

A message sent on behalf of Cllr Susan Glossop to all town and parish councils in West Suffolk.

Good morning

I am writing to you to make you aware that we are reopening the COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF) to a second phase of applications with over £1.4million available.

About CARF

West Suffolk Council was allocated £4.05m from Government for the COVID-19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF).

The Government funding has been made available to provide business rate relief to businesses across West Suffolk that:

- Are in the business rates system
- Can demonstrate that they have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic
- Have not qualified for other COVID-19 rate relief such as the relief given to retail, hospitality, leisure, and childcare nurseries.

Businesses in West Suffolk were invited to apply for CARF rate relief with applications open from 22 February 2022 to 15 March 2022.

West Suffolk Council awarded close to £970,000 of rate relief to 214 businesses who successfully applied for CARF. New bills showing the reduction to their business rate accounts, were sent to these businesses and they are not eligible for further CARF funds.

About CARF phase two

On top of the funds awarded under phase one, West Suffolk Council also awarded more than £1.6m to over 1200 businesses who didn't apply to CARF, but who according to Government data, are working in sectors that have been hardest hit by the pandemic. The proportion of funding awarded to each of these businesses is a quarter of that awarded to those who applied.

The Council and its partners at Anglia Revenues Partnership will be sending new business rates bills to these businesses to show the reduction to their business rates. The letter also invites these businesses to apply for further CARF funding, to a level proportionate to that awarded to businesses who applied under phase one of CARF.

Subject to criteria, this may be up to a further three times the level of CARF reduction that they will have already had put onto their business rates accounts. These businesses are also asked to check they are eligible for the relief and if they believe they have been incorrectly given the relief to complete the first part of the form which allows them to decline the relief. A corrected business rates bill will then be sent to them.

CARF phase two, however, isn't just open to these businesses that have received this smaller proportion of discount to their business rates.

Phase two of CARF is open to businesses that meet the phase one criteria and didn't apply for CARF in February or March this year.

The funding for Phase two is being awarded on a first come first served basis. Applications will be considered as they come in and against the eligibility criteria. The scheme will close at the end of August 2022 or sooner if all of the money has been allocated.

Businesses are advised that it should take between two to four weeks for their application to be considered and CARF to be applied to their business rates account.

Our webpage has more information on eligibility and how to apply. Please direct businesses to <https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/coronavirus/business-support/covid-19-additional-relief-fund.cfm>

Please encourage local businesses who you think might be eligible to visit the webpage to apply.

With best wishes

Cllr Susan Glossop
Cabinet Member for Growth
West Suffolk Council