

ECONOMY AND LABOUR MARKET

COVID-19 BUSINESS SUPPORT EXPERIMENTAL STATISTICS: STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK BUSINESS FUND

Summary

This publication provides experimental statistics for the Strategic Framework Business Fund (SFBF), which was set up to support businesses in Scotland that are required by law to close or to significantly change their operations due to COVID-19 restrictions from 2 November 2020. Support is available under two funds as follows:

- temporary closure grant of £2,000 or £3,000 (depending on rateable value for the premises from which businesses operate) if it is required to close by law; or,
- business restrictions grant of £1,400 or £2,100 (depending on rateable value for the premises from which businesses operate) if it can remain open but is specifically required to modify its operations by law, for example having to close earlier than normal.

Awards for the SFBF are paid over 4 periods.

As at 28 December 2020 23,254 applications for business support had been made to the SFBF over two payment periods from 2 November 2020 to 28 December 2020.

At the national level, about 58% of applications were accepted. About 21% of applications were rejected, and 1% was either referred or deferred. The remaining 20% was still awaiting processing.

Where reasons for rejections have been recorded,¹ the most common reason was that the applicant was in an ineligible sector. About 81% of applications rejected (3,020 applications) fell into this category.

¹ Several Local Authorities did not provide this information

The total amount budgeted for the SFBF for the period from 2 November 2020 to 28 December 2020 is £66,020,000. Of this amount, £31,403,701 or 47.6% of the budget has so far been disbursed to businesses. This was made against 13,462 accepted applications, which account for a total of 23,398 awards over the period.

For the Temporary Closure Fund, disbursements were made against a total of 17,719 applications amounting to a total of £21,761,625.72. This is an average of £1,228.15 per award. For the Business Restrictions fund, a total of 5,679 awards were made giving a total of £9,642,075 in awards. This is an average of £1,698 per award.

For smaller premises with a RV < £51K, a total of 21,497 awards were made for a total of £26,933,589 in awards. This is equivalent to an average of £1,253 per award. For larger premises with a RV of > £51K, a total of 1,901 awards were made for a total of £4,470,111 in awards. This is an average of £2,351 per award.

As of 28 December 2020, the total value of grants disbursed for the four week period from 2 November £14,382,104. The comparable figure for the four week period from 31 November was £11,979,896. For some awards the period for which disbursement relates to was not recorded for a total of £5,041,700.

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1. Introduction and background

All businesses in Scotland that are required by law to close or to significantly change their operations due to COVID-19 restrictions from 2 November 2020 are eligible to apply for grant funding available through the Scottish Government Strategic Framework Business Fund (SFBF). A business can apply for a:

- temporary closure grant of £2,000 or £3,000 (depending on rateable value for the premises from which businesses operate) if it is required to close by law; or,
- business restrictions grant of £1,400 or £2,100 (depending on rateable value for the premises from which businesses operate) if it can remain open but is specifically required to modify its operations by law, for example having to close earlier than normal. This does not include where a demand for products or services has been reduced because of the pandemic.

Grants are paid every 4 weeks in arrears as long as restrictions last, with the earliest claims covering the four week period from 2 November 2020.

The support provided through the SFBF is separate from that made available to businesses through the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Restrictions Fund, which supported businesses impacted by local COVID-19 restrictions from 9 October until 1 November. Applications for that funding closed on 3 November 2020, and statistics are reported using a separate publication.

2. Strategic Framework Business Fund applications

2.1 Application status

This section describes application status, and figure quoted in this section relate to applications rather than awards. Table 1 to table 4 show information from both payment periods, from 2 November to 28 December.

As at 28 December 2020 23,254 applications for business support had been made to the SFBF over two payment periods from 2 November 2020 to 28 December 2020.

Across Scotland, 13,462 of these applications to the SFBF had been accepted as at 28 December 2020. Each of the application can have multiple awards over time, where a business continues to be affected by the public health measures that entitle to continued support. The applications accepted represent about 58% of all applications received.

The number of applications awaiting processing as at 28 December was 4,618. This is equivalent to 20% of all applications to the SFBF since it was launched, an improvement from 36% recorded in the experimental statistics published on the 18 December 2020. This reflects local authorities having had more time to process initial applications .

Table 1: Application status at the national level

Applications	Awaiting processing		Application Rejected		Application referred or deferred		Accepted Applications	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
23,254	4,618	20%	4,966	21%	208	1%	13,462	58%

One area of interest is how quickly applications are being processed. Looking back at those applications made in the initial period from 2 November 2020, of the 6,884 applications received, only 221 were still to be processed as at 28 December 2020. This is equivalent to 3% of applications received for this period .

At the national level, about 21% of applications were rejected, and 1% was either referred or deferred.

Applications may be rejected, referred or deferred for several reasons including multiple applications made by a single business, not meeting the eligibility criteria or requiring additional information to be provided. Where reasons for rejections have been recorded,² the most common reason was that the applicant was in an ineligible sector. About 81% of applications rejected (3,020 applications) fell into this category. Table 2 summarises the reasons for rejecting applications for those businesses where information has been recorded.

Table 2: Reasons recorded for rejecting applications³

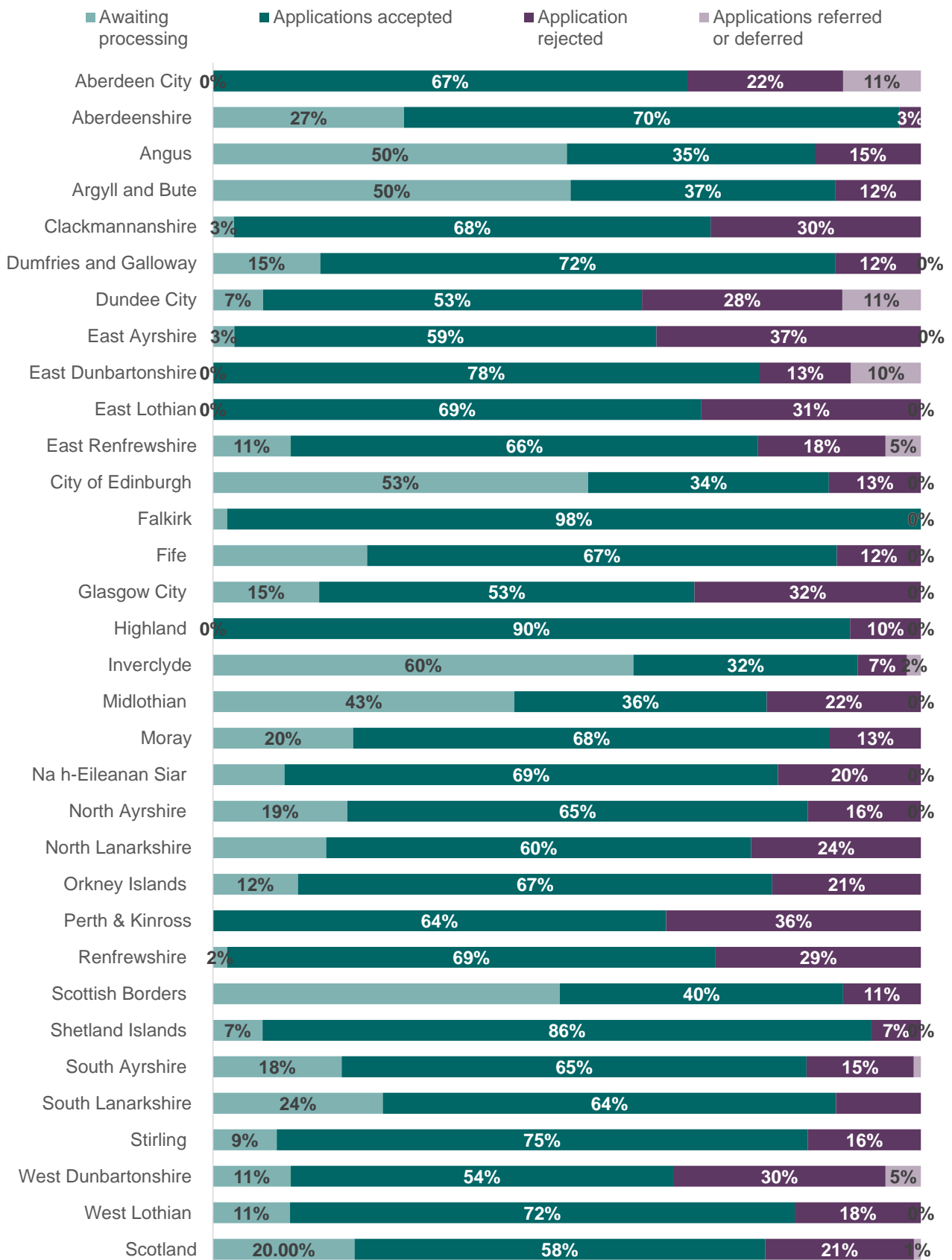
Rejection reason	Number	%
Ineligible Sector	3,020	81%
Invalid application	380	10%
Duplicate applications	134	4%
reason not given	112	3%
HQ outside Local Authority	60	2%
Not trading	27	1%
Total rejections*	3,733	100%

² Several Local Authorities did not provide this information

³ Only includes rejections that could be categorised, several Local Authorities did not provide this information

The distribution of applications status varied by local authority – see Figure 1.

Figure 1: Business Restriction Fund Application Status by Local Authority



3. Disbursement of support

This section relates to awards to business premises. Table 5 to table 8 show information from both payment periods, from 2 November to 28 December. Table 9 shows awards by month.

The total amount budgeted for SFBF for the period from 2 November 2020 is £66,020,000. Of this amount, £31,403,701 or 47.6% of the budget has so far been disbursed to businesses. This was made against 13,462 accepted applications, which account for a total of 23,398 awards over the period.

Table 5: National level spend and budget completed (2 November to 28 December)

Funding £	Spend £	% Budget allocated that has been spent
66,020,000	31,403,701	47.6%

3.1 Local Authority Level Spend

At the Local Authority level disbursement ranged from as high as 110% (Na h-Eileanan Siar showing more support being disbursed than was budgeted) and 22% (Aberdeen City). The average total disbursement per Local Authority was £606,813 and the median was £980,413.

Table 6: Grant spending and budget, by LA (2 November to 28 December)

Local Authority	Actual spend	Budget Allocated to LA	% Budget allocated that has been spent
Aberdeen City	£ 542,300	£ 2,450,000	22%
Aberdeenshire	£ 751,825	£ 1,580,000	48%
Angus	£ 543,300	£ 1,050,000	52%
Argyll and Bute	£ 634,200	£ 1,470,000	43%
Clackmannanshire	£ 195,600	£ 360,000	54%
Dumfries and Galloway	£ 889,900	£ 1,280,000	70%
Dundee City	£ 565,100	£ 1,640,000	34%
East Ayrshire	£ 1,234,725	£ 1,720,000	72%
East Dunbartonshire	£ 363,100	£ 1,220,000	30%
East Lothian	£ 319,200	£ 750,000	43%
East Renfrewshire	£ 440,786	£ 970,000	45%
City of Edinburgh	£ 2,477,400	£ 7,420,000	33%
Falkirk	£ 579,425	£ 960,000	60%

Local Authority	Actual spend	Budget Allocated to LA	% Budget allocated that has been spent
Fife	£ 1,695,800	£ 2,920,000	58%
Glasgow City	£ 6,216,875	£ 12,460,000	50%
Highland	£ 742,650	£ 1,660,000	45%
Inverclyde	£ 275,600	£ 590,000	47%
Midlothian	£ 234,000	£ 580,000	40%
Moray	£ 453,200	£ 480,000	94%
Na h-Eileanan Siar	£ 99,400	£ 90,000	110%
North Ayrshire	£ 531,600	£ 1,300,000	41%
North Lanarkshire	£ 1,750,725	£ 3,720,000	47%
Orkney Islands	£ 57,400	£ 190,000	30%
Perth and Kinross	£ 951,400	£ 1,860,000	51%
Renfrewshire	£ 1,557,000	£ 2,780,000	56%
Scottish Borders	£ 640,050	£ 1,040,000	62%
Shetland Islands	£ 71,400	£ 170,000	42%
South Ayrshire	£ 1,392,380	£ 2,490,000	56%
South Lanarkshire	£ 2,011,750	£ 4,400,000	46%
Stirling	£ 1,513,060	£ 2,720,000	56%
West Dunbartonshire	£ 473,725	£ 1,370,000	35%
West Lothian	£ 1,198,825	£ 2,330,000	51%
TOTAL	£ 31,403,701	£ 66,020,000	48%

3.1.1 LA level disbursements by support type

For the Temporary Closure fund, disbursements were made against a total of 17,719 applications amounting to a total of £21,761,625.72. This is an average of £1,228.15 per award. The average spend across LAs was £680,051 for the Temporary Closure Fund.

For the Business Restrictions fund, a total of 5,679 awards were made giving a total of £9,642,075 in awards. This is an average of £1,698 per award. The average spend across LAs was £301,315 for the Business Restrictions Fund.

The total number of awards (23,398) exceeds the number of applications approved, because over the two periods of restriction covered by the statistics some applications will have more than one award. This is because a premises has continued to be affected by measures in a way that entitles it to continued support.

Table 7: Awards, by Fund and LA (from 2 November to 28 December)

Local Authority	Temporary Closure - funds awarded		Business Restrictions – funds awarded ⁴	
	Number	Value	Number	Value
Aberdeen City	84	£ 200,000.00	122	£ 342,300.00
Aberdeenshire	96	£ 194,400.00	372	£ 557,425.00
Angus	116	£ 229,000.00	215	£ 314,300.00
Argyll and Bute	56	£ 112,000.00	350	£ 522,200.00
Clackmannanshire	66	£ 134,000.00	40	£ 61,600.00
Dumfries and Galloway	138	£ 247,300.00	432	£ 642,600.00
Dundee City	128	£ 261,400.00	195	£ 303,700.00
East Ayrshire	901	£ 930,475.00	180	£ 304,250.00
East Dunbartonshire	309	£ 319,000.00	60	£ 44,100.00
East Lothian	28	£ 56,000.00	180	£ 263,200.00
East Renfrewshire	476	£ 440,785.72	0	£ -
City of Edinburgh	372	£ 782,000.00	1,096	£ 1,695,400.00
Falkirk	158	£ 329,400.00	166	£ 250,025.00
Fife	274	£ 651,200.00	584	£ 1,044,600.00
Glasgow City	5,948	£ 6,216,875.00	0	£ -
Highland	18	£ 43,000.00	444	£ 699,650.00
Inverclyde	92	£ 181,800.00	66	£ 93,800.00
Midlothian	46	£ 94,000.00	96	£ 140,000.00
Moray	53	£ 112,000.00	142	£ 341,200.00
Na h-Eileanan Siar	0	£ -	68	£ 99,400.00
North Ayrshire	102	£ 206,800.00	216	£ 324,800.00
North Lanarkshire	1,578	£ 1,750,725.00	0	£ -
Orkney Islands	0	£ -	40	£ 57,400.00
Perth and Kinross	54	£ 222,000.00	243	£ 729,400.00
Renfrewshire	599	£ 1,286,100.00	0	£ 270,900.00
Scottish Borders	148	£ 277,200.00	256	£ 362,850.00
Shetland Islands	0	£ -	48	£ 71,400.00
South Ayrshire	1,214	£ 1,392,380.00	0	£ -
South Lanarkshire	1,872	£ 2,011,750.00	0	£ -
Stirling	1,490	£ 1,513,060.00	0	£ -

⁴ A premises is judged to be in receipt of an award for the highest level of fund that it is eligible for in a period in cases in which an area has changed level during a payment period, even though payments will be prorated weekly according to eligibility. Due to this definition the average closure award is lower than the average restriction award in this period

Local Authority	Temporary Closure - funds awarded		Business Restrictions – funds awarded ⁴	
	Number	Value	Number	Value
West Dunbartonshire	235	£ 368,150.00	68	£ 105,575.00
West Lothian	1068	£ 1,198,825.00	0	£ -
Total	17,719	£ 21,761,625.72	5,679	£ 9,642,075.00

3.1.2 Local Authority Spend by Rateable Value

For smaller premises with a RV < £51K, a total of 21,497 awards were made for a total of £26,933,589 in awards. This is equivalent to an average of £1,253 per award. The average amount each LA dispersed to premises with RV < £51k was £841,675.

For larger business with RV > £51K, a total of 1,901 awards were made for a total of £4,470,111 in awards,. This gives an average of £2,351 per award.

Table 8: Awards, by RV and LA (from 2 November to 28 December)

Local Authority	RV<51k – grants awarded		RV>51k - grants awarded	
	Number	Value	Number	Value
Aberdeen City	154	£ 327,500.00	52	£ 214,800.00
Aberdeenshire	400	£ 610,625.00	68	£ 141,200.00
Angus	310	£ 502,000.00	21	£ 41,300.00
Argyll and Bute	356	£ 530,800.00	50	£ 103,400.00
Clackmannan-shire	96	£ 172,800.00	10	£ 22,800.00
Dumfries and Galloway	526	£ 801,400.00	44	£ 88,500.00
Dundee City	282	£ 475,400.00	41	£ 89,700.00
East Ayrshire	1036	£ 1,099,925.00	45	£ 134,800.00
East Dunbartonshire	356	£ 344,800.00	13	£ 18,300.00
East Lothian	180	£ 260,400.00	28	£ 58,800.00
East Renfrewshire	464	£ 423,764.29	12	£ 17,021.43
City of Edinburgh	1200	£ 1,880,400.00	268	£ 597,000.00
Falkirk	264	£ 442,500.00	60	£ 136,925.00
Fife	792	£ 1,492,200.00	66	£ 203,600.00
Glasgow City	5470	£ 5,231,000.00	478	£ 985,875.00
Highland	338	£ 475,450.00	124	£ 267,200.00
Inverclyde	146	£ 248,600.00	12	£ 27,000.00
Midlothian	132	£ 211,200.00	10	£ 22,800.00
Moray	163	£ 351,600.00	32	£ 101,600.00
Na h-Eileanan Siar	60	£ 82,600.00	8	£ 16,800.00
North Ayrshire	284	£ 460,200.00	34	£ 71,400.00
North Lanarkshire	1534	£ 1,644,150.00	44	£ 106,575.00

Local Authority	RV<51k – grants awarded		RV>51k - grants awarded	
	Number	Value	Number	Value
Orkney Islands	38	£ 53,200.00	2	£ 4,200.00
Perth & Kinross	259	£ 786,400.00	38	£ 165,000.00
Renfrewshire	578	£ 1,427,100.00	21	£ 129,900.00
Scottish Borders	380	£ 593,150.00	24	£ 46,900.00
Shetland Islands	38	£ 50,400.00	10	£ 21,000.00
South Ayrshire	1,146	£ 1,237,315.00	68	£ 155,065.00
South Lanarkshire	1,800	£ 1,853,625.00	72	£ 158,125.00
Stirling	1,416	£ 1,351,185.00	74	£ 161,875.00
West Dunbartonshire	269	£ 408,700.00	34	£ 65,025.00
West Lothian	1,030	£ 1,103,200.00	38	£ 95,625.00
Total	21,497	£ 26,933,589.29	1,901	£ 4,470,111.43

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3.2 Uptake by month

As of 28 December 2020, the total value of grants disbursed for the four week period from 2 November £14,382,104. The comparable figure for the four week period from 31 November was £11,979,896. The period for which disbursement relates to was not recorded for a total of £5,041,700.

Table 9: Value of awards, by LA and payment Tranche⁵

Local Authority	November		December		Unknown
	Value	Budget	Number	Value	
Aberdeen City	£403,400	£1,220,000	£138,900	£1,230,000	
Aberdeenshire	£586,125	£790,000	£165,700	£790,000	
Angus	£440,500	£530,000	£102,800	£520,000	
Argyll and Bute	£404,200	£730,000	£230,000	£740,000	
Clackmannanshire	£151,800	£180,000	£43,800	£180,000	
Dumfries and Galloway	£826,300	£720,000	£58,000	£560,000	£5,600
Dundee City	£208,300	£820,000	£356,800	£820,000	
East Ayrshire		£740,000		£980,000	£1,234,725
East Dunbartonshire		£510,000		£710,000	£363,100
East Lothian	£254,800	£430,000	£64,400	£320,000	
East Renfrewshire	£302,664	£410,000	£138,121	£560,000	
City of Edinburgh	£1,763,800	£3,710,000	£709,600	£3,710,000	£4,000
Falkirk		£510,000		£450,000	£579,425
Fife	£1,518,400	£1,430,000	£177,400	£1,490,000	

⁵ it was not possible to split the payments by tranche for some Local Authorities

Glasgow City	£49,625	£5,330,000	£6,160,750	£7,130,000	£6,500
Highland	£373,000	£830,000	£369,650	£830,000	
Inverclyde	£252,200	£310,000	£23,400	£280,000	
Midlothian	£186,800	£290,000	£47,200	£290,000	
Moray	£101,400	£240,000	£351,800	£240,000	
Na h-Eileanan Siar	£72,800	£40,000	£26,600	£50,000	
North Ayrshire	£403,200	£650,000	£128,400	£650,000	
North Lanarkshire	£934,350	£1,580,000	£544,225	£2,140,000	£272,150
Orkney Islands	£46,200	£90,000	£11,200	£100,000	
Perth and Kinross		£900,000		£960,000	£951,400
Renfrewshire		£1,190,000		£1,590,000	£1,557,000
Scottish Borders	£463,300	£570,000	£175,250	£470,000	£1,500
Shetland Islands	£53,200	£90,000	£18,200	£80,000	
South Ayrshire	£1,214,255	£1,050,000	£178,125	£1,440,000	
South Lanarkshire	£1,580,375	£1,870,000	£431,375	£2,530,000	
Stirling	£574,460	£1,130,000	£872,300	£1,590,000	£66,300
West Dunbartonshire	£326,875	£580,000	£146,850	£790,000	
West Lothian	£889,775	£980,000	£309,050	£1,350,000	
Total	£14,382,104	£30,450,000	£11,979,896	£35,570,000	£5,041,700

4. Methodology

4.1 Data collection

Each Local Authority in Scotland has recorded information relating to applications received for the Strategic Framework Business Fund. Local Authorities in Scotland are the owners of these data.

Scottish Government asked all Local Authorities in Scotland to provide the following information, via a standardised excel template, for publication purposes;

- Number of applications received
- Number of applications awaiting processing
- Number of applications rejected
- Number of applications referred or deferred
- Number of applications accepted
- Number of grants awarded
- Value of grants awarded

Scottish Government asked that award information be provided for both funds and within each fund for the information to be further split by rateable value (less than/equal to £51k and over £51k)

For the first time in this collection LAs were asked to provide application level data:

- For each premises in receipt of a grant or whose application is held:
 - Name of account holder (payee name) in receipt of grant
 - Company registration (if held)
 - Business purpose (free text from application form, if available and reportable)
 - Rateable value (under or over £51k)
 - Eligibility under each tier
 - Date of application (for each premises award application⁶)
 - Application status (for each premises award application⁶)
 - Date of decision (for each premises award application⁶)
 - Reason for Rejection (if applicable – for each premises award⁶) to include:
 - Multiple premises limit exceeded
 - Not enough information supplied
 - Ineligible sector
 - Duplicate applications
 - Not trading
 - HQ outside LA
 - Other – please specify

⁶ Here the meaning of premises award application is the award that a business applies for in each premises (where the business has multiple premises, when they have only one, it is simply the business application)

- Payment amount in the last 4 week period (for each premises award application ⁶)
- Total Payments to date (for each premises award application ⁶)

Unfortunately only 23 out of 32 LA were able to do so at this time⁷. We are working with local authorities to provide this data for the next release. For those LA that did submit data at application level, they were asked to split aggregates by the month of application. Four LAs were not able to split data by the month of application and provided cumulative data for the whole period⁸.

The requested information was to cover the period 3 November to 28 December.

4.2 Data reporting

The information received from each Local Authority was amalgamated into a single dataset. This dataset was drawn from the templates received and aimed to create national level figures. There are some caveats to this approach;

- In some returns the stated number of applications received was lower than the sum of the application status categories (awaiting processing, rejected, referred or deferred and awarded). In these cases, the total number of applications has been recalculated to equal this sum.
- In other returns, the total number of applications exceeded the sum of the application status categories (awaiting processing, rejected, referred or deferred and awarded). In these cases it has been assumed that the discrepancy is caused by additional applications 'awaiting processing' and that figure has therefore been updated accordingly.
- Some LAs did not provide all the data required at application level. In particular, information on processing applications and rateable value was missing in some cases.
- As not all LAs provided application level data we were not able to fully split reporting by tranche. Where possible these breakdowns have been provided for the LAs which did.
- Due to the timing of this exercise a reasonably high proportion of applications were still awaiting processing.
- Some Local Authorities did not disaggregate the information by rateable value. Disaggregated information has been calculated and provided wherever possible.

⁷ The nine LAs that were not able to submit application level data were Aberdeen City Council, Dundee City Council, East Ayrshire, East Dunbartonshire, Highland, Moray, Perth and Kinross, Renfrewshire, West Dunbartonshire

⁸ The four LAs that were not able to split by month of application were Perth and Kinross, Renfrewshire, East Ayrshire and East Dunbartonshire

An experimental statistics publication for Scotland

This is the second publication of these statistics and therefore they are labelled as experimental statistics. Experimental statistics are defined by the Code of Practice for Statistics as 'a subset of newly developed or innovative official statistics undergoing evaluation, that are published in order to involve users and stakeholders in the assessment of their suitability and quality at an early stage'. Official and National Statistics are produced to high professional standards as set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Both undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs and are produced free from any political interference.

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<https://uksa.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/about-the-authority/what-we-do/uk-statistical-system/types-of-official-statistics/>

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