

# Self-employed people to get extra money in the Borders

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MORE than 200 self-employed businesses are set to receive up to £1,500 as a “top-up payment” from Scottish Borders Council (SBC).

The reallocation of unused money from the council’s discretionary fund was discussed at a meeting of the executive committee on May 18.

Councillors agreed that approximately 240 self-employed businesses should be provided with between £1,000-£1,500 each.

Mark Rowley, SBC’s executive member for finance, said: “They’re a sector that didn’t get a lot of support [during the pandemic] but they’re incredibly important to the Scottish Borders.

“I think that is a really good destination [for the money],” added Mr Rowley, of the Conservatives.

According to a report put to members, £2.8 million of support to around 420 businesses has been given out through the discretionary fund, provided by the Scottish Government.

The council was provided with

a total government grant of £3.1 million, with the key aim of the fund to “help mitigate the short-term financial challenges experienced by local businesses that were not able to access support from Scottish Government since October 2020”.

Mr Rowley also said it was important to recognise the contribution of SBC staff in getting support to businesses during the pandemic.

“Jobs wouldn’t be there, businesses wouldn’t have survived, if we hadn’t got the support out as quickly as we did,” he said. “We must recognise the contribution that our staff played. It was a fantastic achievement across the board.”

According to the paper, the current value of funding distributed to local businesses by SBC is in excess of £70 million, with more than 5,770 businesses currently supported through the grant process.

SBC executive director Rob Dickson described the support as a “remarkable effort”.

On the funding for self-employed businesses, he added: “The council has got to make sure these funds are allocated in the best way possible.”



Scottish Borders Council’s executive member for finance Mark Rowley, of the Scottish Conservatives

## Attraction will be ‘world class’, says impressed council director



The gallery space in the soon-to-open Roman museum in the Ormiston Institute, Melrose. Photo: Trimontium Museum Trust

THE Borders is set to get a “world-class” venue in the summer, according to a council chief (Mike Thomson writes).

Rob Dickson, executive director of Scottish Borders Council, was speaking at a meeting of the executive committee last Tuesday (May 18).

Mr Dickson said he has had a “sneak preview” of the new Roman museum which is set to be opened in Melrose’s Ormiston Institute by the Trimontium Trust this year.

“The work done in that building and I think the artefacts that will shortly be on display

and open to the public this year will absolutely and genuinely be world class,” said Mr Dickson, who will soon be leaving his council role.

“I think we will see later this summer a world-class museum opening with world-class artefacts.

“It will be – for those with a particular interest and those who don’t know or aren’t experts – a fascinating look at what has been discovered in the area around Melrose and something we can be very, very proud of in the Borders.”

According to the trust’s web-

site, the Trimontium Roman fort near Newstead is of “international importance as the largest Roman fort and settlement north of Hadrian’s Wall”.

The museum, which tells the fort’s story, will open in the summer and earlier this month the trust put out an appeal for volunteers.

The only requirements for a position are “an interest in history and museums plus the enthusiasm to get involved”.

If you are interested in volunteering, email [info@trimontium.co.uk](mailto:info@trimontium.co.uk) or visit [www.trimontium.co.uk/volunteer](http://www.trimontium.co.uk/volunteer)



## 20MPH PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Scottish Borders Council has been piloting a 20mph trial across towns and villages in the region since last October.

A public consultation on the trial is now open until 7 June - and we want to hear about your experience travelling across the region.

We’re looking for feedback from pedestrians, cyclists, residents, businesses and drivers to determine if any of the 20 miles per hour limits should be retained.

Give your feedback at  
[www.scotborders.gov.uk/20mph](http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/20mph)



