



Our district is home to a diverse and thriving business community, with organisations of all sizes and sectors making a valuable contribution to our local economy. Through innovation, excellent customer service and investment in the future, local businesses help create jobs, drive economic growth and add to the vibrancy of our city, towns and villages. That's why it is so important that we recognise and celebrate their achievements.

I'm pleased to say that the council is once again supporting the Chichester & District Business Awards. Following

the success of last year's awards, entries are now open for the 2026 event, which is organised by the Chichester Observer Series in partnership with Chichester District Council and Chichester BID.

The awards shine a spotlight on businesses of every kind, from independent retailers and hospitality businesses to professional services, and manufacturers. Last year's awards saw businesses from many different sectors recognised for their achievements, highlighting the quality, ambition and entrepreneurial spirit that exists across our district and celebrating the breadth and strength of our business community.

If your business has achieved something special over the past year, or if you know an organisation or individual that deserves recognition, now is the time to enter or submit a nomination under one of the ten award categories. To find out more, view the award categories and submit your entry before **Wednesday 16 September**, please visit: [www.chichesterbusinessawards.co.uk](http://www.chichesterbusinessawards.co.uk). We wish every business entering the best of luck and look forward to celebrating the success, innovation and dedication of our local business community at the awards ceremony in November.

I'm also pleased that the council is supporting the Chichester Chamber of Commerce & Industry's Back to Business event, which will take place at the University of Chichester on **Friday 11 September**. The event will bring together businesses from across the district for a day of networking, workshops, exhibitions and expert speakers, helping local organisations to share ideas, build connections and explore opportunities for growth. Businesses can find out more about this event at: <https://chichestercci.org.uk/back-to-business/>

Supporting our local businesses to grow, adapt and thrive remains a priority for the council, particularly as many organisations continue to face challenges including rising costs and the need to reduce their environmental impact. Earlier this year, we launched a £105,000 Sustainability Grant Programme to help local businesses take practical steps towards becoming more sustainable while also improving their long-term resilience. The grants, worth up to £7,500 each, were designed to support projects such as energy efficiency improvements, low-carbon technologies and waste reduction initiatives.

We've received a fantastic response to the scheme and look forward to seeing the positive impact these projects will have on businesses, the local economy and the environment in the months and years ahead.

This is not the first time we have delivered a scheme like this — and we know it works. Our previous grant programme supported a wide range of local businesses, helping them to make meaningful changes that are still benefiting them today.

We have also launched a new support platform to help businesses build a climate action plan, cut their energy costs with expert support and much more. It combines sustainability expertise with purpose-built design tools to make climate action faster, practical and accessible. For more information and to sign up, visit:

<https://gikiactions.com/auth/signup/ChichesterGikiActions>

This sustainability grant and support platform is just the beginning. It forms part of a wider commitment from the council to support our local economy — not only to grow, but to do so in a way that is fit for the future.

Best wishes

Cllr Harsha Desai

Cabinet Member for Growth, Economic Development, Communication, Licensing and Events  
at Chichester District Council