
NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATE – DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 Members to consider the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management reviewing the revised scheme for awarding Discretionary Rate Relief.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 In April 2005 Members agreed as part of the efficiency savings review to revise the procedure for awarding Discretionary Rate Relief. The new scheme treats every application on its merits based on a points scheme and any award is now for a fixed period of time, the maximum being three years. Once this award period finishes any applicant would need to make a fresh application if they wish to receive a further rate relief award.
- 2.2 Discretionary Rate Relief may be awarded either:-
- (a) as a top up to mandatory relief granted to charities, community amateur sports clubs, qualifying rural business and businesses in former agricultural premises; or
 - (b) on its own to other specified businesses and non profit making organisations
- 2.3 As a result of this new policy and procedure all cases that had been granted Discretionary Rate Relief were cancelled as at 31 March 2005. Every case was sent a letter and a new application form to complete in May 2005 if they required relief for that year.

3 FINDINGS

- 3.1 Prior to the policy changing 40 ratepayers were in receipt of the 20% Discretionary Rate Relief top up as they were a registered charity and entitled to 80% mandatory relief. Since the changes 38 have reapplied and all 38 have received the 20% top up.
- 3.2 Twelve non-profit making organisations were entitled to some relief prior to the policy changing. Since the changes only three of these now receive relief, eight of the twelve ratepayers have not re-applied for rate relief, this may be because a majority of them have been granted Small Business Rate Relief which was introduced from 1 April 2005. In addition a further organisation has applied and received charitable status as a Community Amateur Sports Club so therefore entitled to 80% mandatory relief. The remaining two organisations are still in receipt of discretionary relief under the new policy.

3.3 Prior to 31 March 2005 three ratepayers received 50% Discretionary Rate Relief under the Rural Settlements rules. This has remained unchanged since the adoption of the revised policy

4 SUMMARY

4.1 At this point in time, the Council are financially supporting 48 organisations at a total cost of £22,002.

5 RECOMMENDATION

5.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES** to endorse introduction of the revised policy adopted in April 2005 into the normal working practices for all future applications of Discretionary Rate Relief.

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Head of Revenue & Housing Management

Background Papers:

None

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