

**WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**MEETING WITH CABINET MEMBER WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR RESOURCES**

**6 JUNE 2018**

**2018/2019 BUSINESS RATES REVALUATION DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF  
SCHEME**

**REPORT OF JOINT SUPPORT LEAD BUSINESS RATES**

**(Contact: Kath Leonard, Tel: (01993) 861246**

**Email:kath.leonard@westoxon.gov.uk)**

(The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Resources is authorised to determine this relief).

**I. PURPOSE**

- a) To approve a scheme of discretionary rate relief in line with the scheme announced by the government in the March 2017 budget.
- b) To consider delegating the decision making process for individual ratepayers to officers with awards being made in line with the approved scheme.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- a) That the scheme as detailed in the appendix to the report be adopted.
- b) That Officers be authorised to award relief in accordance with the approved scheme subject to regular reporting of expenditure to Members.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 On the 4 August 2017 The Member with Responsibility for Resources approved a report which set out changes announced in the budget of 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017 to support businesses through the difficulty arising from major increases in rateable values as part of the 2017 revaluation. This scheme was for the 2017/18 financial year. A new scheme needs to be adopted for the 2018/19 financial year.
- 3.2 The funding provided by central government for 2018/19 is £272,000.
- 3.3 Details of the suggested scheme are set out in Appendix A.
- 3.4 Awarding relief to identified ratepayers facing increases of in excess of £1,200 from 31/03/2017 at various percentage levels will cost the following. The percentages are calculated on the increase in excess of £1,200.

20%	25%	30%	35%
£172,673	£216,341	£259,609	£302,877

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The spring budget reliefs are fully funded by central government so unless relief awards exceed the limits imposed by government of £272,000 there will be no impact on the level of business rates income and therefore the impact on the Council Taxpayer should be neutral.
- 4.2 If the Council does not award the full £272,000 within the financial year the difference between the amount awarded and £272,000 will have to be re-paid to central government.

#### **5. RISKS**

- 5.1 The key risks associated with this Spring budget scheme relate to ensuring that all eligible businesses are awarded the relief. Officers have undertaken a modelling exercise to identify businesses facing increases in line with the criteria set out in Appendix I.
- 5.2. The approval, or otherwise, of any of the individual applications does not carry any significant risk to the Council or its residents although there is a risk that if we fail to approve due only to budget considerations when others have been granted relief in similar circumstances the decision could be challenged.

#### **6. REASONS**

- 6.1 To support the local economy.
- 6.2. Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act (1988) permits the billing authority to grant discretionary rate relief to charities and other organisations of prescribed types.

Kath Leonard

Joint Support Lead

(Author: Kath Leonard, Tel: (01993) 861246; Email: kath.leonard@westoxon.gov.uk)

Date: 12 February 2018