



CABINET MEMBER DECISION

Decision:

That approval is granted to extend the criteria for the temporary Discretionary Rates Relief Scheme to include high street stores and other local businesses and increase the level of relief paid from 40% up to 50% of the increase in business rates payable between the two years after all eligible reliefs have been granted.

(1) Details of Decision

To seek approval to extend the criteria for the temporary Discretionary Rates Relief Scheme.

(2) Considerations/Evidence

The Government has made available £300m of extra funding over 4 years for local authorities to provide discretionary relief to predominantly small, medium and independent businesses facing the steepest increase in their bills as a result of the recent revaluation of all commercial properties. The Chancellor stated that individual authorities were in the best position to determine how these extra monies should be targeted and administered in order to support those businesses with the greatest need.

(3) Reasons for Decision:

South Kesteven's allocation of funding has been confirmed as £568k spread over 4 years as set out below.

Amount of discretionary pot awarded (£000s)				
2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	Total
332	161	66	9	568

The Council has been given the responsibility to design its own discretionary business rates relief scheme having regard to the Government's principles and assumptions. This was the subject of a discussion at Cabinet on 13th July 2017 where Members agreed the principles and eligibility criteria. It was explained that take up was likely to be lower than expected due to the availability of other grants for local businesses, i.e. small business rate support scheme, transitional relief and temporary relief for pubs. Also, in common with other schemes being developed by authorities, a list of exclusions was proposed and an urgent key decision was subsequently made in order that the scheme could be implemented. Following the

implementation, it was identified that the eligibility criteria should be reviewed in order to ensure that the full amount of the grant is paid to local businesses and the following changes are recommended:

- The amount paid will be up to 50% (previously up to 40%) of the increase in business rates payable between the two years after all eligible reliefs have been granted;
- Eligibility will be extended to include all businesses, e.g. high street stores and franchises, financial services and professional services, etc; and
- As before the only exclusions will be NHS, local authorities and all other public bodies. Also excluded are businesses that were not located in the district prior to 31st March 2017 and premises with a rateable value in excess of £100,000 and rate rises below 3%.

Based on current modelling of the rating list, it is anticipated that up to £325,000 of the current year's award will be allocated to local businesses.

Conflicts of Interest

(Any conflict of interest declared by any other Cabinet Member consulted in relation to the decision to be recorded).

NONE

Dispensations

(Any dispensation granted by the Monitoring Officer in respect of any declared conflict of interest to be noted).

NONE

Decision taken by:

Name: Councillor Nick Robins
Cabinet Member for Retail & Visitor Economy

Date of Decision: 28 September 2017

Date of Publication of Record of Decision: 29 September 2017

Date decision effective (i.e. 5 days after the date of publication of record of decision unless subject to call-in by the Chairman of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or any 5 members of the Council from any political groups):

07 October 2017