

Record of an individual Cabinet member decision

Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

Decision made by	Robert Sharp
Key decision?	NO
Date of decision (same as date form signed)	
Name and job title of officer requesting the decision	Paul Howden Revenues and Benefits Client Manager
Officer contact details	Tel: 01235 422484 Email: Paul.howden@southandvale.gov.uk
Decision	To approve an increase in the award of revaluation discretionary rate relief to qualifying Non-Domestic (business) ratepayers from 8.5% to 18.5% for 2017/2018.
Reasons for decision	<p>Government announced in the Spring Budget a £300m discretionary relief fund over four-year period from 2017/2018 to 2020/2021 to support businesses facing the steepest increases in their rates bill following the 2017 revaluation of non-domestic properties. Every authority was provided with a share of the fund (for Vale, this has been confirmed at £335,000 for 2017/18) and was expected consult and discuss options with their major precepting authorities (in the Vale's case this was Oxfordshire County Council) before adopting any scheme. This was done and, along with the other Oxfordshire districts and the City council, the following general qualifying criteria were agreed:</p> <p>i) The ratepayer must be in occupation on 31 March 2017. No relief will be awarded to those taking up occupation on or after 1 April 2017 or to unoccupied properties.</p> <p>ii) All other mandatory reliefs must have been applied for prior to an application for Local Discretionary Relief being considered.</p> <p>iii) The 2017 rateable value must be under £200,000</p> <p>iv) The business rates bill must have increased after revaluation by more than 12.5%</p>

v) Where a property is formed following a split or merger after 31 March 2017 but qualified before the split or merger, a new calculation will be carried out.

vi) The property must have been in the rating list at 31 March 2017. Relief will not apply to new properties entered into the rating list retrospectively (unless under point v. above).

vii) An application form must be completed. All applications will be considered on their merits. Relief will apply from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018. A new application will be required in each subsequent year if applicable.

viii) Increases to the 2017 rateable value will only affect the award if effective from 1 April 2017 and are due to the 2017 rateable value being incorrect and not due to a material change to the property.

ix) Recalculations will be made where reductions in rateable value for either the 2010 or 2017 rateable value are made.

Exclusions

i) Relief will not be awarded to precepting bodies (i.e. County, District or Parish Councils).

ii) Applications will not be invited from banks, building societies or other major financial institutions.

iii) Applications will not be invited from multi-national businesses or large chains.

iv) Applications will not be invited from the NHS.

v) Applications will not be invited from charities.

Following the release and testing of new software, the Vale was able to set awards at **8.5 per cent** for **133** qualifying ratepayers, based on Government guidance and the local qualifying criteria (listed above). This was expected to amount to approximately **£318,000** if all qualifying ratepayers applied, with the remaining **£17,000** retained for changes in awards and unforeseen circumstances. There is no provision to carry forward any unspent funding to **2018/19** (*although retrospective 2017/18 awards can be made up until 30 September 2018*).

We have now been able to confirm that **81** ratepayers out of the **133** qualifying ratepayers are eligible to receive the relief. **8.5 per cent** was awarded to their accounts as agreed on 3 November 2017. This has left an underspend of just under **£206,000**.

	<p>As Government is keen for the council to spend the full budget we are proposing to increase the award for 2017/2018 to 18.5 per cent with the remaining £8,000 retained for changes in awards and unforeseen circumstances.</p> <p>The funding for 2018/2019 to be made available will be reduced to £163,000. For 2019/20 and 2020/21 provisional funding has been set at £67,000 and £10,000 respectively. Further modelling will be undertaken in due course to determine awards for future years.</p>			
Alternative options rejected	Various percentage awards were costed to take the council as near as possible to the available funding but to retain an amount for changes in awards and unforeseen circumstances.			
Legal implications	There are no legal implications emanating from this decision. Awards of relief will be made in accordance S.47 Local Government Finance 1988.			
Financial implications	The awards of relief will be fully funded by Government, so will not be detrimental to the council. New burdens funding has been made available to help cover the administrative costs of implementing the relief.			
Other implications	None			
Background papers considered	Government guidance/circulars			
Declarations/conflict of interest? Declaration of other councillor/officer consulted by the Cabinet member?	None			
List consultees		Name	Outcome	Date
	Ward councillors	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Legal		No Comments	30/05/2018
	Finance	William Jacobs	No Comments	30/05/2018
	Human resources	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Sustainability	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Diversity and equality	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Communications	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Chief Executive	Mark Stone	No Comments	30/05/2018
Confidential decision? If so, under which exempt category?	No			
Call-in waived by Scrutiny Committee				

chairman?	
Cabinet member's signature To confirm the decision as set out in this notice.	Signature <u>MS/qp</u> Date <u>11-7-18</u>

ONCE SIGNED, THIS FORM MUST BE HANDED TO DEMOCRATIC SERVICES IMMEDIATELY

For Democratic Services office use only		
Form received	Date: <u>12 JULY 2018</u>	Time: <u>9:40</u>
Date published to all councillors	Date: <u>12 JULY 2018</u>	
Call-in deadline	Date: <u>NOT APPLICABLE</u>	Time: <u>—</u>