

CABINET

3rd December 2003

REVIEW OF NON-DOMESTIC RATES RELIEFS

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

Contact Officer: Gill Cranswick Tel No: 01962 848190

RECENT REFERENCES:

CAB605: Discretionary Rate Relief – Individual Application, 19th March, 2003

CAB565: Discretionary Rate Relief – Individual Application, 15th January, 2003

CAB558: Non-Domestic Rates - Discretionary Rate Relief Policy, 15th January, 2003

CAB227: Business Rate Reliefs, 5th September, 2001

CAB193: Business Rate Reliefs, 13th June, 2001

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The Local Government Finance Act 1988 prescribes the circumstances in which the Authority can award discretionary relief to business rate payers. Discretionary relief is funded in part by the Council and in part by the NNDR Pool. The cost to the Council of awarding relief for the current year is estimated to be £101,000.

Policy guidelines were developed when business rates was introduced in 1990. Over the years the guidelines have been amended when appropriate and to comply with changes in legislation.

A review of the majority of rate payers receiving discretionary relief has been undertaken this year. The review together with the nature of some recent applications has identified the need for a fundamental review of the policy guidelines to ensure that they reflect corporate priorities.

It is recommended that Central Services Performance Improvement Committee be requested to undertake a fundamental review of rate reliefs as part of its scrutiny function.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Central Services Performance Improvement Committee be requested to undertake a fundamental review of business rate reliefs as part of its scrutiny function.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

1 CORPORATE STRATEGY (RELEVANCE TO):

- 1.1 Granting relief under the Local Government Finance Act 1988 supports the tenet *to achieve a strong and diverse urban and rural economy which builds on local strengths and offers opportunities for all.*

2 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 2.1 The cost of any relief granted is funded in part by the National Non-Domestic Rating Pool and in part the by the Council. The cost to the Council of awarding relief for the current year is estimated to be £101,000.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None

APPENDICES:

None

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