

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 19 MARCH 2018

PART I - DELEGATED

8. BUSINESS RATES - LOCAL DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF (SPRING BUDGET 2017)

1. SUMMARY

1.1 The 2017 revaluation of all non-domestic rate properties came into force on 1 April 2017. The rateable values of the properties in the rating list are based on rental levels from 1 April 2015. The previous revaluation which came into force on 1 April 2010 was based on rental levels from 1 April 2008.

1.2 In the Spring Budget the Chancellor announced three measures to help reduce the impact of business rate increases from April 2017 revaluation, one of which being a local discretionary rate relief.

1.3 The Chancellor announced that the Government would make available a discretionary fund of £300 million, over four years from 2017/18, to support those businesses that face the steepest increases in their business rates bills as a result of the revaluation. The funding for Three Rivers District Council is as per the table below:

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Three Rivers District Council	£143,000	£69,000	£29,000	£4,000

1.4 Each billing authority was asked to set up its Local Discretionary Business Rate Relief scheme for the financial year 2017/18. Three Rivers District Council agreed its 2017/18 scheme at Policy & Resources Committee that was held on 5 October, 2017.

1.5 The Government believed that local authorities are best placed to judge the particular circumstances of local ratepayers and direct the funding where it is most needed to support local economies.

1.6 Once the Policy was agreed in October, 2017, Revenues Officers identified Businesses who may be entitled, and wrote to each Business with an application form, in order to confirm that said Business was entitled to relief.

1.7 A timescale was given for the application form to be returned. Businesses who did not reply were actively telephoned, emailed and follow up letters along with personal intervention, i.e. visit, from our Revenues Inspectors in order to apply relief.

1.8 As at 8 March, 2018, we had applied £113,078 of the £143,000 2017/18 funding for Three Rivers District Council.

2. Detailed Proposal

2.1 Revenues 'NNDR' Officer's have identified and applied relief to 43 businesses during 2017/18.

2.2 These businesses will be invited, along with all those identified that meet the criteria, to make a new application for 2018/19.

3. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no equalities implications.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Council's power to award the proposed relief is contained within Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 as amended.

5. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The local scheme aims to distribute no more than the government grant provided for this purpose in the March 2017 budget, as per the table listed at paragraph 1.3.

6. RECOMMENDATION

6.1 The Policy & Resources Committee are requested to agree that the same criteria are used for the 2018/19 scheme as were used for the 2017/18 scheme and that Officers be delegated to make any small amendments to the scheme up to the maximum limit of the Government grant if felt appropriate.

Report author: Jane Walker – Head of Revenues & Benefits
Appendix attached with P&R report from 5th October, 2017.