

CABINET MEMBER FOR Finance, Revenues, Benefits, Performance and Risk – CLLR dick Tonge

SERVICE AREA **Finance, Revenues and Benefits**

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REFERENCE: (Dem Services will insert this)

Business Rate Relief Scheme offering £1000 reduction to specified retail units

1. Purpose of Report :-

This report introduces a new and temporary business rate relief scheme which the government announced in the Autumn Statement on 5 December 2013 that will provide a relief of up to £1,000 to occupied retail properties with a rateable value of £50,000 or less in each of the years 2014-15 and 2015-16 and set out details of the type of organisation entitled to the relief.

2. Background

The council operate a number of rate relief schemes, to support a variety of organisations meet the business rate liability. This new, fully funded scheme is specifically aimed at supporting and encouraging small and medium sized retail shop keepers, through a temporary reduction in business rates..

3. Main Considerations for the Council

Ensuring the process is well managed, well publicised and well documented to ensure all awards are reimbursed by government.

4. Safeguarding Considerations

None

5. Public Health Implications

None

6. Environmental Impact of the Proposal

None

7. Equalities Impact of the Proposal

None

8. Risk Assessment

None, other than the administrative burden

9. Financial Implications

The cost of the scheme will be fully met by government which is estimated to be £2.25million in Wiltshire, based on the work already undertaken to identify those businesses who could qualify. This was assumed in the budget set by Council on 25th February 2014 for 2014/15 and thus has no impact on that budget.

10. Options Considered

None

11. Reason for Proposal

To raise awareness of the scheme and to obtain agreement on the administration of the scheme, including resolution of disputes

12. Proposal

- a) The government's relief scheme (£1000 High Street Scheme) is adopted and awarded as set out in the report.
- b) That the Associate Director for Finance, Revenues and Benefits is given delegated responsibility to deliver the local scheme in accordance and in conjunction with guidance from government.
- c) That any dispute be resolved through the process currently deployed in the determination of applications for hardship relief.

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report: *(Background papers must be published, label as background papers)*