

## **Item 7 - Discretionary Rate Relief**

The attached report was considered by the Finance Advisory Committee on 29 January 2019. The relevant Minute extract is below.

### Finance Advisory Committee (29 January 2019, Minute 43)

The Business Rates Manager presented the report which set out the proposals for awarding discretionary rate relief for 2019/2020 to ratepayers who had made applications or who were expected to make an application before 1 March 2019, which was an already extended deadline from 15 November 2018. Should applications not be received by 1 March 2019 then annual bills for those organisations would be sent without relief, but they would have until 30 September 2019 to contact the Council and request that their case be re-considered.

The report also provided an update on the local discretionary rate relief scheme which would be in its third year of operation in 2019/2020. It was noted that some existing recipients of discretionary rate relief, the cost of which was solely borne by the Council, would be entitled to Retail Discount and/or revaluation relief. Government guidance was that any government funded reliefs should be applied before un-funded relief. Therefore the recommendations had been amended so that the ratepayer received relief of an equivalent percentage to that given in previous years, albeit via one or more types of relief. The report also set out the proposed approach for the implementation of the Retail Discount Scheme for 2019/2020 and 2020/2021. In response to a question, the Business Rates Manager undertook to look into and advise a local member whether Weald Community Hub CIC was in receipt of business rate relief.

### Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That

- a) it be recommended to Cabinet that the proposals for granting relief from business rates for 2019/20 set out in Appendix B to the report, be approved;
- b) the estimated level of local discretionary rate relief to be awarded in 2019/20 as set out in paragraph 24 of the report, be noted; and
- c) it be recommended to Cabinet that the proposed approach for implementation of the Retail Discount for 2019/20 and 2020/21, be approved.

(Cllr. Eyre was not present during consideration of this item, due to a disclosable pecuniary interest.)