



Report Reference Number: E/18/41

To: Executive
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Status: Non Key Decision
Ward(s) Affected: All
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Leader / June Rothwell, Head of Operational Services
Lead Executive Member: Cllr Lunn, Lead Executive Member for Finance and
Resources
Lead Officer: Julie Slatter, Director of Corporate Services &
Commissioning

Title: NNDR Autumn 2018 budget reliefs and Mobile Infrastructure Relief

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report details the new reliefs announced in the Autumn Budget 2018.
- 1.2 The report also proposes to support a countywide new Mobile Infrastructure Relief.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Executive will be asked to agree the granting of the Autumn Budget 2018 reliefs for 2019/20 and 2020/21 and approve the proposed new Mobile Infrastructure Relief.

3. Reason for recommendation

- 3.1.1 The new Autumn Budget reliefs are government policy and the cost is funded by central government.
- 3.1.2 The new Mobile Infrastructure relief is being supported countywide and will bring benefits for residents of the district.

4. Background

- 4.1 In the Autumn Budget 2018 the government announced further measures to assist business ratepayers in the next financial year -
 - A retail discount with eligible retailers with a rateable value below £51,000 receiving a one third discount on their business rates bill.

- Extension of the £1500 discount to newspaper offices in 2019/20.
 - Intension to legislate to grant a 100% relief for all standalone public toilets.
- 4.2 Local authorities will be expected to use their discretionary relief powers to grant these reliefs in line with the relevant eligibility criteria. They will be compensated for the cost of granting the reliefs through a Section 31 grant from Government.
- 4.3 At the Local Government North Yorkshire and York meeting on the 5 October 2018 attended by Chief Executives and Council Leaders it was agreed to support a proposal for business rate relief for new rural mobile infrastructure where no mobile service was currently available. It was noted that each District Council and the City of York Council would need to make its own decision regarding the proposal set out in the report.

5. The Report

5.0 Autumn Budget 2018 reliefs

5.1 Retail Relief

- 5.1.1 The Retail Discount scheme is for occupied properties with a rateable value less than £51,000 for 2019/20 and 2020/21. The value of the discount should be one third of the bill, and should be applied after mandatory reliefs and other discretionary reliefs have been applied.
- 5.1.2 Further guidance has been published by the Government about the operation and delivery of this policy and the eligibility criteria and this be followed by the council.
- 5.1.3 Properties that will benefit from the relief and those that are wholly or mainly being used as shops, restaurants, cafes and drinking establishments. They must be being used for the sale of goods or food or drink to visiting members of the public or the provision of services to visiting members of the public.
- 5.1.4 The government has set out types of uses that it does not consider to be retail use for the purpose of this relief and these include those used for provision of the following services to visiting members of the public –
- Financial services (eg banks, cash points, payday lenders, betting shops)
 - Other services (eg estate agents, letting agents, employment agencies)
 - Medical services (eg vets, dentists, doctors, chiropractors)
 - Professional services (eg solicitors, accountants, insurance agents)
 - Post office sorting offices
- 5.1.5 The government also does not consider other assembly or leisure uses to be retail use for the purpose of this relief (eg cinemas, museums, gyms).
- 5.1.6 We have identified approximately 200 properties will benefit from this relief in the Selby District, subject to state aid limits.

- 5.1.7 It is expected that billing authorities will use their discretionary relief powers under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 to deliver this relief.
- 5.1.8 It is the council's intention to apply this relief automatically to those who fulfil the eligibility criteria. The government expects this relief to be applied in time for the annual billing for 2019/20. As discretionary relief is subject to state aid limits on awarding of the relief the ratepayer will be advised of their obligation to let the local authority know if this award breaches their state aid limit and the relief will then be removed.
- 5.1.9 Software providers are currently working on the changes to allow this relief to be awarded. This is unfortunately not expected to be in time for the production of the 2019/20 annual bills. We will let the ratepayers who may qualify know that the relief will be applied as soon as these software changes allow.

5.2 Newspaper Offices

- 5.2.1 The £1500 discount for newspaper offices has been extended in 2019/20. Currently one office receives this discount in the district.
- 5.2.2 It is expected that billing authorities will use their discretionary relief powers under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 to continue this discount.

5.3 Public toilets

- 5.3.1 The government is bringing forward primary legislation to grant a 100% relief from business rates for standalone public toilets. It is expected this may not come into force until April 2020.

6.0 Business rates relief for new mobile infrastructure

- 6.1.1 At the Local Government North Yorkshire and York meeting on the 5 October 2018 a proposal was put forward for business rate relief for new rural mobile infrastructure where no mobile service was currently available. It was noted all the District Councils and City of York would need to make a decision regarding the proposal set out in the report. Report of the 5 October 2018 meeting minute number 51 attached (Appendix 1).
- 6.1.2 The award of business rate relief is only for those projects that otherwise would not come forward for progression by the industry and is provided on the basis that the operator will continue to manage and maintain the mast post cessation of the business rate relief period.
- 6.1.3 The areas where the business rate relief will apply are 'not spots' where there is no coverage from other operators and areas of poor mobile coverage for all operators. This will be measured by the NYCC Mobile Phone Coverage Manager.
- 6.1.4 The NYCC Mobile Phone Coverage Manager has provide a map of the district (Appendix 2) from Ofcom data. The brown indicates coverage with the small pockets of grey areas where there is poor/no coverage hence masts may be

required. He also advises after a drive through survey some of this may be overstated.

- 6.1.5 The NYCC Mobile Phone Coverage Manager has indicated therefore that there will be limited number of applications for which the new relief would apply.
- 6.1.6 An application form must be completed by the applicant and this will be assessed against the agreed criteria. The relief will be applied up to a value of £6,000 per annum per mast for a period of seven years to a maximum of £42,000 from April 2019 onwards.
- 6.1.7 The relief would be awarded in accordance with section 69 of the Localism Act 2011, which allows councils to grant discretionary relief in any circumstance where it feels fit having regard to the effect on its council tax payers. The cost of such relief is borne by 40% by the District Council.
- 6.1.8 If agreed this relief would be inserted as an appendix into the Council's Discretionary Rate Relief Policy. The decision to grant relief would be delegated to the NNDR Supervisor or the Taxation, Benefits & Debt Team Leader.

7. Risks

7.1 Legal

- 7.1.1 As the schemes are discretionary there will be no right of appeal on any decision made.
- 7.1.2 All applicants will complete a state aid declaration to ensure all awards are state aid compliant.

7.2 Financial

- 7.2.1 The government will fully reimburse Councils for the cost of reliefs provided under the Autumn Budget 2018 through section 31 grants.
- 7.2.2 The cost of the Mobile Infrastructure relief would be 40% funded by the District Council. After the period of relief the council would benefit from the rates generated in the future by the mast.

8. Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 (Minute number 51 from the Local Government North Yorkshire and York meeting)
- 8.1 Appendix 2 (Mobile phone coverage –SDC area)

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