

## Oxford City Council - Revaluation Discretionary Relief

It is proposed that each Billing Authority's scheme adopts a consistent approach to this relief, with local discretions added as appropriate, dependant on local need and funding allocations.

### Facts

- The Scheme will be funded by Section 31 grant allocated to authorities over a period of 4 years with reduced levels of funding year on year.
- The amounts of grant are already allocated to each authority and will be paid to authorities quarterly in arrears
- This scheme will run for one year only, and will be reviewed before allocations are made in each future year, due to the reduced level of funding year-on-year
- 15% of the grant will be retained to allow for Rateable Value (RV) adjustments/ Appeals etc.
- A change in ratepayer or the property becoming empty terminates entitlement to this discretionary relief
- The Government has yet to confirm whether or not any unspent grant can be carried over into future year/s

### Qualifying Criteria

- i) The ratepayer must be in occupation on 31/03/2017. No relief will be awarded to those taking up occupation on or after 01/04/2017.
- ii) All other mandatory reliefs must have been applied for prior to an application for Revaluation Discretionary Relief being considered.
- iii) The 2017 RV must be under £200,000 and the rates have increased more than 12.5% (This is based on the original funding allocation methodology)
- iv) This scheme will also apply to ratepayers if they are already in receipt of other capped spring budget reliefs
- v) Where a property is formed following a split or merger after 31/03/2017 but qualified before the split or merger a new calculation will be carried out.
- vi) An application form must be completed. All applications will be considered on their merits. Relief is intended for those small businesses facing large increases. Relief will apply from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017. A new application will be required in each subsequent year if applicable
- vii) Increases to the 2017 RV only will not affect the award.

viii) Recalculations will be made where reductions in RV for either the 2010 or 2017 list are made.

## Exclusions

Relief will not be awarded to:

- i) Precepting bodies (i.e. County, District or Parish Councils and Thames Valley Police Authority).
- ii) Banks, Building Societies or other major financial institutions.
- iii) Multi-national businesses or large chains.
- iv) NHS properties.
- v) Charities, as they are already subject to Mandatory Relief of 80%

In agreement with the other Oxfordshire Districts it is proposed that a % relief is applied, based upon grant allocation. At the City Executive Board meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> August 2017, it was agreed that an 8.5% reduction in the 2017/18 liability, after other reliefs, be offered to those falling within the qualifying criteria as above.

This relief is subject to State Aid Rules. State Aid law is the means by which the European Union regulates state funded support to businesses. Providing discretionary relief to ratepayers is likely to amount to State Aid.