

Portfolio Holder decision record sheet

Name of decision maker:	Cllr Graeme Elliot
Portfolio:	Finance & Resources
Date of Portfolio Holder decision:	06/03/19

Title of decision:	Business rates retail discount 2019-2021
Part II:	No
Part II reason:	

Background to report: (this will be sent to members in the initial notice email so they know the content of the decision)
 The Chancellor announced a “retail discount” scheme in the last Budget. This decision is to formally adopt the scheme for Dacorum businesses.

Decision made and reasons:

To introduce a discretionary business rate relief for the years 2019/20 and 2020/21 for occupied retail properties with a rateable value of less than £51,000, to be known as the Retail Discount scheme.

The value of the relief will be one third of the bill, applied after all other mandatory and discretionary reliefs. The relief will be awarded in line with the detailed guidance provided by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government.

The scheme was announced by the Chancellor in the last budget, and is designed to support retail businesses for the two years before the next business rates revaluation takes place. As it is only for a limited period of time the Government will not legislate for this change, and instead expects local authorities to use their discretionary powers under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

The Government will reimburse the full cost of the local share of awarding this relief.

Authority to make decisions of this type has been delegated to the Portfolio Holder (Finance & Resources) by cabinet decision CA/78/17.

Reports considered: (here reference can be made to specific documents)
 Retail Discount guidance published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/768205/Retail_Discount_Guidance.pdf)

Officers/Councillors/Ward Councillors/Stakeholders consulted:
 Group Manager (Revenues, Benefits & Fraud)

Monitoring Officer comments: No comments to add.

Chief Financial Officer comments: The implementation of this policy is funded through MHCLG grants in full and will not impact negatively on DBC funding.

Implications: Initial estimates suggest that this relief will help around 500 local businesses, with a total relief award of around £2 million for each of the two years the scheme operates.

Risk: If the Council does not adopt the scheme, there is a risk of reputational damage, and also of small retailers leaving the borough to set up elsewhere.

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Value for money: There will be no net cost to the Council to introduce the scheme. Government will provide section 31 funding to offset the reduction to collectable rates. It is also providing new burdens funding to cover the cost of the required software changes, and towards the administration of the relief.

Options considered and reasons for rejection:

The only alternative option is not to introduce the scheme. This has been rejected because of the risks to local businesses, and the risk of reputational damage to the Council.

Portfolio Holder's signature:

Date:

Details of any interests declared and any dispensations given by the Standards Committee:

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Date decision record sheet received from portfolio holder: 06/03/19

Date decision published: 06/03/19

Decision no: PH/009/19

Date of expiry of call-in period: 13/03/19

Date any call-in received or decision implemented: