



**CABINET**

**AGENDA ITEM (9)**

**BUSINESS RATE RELIEF**

<b>Accountable Member</b>	Councillor Lynden Stowe Leader of the Council
<b>Accountable Officer</b>	Jon Dearing Joint Head of Revenues and Housing Support 01285 623304 <a href="mailto:jon.dearing@cotswold.gov.uk">jon.dearing@cotswold.gov.uk</a>

<b>Purpose of Report</b>	To update the Cabinet on the impact of the Business Rate Retail Relief scheme and approve schemes for Business Rate Re-occupation Relief and New Build Relief
<b>Recommendation(s)</b>	<p>(a) That the schemes for Re-occupation Relief and New-Build Relief be approved, in line with the principles detailed at Appendix 'A'</p> <p>(b) that the Joint Head of Revenues and Housing Support be authorised to determine the award of such reliefs;</p> <p>(c) that the update and take-up approach in relation to the Business Rate Retail Relief be noted.</p>
<b>Reason(s) for Recommendation(s)</b>	The schemes contribute to the Council's objectives.

<b>Ward(s) Affected</b>	All
<b>Key Decision</b>	Yes
<b>Recommendation to Council</b>	No

<b>Financial Implications</b>	It is not anticipated that any significant levels of application will be received in relation to Re-occupation Relief or New Build Relief. However, the local share of any awards will be fully reimbursed by the Government by way of a grant under Section 31 of the Local Government Finance Act 2003.
<b>Legal and Human Rights Implications</b>	None
<b>Environmental and Sustainability Implications</b>	None

<b>Human Resource Implications</b>	None
<b>Key Risks</b>	As reliefs awarded will be fully reimbursed by the Government, there is limited financial risk. The major risk would be around reputation if the Council decided not to adopt the scheme.
<b>Equalities Analysis</b>	None

<b>Related Decisions</b>	CAB.97 - 6 <sup>th</sup> March 2014
<b>Background Documents</b>	None
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>Appendix 'A'</b> - Relief Criteria

<b>Performance Management Follow Up</b>	The Revenues and Housing Support Service will monitor any impact.
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<b>Options for Joint Working</b>	The recommendations are aligned with those made to the Cabinet at West Oxfordshire District Council, and alignment of the reliefs will make joint Business Rate administration marginally more straightforward
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<b>Background Information</b>	
<p>1. The Government announced in the Autumn Statement 2013 that it would provide Business Rate Relief of up to £1,000 to all occupied retail properties with a rateable value of £50,000 or less in each of the financial years 2014/15 and 2015/16. The Autumn Statement 2014 increased the relief to a maximum of £1,500 for 2015/16.</p> <p>2. The Cabinet approved the scheme and Officer delegation in respect of rate relief at its Meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2014 (Minute CAB.97 referred). To date, the Council has awarded Rate Relief to 598 Business Rate accounts (13% of the total 4,464 accounts), giving a total benefit of £540,735 to local businesses. The anticipated relief payable in 2015/16 is estimated at £830,000 bringing the total relief to local businesses over the two years to £1.37m.</p> <p>3. The Business Rates team is proactive in identifying businesses that may qualify for relief but have not yet applied. The team continues to encourage take-up across the District.</p> <p>4. The Autumn Statement 2013 also introduced two other Business Rate Reliefs - Re-occupation Relief and New Build Relief. Overviews of those Reliefs are attached at <b>Appendix 'A'</b>.</p> <p>5. As with Retail Relief, these awards are subject to State Aid Limits, which currently stand at €200,000 (approximately £172,000).</p> <p>6. Local authorities are expected to administer these schemes, using discretionary powers introduced under the provisions of the Localism Act to award the relief. The Government will reimburse the local authorities' share of the cost by way of a Section 31 Grant.</p> <p>7. While the numbers connected to Retail Relief were significant, the Council has yet to receive a single application for Re-occupation or New Build Reliefs. The recommendation is, therefore, intended to confirm the scheme and delegation so that they are in place should any application(s) be received.</p>	