

BUSINESS RATES – DISCRETIONARY REVALUATION RELIEF SCHEME 2017/18

COMMENTS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (ECONOMY AND GROWTH) 5th October 2017

While the proposed policy has been designed using the principles used by Government to determine the level of funding available, the Head of Customer Services explained that one significant change is proposed by specifically excluding multi-national companies through the qualifying criteria.

Members discussed the policy and were supportive of the decision to support smaller local businesses and the proposal to retain some of the funding as a contingency pot for use on a case-by-case basis to make awards to businesses adversely affected by the revaluation that do not meet the qualifying criteria. It was confirmed that the impact on local businesses has been modelled and the benefits of the relief scheme are spread across the district with both market towns and rural communities receiving a fair share.

There was discussion of whether reviews under the right of appeal should be carried out solely by a Head of Service. Members were advised that the Head of Customer Services would undertake these reviews independently from the team administering the policy and awarding relief but the Panel felt that Executive Member involvement should be considered.

The Panel made a recommendation to Cabinet that, subject to considering amending the right of appeal in section 9 to require Executive Member involvement in reviews, they approve the Business Rates Discretionary Revaluation Relief Scheme for 2017/18 and delegate authority to the Executive Councillor for Strategic Resources to agree the revised Business Rates Revaluation Schemes for the next three consecutive years.