

Forest of Dean District Council

Local Discretionary Business Rates Relief Scheme 2017/2018

The scheme sets out the Council's local discretionary business rate relief schemes for 2017/18 under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, as amended.

1. Local Revaluation Support

The revaluation support scheme will apply for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2021, subject to Government funding being available. The support scheme will deliver business rate relief to qualifying ratepayers whose bills have increased due to the 2017 revaluation. The scheme will be reviewed each year and may be varied or cancelled due to changes in funding arrangements, the way business rates are calculated and levied or any other reason deemed appropriate.

The Council's scheme is designed to:

- provide support to businesses that contribute to the local economy and are facing the largest impact as a result of revaluation
- minimise bureaucracy for businesses and for the council
- take account of the Council's allocation of funding from the Government for this scheme
- take account of other existing reliefs that are already available
- minimise the potential for breaching State Aid limits
- take account of businesses likely ability to pay

Qualifying Conditions

Revaluation Support will only be awarded in respect of the rates payable for a property where the following conditions are met:

- There has been an increase in the rates bill payable from 1st April 2017 compared to the 2016/2017 bill as a result of the 2017 revaluation
- The annual increase in rates bill for 2017/18 is more than £50.00 or 3% more, whichever is greater, when compared to the annual bill for 2016/17
- The ratepayer must be in occupation and liable for business rates for the relevant property on 31st March and 1st April 2017
- The rateable value is less than £200,000
- The property must be occupied, relief will not apply if the property is empty or becomes empty

Relief will not be awarded in the following circumstances:

- The relevant property is not in the rating list on 31st March and 1st April 2017
- The ratepayer occupies the property on or after 1st April 2017
- The ratepayer is in receipt of mandatory, discretionary or CASC rate relief
- The rateable value is £200,000 or more, or increases to £200,000 or more
- The relevant property is new, split or merged in the rating list after 1st April 2017
- Where the rates payable increases due to the ratepayer ceasing to qualify for any other reliefs
- To business properties occupied by a national chain or organisation - any organisation which is known, or may reasonably be assumed by the Council, to occupy business properties in billing authorities outside of Gloucestershire
- Doctors surgeries, health centres and any publicly funded organisation will not be eligible

Relief will be recalculated in the following circumstances:

- A change in rateable value in either the 2010 or 2017 rating lists
- The provision of a certificated value for the 2010 or 2017 rating list
- Any other reduction in the rates payable before revaluation support relief is applied
- Where there is an increase in rateable value after 1st April 2017 relief will not be awarded in respect of the rates payable attributable to the increase
- Any of the above conditions cease to be met

Revaluation support relief will apply to ratepayers receiving the supporting small businesses and pub relief provided all the above conditions are met. Revaluation support will be calculated after the national reliefs have been applied.

How will relief be calculated?

Revaluation support will be calculated on the rates payable after transitional protection and any other reliefs have been applied. The amount of relief for 2017/18 will be calculated as 70% of the increase from the 2016/17 bill. The level of support will be phased out over the following three years and will stop completely by 2021/22.

The estimated total value of support across the four years is expected to be as set out below, subject to continued Government funding and confirmation of the ability to move resources between financial years:

2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
£169,000	£82,000	£34,000	£5,000

2. Relief for Pubs

A maximum discount of £1,000 will be awarded to pubs where the rateable value is less than £100,000 in line with the [detailed guidance](#) issued by the Department of Communities and Local Government. As this relief is for one year only it will end on 31st March 2018. State aid rules will apply and the relief will be administered as detailed in section 5.

3. Supporting Small Businesses Relief

Relief will be awarded to ratepayers losing some or all of their small business rate relief in line with the [detailed guidance](#) issued by the Department of Communities and Local Government. This relief will be available for up to five years from 1st April 2017. State aid rules as detailed in section 4 and will apply and the relief will be administered as detailed in section 5.

4. State Aid

The award of Supporting Small Businesses, Pubs and Revaluation Support Relief must comply with EU law on State Aid. Businesses applying for, or in receipt of, relief must advise the council if they have received any other State Aid that exceeds in total €200,000 in a 3 year period, under the De Minimis Regulations EC 1407/2013. The total amount of State Aid received includes any other discretionary business rates reliefs being granted in respect of all properties for which the business is responsible. Further information on State Aid law can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/state-aid>.

5. Administration

- Forest of Dean District Council will administer the schemes under the Local Government Finance Act 1988 as amended by The Localism Act 2011 and The Non-Domestic Rating (Discretionary Relief) Regulations 1989 (S.I. 1989/1059)
- Entitlement to Revaluation Support, Supporting Small Business Relief and Relief for Pubs will be dependent on the qualifying conditions being met. Relief may be recalculated or cancelled to reflect a change in circumstances or if any of the conditions ceases to be met.
- Relief will be recalculated as a result of a change to the rating list for the relevant property
- Decisions relating to the granting of reliefs will be delegated to the staff within the Revenues Service
- Reliefs will be granted automatically where information held on the business rate account confirms eligibility in line with qualifying criteria. In these cases businesses will be asked to notify the council if they are in receipt of other State Aid.
- Where sufficient information is not held businesses will be required to complete and submit an application form, including a declaration in respect of State Aid
- There is no statutory right of appeal against a decision made by the Council in respect of Supporting Small Businesses, Pubs or Revaluation Support Relief. However, the Council may reconsider the decision if the ratepayer is dissatisfied with the outcome and the review will be carried out by the Section 151 Officer
- If an unsuccessful applicant requests a reconsideration they will still need to continue to pay their rates bill. Once the reconsideration has been carried out, the ratepayer will be informed, in writing, of the decision.