

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 14 November 2019

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community and Resources

SUBJECT: Discretionary Non-Domestic Rate Relief

PORTFOLIO: Resources

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider an application for discretionary non-domestic rate relief, under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the application for discretionary rate relief for Runcorn and District Foodbank in respect of their premises at Russell Road, Runcorn, be approved at 15%.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Under the amended provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Council is able to grant discretionary rate relief to any business ratepayer. This relief had previously only been available to organisations that were a registered charity, a community amateur sports club or a not-for-profit organisation.

3.2 From 1 April 2017, the Council became responsible for meeting the full cost of all mandatory and discretionary relief granted, as part of the Liverpool City Region 100% Business Rates Retention Pilot Scheme.

3.3 An application for 15% discretionary business rate relief has been received as outlined below, from Runcorn and District Foodbank. As a registered charity they automatically receive 80% mandatory rate relief.

3.4 Currently, where discretionary rate relief has been granted to registered charities, it has been provided until 31st March 2022 in order to provide the organisations with some degree of certainty.

Runcorn and District Foodbank

Russell Road, Runcorn

- 3.5 Runcorn and District Foodbank is a registered charity established for the prevention or relief of poverty within Halton. The charity has used the above premises since 8th July 2019 for the collection and distribution of food for people in need. The office at the premises is used for all administration needs for the charity.
- 3.6 The organisation helps to provide emergency food boxes containing a three day supply of balanced and nutritional food to suit individual's needs. Almost all food is donated by the local community through churches, schools, businesses and supermarket collection days.
- 3.7 Customers are referred to the foodbank by front line care agencies who identify their needs. They are then provided with a voucher which is exchanged for a food box.
- 3.8 The organisation relies on the support of the local community through volunteering, food donations and fundraising.
- 3.9 The cost of granting 15% discretionary rate relief would be £287.86 for the part-year of 2019/20 as shown below and £393.12 in a full financial year.

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Actual cost of 80% mandatory relief from 08/07/19 – 31/03/19 | £ 1,168.62 |
| Actual cost of 15% discretionary relief from 08/07/19 - 31/03/19 | <u>£ 287.86</u> |
| Total | £ 1,456.48 |

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Board is required by the regulations to consider each application on its own merit. Any recommendations provided are given for guidance only, are consistent with Council policy and, wherever possible, previous decisions.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Appendix presents the potential costs to the Council of granting rate relief.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

- 6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton**
None.

6.2 **Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**
None

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**
None

6.4 **A Safer Halton**
None

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**
None.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 There are no key risks associated with the proposed action.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 The applicant offer their services to all sections of the community, without any prejudice.

9.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

| 9.1 | Document | Place of Inspection | Contact Officer |
|-----|------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| | Application form | Kingsway House, Caldwell Road, Widnes | Louise Bate Revenues Manager |

APPENDIX

| Ratepayer | Address | Annual Rates Liability 2019/20 | Mandatory Rate Relief Awarded | Annual Cost of Mandatory Rate Relief to HBC | Disc. Rate Relief | Annual Cost of Disc. Rate Relief to HBC | Actual Rates Liability 8th July to 31st March 2019 | Actual Cost of Mandatory Relief to HBC 8th July to 31st March 2019 | Actual Cost of Disc. Rate Relief to HBC 8th July to 31st March 2019 |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| | | £ | | £ | | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Runcorn and District Foodbank | Russell Road, Runcorn, WA7 4BH | 2,620.79 | 80% | 2,096.63 | 15% | 393.12 | 1,919.05 | 1,168.62 | 287.86 |