



## **Chester-le-Street** District Council

<b>Report to:</b>	Council
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	27 September 2007
<b>Report from:</b>	Head of Revenues & Benefits
<b>Title of Report:</b>	Rate Relief Policy
<b>Agenda Item Number:</b>	<b>23</b>

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### **PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider and approve a replacement to the existing Council's discretionary rate relief policy approved in April 2000. The new policy will address all rate relief and will give clear guidance to members of staff and customers on the criteria for qualifying.

### **2. CONSULTATION**

- 2.1 Corporate Management Team, Risk and Financial Services Manager, Accountancy Manager, Chief Internal Auditor and Legal and Democratic Manager have been consulted on the Rate Relief Policy

### **3. CORPORATE PLAN AND PRIORITIES**

- 3.1 The new policy contributes towards customer excellence as it allows our customers access to clear guidance on qualifying criteria, this will assist them financially and contribute towards continued business survival.

### **4. IMPLICATIONS**

#### Cost:

The current cost of administering rate relief to Chester-le-Street Council is £21,647.08 and details of all the individual awards are attached on appendix 3 provided as confidential. The proposed cost of administering the new rate relief policy to Chester-le-Street Council is £18,643.42. These costs are based on present awards and the removal of discretionary rate relief from two organisations who sustain a healthy profit from bar and entertainment functions. Details of the organisations can again be found in appendix 3 which is confidential.

#### User Focus / Community Engagement

The rate relief policy criteria identify the benefits to the community to be considered in determining an application for rate relief.

#### Quality

The economic benefits of discretionary rate relief contributes towards the aims of the anti-poverty strategy; working to help start and sustain businesses and

promote economic growth within the district.

#### Achievement of Priority Outcomes

The rate relief policy contributes towards the corporate priority of regenerating the district

#### 4.2 Legal

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

#### 4.3 Personnel

There are no personnel implications associated with this report

#### 4.4 Other Services

There are no implications for other service with this report

#### 4.5 Crime and Disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications

#### 4.6 Risk

Without a comprehensive rate relief policy, there is a risk that the Council will not maximize assistance to local businesses.

#### 4.7 Diversity

A diversity impact assessment has been carried out on the draft rate relief policy

### 5. **THE POLICY**

#### 5.1 The new rate relief policy, the existing discretionary rate relief policy, current and proposed costs (confidential) of the new policy are attached: -

Appendix 1 New Rate Relief Policy

Appendix 2 Existing Discretionary Rate Relief Policy

Appendix 3 **Confidential** Cost of Current & Proposed Rate Relief

### 6. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### 6.1 As agreed by the Executive, the Council is requested to consider and approve the new rate relief policy.

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