

Non-Domestic Rates – Discretionary Rating Relief

Finance and Resources Committee

11 November 2008

1 Purpose of report

- a) To consider extending awards of Discretionary Rating Relief (DRR) to organisations that are outwith the standard policy for a further four years. This will bring these organisations into line with the other recipients of DRR.
- b) To report on the progress of Equal Opportunities Policies adopted by sports clubs as a condition of receiving DRR.
- c) To consider an additional application for DRR which is outwith the scope of the current policy.

2 Summary

2.1 The Council's current policy is as follows:-

2.1.1 An additional 20% DRR is granted to organisations already in receipt of Mandatory Relief where they:-

- are mainly concerned with working with youths (defined as under 19 years of age)
- or
- provide community facilities in village halls and community centres.

For information Mandatory Relief is granted to charities where they occupy premises and use them wholly or mainly for charitable purposes.

2.1.2 50% DRR is granted to recreation clubs which do not have a licence to sell alcohol.

2.1.3 100% DRR is granted to all clubs who meet the definition of "Sports Clubs" as set out by the Scottish Sports Association and who operate an equal opportunities policy.

This relief is granted subject to full compensation for such relief being contained within the Rating Pool arrangements.

2.14 An additional 20% DRR is granted to organisations already in receipt of Mandatory Relief where they:-

Provide and maintain grounds and buildings used for the purposes of recreation or leisure time occupation where facilities are available to members of the public at large.

2.15 80% DRR is also granted in respect of properties used for recreational purposes and occupied by Clubs/Societies which are charitable bodies and not established/conducted for profit.

2.16 When the Council reviewed its Discretionary Rating Relief Policy with effect from 1 April 2008 it decided only to grant those organisations receiving relief outwith the standard policy relief for a one year period up to 31 March 2009. Ongoing relief for these organisations was to be subject to review during 2008/09. Those organisations in receipt of such relief are listed at Appendix 1. Relief has been granted on the basis that the organisations concerned provide benefit to the local community and meet the Council's Social Inclusion and strategic objectives.

3 Main report

3.1 The power to grant DRR is governed by the provisions of the Local Government (Financial Provisions etc) (Scotland) Act 1962 as amended.

3.2 Under the terms of the 1962 Act a Rating Authority may grant Discretionary Rating Relief in respect of:-

- a. Any lands and heritages which are occupied by, or by trustees for, a charity and are wholly or mainly used for charitable purposes (whether of that charity or of that and other charities).
- b. Any lands and heritages occupied for the purposes of one or more institutions or other organisations (whether corporate or unincorporated) which are not established or conducted for profit and whose main objects are charitable or are otherwise philanthropic or religious or concerned with education, social welfare, science, literature or the fine arts.
- c. Any lands and heritages occupied for the purpose of a club, society or other organisation not established or conducted for profit, and which are wholly or mainly used for the purposes of recreation.

3.3 Award of Discretionary Rating Relief outwith the standard policy.

The organisations listed at Appendix 1 have been awarded relief on the basis that they provide benefit to the local community and meet the Council's Social Inclusion and strategic objectives. In accordance with the Committee's instruction these organisations have been reviewed and it is considered that they continue to meet the Council's Social Inclusion and strategic objectives. Due to the diverse nature of the organisations involved it has not been possible to include them within the Council's standard policy and it is considered appropriate to recommend awarding the organisations listed in Appendix 1 relief for a further four years from 1 April 2009.

3.4 Equal Opportunities policies adopted by Sports Clubs

All Sports Clubs currently receiving relief have been contacted and requested to:-

- a. Confirm that they continue to meet the eligibility criteria for DRR, in particular that an Equal Opportunities policy is in place as follows:
 - (I) Same membership rights are available to both men and women.
 - (II) There is reasonable access to the facilities for both men and women.
 - (III) Both men and women can vote and run for office.
- b. Provide a report outlining the success or otherwise of their Equal Opportunities Policy over the last five years. The report must include trend information regarding the numbers of men and women at 3.4 a) (I) and (III) above.

- 3.5 To date 126 sports clubs have responded, of which 25 have still to produce a report as detailed at 3.4 (b) above. Forty two clubs have still to reply and a reminder will be issued stating that relief will be withdrawn from 1 April 2009 if no response is received by 30 November 2008.

The 126 sports clubs that have responded confirm they have an Equal Opportunities policy and that the criteria at 3.4 (a) are met. An analysis of the 101 reports received specifically regarding the success or otherwise of said policies (3.4 (b)) will be subject to a further report to Committee when all responses have been received.

3.6 Further application outwith Standard Policy

An application has been received from the following organisation for DRR outwith the standard policy

Scottish Arts Club – Clubroom : 24 Rutland Square, Edinburgh

The objective of the club is to promote the interests of the Arts. The Arts include, but is not limited to, painting, sculpture, architecture, design, music, literature, drama and film.

As the club is not a charitable organisation they do not receive Mandatory Relief. Relief has been requested from 1 April 2008.

A letter of support has been received from Sarah Boyack MSP

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The cost of awarding DRR to the organisations listed at Appendix I is split, 75% is borne by the Rating Pool and 25% by the Council and its Council Tax payers. The cost to the Council currently amounts to £85,425 per annum.

- 4.2 The cost of awarding DRR to sports clubs is fully borne by the Rating Pool.
- 4.3 The cost to the Council of granting 80% DRR to the Scottish Arts Club would be £1,465 per annum.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 The Committee is requested to :
- a) Following review, grant relief to organisations outwith the scope of the existing policy, as detailed in Appendix 1, for a further period of 4 years from 1 April 2009.
 - b) Note the information to date re progress with the roll out of Equal Opportunities by Sports Clubs and note that a further report will be submitted to Committee once all responses have been received.
- 5.2 The Committee consider the application detailed at 3.6 above and determines whether it wishes to grant DRR and the amount thereof.


Donald McGougan
Director of Finance
22nd October 2008

Appendices	1
Contact/tel/Email	Cliff Dryburgh, Revenues Services Manager – 0131 469 5001
Wards affected	City wide
Single Outcome Agreement	
Background Papers	None

**Organisations currently receiving Discretionary Rating Relief on an individual basis outwith the scope of the general policy
Relief has been granted until 31 March 2009**

	Council Contribution £
• The Albion Trust	4,781
• Craighour High Flats Association	421
• Edinburgh City Mission	238
• Edinburgh Cyrenian Trust	613
• Artlinks	155
• Artists Collective Gallery	567
• Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop	423
• Festival City Theatre Trust	6,653
• The Filmhouse Limited	2,686
• Photography Workshop	119
• Printmakers Workshop Ltd	402
• The Queen's Hall (Edinburgh) Ltd	1,402
• Stills Ltd – 23 Cockburn Street	602
• Traverse Theatre (Scotland) Ltd	1,732
• Edinburgh Book Festival	366
• Edinburgh Festival Society	5,348
• Royal Lyceum	5,303
• Lothian Community Transport Service	613
• Craigmillar/Peffermill Courts Tenants Group	215
• Margaret Blackwood Housing Association	1,820
• Dance Base Ltd	2,517
• Caledonia Youth Ltd	659
• Dynamic Earth Charitable Trust	15,592
• The Forest Arts Café	265
• The Fruitmarket Gallery	880
• Out of the Blue	1,128
• Redbraes Residents Association	109
• Keymoves Support for Homeless Women In Edinburgh	384
• Living Memory Association	85

• Pilton Elderly Project	295
• Edinburgh International Science Festival	2,418
• Royal Zoological Society	7,161
• Scottish Book Trust	997
• Astronomical Society of Edinburgh	350
• Home Start Leith and North East Edinburgh	251
• The Pooka Ltd	403
• ACE IT Scotland Ltd	158
• The Bongo Club Ltd	4,056
• Workshop and Artists Studio Provision	2,800
• The Melting Pot Ltd	4,010
• Care and Repair Edinburgh Limited	529
• Edinburgh Community Food Initiatives	288
• Royal National Lifeboat Institute : Hawes Pier	98
• The French Institute	5,109
• Enlighten Tackling Epilepsy	313
• Ethnic Minorities Law Centre	113
TOTAL	£85,425