
EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE HELD ON 22 NOVEMBER 2010

EX.195/10 DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF POLICY (Key Decision)

Councillor Mrs Bowman, having declared a personal and prejudicial interest, retired from the meeting room during consideration of this item of business.

Councillors Bainbridge, Bloxham, J Mallinson and Mitchelson, having declared a personal interest, remained within the meeting room. Councillor J Mallinson took part in discussion on the matter.

Portfolio Governance and Resources

Subject Matter

Pursuant to Minute EX.151/10, the Financial Services Manager submitted report RD.35/10 on the Discretionary Rate Relief Policy.

The Financial Services Manager reminded Members that there had been growth in the number of charities and non-profit making organisations qualifying for discretionary rate relief occupying premises in the Carlisle district area, which trend was continuing. That had resulted in the cost of getting such relief being significantly over the budget available and she set out several options for consideration in addressing the situation.

The Executive had, on 2 September 2010, considered the matter and indicated a preference for option 2.1(iii) as detailed in the report i.e. grant Rate Relief of 80% for all qualifying organisations as the basis for consultation with Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

The Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel had on 3 November 2010 considered and noted Report RD.35/10 and Minute EX.151/10 setting out the Executive's preferred option.

In conclusion, the Financial Services Manager asked that Members consider ratifying their previous decision as outlined above.

The Chairman of the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel reported that a number of Members had left the meeting prior to the Panel's consideration of the matter. The issue would clearly have powerful political connotations and it was not therefore considered appropriate to vote on it at that time.

The Governance and Resources Portfolio Holder emphasised once more that many difficult decisions would need to be taken due to the current financial climate. The Discretionary Rate Relief budget was already overspent and steps would have to be taken to address that.

Summary of options rejected Other options set out in the report

DECISION

That the Executive ratified the decision taken on 2 September 2010, namely to grant Rate Relief of 80% for all qualifying organisations, subject to the required twelve months notice being given of the change in Policy.

Reasons for Decision

The Executive is required to consider options to address a shortfall in the Council's Discretionary Rate Relief budget.