

Discretionary Retail Rate Discount Policy

Criteria

The Retail Rate Discount Policy for the Council will award a discount of **one third of the net balance (after mandatory and other Section 31 funded discretionary reliefs have been applied)**.

Discretionary Retail Rate Discount will be applied to properties that:

- (i) have a Rateable Value of less than £51,000 in each of the years 2019/2020/21 and
- (ii) are occupied and
- (iii) the undertaking has received less than 200,000 Euros in State Aid over a 3 year period (current and 2 preceding financial years)
- (iv) It is occupied and it is being used and is wholly or mainly being used as a shop, restaurant, cafe and drinking establishments.

Definition

1.0 It is considered shops, restaurants, cafes and drinking establishments to mean:

(i) **Hereditaments that are being used for the sale of goods to visiting members of the public:**

- Shops (such as: florists, bakers, butchers, grocers, greengrocers, jewellers, stationers, off licences, chemists, newsagents, hardware stores, supermarkets, etc)
- Charity shops
- Opticians
- Post offices
- Furnishing shops/ display rooms (such as: carpet shops, double glazing, garage doors)
- Car/ caravan show rooms
- Second hand car lots
- Markets
- Petrol stations
- Garden centres
- Art galleries (where art is for sale/hire)

OR

(ii) **Hereditaments that are being used for the provision of the following services to visiting members of the public:**

- Hair and beauty services (such as: hair dressers, nail bars, beauty salons, tanning shops, etc)
- Shoe repairs/ key cutting

- Travel agents
- Ticket offices e.g. for theatre
- Dry cleaners
- Launderettes
- PC/ TV/ domestic appliance repair
- Funeral directors
- Photo processing
- Tool hire
- Car hire

OR

(iii) Hereditaments that are being used for the sale of food and/ or drink to visiting members of the public:

- Restaurants
- Takeaways
- Sandwich shops
- Coffee shops
- Pubs
- Bars

2.0 The list set out above is not intended to be exhaustive as it would be impossible to list the many and varied retail uses that exist. There will also be mixed uses. However, it is intended to be a guide as to the types of uses that Council and Government considers for this purpose to be retail.

3.0 The Council can determine whether particular properties (hereditaments) not listed are broadly similar in nature to those above and, if so, to consider them eligible for the discount. Conversely, properties that are not broadly similar in nature to those listed above will not be eligible for the discount.

4.0 To qualify for the discount the hereditament should be wholly or mainly being used as a shop, restaurant, cafe or drinking establishment. In a similar way to other reliefs (such as charity relief), this is a test on use rather than occupation. Therefore, hereditaments which are occupied but not wholly or mainly used for the qualifying purpose will not qualify for the discount.

5.0 In accordance with the Government’s guidance on awarding “Retail” Rate Relief, the Council considers the following not to be “retail premises” and will not be eligible for relief under the scheme:

(a) Hereditaments that are being used for the provision of the following services to visiting members of the public:

- Financial services (e.g. banks, building societies, cash points, bureau de change, payday lenders, betting shops, pawn brokers)
- Other services (e.g. estate agents, letting agents, employment agencies)
- Medical services (e.g. vets, dentists, doctors, osteopaths, chiropractors)
- Professional services (e.g. solicitors, accountants, insurance agents/

- financial advisers, tutors)
- Post office sorting office

(b) Hereditaments that are not reasonably accessible to visiting members of the public.

Generally speaking, the government also does not consider other assembly or leisure uses beyond those listed at paragraph 11 to be retail uses for the purpose of the discount.

For example, cinemas, theatres and museums are outside the scope of the scheme, as are nightclubs and music venues which are not similar in nature to the hereditaments described at paragraph 11(iii) above. Hereditaments used for sport or physical recreation (e.g. gyms) are also outside the scope of the discount.

Where there is doubt, the local authority should exercise their discretion with reference to the above and knowledge of their local tax base.

6.0 The relief will be calculated in the same format as Business Rate charges and apportioned accordingly where the occupation, other reliefs or rateable value of a premises changes.

Delegated Authority

Council officers are delegated to approve Discretionary Business Rates Relief in line with the Council's approved Policy.

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