



POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 21ST JANUARY 2014

SUBJECT: DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF APPLICATIONS

**REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND SECTION 151
OFFICER**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The following applications for rate relief have been determined by the Acting Head of Corporate Finance under delegated powers.
- 1.2 In arriving at his determination, the Acting Head of Corporate Finance has been guided by existing Council policy, together with Welsh Government and central government guidance for considering such applications.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Council is able to assist a wide range of voluntary and sporting organisations by granting rate relief. This report deals with a recent application.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The granting of rate relief is a very cost effective way in which the Council can pursue its regeneration objective by giving financial assistance to local organisations.

4. THE REPORT

4.1 GC Enterprises (Wales) Ltd

- 4.1.1 An application for discretionary relief has been received from GC Enterprises (Wales) Ltd. The application is in respect of 7-9 Pentrebane Street Caerphilly CF83 1FR.
- 4.1.2 The Furniture Revival is a social enterprise whose main aim is to minimise waste, via the collection and re-use of donated furniture and electrical items to help individuals and families equip their homes at affordable prices. Goods for re-use are collected free of charge (within the Caerphilly County Borough), cleaned and tested before being put on display. This service helps people on benefits, and low wages as well as helping with the carbon footprint by recycling.
- 4.1.3 GC Enterprises (Wales) Ltd is the trading arm of Groundwork Caerphilly who currently receive relief 80% Mandatory relief and 20% Discretionary relief.
- 4.1.4 It has previously been the policy of the Authority to award discretionary relief to other similar organisations for example Greencap Ltd.

4.1.5 The current liability of the premises from May 2013 is £4444 and the cost to the Authority of awarding 100% discretionary rate relief at present levels would be £444 with the Welsh Government pool bearing the remainder of £4000.

Decision: 100% Discretionary rate relief be awarded

4.2 Sustrans Ltd

4.2.1 The applicant is a registered charity who has therefore been awarded 80% mandatory relief in accordance with statutory powers.

4.2.2 The application relates to the premises of Suite A, Orchard House, Caerphilly Business Park, which forms the base of the Personalised Travel Planning (PTP) project that is being delivered by Sustrans along with CCBC and funded by the Welsh Government.

4.2.3 The main objectives of the organisation are to provide smarter travel choices where possible. Their vision is a world in which people choose to travel in ways that benefit their health and our environment.

4.2.4 Their mission is to influence practice and shape policy so everyone can travel by foot, bike or public transport, including its contribution to climate change, and resource depletion is significantly reduced.

- People can choose more often to travel in ways that benefit their health
- Local streets and public spaces become places for people to enjoy
- The project targets 14,000 households in Caerphilly and offers them personalised travel packs containing information on local sustainable travel choices. The aim is to reduce car trips in Caerphilly by 10% among the target audience.

4.2.5 The current annual rate liability of the premises is £5800 and the cost to the Authority of awarding 20% discretionary top-up relief would be £569.67 (75%) with 25% being borne by the Welsh Government pool of £189.89.

Decision: That the top-up 20% discretionary rate relief be awarded

4.3 Show Jesus

4.3.1 An application for mandatory and discretionary relief has been received from Show Jesus. The application is in respect of Units 2B, 2C and 2D Blackwood Business Park, Newport Road, Pontllanfraith, Blackwood, NP12 2XN. The premises are used to store equipment used for the purpose of the organisation.

4.3.2 Membership of Show Jesus is made up of some 250 adults and 280 junior residents from South, Mid Wales and the Borders. Approximately 25% of members are based or work within the Caerphilly County Borough, whilst undertaking Community Shows and Events e.g. Bedwas Show, Bedwellty Show and local fun days with many groups and churches.

4.3.3 Show Jesus is an unregistered charitable trust, which intends to form a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, when eligible to apply. They have no restrictions on members who are drawn from all aspects and ages of local communities and also have members of all faiths and no faith at all.

4.3.4 Show Jesus relies solely on gifts from its members, churches and trusts with facilities being made available free of charge or for voluntary donations.

4.3.5 Show Jesus aims to achieve the following:-

- To advance the Christian faith for the benefit of the public.
- To show practically and verbally the Christian faith.

- To educate members in the safe use of their equipment.
- To train young people over the summer months in all aspects of community work.

4.3.6 The rate liability, inclusive of the current year of the organisation's premises are below:-

Unit 2B - £6620.27 and the cost to the Authority of awarding the 20% top-up relief would be £993.04 with the Welsh Government pool bearing the remainder of £331.01.

Unit 2C - £173.69 and the cost to the Authority of awarding the 20% top-up relief would be £26.05 with the Welsh Government bearing the remainder of £8.69.

Unit 2D - £7153.57 and the cost to the Authority of awarding the 20% top-up relief would be £1073.03 with the Welsh Government pool bearing the remainder of £357.68.

Decision: That 20% discretionary top-up relief be awarded

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 This report is for information purposes only, so the Council's full Equalities Impact Assessment process does not need to be applied.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 These are contained within the report.

7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no personnel implications.

8. CONSULTATIONS

8.1 There are no consultation responses which have not been reflected in this report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Members note the decisions taken under delegated powers.

10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 To assist local voluntary organisations.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 Section 47 of the Local Government Financial Act 1988.

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Background Papers:
Rate Relief Application Forms, contact ext 3421