



## COUNCIL – 13TH APRIL 2021

**SUBJECT: WELSH GOVERNMENT RETAIL, LEISURE & HOSPITALITY RATE RELIEF SCHEME 2021/2022**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR – EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES**

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- 1.1 The attached report was considered as an urgent item by Cabinet on 24th March 2021.
- 1.2 The Constitution requires that any decision taken as a matter of urgency must be reported to the next available meeting of Council, giving the reasons for its urgency. Therefore, the report is presented to Council for Members' information.
- 1.3 The report provided Cabinet with details of the recent Welsh Government (WG) announcement that a new temporary business rate relief scheme, the 'Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rate Relief Scheme' will be made available for the financial year 2021/22 only. It was noted that relief granted by the Authority under this new scheme is to be reimbursed by WG by way of a specific cash-limited grant but, before any relief is awarded, the Authority must consider and adopt the new scheme.
- 1.4 The report recommended that the Council endorses the new relief scheme in accordance with the WG guidance set out in Appendix 1. Cabinet noted that the adoption of the scheme, as set out at Appendix 1 of the Officers Report is obligatory because WG has prescribed the details for the scheme. The Authority must formally adopt the new scheme set out in the guidance at Appendix 1 in order to obtain the WG grant funding.
- 1.5 A Member raised concerns about the impact of further additional work on the Business Rates Team who have worked tirelessly administering business grants, and sought clarification on whether there was sufficient capacity to administer the additional monies proposed, so as not to increase pressure on the service. The Head of Financial Services & S151 Officer assured Cabinet that whilst the team have been working exceptionally hard to administer business grants, should the recommendations in the report be endorsed, the rate relief will be automatically applied to rate demands which will avoid the need for any manual adjustments. This is the reason for the urgency of the report as the rate demands must be issued by the end of March 2021.
- 1.6 The recommendations of the report were considered and approved by Cabinet.
- 1.7 Members are asked to note the recommendations of the report and the Cabinet decision.

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Appendices:

Appendix Report to Cabinet on 24th March 2021