

Finance Sub-Committee

Date of Meeting:	8 th March 2023
Report Title:	Appointments to the Business Rates Working Group
Report of:	Alex Thompson, Director of Finance and Customer Services and Section 151 Officer
Report Reference No:	FSC/25/22-23
Ward(s) Affected:	No specific wards

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. Following a report to the Sub-Committee on 9 November 2022, relating to Business Rates Discretionary Relief, this report seeks agreement in respect of Member appointments to the Business Rates Working Group.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The appointment of Members to working groups is a matter for the relevant service committee. This report responds to the Finance Sub-Committee's agreement, on 9 November 2022, to appoint a Working Group.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. That the Sub-Committee determine the political composition and membership of the Working Group, in line with the recommendation set out in paragraph 6.1 of this report subject to agreement that where it is not possible to determine the whole membership of the Working Group at the meeting, nominations be submitted by the relevant political groups to the Head of Democratic Services and Governance.

4. Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The Committee, at its meeting on 9th November, appointed the Working Group, its purpose being to understand the extent of Discretionary Relief available to local businesses and how those reliefs impact both business and the Council. To make recommendations for change where appropriate.

5. Other Options Considered

- 5.1. Whilst the Sub-Committee could decide not to appoint Members to the Working Group, this would be at odds with its agreement, on 9 November, to appoint the Working Group to undertake specific work.

6. Background

6.1 Business Rates Working Group

The Finance Sub-Committee received the Business Rates Discretionary Relief report on 9 November 2022. The report confirmed the current position in relation to discretionary rate reliefs awarded to local businesses and organisations by Cheshire East Council. The Sub-Committee agreed to set up the Business Rates Working Group to understand the extent of Discretionary Relief available to local businesses and how those reliefs impact both business and the Council and to make recommendations for change where appropriate. The terms of reference are set out in the Appendix for information.

It is recommended that the Working Group should comprise 3 members with the following composition: 1 Conservative Group member: 1 Labour Group Member: 1 Independent Group Member, each Member being a member of the Sub-Committee.

7. Implications of the Recommendations

7.1. Legal Implications

- 7.1.1. The Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990, made pursuant to the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, make provisions in respect of the political group representation on a local authority's committees in relation to the overall political composition of the Council. The legislation applies to the decision-making committees and sub-committees of the Council. However, the Working Group will not be a formal decision-making body and will make recommendations to the Finance Sub-Committee. There is therefore some flexibility around its membership.

7.2. Finance Implications

- 7.2.1. The working group may make recommendations that impact the Council and/or local organisations.

7.3. Policy Implications

- 7.3.1. There are no direct implications for policy.

7.4. Equality Implications

7.4.1. There are no direct implications for equality.

7.5. Human Resources Implications

7.5.1. There are no direct human resource implications.

7.6. Risk Management Implications

7.6.1. Making reasonable and broadly proportional appointments to the Working Group will ensure balanced consideration of matters which come before the Working Group

7.7. Rural Communities Implications

7.7.1. There are no direct implications for rural communities.

7.8. Implications for Children & Young People/Cared for Children

7.8.1. There are no direct implications for children and young people/Cared for Children.

7.9. Public Health Implications

7.9.1. There are no direct implications for public health.

7.10 Climate Change Implications

7.10.1. There are no direct climate change implications.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Helen Gerrard, Head of Customer Services Helen.gerrard@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Appendix: Terms of reference of the working group
Background Papers:	The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer.