

Executive decision taken by Leader



Lewes District Council

Decision taken by:

Councillor Zoe Nicholson, Leader of the Council

Date of decision:

20 August 2019

Subject of report:

To consider the application for discretionary rate relief as set out in this report for an award of 20% relief from 01 April 2018.

Exempt matter (if any as given under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972):

Not applicable

Key decision?:

Non-key

Open summary of decision made:

To approve request for 20% discretionary rate relief to:

- Brightnight Ltd (Cliffe Bonfire Society)

Reason(s) for decision:

The Council has set a Policy for the award of discretionary rate relief. New applications can be received at any time of the year. Once awarded, rate relief remains in place until the end of the financial year. An annual review takes place to ensure that the circumstances of the organisation have not changed significantly and, if not, rate relief will continue for a further year.

The applicant has put forward a case for the award of relief and has met some of the criteria to be able to award the relief.

The policy states that 'The Council will only award relief to its key partners which are registered charities or non-profit making organisations that enable membership and participation from all sectors of the community'.

Brightnight Ltd use land and storage facilities at Ham Lane for the activities of the Cliffe Bonfire Society. The site is used for bonfire night preparations, houses the equipment and structures for the society and is also the fire site. It is currently the only hereditament that Brightnight Ltd or Cliffe Bonfire Society are liable for in the area.

- 1.1 Brightnight Ltd are not a registered charity but do meet some of the criteria contained within our Discretionary Rate Relief policy. I am therefore recommending that the application for Discretionary Rate Relief is approved for the 2018/19 and 2019/20 financial years for 20%.
- 1.2 They have 775 members who are mostly from the Lewes community and surrounding area which is a requirement for non-profit organisations to receive discretionary relief.
- 1.3 They provide cultural and educational experiences for people of all ages and abilities. They have a strong sense of community and offer support in terms of care for the elderly/children and vulnerable members of the local community. The society work with various local organisations and through their activities, provide local residents with a wide range of opportunities to get involved. There is no defined percentage in our policy for non-profit organisations so the 20% award would reflect what we could consider awarding if the organisation was a charity.

The total cost of the top-up relief to the Council will be £3058.65 for 2018/19 & 2019/20

Alternative options considered:

To not award discretionary rate relief.

Was an executive councillor(s) consulted before decision was taken?

Not applicable

If councillor(s) consulted, did they declare any personal interest relating to the decision, had they been given a dispensation in respect of the matter?

Not applicable

Signed:

Zoe Nicholson