

Appendix 2

Guidelines for determining applications for Discretionary Rate Relief

These guidelines are to be used when considering an application for Discretionary Rate Relief. It should be remembered that each application should be considered on its own individual merits and that these guidelines should only be used to help ensure consistency in decision making.

All applications for Discretionary Rate Relief must be submitted in writing and should include a copy of the Organisations Memorandum or Articles of Association together with accounts for the last two years. If the applicant is a national organisation, it should provide the local and national accounts (where possible).

In determining an application the following guidelines should be considered.

- If the organisation already receives 80% Mandatory Rate Relief, no top-up of Discretionary Rate Relief should be awarded unless Committee consider the applicant's circumstances are exceptional and warrant the additional relief. In such cases, up to 20% relief may be awarded.
- The organisation should be open to all sections of the community. Membership fees should be reasonable and not be at a level where it restricts membership.
- Preference will be given to applicants who provide recreational and/or sporting facilities for the benefit of those living within the Borough.
- Does the organisation actively encourage membership from particular groups (e.g. the young, elderly, disabled, the disadvantaged etc)?
- Does the organisation allow their facilities to be used by people other than members (e.g. schools, casual public sessions)?
- Discretionary Rate relief will normally be awarded up to 80% of the rates charged (unless Committee consider the applicant's circumstances to be exceptional).
- When determining an application, Committee will have regard to the funds held by the organisation. Any profit earned should be reinvested into the organisation.
- If the organisation provides a bar for its members, Committee will consider the main purpose of the organisation. In making its decision Committee will have regard to the balance between playing and non-playing members and whether the prices charged for drinks are significantly lower than those charged by commercial organisations.
- Does the organisation provide training or education for its members?
- Does the organisation provide facilities which indirectly relieve the Authority of the need to do so, or enhance and supplement those which it does provide?