

Notice of a public

Decision Session - Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning [previously Executive Member for Economic Development and Community Engagement (Deputy Leader)]

To: Councillor Waller (Executive Member)

Date: Monday, 22 July 2019

Time: 3.00 pm

Venue: The Thornton Room - Ground Floor, West Offices (G039)

AGENDA

Notice to Members – Post Decision Calling In:

Members are reminded that, should they wish to call in any item* on this agenda, notice must be given to Democracy Support Group by:

4:00 pm on Wednesday 24 July 2019 if an item is called in *after* a decision has been taken.

*With the exception of matters that have been subject of a previous call in, require Full Council approval or are urgent which are not subject to the call-in provisions. Any called in items will be considered by the Customer and Corporate Services Scrutiny Management Committee.

Written representations in respect of item on this agenda should be submitted to Democratic Services by **5.00pm on Thursday 18 July 2019**.

1. **Declarations of Interest**

At this point in the meeting, the Executive Member is asked to declare:

- any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests
- any prejudicial interests or
- any disclosable pecuniary interests

which they may have in respect of business on this agenda.

2. **Minutes**

(Pages 1 - 4)

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2019.

3. **Public Participation**

At this point in the meeting, members of the public who have registered to speak can do so. The deadline for registering is **5.00pm on Friday 19 July 2019**. Members of the public can speak on agenda items or matters within the Executive Member's remit.

To register to speak please contact the Democracy Officer for the meeting, on the details at the foot of the agenda.

Filming, Recording or Webcasting Meetings

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The Council's protocol on Webcasting, Filming & Recording of Meetings ensures that these practices are carried out in a manner both respectful to the conduct of the meeting and all those present. It can be viewed at https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/11406/protocol_for_webcasting_filming_and_recording_of_council_meetings_20160809

**4. High Streets Heritage Action Zone Fund (Pages 5 - 10)
Expression of Interest submission**

This report updates the Executive Member on York Conservation Trust's (YCT) submission of an Expression of Interest (EoI) to the High Streets Heritage Action Zone Fund, a central government funding opportunity to tackle the challenges facing historic town and city centres.

**5. The Economic Impact of Business Rates for (Pages 11 - 20)
York and its City Centre**

This reports updates the Executive Member on the economic impact of Business Rates for York and its city centre.

6. Urgent Business

Any other business which the Chair considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

Democracy Officer

Angela Bielby

Contact details:

- Telephone - (01904) 552599
- Email – a.bielby@york.gov.uk

For more information about any of the following please contact the Democracy Officer responsible for servicing this meeting

- Registering to speak
- Written Representations
- Business of the meeting
- Any special arrangements
- Copies of reports

Contact details are set out above

This information can be provided in your own language.

我們也用您們的語言提供這個信息 (Cantonese)

এই তথ্য আপনার নিজের ভাষায় দেয়া যেতে পারে। (Bengali)

Ta informacja może być dostarczona w twoim własnym języku. (Polish)

Bu bilgiyi kendi dilinizde almanız mümkündür. (Turkish)

یہ معلومات آپ کی اپنی زبان (بولی) میں بھی مہیا کی جاسکتی ہیں۔ (Urdu)

 **(01904) 551550**

City of York Council

Committee Minutes

Meeting	Decision Session - Executive Member for Economy and Strategic Planning
Date	22 March 2019
Present	Councillor Aspden (Executive Member)

23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Executive Member was asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests that he might have in respect of the business on the agenda. None were declared.

24. MINUTES

Resolved: That the minutes of the last Decision Session held on 5 February 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Executive Member.

25. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

26. ECONOMIC HEALTH OF YORK CITY CENTRE SCRUTINY REVIEW FINAL REPORT

The Executive Member considered the Final Report of the Economy and Place Scrutiny Committee's scrutiny review into the Economic Health of York City Centre. Cllr Pavlovic (Chair of Economy & Place Scrutiny Committee) explained the background of the review, thanking the Head of Economic Growth and his team for their input into the review. Cllr Pavlovic then outlined the conclusions and recommendations arising from the review. In response to a question from the Executive Member, the Head of Economic Growth provided clarification on the grant to Indie York.

Following consideration of the recommendations, the Executive Member:

Resolved: That the Council;

- i. Agrees a grant of £10,000 to the business sector, delegated to the Head of Economic Growth to decide and administer the grant;
- ii. Considers making a bid to the £675 million Future High Streets Fund to secure funding to help York respond and adapt to changes facing city centres.
- iii. Prepares a long-term strategy to make its high streets and the city centre fit for the future, taking into account relevant aspects of the Grimsey report and the view of all key stakeholders.
- iv. Develops an easy but comprehensive and consistent guide to help businesses access relevant information around Council policies effecting businesses, such as planning and licensing issues and alike.
- v. Examines ways of extending the city's traditional festivals venue in Parliament Street to open up other areas to visitors, particularly across the river into Micklegate, and reduce pedestrian congestion in parts of the city centre at peak hours.
- vi. Works with Indie York and traders to develop a city-wide loyalty scheme to make it easier for businesses to reward customers with an attractive discount offer for shopping locally while encouraging business growth and customer retention across a city-wide customer engagement platform.
- vii. Incentivises ways to further encourage more people to use Park and Ride and work with bus operators to extend the operating hours of Park and Ride to help reduce vehicle congestion in the city.

- viii. Notes the suggestion of an option to seek to make provision in the 2020/21 revenue budget for a grant fund to support independent traders groups, such as Indie York and others.

Reason: To promote the economic health of the city centre.

27. ECONOMIC UPDATE

The Executive Member considered a report on the progress that has been made in delivering the York Economic Strategy 2016-20. It also provides an update on the preparation of a draft York Economic Strategy 2020-24. The Head of Economic Growth presented the update. It was:

Resolved: That;

- i. the progress that has been made in delivering the York Economic Strategy 2016-20 be noted.
- ii. the Head of Economic Growth be instructed to bring forward proposals for a revised York Economic Strategy 2020-2024 as an early priority for the next Administration.

Reason: To support economic growth in York.

28. FUTURE HIGH STREETS FUND – SUBMISSION OF EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Executive Member considered an update on the submission of an Expression of Interest to the Future High Street Fund, a central government funding opportunity to tackle the challenges facing town and city centres. The Expression of Interest did not commit the council to proceeding with a full bid or to any funding as successful applicants would be invited to submit a full business case at a later date. The Head of Economic Growth outlined the update and clarified the different rounds of bidding for the fund. It was:

Resolved : That the Expression of Interest submission to the Future High Streets Fund be noted.

Reason: In order to be updated on the progress of the submission to the Future High Streets Fund.

Cllr A Waller, Executive Member
[The meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 2.39 pm].

DRAFT



**Decision Session – Executive Member for
Economy and Strategic Planning****22 July 2019**

Report of the Corporate Director Economy and Place

**York Conservation Trust’s Expression of Interest to the High Streets
Heritage Action Zone Fund****Summary**

1. The Executive Member is asked to note that York Conservation Trust (YCT) has submitted an Expression of Interest (EoI) to the High Streets Heritage Action Zone Fund, a central government funding opportunity to tackle the challenges facing historic town and city centres. The bid is focused on Herbert House, Lady Peckett Yard and Pavement. As part of the funding criteria the support of the council was required as a co-signatory. However there is no commitment of council capital funding towards the proposal which will be funded by YCT and other partners. This is an information only paper and requires no decision.

Recommendations

2. The Executive Member is asked to note council’s support as a co-signatory to York Conservation Trust’s Expression of Interest to central government’s High Streets Heritage Action Zone Fund.

Reason: In order to be updated on York Conservation Trust’s submission of an Expression of Interest to the High Streets Heritage Action Zone Fund.

Background

3. In December 2018 the government launched the Future High Street Fund, an opportunity for local authorities to bid for a share of £675m to help respond to the challenges affecting town centres and high streets across the country. The council submitted an EoI to that funding round in March 2019 outlining a proposal for a multi-layer response to tackling the issues facing Coney Street, with a particular focus on reconnecting the

street with the river. Unfortunately that submission was unsuccessful, with all of the funding being allocated to authorities or areas that are experiencing far worse market failures of their retail environments. However, the process was hugely beneficial in drawing together all of the city centre's key stakeholders and articulating the challenges facing York which will shape future workstreams.

4. As part of the £675m Future High Street Fund £44m was set aside for High Streets Heritage Action Zone funding to be administered through Historic England. The bid criteria for this funding stream was made available in March and was again based on an Expression of Interest format to determine which successful bids would proceed to the next stage. The deadline for submissions was 12 July 2019. The 4 essential bidding criteria were:
 1. delivered by a partnership, including the local authority as lead or a partner;
 2. High streets that are also within designated conservation areas;
 3. have demonstrable support of the local community and;
 4. be capable of delivery in four years (April 2020 – March 2024).
5. The key criteria to note, clarified with Historic England, is that the local authority can act as the lead or as a partner - effectively sponsoring a submission as a co-signatory. Due to the funding round falling during the local election period and the tight timescales for submission the council sought to work with key stakeholders to identify and support a bid rather than taking the lead or looking to fund a project. The council discussed with a range of stakeholders to identify parties who would be interested in putting forward a submission. Having considered options through the National Trust, York Minster and YCT it was agreed that YCT's proposals was the best strategic fit for the criteria and most likely to secure funding.

Consultation

6. The Future High Streets Fund EoI was prepared and submitted with a whole range of stakeholders including the York Retail Forum, the York BiD, Make It York, and Indie York. As part of that process a new group was established by Indie York to consider opportunities for unlocking vacant spaces above shops in the city centre. This group has continued to meet regularly with representatives including all of the above. They have been instrumental in considering the bid criteria, potential options, and advising YCT on the preparation of the EoI.

Analysis

7. The YCT proposal focuses on the Pavement area of the City, and is anchored by the restoration of the grade 1 listed Herbert House to its former glory. The building was until 2018 occupied by Jones the Bootmaker and currently houses a pop up gin shop. With 1,000 sq metres of accommodation (the majority of which was, and remains, unused), the building complex is a significantly under-utilised asset of significant historic and architectural importance. The bid would also see the restoration of the adjacent Lady Peckett's Yard, creating a safer and more welcoming thoroughfare between Pavement and Fossgate. The proposals would establish a fund to allow other landlords and organisations to deliver improvements to buildings and spaces in the area. This would complement the Council's recent significant investment in street improvements in the local area, focussed on Fossgate.
8. The submission proposes a significant amount of community engagement activity, incorporating a schools engagement programme, and activity focussed on adults with learning difficulties. The activity will help to reveal the significance of the building and area to a broader audience, and establish a strong legacy from the programme.
9. The total cost of the project would be defined at full business case but the level of Heritage High Street funding cannot exceed £2m, and any funding ask would require 50% match funding. The majority of this match funding would be provided by YCT, with assumed contributions from other city centre stakeholders.
10. There is no council funding commitment associated with the bid. Should any complimentary highway or public realm improvements be identified at business case stage then there may be the possibility of existing highway maintenance budgets being applied, but this would be considered on its merit at that time through the appropriate decision making process.
11. If successful the YCT funding bid will secure significant national funding in to the city - matched by a third party - to restore and bring back in to full use a hugely important existing heritage building.

Council Plan

12. The funding would assist in achieving the council plan objectives through the creation of a Prosperous City for All, and the vision to be a council that listens to residents, particularly by ensuring that:
- Everyone who lives in the city can enjoy its unique heritage and range of activities
 - Visitors, businesses and residents are impressed with the quality of our city
 - Local businesses can thrive
 - We are entrepreneurial, by making the most of commercial activities
 - We engage with our communities, listening to their views and taking them into account

Implications

13. The Expression of Interest has no implications for the council. It is a YCT led submission which the council have supported in principle with no commitment to provide any future capital funding should it be successful.

Risk Management

14. To ensure there is no reputational risk to the council key stakeholders have been involved in assessing the bid criteria and identifying the most appropriate opportunity for the council to support. YCT will be responsible for preparing the full business case, and if the decision was taken not to proceed to full business case then there are no consequences for the council.

Contact Details

Author:

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Head of Regeneration
Programmes**

**Major Projects and
Regeneration**
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Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

**Chief Officer's name
Neil Ferris
Corporate Director of Economy and Place**

Report **Date** 11/7/2019
Approved

Wards Affected: Guildhall

All **Tick**

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes

None

List of Abbreviations Used in this Report

YCT – York Conservation Trust
Eol – Expression of Interest

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**Decision Session – Executive Member for
Economy and Strategic Planning****22 July 2019**

Report of the Head of Economic Growth

The economic impact of Business Rates for York and its city centre**Summary**

1. Business Rates – or more correctly National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) – are frequently cited as a major obstacle to the profitability for city centre retail businesses. They are seen by many as an outdated property-based tax, with frequent calls for local authorities to provide relief from business rates for businesses.
2. Over recent years, national government funding for local authorities has changed significantly, with local business rates retention being introduced while the Revenue Support Grant has been withdrawn. Rates have become a significant element of City of York Council's income. For the 2019/20 revenue budget, £33m of retained business rates represents 26% of Council income.
3. Business rates are not well understood. They are set nationally and collected locally, leading to confusion in business owners' minds about who is responsible for the size of their bills. This in turn leads to frequent calls for Councils to reduce the burden of rates bills for businesses.
4. York's businesses pay a total of £108m in business rates on 7,482 identified sites in the city. Over 30% of these sites have a zero bill through rates relief, and a further 30% have an annual bill of less than £5,000. In contrast, the 192 premises with a bill of over £100,000 per annum contribute 46% of the city's total NNDR.
5. Rates data for York, including a full list of rateable premises, the current bill-payer, rateable value, reliefs applied and the net current charge, is published quarterly on the York Open Data platform. The figures in this report are derived from that data. See: [link to NNDR data](#)

Recommendation

6. The Executive Member is asked to note:
 - a) A guide to NNDR and how the system for charging and collecting them works
 - b) Details of the contribution that retained business rates now make to Council budgets
 - c) The flexibilities that City of York Council has in terms of providing relief on those rates, our current policies and take-up levels
 - d) An analysis of the specific impacts for the city centre

Reason: To be updated on the economic impact of Business Rates for York and its city centre.

Background

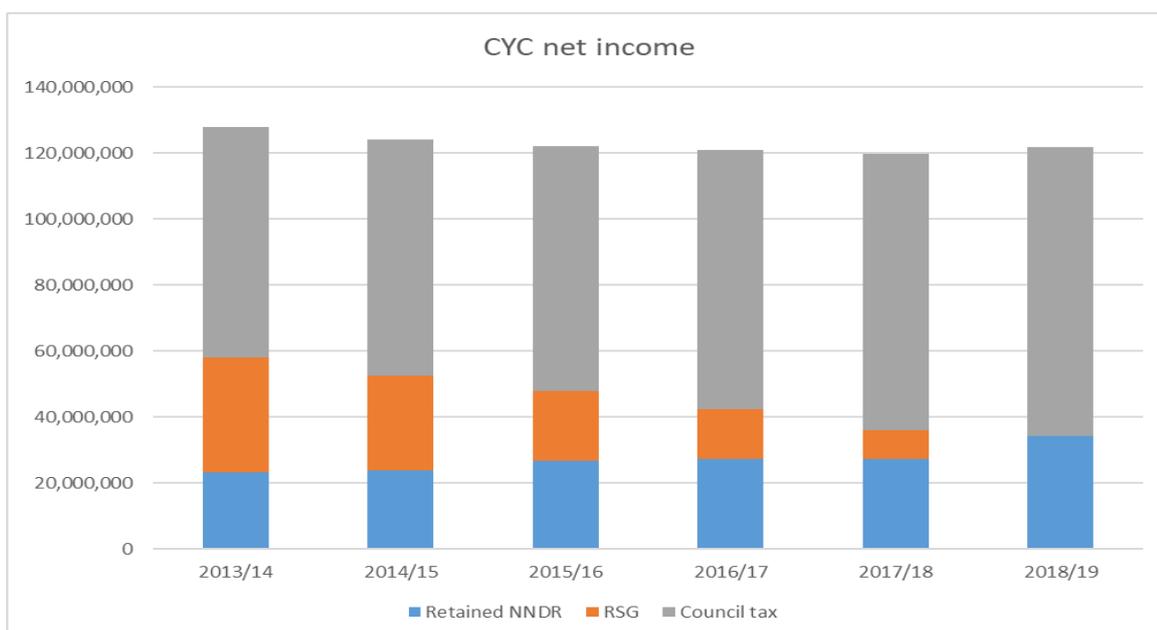
How Business Rates work

7. Non-domestic properties, such as shops, offices, warehouses, car parks, advertising hoardings, and mobile phone masts, are assigned a rateable value by the Government's Valuation Office Agency. These values are the estimated annual rent payable for the property as of a fixed date, currently 1st April 2015. Businesses can appeal to the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) if they believe their rateable value has been incorrectly determined (see <https://www.gov.uk/correct-your-business-rates>).
8. As part of the annual Budget announcement, the Chancellor of the Exchequer publishes business rates multipliers for small and standard businesses. Small business multipliers apply to premises with a rateable value of less than £51,000, with the standard multiplier being used for premises above that value. The current multipliers for 2019/20 are 49.1p for small businesses and 50.4p as the standard figure.
9. The rates bill is calculated by multiplying together the rateable value and the appropriate multiplier. So a small business in premises with a rateable value of £20,000 would see an annual rates bill of $20,000 \times 0.48 = \text{£}9,600$. This bill, set nationally by the VOA and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, is sent out and collected by the local authority, with the majority then passed on to national government.

10. There are numerous rates reliefs available either through national schemes or through local discretion. These are summarised below at paragraph 13. Where applicable, these discounts are applied prior to sending out annual rates bills in February or March. Rates are collected over 10 months for most businesses, and over 12 months for some large accounts.

Business rates retention as a local government funding stream

11. Business rates have their origin as a method of taxation in the Poor Laws of 1572 and 1601, with tax on local property funding the support of the "aged, decayed, and impotent" poor in each parish. They are an ancient tax, originally collected to fund local social infrastructure in Tudor England.
12. There were two types of rates – those on domestic and non-domestic properties. Domestic rates remained in use as a form of local taxation until they were replaced with the Community Charge in 1988, and subsequently with Council Tax in 1993.
13. The Local Government Finance Act 2012 introduced changes in the funding arrangements for local authorities, with the phasing out of Revenue Support Grant, and its replacement with a new scheme to share NNDR receipts between central and local government.
14. For York, Revenue Support Grant has now disappeared as an income stream, with retained rates now accounting for 28% of our revenue budget. The chart below shows how this has changed over the past 6 years since the introduction of the scheme.



Rates relief

15. There are several ways in which companies and organisations occupying properties with a NNDR liability can receive relief on those rates. Some derive from national regulations – for example Charitable rates relief, and Small Business Rates Relief. Others are available at local discretion. Overall, approximately 60% of rateable properties in York attract some form of rates relief.
16. Because NNDR receipts are shared equally with central government, the costs of providing relief on existing properties are also shared in the same proportion with central government. So providing £100,000 of rates relief costs the Council £50,000, and this money is lost from the net income budget which supports our revenue expenditure. NNDR receipts currently provide around 30% of Council income, so any additional relief would have an impact on the delivery of Council services or on the level of Council Tax needing to be raised.
17. Through national provisions, Charities and amateur sports clubs can apply for 80% rates relief on premises which are used for charitable purposes. This 80% can be increased to 100% at local discretion, and we have an application process in York which provides this relief on an annual basis through the Executive. Not-for-profit organisations which are not charities can also apply for discretionary relief on their rates liability.
18. In rural settlements with a population below 3,000, there is national mandatory relief for a range of key local businesses where they are the only such facility. This covers premises which are the only post office, petrol station, pub, general store or cold food shop and are below rateable value thresholds, and provides 50% relief. Discretionary relief can be applied for from local authorities to provide some or all of the remaining 50%. For York, these settlements are Acaster Malbis, Askham Bryan, Askham Richard, Deighton, Earswick, Elvington, Fulford, Holtby, Kexby, Murton, Naburn, Nether Poppleton, Rufforth, Skelton, Stockton on the Forest, Upper Poppleton, and Wheldrake.
19. For 2018/19, CYC Executive provided the following discretionary reliefs for charities, not-for-profit organisations, community amateur sports clubs and rural businesses:

Category	Cost	CYC share
Not-for-profit	£15,283	£7,642
Charities	£59,297	£29,649

CASCs	£8,619	£4,310
Rural discretionary	£51,001	£25,001
Total cost	£134,200	£66,602

20. Also through national arrangements, but of a temporary nature, small businesses are entitled to a sliding scale of relief on their NNDR liabilities so long as the rateable value of their premises is £15,000 or less and they occupy only one set of premises. For example, this ensures that the small business tenants at the EcoBusiness Centre on Clifton Moor have no rates liability.
21. For the financial years 2019/20 and 2020/21, the Government has introduced a new relief scheme for retail properties that have a rateable value of less than £51,000. Under the scheme, eligible ratepayers receive a discount of one third of their daily chargeable amount. As the data from the Open Data platform shows, there are 684 retailers in York benefiting from this scheme in the current financial year. For details see the link above.
22. Again, through national regulations, empty properties are exempt from NNDR for the first 3 months of vacancy, but then attract the full rates liability. There are some exceptions and extensions:
- a. Industrial buildings such as warehouses are exempt for a further 3 months
 - b. Listed Buildings are fully exempt whilst empty
 - c. Buildings belonging to charities and sports clubs are exempt whilst empty so long as the next use will be mostly charitable or mostly as a sports club
 - d. Buildings with a rateable value of £2,900 or less are exempt whilst empty
23. Hardship relief is available at the discretion of local councils in England, with the provisos that the occupier would be in hardship without that relief, and that providing relief is in the interests of local people. There are no current uses of hardship relief in York – the relief is for exceptional circumstances only, where a short term relief from rates will allow recovery and resumption of paying the full liability.
24. Section 69 of The Localism Act 2011 introduced the provision for local authorities to allow relief, or a discount, from business rates from 1st

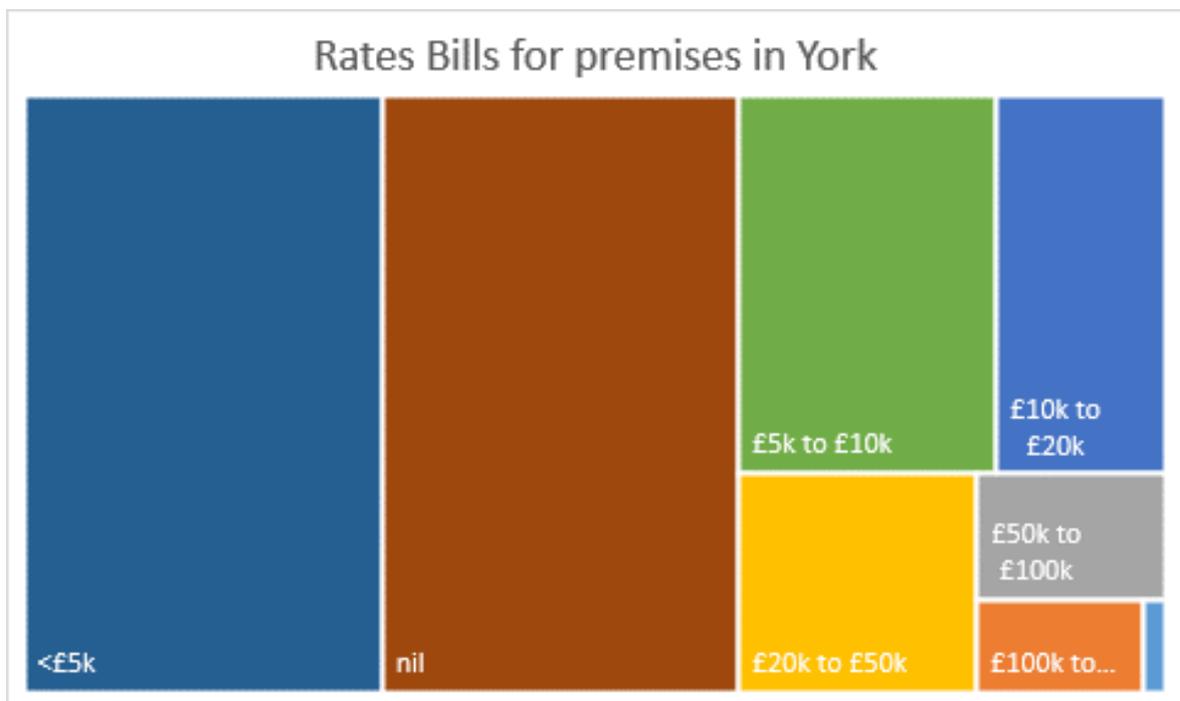
April 2012 to any organisation it deemed appropriate, provided that it was in the interests of local council tax payers to do so. Prior to this Act the provision extended only to not for profit organisations.

25. In York, the Council has a Discretionary Business Rates Relief Policy, last amended in August 2014. This includes a set of rates reliefs covering 4 strategic ambitions:
 - a. Supporting young business in our economic growth sectors
 - b. Bringing empty Listed Buildings back into use
 - c. Significant business relocations to York
 - d. Business Development Districts
26. With the exception of the creation of a Business Development District in Acomb, these reliefs have not been widely used. A review of the policy, including consideration of the application and approval process, is planned for later this year.

Business Rates in York

27. Details of NNDR charges, including the occupier, property information, and reliefs applied, are published on the York Open Data Platform at www.yorkopendata.org. There are over 5,800 rateable premises in York, with a combined net charge of over £104m per annum. The highest rateable value of £7m is for the University of York, although the University is a charity and receives 80% relief on its liability.
28. Looking at the total net charge paid, the largest contributors of NNDR in York are the supermarkets. The Tesco superstore at Clifton Moor has the highest net charge at £1.49m, and 7 of the top 10 charges are for superstores, including those at Vangarde. The top 3 non-retail rates bills are for Nestle (£1.43m), York District Hospital (£1.1m), and Defra (£900k).
29. Hotels are also significant rates payers, with The Grand having a net charge of £695k, The Principal paying £559k and the Hilton Hotel on Tower Street contributing £341k. Within the city centre, the highest charges are paid by Marks and Spencer for their Parliament Street store (£539k), Primark (£362k) and Boots (£342k).
30. While the top 100 payers contribute a total of £37m – over a third of the total rates paid in York – the bottom 50% of rates bills contribute less

than £3m in total. As the diagram below shows, most businesses in York have a rates bill of less than £5,000.



31. In York city centre, the rateable values are somewhat higher, due to the predominance of retail premises and the high cost of property. The 1,395 liable properties with a YO1 postcode contribute £32m of the total net charge for York of £108m.
32. Within the city centre, it is Parliament Street, Coney Street and the streets in between those which have the highest rateable values. Looking more specifically, in the Shambles, the average net rates charged are £7,840 per premises. For Goodramgate, where premises are typically larger but not in the prime retail area, the average rates are around £10,600 per property. In Coney Street, the average rates bill rises to £45,500.
33. Although rates bills in the city centre are higher than elsewhere in York, 44% of rateable premises in the city centre pay a total bill of less than £5,000 per annum.

Analysis

34. National Non Domestic Rates play an increasingly important role in providing income to City of York Council, representing 28% of the net revenue budget income in the current year.

35. The largest payers of rates in York are, as might be expected, the largest commercial premises, with superstores representing 5 of the 6 highest net charges. Outside of the city centre, many businesses face much more modest rates charges.
36. There are a wide range of rates reliefs available, some set nationally, others applied with local discretion. Over 2,000 small businesses are entirely exempt from rates, and the bottom 50% of rates payers pay an average of £1,000 per annum.
37. While review of the rates system is often mooted, and the impact on city centre businesses is highlighted as a key challenge for sustainability, the reality is that rates fall predominantly on large businesses. Typical small businesses see a rates bill in York of less than £5,000, while the supermarkets pay substantial sums. Tesco Stores Ltd alone has a total rates bill in York in excess of £3m.

Consultation

38. A previous version of this report was considered by Economy and Place Scrutiny Committee in March 2019 as part of their enquiry into the city centre economy.

Options

39. This report is for information only, and no options for action are presented.

Council Plan

40. This is not relevant as the report is for information only.

Implications

41. This report is for information only.
 - **Financial** There are no financial implications
 - **Human Resources (HR)** There are no HR implications
 - **Equalities** There are no equalities implications
 - **Legal** There are no legal implications
 - **Crime and Disorder** There are no crime and disorder implications
 - **Information Technology (IT)** There are no IT implications
 - **Property** There are no property implications
 - **Other** There are no other implications

Risk Management

42. There are no known risks.

Contact Details

Author:

Author's name

Simon Brereton
Head of Economic Growth
Tel: 01904 552814

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Neil Ferris

Corporate Director Economy and Place

**Report
Approved**



Date 11 July 2019

Wards Affected:

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annexes

None

List of Abbreviations Used in this Report

NNDR – National non-domestic rates

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