

WOLVERHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

SCHEME FOR DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF WEF 25 JUNE 2013

1. The following criteria is taken into account when considering applications for discretionary rate relief and each application will be treated on its merits. The criteria set out below are consistent with recommendations of the Department for Communities and Local Government and local authority associations.

1.1. The organisation should ensure that membership is open to all sections of the community and membership rates/subscriptions should not be set at such a high level as to exclude the general community. The club should, if required, be able to demonstrate the criteria by which applications for membership are consistent with the principle of 'open membership' and in accordance with equal opportunities policies.

1.2. Sympathetic consideration will be given to applications from groups who actively encourage membership from particularly disadvantaged groups in the community, e.g. young people or the disabled, elderly people and ethnic minorities.

1.3. Sympathetic consideration will be given to organisations who make their facilities available to people other than members e.g. schools.

1.4. Whether the organisation provide training for its members particularly the young.

1.5. Have the facilities available been provided by self help or grants from other bodies? Self help organisations may be considered more sympathetically for discretionary relief.

1.6. Does the organisation provide facilities which indirectly relieve the Authority of the need to do so or do the facilities complement those provided by the Authority?

Local Criteria

2. In addition, the following local criteria have been adopted by the Authority.

2.1. Generally no discretionary relief should be allowed to national charitable organisations - unless there are exceptional circumstances, *e.g. charitable animal welfare organisations providing local facilities.*

2.2. Relief should not be given to sports or social clubs of industrial firms or other business organisations (assistance should be provided by the firm or organisation).

2.3 Organisations who receive direct grant aid from the Council will receive maximum discretionary relief with a corresponding reduction in their grant, providing that this does not apply to schemes funded by the Government. However, in cases where the Government funding regime assumes that local relief is being granted, this will be given providing that all other criteria is met. Relief will not be granted where government funding is available to meet the liability.

2.4. Generally the facility should be provided for the benefit of people living in the City.

2.5. The Authority has generally agreed not to allow any relief where in its opinion the body is capable of supporting itself financially without the need for assistance from the Council in the form of discretionary rate relief.

Sports Clubs

3. The following additional criteria apply specifically for sports clubs:

3.1. More than 50% of the members should be active playing members.

3.2. Generally no relief should be allowed where a public admission fee is charged unless there are exceptional circumstances.

3.3. Sympathetic consideration to be given to minority sports and where facilities are not provided by the Council.

3.4. For those sports clubs that operate a bar, relief should not generally exceed 50% unless there are exceptional circumstances.

3.5. Sympathetic consideration to be given to those organisations that are affiliated to local or national organisations with a view to developing their own interests and promoting Wolverhampton as a national or international venue.