

## Written Ministerial Statement 27<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Following the election last December the budget is not due to be set until 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020 however in advance of that local authorities have been issued with a Written Ministerial Statement which lays out their intention.

These are

- Increase the current Retail Rate relief scheme from a 1/3<sup>rd</sup> discount to 50% discount from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 for eligible properties occupying a property with a rateable value of less than £51,000
- Extend the Retail Rate Relief scheme to cover eligible music venues and cinemas with a rateable value of less than £51,000
- Extend the £1500 business rate discount for local newspaper offices for an additional 5 years to 31.3.2025
- Re-introduce Pub Relief as a £1,000 discount to eligible pubs with a rateable value of less than £100,000 in 2020/21 which can be applied as well as the Retail Rate Relief above.

All reliefs are subject to state aid rules and apply in England only.

**Where possible these changes to reliefs have been taken into account on your 2020/21 Annual bill. If this has not been done then new bills where appropriate will be issued as soon as possible. In the meantime you must continue to make payments as per the bill you have been served.**

If we are able, the relief will be awarded automatically without the need for an application form and this will be based on where ratepayers previously received the retail relief in 2019/20 or Pub Relief in 2017/18. A letter will be sent to those ratepayers which will advise on their obligations under State Aid regulations.

Where it is not possible to automatically award the relief applications will be issued to other 'likely' candidates however the application form will also be available on our website with the guidance for any other ratepayers to consider and submit if they feel they may qualify.

Some reliefs already introduced as part of the implementation of the 2017 revaluation also remain. These are

1. Supporting Small Businesses – limiting the annual increase to the greater of £600.00 or the real terms transitional relief cap is continuing for those still eligible in 2020/21
2. Local Discretionary Revaluation Support Scheme – this has been reviewed for 2020/21 in line with the reduced Central Government funding and the new policy agreed. See [www.harrow.gov.uk/bratesrelief](http://www.harrow.gov.uk/bratesrelief).

Where applicable these have been awarded for the annual bills for 2020/21.