

**Hampshire County Council  
Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority  
Police and Crime Commissioner**

**Joint response to consultation on the design of the discretionary business rates relief scheme**

Thank you for inviting comments on the design of your discretionary business rates relief scheme. This is a joint consultation response from all of the major preceptors in the billing authority's area.

**Comments from Hampshire County Council and Hampshire Fire and Rescue Authority**

The impact of the 2017 business rates revaluation has varied for different ratepayers in Hampshire. Bills for some ratepayers have fallen but they have risen for others. We welcome having a discretionary support scheme for ratepayers affected by revaluation increases, as they may benefit from additional help to manage the transition. The amount of support provided needs to be kept within the available funding from the Government. It would be appropriate to focus support on small and medium sized ratepayers with large revaluation increases, as these are the groups most likely to benefit from assistance.

We note that although funding is being provided from the Government over four years it is heavily weighted towards the earlier years. The design of the scheme will need to keep within the funding limit each year. We note that the Government proposes to consider in quarter two this year whether funding can be moved between years, which may be a useful flexibility if the Government permits it.

**Comments from the Police and Crime Commissioner**

The police will be not be financially affected by this scheme as the police do not receive funding from business rates. However, measures to help communities in the area served by the Police and Crime Commissioner are welcome, such as supporting local ratepayers who have seen an increase in bills as a result of the 2017 revaluation.