

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION TAKEN BY AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER

This form **MUST** be used to record any decision taken by the Elected Mayor or an individual Executive Member (Portfolio Holder).
 The form must be completed and passed to the Chief Officer Democratic and Registration Services no later than NOON on the second working day after the day on which the decision is taken. No action may be taken to implement the decision(s) recorded on this form until 7 days have passed and the Chief Officer Democratic and Registration Services has confirmed the decision has not been called in.

1. Description of decision

To approve the Rural Settlements List for 2019/2020, shown at **Appendix A** to the attached report, which is unchanged from the 2018/2019 list, for publication.

2. Date of decision

17th December 2018

3. Reasons for decision

To comply with the statutory requirement to determine the Rural Settlements List for Bedford Borough Council in order to enable awards of rural rate relief in 2019/2020.

4. Alternatives considered and rejected

The determination and publication of the rural settlements list is a statutory requirement.

5. How decision is to be funded

The reduction in rates yield due to the award of rural rate relief is taken into account in determining the non-domestic rates yield for each financial year.

6. Conflicts of interest

Name of all Executive members who were consulted AND declared a conflict of interest.	Nature of interest	Did Standards Committee give a dispensation for that conflict of interest? (If yes, give details and date of dispensation)	Did the Chief Executive give a dispensation for that conflict of interest? (If yes, give details and the date of the dispensation).

The Mayor has been consulted on this decision

Signed *Dave Hodgson*

Date *17/12/18*

2018

Name of Decision Taker *MAYOR DAVE HODGSON*

This is a public document. A copy of it must be given to the Chief Officer Democratic and Registration Services as soon as it is completed.

Date decision published: *18th December 2018*

Date decision can be implemented if not called in: *31st January 2018*

(Decision to be made exempt from call in.....~~YES~~ or NO.....)

Bedford Borough Council – Finance Portfolio Holder

November 2018

Report by the Chief Officer for Customer Experience and Digital Services

Subject: BOUNDARIES OF RURAL SETTLEMENTS FOR THE PURPOSES OF RURAL RATE RELIEF 2019/2020

1. Executive Summary

The Council is required to determine the rural settlements in the Borough each year for the purposes of administration of Rural Rate Relief in accordance with section 42B of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 and to publish the list by 31 December each year. No changes are proposed for the list for 2019/2020.

2. Recommendation

The Portfolio Holder is recommended to approve the proposed Rural Settlements List for 2019/2020 shown at Appendix A which is unchanged from the 2018/2019 list.

3. Reason for Recommendation

To comply with the statutory requirement to determine the Rural Settlements List for Bedford Borough Council in order to enable awards of rural rate relief in 2019/2020.

4. Key Implications

(a) Policy Issues

To be eligible for mandatory rural rate relief a business must be located in a qualifying rural settlement which has a population of no more than 3,000 and falls wholly or partly in a rural area designated for the purposes of the rate relief scheme by the Secretary of State. It is the responsibility of the local authority to determine which settlements in its area meet these criteria and place them on the authority's Rural Settlements List.

The current Rural Settlements List has been reviewed to take account of the latest population statistics available.

The Council has an agreed policy for the award of discretionary rate relief to small businesses in rural settlements and the determination of the Rural Settlements List is also necessary in order for the Council to exercise its discretion in accordance with the policy.

(b) Legal Issues

The Council is required to determine annually the rural settlements within its area where the population of the settlement is less than 3,000 and to publish a list of settlements before 31 December each year.

Non-Domestic properties situated within such a designated rural settlement that meet certain qualifying criteria set out in regulations are eligible for relief from payment of Non-Domestic Rates.

(c) Resource Implications

The 2016 Autumn Statement confirmed the doubling of rural rate relief from 50% to 100% from 1 April 2017 with local authorities expected to use their local discount powers to grant 100% rural rate relief to eligible ratepayers from 1 April 2017.

The Rural Settlements List currently facilitates the award of rate relief worth £74,000 in 2018/2019 for small rural businesses. This consists of £40,000 in mandatory rural rate relief and £34,000 in discretionary rate relief.

Awards of rate relief reduce the overall rates yield and result in a corresponding reduction in the Council's retained share of 49% of the rates yield. The Council will, however, be reimbursed for the actual cost in granting discretionary rural rate relief

in order to award 100% rural rate relief. The estimated effect of rural rate relief is taken into account when determining the non-domestic rates yield for the forthcoming financial year as part of the Council's budget setting process.

(d) Risk Implications

It is a legislative requirement to determine and publish the list of rural settlements before 31 December in each year. Should the list not be published the Council may be unable to award rural rate relief resulting in small rural businesses being required to pay the full amount of business rates.

(e) Environmental Implications

There are no identifiable environmental implications.

(f) Equalities Implications

In preparing this report, due consideration has been given to the Borough Council's statutory Equality Duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, as set out in Section 149 (1) of the Equality Act 2010.

A relevance test for equality has been completed. The equality test determined that the activity has no relevance to Bedford Borough Council's statutory equality duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. An equality analysis is not needed.

5. Details

- 5.1 The Council is required to determine those settlements within its area which it considers to be rural settlements for the purposes of awarding rural rate relief.
- 5.2 To be designated as a rural settlement the settlement must have a population of no more than 3,000 and fall wholly or partly in a rural area designated for the purposes of the rate relief scheme by the Secretary of State.

5.3 The current Rural Settlements List has been reviewed to take account of the latest population data available to the Council and any changes in the composition of rural settlements. The review has not identified any changes to populations or boundaries of rural settlements that would affect the Rural Settlements List. Therefore, it is proposed that the Council's Rural Settlements List for the purpose of Non-Domestic Rates for 2019/2020 should remain unchanged from 2018/2019. The proposed list for 2019/2020 is shown at **Appendix A**.

6. **Summary of Consultations and Outcome**

The following Council Units or Officers and/or other organisations have been consulted in preparing this report:

Management Team
Relevant Officers

No adverse comments have been received.

Report Contact Officer: Lee Phanco, Chief Officer for Customer Experience and Digital Services
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File Reference: L.6(d)

Previous Relevant Minutes: None

Background Papers: None

Appendices: A – Proposed Rural Settlements List as at 31 December 2018

**LIST OF RURAL SETTLEMENTS UNDER SECTION 42B OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE ACT 1988
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2018**

In the Parish of:	Rural Settlements
Great Barford	Great Barford
Little Barford	Little Barford
Biddenham	Biddenham
Bletsoe	Bletsoe
Bolnhurst & Keysoe	Bolnhurst
	Keysoe (except Keysoe Row)
	Keysoe Row
Bromham	None
Cardington	Cardington
Carlton & Chellington	Carlton & Chellington
Clapham	None
Colmworth	Colmworth
Cople	Cople
Dean & Shelton	Lower Dean
	Upper Dean
	Shelton
Eastcotts	Cotton End
	Wilshamstead (See also Wilshamstead Parish)
	Old Harrowden
Elstow	Elstow
	Abbeyfields
Felmersham	Felmersham
	Radwell
Great Denham	Great Denham
Harrold	Harrold
	Little Odell
Kempston Rural	Kempston Hardwick (See also Stewartby Parish)
	Church End/Green End/Cemetery Rd
	West End/Box End
	Wood End
	Gibraltar Corner/Ridge Road

In the Parish of:	Rural Settlements
Melchbourne & Yelden	Melchbourne
	Yelden
Milton Ernest	Milton Ernest
Oakley	Oakley
Odell	Odell
Pavenham	Pavenham
Pertenhall	Pertenhall
Podington	Podington
	Farndish
	Hinwick
Ravensden	Ravensden (excluding Church End)
	Church End, Ravensden
Renhold	Renhold (excluding Salph End)
	Salph End
	Renhold
Riseley	Riseley
Roxton	Eaton Socon
	Wyboston (See also Staploe & Duloe Parish)
	Chawston
	Colesden
	Begwary (See also Staploe & Duloe Parish)
	Roxton
Sharnbrook	Sharnbrook
Stagsden	Stagsden
Staploe & Duloe	Colmworth (See also Colmworth Parish)
	Bushmead
	Duloe
	Honeydon
	Staploe
	Begwary (see also Roxton Parish)
	Upper Staploe
	Wyboston (See also Roxton and Wyboston Parishes)

<u>In the Parish of:</u>	<u>Rural Settlements</u>
Knotting & Souldrop	Knotting
	Souldrop
Stewartby	Stewartby
	Kempston Hardwick (See also Kempston Rural Parish)
Swineshead	Swineshead
Thurleigh	Thurleigh
Turvey	Turvey
Wilden	Wilden
Willington	Willington

<u>In the Parish of:</u>	<u>Rural Settlements</u>
Little Staughton	Little Staughton
Stevington	Stevington
Wilshamstead	Wilshamstead
Wixams	Wixams
Wootton	Hall End
Wyboston, Chawston, and Colesden	Wyboston (See also Staploe & Duloe Parish)
	Chawston
	Colesden
Wymington	Wymington