

Appendix 1

Council Tax Discount Policy

1. Vacant (Empty & Unfurnished Property)

1.1 Properties which were previously defined in accordance with council tax exempt dwelling order 1992/558

1.2 Now entitled to a discount under the council tax (prescribed classes of dwellings)(England)(amendment) regulations 2012/ 2964

1.3 These new arrangements will apply with effect from 1st April 2014

1.4 For the avoidance of doubt, any property which was, or is retrospectively, granted a reduction which begins before 1st April 2014 will be granted 100% discount for any applicable period up to & including 31st March 2014 in accordance with the policy that existed before 1st April 2014. From 1st April 2014 the *balance* of any award will be granted in accordance with the existing policy. The maximum period of discount will be six months in total.

1.4 The discount will apply for the first 6 months that the property is both unoccupied and unfurnished

1.5 The rate of discount to be applied is 100% for the first calendar month, followed by 50% discount for the next five calendar months.

1.6 The discount is applicable to the property and is not affected by any change of ownership or transfer of responsibility. Where an award of discount is made, no new entitlement to 6 months discount can be made until the property in question has been occupied for at least 42 days. Any period of occupation of less than 42 days is disregarded for the purposes of calculating the amount of time for which a property has been continuously vacant.

1.7 There is no time limit on backdated awards of discount where a claimant can demonstrate the satisfaction of the Council that an award of discount would have been appropriate at the time.

2. Vacant Property Undergoing Structural Alteration/Undergoing Or In Need Of Majors Repairs In Order To Render It Habitable.

2.1 Properties which were previously defined in accordance with council tax exempt dwelling order 1992/558

2.2 Now entitled to a discount under the council tax (prescribed classes of dwellings)(England)(amendment) regulations 2012/ 2964

2.3 These new arrangements will apply with effect from 1st April 2014

2.4 For the avoidance of doubt, any property which was, or is retrospectively, granted a reduction which begins before 1st April 2014 will be granted 100% discount for any applicable period up to & including 31st March 2014 in accordance with the policy that existed before 1st April 2014. From 1st April 2014 the *balance* of any award will be granted in accordance with the existing policy. The maximum period of discount will be twelve months in total.

2.5 The discount may apply for a maximum of 12 months, including up to 6 months after the completion of works where the property remains vacant.

2.6 The discount is applicable to the property and is not affected by any change of ownership or transfer of responsibility. Where an award of discount is made, no new entitlement to 12 months discount can be made until the property in question has been occupied for at least 42 days. Any period of occupation of less than 42 days is disregarded for the purposes of calculating the amount of time for which a property has been continuously vacant.

3. Second Homes

3.1 For the purposes of Council Tax a second homes is a property which is substantially furnished and is not occupied.

3.2 From 1st April 2014 Council Tax is charged at full rate, rather than with a 10% discount as had been the case up to 31st march 2014.

3.3 Any property classified as a second home will be charged in accordance with the new rate from 1st April 2014.

3.4 Any property which is determined to have been a second home from prior to 31st March 2014 will be awarded discount of 10% up to 31st March 2014 and charged at the full rate of Council Tax thereafter.

4. Empty Property Premium

4.1 Properties which have been vacant continuously for more than 2 years will be charged an additional premium of 50% Council in addition to the full charge.

4.2 The two year period begins from the date that the property became vacant. If a property has already been vacant for 2 years continuously as at 1st April 2014 then the additional premium is applied from 1st April 2014.

4.3 Where a property has been continuously vacant for any period prior to 1st April then council tax reduction will be applied for the period prior to 1st April 2014 on the basis of the provisions that applied at that time, and additional premium will be levied once the two year period has been reached.

5. General Provisions

5.1 Administration and calculations of Council Tax liability taking account of this policy will be calculated in accordance with the prevailing regulations contained in the 1992 Local Government Finance Act and its regulations i.e.

- Liability to Council Tax arises on a daily basis
- The state of affairs which exists at the end of any day is assumed to have lasted all day
- The liable party will be advised of any amendments to their liability through the issue of an amended council tax demand notice.