

From the Minister of Finance

*Dr Steve Aiken, MLA
Chair of the Finance Committee*

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Dear Steve,

THE NON-DOMESTIC RATES VALUATIONS (CORONAVIRUS) BILL

Following on from the briefing session on 3 November and subsequent letters, I write to provide an update on one issue you had concerns about.

The Department urgently makes stakeholders aware of the legislation and explains its retrospective nature.

As I mentioned in my previous correspondence, the Department is in the process of undertaking this and openly welcomes engagement. Letters have already been issued to the following groups, setting out the intent of the Bill and offering an opportunity for them to raise their own concerns directly with Sharon Magee in LPS Rating Policy Division.

- Federation of Small Business
- NI Chamber of Commerce
- Confederation of British Industry
- NI Retail Consortium
- Manufacturing NI
- Hospitality Ulster
- Northern Ireland Hotel Federation
- Retail NI
- RICS Rating Forum

I have also scheduled a round table event with this group, which I will chair, to provide the opportunity for further discussion on the issues.

A round table meeting with District Council Finance Officers has been arranged for 12 November and Council Chief Executives will have an opportunity to speak to me on the matter at our next Executive-Local Government Engagement Forum meeting, which is scheduled for 25 November.

I trust that this addresses the Committee's concerns in this regard.

Is mise le meas,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Conor Murphy." The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

**CONOR MURPHY, MLA
MINISTER OF FINANCE**