



Eich cyf/Your ref P-05-987
Ein cyf/Our ref RE/00453/20

Janet Finch-Saunders MS
Chair, Petitions Committee

14 July 2020

Dear Janet

Thank you for your letter, in your role as Chair of the Petitions Committee, about non-domestic rates and the Welsh Government's support for businesses.

The Welsh Government recognises that not all businesses will benefit from the rates relief scheme and rates related grant support provided in response to the coronavirus pandemic. The package of support has been designed to be affordable within the available funding. To ensure clarity and consistency in administering the schemes, there are no plans to amend the eligibility criteria.

Local authorities have been administering the non-domestic rates (NDR) grant schemes on behalf of and in partnership with the Welsh Government. In working together on this, they have done a remarkable job in distributing more than 60,000 awards and over £729 million of funding since the outbreak began in March.

You will no doubt be aware of the guidance that the Welsh Ministers have published in relation to the NDR grant schemes. Our local authority partners, while holding the discretion as to whether a grant should be awarded, are working to this guidance in the way that they are implementing the schemes. Specifically for amusement arcades and similar businesses, local authorities are thoroughly considering the following conditions before awarding grant funding:

1. All businesses in receipt of small business rates relief (SBRR) are entitled to a £10k grant. This means that smaller gaming/gambling establishments benefitting from SBRR could also be eligible for a grant.
2. Arcades of the type that could be classified as amusements rather than gambling premises are considered leisure establishments and are eligible for the grants either via the SBRR route or, where the rateable value of the premises makes them eligible, for the larger £25k grant as leisure facilities.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Correspondence.Rebecca.Evans@gov.wales
Gohebiaeth.Rebecca.Evans@llyw.cymru

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

3. Gaming establishments (as generally found in a city centre environment but potentially also located anywhere) that usually have limited access to people aged 18 and over and are a) not entitled to SBRR and b) where gambling rather than amusement is the predominant activity are not eligible for the retail, leisure and hospitality grant. The NDR scheme guidance for Retail, Leisure and Hospitality Rates Relief in Wales – 2020-21 explicitly excludes gambling hereditaments.

It has been made clear to local authorities that Ministers fully support the use of their discretionary powers to award or withhold NDR grant payments based on the published scheme guidance.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca Evans". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rebecca Evans AS/MS
Y Gweinidog Cyllid a'r Trefnydd
Minister for Finance and Trefnydd