

Mark Drakeford AM/AC
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Gyllid a Llywodraeth Leol
Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref: OAQ(4)0089(FLG)

Bethan Jenkins AM
Assembly Member for South Wales West
National Assembly for Wales
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1 March 2017

Dear Bethan,

During an Oral Question about non-domestic rates on 15 February, you raised a matter relating to market traders in Neath Port Talbot and increases in the rents being charged by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.

As I understand it, some market traders in the area have suggested that rent increases may result in having to close their business or move it elsewhere. I am happy for my officials to look into this matter more closely with a view to writing to the Council. However, it would be helpful if you could provide any information you have about which traders are affected and their circumstances so that my officials can investigate the matter more fully before I raise the matter with the Council.

In the meantime, it might be helpful for me to provide some information about the revaluation undertaken by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) and the support being provided by the Welsh Government. The VOA has responsibility for independently assessing the rateable values of non-domestic properties in Wales. It published summary valuations for ratepayers on 30 September 2016 ahead of the new rating list coming into effect on 1 April 2017. This was to allow ratepayers to check their details and to notify the VOA of any errors before the valuations come into force. Ratepayers and property owners can check their details and correct any errors using the following website: <https://www.gov.uk/correct-your-business-rates> or by telephone on 03000 505505.

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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.

In terms of support available to ratepayers, the Welsh Government has extended the Small Business Rates Relief scheme until 31 March 2018. In addition, I have introduced a £10 million Transitional Rates Relief scheme to support small businesses affected by the recent revaluation and a further £10 million scheme to provide targeted rates relief for businesses on the high street. Taken together, the available relief schemes mean that around three-quarters of those in Wales who are liable for non-domestic rates will be receiving help with their bills.

In terms of other support available to ratepayers operating on a commercial basis, Business Wales provides a range of advice on the support available to businesses. The service can be contacted on 03000 603000, or via its [website: https://businesswales.gov.wales/](https://businesswales.gov.wales/).

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Drakeford". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

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