

Rebecca Evans MS

Minister for Finance and Local Government

19 October 2021

Dear Rebecca

Welsh Government's Legislative Consent Memorandum on the Rating (Coronavirus) and Directors Disqualification (Dissolved Companies) Bill

We considered the Legislative Consent Memorandum (the Memorandum) on the Rating (Coronavirus) and Directors Disqualification (Dissolved Companies) Bill (the Bill) at our meeting on Monday of this week. There are two important matters, raising points of transparency and accessibility, that we wish to raise with you before we consider how we will report on the Memorandum.

First, the Memorandum refers to the Bill as introduced in the House of Commons on 12 May 2021 and provides a link to the Bill as introduced. However, clause 1 in that version of the Bill does not apply to Wales.

On 7 July 2021, you published a written statement confirming the Welsh Government's intention to legislate "by seeking to include provisions for Wales in the UK Government's Rating (Coronavirus) and Directors Disqualification (Dissolved Companies) Bill... which will operate to disregard Covid-19 appeals on the basis of a...[material change of circumstances]."

The UK Government subsequently amended the Bill at Report Stage in the House of Commons on 9 September 2021 to extend the application of clause 1 of the Bill to Wales. In the explanatory notes accompanying the Bill as introduced into the House of Lords on 10 September, the UK Government stated "The [UK] Government, at the request of the Welsh Government, tabled amendments to the Bill at Commons Report stage to extend application of Clause 1 to non-domestic rating lists compiled for the purposes of business rates in Wales (as well as lists for England)."



These matters are not referred to at all in the Memorandum, which was laid on 21 September 2021, and we would welcome your explanation for their omission.

Secondly, in your July written statement you said "We also intend to introduce regulations in Wales which will have a similar effect to the provisions to be included in the UK Bill, and those regulations would apply until such time as the UK Bill becomes law." As far as we are aware, these regulations have not been made. We have noted that UK Ministers made The Valuation for Rating (Coronavirus) (England) Regulations 2021 in March, and that clause 1(9) of the Bill will revoke the Regulations if and when the Bill is enacted. We would also welcome clarity on this matter, including the current situation regarding the regulations referred to in your written statement.

I am copying this letter to Paul Davies MS, Chair of the Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee.

I would be grateful to receive your reply by 2 November 2021.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Huw Irranca-Davies". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.

Huw Irranca-Davies
Chair

