

# MONTAGU EVANS TALKS...

## EXTENSIVE MEASURES TO ASSIST SCOTTISH RATEPAYERS

BY STEVEN DALTON

This week's announcement by the Chancellor introducing a £330 billion emergency package to businesses affected by COVID19 is welcome but many questions remain unanswered and how exactly these measures will benefit ratepayers in Scotland.

### WHAT WE KNOW

The Scottish Government confirmed that many of the measures announced by the Chancellor will be mirrored in Scotland. These include:

- 12 month rates exemption for retail, hospitality and tourism businesses regardless of rateable value, available from 1 April 2020.
- To qualify for 12 month rates exemption, the property must remain occupied.
- £10,000 grants being made available for businesses that qualify for Small Business Bonus Scheme or Rural Relief.
- £25,000 grants for hospitality, leisure and retail properties with a rateable value between £18,000 and £51,000.
- Grants will be made available from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.
- Freezing the rates poundage for all properties for 2020/21.
- Deferred option of 2020/21 rates liability – options may vary from council to council.

The Scottish Government has provided a list properties that fall to be described as retail, hospitality and leisure as follows:

#### RETAIL

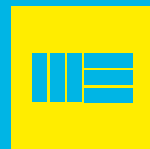
- auction marts
- shops
- opticians
- post offices
- furnishing shops/display rooms
- second hand car lots
- showrooms  
*(including car/caravan showrooms)*
- markets
- car washes
- garden centres
- petrol stations
- shoe repairs/key cutting
- hair and beauty services
- travel agents
- ticket offices
- dry cleaners
- launderettes
- domestic appliance repair
- funeral directors
- photo processing
- tool hire
- car hire

#### HOSPITALITY

- bed and breakfast accommodation
- camping sites
- caravans and caravan sites
- chalets and holiday huts
- guest houses
- hotels and hostels
- public houses
- restaurants
- bothies

#### LEISURE

- arts centres
- fishing huts
- sports clubs/centres/grounds
- galleries
- museums
- cinemas
- music venues
- recreation grounds
- studios
- live music venues
- theatres



## WHAT IS UNKNOWN

It is still, perhaps, early days for full and precise details and its likely other property descriptions will be added to the list above but given the severity of the current climate, ratepayers will be keen to know further detail including:

- Will any additional support be provided to those out with retail, hospitality and leisure?
- How long will an application take to process?
- Do I require to make any rates payments for 2020/21?
- Will State Aid Limits apply? (currently these Limits restrict the level of relief that can be claimed by ratepayers and we are aware that the Government is seeking confirmation from the European Union whether these Limits can be removed)

**It is expected further detail will be provided over the next few days and once known, a further update will be provided.**

**All affected businesses should be aware of the announcements, but this 'discretionary relief' will be applied automatically by the Local Authorities, who will in turn be compensated by the Treasury. Ratepayers who are concerned that due exemption has not been applied should contact our rating specialists for assistance.**

## TALK TO ONE OF THE TEAM



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