



**Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities**

Rt Hon Lord Etherton
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London
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Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE
*Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
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20 April 2023

Dear *Terence*,

LEVELLING UP AND REGENERATION BILL, BUSINESS RATES REVIEW

During day six of the committee for the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, you raised the important issue of business rates, in particular how the review of business rates was undertaken and whether there was public involvement in the process.

I committed to write to you setting out who was consulted and to put that answer in the Library of the House. I am sorry for the delay in responding, and hope the following provides you with the necessary assurances of the public nature of the consultation the government has undertaken.

As you may know, the government announced the Review of Business Rates and published its terms of reference at Spring Budget 2020. As part of the Review process the government carried out an extensive public consultation exercise, including:

- The public call for evidence from July to October 2020, followed by an Interim report in March 2021 setting out an overview of the responses received;
- A second standalone consultation from June to August 2021, seeking further input to inform policy development on more frequent revaluations (MFR); and
- A technical consultation from November 2021 to February 2022, which set out and requested input on the government's proposals to deliver several measures arising from the review, including measures to enable MFR, Improvement Relief, support for investment in green plant and machinery and other administrative changes.

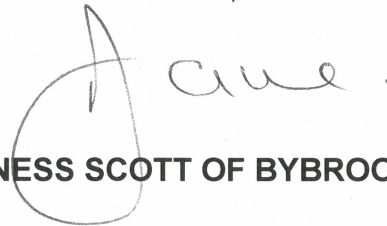
In addition, a wide range of businesses, representative bodies, local government stakeholders and individuals from different sectors and regions submitted input at the various stages of the Review, through both written feedback and stakeholder roundtables. This input was carefully considered. Summaries of responses setting out an overview of the feedback received and the government's response to each of the consultations can be found on gov.uk.

The government published the final report of the business rates review at the Autumn Statement 2021, and in addition, alongside the Spring Budget 2023 the government published the response to the technical consultation.

Furthermore, on 29 March 2023 the Government introduced the Non-Domestic Rating Bill to Parliament, with Second Reading scheduled for 24 April. The Bill is the critical next step following the conclusion of the 2020 Business Rates Review which committed to substantial reforms to make the business rates system fairer and more responsive for all ratepayers. Information on the Bill, the supporting documents and its progress through Parliament can be found at <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3442>

As above, I hope this provides you assurances on the public nature of the consultation and wide-ranging engagement undertaken as part of that process. Nevertheless, if there is anything further you wish to discuss, please do not hesitate to get in touch with my team.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'D. Awe.', with a large, stylized initial 'D'.

BARONESS SCOTT OF BYBROOK