



<b>Subject:</b>	Response received from Minister of Finance re adopting the Scottish model of setting the business rate poundage
<b>Date:</b>	19th April, 2024
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Nora Largey, Interim City Solicitor/Director of Legal and Civic Services
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Jim Hanna, Democratic Services and Governance Manager Trevor Wallace, Director of Finance

<b>Restricted Reports</b>									
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
<p>Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.</p> <p>Insert number <input type="checkbox"/></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Information relating to any individual</li> <li>2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual</li> <li>3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)</li> <li>4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter</li> <li>5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained</li> <li>6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction</li> <li>7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime</li> </ol>									
<p><b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b></p> <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">After Committee Decision</td> <td style="width: 30%;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>After Council Decision</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sometime in the future</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Never</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>		After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
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After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>								

<b>Call-in</b>	
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

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<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	To note the correspondence received from the Minister of Finance.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to note the correspondence as set out in the report.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	The Committee will recall that, at the Council meeting held on 1st February, 2024, it was agreed to write to the Minister of Finance to ask the Department to consider adopting the same model used by the Scottish Government of setting its own business rates to help pay for local services.
3.2	The Committee is advised that a response has been received from the Minister of Finance, Dr Caoimhe Archibald.
3.3	In her response she advises that her Department is currently engaging with Ulster University on the potential for new research on the issue of rate poundage differentials across Council areas here, how this operates within the wider non-domestic rating system and any economic effects.
3.4	She points out though that any structural changes to the rate striking process for non-domestic rates would be a complex one. District Council rate setting sits outside her Ministerial portfolio, local government finance falls within the Minister for Communities' policy and legislative competency.
3.5	<b><u>Financial and Resource Implications</u></b> None associated with this report.
3.6	<b><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></b> None associated with this report.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b>
	Appendix 1 – Response from Minister of Finance