

## **POLICY NOTE**

### **THE NON-DOMESTIC RATES (CORONAVIRUS RELIEFS) (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT REGULATIONS 2020**

#### **SSI 2020/230**

The above instrument is made in exercise of the powers conferred by section 153 of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994 and by all other enabling powers. The instrument is subject to the negative procedure.

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of these regulations is to introduce an additional 100% non-domestic rates relief for properties with specified uses in the retail, hospitality and leisure (RHL) sectors, to non-domestic properties used wholly or mainly as a soft play centre, amusement arcade or amusement centre. Premises are not included in the definition of an eligible amusement arcade or amusement centre if they allow access to Fixed-Odds Betting Terminals (B2 gaming machine, set out in regulation 5(5) of the Categories of Gaming Machine Regulations 2007). The relief will apply for the whole 2020-2021 financial year and is backdated to 1 April 2020.

The regulations also make a change to the Non-Domestic Rates (Transitional Relief) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2020 to exclude soft play centres, amusement arcades and amusement centres from the definition of relevant lands and heritages for the relief granted by those regulations (since the regulations grant 100% relief, making transitional relief irrelevant for these uses).

#### **Policy objective**

The RHL relief was introduced to provide temporary support to counter the adverse economic impact of COVID-19 for the 2020-2021 financial year only.

The relief is already available for properties in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors, where they are wholly or mainly used on a day for a purpose specified in the classes in schedule 1 of The Non-Domestic Rates (Coronavirus Reliefs) (Scotland) Regulations 2020.

The relief is not available for properties that were unoccupied on 17 March 2020. This is in order to target relief to properties that are in difficulty in 2020-21 as a result of COVID-19 directly.

#### **Consultation**

There is no statutory requirement to consult on these Regulations.

#### **Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment**

No Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment has been carried out.

## **Financial Implications**

The decrease in the amount of non-domestic rates payable is in line with the policy objectives as outlined above. The RHL relief is subject to State aid *de minimis*.

Scottish Government

*Local Government and Communities Directorate*