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From: Nick Rose [<mailto:Nick@RHMCommercial.com>]

Sent: 12 November 2021 10:23

To: info@jimallister.org

Subject: Proposed Rates Bill

Dear Jim

I am contacting you regarding the Non-domestic Rates Valuations (Coronavirus) Bill being proposed by the Department of Finance.

We are a Belfast firm of Property Consultants specialising in advice to clients on rates issues.

We totally agree with your comments during the Finance Committee meeting on 3rd November.

The proposed Bill is a very dangerous piece of legislation because it seeks to introduce retrospective legislation without any public consultation whatsoever.

Like you, we are bemused why it has taken LPS more than 18 months to devise this dangerous Bill. Their excuse seems to be that they were taking legal advice but, as you know, such legal advice could have been obtained in a matter of weeks.

We have a raft of appeals in the system on behalf of businesses who are struggling for their survival and LPS has simply parked those appeals for 18 months whilst they “consider their position” - all very unsatisfactory to say the least.

Whilst we appreciate the need for certainly with the outstanding appeals we are amazed by the LPS admission that they don't see the need for a consultation exercise because it won't change their minds!!

This is totally undermining the role of the finance committee which exists to prevent such flagrant breaches of the democratic process.

I hope that you and the rest of the committee will continue to press for a short sharp consultation process (followed by evidence to the committee) so that industry bodies and ratepayers can put forward their case against (or to amend) the proposed Bill.

Regards

Nick

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