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| WRITTEN STATEMENT BYTHE WELSH GOVERNMENT |

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| **TITLE** | **Review of non-domestic rates reliefs** |
| **DATE** | **20 June 2024** |
| **BY** | **Rebecca Evans MS, Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Constitution and Cabinet Office** |

In 2022, I made a [statement](https://www.gov.wales/oral-statement-non-domestic-rates-reform) setting out a programme of non-domestic rates reform for the current Senedd term and [consulted](https://www.gov.wales/reforming-non-domestic-rates-wales) on a range of specific proposals for improvements. Most of these proposals are reflected in the Local Government Finance (Wales) Bill, which is currently being considered by the Senedd.

As part of this reform agenda, I committed to undertaking a review of non-domestic rates reliefs. I am pleased to confirm that, following the outcome of a competitive procurement process earlier this year, a research contract has been awarded to Alma Economics to conduct this review.

The Welsh Government spends over £250m annually on permanent non-domestic rates reliefs. In addition, we have provided more than £1bn in temporary reliefs since 2020, to support eligible business in the sectors most affected by economic challenges during that period.

This review is being undertaken to provide an insight into the effectiveness of the considerable financial support offered to non-domestic ratepayers and to inform how the existing package of reliefs may be changed in the future. There are three core strands to the research:

1. Principles – develop a set of key principles to guide future changes to non-domestic rates reliefs.
2. Practicalities – test and refine the developed principles, considering the practicality of the reliefs and their administration by local authorities.
3. Perceptions – consider the perspectives of current ratepayers and their representatives, to further test and refine the principles.

The review of reliefs will be completed over the next 12 months, culminating in the publication of a Government Social Research report. Stakeholders will be invited to engage with the review as it progresses, and I encourage participation where the opportunity arises.