

PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FAO: LOCAL REPORTERS

TUESDAY 21st FEBRUARY 2017

MSP WELCOMES SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT RATES RELIEF FOR KIRKCALDY CONSTITUENCY

MEASURES PROVE SNP GOVERNMENT WILL ALWAYS BACK BUSINESSES IN FIFE

SNP MSP for Kirkcaldy, David Torrance MSP, has backed the Scottish Government's proposals on business rates, after Finance Secretary Derek Mackay announced a wide-ranging relief scheme that will offer strong support to businesses across the Kirkcaldy Constituency.

Overall, the complete package of Scottish Government relief will ensure that 77% of Fife business will see either no change or a decrease in their business rates bill – with more businesses being entitled to support through the small business bonus scheme. The Scottish Government had already taken action to reduce the rates poundage to help businesses who have seen a revaluation.

The relief proposals will provide support for hotels, restaurants, pubs and cafes, which had seen their rates rise the steepest following the 2015 revaluation. Any rises in this sector will be capped at 12.5% - providing substantial support to the tourism and hospitality industries in Kirkcaldy High Street and the rest of Kirkcaldy Constituency.

Commenting, SNP MSP David Torrance said:

“This announcement by the Scottish Government proves once again the SNP's commitment to local businesses across the Kirkcaldy Constituency – with the substantial package of support ensuring that many businesses will not see any rise in the rates that they pay.

“The support for the tourism and hospitality sectors is very welcome – after these industries were left facing substantial hikes in their rates bills. The cap of a 12.5% increase provides excellent support to hotels, pubs, restaurants and cafes and will greatly support Kirkcaldy High Street's local economy.

“The extension to the small business bonus will see over 100,000 firms across Scotland pay no rates whatsoever, which is a strong package of support for local businesses, and comes in addition to other funding offered in the Scottish Government's budget, including the £500m Scottish Growth Scheme, and action taken to reduce the rates poundage.

“This relief package shows that only the SNP are interested in taking decisive action to support communities and businesses, whilst the Tories chase cheap headlines by carping from the side-lines.

“Overall, 77% of businesses in Fife will see either a decrease or no change in the bills that they pay – helping to protect jobs and support firms in Kirkcaldy. It is time for the opposition parties

to put their political opportunism to one side and to get behind the substantial support that the Scottish Government is proposing.”

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITOR:

Local breakdown on proportion of businesses to see a decrease/no change in bills:

What this means for properties in different parts of the country

The following table shows the number of rateable properties who will either see a (cash terms) reduction in their bill or see no change in their bill as a result of the Business Rates revaluation. This modelling is known to underestimate these properties because it does not take account of all the support through relief schemes provided by the Scottish Government and by Local Authorities in Scotland.

Local authority	No of rateable properties	% with decrease or no change in bill*
Aberdeen City	8,603	38%
Aberdeenshire	11,695	60%
Angus	4,703	78%
Argyll & Bute	8,311	67%
Clackmannanshire	1,532	63%
Dumfries & Galloway	9,013	71%
Dundee City	5,722	80%
East Ayrshire	3,876	70%
East Dunbartonshire	2,345	74%
East Lothian	3,323	63%
East Renfrewshire	1,736	78%
Edinburgh, City of	19,411	62%
Eilean Siar	2,429	66%
Falkirk	4,809	70%
Fife	13,299	77%
Glasgow City	25,582	73%
Highland	17,131	68%
Inverclyde	2,317	78%
Midlothian	2,856	60%
Moray	4,540	57%
North Ayrshire	5,009	72%
North Lanarkshire	9,855	79%
Orkney Islands	2,130	74%
Perth & Kinross	8,273	72%
Renfrewshire	6,343	73%
Scottish Borders	7,247	61%
Shetland Islands	1,986	69%
South Ayrshire	4,679	69%
South Lanarkshire	9,764	75%
Stirling	4,882	71%
West Dunbartonshire	2,855	74%
West Lothian	5,673	68%
<i>Designated utilities **</i>	29	45%
Scotland	221,958	69%

** These percentages are a known underestimate. In the first instance Gross Bill changes are analysed. Some basic property by property modelling of SBBS is then applied. In reality, many more businesses will benefit from some form of SBBS as well as the other reliefs provided by the Scottish Government.*

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