



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ASSC Reacts to Barclay Review With "Cautious Optimism"

The Association of Scotland's Self-Caterers (ASSC) has welcomed several of the recommendations made in the Barclay Review of Non-Domestic Rates but also expressed a desire to see further action taken to help the hospitality sector in Scotland. In its reaction, the ASSC - the only organisation representing Scotland's self-catering sector - praised some of the review's recommendations as being helpful to the prosperity of the sector but also noted the need for development in some areas.

The ASSC warmly welcomed the action proposed in the Barclay Review on a Business Growth Accelerator for establishing business in Scotland and believes doing so will be a boost for the Scottish self-catering and hospitality sector. The Association also gave a reserved welcome to the proposals for three year revaluations but also drew attention to the need for an opportunity to have further input on this issue. Given that Barclay was developed with input from the ASSC, the Association hopes that its contributions will continue to be welcomed.

However, the ASSC has expressed doubts over the proposed changes to the Small Business Bonus Scheme (SBBS). While the Association welcomed the threshold of 140 available days and 70 nights of lets in order for a small self-catering business to qualify for SBBS, as most such businesses already comply, it has expressed concerns that other aspects of SBBS reform proposed by the review will place an unfair burden on smaller businesses. This concern is supported by a recent SPICe report and, if realised, would cause the very effect that SBBS was introduced to avoid in the first place. ASSC feels that action needs to be taken to avoid this unfair impact on such an important element of Scotland's economy.

In particular, the Association has an excellent record of working with the Assessors on SBBS and, although every effort was made to encourage businesses to make accurate returns, the data submitted ahead of the 2017 revaluation could have been improved upon. ASSC also broadly welcomes the increased level of transparency contained within the review and hopes that the goal of ensuring a level playing field for all involved is achieved.

Generally, the ASSC welcomes the opportunity to further work with stakeholders from across government and industry as the recommendations contained in the review are discussed and implemented. While there will be areas of disagreement and need for negotiation, the Association is motivated to work with all interested parties in a spirit of honesty and good faith spurred by a desire to promote and protect Scotland's vital small businesses.

An ASSC spokesperson said: "The ASSC's attitude towards much of the Barclay Review of Non-Domestic Rates is one of cautious optimism and welcome. "While we see progress being made in a number of key areas, there are parts,

such as the handling of SBBS, that give us grounds for concern.

“ASSC will continue to be a willing and enthusiastic participant in all future discussions and we will endeavour to work constructively with others in order to achieve the best results for our members and for the wider Scottish economy.”

ENDS

Editor's Notes

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