

Explanatory Memorandum to The Non-Domestic Rating (Collection and Enforcement) (Local Lists) (Amendment) (Wales) Regulations 2014

This Explanatory Memorandum has been prepared by Local Government Finance and Public Service Performance Division and is laid before the National Assembly for Wales in conjunction with the above subordinate legislation and in accordance with Standing Order 27.1.

Minister's Declaration

In my view, this Explanatory Memorandum gives a fair and reasonable view of the expected impact of The Non-Domestic Rating (Collection and Enforcement) (Local Lists) (Amendment) (Wales) Regulations 2014.

Lesley Griffiths

Minister for Local Government and Government Business

20 February 2014

1. Description

The Non-Domestic Rating (Collection and Enforcement) (Local Lists) (Amendment) (Wales) Regulations 2014 amend The Non-Domestic Rating (Collection and Enforcement) (Local Lists) Regulations 1989 (SI 1989/1058) (the “Local Lists Regulations”).

The Non-Domestic Rating (Collection and Enforcement) (Local Lists) (Amendment) (Wales) Regulations 2014 will enable Local Authorities to provide certain information supplied with Non-Domestic Rates bills relating to local lists by electronic means via their websites rather than in hard copy.

2. Matters of special interest to the Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee

None.

3. Legislative background

Under paragraph 2 of Schedule 9 to the Local Government Finance Act 1988, Local Authorities are required to “publish the prescribed information in the prescribed manner”. Sections 62 and 143(1) and (2) and paragraph 2 of Schedule 9 to the Act give the Welsh Ministers wide powers to make regulations in relation to the collection of relevant taxes. Those powers to make regulations were transferred from the National Assembly to the Welsh Ministers under paragraph 30 of Schedule 11 to the Government of Wales Act 2006.

4. Purpose and intended effect of the legislation

The proposed amendments to the Local Lists Regulations will enable Local Authorities to provide certain information supplied with Non-Domestic Rates bills relating to local lists by electronic means via their websites rather than in hard copy. Local Authorities would be required to provide certain details, including the address of the relevant website, in the demand notice. The information will still be available to the ratepayer in hardcopy where it is specifically requested.

The amendments to the relevant Regulations will result in improvements in the speed of communication and in administrative savings for Local Authorities. This is a cheaper method of communication than paper delivery and will enable Local Authorities largely to dispense with the need to print and post documents.

It is estimated Local Authorities could make cash savings of at least £110k a year in total and savings in staff time as a result of this amendment. There would also be environmental benefits.

5. Consultation

A consultation exercise was not carried out as although the amending regulations impact on ratepayers in the way they receive the supplementary information to their bills i.e. via their Local Authorities website the option to receive this information by hard copy is still available. The amendments are mostly of interest to Local Authorities due to the cost and time saving efficiencies and have no policy implications. In light of this, it is considered these Regulations can proceed without consultation.

6. Regulatory Impact Assessment

A regulatory impact assessment has not been produced for this instrument as the cost savings only relate to Local Authorities and has no policy implications.