

The Commons Treasury Committee has published its report on business rates. Are changes on the horizon?

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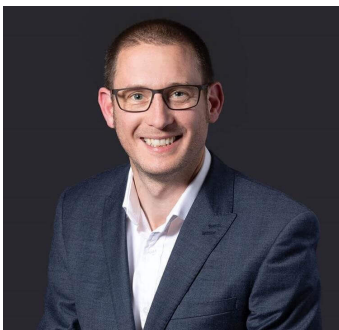
The Treasury Committee has just published its report on its inquiry into the administration of business rates in England and, at first glance, it could be the catalyst to drive the change that many businesses have been calling for.

Amongst other findings, the inquiry has highlighted how the current system does not fall on all businesses equally. Similar businesses can end up paying widely varying rates, and retailers that require a high street presence pay disproportionately more, than those that are internet based. The report also argues that the number of reliefs available and the complexities surrounding their application further proves how strained the system is.

Many alternatives were presented to the committee and it is recommended that the Government should prepare a consultation on these in time for the Spring Statement 2020.

However, it cannot be ignored that the Government generates a huge amount of income from business rates - £31 billion in 2018-19. If change is coming, then it is certainly going to take time.

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