

SGF

Scottish Grocers' Federation

www.scottishshop.org.uk

Promoting Responsible Community Retailing Since 1918
to ensure a sustainable and prosperous convenience industry in Scotland



John Swinney MSP
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery
The Scottish Government
St. Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

Sent by e-mail

21 November 2022

Dear Deputy First Minister,

SUPPORT FOR BUSINESS

Last week the Chancellor of the Exchequer set out his Autumn Statement 2022 and announced a significant business rates support package for businesses in England. Scottish Grocers' Federation (SGF) believes that the Scottish Government should act now and provide, at the very least, the same support in Scotland.

There are 5,098 convenience stores in Scotland, which includes all the major symbol groups, co-ops, and convenience multiples in Scotland. In total, convenience stores provide over 49,000 jobs. Over the last year, convenience stores in Scotland have invested £65m in their business. During this same period, the UK convenience sector contributed over £9.7bn in GVA and over £9bn in taxes.

Convenience retailing businesses have been remarkably resilient, agile, and adaptable over last the 3 years however they are being confronted with an exceptionally challenging trading environment which is characterised by the industry being exposed to soaring energy costs, rising inflation, and rising interest rates and a cost-of-living crisis. On top of this the smooth flows that produce efficient and effective supply chains are broken introducing further costs and disruption.

Find us on



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It is essential that the Scottish Government acts urgently to help alleviate the pressures businesses are currently facing.

SGF would therefore ask that, as a minimum, you match the support outlined by the Chancellor and provide 75% business rates relief for properties in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors for the 2023 to 2024 tax year, up to a maximum of £110,000 of relief per business, and likewise freeze the business rates multiplier (Poundage) at its current level in 2023-24.

Such action would provide vital support and certainty to convenience retailers and offer some relief from the challenges and costs which they are trying to cope with in order maintain business survival during these exceptional economic conditions.

We look forward to hearing from you and are happy to discuss further if you think that would be useful.

Yours sincerely

Luke McGarty

LUKE MCGARTY

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Scottish Grocers' Federation

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