



DAVID T C DAVIES MP  
Member for Monmouth

**Please Reply To:**  
16 Maryport Street  
Usk  
Monmouthshire  
NP15 1AB

**Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> November 2016  
**Our Ref:** C(7)/ld  
**Your Ref:**

**\*URGENT\***

Mark Drakeford AM  
Cabinet Secretary  
Finance and Local Government  
Welsh Government  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

Dear Mark

I will be grateful if you could explain to me why Monmouthshire has been unfairly penalised by the 2017 business rates revaluation.

Our retailers, small traders and businesses are once again being asked to shoulder a higher proportion of the rates burden liability in Wales when there are inconsistencies with other councils. I understand the Vale of Glamorgan, for example, is experiencing an overall reduction of 10.6 per cent.

Monmouthshire is facing huge hikes – greater than any other local authority area apart from Conwy – with 65 per cent of businesses set to be affected. Numerous rural business owners are being hit with increases in excess of 130 per cent, which puts them under serious threat of closure. Monnow Bridge Fish Bar in Monmouth will see a massive increase of over **200 per cent**, from £9,800 to £20,000-plus.

Around 200 Monmouthshire companies will also lose out on small business rates relief after the Valuation Office Agency reassessed their rateable value at higher than the £12,000 qualifying limit.

Pubs, shops, Post Office branches and village halls seem to have been particularly hard hit; local facilities that are vitally important to the rural economy in Monmouthshire. Unless something is done, cherished family-owned businesses will be forced to shut down. I cannot believe you will want this to happen.

Many people are still unaware of the forthcoming rise and haven't had a chance to respond to the recent six-week consultation on transitional arrangements. While it must be said not all our businesses face increases, and indeed there may be good reason for some proposed changes, the system must be seen to be transparent and fair.

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I am therefore writing to urgently request a delay in implementing the new tariffs, due to come into force next April, while further work is carried out to scrutinise the impact they are likely to have on rural business communities.

Yours ever

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David".

**David T C Davies MP**

**Cc: Paul Matthews, Chief Executive, Monmouthshire County Council  
C Cllr Bob Greenland, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Enterprise**