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Standards, Procedures and Public Appointments
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1 September 2026

Dear Convener

Use of Common Law Powers to Appoint a Chair of the Independent Review of the valuation for licensed hospitality premises

The Programme for Government 2025-26 committed government to commissioning an independent review on the valuation methodology applied to non-domestic property in the licensed hospitality sector. This commitment recognised the ongoing concerns raised by the licensed hospitality sector on the valuation methodology applied to non-domestic property in this sector.

An independent Chair was previously appointed, using Common Law powers, in order to ensure that the review is conducted with impartiality and objectivity. I am now writing to inform you that following the resignation of Solicitor General BJ Gill from the position of chair, I have invited Jonathan Murphy to chair the independent review of valuation of licensed hospitality premises and that he has accepted this appointment. A daily rate will be payable to Mr Murphy.

Mr Murphy is an Advocate, and he has a general practice in property law, public law, valuation for rating and judicial review. He has acted for clients in appeals in all forums and appeared in important and high-value rating valuation cases in the Upper Tribunal and Lands Valuation Appeal Court in recent years. I welcome the expertise and skills which Mr Murphy will bring to the role, and he will be supported by a panel of group members which together comprise a Review Group.

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

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The findings of the Independent Review will be reported by the end of 2026, and will be considered in advance of the 2029 revaluation cycle.

Yours sincerely



HANNAH MARY GOODLAD

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