Political update: February 2023

Briefings



27 January 2023

Political update: CIOT, ATT and LITRG work with politicians from all parties in pursuit of better informed tax policymaking.

As well as its general inquiry into HMRC's annual report (see above), the Public Accounts Committee has been looking into the value for money of HMRC's Covid support schemes and into the effectiveness of the digital services tax. CIOT submitted evidence to both inquiries and this was referred to by MPs in their questioning of HMRC officials in both sessions.

CIOT were also mentioned by Scottish tax minister Tom Arthur in a response to a parliamentary question on the Office of Tax Simplification. He said, in essence, that CIOT thinks the OTS should be retained and he agrees with us!

In the Lords, Lord Palmer (Lib Dem) asked a question that ATT had suggested during a mini-debate on the tax treatment of trees and woodlands.

MPs and peers have been debating the increase to the stamp duty land tax threshold. CIOT (jointly with the Stamp Taxes Practitioners Group) provided a

briefing identifying areas where greater clarity is needed. During the debate, Lib Dem spokesperson Baroness Kramer noted the ‘loopholes and anomalies’ identified by CIOT and the STPG and asked the government to investigate them further. In response, Treasury minister Baroness Penn said that the government were aware of the
CIOT/STPG points and ‘have asked officials in HMRC and the Treasury to work with those groups to discuss their comments’.’

In December, Lords Speaker John McFall made his first big speech on reform of the House of Lords. ATT/CIOT Head of External Relations George Crozier asked him if he thought the upper House could take on a bigger role in scrutinising tax legislation. McFall, a former Commons Treasury Committee chair, said he was a convert to the idea that the Lords could play an active role in tax law.