

Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum

Minutes of Meeting dated Thursday 25 October 2007

APPENDIX A ACTION POINTS 5.6 AND 9.1 OF 26 JULY 2007 MINUTES

SEAN CLARK'S RESPONSES (Head of Finance and Property Services)

National Non Domestic Rates Notes

BUSINESS RATES

Empty rates are payable at 50% after a business property has been empty for 3 months.

Only exceptions to this are that no empty rates are charged on listed buildings or industrial buildings such as stores, warehouses, or properties that have a rateable value under £2,200.

All the time a property has a rateable value in the valuation list, empty rates are charged accordingly.

Once a property is demolished, the valuation officer will take the property out of the rating list, so rates liability ceases at that date.

With regard to the cinema site, once demolition starts, the site will be taken out of the valuation list, so any rate liability ceases. At the moment the site is being charged 50% empty rates. (in relation to action point 5.2 That Sean Clark reply regarding reference to business rates being paid on empty buildings)

In answer to your question **regarding cafes moving onto pedestrian areas**, there is no automatic increase in rates. (Action 9.2 That Sean Clark be asked whether or not business rates were automatically increased when shop owners placed tables and chairs outside their premises.)

The Valuation Office need to be informed (generally through noticing that this has occurred) and criteria that would be considered includes whether there is exclusive use of the area occupied.