Local Government and Communities Committee

Consideration of the Council Tax (Substitution of Proportion) (Scotland) Order 2016

Submission from Kevin Hannah

1. Overall, do you support the principles of the Government's plans to reform Council Tax?

   No.

2. To what extent will the Government's proposed reforms make the system of Council Tax fairer?

   They won't.

3. To what extent will the changes be straightforward for local authorities to implement?

   Very.

4. Do you support the Government's planned changes to Council Tax reductions?

   No because Local Authorities are not transparent enough. I know people on low incomes who don't qualify for the reduction scheme.

5. Please add any other comments on any aspect of the proposed reforms.

   People on any kind of benefits eg working tax credit should not see an increase in Council Tax - under the existing rules the threshold for council tax reduction is too low. It should be the same threshold as working tax credit.

   People on mediocre salaries with high childcare costs for example could see an increase under the current proposals, making them worse off.

   Anyone on any type of benefit should be exempt from an increase in proportion. Older people on fixed pensions should also be protected from the proposed increase.

   Only the top two bands should see an increase, and that increase should be income-related.
The current proposals are too blunt an instrument and should be refined to a fairer system with some form of local income tax and exemptions.

The current proposals are regressive for many people.

Kevin Hannah