Local Government and Communities Committee

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

Submission from Roy Keil

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

I do not support the reforms.

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

The proposals do not make the system of Council Tax fairer as they do not take account of the ability to pay. I am retired and living with my wife, who is also retired, in a band “G” property our annual income is less than £30,000. A family of four adults living in an exactly similar property with a joint income in excess of £100,000 would pay the same in council tax as my wife and I.

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

Of course they will be straightforward. Implementing a local income tax would also be straightforward, except that the wealthy would dodge the local income tax. However, rather than pursue a fair system the government would seem to be rewarding the wealthy tax avoiders and punishing the less affluent tax non-avoiders.

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

Yes. However, It does not protect people like myself. It seems that I fall into a new “poverty” trap where I have dared to buy a property which has risen in value without making provision for my retirement income to rise in value correspondingly.

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

I voted for the SNP because they promised to change the system of local taxation to a system of local income tax. I do not see that it is fair that the wealthiest people in the land pay very little more than I do in local council tax. This despite the huge disparity in our respective income.
Roy Keil