

CCBB



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The Rt Hon Malcolm Rifkind MP  
Scottish Office  
Dover House  
Whitehall  
LONDON  
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My ref:

Your ref:

27 October 1986

NBM

Dear Malcolm

at trap

Your letter of 15 October to Norman Fowler set out your proposals on the issues raised by E(LF) on the form in which the rebate scheme should be carried forward to the community charge.

My main concern is that the decisions taken for Scotland should not close options for England. In particular I would want to keep open the possibility of fixing a ceiling on the level of community charge for which rebates should be available. I accept however that the highest charges in Scotland are likely to be below the level at which I might wish to impose a cut off in England. On that basis, therefore, I have no objection to what you propose.

Similarly I have no objection to the proposal to increase the size of the minimum rebate to 50p. That will help to reduce the number of benefit cases.

I have sympathy too with your arguments for not throwing doubt on the 20% minimum contribution to rates and the community charge at this stage. But I must particularly ask that nothing is said which might close options for us on this. Since you are not proposing a change there should be little need for the question to arise.

I am copying this to the Prime Minister, the other members of E(LF) and Sir Robert Armstrong.

NICHOLAS RIDLEY

LOCAL GOVT Rating PTS

