

Ref. A087/2609

MR BEARPARK

---

I have seen a copy of the minute which the Secretary of State for Wales sent to the Prime Minister on 9 September about the transfer of rating responsibility for Wales from the Secretary of State for the Environment to the Secretary of State for Wales.

2. As Miss Bowdery said in her minute of 12 August, there is no objection to the proposal in machinery of government terms.

3. I fear that this is a matter on which Welsh (as well as Walkerian) amour propre is at issue: rating is the only aspect of local government finance in Wales for which the Secretary of State for Wales is not responsible, and the Secretary of State for the Environment is prepared to relinquish it.

4. The important consideration seems to me to be that separate responsibilities should not lead to differences in the operation of the rating system, or at least not to differences for which Ministers collectively have not accepted as reasonable and sensible. I suggest that the Prime Minister might accept the proposal, subject to satisfactory arrangements to secure that --- objective. I offer the draft attached.

RTA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

11 September 1987



DRAFT LETTER TO PS/SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WALES

The Prime Minister has seen your Secretary of State's minute of 9 September about the transfer of rating responsibility for Wales.

She is prepared to agree that responsibility for rating in Wales should be transferred from the Secretary of State for the Environment to your Secretary of State, on the understanding that the transfer is not intended to lead to differences in the operation of the rating system as between England and Wales, and that any proposal whereby operation of the system in Wales would diverge from operation of the system in England would be put to the appropriate Cabinet Committee for consideration.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to members of E(LF), the Minister of State, Privy Council Office and Sir Robert Armstrong.

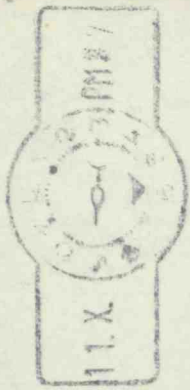


DRAFT LETTER TO PS/SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WALES

The Prime Minister has seen your Secretary of State's minute of 9 September about the transfer of rating responsibility for Wales.

She is prepared to agree that responsibility for rating in Wales should be transferred from the Secretary of State for the Environment to your Secretary of State, on the understanding that the transfer is not intended to lead to differences in the operation of the rating system as between England and Wales, and that any proposal whereby operation of the system in Wales would diverge from operation of the system in England would be put to the appropriate Cabinet Committee for consideration.

I am sending copies of this letter to the Private Secretaries to members of E(LF), the Minister of State, Privy Council Office and Sir Robert Armstrong.



LOCAL GOVT. ratny. pt 8.

CONFIDENTIAL