

CCBA



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My ref:

Your ref:

The Rt Hon The Viscount Whitelaw CH MC
Lord President of the Council
Privy Council Office
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nom 6

October 1986

Dear Willie

COMMUNITY CHARGE: DUTIES ON REGISTRATION OFFICER

Malcolm Rifkind copied to me his letter of 25^{at 7.00} September on this subject.

The main issue for me is whether to have a nominated individual in the local authority on whom responsibility for these matters should rest; or whether to impose the duties simply on "the local authority". There are strong arguments in favour of Malcolm's approach. The difficulty is that, in England, there is no obvious candidate to fill the role. In Scotland it will be the assessor, who also maintains the valuation list: in England that job is done by the Inland Revenue. I will circulate my own proposals on this in due course.

So far as the suggested duties themselves are concerned, I have only one comment. I wonder whether it would not be sensible to provide for the possibility of excluding some sources of information from the proposed power of the registration officer to have access to local authority records? I have in mind particularly some social work case files. Such sources are likely to be of little practical use, yet insisting on their availability would expose the proposals to needless criticism.

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

*Yours sincerely
Nicholas Ridley*

NICHOLAS RIDLEY

LOCAL GOVT Rating PTS

