

# Isitfair®

## Council Tax Reform

A non party political nationwide campaign

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**Subject:** Isitfair Newsletter 31

We have recently received a copy of the Liberal Democrats' discussion paper on local government funding.

Earlier Lib Dem policy papers have included land value tax and we have always maintained that LVT is not fair. What worries me is the position of power now held by them and the possibility that, like the mansion tax, other aspects of this paper may be used as trading off tools.

I was always under the impression that the Liberal Democrats were very keen on fairness, perhaps I have been wrong all along, or maybe my version of fairness is out of kilter.

I know that I have used this example before and I make no excuses for doing so again. Why should council tax on a similar property across the country vary so much? Why should the tax vary between Band B and Band H for a property of a similar size in a different part of the country?

All the Isitfair campaign calls for is a fair and equitable way of funding local government. The present system is unfair and unaffordable and until any of these politicians demonstrate that they have **at last** grasped that

(a) one of the flaws in the current system is its failure to recognise that the value, and the consequent banding, of your property is dependent not on how grand or how simple it is, but on where in the country you live; that

(b) so-called "wealthy" areas are not entirely populated by "wealthy" people; and that

(c) the differences across the country in Formula Grant per head are so huge that there is no possible chance that the system can be fair,

they should go back to the drawing board. Perhaps this is what the Lib Dems are trying to do, but we believe that Land Value Tax does nothing to correct the situation at point (a) above. And actually, neither does Mansion Tax which fails to recognise that a home designated a "mansion" in one area will be very different indeed from one designated a "mansion" in another.

We all realise that local government must be funded but how it is done, must be fair for all  
<http://www.libdems.org.uk/siteFiles/resources/docs/conference/103%20-%20Local%20Government%20Finance.pdf>

### **COURT CASE**

June Farrow has received enormous publicity for her cause. She feels that a person living alone should receive a bigger discount on their council tax bill. She also believes that households with more than two adults should pay more. However her campaign has come to a halt for the present – her bill has been cleared. The amount of correspondence triggered by her case has been enormous and although not everyone agrees with her stance, many of them feel she has a point. Isitfair that she and others like her receive a 25% discount? What do you think?

**LOCALISATION OF COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT** (you will find a little more detail on the government's proposal on page 6 of the Newsletter attached).

A Sheffield newspaper recently reported the following:-

Sheffield Council leader Cllr Julie Dore said: "This is an unfair policy because it will have a disproportionately worse effect on poorer northern communities and does not take into account the fact that the number of claimants could increase when more public sector jobs are under threat."

Councillor Dore added, "It will be up to us to decide how to reduce the level of benefits.

**"We could ask households who are receiving 100 per cent council tax benefit to make a contribution, or we could change or remove the single person's discount."**

The Department for Communities and Local Government confirmed today that ... **the single persons discount is provided in legislation and cannot be changed** They have no plans to change the existing legislation Therefore the council leader has got it wrong ...

Had this been the case it would have been outrageous for people to lose this discount. As it is the comments made by the councillor have been **outrageous** and have caused some unnecessary distress to single occupiers.

What makes her think that only her part of the country will be badly affected by the cuts?

### **COUNCIL TAX REFERENDA**

I know we have already done a survey on Referenda and we have made your views available to Government, but please, please can you let me have a yes or no answer on the form at the end of page 8 (copy and paste?). I can then put the responses together with those of our postal members

Yours in the cause

Christine

***Isitfair is a Nationwide Campaign calling for the Reform of the Council Tax System***

***Please visit [www.isitfair.co.uk](http://www.isitfair.co.uk)***