

Our Ref: DRH/KT/121200

23 November 2009

The Rt Hon John Denham MP
Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

Dear Secretary of State

RE: DISTRIBUTION OF REVENUE SUPPORT GRANT TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES

I am directed by my Council to draw your attention to the following resolution that was passed unanimously by the Council at its meeting on 19 November 2009.

"In the light of the state of the nations public finances and the likely future reductions in public expenditure, this Council calls upon whichever Party forms the next Government following the General Election to carry out a comprehensive review of the formulae for Government grant aid to local authorities to ensure that there is an equitable distribution of such support between different types of authorities and between different geographic regions. The Council considers this is necessary to avoid damaging cuts to essential services as a result of reduced Government financial support being compounded by a flawed distribution system."

My Council would be interested to receive your response to its call for a comprehensive review of the formulae for distribution of Government grant to local authorities.

Please note that I am writing in similar vein to the shadow spokespersons from the other major parties.

Yours sincerely



CHIEF EXECUTIVE

MRS CAROLINE SPELMAN, M.P.

Meriden



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA



David Hughes
Chief Executive of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Gibson Building
Gibson Drive
Kings Hill
West Mailins
Kent ME19 4LZ

26th November, 2009

Our Ref: CS/EG

Dear Mr Hughes,

Thank you for your letter dated 23rd November regarding the distribution of Revenue Support Grant to local authorities. I would like to direct you to our green paper 'Control Shift' in which we state our intention of reviewing the formula for Revenue Support Grant. The green paper is available on the Conservative Party website at www.conservatives.com.

Thank you once again for your letter.

Yours sincerely,


Caroline Spelman MP

CHIEF EXECUTIVE	
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ACKNOWLEDGED	YES/NO

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
Tel. 020 7219 4189 Fax. 020 7219 0378
Email. caroline@carolinespelman.com www.carolinespelman.com

From: The Rt. Hon. Sir John Stanley, M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

30 November 2009

CHIEF EXECUTIVE	
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04 DEC 2009	
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ACKNOWLEDGED	YES/NO

Mr David Hughes
Chief Executive
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Gibson Building, Gibson Drive
Kings Hill, West Malling
Kent, ME19 4LZ

Distribution of Revenue Support Grant to Local Authorities

Many thanks for your letter of November 23 and for a copy of the unanimous resolution passed by the Borough Council calling for an equitable distribution of revenue support grant to local authorities as set out in your letter to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, John Denham.

I strongly support the Borough Council's resolution.

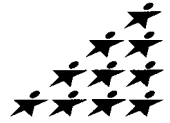
The present Government's huge shifting of revenue support grant away from the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council and other councils in the South East has been, in my view, unreasonable and unfair and needs to be reversed.

I have now written myself to the Secretary of State giving my strong support to the Borough Council's resolution.

I should be grateful if you could inform the members of the Borough Council of my reply.

promoting better local government

CHIEF EXECUTIVE	
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04 DEC 2009	
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A NO1	ES/NO



Local Government Association

David Hughes
Chief Executive
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
Gibson Building, Gibson Drive
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent ME19 4LZ

Your Ref: DRH/KT/121200

03 December 2009

Dear David

RE: Distribution of Revenue Support Grant to Local Authorities

It was good to meet you briefly at the District Chief Executives' meeting here at the LGA earlier this week.

Thank you for sending us a copy of your council's letter to Ministers and opposition spokespersons about the distribution of Revenue Support Grant. I am sure you will appreciate that there is a wide range of views on how equitable or otherwise the distribution formulae are. In these circumstances it's difficult for the LGA as a cross-party consensual organization to take a position. What we do lobby for, most strongly, is the correction of clearly evidenced underfunding and for the removal of the many wasteful and unnecessary restrictions placed on our member authorities' freedom to raise and spend money. Our recent document on delivering more for less suggested how around £4.5bn p.a. might be saved in this way.

I suspect, though, that given the pressures the public finances face over the next few years, the grant formulae will come under particular scrutiny. The LGA is represented on the Settlement Working Group that regularly discusses these matters with CLG, and we would be very pleased to know more about your council's concerns. My colleague Mike Heiser is our specialist on these matters and can be contacted by e-mail or on 020 7664 3265.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Jones
Director of Finance and Performance

Direct line Tel 020 7664 3171 Fax 020 7664 3030 E-mail Stephen.Jones@lga.gov.uk

[http://portal/sites/directoroffinance/director of finance documents/2009/dec 09/tr sj to d hughes ce tonbridge and mallings re rsg 031209.doc](http://portal/sites/directoroffinance/director%20of%20finance%20documents/2009/dec%2009/tr%20sj%20to%20d%20hughes%20ce%20tonbridge%20and%20mallings%20re%20rsg%20031209.doc) 03/12/2009

Local Government House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3HZ DX 119450 Clerkenwell 3

Chief Executive: *John Ransford*

Tel 020 7664 3000 Fax 020 7664 3030 Information Helpline 020 7664 3131 <http://www.lga.gov.uk>



Mr David Hughes
Chief Executive
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Gibson Building
Gibson Drive
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent
ME19 4LZ

Barbara Follett MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

Department for Communities and Local Government

Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

Tel: 0303 44 43424
Fax: 020 7944 4339
E-Mail: barbara.follett@communities.gsi.gov.uk

www.communities.gov.uk

Our Ref: JD/BF/029868/09

December 16th 2009

Thank you for your letter of November 23rd 2009 addressed to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, the Rt Hon John Denham MP, drawing our attention to the resolution on Revenue Support Grant passed by the Council on November 19th 2009. Your letter has been transferred to me for response as this issue forms part of my Ministerial responsibilities.

I understand your concern about possible reductions in public expenditure and the Council's associated desire for a comprehensive review of the distribution of formula grant. As you may know, we are currently consulting local government stakeholders on future distribution of formula grant. These discussions are taking place in the officer level Settlement Working Group. The group discusses issues relating to formula grant distribution, in particular potential changes to the 2011-12 Local Government Finance Settlement onwards.

In addition, there will be a public consultation before Ministers decide on the precise way forward from April 2011.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Follett".

BARBARA FOLLETT MP

CS/BF

DEC 2009

	OPTION
COPY TO B	
ACKNOWLEDGE	YES/NO

MRS CAROLINE SPELMAN, M.P.

Meriden



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA



The Rt. Hon. Sir John Stanley MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

10th December, 2009

Our Ref: CS/EG

Dear John

Thank you for your letter of 30th November enclosing the letter from David Hughes of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council to John Denham MP regarding distribution of revenue support grant to local authorities. I have replied directly to David Hughes as he sent a copy of his letter to me directly. I enclose a copy of this letter as you requested.

If we are elected one of the first things to do would be to revisit the funding formula to get fairness and transparency into it.

Yours sincerely,
Caroline
Caroline Spelman MP

From: The Rt. Hon. Sir John Stanley, M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

17 December 2009

Mr David Hughes
Chief Executive
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Gibson Building, Gibson Drive
Kings Hill, West Malling
Kent ME19 4LZ



YES/11

Dear Mr Hughes

Distribution of Revenue Support Grant to Local Authorities

Further to my letter of November 30, I now attach this reply of December 10 that I have received from the Shadow Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Caroline Spelman, who has also sent me a copy of her letter to you of November 26.

I was glad to see Caroline Spelman's statement that "If we are elected one of the first things to do would be to revisit the funding formula to get fairness and transparency into it."

I am still awaiting the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government's reply to my letter giving my strong support to the Borough Council's resolution.

Yours sincerely
John Stanley



Jonathan Shaw

Member of Parliament for Chatham & Aylesford

411 High Street
Chatham
Kent
ME4 4NU

Tel: 01634 811573
Fax: 01634 811006

www.jonathanshaw.org.uk

Mr D Hughes
Chief Executive
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
Gibson Building, Gibson Drive
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent
ME19 4LZ

CHIE

Ref: SS/JS

21 December 2009

Dear

Re:- Distribution of Revenue Support Grant.

Thank you for your letter dated 23 November with a copy of the letter to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government about the above matter and confirm that the work of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council is valued.

In considering such a consultation to review the formulae for the distribution of Government grant to local authorities it would clearly need to involve the Local Government Association, as has been the case in previous consultations.

will ensure that the comments of the council are passed on to my colleagues.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Shaw MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

CHIEF

30 December 2009

CE

04

Mr David Hughes
Chief Executive
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
Gibson Building
Gibson Drive
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent ME19 4LZ

Distribution of Revenue Support Grant to Local Authorities

Further to my letter to you of December 17, I have now received a copy of the reply of December 16 that you had from the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Communities and Local Government, Barbara Follett.

On this key issue of obtaining a fairer distribution of Revenue Support Grant to the Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council with consequent benefit to all the Council tax payers in Tonbridge & Malling, I should be grateful if you could send me a copy of any further input that the Borough Council makes to the Settlement Working Group.

It is disappointing that the present Government are not envisaging changes, if any, in the distribution of RSG until the 2011-12 Local Government Finance Settlement. However, I look forward to receiving the Borough Council's response to the public consultation planned by the present Government and I anticipate giving my strong support to the Borough Council's position in response to this consultation.

I should be grateful if you could inform the members of the Borough Council of my response here to the Minister's reply to you of December 16.