

Reform's hollow promise

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There [is an article in the FT](#) this morning that blows apart the only known political justification for Reform, which is their claim to be able to cut the size of government by eliminating waste, a competence they have suggested no one else possesses.

The article notes:

Senior councillors at Kent county council have admitted their Elon Musk-inspired cost-cutting drive has not found any significant waste to cut, despite bombastic claims made by senior figures in Reform UK.

It continues:

Paul Chamberlain, one of the Reform UK cabinet members in charge of the so-called Department of Local Government Efficiency [Dolge], told the FT they had taken control nine months ago expecting to find vast amounts of waste but that had not materialised.

“We made some assumptions that we would come in here and find some of the craziness that [Elon Musk’s cost-cutting vehicle] Doge found in America . . . and that was wrong, we didn’t find any of that,” Chamberlain said.

As the FT notes

His admission calls into question the rationale for Reform’s Dolge by Nigel Farage and the rightwing populist party’s former chair Zia Yusuf, who have both argued there is vast waste and “fraud” in local government.

There is, beyond a shadow of doubt, waste and fraud in local government. Most human systems are prone to both. But the reality is that Reform's claims were always ridiculous.

Local authorities have been cut back to the bone by more than a decade of cuts.

If there was waste to eliminate, it has almost all been eliminated, and what remains will

largely be due to new initiatives that are not yet bedded in. As for fraud, the systems to find it in local government are now pretty good. It is in the private sector's relations with the government where fraud is rampant: 40% of all corporate tax owed by small businesses goes unpaid.

So what is left of the reason for Reform and its absurd economic claims? Nothing at all, of course. They were always hollow, and now they have been hollowed out.

There is just racism left to justify its existence in that case, as well as all the other forms of discrimination it can bring to the table with it. That is all Reform is about now, and I think people are beginning to realise that.