

## WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

### ETHICS AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

6<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2006

### PUBLICITY OF MEMBERS' ACTIVITIES IN THEIR ROLE AS DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

OPEN	
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER</b>	Monitoring Officer
<b>CONTACT OFFICER</b>	C S Caygill Ext. 2715
<b>APPENDICES</b>	Appendix 1: Template Appendix 2: Examples of Other Councils Member Reports

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1. To consider the possibility of increasing transparency and accountability of Members by introducing a facility for all Members to complete an annual report that details their activities in their role as District Councillor.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATION**

**The Committee is asked to recommend to Council:**

- 2.1. **Members produce an annual report in the format of the template at Appendix 1 of the report detailing their activities in their role as a District Councillor in order to increase transparency and accountability.**

#### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1. At the last meeting of the Ethics and Standards Committee on the 20<sup>th</sup> December 2005, the Monitoring Officer discussed the impact the Local Government Act 2000 had on the roles of Members and their duties.
- 3.2. The Local Government Act 2000 has lead to a move away from service-based committees where members received an attendance allowance for attending Council meetings.
- 3.3. The Act introduced Members' Allowances, paid in monthly lump sums, to replace attendance allowances. This reflected a change of emphasis to recognise Councillors' ward work, participation in community groups and other work outside committee meetings.

Hence, under the current Allowance Scheme, the amount received by a Councillor is no longer calculated according to the number of meetings attended.

- 3.4. The Council, in implementing the Members' Allowance Scheme had received guidance from the Independent Remuneration Panel. In the report to the Council on the implementation of Members' allowances, the Independent Remuneration Panel suggested that there should be more publicity of Councillors' work to increase transparency and accountability.
- 3.5. In the light of Implementing Electronic Government (IEG) targets, some Councils have moved towards each of their Councillor being responsible for submitting an annual report on their activities for publication on their Council's website. The purpose of the report is to give feed back to the public on the activities Councillors have undertaken during the municipal year e.g. details of ward surgeries held, training and development undertaken, scrutiny work they have undertaken and Committees they have sat on.
- 3.6. On the 20<sup>th</sup> December 2005 the Ethics and Standards Committee discussed the merits of improving transparency and accountability in relation to Members' allowances and requested the Monitoring Officer to produce a template for discussion, that would ensure a corporate approach to the annual report so that all members detailed their activities under the same specified headings.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1. The introduction of an Annual Report by Councillors would not only assist in meeting (IEG) targets but would sharpen transparency and accountability. It would also be a mechanism that would demonstrate to the local electorate the demanding role of members.

#### **Background Papers**

Local Government Act 2000

Report by the Independent Remuneration Panel (April 2002)

**WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**ANNUAL REPORT OF ACTIVITIES 2006/07**

**COUNCILLOR .....**

**WARD .....**

**Activities**

**(Set out here a brief description of your main activities this year - maximum 250 words**

**(What has been your main focus of work within the ward including any community activities or membership of any community bodies where not a council appointee)**

**Council Activities**

**(Identify what committees you sit on)**

**Outside Bodies**

(provide details of those bodies to which the Council has appointed you)

**Achievements During the Year**

(set out here a description of your main achievements/successes this year - in your own words - maximum 25)

**Members Surgeries**

**Training and Development**

**Attendance Percentage for 2006/07**