

WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

ETHICS AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE

29th NOVEMBER 2007

Form of Wording Regarding the Disclosure of Information - Exempt Reports

OPEN	
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Monitoring Officer
CONTACT OFFICER:	C S Newlands ext. 2715
APPENDICES	None

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. To consider the a report from the Monitoring Officer regarding a proposed form of wording for inclusion on each exempt report to the effect that members should not disclose exempt information under any circumstances, unless an exception is applicable under paragraph four of The Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1. **The Committee is asked to DECIDE:**

The following form of wording for inclusion on each exempt report regarding the provisions relating to exempt information be acceptable:

"NOTE: The contents of this report are confidential. Members should not disclose any details *unless* they can meet the four requirements as laid down in the Council's 'Protocol on the Disclosure of Confidential Information' which is contained in the Constitution and have sought advice in advance from the Monitoring Officer."

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. At the last meeting of the Ethics and Standards Committee on 31st July 2007 a report was considered from the Monitoring Officer entitled 'Protocol for the Disclosure of Confidential Information'.

- 3.2. Whilst debating the report, members requested that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee, setting out a form of wording that could be included on each exempt report that would draw Members' attention to the provisions in the Code of Conduct relating to the disclosure of exempt information.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1. The Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007, paragraph 4, lays down four tests which Members would be required to meet before they disclosed any confidential information.
- 4.2. The Council's Constitution contains a Protocol on the Disclosure of Confidential Information. This document gives advice on the disclosure of confidential information and it states that Members should contact the Monitoring Officer in order to decide whether a disclosure is reasonable and in the public interest.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. There are no financial implications as a result of this proposal.

6. LEGAL AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. The Council's Protocol on the Disclosure of Confidential Information contains advice and guidance for Members.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 There are no risk management issues associated with this proposal.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1. The inclusion of the suggested form of wording on exempt reports will act as a reminder to members not to disclose exempt information and will endorse the Protocol for the Disclosure of Exempt Information which was approved by Council on 19th September 2007.

9. Consultees

Chairman/Vice-Chairman Ethics and Standards Committee

10. Background Papers

Report to Ethics and Standards Committee 31/07/07 - Protocol for the Disclosure of Confidential Information
Minute number ES.8 Ethics and Standards Committee 31/07/07
Standards Board for England Guide for Members 2007, Code of Conduct