



Department for Communities and Local Government

Councillor Phil Davies
Leader - Wirral Council
Cheshire Lines Building
Canning Street
Birkenhead
Wirral
CH41 1ND

Marcus Jones MP
Minister for Local Government

Department for Communities and Local Government

4th Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

Tel: 0303 444 3460

Fax: 020 7828 4903

E-Mail: marcus.jones@communities.gsi.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/dclg

Dear Councillor Davies,

You will be aware that Section 4(1) of the Local Government Act 1986 requires all local authorities to have regard to the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity (the 'Publicity Code') that was issued on 31 March 2011.

You will also be aware of the provision in the Publicity Code that where local authorities do commission or publish newsletters, newssheets or similar communications, they should not issue them more frequently than quarterly.

As you know the great majority of local authorities comply with the provisions in the Publicity Code – the provision in relation to frequency of publication has been designed to ensure that in each locality the independent local media does not face unfair competition. In short, the purpose of that provision is to create an environment which is as conducive as possible to the flourishing of the independent local media, an essential element of any effectively operating democracy.

It has been suggested in recent press reports in both the Municipal Journal and the Liverpool Echo that Wirral Council are considering publishing a monthly newsletter. Such a publication would not appear to comply with the provision in paragraph 28 of the Publicity Code which provides that "where local authorities do commission or publish newsletters, newssheets or similar communications, they should not issue them more frequently than quarterly".

I would be grateful therefore if you could provide me with reassurance that Wirral Council will comply with the provisions of the Publicity Code when considering how it communicates with residents.

Yours sincerely,

Marcus Jones
MARCUS JONES MP