

# **Report to Constitution and Members' Services Standing Panel**

**Date of meeting: 4 December 2008**

**Subject: Consultation: Standing for Office: Time-off Entitlements**

**Contact for further information: C Overend (ext 4247)**

**Committee Secretary: M Jenkins (ext 4607)**

---



## **Recommendation:**

**That the Panel address and comment on the questions listed in the report to enable the Council to respond to the Government Consultation.**

## **Report**

1. The Government White Paper 'Communities in Control: Real People, Real Power' published in July 2008 set out a range of policies with a view to returning power to local communities. It has agreed a series of consultation papers covering the following aspects:

Improving Local Accountability;  
Making and Enforcing Byelaws;  
A revised Code of Conduct for Members;  
Mayors;  
Time-off Entitlements; and  
Local Government Publicity

2. Communities and Local Government (the CLG) is now inviting comments on the recently released consultation paper in respect of Time-Off Entitlements. A copy of the consultation paper is appended to this report.

...

3. There are a number of specific comments and questions on which the consultation paper invites a response:

(a) Do you agree with the analysis in the consultation paper on the benefits of undertaking civic roles? Are there any others?

- employees can build competencies and develop skills which can be used in their jobs and could in some cases be part of ongoing personal development and training;
- support from employers can be categorised as contribution to Corporate Social Responsibilities which can, in turn, make a company more attractive to customers or clients as well as an appealing place to work for current or future employees; and
- there is some evidence that flexible working practices have improved the productivity of their businesses;

- (b) Do you agree with the estimation of costs and assumptions made in calculating the overall costs to employers?
- (c) Do you agree with the proposal that each of the following roles should be added to the list of roles under Section 50 of the Employment Rights Act 1996 entitled to time off work? Are there any other local civic roles which should be included?
- Members of Probation Boards/Probation Trusts
  - Members of Court Boards
  - Youth Offender Panel Members
  - Lay Advisers Assisting Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
  - Co-opted Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members
- (d) Do you agree with the proposal that various housing roles (any member of a TMO Board, an ALMO Board or RSL Board) should be added to the list of roles under Section 50 of the Employment Rights Act 1996 entitled to time off work? Are there specific issues that should be considered?
- (e) Do you agree that this proposed entitlement should cover the main TMO, ALMO or RSL Boards only rather than members of other governance committees below TMO, ALMO or RSL Board level?
- (f) Are the barriers to undertaking a charity trustee or other governance position different from those barriers which prevent people from committing to regular volunteering? If so, how?
- (g) Do you agree that lack of awareness and understanding of roles is a barrier to participation? If so, what else could be done to address it?
- (h) Are existing volunteer recruitment routes such as Volunteer Centres and the Do-It.org database adequate for filling trustee and other third sector governance role vacancies? If not, what would be the best way of addressing this issue?
- (i) Do you agree it would be useful to add information on third sector governance roles, such as charity trustees to the employers information pack?
- (j) What other action could: (i) Government; (ii) employers; (iii) the sector and their representative bodies; and (iv) communities and individuals take to increasing the number of people who want to be trustees or take on other governance positions?
- (k) In particular, what steps could be taken to increase the number of underrepresented groups such as young adults, disabled groups, BME groups and those with lower incomes to participate?

**Other means of responding:**

4. If you have any comments to make on the consultation paper please advise Chris Overend on 01992 564247 in advance of the Panel meeting. As an alternative, should you wish to comment as an individual you can do so via e-mail [timeoffentitlements@communities.qsi.co.uk](mailto:timeoffentitlements@communities.qsi.co.uk) or in writing to Time Off Entitlements Consultation, Communities and Local Government, Zone 5/A2, Eland House, Bressenden Place, London SW1E 5DU.

5. All members had been consulted about this in the Members Bulletin, dated ?? November 2008.