

Mr. John Dakin
Corporate Director
South Ribble Borough Council
Civic Centre
West Paddock
PR25 1DH

Cllr. Dave Watts
17 Craigflower Court
Bamber Bridge
PR5 6DX

18.03.09

Dear John,

You will no doubt be aware that on Tuesday 17.3.09 copies of our "Forward" Newspaper were distributed in Bamber Bridge West. Nothing wrong there, but included with that delivery was a political leaflet on behalf of The Conservative Party. Having contacted The Civic Centre and voiced my concern, I was told the matter would be investigated.

Within twenty minutes, Michael phoned me back explaining that the person who had delivered the leaflets was Councillor Jim Marsh who "had not realised he was doing anything wrong" and had apologised. This is all well and good but it seems to me that some very basic rules have been broken and despite Cllr. Marsh's "least said soonest mended" approach I feel duty bound to formally refer Cllr. Marsh to The Standards Committee.

At the outset let me say that I do not think for one moment that Cllr. Marsh deliberately offered to deliver Forward as cover to deliver the Conservative literature. Equally, given that Jim Marsh had not so long ago been delivering copies of The Idle Toad and that its editor Cllr. Sharratt would have gone to great pains to explain the etiquette of what can and can't be published and distributed, do I believe Cllr. Marsh didn't think he was doing anything wrong. Nearer the truth would have been whilst I deliver one what harm delivering the other.

Sadly, once again, it is the good and moral name of this council that is being dragged down.

Forward is produced by this council for the public. It is distributed by council staff and others who are given a small recompense for that service.

That this leaflet was delivered with Forward leaves this council open to suggestions that the ruling Tory Council is now paying Tory Councillors to deliver Tory leaflets at rate payers' expense. This accusation is further endorsed by the fact that it was (a) delivered to a Labour Councillor's house and (b) the fact that said address is in the middle of the largest estate in Bamber Bridge suggests that well over 200 copies have been despatched.

[REDACTED]

I trust you will look into these concerns and if you concur take the matter to its next step.

I am, yours sincerely



Cllr. Dave Watts