

WEST MERCIA INDEPENDENT MEMBERS FORUM.

ISSUES OF CONCERN

An Evaluation of the Responses Made to the Questionnaire
Completed at the Ludlow Meeting on 10/03/05.

Issue 1 TRAINING

There were 10 comments made relating to the need for training. Comments included:

- *too little, too late*
- *need to understand the workings of local Government - we need a 'jargon buster'.*
- *need for an introductory training package*
- *need for a continual training programme*

Issue 2 COPING WITH MARGINALIZATION

There were 5 comments made about the need for the Standards Committee to be valued within the Local Authority. Comments included;

- *lack of appreciation of the independent member*
- *failure to identify and use independent members' skills*
- *'I feel lam being kept at arm's length'*
- *failure to use the Standards Committee for anything other than the statutory minimum.*

Issue 3 LOCAL DETERMINATION

There were 3 comments made on this issue. Comments centred around the need for a full discussion on the relative values of a 'top down' or a 'bottom up' approach.

Issue 4 (joint) POLITIZATION

A comment was made about the need to keep party politics out of the Standards Committee.

Issue 4 (joint) CHAIRING

A comment was made on the need for firmer guidance from the SBE on the suggestion that an Independent Member chairs the Standards Committee.

Issue 4 (joint) ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

A comment was made on some shortcomings of certain speakers at the recent Assembly.