

LOCAL GOVERNMENT INFORMATION UNIT

NEWS RELEASE

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Lift the bar on politics

Local democracy thinktank the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) has launched a new pamphlet, entitled Barred from politics, as part of its campaign to modernise the legislation preventing many council employees from being active in local politics.

The publication makes the case for less draconian rules and comes at a time when the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) has promised a consultation paper on reforming the restrictions that were introduced in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

Barred from politics, which can be downloaded free from <http://www.steerbriefing.org.uk/lgiu/politics.pdf>, is the latest publication in the LGIU's Perilous Democracy campaign to remove the barriers and disincentives that stop people participating in local politics and standing to be councillors, school governors and volunteering for other public service roles.

Tracy Gardiner, LGIU Policy Officer and author of Barred from politics, said: "The present political restrictions on many public sector workers are excessive. They go way beyond the reasonable and limited set of restrictions that are necessary in this sphere to the point of unreasonably restricting the political freedoms that are taken for granted in a democracy. They are inconsistent and outdated. Barred from politics argues for changes to these rules.

"Reforming the political restrictions regime is a key part of the LGIU's proposals for encouraging more people to participate in local politics. It forms part of our wider agenda for boosting local democracy, the role of councillors and public service."