

7.

**RECEIVED**  
28 OCT 1997  
LEGAL, CONSTITUTIONAL  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
COMMITTEE

for the attention please of ..

THE LEGAL, CONSTITUTIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE.

Submission on the need for a BILL OF RIGHTS relating to ...

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION. and CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS.

from Sondra Adams

27 October, 1997.

*Sondra Dawn Adams.*

SUBMISSION on the need for a BILL OF RIGHTS.  
to The Research Director, Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee.

### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION.

At present the FOI guidelines are open to interpretation. A Council or other body with something to hide can make it difficult and expensive or impossible to secure information, by how they apply the rules.

By comparison another organisation will happily make everything available at no charge.

At present, for example, a Council wishing to be difficult uses the guidelines to make access to personal details costly by claiming the rule that personal information is only related to medical, age or scholastic details etc.

Files can be "vacuumed" as I am told is the term for removing documents considered incriminating.

■ Any document that mentions a person's name should be freely available to that person as their basic human right. A BILL OF RIGHTS should guarantee this essential right.

If the information or statements are untruthful the person named, should be able to use the BILL OF RIGHTS to correct the information.

No one should be able to sue when the truth is told just because they find the truth offensive.

### CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS.

I contacted the Electoral Commission about a husband and wife team in a Council, running under different names. I was told there was nothing illegal with the wife campaigning under her maiden name. A lot of people were not aware that they were electing again...a husband and wife team. With the wife as Chairman with a casting vote that gave three votes to one family and a number of decisions were made by the casting vote. Too much power to one family.

Requests for meetings to be taped in the interests of accuracy were refused. This sort of attitude allows selective keeping of records which depend on the integrity or lack of it of the people in charge and can lead to miscarriages of justice.

The campaign posters of the husband apparently use the photo he first used decades ago. There is nothing against an older candidate...but a lot of people do vote on what they see and should see the candidate as he is not as he was about thirty years ago.

Also a candidate with unlimited finances to spare to keep himself in office or advance that office, has an unfair advantage over other candidates.

■ There should be a set amount allowed for campaigning. A limit to how many campaign posters each candidate is allowed. When one name and face is just about everywhere...it gets through to people. A lot of people just vote for any name they recognise.

A limit to what each candidate can spend would prevent the candidate with millions of dollars behind him being able to put as many posters up as he likes while the less financial candidate is limited to a few.

A limit could help prevent a very financial candidate quietly funding candidates across the board.

That unfairly gives access to preferential votes. These financed candidates, if elected as councillors, would be beholden to the elected Mayor and hardly likely to vote against his wishes.