

### **Question for Council October 2010 - Councillor Young**

To ask the Chair of the Pensions Panel, who if anybody, declared an interest at the Pensions Panel when discussing the pension arrangements for Oakbank School and to further ask, if nobody declared an interest at the Pensions Panel meeting, does the chair of the Pensions Panel remember an Elected Member declaring an interest at Council regarding Oakbank School by virtue of their position as Chairperson of the Pensions Panel and stated that he considered that the nature of that interest required the Elected Member to leave the meeting and take no part in the Council's deliberations thereon and if so can he confirm if this Elected Member is also a member of the Pensions Panel and if so can he confirm the Elected Member's name and the position he holds within the Pensions Panel?

### **Answer by Councillor Fletcher**

**Declarations of interest are matters recorded in minutes, and so are publicly available. I believe it inappropriate to use questions to ask a member to justify a declaration, as the Code states that it is a matter for each individual member.**

**I am also astonished that the Chairman of Oakbank School, an organisation that has debts to the Pension Fund of between £2M and £3M, believes it is justifiable to use Council resources to put a question to the Convener of the Pension Fund, about matters pertaining to Oakbank. That the question relates to declarations of interest is particularly ironic.**

**However, in an attempt to keep officer costs to a minimum on this question, I will add the following:**

**No elected member on the Pension Panel has declared an interest at the Panel when Oakbank has been regularly discussed.**

**I declared an interest at Council as Chair of the Pensions Panel, when a planning application for Oakbank's site was discussed.**

**If I had voted on Oakbank's planning application, which would have affected the value of its land, and hence Oakbank's ability to pay its debts, it would not have been out with the suspicion of an ordinary member of the public that any decision I took on the application may have been affected by my Pension Fund responsibilities.**