



Press Release Stafford & Stone Green Party

**Green Party rated best in Britain
for transparency, accountability, democracy and waste.**

Caroline Lucas MEP, leader of the Green Party, has been rated best British MEP on transparency, accountability, democracy and waste by campaign group Open Europe.

And Britain's Green Party MEPs were ranked above the groups of all other British parties.

Today Open Europe published a ranking of all 785 Members of the European Parliament, scoring their record on promoting transparency and reform in the European Union over the last five-year term.

Open Europe's ranking was based on a range of activities, including voting records, attendance, written declarations, and whether the MEPs themselves have taken part in wasteful activities, such as the controversial second pension fund.

Open Europe awarded points based on a "Premier League" model, where 3 points was the highest score, followed by 1 point and 0 points. On attendance, a scale from 1 to 6 was used. MEPs who had been the subject of substantive press reports of wrongdoing were shown Open Europe's "red card" and had 10 points deducted from their score.

****UKIP leader shares bottom place with a Conservative, a Labour MEP and a LibDem****

The bottom thirteen places for British MEPs in Open Europe's ranking included 5 Conservatives and 6 UKIP MEPs. The very bottom place, however, was jointly shared between an MEP each from the Conservatives, Liberal Democrats, Labour and UKIP.

The UKIP MEP with the poorest score was party leader Nigel Farage.

Green Party leader Dr Caroline Lucas MEP, commenting on the result, said:

"I'm delighted that the Green Party has topped the poll on promoting transparency and reform in the EU. It shows more clearly than ever that if people want to see greater democracy, transparency and accountability in parliament, the best way of achieving that is to vote Green on 4 June."

Open Europe's Research Director Mats Persson said commented:

"No matter where their political sympathies may lie, MEPs should all be working for a more open, democratic EU, while trying to reduce the waste of taxpayers' money. These issues should be at the top of their agenda - especially now when the public's trust in

politicians is at an all-time low.

"They might talk a good game at home, but too many British MEPs have voted against transparency and EU reform on a number of occasions. What we need now is a new generation of politicians, committed to acting in the public interest and pushing for a much better deal for taxpayers at all levels of government - including EU level."

Open Europe's categories were as follows:

****A) Transparency, openness and democracy****

MEPs are ranked according to whether they:

1. Voted for easier public access to EU documents
2. Voted against keeping MEPs' expenses and accounts secret
3. Voted to increase transparency, including better public access to MEPs' voting records
4. Responded to Open Europe's Transparency Initiative on expenses and allowances
5. Voted in favour of imposing sanctions for MEPs guilty of financial irregularities
6. Voted in favour of providing mandatory receipts for travel expenses
7. Voted to respect the outcome of the pending legally-binding Irish referendum on the Lisbon Treaty
8. Voted in favour of opening Europe up to trade with developing countries
9. Achieved good attendance at the Parliament's voting sessions

****B) Fighting waste and misuse of EU funds****

MEPs are ranked according to whether they:

1. Opted out of the Parliament's controversial second pension fund
2. Voted in favour of cleaning up the second pension fund
3. Supported moves to abolish the Parliament's second seat in Strasbourg
4. Voted against 'hypocritical' EU subsidies to tobacco farmers
5. Voted to reform the CAP and discontinue subsidies to tobacco farmers
6. Voted not to clear the European Parliament's accounts for 2006 due to 75% unaccounted expenditure on MEPs' assistants' allowances
7. Voted not to approve the Parliament's accounts for 2007
8. Voted not to approve the Commission's accounts for 2007
9. Voted to postpone clearing the European Council's accounts for 2007
10. Voted against clearing the accounts of the European Police College for 2007 while it was under investigation for fraud

To see the league table, please click here:

[\[www.openeurope.org.uk/research/mepranking.xls\]](http://www.openeurope.org.uk/research/mepranking.xls)^[1] (See sheet two for UK MEPs only)

For a guide to the criteria used in the ranking, please click here:

[www.openeurope.org.uk/research/rankingguide.pdf][2]

[1]: <http://www.openeurope.org.uk/research/mepranking.xls>

[2]: <http://www.openeurope.org.uk/research/rankingguide.pdf>

URL: <http://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2009-05-25-open-europe.html>

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“VOTE GREEN FOR DEMOCRATIC REFORM”

Against the backdrop of the expenses scandal voters are going to the polls in local and European elections on June 4th.

Tom Harris, Green Party candidate for Stafford Central, said “With snout-in-trough disease rife in the ‘Gentleman’s Club’ of Britain’s Parliament and voters looking for new parties to support, there has never been a better time to vote Green. The world is facing economic and environmental crisis. The long established main parties will not steer us away from these disasters as they are selfish, complacent and out of touch.

They are out of touch because they are run by top-down management teams in Westminster who tell their MPs and Councillors what to think and do. They can afford to be complacent because the current first-past-the-post electoral system pretty much guarantees that each of the two main parties can take their turn being in power every few years - a very cosy arrangement. They can also be very selfish, with MPs often putting their own interests before their party’s, and their party’s interests before the country’s.

More and more voters who have turned away from the main parties see the Green Party as the best alternative. The Green Party is the only party to remain free of controversy over the expenses scandal.

Also, I think the fact that there are three times as many West Midlands Green candidates in the upcoming County Council elections as last time shows how the groundswell of grass roots support is making the Green Party a very serious new force in local and national politics.

The Green Party wants complete democratic reform in Britain, from the way parties are funded to the introduction of proportional representation in all elections. On June 4th only a vote for the Green Party is one for a bright and positive democratic future.”

Promoted by Tom Harris, 15 Doxey Road, Stafford, ST16 2EW for Stafford and Stone Green Party of the same address.