



**BEDFORDSHIRE POLICE**

North Beds: 01234 842190 Central Beds: 01582 473133 South Beds: 01582 394171

**Media Officers**

# NEWS RELEASE

**Media Office**

Headquarters, Woburn Road, Kempston, Bedford MK43 9AX  
Tel: 01234 842390 Fax: 01234 842392

November 11, 2009

## Tom Wise – Sentenced

The former MEP Tom Wise has today been sentenced to two years at Southwark Crown Court after pleading guilty to False Accounting and ordered to pay £30,000 costs.

Mr Wise, aged 61, of Ship Road in Linslade, changed his plea last week after admitting to inappropriately claiming £39,000 worth of allowances, following an investigation by Bedfordshire Police that began in June 2008.

Due to admissions Mr Wise made when entering the guilty plea the Crown Prosecution Service has decided to offer no evidence against co-defendant Lindsay Jenkins.

Following sentencing Judge Rivlin QC commended the officer in the case, DC Ian Williams and DI Shane Roberts from Bedfordshire Police Economic Crime Unit for "the way the matter was investigated with great care and sensitivity, with the work being carried out expertly and to the highest standards".

Also commended were Alan Knowles, who made the authorities aware of Mr Wise's actions and Roberto Di Tullio, the investigator from OLAF (European Parliament).

Ends

### **Background briefing**

Mr Wise was a member of the European Parliament, and a prominent member of his political party. He dishonestly obtained parliamentary funds and used them to finance his party's political activities and his personal lifestyle. The £39,000 he obtained using a fraudulent document was spent on a car, fine wine, and credit card bills among other things.

Elected to sit in the European Parliament in June 2004 he initially served as a member of the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), but for reasons linked to this case UKIP later withdrew the party whip and he completed his term as an Independent.

Prior to his election, from early 2001 until the summer of 2004, he had worked as the office manager to Jeffrey Titford MEP. One of his responsibilities was to act as a "paying agent" and regularly submitted contracts to the EP authorities and paid out funds and was therefore familiar with the system long before he was ever elected. Following his election Mr Wise completed six applications for the secretarial assistance allowance, which wholly complied with the Rules.

In October 2004, Mr Wise met Lindsay Jenkins. They agreed that she would do research work for him from time to time and agreed a basic monthly of retainer of £500. On 21st October Mr Wise submitted the application and contract to the EP. By the time the papers were submitted the



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



monthly sum that was to be claimed was £3000. Mr Wise solely controlled the bank account into which the money was to be paid. The form was completed so as to conceal this fact from the EP. Mr Wise completed three subsequent contracts correctly where the monies were to go straight to the service provider.

He was paid £39,000 over a thirteen month period and paid Ms Jenkins £13,555.00 over the course of the year. Within six weeks of the surplus beginning to accumulate, Wise began to spend the EP money on himself. On Sunday October 23 2005 the story broke in a national newspaper.

### **European Parliament/ OLAF Investigation**

The authorities wrote to Mr Wise in late 2005 in response to the articles in the press asking for proof as to what the funds were used for. He responded claiming "I did not seek to take any personal financial gain from this." That claim was untrue as the investigation proved he used the funds to pay for a car, wine, credit card debts and funding his colleagues' election expenses.

Mr Wise quickly took steps to cancel the claim and repay the money. An investigation by the European Parliament authorities followed in 2006 - 7, and the case was referred to the British authorities, namely Bedfordshire Police.

Ends



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

