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Jeff Hughes

*Head of Democratic and Legal
Support Services*

MEETING : STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE
VENUE : ROOM 27, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD
DATE : TUESDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2015
TIME : 2.00 PM

PLEASE NOTE TIME AND VENUE

MEMBERS OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

Councillors B Deering, G McAndrew and C Woodward

CONTACT OFFICER: JEFF HUGHES
TEL: 01279-502170
EMAIL: jeff.hughes@eastherts.gov.uk

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DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

1. A Member, present at a meeting of the Authority, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee of the Authority, with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in any matter to be considered or being considered at a meeting:
 - must not participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting;
 - must not participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting;
 - must disclose the interest to the meeting, whether registered or not, subject to the provisions of section 32 of the Localism Act 2011;
 - if the interest is not registered and is not the subject of a pending notification, must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days;
 - must leave the room while any discussion or voting takes place.
2. A DPI is an interest of a Member or their partner (which means spouse or civil partner, a person with whom they are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom they are living as if they were civil partners) within the descriptions as defined in the Localism Act 2011.
3. The Authority may grant a Member dispensation, but only in limited circumstances, to enable him/her to participate and vote on a matter in which they have a DPI.

4. It is a criminal offence to:

- fail to disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest at a meeting if it is not on the register;
- fail to notify the Monitoring Officer, within 28 days, of a DPI that is not on the register that a Member disclosed to a meeting;
- participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which a Member has a DPI;
- knowingly or recklessly provide information that is false or misleading in notifying the Monitoring Officer of a DPI or in disclosing such interest to a meeting.

(Note: The criminal penalties available to a court are to impose a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale and disqualification from being a councillor for up to 5 years.)

Audio/Visual Recording of meetings

Everyone is welcome to record meetings of the Council and its Committees using whatever, non-disruptive, methods you think are suitable, which may include social media of any kind, such as tweeting, blogging or Facebook. However, oral reporting or commentary is prohibited. If you have any questions about this please contact Democratic Services (members of the press should contact the Press Office). Please note that the Chairman of the meeting has the discretion to halt any recording for a number of reasons, including disruption caused by the filming or the nature of the business being conducted. Anyone filming a meeting should focus only on those actively participating and be sensitive to the rights of minors, vulnerable adults and those members of the public who have not consented to being filmed.

AGENDA

1. Appointment of Chairman

To appoint a Chairman for this meeting.

2. Apologies

To receive any apologies for absence.

3. Chairman's Announcements

To receive any Chairman's announcements.

4. Declarations of Interest

5. Minutes (Pages 7 - 12)

To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2015.

6. Urgent Business

To consider such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration and is not likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information.

7. Exclusion of the Press and Public

To move that under Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of items 8 - 11 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the said Act:

It is for the Sub-Committee to determine whether or not this item should be considered in public and the report made available for public information. Until a decision is taken, please regard the report as confidential.

8. Complaint in respect of District Councillor J Cartwright (Pages 13 - 36)
9. Complaints in respect of Much Hadham Parish Councillors S Bannerman, A Baxter and I Hunt (Pages 37 - 108)

Note – Essential Reference Paper ‘B’ for this report can be seen at Agenda Item 8

10. Complaint in respect of District Councillor D Andrews (Pages 109 - 132)

Note – Essential Reference Paper ‘B’ for this report can be seen at Agenda Item 8

11. Complaint in respect of District Councillor K Crofton (Pages 133 - 152)

Note – Essential Reference Paper ‘B’ for this report can be seen at Agenda Item 8

12. Urgent Business

To consider such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE HELD IN
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS,
HERTFORD ON THURSDAY 10
SEPTEMBER 2015, AT 2.30 PM

PRESENT: Councillor B Deering (Chairman).
Councillors A Alder and C Woodward.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors K Crofton, P Moore and
R Standley.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Jeff Hughes - Monitoring Officer

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Philip Copland - Independent Person

11 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED – that Councillor B Deering be appointed
Chairman for this meeting of the Standards Sub-
Committee.

12 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting of the
Standards Sub-Committee held on 30 June 2015 be
confirmed as a correct record and signed by the
Chairman.

13 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Sub-Committee considered whether or not to pass a
resolution to exclude the press and public from the meeting
during the discussion of the items recorded at Minutes 14 and

15 below on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in provisions of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Sub-Committee also considered whether or not to make the associated reports publically available.

The Sub-Committee determined not to exclude the press and public from the meeting during the discussion of the matters at Minutes 14 and 15 below and to make the associated reports publically available.

RESOLVED – that the press and public be not excluded from the meeting during the discussion of the matters at Minutes 14 and 15 below and the associated reports be made publically available.

14 COMPLAINT IN RESPECT OF DISTRICT COUNCILLOR D ANDREWS

The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Monitoring Officer on eight complaints against Councillor D Andrews alleging that he had breached the Authority's Code of Conduct.

The Sub-Committee noted the detail of each complaint and the evidence (and supplementary evidence where) provided by each complainant in support of their allegations.

The Monitoring Officer confirmed that, having consulted the Independent Person, he did not consider the complaints could be resolved informally.

The Monitoring Officer invited the Sub-Committee to consider each complaint individually against the (published) assessment criteria of the Authority's Complaints Procedure.

The Sub-Committee retired to a separate room to consider each complaint.

In respect of seven of the eight complaints, the Sub-

Committee, after careful consideration and based on the complaints assessment criteria and the evidence submitted (and having reviewed the webcast of the meeting identified) agreed that no further action be taken.

The Sub-Committee made the determinations to take no action following consultation with the Independent Person and for the following reasons:

- (1) in relation to the allegation that the councillor was in collusion with those making the application and/or that he had an interest, as supported by the assertion that a speaker referred to the Chairman as “Dave”, Members only heard the name “David” once and this was articulated by a proponent. It was not repeated. In these circumstances it was not considered necessary for the Chairman to have intervened to request the use of an appropriate title;
- (2) there was no evidence on the webcast to support the allegation that the Committee Chairman and proponent were chatting like old friends;
- (3) with regard to the change in the running order of agenda items, the Committee Chairman had acknowledged the impact this might have on objectors’ representations and had invited the Committee to make due allowance. The objectors’ representative was dealt with as fairly as possible;
- (4) the Committee Chairman had exercised a second (casting) vote in respect of the second application – the vote was in favour of granting planning permission and supported the officer recommendation. There was no convention that required the Chairman in the circumstances pertaining to this application to vote in a contrary manner;
- (5) the remarks made by the Committee Chairman after the decisions on the applications were noted by the Sub-Committee having reviewed the webcast. The

remarks were not considered to be inappropriate, rather they were polite, courteous and neutral in nature, and

- (6) with regard to the manner in which the applications were summed up, the webcast did not show any basis to criticise the Chairman on this aspect.

In relation to the complaint that formed Essential Reference Paper 'F' to the report, the Sub-Committee agreed to request the Monitoring Officer to obtain information on any connection between Councillor Andrews and Riversmead Housing Association. In so doing, it agreed to defer consideration of this complaint.

RESOLVED – that (A) in relation to the complaints that form Essential Reference Papers 'A' to 'E' and 'G' and 'H' to the report now submitted by the Monitoring Officer, no further action be taken for the reasons now detailed; and

(B) consideration of the complaint at Essential Reference Paper 'F' to the Monitoring Officer's report be deferred to a future meeting to allow that Officer to obtain information on any connection between Councillor Andrews and Riversmead Housing Association.

15 COMPLAINT IN RESPECT OF DISTRICT COUNCILLOR K CROFTON

The Monitoring Officer submitted a report reminding the Sub-Committee that, at its meeting held on 30 June 2015, it had considered a complaint alleging that District Councillor K Crofton had breached the Council's Code of Conduct (Minute 7 refers).

The Sub-Committee had agreed that consideration of the complaint be deferred to allow the Monitoring Officer to invite the complainant to particularise an element of their allegation. The complainant was requested to particularise their

“...previous relationship (with Councillor Crofton) and that which he has had with an immediate family member...” in order for the Sub-Committee to form a view on its relevance to the complaint.

The Sub-Committee noted the information provided by the complainant in response to the Sub-Committee’s request. It also noted the complainant’s request for it to view the webcast of the relevant Development Management Committee meeting.

The Sub-Committee agreed to defer consideration of the complaint to a future meeting in order for the Monitoring Officer to obtain Councillor Crofton’s comments on the information now provided by the complainant. In particular, the Sub-Committee considered that Councillor Crofton should be afforded an opportunity to comment on the complainant’s assertions regarding his membership of the Standards Sub-Committee that had considered code of conduct complaints against the complainant (when a District Councillor) that had led to a decision being taken that they should be investigated.

RESOLVED – that consideration of the code of conduct complaint against Councillor Crofton be deferred to a future meeting to afford the subject an opportunity to comment on the complainant’s submitted further information and in particular the aspect now detailed regarding the subject’s role in a previous decision of the Standards Sub-Committee.

The meeting closed at 5.45 pm

Chairman
Date

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE – 24 NOVEMBER 2015

REPORT BY MONITORING OFFICER

COMPLAINT IN RESPECT OF DISTRICT COUNCILLOR J CARTWRIGHT

WARD(S) AFFECTED: NONE

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To consider code of a code of conduct complaint in respect of District Councillor J Cartwright.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Monitoring Officer has received a complaint alleging that District Councillor J Cartwright has breached the Council's Code of Conduct.

2.0 Report

- 2.1 Council has agreed a procedure for considering complaints.
- 2.2 The Sub-Committee will consider the complaint and decide what action to take.
- 2.3 In appropriate cases, the Monitoring Officer may seek to resolve the complaint informally, without the need for a formal investigation. Having consulted the Independent Person, it is not considered that the complaint can be resolved informally.
- 2.4 Complaints are considered in accordance with the Standards Complaints assessment criteria set out in Appendix 2 of the Complaints Procedure (**Essential Reference Paper 'B'**)

3.0 The Complaint

3.1 The complaint is set out in the complaint forms and accompanying documents that form **Essential Reference Papers 'C'**.

3.2 In addition, the complainant has requested the Sub-Committee's attention be drawn to the web page in the link below:

<http://m.hertsandessexobserver.co.uk/Complaint-East-Herts-councillor-calling-resident/story-28106759-detail/story.html>

4.0 Procedure

4.1 A copy of the Council's complaints procedure is contained in **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Contact Officer: Jeff Hughes - Monitoring Officer - 01279 502170
jeff.hughes@eastherts.gov.uk

Report Author: Jeff Hughes - Monitoring Officer

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives (delete as appropriate):	People This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, particularly those who are vulnerable.
Consultation:	The Independent Person has been consulted.
Legal:	The procedures are in accordance with relevant legislation.
Financial:	None
Human Resource:	None
Risk Management:	The case should be determined in accordance with the legislation having regard to the relevant guidance.

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'B'

Code of Conduct

As a member or co-opted member of East Hertfordshire District Council I have a responsibility to represent the community and work constructively with our staff and partner organisations to secure better social, economic and environmental outcomes for all.

In accordance with the Localism Act provisions, when acting in this capacity I am committed to behaving in a manner that is consistent with the following principles to achieve best value for our residents and maintain public confidence in this authority.

SELFLESSNESS: Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

INTEGRITY: Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

OBJECTIVITY: In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

ACCOUNTABILITY: Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

OPENNESS: Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

HONESTY: Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

LEADERSHIP: Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

The Act further provides for registration and disclosure of interests and in East Hertfordshire District Council this will be done as follows:

INTERESTS

1 General

A Member, present at a meeting of the Authority, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee of the Authority, with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in any matter to be considered or being considered at a meeting:

- (a) must not participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting;
- (b) must not participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting;
- (c) must disclose the interest to the meeting, whether registered or not, subject to the provisions of section 32 of the Localism Act 2011;
- (d) if the interest is not registered and is not the subject of a pending notification, must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days;
- (e) must leave the room while any discussion or voting takes place.

2 Register of interests

Any interests notified to the Monitoring Officer will be included in the register of interests.

A copy of the register will be available for public inspection and will be published on the authority's website.

3 Sensitive interests

Where you consider that disclosure of the details an interest could lead to you, or a person connected with you, being subject to violence or intimidation, and the Monitoring Officer agrees, if the

interest is entered on the register, copies of the register that are made available for inspection and any published version of the register will exclude details of the interest, but may state that you have an interest, the details of which are withheld.

OTHER

As a Member of East Hertfordshire District Council, my conduct will in particular address the statutory principles of the code of conduct by:

- Championing the needs of residents – the whole community and in a special way my constituents, including those who did not vote for me - and putting their interests first.
- Dealing with representations or enquiries from residents, members of our communities and visitors fairly, appropriately and impartially.
- Not allowing other pressures, including the financial interests of myself or others connected to me, to deter me from pursuing constituents' casework, the interests of the Authority's area or the good governance of the authority in a proper manner.
- Exercising independent judgement and not compromising my position by placing myself under obligations to outside individuals or organisations who might seek to influence the way I perform my duties as a member/co-opted member of this authority.
- Listening to the interests of all parties, including relevant advice from statutory and other professional officers, taking all relevant information into consideration, remaining objective and making decisions on merit.
- Being accountable for my decisions and co-operating when scrutinised internally and externally, including by local residents.
- Contributing to making this authority's decision-making processes as open and transparent as possible to enable residents to understand the reasoning behind those decisions and to be informed when holding me and other members to account but restricting access to information when the wider public interest or the law requires it

- Behaving in accordance with all our legal obligations, alongside any requirements contained within this authority's policies, protocols and procedures, including on the use of the Authority's resources.
- Valuing my colleagues and staff and engaging with them in an appropriate manner and one that underpins the mutual respect between us that is essential to good local government.
- Always treating people with respect, including the organisations and public I engage with and those I work alongside.
- Providing leadership through behaving in accordance with these principles when championing the interests of the community with other organisations as well as within this authority.



COMPLAINT FORM : CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS

A. Your details

1. Please provide us with your name and contact details. Anonymous complaints will only be considered if there is independent evidence to substantiate the complaint.

Title:	Mr
First name:	Adrian
Last name:	McNeece
Address:	<div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 100%;"></div>
Contact telephone:	
Email address:	
Signature:	
Date of complaint:	2 November 2015

Your address and contact details will not usually be released unless necessary or to deal with your complaint.

The following people may see this form:

- Monitoring Officer of the Council
- Standards Committee members
- Council's Independent Person(s)
- The subject member(s)
- the Parish Clerk (if applicable)

If you have serious concerns about your name and a summary, or details of your complaint being released, please complete **Section C** of this Form and also discuss your reasons or concerns with the Council's Monitoring Officer.

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Please tell us which complainant type best describes you:

- ☒ A member of the public
- ☐ An elected or co-opted Member of the Council
- ☐ An independent member of a Standards Committee
- ☐ A Member of Parliament
- ☐ A Monitoring Officer
- ☐ Other council employee, contractor or agent of the Council
- ☐ Other ()

2. Equality Monitoring Form - please fill in the attached form.

B. Making your complaint

3. Please provide us with the name of the Member(s) you believe have breached the Council's Code of Conduct:

Title	First name	Last name
Cllr	James	Cartwright

4. Please explain in this section (or on separate sheet(s)) what the Member is alleged to have done that you believe breaches the Code of Conduct. If you are complaining about more than one Member you should clearly explain what each individual person has done, with dates / witnesses to substantiate the alleged breach.

It is also important that you provide all the evidence you wish to have taken into account. For example:

- You should be specific, wherever possible, about exactly what you are alleging the Member said or did. For instance, instead of writing that the Member insulted you, you should state what it was they said or did to insult you.
- You should provide the dates of the alleged incidents wherever possible. If you cannot provide exact dates it is important to give a general timeframe.

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

- You should confirm whether there are any witnesses to the alleged conduct and provide their names and contact details if possible.
- You should provide any relevant background information or other relevant documentary evidence to support your allegation(s).

Please provide us with the details of your complaint. Continue on a separate sheet if there is not enough space on this form.

I am complaining about Cllr James Cartwright's comments on his Twitter account page made at 15.19hrs on 29 October 2015. Specifically, he published a tweet stating;

"@davebromage @ScotRamsay @StortSkeptic @galdam 27% no religion. #thick and #illiterate"

His comments were inappropriate to members of the public, and he has treated non-religious members of the public with a cavalier lack of respect. His comments suggesting that people of no religion are **thick** and **illiterate** could not be designed to be more offensive or discriminating. He has shocked and offended myself and others who hold secular or atheist views.

His comments came less than 24 hours after the council defeated a motion to end the saying of prayers (Christian) by the council on council premises. Given that the council defeated the motion by 42 votes to 5, prompting my resignation as a councillor. I view Cllr Cartwright's comments to be provocative, offensive and disrespectful. His comments were made at a very sensitive time, following a debate on the exclusion of religious observance at East Herts District council.

I was offended, and other residents of East Herts were offended. I would be happy to provide names, and contact details if necessary. However I trust my complaint is sufficient to warrant an investigation and review of Cllr Cartwright's errant conduct

I refer to The Code of Conduct ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'B';

Page 1 – Introductory declaration subscribed to by all members

As a member or co-opted member of East Hertfordshire District Council I have a responsibility to represent the community and work constructively with our staff and partner organisations to secure better social, economic and environmental outcomes for all.

In accordance with the Localism Act provisions, when acting in this capacity I am committed to behaving in a manner that is consistent with the following principles to achieving best value for our residents and maintain public confidence in this authority.

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

ACCOUNTABILITY: Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Page 3 - Dealing with representations or enquiries from residents, members of our communities and visitors fairly, appropriately and impartially.

Page 4 – Behaving in accordance with all our legal obligations, alongside any requirements contained within this authority's policies, protocols and procedures, including on the use of the authorities resources.

Page 4 - Always treating people with respect, including the organisations and public I engage with and those I work alongside.

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

C. Confidentiality of complainant and the complaint details

Only complete this next section if you are requesting that your identity is kept confidential

5. In the interests of fairness and in compliance with the rules of natural justice, we believe Members who are complained about have a right to know who has made the complaint and the substance of the allegation(s) made against him / her. We are, therefore, unlikely to withhold your personal details or the details of your complaint unless you have good reasons to believe that you have justifiable grounds, for example:
- to believe you may be victimised or harassed by the Member(s) against whom you are submitting a written complaint (or by a person associated with the same); or
 - may receive less favourable treatment from the Council because of the seniority of the Member against whom you are submitting a written complaint in terms of any existing Council service provision or any tender / contract that you may have or are about to submit to the Council.

Please note that requests for confidentiality or requests for suppression of the personal and complaint details will not automatically be granted. The Assessment Sub-Committee will consider the request alongside the substance of your complaint and the Monitoring Officer will then contact you with the decision. If your request for confidentiality is not granted, we will usually allow you the opportunity, if you so wish, of withdrawing your complaint.

However, it is important to understand that - in exceptional circumstances, where the matter complained about is very serious - we may proceed with an investigation (or other action) and may have no choice but to disclose your personal and complaint details, because of the allegation(s) made, even if you have expressly asked us not to.

Please provide us with details of why you believe we should withhold your name and/or the details of your complaint:

(Continue on separate sheet(s), as necessary)

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

D. Remedy sought

7. Please indicate the remedy or remedies you are looking for or hoping to achieve by submitting this complaint.

1. A personal letter of apology from Cllr Cartwright to myself for the offence he has caused.
 2. A public apology by Cllr Cartwright at the next full meeting of the council.
 3. A press release apology by the council to local media organisations.
 4. A suitable sanction by the council against Cllr Cartwright for his behaviour, as a demonstration that his disrespectful conduct has consequences, and that he must be seen to be accountable for his conduct.

(Continue on separate sheet(s), as necessary)

E. Additional information

8. Complaints must be submitted in writing. This includes fax and electronic submissions. Frivolous, vexatious and politically motivated tit-for-tat complaints are likely to be rejected.
9. In line with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, we can make reasonable adjustments to assist you if you have a disability that prevents you from making your complaint in writing. We can also help if English is not your first language.
10. If you need any support in completing this form, please contact the Monitoring Officer as soon as possible.

Monitoring Officer Contact details:

The Monitoring Officer – Simon Drinkwater
East Herts Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford
SG13 8EQ

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Monitoring Form – Local Assessments of Complaints Standards Committee - Assessment Sub Committee

Working towards equal opportunities

East Hertfordshire District Council is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity in both employment and service provision. We seek to ensure that no person receives less favorable treatment on the grounds of gender, race, or ethnic origins, marital status, disability, age, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, religion, trade union involvement or political belief or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

White

White British
White Irish
Any other White
background

☒

Mixed

White and Black
Caribbean
White and Black
African
Any other mixed
background

☐

Asian

Indian
Pakistani
Bangladeshi
Any other Asian
background

☐

Black

Caribbean
African
Any other Black
background

☐

Chinese or other ethnic group

Chinese
Other

☐

*Categories used are those utilised by
the Office of Population Censuses and
Surveys

Do you have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect
on your ability that you wish to declare under the Disability Discrimination Act?

Yes

☐

No

☐

Adrian McNeece

@AdrianMcNeece

Workplace Strategist, Interiors Photographer,
Artist & Still an Atheist

📍 Hertford, UK

867 FOLLOWING

1,008 FOLLOWERS

Tweets

Media

Favourites

↩ in reply to @james_cllr



Adrian McNeece @AdrianMcNeece 41s

@james_cllr Dismayed James's
assertion that non Christians or
atheists are thick/illiterate
@davebromage @ScotRamsay
@StortSkeptic @galdam



↻ You Retweeted



Cllr J Cartwright @james_cllr 7h

@davebromage @ScotRamsay
@StortSkeptic @galdam 27% no
religion. #thick and #illiterate



Home



Notifications



Messages



Me



Edit profile

Adrian McNeece

@AdrianMcNeece

Workplace Strategist, Interiors Photographer,
Artist & Still an Atheist

📍 Hertford, UK

867 FOLLOWING

1,008 FOLLOWERS

Tweets

Media

Favourites

↻ You Retweeted



Scot Ramsay @ScotRamsay

41m

The view of one of my local
Councillors who claims he is a
Christian.

Cllr J Cartwright @james_cllr

@davebromage @ScotRamsay
@StortSkeptic @galdam 27% no
religion. #thick and #illiterate



Home



Notifications



Messages



Me



East Herts councillor James Cartwright labels Twitter opponents 'thick', 'illiterate' and 'pathetic'



(/photos/article/28106759)





Cllr James Cartwright was embroiled in a spat on Twitter over a failed motion to remove prayers from before the start of EHDC meetings

🕒 Yesterday at 9:17 PM

💬 2 comments

By Herts & Essex Observer

A complaint has been made alleging that a member of East Herts District Council breached the authority's  code of conduct for councillors by calling non-religious opponents on Twitter "thick", "illiterate" and "pathetic".

Cllr James Cartwright, the Conservative member for Puckeridge and chairman  of Standon Parish Council, is the subject of an official protest by a former fellow Tory who put forward a motion to have prayers removed from before the start of EHDC's seven full meetings a year.



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Following a 2-5 defeat of the motion by councillors in a secret ballot last Wednesday evening, atheist Adrian Mc Ee, the member for Hertford Heath who proposed the motion, resigned from the council and then from the Conservative Party.

A heated debate about the decision erupted on Twitter, during which Cllr Cartwright, who had previously tweeted how he respected the views of others, appeared to lose respect for one or two electors.

In his complaint to EHDC about Cllr Cartwright, Mr Mc Ee references the following series of tweets:



Dave Bromage
davebromage

29 Oct

james cllr Scot amsay StortSkeptic galdam 6
Christian, 7 non-tian. basic maths. You're not in charge of
council budgets, right



Cllr J Cartwright
james cllr

Follow

davebromage Scot amsay StortSkeptic galdam 27
no religion. thick and illiterate
:19 PM - 29 Oct 2015

2 1



Cllr J Cartwright
james cllr

29 Oct

davebromage Scot amsay StortSkeptic galdam 27 no
religion. thick and illiterate



Cllr J Cartwright
james cllr

Follow



Cllr J Cartwright

james cllr

1 ov

davebromage Scot amsay StortSkeptic galdam
apologies if my tweet re thick and illiterate offended any
atheists - it was directed 1/2



Cllr J Cartwright

james cllr

Follow

davebromage Scot amsay StortSkeptic galdam at
only one and taken (conveniently) out of conte t - many of my
friends are atheists 2/2

10:00 PM - 1 ov 2015



Dave Bromage

davebromage

1 ov

james cllr Scot amsay StortSkeptic galdam Just me
then Even though you are claiming Christian prayers are
inconclusive of all faiths



Scot Ramsay

Scot amsay

Follow

Entirely untrue james cllr You called me thick, reiterated
that you meant me, and subse uently called davebromage
thuck and illiterate

12:02 PM - 1 ov 2015

1



Scot Ramsay

Scot amsay

1 ov

Entirely untrue james cllr You called me thick, reiterated that
you meant me, and subse uently called davebromage thuck
and illiterate



Cllr J Cartwright

james cllr

Follow

Scot amsay no - meant just for you - apologies to anyone
else to whom it was not intended and mis uoted out of conte t.

12:06 PM - 1 ov 2015



Mr Mc Eeche said: "His (Cllr Cartwright's) comments were inappropriate to members of the public, and he has treated non-religious members of the public with a cavalier lack of respect.

"His comments suggesting that people of no religion are thick and illiterate could not be designed to be more offensive or discriminating. He has shocked and offended myself and others who hold secular or atheist views.

" view Cllr Cartwright's comments to be provocative, offensive and disrespectful. His comments were made at a very sensitive time, following a debate on the exclusion of religious observance at East Herts District Council."

He cited accountability of members, including a clause which members must abide by, which is to be "always treating people with respect, including the organisations and public engage with and those work alongside".

Mr Mc Eeche asks for a personal apology from him, a public apology at the next full council meeting, a press release apology by the council to local media and a "suitable sanction" against Cllr Cartwright so he is "seen to be accountable for his conduct".

Like Mr Mc Eeche, Cllr Cartwright, 51, was first elected to the district council in May. A Church of England Christian, he works as director of operations at a Saint Ignace Catholic School in London.

An East Herts District Council spokeswoman said Mr Mc Eeche's complaint about Cllr Cartwright would be considered in the next few weeks by a standards sub-committee, made up of three East Herts councillors from the standards committee and an independent person. The sub-committee will decide whether an investigation by the full standards committee is appropriate.

 **Have your say**

 **Report**

Related Articles

East Herts council prayers: Member who quit after failed motion now resigns from Conservative Party (<http://m.hertsandessexobserver.co.uk/East-Herts-Prayers-Member-left-council-failed/story-28079521-detail/story.html>)

East Herts councillor resigns as vote to remove prayers before meetings lost in landslide (<http://m.hertsandessexobserver.co.uk/East-Herts-councillor-resigns-vote-remove-prayers/story-28077804-detail/story.html>)

East Herts District Council to vote on scrapping Christian prayers from meetings (<http://m.hertsandessexobserver.co.uk/East-Herts-District-Council-set-vote-motion/story-28070901-detail/story.html>)

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The uardian for Heineken

(<http://www.theguardian.com/heineken-rugby/2015/aug/26/meet-the-heineken-legends-jonah-lomu>
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(<http://www.msn.com/en-gb/health/medical/tattoo-with-a-hidden-message-highlights-the-invisible-battle-faced-by-people-with-depression/ar-AAAdmHliAA51YE> srcref rss CD TA 1 7)

This oman's Tattoo Has A Hidden Message And t s oing iral

 MS

PatrickNewman

4/11/15 10:4 AM

Bigotry and intolerance is clearly not the preserve of non-Christian religions. It is the natural order of things in a world of science that there is no god but religion is a convenient crutch for many people and they should be allowed their illusion if they find it satisfying.



konnichiwa

4/11/15 10:1 AM

To be frank Cllr Cartwright more fool you for engaging those idiots on twitter but if you must watch for Atheist Humanist stock phrases like "tyranny of the majority" as that means -- WE won't be calling it tyranny if WE ever become the majority we'll call it DEMOCRACY until then...booo we're the minority shouting "tyranny of the majority" until WE get what WE want...



News



Sport



What's On



≡ **Directory (businesses)**



Tory councillor stands down in 'prayers before meetings' row

Apology demanded over comments on Twitter

By Tom Durham

tom.durham@hertssexobserver.co.uk

A TORY member of East Herts District Council has quit after his motion for prayers to be dropped from before the start of meetings of the full council was defeated by a landslide.

The day after last Wednesday's 42-5 vote of refusal in a secret ballot of councillors at the authority's chamber in Hertford, atheist Adrian McNeece also resigned from the Conservative Party.

He has since lodged a formal complaint against a former Conservative colleague, who supported the status quo, over comments on Twitter.

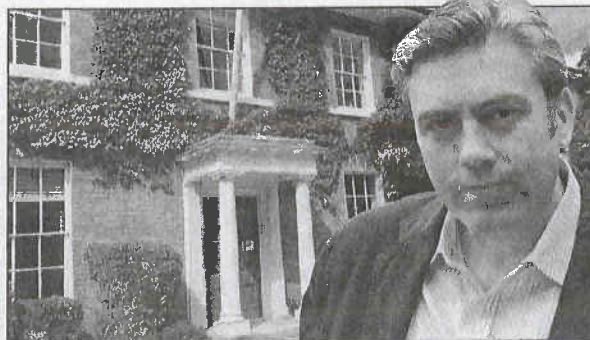
Mr McNeece, who was elected as member for Hertford Heath in May, had hoped to abolish the decades-long practice of inviting a Christian priest to conduct prayers before meetings. He said that he had felt "excluded" during prayers held at his first meeting of the full council.

No part

His motion read: "The meetings of East Herts District Council should be conducted in a manner equally welcoming to all attendees, regardless of their individual religious beliefs or lack of belief. Religious worship should therefore play no part in the formal or informal business of council meetings, on council premises."

The vote focused on three lines of text which appear on every full council meeting agenda, which read: "Prayers will be said before the meeting commences. Those members who do not wish to participate will be invited to enter the chamber at their conclusion."

Mr McNeece described his shock at the strength of opposition among fellow councillors, citing a Herts & Essex Observer Twitter poll which showed 92 per cent of 347 voters supported his stance. Three of EHDC's



QUIT: Adrian McNeece has resigned from East Herts District Council

50 members, all of whom are Conservative, were not at last Wednesday's vote.

Since then, a heated social media exchange between supporters of the motion and EHDC's Puckeridge member, Cllr James Cartwright, on the side of the status quo, has flared up. Mr McNeece has lodged a council members' code of conduct complaint with EHDC against Cllr Cartwright for suggesting people of no religion were "thick" and "illiterate".

Mr McNeece has asked for a personal letter of apology for "the offence he has caused", a public apology at the next full meeting of EHDC, a press release to local media and a "suitable sanction" for Church of England Christian Cllr Cartwright, who works in a Catholic school in London.

Speaking to the Observer after the result, Mr McNeece said: "The separation of government and religion is essential. I'm extremely saddened that such a huge number of councillors voted against the motion.

It suggests to me that they are making the decision based upon political expediency rather than political honesty."

Prayers take place at full meetings of Herts and Essex county councils and at Sawbridgeworth Town Council. They do not occur at meetings of Bishop's Stortford, Uttlesford and Harlow councils.

An EHDC spokesperson said: "It is important to make it clear that prayers are held before full council meetings, of which there are approximately seven in a year. They are not held as part of the actual meeting, they are entirely optional and they are not held before any other of the very many council committee meetings."

Council leader Linda Haysey said: "The manner and timing of the option is to be reviewed to ensure that councillors who do not wish to take part do not feel uncomfortable or excluded."

Mr McNeece's departure means a by-election will be held in Hertford Heath.

Dave Brotnage



Trash talking...

DEAR God, my black bin split in August. I ordered a replacement online but as yet it hasn't arrived.

Rats are sniffing around, so could you please remind East Herts District Council about it at its next meeting, as it listens to you more than local residents? Amen.

Welcome to the new way of doing things in Britain's Bible Belt.

At least, that's the conclusion I've drawn from EHDC's 42-5 thrashing of atheist upstart Adrian McNeece and his request that prayers are not held before official meetings.

And it's certainly something we can infer from the post-vote Twitter gloatfest of the self-appointed mouthpiece of the council's overwhelming Christian majority, Cllr James Cartwright.

It is all deeply troubling.

Magnanimity

"42-5! 42-5!" parroted Puckeridge representative Cartwright, like a rugby fan untroubled by the concept of magnanimity in victory.

He repeated the 'score' as though it were a justification of itself, when it merely highlighted how out of touch this 100 per cent Conservative council is.

He labelled the secularist viewpoint "pathetic" and the vote a "total waste of council time". Yet muttering platitudes into the ether is well worth both the time and council resources, of course.

Most perturbing was Cartwright's unshakable belief that the rights of the majority trump all. Channelling Eric Pickles, the gelatinous former Minister of

Faith, Cartwright goaded critics with: "You live in a Christian country - get over it!"

This sinister phrase betrays an elected member's smugness and excitement at the freedom to ride roughshod over the views of the under-represented.

Even if most Brits - including 62.75 per cent of East Herts residents, according to the 2011 Census - identify as Christian, so what? Politicians are elected by majorities but they must strive to serve the whole. Pickles' mantra holds no more water than "This is a white country - get over it!" as an excuse to tell racist jokes.

Cartwright insists the prayer session is inclusive because those it makes uncomfortable can CHOOSE (his capitals) either to join in the worship of a deity they don't believe in or stand outside. Much like Christians living in the Islamic State's caliphate are free to CHOOSE whether to convert or die.

Some American police officers have taken recently to plastering 'In God We Trust' stickers over their panda cars - a concerning move which implies these cops will "protect and serve" fellow believers over non-believers. Last week's East Herts landslide has the same effect.

It tacitly - and, in the case of Cartwright's ravings, explicitly - reinforces the notion that the opinions and concerns of East Herts' non-Christian minority aren't worth a damn.

An elected body asking, in an official capacity, for divine guidance is left wide open to accusations of prejudice. Is a Christian more likely to get a leg up on the housing register? Would a secular disco have less chance than a church

beetle drive of getting an alcohol licence approved?

I'd have previously dismissed such claims as scaremongering. But that was before the Christian majority showed so little empathy with McNeece that, when he proposed a motion asking them to desist in making him feel marginalised, they stomped on it with such vigour that he had no choice but to resign.

Let's be clear: this isn't about clamping down on religion. That Cllr Cartwright believes God will help him make wiser decisions regarding the district's recycling needs is, of course, his business.

But he hasn't been elected to a synod. Why can't he pray in the privacy of his own home?

Flake

Perhaps it's understandable. God is, after all, a notorious flake. If He can't be arsed to answer the prayers of the parents of a dying child, then there's no chance He is going to rule on bin collections unless presented with all the minutiae immediately before the vote.

It shows the danger of writing 'Christian' on the Census form just because you celebrate Christmas rather than Hannukah or Eid.

A Church of England survey last week revealed that many of these 'cultural' Christians don't even believe Jesus was a real person.

But the fact so many tick the box emboldens fundamentalist zealots in positions of power, giving them reason to believe they have a mandate to push for a theocracy. And if that happens, I'd never get my new bin.

■ "It's time the council took a good look outside of its bubble of privilege": See Letters, p10&11



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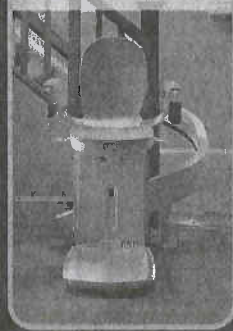
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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE – 24 NOVEMBER 2015

REPORT BY MONITORING OFFICER

COMPLAINTS IN RESPECT OF MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCILLORS S BANNERMAN, A BAXTER AND I HUNT

WARD(S) AFFECTED: NONE

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To consider code of conduct complaints in respect of Much Hadham Parish Councillors Anthony Baxter, Selina Bannerman and Ian Hunt.

1.0 Background

1.1 The Monitoring Officer has received several complaints alleging that Much Hadham Parish Councillors Baxter, Bannerman and Hunt have breached their Council's Code of Conduct.

1.2 The Sub-Committee will need to come to a determination in respect of each complaint individually.

2.0 Report

2.1 Council has agreed a procedure for considering complaints.

2.2 The Sub-Committee will consider each complaint and decide what action to take.

2.3 In appropriate cases, the Monitoring Officer may seek to resolve the complaint informally, without the need for a formal investigation. Having consulted the Independent Person, it is not considered that the complaints can be resolved informally.

2.4 Complaints are considered in accordance with the Standards Complaints assessment criteria set out in Appendix 2 of the Complaints Procedure (**Essential Reference Paper 'B'**)

3.0 The Complaints

- 3.1 The four complaints are set out in the complaints forms and accompanying documents that form **Essential Reference Papers 'C' to 'F'**.

4.0 Procedure

- 4.1 A copy of the Council's complaints procedure is contained in **Essential Reference Paper 'B' (see Agenda Item 8)**.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

- 3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Contact Officer: Jeff Hughes - Monitoring Officer - 01279 502170
jeff.hughes@eastherts.gov.uk

Report Author: Jeff Hughes - Monitoring Officer

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives (delete as appropriate):	People This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, particularly those who are vulnerable.
Consultation:	The Independent Person has been consulted.
Legal:	The procedures are in accordance with relevant legislation.
Financial:	None
Human Resource:	None
Risk Management:	The cases should be determined in accordance with the legislation having regard to the relevant guidance.

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COMPLAINT FORM : CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS

A. Your details

1. Please provide us with your name and contact details. Anonymous complaints will only be considered if there is independent evidence to substantiate the complaint.

Title:	MRS
First name:	SUE
Last name:	WETHERALL
Address:	
Contact telephone:	
Email address:	
Signature:	
Date of complaint:	6 October 2015

Your address and contact details will not usually be released unless necessary or to deal with your complaint.

The following people may see this form:

- Monitoring Officer of the Council
- Standards Committee members
- Council's Independent Person(s)
- The subject member(s)
- the Parish Clerk (if applicable)

If you have serious concerns about your name and a summary, or details of your complaint being released, please complete **Section C** of this Form and also discuss your reasons or concerns with the Council's Monitoring Officer.

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Please tell us which complainant type best describes you:

- ☒ A member of the public
- ☐ An elected or co-opted Member of the Council
- ☐ An independent member of a Standards Committee
- ☐ A Member of Parliament
- ☐ A Monitoring Officer
- ☐ Other council employee, contractor or agent of the Council
- ☐ Other ()

2. Equality Monitoring Form - please fill in the attached form.

B. Making your complaint

3. Please provide us with the name of the Member(s) you believe have breached the Council's Code of Conduct:

Title	First name	Last name
MRS	SELINA	BANNERMAN

4. Please explain in this section (or on separate sheet(s)) what the Member is alleged to have done that you believe breaches the Code of Conduct. If you are complaining about more than one Member you should clearly explain what each individual person has done, with dates / witnesses to substantiate the alleged breach.

It is also important that you provide all the evidence you wish to have taken into account. For example:

- You should be specific, wherever possible, about exactly what you are alleging the Member said or did. For instance, instead of writing that the Member insulted you, you should state what it was they said or did to insult you.
- You should provide the dates of the alleged incidents wherever possible. If you cannot provide exact dates it is important to give a general timeframe.

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

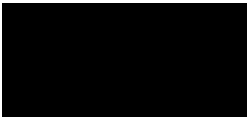
- You should confirm whether there are any witnesses to the alleged conduct and provide their names and contact details if possible.
- You should provide any relevant background information or other relevant documentary evidence to support your allegation(s).

Please provide us with the details of your complaint. Continue on a separate sheet if there is not enough space on this form.

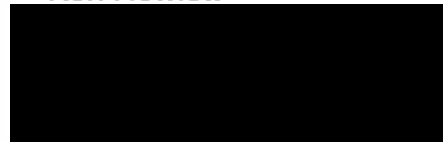
* Please see attached statement.

Witnesses:

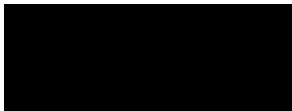
Alexandra Farmer



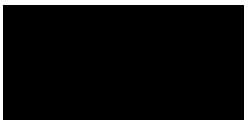
Ken Howlett



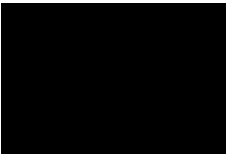
Fred Pavey



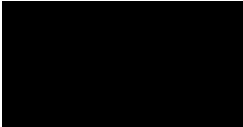
Marianne O'Neill



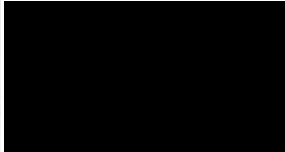
Barry Brett



Sally Barra



Karen Cope



EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

C. Confidentiality of complainant and the complaint details

Only complete this next section if you are requesting that your identity is kept confidential

5. In the interests of fairness and in compliance with the rules of natural justice, we believe Members who are complained about have a right to know who has made the complaint and the substance of the allegation(s) made against him / her. We are, therefore, unlikely to withhold your personal details or the details of your complaint unless you have good reasons to believe that you have justifiable grounds, for example:
- to believe you may be victimised or harassed by the Member(s) against whom you are submitting a written complaint (or by a person associated with the same); or
 - may receive less favourable treatment from the Council because of the seniority of the Member against whom you are submitting a written complaint in terms of any existing Council service provision or any tender / contract that you may have or are about to submit to the Council.

Please note that requests for confidentiality or requests for suppression of the personal and complaint details will not automatically be granted. The Assessment Sub-Committee will consider the request alongside the substance of your complaint and the Monitoring Officer will then contact you with the decision. If your request for confidentiality is not granted, we will usually allow you the opportunity, if you so wish, of withdrawing your complaint.

However, it is important to understand that - in exceptional circumstances, where the matter complained about is very serious - we may proceed with an investigation (or other action) and may have no choice but to disclose your personal and complaint details, because of the allegation(s) made, even if you have expressly asked us not to.

Please provide us with details of why you believe we should withhold your name and/or the details of your complaint:

(Continue on separate sheet(s), as necessary)

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

D. Remedy sought

7. Please indicate the remedy or remedies you are looking for or hoping to achieve by submitting this complaint.

That there should be an audit of the expenditure to the pavilion in the light of the request of fund raising which was specifically for the building and not for the capital items, running costs or maintenance.

There appears to be no authorisation or agreement by the Parish Council of some of the expenditure, which has now taken place.

(Continue on separate sheet(s), as necessary)

E. Additional information

8. Complaints must be submitted in writing. This includes fax and electronic submissions. Frivolous, vexatious and politically motivated tit-for-tat complaints are likely to be rejected.
9. In line with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, we can make reasonable adjustments to assist you if you have a disability that prevents you from making your complaint in writing. We can also help if English is not your first language.
10. If you need any support in completing this form, please contact the Monitoring Officer as soon as possible.

Monitoring Officer Contact details:

The Monitoring Officer – Simon Drinkwater
East Herts Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford
SG13 8EQ

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Monitoring Form – Local Assessments of Complaints Standards Committee - Assessment Sub Committee

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White Irish
Any other White
background

Mixed

White and Black
Caribbean
White and Black
African
Any other mixed
background ☐

Asian

Indian
Pakistani
Bangladeshi
Any other Asian
background ☐

Black

Caribbean
African
Any other Black
background ☐

Chinese or other

**ethnic
group**
Chinese
Other ☐

☒

*Categories used are those utilised by
the Office of Population Censuses and
Surveys

Do you have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect
on your ability that you wish to declare under the Disability Discrimination Act?

Yes

☐

No

☒

STATEMENT

On Tuesday 6th October 2015 I attended the Much Hadham Parish Council meeting held at the Mission Hall, Green Tye.

My reason for attending was to pose a question to the committee during the 20-minute residents comments part of the agenda.

As soon as the question time started Alex Farmer, a local resident, raised questions as to accountability of the pavilion committee. Councillor Bannerman was extremely rude and offhand in her replies, saying to the Chair in a loud voice "what is she criticising now" (referring to Mrs Farmer).

Then came my turn to ask a question. I had purchased 5 bricks, costing £50, for my family under the "buy a brick" appeal which was advertised by the PC as "*we would like every member of the Parish to 'own' a piece of the building by purchasing a 'brick'*" (to pay for the building/loan costs of the pavilion, which I thought was a good idea).

I wanted to be reassured by the committee that the donated monies were to be used only for the main refurbishment /building of the pavilion and to pay off the loan and not for running or maintenance costs. Councillor Bannerman's response, several times, was that we could have our money back if we were not happy. Having money back for me was not the issue or one I would have wished to pursue. I told the committee that I merely wanted confirmation that our money was being spent, as we believed it was going to be, on the "main build"; I said this is what had been sold to us and that I felt very "uncomfortable" with the way things were. Councillor Bannerman disputed this and said it had been made clear from the outset that monies would be used for "other" expenses. I in turn disagreed with her.

Whilst the next question was being asked, Cllr Bannerman left her seat at the PC table and started to walk to the back of the hall toward where I was sitting. The next thing I knew she thrust £50 onto my lap and walked back to her place next to the Chairman.

I was thoroughly insulted and intimidated by this act and went up to the PC table taking the money back, telling them that I had lived in the village for over 40 years and had never been so publicly insulted by anyone and that Councillor Bannerman had no right to just give £50 back without the authorisation of the PC Committee. I said that I have the democratic right to ask a question about any expenditure by the Parish Council and that it was not her place to make a decision to just come and thrust money at me in the hope that I will go away and shut up. She then added that she would come and push the money through my letterbox to make me take it back. I told her that she was a bully and spoke to people in a most disrespectful manner. This was an act of sheer aggression and loss of control by Councillor Bannerman. I felt that her actions were of a bullying nature and showed little or no respect to a member of the public. The Chair did nothing to reprimand her.

Notwithstanding gratifying and discernable murmurings of support from amongst the assembled company I then left the hall feeling very shaken, upset and tearful and spent the rest of the night feeling apprehensive that she might come to my home, as she had threatened to do.

Apparently, later in the evening, she publicly apologised for her behavior and said she would come and see myself and another lady, to whom she had also been rude, to apologise the following morning. Apparently Councillor Bannerman also added that she would not apologise for anything the pavilion committee had done. I understand that later in the evening Councillor Hunt, who is an extremely fair man, apologised on behalf of the committee for the behaviour towards some of the residents earlier that evening.

Councillor Bannerman did knock on my door the next day to apologise. I have to say that I find it hard to accept such dreadful threatening behaviour from anyone, let alone a Councillor who is surely there to represent and help the residents of Much Hadham and not threaten them? I am not a vindictive person but I do feel that in this instance an apology is not sufficient and that a proper enquiry is called for as I did not receive an adequate answer to my enquiries or explanations as to where the money for expenditure was actually coming from or what the buy a brick funds had been spent on.



Sue Wetherall

9th October 2015



EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMPLAINT FORM : CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS

A. Your details

1. Please provide us with your name and contact details. Anonymous complaints will only be considered if there is independent evidence to substantiate the complaint.

Title:	MRS
First name:	MARIANNE
Last name:	O'NEILL
Address:	[REDACTED]
Contact telephone:	[REDACTED]
Email address:	[REDACTED]
Signature:	[REDACTED]
Date of complaint:	6 th October 2015

Your address and contact details will not usually be released unless necessary or to deal with your complaint.

The following people may see this form:

- Monitoring Officer of the Council
- Standards Committee members
- Council's Independent Person(s)
- The subject member(s)
- the Parish Clerk (if applicable)

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

If you have serious concerns about your name and a summary, or details of your complaint being released, please complete **Section C** of this Form and also discuss your reasons or concerns with the Council's Monitoring Officer.

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Please tell us which complainant type best describes you:

- ☒ A member of the public
- ☐ An elected or co-opted Member of the Council
- ☐ An independent member of a Standards Committee
- ☐ A Member of Parliament
- ☐ A Monitoring Officer
- ☐ Other council employee, contractor or agent of the Council
- ☐ Other ()

2. Equality Monitoring Form - please fill in the attached form.

B. Making your complaint

3. Please provide us with the name of the Member(s) you believe have breached the Council's Code of Conduct:

Title	First name	Last name
MRS	SELINA	BANNERMAN

4. Please explain in this section (or on separate sheet(s)) what the Member is alleged to have done that you believe breaches the Code of Conduct. If you are complaining about more than one Member you should clearly explain what each individual person has done, with dates / witnesses to substantiate the alleged breach.

It is also important that you provide all the evidence you wish to have taken into account. For example:

- You should be specific, wherever possible, about exactly what you are alleging the Member said or did. For instance, instead of writing that the Member insulted you, you should state what it was they said or did to insult you.
- You should provide the dates of the alleged incidents wherever possible. If you cannot provide exact dates it is important to give a general timeframe.
- You should confirm whether there are any witnesses to the alleged conduct and provide their names and contact details if possible.
- You should provide any relevant background information or other relevant documentary evidence to support your allegation(s).

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Please provide us with the details of your complaint. Continue on a separate sheet if there is not enough space on this form.

On Tuesday 6th October 2015 I attended a meeting of the Much Hadham Parish Council, held at the Mission Hall, Green Tye.

My reason for attending was to support our local community and also to learn of any developments in the village.

I was alarmed at the response of Councillor Bannerman to one village resident, Mrs Alex Farmer, when she raised, what I felt was a fair question concerning the Village Pavilion Committee of which Councillor Bannerman is a member. Councillor Bannerman was rude and dismissive of Mrs Farmer's question and made an aside to the Chair of "What is she criticising now?" It is my belief that councillors should be bipartisan and there to listen to queries and concerns of residents and in this instance, I feel Councillor Bannerman was not.

As the 20 minute residents comments section continued, another village resident, Mrs Susan Wetherall, raised another pertinent question concerning the Village Pavilion. Her question related to the 'Buy-A-Brick' appeal which was to be used for the main refurbishment/building the pavilion and paying down the loan and not for running or maintenance costs. Mrs Wetherall wanted assurance from the Parish Council that this was the case. Councillor Bannerman's response to Mrs Wetherall was abrupt and she said that if Mrs Wetherall was unhappy, she could have her £50 donation back. Mrs Wetherall made it clear that she did not want her money returned, she merely wanted clarification from the Parish Council that her money was being used for the purposes that were initially advertised. I felt that this question was justified and it had been a concern of mine also.

I was outraged at what happened next. Councillor Bannerman behaved in an inappropriate manner and not in the way I would expect a representative of the Parish Council to behave. She walked to the back of the hall where Mrs Wetherall was sitting and thrust £50 in notes into her lap before walking back to her place next to the Chairman. I was sat near to Mrs Wetherall and could see the impact of Councillor Bannerman's actions, it left Mrs Wetherall quite shaken. In fact, her actions had an effect on many people present, including myself. I was appalled that anyone could behave in an insulting and intimidating manner in a public forum. I was also very surprised that there was no intervention from the Chairman of the Parish Council, Councillor Baxter.

Mrs Wetherall then got up and calmly walked to the front of the hall and politely returned the money to Councillor Bannerman. Addressing the room, she said that she had been a resident of Much Hadham for over 40 years and had never been so

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

publicly insulted by anyone and that Councillor Bannerman had no right to just give £50 back without the authorisation of the Parish Council.

At this point I felt I should speak up as I supported the view of Mrs Wetherall and too wanted to address my concerns over the 'Buy-A-Brick' Appeal. I stood up and addressed Councillor Bannerman by saying that I too thought the money was just for the repayment of the loan. To which I was told that I could have my money back as well.

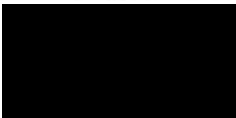
Feeling insulted and unheard, I left the Parish Council meeting alongside Mrs Wetherall who was obviously very shaken by the whole experience.

After the meeting it was brought to my attention that Councillor Bannerman publicly apologised for her behaviour and that she would personally apologise to both myself and Mrs Wetherall. Councillor Ian Hunt, who had been witness to all of this, also apologised on behalf of the committee for the behaviour by some of the councillors towards residents. I am told his actions were applauded by many of those present.

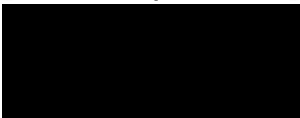
The next day I did indeed receive a message from Councillor Bannerman via Facebook both apologising for her actions and asking if she could come round to my house to apologise in person. Whilst I appreciated this, I felt her behaviour was unjustified and intimidating.

Witnesses:

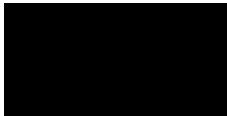
Alexandra Farmer



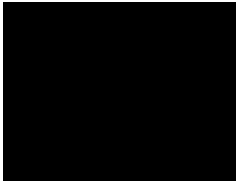
Fred Pavey



Susan Wetherall

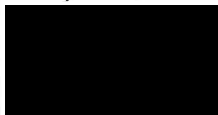


Barry Brett

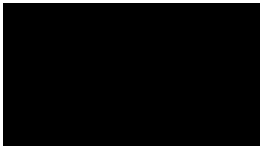


EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Sally Barra



Karen Cope



Ken Howlett



(Continue on separate sheet(s), as necessary)

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

C. Confidentiality of complainant and the complaint details

Only complete this next section if you are requesting that your identity is kept confidential

5. In the interests of fairness and in compliance with the rules of natural justice, we believe Members who are complained about have a right to know who has made the complaint and the substance of the allegation(s) made against him / her. We are, therefore, unlikely to withhold your personal details or the details of your complaint unless you have good reasons to believe that you have justifiable grounds, for example:
- to believe you may be victimised or harassed by the Member(s) against whom you are submitting a written complaint (or by a person associated with the same); or
 - may receive less favourable treatment from the Council because of the seniority of the Member against whom you are submitting a written complaint in terms of any existing Council service provision or any tender / contract that you may have or are about to submit to the Council.

Please note that requests for confidentiality or requests for suppression of the personal and complaint details will not automatically be granted. The Assessment Sub-Committee will consider the request alongside the substance of your complaint and the Monitoring Officer will then contact you with the decision. If your request for confidentiality is not granted, we will usually allow you the opportunity, if you so wish, of withdrawing your complaint.

However, it is important to understand that - in exceptional circumstances, where the matter complained about is very serious - we may proceed with an investigation (or other action) and may have no choice but to disclose your personal and complaint details, because of the allegation(s) made, even if you have expressly asked us not to.

Please provide us with details of why you believe we should withhold your name and/or the details of your complaint:

X

(Continue on separate sheet(s), as necessary)

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

D. Remedy sought

7. Please indicate the remedy or remedies you are looking for or hoping to achieve by submitting this complaint.

I would like to see more transparency from both the Parish Council and the Village Pavilion Committee, on which many members of the Parish Council sit.

(Continue on separate sheet(s), as necessary)

E. Additional information

8. Complaints must be submitted in writing. This includes fax and electronic submissions. Frivolous, vexatious and politically motivated tit-for-tat complaints are likely to be rejected.
9. In line with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, we can make reasonable adjustments to assist you if you have a disability that prevents you from making your complaint in writing. We can also help if English is not your first language.
10. If you need any support in completing this form, please contact the Monitoring Officer as soon as possible.

Monitoring Officer Contact details:

The Monitoring Officer – Simon Drinkwater
East Herts Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford
SG13 8EQ

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Monitoring Form – Local Assessments of Complaints Standards Committee - Assessment Sub Committee

Working towards equal opportunities

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White

White British
White Irish
Any other White
background

☒

Mixed

White and Black
Caribbean
White and Black
African
Any other mixed
background

☐

Asian

Indian
Pakistani
Bangladeshi
Any other Asian
background

☐

Black

Caribbean
African
Any other Black
background

☐

Chinese or other ethnic group

Chinese
Other

☐

*Categories used are those utilised by
the Office of Population Censuses and
Surveys

Do you have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on your ability that you wish to declare under the Disability Discrimination Act?

Yes

☐

No

☒

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EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMPLAINT FORM : CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS

A. Your details

1. Please provide us with your name and contact details. Anonymous complaints will only be considered if there is independent evidence to substantiate the complaint.

Title:	MRS
First name:	ALEXANDRA
Last name:	FARMER
Address:	[REDACTED]
Contact telephone:	[REDACTED]
Email address:	[REDACTED]
Signature:	[REDACTED]
Date of complaint:	14 OCTOBER 2015

Your address and contact details will not usually be released unless necessary or to deal with your complaint.

The following people may see this form:

- Monitoring Officer of the Council
- Standards Committee members
- Council's Independent Person(s)
- The subject member(s)
- the Parish Clerk (if applicable)

If you have serious concerns about your name and a summary, or details of your complaint being released, please complete **Section C** of this Form and also discuss your reasons or concerns with the Council's Monitoring Officer.

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Please tell us which complainant type best describes you:

- ☒ A member of the public
- ☐ An elected or co-opted Member of the Council
- ☐ An independent member of a Standards Committee
- ☐ A Member of Parliament
- ☐ A Monitoring Officer
- ☐ Other council employee, contractor or agent of the Council
- ☐ Other ()

2. Equality Monitoring Form - please fill in the attached form.

B. Making your complaint

3. Please provide us with the name of the Member(s) you believe have breached the Council's Code of Conduct:

Title	First name	Last name
MRS	SELINA	BANNERMAN
DR	ANTHONY	BAXTER

4. Please explain in this section (or on separate sheet(s)) what the Member is alleged to have done that you believe breaches the Code of Conduct. If you are complaining about more than one Member you should clearly explain what each individual person has done, with dates / witnesses to substantiate the alleged breach.

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EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

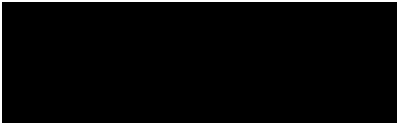
- You should confirm whether there are any witnesses to the alleged conduct and provide their names and contact details if possible.
- You should provide any relevant background information or other relevant documentary evidence to support your allegation(s).

Please provide us with the details of your complaint. Continue on a separate sheet if there is not enough space on this form.

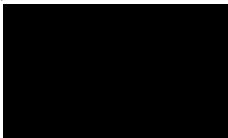
Please see separate document with details of my complaint headed "Details of my Complaint"

Listed below are some of the witnesses who attended the meeting on 6 October 2015 and were therefore witnesses to what happened at the meeting on that date:

Ken Howlett



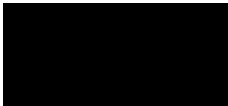
Sue Wetherall



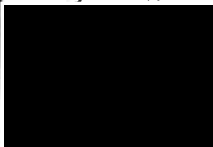
Fred Pavey



Marianne O'Neill



Barry Brett

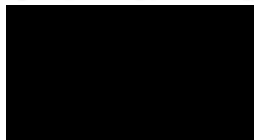


Sally Barra



EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Karen Cope



(Continue on separate sheet(s), as necessary)

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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(Continue on separate sheet(s), as necessary)

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

D. Remedy sought

7. Please indicate the remedy or remedies you are looking for or hoping to achieve by submitting this complaint.

Councillor Bannerman has worked tirelessly to get the refurbishment of the pavilion off the ground and this is to be commended, however the residents of the parish deserve a pavilion committee which fully represents their interests, properly constituted and with proper governance by the Parish Council to include:

- A constitution which is representative of all ages in the village. The places available to members of the public on the committee should have been open to residents to gauge interest rather than three residents appointed to the committee by Cllr Bannerman.
- A budget and spending limitations – neither budget or limitations on spend currently exist and there appears to be no process for ratification
- Full reporting to the MHPC (only one set of minutes has so far been provided to the MHPC)
- Terms of reference that are fully discussed by the MHPC and agreed upon
- Financial reporting to the MHPC to show all the costs of the refurbishment, how these costs are to be funded and a record of the ongoing receipts, donations, payments etc. As far as I am aware there has been no financial reporting to the MHPC to date
- Transparency in discussions and decision making
- The Buy a Brick fund needs to be looked by the MHPC and the MHPC need to decide how to deal with its spend in the light of my complaint.
- Questions from the floor during parish council meetings should be answered as fully as possible and with respect and this needs to be supported by the Chair
- Chair to be objective in his role and act in the best interests of the parishioners rather than supporting those councillors who are his friends when there are breaches of the code of conduct
- To stop the combative and disrespectful nature of emails
- Confirmation from the councillors that they are aware of their obligations under the Code of Conduct and will abide by them in future.

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

(Continue on separate sheet(s), as necessary)

E. Additional Information

8. Complaints must be submitted in writing. This includes fax and electronic submissions. Frivolous, vexatious and politically motivated tit-for-tat complaints are likely to be rejected.
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EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Monitoring Form – Local Assessments of Complaints Standards Committee - Assessment Sub Committee

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White

White British
White Irish
Any other White
background

☒

Mixed

White and Black
Caribbean
White and Black
African
Any other mixed
background

☐

Asian

Indian
Pakistani
Bangladeshi
Any other Asian
background

☐

Black

Caribbean
African
Any other Black
background

☐

Chinese or other ethnic group

Chinese
Other

☐

*Categories used are those utilised by
the Office of Population Censuses and
Surveys

Do you have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on your ability that you wish to declare under the Disability Discrimination Act?

Yes

☐

No


☒

Details of my Complaint

1. Background

As a fund raising exercise for the pavilion rebuilding project, parishioners were asked to contribute £10 to "buy a brick", which meant their name would be written on a tile on an internal wall as an enduring record of who had donated towards the renovation project. It was promoted with this poster e.g in the parish magazine and in the village shop.

BUY A BRICK
FOR MUCH HADHAM PAVILION
RENOVATION PROJECT



'Own' a piece of the building by purchasing a 'brick' for a suggested donation of £10, or buy one for each member of your family. Each brick can be signed by the Donor and placed on a donor wall inside the Pavilion.... 'be a part of history'...

Donations:
ONLINE: to GO FUND ME www.gofundme.com/vk8z4qc
By CHEQUE: payable to MUCH HADHAM PARISH COUNCIL (REF PAVILION), please place in box in LORDES

CAN BE HIRED FOR ANY EVENT - CHILDREN, ADULTS, SPORTING OR OTHERWISE

- ✦ Kids parties
- ✦ Exercise classes
- ✦ Tea parties
- ✦ Coffee Groups
- ✦ Clubs
- ✦ Private venue
- ✦ Sports teams
- ✦ Cricket
- ✦ Football
- ✦ Running
- ✦ Biking
- ✦ Bridge
- ✦ Raffles
- ✦ Fundraisers
- ✦ Get togethers
- ✦ Playgroups
- ✦ Sales

Possibilities are endless...

In the PC minutes for Feb 2015: Cllr Bannerman stated that ".....Having secured the loan (to pay for the renovation) it was intended to undertake a marketing strategy involving fund raising from within the village on the lines of a "buying a brick", ie a plaque sponsorship.

The sums raised by this method would offset the total of the loan."

A fund-raising site Go Fund Me was used from May 2015 as the intended primary method of attracting a large number of parishioner contributions. Initially, the target was specified on the site to be £80k and in this extract (key phrases highlighted here for clarity):

"We would like to raise £80,000 to repay the loan for the build out but realistically a lot of that will come from Grants - what we would like is for every member of the parish to 'own' a piece of the building by purchasing a 'brick'

for a suggested minimum donation of £10. We encourage those who can, to buy more than one brick; perhaps one for each family member

Each brick (which is actually a tile) will be signed (or can be anon) and a note of your age if you wish- this will demonstrate the diverse age groups in our community and will enable children to look back at their contribution. This brick will be placed on a purpose built Donor wall inside the pavilion. Corporate and Group donations are very welcome and Acknowledgement Plaques will be arranged for the wall.

Generations to come can look back at the Donor wall and know that these people built this pavilion. "

Please note that MHPC has its own code of conduct and has not adopted the model code (I don't know why) and it is the MHPC code that I refer to below

2. Parish Council Meeting

On Tuesday 6 October 2015 I attended a Much Hadham Parish Council ("MHPC) meeting.

During agenda item 6 "Residents Comments" I raised my hand and said the following (I wrote down what I wanted to say so this is an accurate record):

"I am very concerned about the ongoing costs referable to the pavilion and the complete lack of accountability of the Pavilion Committee. The end of year accounts for the parish council do not show architect or surveying fees so I suspect these have yet to be paid and were they budgeted for? I understand that significant further expenditure which was not part of the original contract value of £114,000 has arisen, such as £2k on locks and bolts, presumably someone is paying for the cleaning after the open sessions after school and there are Much Hadham Parish Council Facebook page references to purchases of equipment (e.g. coffee machine, TV), do you have a licence?, references have been made to the proposed movement of items in the children's playground to make room for the reinstatement of a cricket square to bring Hertford cricket team in next year, now talk of a cafe on Facebook etc- all without any discussion or mandate from the Parish Council. Can you tell me please what are the costs referable to the pavilion which were not included in the contract value with Glenplan and are still to be paid e.g architect's fees and can you tell me what the pavilion committee's terms of reference are, its budget/spend limitations and the reporting structure in place?"

2.1 Breach of Member Obligations 1 and 2

During my statement and questions Councillor Bannerman raised her eyes to heaven a number of times and said in a voice loud enough for the whole audience to hear "what is she criticising now?", more than once and whilst I was speaking. I found it belittling,

embarrassing and intimidating. The witnesses listed on the complaint form saw/heard this and have offered to support this aspect of my complaint. I believe Cllr Bannerman was disrespectful and intimidatory, in breach of **Member Obligations 1 and 2 of the MHPC Code of Conduct**.

2.2 Breach of Member Obligation 4

The Chair of MHPC, Cllr Baxter, then said that the organisation of the pavilion committee was going to be discussed later on so perhaps that part of my question could be answered then but he asked Councillor Bannerman to answer the questions as to expenditure. Cllr Bannerman said that the £13,000 raised from Buy a Brick and other donations had been earmarked to get the pavilion up and running and the cleaner for example had been paid from this fund and that the architect had been paid but didn't explain from which pot of money or when this payment had been ratified. I said I did not think that people thought their Buy a Brick donations would be used for running costs. I believe that the resources (funds from Buy A Brick) of the Council have not been used in accordance with the Council's requirements and expectation to pay down the loan but for other purposes and Cllr Bannerman breached **Member Obligation 4 of the MHPC Code of Conduct**.

[Subsequent to this there was an altercation between Cllr Bannerman and other residents, which I understand is the subject of a separate complaint]

Separately, I have seen the Pavilion Committee's minutes for September (which have not been presented to the MHPC) which records that "£13k raised from donations and buy a brick Money to be used for equipment and initial costs (eg, TV, crockery, cutlery, framing, turf etc).....Funds are not to repay the loan – ongoing maintenance and running costs". The Chair of the MHPC was at this committee meeting. I therefore believe both Cllr Baxter and Cllr Bannerman breached **Member Obligation 4 of the MHPC Code of Conduct** in using funds for purposes not required.

At the time of writing, there has been no financial information presented to PC as to how much was raised in total through "Buy a Brick", when it was all banked, how much the fundraising site deducted from the donations and what the total raised has been spent on.

2.3 Breach of Principles of Objectivity and Accountability

When agenda item 13 of the 6 October meeting was reached "Pavilion update and recreation ground activities" John Carey, a co-opted member of the Pavilion Committee, made a presentation and then the Chair, Cllr Baxter, said that as Cllr Hunt was a detail man and that the pavilion committee needed to be reviewed he would like to ask Cllr Ian Hunt to review the pavilion committee. Cllr Hunt first apologised to the residents for how the MHPC had treated some of the residents earlier in the meeting and said that all questions from residents should be treated with respect and that the councillors were here to represent the residents of the parish and they should attempt to answer questions as fully

as possible. Cllr Hunt then outlined the short comings of the Pavilion Committee and accepted Cllr Baxter's offer. At that point many residents clapped.

However 36 hours after asking Cllr Hunt to help review the Pavilion Committee the Chair unilaterally took Cllr Hunt off this task and has since drafted a new constitution and terms of reference himself *(clearly copying the outstanding terms of reference put together for the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee by Cllr Hunt because the document still refers to the Steering Committee in 3.1)*. The terms of reference contains statements which suggest that this committee oversaw the design and building of the pavilion which was not the case. I believe that these actions by Cllr Baxter **breach the principles contained in the Introduction to the Code of Conduct of objectivity and accountability.**

3. Pavilion Locks

On 30 September 2015 Cllr Bannerman sent the Sports Association an email which included the following paragraph "Fyi we have spent nearly £2000 on locks and keys to reach insurance standards. The whole time we were paying for the pavilion insurance it was invalid due to the locks and mainly lack of approved locks in place . If there was breakin and damage we would not have been covered . This hAs now been rectified through the money raised by the bricks ".

I responded later the same day:

"Dear Selina

The insurance documents were, as requested, sent to *(Chairman)* Tony *(Baxter)* and John Carey on 27th June. There are no conditions with regard to locks on the doors etc in the policy documents. Following your earlier email suggesting that our policy was invalid because of unapproved locks, I thought I better double check my understanding with our brokers. They have confirmed that there are no such conditions and the policy does not require any specific types of door locks or keys.

I'm not sure where you received the information which has resulted in expenditure of nearly £2000 on locks and keys to reach insurance standards.

Alex "

There is no record that the MHPC or Pavilion Committee had a requirement for this work or that it authorised its commissioning, there has been no evidence that a number of quotes were obtained as they should be, the identity of the provider is unknown and the cost appears to have been met from Buy a Brick funds, which were not, in my view donated for that purpose, or from general parish expenditure budgeted for other uses. I believe Councillor Bannerman breached **Member Obligation 4 of the MHPC Code of Conduct** in spending money (£2000) for locks that were not required.

4. Correspondence

Fred Pavey who is an elderly gentleman and the Chair of the Sports Association which is a local village charity which runs the recreation ground has received emails copied to the other members of the Sports Association including me, such as

"Get a grip and acknowledge when John and others who are on the PC are trying to help - or get others who will .

I for one have had enough .

Take a step back and just figure out what's important " *Cllr Bannerman 12/8/2015*

"I forgot your usual (and I speak from personal experience on several occasions) approach is to discourage, bully and disenfranchise anyone who has tried to use the facilities or help the SA, aside from the present incumbents of course.

I must not tread on your toes

I must not tread on your toes

Repeat to fade...." *John Carey 12/8/2015 (co-opted member appointed onto the pavilion committee by Cllr Bannerman)*

"Sorry for doing your job for you and encouraging youth (local and further afield) back to the playing fields of Much Hadham, oh and earning you some money." *John Carey 12/8/2015*

"Well either I can be helpful and find him for you in the village and then pass in his details or you are welcome to try to find him yourself ...

Or you could assume that I am trying to contact him on your behalf .

Do the leg work if you wish but as he didn't see or meet you he is more likely to be found by me when I meet him at the school gates to get his details ... " *Cllr Bannerman 3/9/2015*

These are just a few examples of endless emails containing unnecessarily combative language which leave little room for proper discussion or other views. All these emails were copied to the Chair, Cllr Baxter, and he has done nothing to try to stop this behaviour. I believe the e-mails constitute breaches of **Member Obligations 1 and 2 of the code of conduct** by Cllr Bannerman and the failure of the Chair, Cllr Baxter, to act decisively is a

failure of the **leadership principle contained in the code of conduct**. The Chair should enforce proper procedure and the code of conduct.

14 October 2015

Deputy Monitoring Officer - Jeff Hughes

East Herts Council

Council Offices

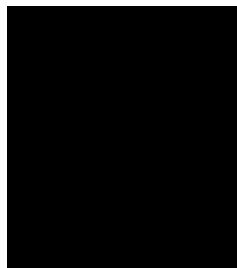
Wallfields

Pegs Lane

Hertford

SG13 8EQ

Cllr Dr Anthony D Baxter



Dear Mr Hughes thanks for your time on the phone last week discussing the case of a Councillor (Mr Ian Hunt) on the Much Hadham Parish Council who in my opinion behaved very badly at a our last Parish Council meeting on the 6th October 2015. Since that meeting I have received three letter of complaint from fellow Councillors, two from members of the public present at the Parish Council Meeting and from the Clerk to the Parish Council John Ingham.

Having discussed the matter with our Clerk and yourself it seems the most appropriate course of action is to have the actions of Councillor Hunt investigated under a potential breach of the Code of Conduct.

Please accept this letter as my complaint as the sheet in the complaints form is not big enough.

On the 6th October we had a Parish Council meeting held in the Green Tye Mission Hall. To be concise, one of the Parish Councillors Ian Hunt made a series of allegations and offensive remarks to members of the pubic, Parish Councillors and the Clerk. The background as to why he came to make these statements is included in my Chairmans statement (appendix 1). You can also take my statement as a letter of complaint.

Following the meeting I received letters of complaint about Cllr Hunts conduct from three fellow councillors, Cllr Mrs Selina Bannerman (Vice Chairman) [REDACTED] Cllr Mr Richard Key [REDACTED] and Cllr Mr Michael Keogh [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Their statements are attached appendixes 2,3 and 4 respectively. I also received letters of complaint from two members of the public, Mr John Carey [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and Mr Blaise Morris [REDACTED] Their statements are attached appendixes 5 and 6 respectively. Finally I received a complaint from our Clerk, Mr John Ingham, [REDACTED] Attachment included appendix 7.

I have attached two more e-mails (appendix 8 and 9) which have some additional relevant content.

In summary from the events at the PC meeting I am asking the Monitoring officer to investigate whether Cllr Hun [REDACTED] broke Code of Conduct rules in the following cases:

- 1) Falsely alleging that the Pavilion Committee had spent tax payers money without due process
- 2) Falsely alleging that the Clerk had not fulfilled his duties adequately
- 3) Bullying the Clerk
- 4) Being disrespectful to Chairman, fellow PC's, the Clerk and members of the audience

I have spoken to Carina Helmn (Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils, [REDACTED] and she has advised me that the allegations of disrespect and bullying towards the Clerk should also be managed as a disciplinary matter within the Parish Council and she is providing assistance on that.

I have in my possession several hundred e-mails which are related to these matters in correspondence and can give these and any other information you require on request.

I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Cllr Dr Anthony D Baxter

Much Hadham Parish Council

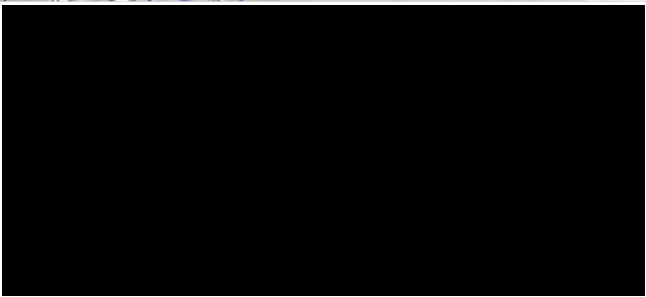


EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMPLAINT FORM : CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS

A. Your details

1. Please provide us with your name and contact details. Anonymous complaints will only be considered if there is independent evidence to substantiate the complaint.

Title:	DR
First name:	ANTHONY
Last name:	BAXTER
Address:	
Contact telephone:	
Email address:	
Signature:	
Date of complaint:	13/ October / 2015

Your address and contact details will not usually be released unless necessary or to deal with your complaint.

The following people may see this form:

- Monitoring Officer of the Council
- Standards Committee members
- Council's Independent Person(s)
- The subject member(s)
- the Parish Clerk (if applicable)

If you have serious concerns about your name and a summary, or details of your complaint being released, please complete **Section C** of this Form and also discuss your reasons or concerns with the Council's Monitoring Officer.

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Please tell us which complainant type best describes you:

- ☐ A member of the public
- ☒ An elected or co-opted Member of the Council
- ☐ An independent member of a Standards Committee
- ☐ A Member of Parliament
- ☐ A Monitoring Officer
- ☐ Other council employee, contractor or agent of the Council
- ☐ Other ()

2. Equality Monitoring Form - please fill in the attached form.

B. Making your complaint

3. Please provide us with the name of the Member(s) you believe have breached the Council's Code of Conduct:

Title	First name	Last name
MR	IAN	HUNT

4. Please explain in this section (or on separate sheet(s)) what the Member is alleged to have done that you believe breaches the Code of Conduct. If you are complaining about more than one Member you should clearly explain what each individual person has done, with dates / witnesses to substantiate the alleged breach.

It is also important that you provide all the evidence you wish to have taken into account. For example:

- You should be specific, wherever possible, about exactly what you are alleging the Member said or did. For instance, instead of writing that the Member insulted you, you should state what it was they said or did to insult you.
- You should provide the dates of the alleged incidents wherever possible. If you cannot provide exact dates it is important to give a general timeframe.

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

- You should confirm whether there are any witnesses to the alleged conduct and provide their names and contact details if possible.
- You should provide any relevant background information or other relevant documentary evidence to support your allegation(s).

Please provide us with the details of your complaint. Continue on a separate sheet if there is not enough space on this form.

Please see separate attachments.

(Continue on separate sheet(s), as necessary)

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

C. Confidentiality of complainant and the complaint details

Only complete this next section if you are requesting that your identity is kept confidential

5. In the interests of fairness and in compliance with the rules of natural justice, we believe Members who are complained about have a right to know who has made the complaint and the substance of the allegation(s) made against him / her. We are, therefore, unlikely to withhold your personal details or the details of your complaint unless you have good reasons to believe that you have justifiable grounds, for example:
- to believe you may be victimised or harassed by the Member(s) against whom you are submitting a written complaint (or by a person associated with the same); or
 - may receive less favourable treatment from the Council because of the seniority of the Member against whom you are submitting a written complaint in terms of any existing Council service provision or any tender / contract that you may have or are about to submit to the Council.

Please note that requests for confidentiality or requests for suppression of the personal and complaint details will not automatically be granted. The Assessment Sub-Committee will consider the request alongside the substance of your complaint and the Monitoring Officer will then contact you with the decision. If your request for confidentiality is not granted, we will usually allow you the opportunity, if you so wish, of withdrawing your complaint.

However, it is important to understand that - in exceptional circumstances, where the matter complained about is very serious - we may proceed with an investigation (or other action) and may have no choice but to disclose your personal and complaint details, because of the allegation(s) made, even if you have expressly asked us not to.

Please provide us with details of why you believe we should withhold your name and/or the details of your complaint:

(Continue on separate sheet(s), as necessary)

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

D. Remedy sought

7. Please indicate the remedy or remedies you are looking for or hoping to achieve by submitting this complaint.

I would expect Cllr Hunt to be severely reprimanded about his conduct towards fellow councillors, the clerk and members of the public and made to apologise to those people he has offended.

(Continue on separate sheet(s), as necessary)

E. Additional information

8. Complaints must be submitted in writing. This includes fax and electronic submissions. Frivolous, vexatious and politically motivated tit-for-tat complaints are likely to be rejected.
9. In line with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, we can make reasonable adjustments to assist you if you have a disability that prevents you from making your complaint in writing. We can also help if English is not your first language.
10. If you need any support in completing this form, please contact the Monitoring Officer as soon as possible.

Monitoring Officer Contact details:

The Monitoring Officer – Simon Drinkwater
East Herts Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford
SG13 8EQ

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Monitoring Form – Local Assessments of Complaints Standards Committee - Assessment Sub Committee

Working towards equal opportunities

East Hertfordshire District Council is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity in both employment and service provision. We seek to ensure that no person receives less favorable treatment on the grounds of gender, race, or ethnic origins, marital status, disability, age, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, religion, trade union involvement or political belief or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

White

White British
White Irish
Any other White
background

☒

Mixed

White and Black
Caribbean
White and Black
African
Any other mixed
background

☐

Asian

Indian
Pakistani
Bangladeshi
Any other Asian
background

☐

Black

Caribbean
African
Any other Black
background

☐

**Chinese
or other
ethnic
group**
Chinese
Other

☐

*Categories used are those utilised by
the Office of Population Censuses and
Surveys

Do you have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on your ability that you wish to declare under the Disability Discrimination Act?

Yes

☐

No

☒

Chairman's Statement

09/10/15

On the 6th October, I was in my study preparing for the upcoming PC meeting. At around 6.00pm, (1.5 hours before the scheduled start of the PC meeting - held at 7.30pm at Green Tye Mission Hall) I received a call from Cllr Ian Hunt who told me "I am calling you out of courtesy to inform you that I will be proposing a motion to disband the Pavilion Committee and I am going to read out a prepared speech to explain why". I was very surprised so I asked why. Cllr Hunt said that as the Pav Comm had not been properly instituted and constituted it didn't actually exist. As it didn't exist, spending tax payers money without any terms of reference or a valid constitution, or held meetings or circulated minutes which he had heard was a widespread concern amongst villagers with therefore illegal. I told Cllr Hunt that he was talking rubbish, the Pav Comm was a lawfully constituted Sub-committee of the Parish Council with full delegated authority, that had been agreed on that basis to operate the newly refurbished Pavilion. That decision had been voted on (unanimously) by the PC and the proposal had been blessed by the Clerk. I said that as it happened, we wanted to make this position more clear and that now the Pavilion had been open for 5 weeks now since the 31st August (Fete Day) and now we understood better the operating situation we were now in a position to do so. I told Cllr Hunt that In fact, John Carey who is the Vice Chair of the Pav Comm was going to turn up at the PC meeting this evening with all the agendas and minutes of the 4 Pav Comm meetings held and with a Constitution that had been agreed at the time (in June 2015) and to propose that we were now going to expand the Constitution and operating rules asap. Furthermore, I told Cllr Hunt that tax payers money was not being spent but donations from the buy a brick campaign and other sources.

Cllr Hunt was still dismissive of the sorts of controls and procedures that had been put in place and repeated that in his opinion the Pav Comm was not fit for purpose and he was still going to propose its disbandment. I said "Ian, you are a procedures man, you understand how to write these documents why don't you help the Pav Comm write the updated Constitution, Terms of Reference and other documents - you would be a hero rather than looking like someone who has got it in for the Pav Comm. Cllr Hunt said he didn't understand why the Pav Comm hadn't done it themselves after all he had done the same thing single handed for the Neighbourhood Plan committees. I again said the PC has never had this sort of written documentation to regulate sub committees - no one had that experience, why don't you help them - you would look like a supportive colleague and it would do you some good because as you might have gathered he (Cllr Hunt) was the most unpopular person on the PC and if he tried to disband the Pav Comm in the way he was suggesting he would be the most hated man in the village. Would he, do me a favour as Chairman and help the Pav Comm? He said that on the contrary many, the majority, of people in the Village supported what he was proposing to do, and whilst he would think about my proposal he would not commit to it. I said, "Ian, if you go ahead with your proposal I will not be responsible for the consequences" knowing as I did that such a proposal was tantamount to putting a match to a tinderbox given the emotions surrounding what the Pav Comm members felt was a succession of injustices, innuendo, accusations, obstructiveness and downright rudeness from certain members of the village, mainly associated with the Sports Association. The antipathy between the Pav Comm and the SA is a long running saga and a suppurating sore which I can go into separately. The matter was left as it was, I was not certain Cllr Hunt would agree with my request but I hoped that I had used persuasive argument for him to desist.

A thought occurred to me at that point, why hadn't Cllr Hunt raised his concerns with me before? He had voted to support the setting up of a Pav Comm in June as a sub-committee of the PC with delegated authority and he had not mentioned the subject once since then. If he had genuine concerns why hadn't he raised the subject either in council or with me separately - because he definitely hadn't. Why had he left it to the 11th hour to raise the subject and not given me any notice of his intentions?

I then phoned John Ingham, our Clerk, and informed him of the discussion I had just had with Cllr Hunt. John said Cllr Hunt could not propose to disband the Pav Comm as it was not on the agenda and he would need 7 days (?) notice to propose an emergency motion which of course he hadn't. I was hugely relieved and figured that my proposal for Cllr Hunt to help the Pav Comm would be a suitable compromise to him as whilst he could not disband the Pav Comm he could at least have a hand in making it even more procedurally accountable which appeared to be his main concern.

I then phoned the Vice Chair Selina Bannerman and informed her of both conversations and my thoughts on the situation. I asked the VC to call John Carey to make sure he articulated clearly that meetings had been properly convened, agendas circulated, minutes taken, actions approved etc and that the Pav Comm was keen to expand their documentation more tightly - all of which was going to be covered but I wanted to make sure that this message was understood by all.

I went to the Green Tye Mission Hall with a bit of a sense of trepidation – what was Cllr Hunt going to do?

The meeting started fine, introductions including welcoming a new councillor Penny Taylor and agreeing her new portfolio roles, apologies, previous minutes (a couple of minor corrections identified by Cllr Hunt), all went as per usual and then on to Residents Comments. I said at this point (in fact I Had meant to mention this in my first address but forgot) that as we had a full agenda and two of my fellow Cllrs had told me that they needed to be home by 10.30, we should aim to finish the meeting at 10.00am. I said that Residents comments in the standing orders were limited to 20 mins in total with 3 mins per person (I confess I do not always follow this rule and have always given residents all the time they want to raise issues that are important to them within reason) for good timekeeping reasons.

The first question was from Ms Alex Farmer who asked 'can you tell us how much more tax payers money over the builders costs and the separate architects fees is going to be spent on the Pavilion. I understand that items have not been approved have been purchased for example a TV and a coffee maker' Cllr Bannerman said that the Pav Comm had not used any Tax payers money but donations which had been given from the public. Ms Farmer continued this line of questioning and added that there was a lack of a properly constituted committee with terms of reference and that tax payers monies had been spent without the authority of the PC.

One might reasonably assume that Mrs Farmer and Cllr Hunt were singing from the same rehearsed hymn sheet. John Carey confirmed he had bought the TV out of his pocket and it was pointed out that the coffee maker was bought by the lady planning to supply refreshments from the pavilion.

The second question was from a Mrs Weatherall who persistently said that she felt that she had been misled over the buy a brick campaign, that she had spent £50 buying 5 nominated bricks for her family and she thought they were paying for the actual fabric of the pavilion and not to pay for the toilet cleaner! and certainly not for a TV for children. Vice Chair Bannerman tried to answer the questions and pointed out that the monies raised from the buy a brick campaign and other donations was in part to be used to furnish the Pavilion for the opening on Fete day, and to enable the Pavilion to be fully functional for its stated purpose which was to provide facilities to enable sporting events to be better supported and encouraged. The statement was repeated 5 times as I recall despite all reasonable efforts to answer the question. It seemed at no answer would satisfy the Parishioner and in retrospect I should have called a halt to the line of questioning earlier than I did.

Councillor Bannerman as a result of this goading stood up, walked over to Mrs Weatherall and handed £50 in notes saying "if you feel that you have been misled please have your money back".

Mrs Weatherall was clearly unhappy and walked to the front of the room and handed me the money back saying she did not want to receive it. Mrs Weatherall and a colleague then left the meeting. Cllr Bannerman handed me a note saying she was going to apologise to the meeting following this. I said wait until the end of the meeting and I will also apologise on behalf of the PC.

As we progressed down the agenda we came to the Pavilion Committee item. Mr John Carey (VC Pavilion Committee) stood up and read from his notes about what had been achieved with the Pavilion, that meetings had been held and he produced the various agendas and minutes of the meeting. He said that he now wanted to update the constitution and terms of reference and intended to do so by the date of the November meeting.

At this point, I asked Cllr Hunt if he would be willing to help the Pav Comm in this endeavour as he has the acknowledged experience and qualities to do so.

Cllr Hunt said that he would do this but before he did he wanted to make a few points and outline the conditions upon which his help would be secured. He then read a speech from a prepared document and repeated the allegations that he had said to me earlier. I have to say it was the most vituperative and insulting speech I have ever heard. Given the earlier fractiousness it was exceptionally foolhardy in my opinion to read out his speech and was guaranteed to cause massive discord. The contents of the speech have been covered eloquently elsewhere. It was particularly presumptive of Cllr Hunt to take it upon itself to apologise to the meeting for the conduct of the PC without reference to the Chairman.

Cllr Hunt specifically accused the Clerk of not handling the financial governance of the Pavilion Committee properly.

Cllr Hunt's speech was applauded by the group of Sports Association members (about 5) who were in attendance.

I made a verbal statement of my own which was to the effect that the Pavilion Committee of which I was Chairman had done nothing wrong, but that we were working to update the paperwork and would be grateful for Cllr Hunts input and that it was not beyond the wit of man for us all to work together to deliver a excellent facility for use by all villagers and that we should all go home and look in the mirror and ask ourselves if what we were doing was in the best interests of the Parish. There was a round of applause following this.

Cllr Hunt later on in the meeting made some comments about training courses he had been on and that we couldn't as PC's just wing it at meetings. "It was a dereliction of duty for Councillors not to go on courses and we were letting the Parish down if we didn't". Several of my colleagues were horrified at this sanctimonious tirade of self-righteousness and said they couldn't all commit to regularly attend courses because of work and family commitments.

At the end of what was a bruising and damaging meeting where I felt the Cllr Hunt had caused enormous disruption and set us back as a PC a long way in terms of our perception within the community from his baseless inaccuracies which he gave the perception to the residents as being absolute fact.

I was appalled at the lack of collective council responsibility and respect shown to the meeting as a whole by Cllr Hunt.

John Ingham asked Cllr Hunt for a copy of his notes to help write the minutes which Cllr Hunt customarily does and Cllr Hunt flatly refused.

I decided to wait a couple of days to hear what my colleagues thought about Cllr Hunts performance and it wasn't long before I was made aware that the whole village was under the impression the Pavilion Committee had been acting recklessly with public funds and I knew that serious damage had been done to the reputation of the Parish Council and to me as Chairman.

Several of my colleagues wrote (without any prompting at all from me) to me complaining about Cllr Hunts conduct, I also received two written complaints from members of the public and one from the Clerk. I have also had sight of two e-mails from other members of the public who have expressed great disquiet at Cllr Hunts conduct and motives.

I am very surprised that after 6 days since the PC meeting and being in receipt of all the complaint letters Cllr Hunt cannot find it within his heart able to apologise for the hurt and distress he has caused.

I took advice from East Herts District Council legal department (Jeff Hughes) and have decided that the best and most appropriate path is for the PC to report Cllr Hunts action as a potential breach of the Code of Conduct rules for Parish Councillors.

Following the PC meeting on Tuesday, John Carey asked Cllr Hunt to help him with the upgrading of the constitution and terms of reference as we agreed at the PC meeting. Cllr Hunt and Mr Carey exchanged nearly 30 e-mails during the day (I was copied in on all of them and have records should anyone want to see them) with Cllr Hunt insisting on various preconditions before he would volunteer his assistance. I was pretty sure that Cllr Hunt was procrastinating for reasons I cannot fathom and was not going to help Mr Carey with an action I am sure we all agree is important to be carried out quickly yet thoroughly. I took the decision to rescind the request to ask for Cllr Hunts help and wrote the Constitution and terms of Reference myself (ably assisted it must be said by the excellent pro-forma document that Cllr Hunt wrote for the NP Committee). These have been circulated to the Pav Comm for their review and once they have been commented on they will go back to the PC (including Cllr Hunt) for their comments and hopefully adoption at the November meeting.

ADB091015



Appendix 2

Tony Baxter [REDACTED]

Private and confidential

3 messages

Selina Bannerman [REDACTED]

Wed, Oct 7, 2015 at 10:11 PM

To: Tony Baxter [REDACTED]

John Ingham [REDACTED]

Cc: "<ianhunt@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk>" <ianhunt@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk>, Jan Liversage <janliversage@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk>, Justin Godfrey <justingodfrey@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk>, Alex Young [REDACTED] Mike Keogh <mikekeogh@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk>, Richard Key [REDACTED] Penny Taylor [REDACTED]

Without prejudice

Dear Chairman

Last night the actions of Cllr Hunt were deeply upsetting and offensive. His behaviour has since he joined the PC become more and more dictatorial and bullying in terms of making out that of we don't act or behave in a manner he sees fit or a style that he approves of, that we are not doing our job properly or worse.

The actions of Cllr Hunt in attacking the work of the Pavilion Committee last night and undermining its integrity in a public meeting brought the Council into disrepute and should be classed as disorderly conduct unbecoming of a Councillor. What he said should have been mentioned out of meeting to either you as Chairman of the Committee or myself as a member. Members should not be seen to be "airing their dirty washing in public". Not only did he wash his laundry but he accused the members of the Pavilion committee of misconduct at best and gave a speech when asked if he would help to write the constitution to this satisfaction, which was slanderous, insulting, inaccurate and totally unfair. His written diatribe was pre prepared and he was working from one sheet to another so one could assume he had doctored his original comments somehow.

Regardless, what he read out was a list of items that he accused the the PavCom of not having done, including accounting etc, he started by saying that as far as he was concerned it didn't even exist. He made sure that the entire room left with the view that the whole thing was mismanaged and had no accounting for expenses. This in turn has now led to the question of integrity of all those members of the Pavilion Committee- myself, Mike Keogh, John Carey, Annica Farley and Richard Key. Its all highly insulting.

He said that we had acted without any authority, clarity, purpose, aim, constitution, etc etc and has not made his notes available. The public will have been left with the notion from his speech that we are possibly all corrupt. It was unprofessional, inaccurate and disgraceful. I stated once he had finished that i thought it was highly offensive. I stated also that we on the Pavcom should be taken in good faith and that we were highly visible and accountable and that just because its not in his preferred format doesn't make it invisible.

As you know that I have paid for everything out of my pocket and claimed it back for the pavilion, with receipts - whilst we wait months for a bank account. This enabled us

to provide the pavilion for rent straight away because i was able to make CC purchases. Now because of that i now feel open to more critics from Cllr Hunt and refuse to have anything further to do with helping operate the pavilion. This can only hurt the Parish. What Cllr Hunt did last night was accuse a group of hard working and devoted parishioners and Councillors of misconduct .

Additionally, by threatening before the meeting to propose to disband the Committee to no-ones benefit, it became immediately apparent he was creating more harm than good. How would that help anyone? How would that benefit the Parish ?It just put everyone on edge and especially with the over use of the word ' illegal' as if we were intentionally par-taking in some criminal act. He used the word illegal more than once .

I believe he committed slander against me/the Pavcom and I am taking legal advice . Why would we want to put ourselves through the unpleasantness of those accusations and that which have been fuelled in the audience for nothing other than the potential to be accused of behaving illegally . I have no issue with tick boxing and I understand why it's there but not at the detriment of actually utilising the facility .AT this rate the Clerk and the Pavcom will all resign rather than work with him as its so unpleasant. We dont get paid and take a huge amount of time energy and our own money to be part of the Parish Council . I did not do this job to be accused of acting illegally and being treated so badly.

By Cllr Hunt's actions last night I have withdrawn all my efforts to assist in the Village Hall as I don't want to be accused of any wrong doing with any builder that I may or may not know.I dont trust him at all . He assumes the worse in situations and people judging by his comments. Since he joined the PC he has arrived any notion of team work and instead facilitated an environment of negative, critical and passive aggressive, bullying behaviour . All he has done is hurt the parish by throwing susicion on us and relaying that to the public and reducing any voluntary efforts on our part to assist and make an effort for the parish . Its now a miserable stressful atmosphere and i would frankly rather be with my family. The real shame is that the 95% of people who are living what we do are not at meetings. The same people come to complain about their same issues and He is now facilitating this.

Additionally Chairman, i recall Cllr Hunt's last email regarding the £1200 that was assigned to the goals and shed and alleged that we had as a Pc acted illegally . I also understand that Penny Taylor repeated this to you leading me to believe that Hunt has been spreading these false allegations around the village and at the very least to a new Councillor who hadn't even taken her seat by then. He doesn't ask us or the Clerk for clarification he just sends emails of accusations.

There was another email to me suggestions that i was inadequate by my approach to planning issues. He has also stated last night that if Cllrs don't take the courses he has that we are doing a great disservice and failing in our duty to the parishioners. I resent this idea that one has to go on courses to be able to do the job . I have no objection to anyone going on them but its rude and insulting to say in public that if we dont we are letting down the electors. When i was elected no one voted for me because i was or was not , going on courses. He is a passive aggressive bully and its not someone i wish to continue to work with. He gives the impression that he has no respect for our Clerk given the public grilling and the letters about him. Truly disgraceful .

Yours,

Selina Bannerman
Vice Chair

Tony Baxter [REDACTED] Wed, Oct 7, 2015 at 11:24 PM
To: Selina Bannerman [REDACTED]
Cc: John Ingham [REDACTED] "<ianhunt@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk>"
<ianhunt@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk>, Jan Liversage <janliversage@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk>,
Justin Godfrev <iustingodfrev@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk>, Alex Young
[REDACTED] Mike Keogh <mikekeogh@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk>, Richard Key
[REDACTED] Penny Taylor [REDACTED]

Dear Cllr Bannerman,

Thank you for your e-mail. You have made some very serious points and I need to consider them and take advice on procedure as to how to deal with them.

I will respond as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Tony Baxter

Dr A D Baxter
Chairman
MHPC
[Quoted text hidden]

Tony Baxter [REDACTED] Wed, Oct 7, 2015 at 11:34 PM
To: john [REDACTED]
FYI
[Quoted text hidden]

Anthony Baxter

From: Anthony Baxter
Sent: 08 October 2015 15:28
To: 'Richard Key'; John Ingham [REDACTED]
'ianhunt@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk'
Cc: Selina Bannerman; Mike Keogh; John Ingham; JANET LIVERSAGE; Justin Godfrey;
'Alexander Julian Young'; Penelope taylor
Subject: RE: Complaint re Ian Hunt

Dear Cllr Key,

I have received your e-mail which I will forward to the Clerk as you have made a formal complaint about a fellow Parish Councillor.

In fairness, and following protocol, I am also copying Cllr Hunt himself so he can see the nature of the complaint.

I am in communication with the Clerk about next steps following this and Cllr Bannerman's letter and will inform you of what is going on as soon as I have anything concrete.

Yours sincerely

Tony Baxter

Dr Anthony D. Baxter

Chairman MHPC

Cell: [REDACTED]

eMail [REDACTED]

Web: www.cyprotex.com

From: Richard Key [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 October 2015 14:10
To: Anthony Baxter [REDACTED]
Cc: Selina Bannerman [REDACTED]; Mike Keogh
<mikekeogh@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk>; John Ingham [REDACTED] JANET LIVERSAGE
[REDACTED] Justin Godfrey [REDACTED] 'Alexander Julian Young'
[REDACTED] Penelope taylor [REDACTED]
Subject: Complaint re Ian Hunt

Dear Chairman,

Without Prejudice.

I would like to register the content of this email as a formal complaint.

I wholly support all of the content of the email that Cllr Bannerman sent you with regard to the conduct of Cllr Ian Hunt.

I find his conduct insulting both to fellow councillors and certain members of the public, indeed I believe that he may have slandered a member of the public who has done no more than pour huge amounts of time and his own money into help making the Pavilion project the fantastic success it is. This is a disgrace.

I do not want Cllr Hunt to 'apologise' on my behalf at public meetings, he is not the chairman and I was not consulted.

Furthermore, I do not wish to see the clerk treated by Cllr Hunt in a disrespectful and belligerent manner, I have the utmost respect for John and the way he has been treated, made me feel ashamed to live in this village and to be a member of the Parish Council.

I also feel that these issues make it difficult, if not impossible for me to work with Cllr Hunt in the future.

I must congratulate you on the way you handled, what was, a very difficult meeting.

Kind Regards

Cllr Richard Key

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Appendix 4

Anthony Baxter

From: Anthony Baxter
Sent: 08 October 2015 16:50
To: Selina Bannerman; JANET LIVERSAGE; Justin Godfrey; Penelope Taylor; 'Richard Key'; alexyoung@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk; 'ianhunt@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk'; John Ingham [REDACTED]
Cc: Mike Keogh
Subject: FW: Complaint

Dear Colleagues,

Please find attached a Formal Complaint I received from Cllr Keogh earlier concerning Cllr Hunt and the PC meeting of the 6th October 2015.

I will let you know the outcome of any progress on the outcome of this and the other complaints as soon as I can.

Tony Baxter

Dr Anthony D. Baxter

Chairman MHPC

Cell: [REDACTED]

eMail: [REDACTED]

Web: www.cyprotex.com

From: Michael [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 October 2015 16:23
To: Anthony Baxter [REDACTED]
Subject: Complaint

[REDACTED]
8th Oct 2015

Chairman Anthony Baxter
Much Hadham Parish Council

WITHOUT PREJUDICE

Dear Chairman

Regretfully, I am writing to formally complain about the actions and behaviours of Councillor Ian Hunt, which have caused me to question my own position on the Parish Council and Pavilion Committee.

During the Parish Council Meeting on Tuesday 6th October, Cllr Hunt delivered a 'speech' setting out his perceived misgivings and criticisms about the conduct of the Pavilion Committee. Whilst Cllr Hunt is entitled to his opinions, I do not think that this was the appropriate forum to air these views, which would have left members of the Parish in attendance questioning the integrity of the Pavilion Committee. Given

what the Pavilion Committee has achieved and the hard work of its members, I feel that such public condemnation was unfair and misjudged.

During the same meeting, Cllr Hunt made the grand gesture of apologising for the behaviour of Cllr Bannerman (for an incident during residents questions). It was not his place to do so. Whilst an apology was needed, it should have come from the Chair, or (more appropriately) Cllr Bannerman, who had indicated to me her intention to apologise during the meeting, before Cllr Hunt took it upon himself.

Again at the meeting, Cllr Hunt made comment that in his opinion Councillors who do not attend training courses are in 'dereliction of duty'. I felt that this was deliberately directed towards myself and certain other members of the Parish Council, who with busy work/family/PC commitments cannot afford the time. Whilst I applaud those who attend the courses, I do not wish to be made to feel inadequate for not doing so and I felt Cllr Hunt's comment to be unfair.

During the August Parish Council meeting, I was accused by Cllr Hunt of an 'ambush' because I had asked for £1200 to be approved for goals and a shed, in order to get kids football started on the recreational field. I have subsequently seen a communication from Cllr Hunt suggesting that the manner of the request was 'illegal'. I am relatively new to the Parish Council and I am learning the processes/procedures and if the request in question was not in proper form, it was made with unquestionable good intention. In such a scenario, I would expect the support and coaching from fellow Councillors and not to be jumped on and flogged.

Finally, I would like to see our Clerk, John Ingham, treated with more respect by Cllr Hunt.

I am sorry to be writing these words, as Cllr Hunt has much to offer the Parish. However, unless he realises that everyone is trying to do their best and that sometimes things are not perfect, I will find him difficult to work with going forward.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Michael Keogh

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Anthony Baxter

From: Anthony Baxter
Sent: 09 October 2015 11:18
To: selinabannerman [REDACTED] Mike Keogh;
alexyoung@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk; Justin Godfrey; JANET LIVERSAGE;
'Richard Key'; Penelope taylor; 'ianhunt@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk'; John
Ingham [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Pavilion Committee
Attachments: Cllr Hunt.docx
Importance: High

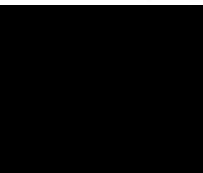
Dear Colleagues,

Please find attached a complaint concerning Cllr Hunt from the Parish Council meeting on 6th Oct 2015 by a resident, Mr John Carey.

The e-mail letter was received by me and the Vice Chair on the 8th Oct at 11.14 and Mr Carey has just given me his permission for circulation to you.

Tony Baxter

Dr Anthony D. Baxter
Chief Executive Officer



Tel [REDACTED]
Fax [REDACTED]
Cell [REDACTED]
eMail: [REDACTED]
Web [REDACTED]

From: john [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 October 2015 11:14
To: Anthony Baxter [REDACTED] selinabannerman [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Pavilion Committee
Importance: High

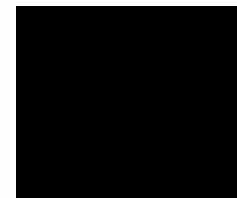
Chair/Vice Chair

Please find attached a formal complaint regarding Cllr Hunt.

Regards

John Carey

John Carey



8th October 2015

Chairman
Much Hadham Parish Council

Dear Sir

Re: Formal Complaint – Councillor Hunt

It is with regret that I find myself in position as a parishioner to have to write a formal complaint about the ongoing behaviour of one of your Councillors.

At the Parish Council meeting on Tuesday 6th October 2015, after some false accusations were made from the floor in Residents Comments, Councillor Hunt followed these up with a pre-prepared 'speech', a sanitised copy of which I have now received from him.

In this one way commentary, he proceeded to accuse the whole of the Pavilion Committee and the Clerk to the Parish Council of dishonesty, misappropriation of tax payers funds, illegal activity (allowing a café) and apologised on behalf of his own colleagues who form part of that committee (along with myself and three other parishioners) to the public for this wrong doing. All of this is not just slightly wrong, it is completely incorrect.

All of these points were made with no knowledge of the actual situation, nor were any of the member of the Pavilion Committee (that I am aware of) consulted on the detail. Cllr Hunt claims he is speaking on behalf of the majority. He has failed to substantiate that claim.

The accusations were both slanderous and wholly inaccurate – not just to the public voluntary members of the committee but to his own fellow councillors and its long serving clerk! For example, all the financial information is available, if it were asked for, it would be presented. Terms of reference were agreed in the June Parish Council meeting, as was the reporting line – he failed to mention any concerns at that point and has failed to ask for ANY information up until his monologue.

I have been in email communication with Cllr Hunt since the meeting to try to help him understand how misinformed his words and actions are. Not only has he watered down the words he used at the meeting, he has continued to stand by his falsehoods despite me offering to explain and bluntly

telling him that his facts are wrong. He has also made further disparaging and personal remarks to me. Not once has he said thank you for helping deliver a functioning pavilion for the community.

I am not sure how the process from here on works, but I for one will not lift a finger to help the Parish Council or the pavilion whilst he remains in office.

I would also request that someone from the Pavilion Committee be allowed to 'set the record straight' as soon as possible in as public a way as possible to counter the damage done by Cllr Hunts one way onslaught and the other misinformed and incorrect allegations from the floor.

All the Pavilion Committee have done is raise funds, kit out the facility for hire and taken the initial bookings (whilst acting as caretaker for free) – the committee has always stated that the building should be self funding and we believe this is achievable with some marketing of its availability.

Yours

John Carey

Anthony Baxter

From: Anthony Baxter
Sent: 09 October 2015 11:10
To: selinabannerma [REDACTED] JANET LIVERSAGE; Justin Godfrey; 'Richard Key'; Mike Keogh; alexyoung@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk; 'ianhunt@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk'; John Ingham [REDACTED]
Subject: Complaint 6 October 2015

Dear Colleagues,

Please find attached two e-mail letters of complaint concerning Cllr Hunt from the Parish Council meeting on 6th October 2015 from a resident, Mr Morris.

The letters were addressed to me on the 7th October at 14.17 and 8th October at 10.01am. I did not forward them on to you immediately as I had to check with EHDC and the protocol is that I had to write to Mr Morris to secure his permission for the letter to be circulated. Mr Morris has just given me that permission.

Tony Baxter

Dr Anthony D. Baxter
Chairman MHPC

Cell: [REDACTED]
eMail [REDACTED]
Web: www.cyprotex.com

From: Morris, Blaise [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 October 2015 10:01
To: Anthony Baxter [REDACTED]; John Ingham [REDACTED]
Subject: (2) Complaint 6 October 2015

Dear Chairman

Please be advised I am personally taking legal advice on this whole matter at my expense:

There are two specific issues which concern me greatly as a member of the public, former VC of the PC and a resident of 44 years:

- 1 The conduct of your colleague Cllr Hunt toward his peers, specific members of the public and especially toward a long serving, much respected and professional employee of the Parish
- 2 The harmful damage to our community's reputation, harmony and well-being

Many in the village within 24 hrs are talking about Cllr Hunt's "speech" and I would politely suggest he has damaged your own personal reputation and has potentially called into question your ability to govern the PC.

Cllr Hunt has single handed put into the minds of the public that Cllr Mrs Bannerman has done something wrong in her fundraising activities for the Pavilion. He has offered no substantiated evidence yet he apologised to the public in public on behalf of the Parish Council giving the illusion that Cllr Mrs Bannerman is de facto guilty.

Cllr Hunt I suggest slandered a member of the public (Mr John Carey) whose only offence it would appear is to give huge amounts of his own time and money in establishing the new Pavilion as a venue for which the Community can be justly proud.

This unacceptable behaviour by Cllr Hunt is wholly inappropriate and unacceptable. It is I believe causing serious friction in the village. If Cllr Hunt is allowed in my opinion to conduct himself in making unfounded allegations and bullying in public I believe the Police should be notified. This behaviour is going to create such division and disharmony that it may take years for matters to heal.

I do not know what powers are available to you as Chairman but if something is not done I should like to ask if an EGM can be called forthwith so the Parish Council might discuss damage limitation to their authority and reputation..

Please be assured that at every opportunity I will reassure Parishioners that the PC Chairman has matters in hand, Cllr Mrs Bannerman is not dishonest or incompetent and that our Clerk is thoroughly professional and has not misappropriated any funds.

Yours ever

Blaise Morris

From: Morris, Blaise
Sent: 07 October 2015 14:17
To: Tony [REDACTED] John Ingham [REDACTED]
Subject: Complaint 6 October 2015
Importance: High

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Dr Tony Baxter
Chairman,
MHPC
[REDACTED]

Dear Chairman

I cannot be alone in my astonishment at the behaviour of Cllr Ian Hunt last night. He made a public address lasting nearly 5 minutes. The content and attitude of his ad hoc "speech" without notes broke nearly every Code and Protocol for being a Parish Councillor in his condemnation of the Pavilion subcommittee.

His verbal attack on some of his Parish colleagues and those public volunteers co-opted onto the Pavilion subcommittee lacked any appreciation for the situation, common courtesy or respect and was arguably slanderous at one point toward one villager who has given generously with time and money toward the project over many months.

I especially found Cllr Hunt's interrogation and the suggestion of financial incompetence toward our very loyal and industrious Parish Clerk John Ingham, whom he must know cannot defend himself publicly, to be an outrageous abuse of process, yet he still persisted to bully him. It was embarrassing.

Cllr Hunt received loud applause from four or five members of the public sitting near me when he finished speaking. Some of them were also complicit in deliberately goading and successfully baiting another Parish Councillor, Mrs Bannerman earlier in the evening. She finally lost her cool after three repeated attempts of making allegations of deliberate misrepresentation on fund raising for the Pavilion. Cllr Bannerman publicly apologised three times to the whole meeting for any misunderstandings on fund raising matters and her behaviour after she returned the cash donations to the third complainant which was badly received.

As you will recall the meeting finished shortly after Cllr Hunt's address. Whilst tidying up I found Cllr Bannerman in tears and general distress in an adjoining room following Cllr Hunt's oral condemnation of her earlier behaviour in his speech.

I was Vice Chair of the Parish Council and served a total of 12 years being on the PC missing 2 meetings in that period. I have never experienced anything like last night. You may receive other complaints. Should you do so, and as a member of the public, I hope you will invite me to comment further and in more detail.

Cllr Hunt, if he is a gentleman, will at the very least apologise to each of those he offended. Throughout the meeting he spoke with his absolute authority and certainty on procedure, how to behave and what was lawful. Oh, the irony.

I hope our Parish does not lose an excellent long serving, knowledgeable and thoroughly decent Parish Clerk.

Yours ever

Blaise Morris



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Appendix 7

Tony Baxter [REDACTED]

Meeting - 6 October 2015

Tony Baxter [REDACTED] Sat, Oct 10, 2015 at 7:31 PM
 To: Selina Bannerman [REDACTED] Justin Godfrey
 <justingodfrey@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk>, JANET LIVERSAGE [REDACTED] Richard
 Key [REDACTED] Michael Keogh [REDACTED] Alex Young
 <alexyoung@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk>, Penny Taylor [REDACTED]
 "<ianhunt@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk>" <ianhunt@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk>, John Ingham
 [REDACTED]

Dear Colleagues,

Please find attached a complaint from our Clerk, John Ingham, concerning the actions, words and statements of Cllr Hunt resulting from the Parish Council Meeting of the 6th October.

Tony Baxter
 Chairman Much Hadham Parish Council

----- Forwarded message -----

From: John Ingham [REDACTED]
 Date: Sat, Oct 10, 2015 at 4:45 PM
 Subject: Meeting - 6 October 2015
 To: Tony Baxter [REDACTED]
 Cc: Selina Bannerman [REDACTED]

Dear Cllr Baxter

I am writing to formally register my concerns regarding the behaviour of Cllr Hunt at the last meeting of the Parish Council held on 6 October. Apart from veiled attacks on me (financial), I was appalled at his attack on the members of the Council and the veiled suggestion that money had been spent illegally, that there had been no transparency and that the Pavilion Committee had not been formally constituted. All attacks being on the integrity of the Council. In my opinion, Cllr Hunt, by the contempt shown to members, has clearly breached the Council's Code of Conduct in that he behaved in a way that was totally disrespectful, his actions were bullying and intimidating and he implied that the actions of certain members were illegal.

I am at a loss to understand the diatribe which lasted for a full 5 minutes (against Standing Orders – 3 minutes) and quite frankly where Cllr Hunt was coming from. He was clearly out to undermine the whole working of the Pavilion Committee and never once did he recognise or appreciate the tremendous amount of work which has been achieved in a very short period of time since the building was completed. Neither was any credit given to Cllr Mrs Bannerman for all her time in liaising with the builder during refurbishment of the building.

The Parish Council has not been operating illegally, neither has there been any misuse of funds. The Council has refurbished its own property from Parish funds (precepted) and to date it has outfitted the building from public subscriptions ever conscious of the need that any surplus donated funds will be used to reduce the burden of the loan on the Council tax payers. The Council might not have followed protocol to the letter, which is something that is to be addressed very shortly. However, credit must be given to the fact that so

much has been achieved in a very short time. There is a full paper trail of everything that has gone on appertaining to the pavilion and the Committee.

Kind regards

John
Clerk to Much Hadham Parish Council



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www.avast.com

Anthony Baxter

From: Anthony Baxter
Sent: 12 October 2015 17:06
To: 'ianhunt@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk'
Cc: selinabannermar [REDACTED] 'Justin Godfrey' [REDACTED]
Ale [REDACTED] richardkey [REDACTED] 'Michael Keogh'; 'Penny
Taylor'; 'Jan Liversage'; John Inghan [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Steering group meet 13 Oct 2015

Dear Cllr Hunt,

I have finished writing my Chairman's statement and will be sending this and all the complaint letters to the Code of Conduct complaint process later today.

I note you continually refer to me as 'Tony' in both PC meetings and in correspondence, not that I am particularly minded myself, but you do give the impression (as many have commented) as lacking proper respect for the office of Chairman and myself within that role. In important communications I would prefer that you refer to me as Chair or Chairman.

Referring to your points.

- 1) I am sure you would yourself have said that ignorance is no defence and you should certainly know about the Code of Conduct. However, I will make sure all Councillors and committee co-optees are given a copy at the next PC meeting. I don't think I need to respond about your 'practicing normal good manners and common sense' following the last PC meeting and the complaints that have been circulated as a result – it does seem that reality has left the building.
- 2) I hope you are not implying that I have been the source of misinformation circulating about the NP meeting. I wrote to ask you that given the climate of concern about procedure that you should consider delaying or postponing the meeting. I have been in contact with the Secretary of the NP committee and she will no doubt pass on to you what we agreed should be done about tomorrow's meeting. I am still not certain whether the meeting is 'valid' but in the circumstances of not withholding the NP process which I am very supportive of I think we have reached a compromise.
- 3) I will check with the Clerk on the status of the risk assessment and review whether any more input is required by you or any other councillor.
- 4) No attempt whatsoever is being made to sit on you. I cautioned you that it was not helping matters in that you were corresponding about the Pav Comm to a member of public when the subject matter concerned the NP. It was to help the situation not hinder you from your duties.

You accuse me of not deescalating the situation. On the contrary, I have behaved impartially, reasonably and legally. I have deliberately not (yet) circulated my views or account of the events before, during and after the Oct PC meeting which had I done so on say Wednesday last week would certainly have added a lot of fuel to the fire. I have consistently liaised with the Clerk and Jeff Hughes about points of procedure, I have been calm and measured in the face of severe provocation. I am reporting you to EHDC about a potential breach of the Code of Conduct that is not a threat. I am unaware of any other complaints against any other councillor.

It is interesting that you talk of me asking you where the makings of a resolution might lie and peace talks when you seem to have little appreciation of the hurt and damage you have caused and that you have studiously ignored the opportunity to apologise to the people you have offended.

Yours truly,

Tony Baxter

Dr Anthony D. Baxter
Chairman MHPC
eMail [REDACTED]
Web: www.cyprotex.com

From: Ian Hun [REDACTED]
Sent: 12 October 2015 15:35
To: Anthony Baxter [REDACTED]
Cc: selinabannermar [REDACTED] 'Justin Godfrey' [REDACTED]
Alex [REDACTED] richardkey [REDACTED] 'Michael Keogh' [REDACTED] 'Penny Taylor'
[REDACTED] 'Jan Liversage' <janliversage@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk>
Subject: RE: Steering group meet 13 Oct 2015

Tony

I'll just make a couple of points:

1. until Thursday of last week, I didn't know we had a Code of Conduct. I was never provided with one when joining the PC, so the only reference to code of conduct that I was aware of was s.13 of the model standing orders. Fortunately, by practicing normal good manners and common sense, I don't appear to be in breach of it. Can I recommend the Code be issued to new councillors by the Clerk as part of a new councillor's pack, as a matter of course? It is difficult to know what to ask for as a new councillor particularly if you don't know a document exists. I should also point out that the Code applies to co-opted members of committees (such as John Carey, for example) and it should be the case that they are automatically supplied with it too.

2. There has been misinformation circulating that the notice of our NP meeting tomorrow is incomplete and, therefore, the meeting will be invalid. This view has been articulated but has not been supported by reference to any rules, regulations, law, etc. - it is simply stated as if it were fact.

The rules governing meetings and proceeding of parish councils are set out within the Local Government Act 1972, according to Jeff Hughes, Head of Democratic and Legal Support Services, EHC.
I've attached a précis of the relevant parts of the legislation, as it applies to parish councils. You will see in there that notices of parish council meetings are not required to be dated and only those calling for extraordinary meetings need to be signed (by the members calling the meeting).

Looking for guidance elsewhere, the model standing orders specifically for our parish do not require dated, signed notices of committee meetings. The Governance Toolkit for Parish & Town Councils v3 pp25-26 makes no mention of these requirements. In fact, I am unable to find anything that supports the suggestion that the notice is invalid.

I, therefore, conclude that the notice of meeting is entirely valid and, with this information, I presume you now do too.

3. In terms of my accountabilities, you do not mention the Risk Assessment review. As you know, our Annual Return was qualified for the lack of this and the draft I prepared has been with the Clerk for several weeks, since August. Do you wish him or another councillor to conclude the work without my further input?

4. More generally, I object to being limited to comment on my own accountabilities. I remain a member of Much Hadham Parish Council and as such can undertake duties associated with that role within the standards framework specified in our Code of Conduct. That's not my view – that's from Jeff Hughes. Frankly, in areas that are working well such as Parish Paths, I have no reason to comment, other than offer a "well done". In other areas that are not working well, it is vital that elected officials give voice to valid concerns – the Nolan principles practically demand it. I suspect that, if this attempt to sit on me became public knowledge, there would be some disquiet around the parish, to say the least.

Finally, what is also disquieting is that, as Chair of the PC, you seem not to be attempting to de-escalate this crisis, and content to fan the flames by threatening to report me to EHC, presumably to add to those complaints that, I am told, are being made by members of the public against other councillor(s). Why would you prefer, on the face of it, to do that rather than ask me where the makings of a resolution might lie? If there are peace talks going on in the background that I am unaware of, then please let me know.

Regards

Ian

From: Anthony Baxter [REDACTED]
Sent: 10 October 2015 21:24
To: [ianhunt](#) [REDACTED] [selinabannerman](#) [REDACTED] 'Justin Godfrey
[REDACTED] [Alex](#) [REDACTED] [richardkey](#) [REDACTED] 'Michael
Keogh' [REDACTED] Penny Taylor [REDACTED] Jan Liversage
<janliversage@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk>
Subject: RE: Steering group meet 13 Oct 2015

Dear Councillor Hunt,

Re Steering Group Meeting Communications

In view of the fact that your conduct at the 6th October 2015 Parish Council meeting is now going to be investigated (as you will know from my earlier e-mail) under a potential breach of the Code of Conduct for Councillors I would expect you to refrain from commenting to a member of the public over an unrelated matter (to wit the "Pav Comm") concerning the Parish Council without my agreement and approval as Chairman.

On that subject, let me remind you that the Pavilion Committee was set up legally in the June 2015 Parish Council meeting as a sub-committee of the Parish Council with full delegated authority. This matter was discussed, advised by our Clerk, voted on (unanimously as I recall) and passed. No comment until now has surfaced as to the validity of that decision. There is in my opinion, as Chairman, no doubt as to their order or validity. No doubt you recall that I said the same to you, in our discussion, when you called me on my phone 99 minutes before the Parish Council meeting on Tuesday to say ("out of courtesy") without prior notice that you intended to propose that the Pavilion Committee should be disbanded and that you were going to read out a statement explaining your reasoning. (I have for good reason for not disclosing this fact to our Colleagues before now)

A verbatim account of this conversation will be submitted, along with my Chairman's statement, to the standards board as part of their investigation.

Given this situation, I advise you, as Chairman of Much Hadham Parish Council, not to comment in future on any matter outside of your accountabilities which are Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan, and your portfolio responsibilities of Highways and Planning until the Code of Conduct review is completed.

Moving on, I have read the various accounts concerning the Neighbourhood Plan meeting scheduled for next week and the issues therein regarding its legality to be held (date of notice etc). In this climate of concern over procedure I think it is advisable, as the NP Committee reports to the MHPC, to defer or postpone this meeting to a later date until all Parishioners are satisfied that due process has been followed. I am in communication with the legal department of EHDC to get their advice and on Monday I will let you know my decision.

Yours faithfully

Tony Baxter

Dr Anthony D. Baxter
Chair Much hadham Parish Council
Cell: [REDACTED]

eMail [REDACTED]
Web: www.cyprotex.com

From: Ian Hunt [REDACTED] **On Behalf Of** ianhunt@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk
Sent: 10 October 2015 11:23
To: 'Morris, Blaise' [REDACTED] Anthony Baxter [REDACTED]
[selinabannerman](#) [REDACTED] 'Justin Godfrey' [REDACTED]
[Alex](#) [REDACTED] [richardkey](#) [REDACTED] 'Michael Keogh' [REDACTED]; Penny Taylor
[REDACTED] Jan Liversage <janliversage@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk>
Subject: RE: Steering group meet 13 Oct 2015

Blaise

It doesn't need to be dated.....pp25-26 of the Governance Toolkit don't mention any requirement for it to be dated, neither do the PC's model standing orders.

In view of your interest in these administrative matters generally, perhaps you would like to comment on the notices of meetings used by Pav Comm in recent months and offer an opinion on those, for the guidance of us all. I wondered if they were out of order and invalidated those meetings and any decisions taken?

Regards

Ian

From: Morris, Blaise [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 October 2015 20:24
To: Tony [REDACTED] [selinabannerman](#) [REDACTED] Justin Godfrey [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [Alex](#) [REDACTED]; [richardkey](#) [REDACTED]
Michael Keogh [REDACTED] Vernon & Penny Taylor [REDACTED]
Subject: Steering group meet 13 Oct 2015

Dear Cllr Hunt

I am told the attached Notice(s) were placed on village Notice Boards late this week and I am prepared to accept that 3 clear working days notice has been given.

But, the Notice is unlawful because it is undated.

Accordingly proper procedure has not been followed.

This in my opinion invalidates the proposed meeting.

Yours truly

Blaise Morris

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Appendix 9

Anthony Baxter

From: Anthony Baxter
Sent: 09 October 2015 12:58
To: selinabannerma [REDACTED] 'Richard Key'; JANET LIVERSAGE; Penelope taylor; Justin Godfrey; alexyoung@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk; Mike Keogh; 'ianhunt@muchhadhamparishcouncil.co.uk'; John Ingham [REDACTED]
Subject: Code of Conduct Complaint

Dear Colleagues,

In addition to my own views on the subject matter (which I have yet to share with you), I have examined the complaint statements made by three Parish Councillors and two members of the public all concerning the actions and deeds of Cllr Ian Hunt that you have been made aware of. I have discussed the matter with our Clerk, John Ingham and with the Head of Democratic and Legal Support Services at East Herts District Council. We feel that that Cllr Hunt during the Oct 6th Parish Council meeting breached basic Code of Conduct principles that all Parish Councillors sign up to and are expected to abide by, and his actions and statements should be investigated to determine whether he has indeed breached the Code of Conduct.

As a consequence I will be filling in a Code of Conduct Complaint form (<http://www.eastherts.gov.uk/index.jsp?articleid=25890>) and the matter will then be handled by the Monitoring Officer at East Herts District Council.

I will keep you informed of what happens from now.

Given that this action is about to take place and again after consultation with the Head of Democratic and Legal Support Services at EHDC I intend to call an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) of the Much Hadham Parish Council to discuss this matter in full and in particular to discuss what, if anything, we should do regarding Cllr Hunts portfolio responsibilities whilst the alleged breach of the Code of Conduct is being investigated.

I will be liaising with the Clerk to find a suitable date for this EGM and will be informing you all of what is happening.

I appreciate that some of you might want to talk to me privately and I will make myself available over the weekend should you wish to do so.

Yours sincerely,

Tony Baxter

Chairman Much Hadham Parish Council

Cell: [REDACTED]
eMail: [REDACTED]
Web: www.cyprotex.com

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EAST HERTS COUNCIL

STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE – 24 NOVEMBER 2015

REPORT BY MONITORING OFFICER

COMPLAINT IN RESPECT OF DISTRICT COUNCILLOR ANDREWS

WARD(S) AFFECTED: NONE

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To consider a deferred complaint in respect of District Councillor D Andrews.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Council received eight complaints alleging that District Councillor D Andrews has breached the Council's Code of Conduct.
- 1.2 The Sub-Committee, at its meeting held on 10 September 2015, determined that no action be taken in respect of seven of the eight complaints. It deferred consideration of the remaining complaint to allow the Monitoring Officer to obtain any information on any connection between Councillor Andrews and Riversmead Housing Association.

2.0 Report

- 2.1 Council has agreed a procedure for considering complaints.
- 2.2 The Sub-Committee will consider the complaint and decide what action to take.
- 2.3 In appropriate cases, the Monitoring Officer may seek to resolve the complaint informally, without the need for a formal investigation. Members are reminded that having consulted the Independent Person, it was not considered that the complaint could be resolved informally.
- 2.4 Complaints are considered in accordance with the Standards Complaints assessment criteria set out in Appendix 2 of the Complaints Procedure (**Essential Reference Paper 'B'**)

3.0 The Complaint

- 3.1 The outstanding complaint is set out in the complaints form and accompanying documents that form **Essential Reference Paper 'C'**.
- 3.2 Essential Reference Paper 'D' contains further information provided by the complainant in support of their assertion of a relationship between the Member and the Housing Association.
- 3.3 The Regional Director of Riversmead Housing Association (Paul Huckstep) has advised that to the best of his knowledge "...the only connection that Riversmead has with Councillor Andrews is that of District/County Councillor in areas where we own/manage and develop homes." He further advised that he is aware of press coverage suggesting a link between Councillor Andrews and Jackie Trundell, through their joint involvement with the CVBEH. The Regional Director confirms that, in this respect, Mrs Trundell has never met Councillor Andrews.

4.0 Procedure

- 4.1 A copy of the Council's complaints procedure is contained in **Essential Reference Paper 'B' – see Agenda Item 8.**

5.0 Implications/Consultations

- 5.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Contact Officer: Jeff Hughes- Monitoring Officer
01279 502170
jeff.hughes@eastherts.gov.uk

Report Author: Jeff Hughes - Monitoring Officer

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives (delete as appropriate):	People This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, particularly those who are vulnerable.
Consultation:	The Independent Person has been consulted.
Legal:	The procedures are in accordance with relevant legislation.
Financial:	None
Human Resource:	None
Risk Management:	The case should be determined in accordance with the legislation having regard to the relevant guidance.

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EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMPLAINT FORM : CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS

A. Your details

1. Please provide us with your name and contact details. Anonymous complaints will only be considered if there is independent evidence to substantiate the complaint.

Title:		
First name:		
Last name:		
Address:		
Contact telephone:		
Email address:		
Signature:		
Date of complaint:	03/07/2015	

Your address and contact details will not usually be released unless necessary or to deal with your complaint.

The following people may see this form:

- Monitoring Officer of the Council
- Standards Committee members
- Council's Independent Person(s)
- The subject member(s)
- the Parish Clerk (if applicable)

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If you have serious concerns about your name and a summary, or details of your complaint being released, please complete **Section C** of this Form and also discuss your reasons or concerns with the Council's Monitoring Officer.

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Please tell us which complainant type best describes you:

- ☐ A member of the public
- ☒ An elected or co-opted Member of the Council
- ☐ An independent member of a Standards Committee
- ☐ A Member of Parliament
- ☐ A Monitoring Officer
- ☐ Other council employee, contractor or agent of the Council
- ☐ Other ()

2. Equality Monitoring Form - please fill in the attached form.

B. Making your complaint

3. Please provide us with the name of the Member(s) you believe have breached the Council's Code of Conduct:

Title	First name	Last name
Mr	David	Andrews

4. Please explain in this section (or on separate sheet(s)) what the Member is alleged to have done that you believe breaches the Code of Conduct. If you are complaining about more than one Member you should clearly explain what each individual person has done, with dates / witnesses to substantiate the alleged breach.

It is also important that you provide all the evidence you wish to have taken into account. For example:

- You should be specific, wherever possible, about exactly what you are alleging the Member said or did. For instance, instead of writing that the Member insulted you, you should state what it was they said or did to insult you.
- You should provide the dates of the alleged incidents wherever possible. If you cannot provide exact dates it is important to give a general timeframe.

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

- You should confirm whether there are any witnesses to the alleged conduct and provide their names and contact details if possible.
- You should provide any relevant background information or other relevant documentary evidence to support your allegation(s).

Please provide us with the details of your complaint. Continue on a separate sheet if there is not enough space on this form.

I have now watched the webcast http://www.eastherts.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/127130 of the DMC meeting and we have concluded that gross-misconduct, inappropriate bias and non-declared conflict of interests were in evident and which resulted in a decision to "approve" applications 3/14/2292/FP and 3/14/2250/FP.

We cite the following in evidence.

- 1) Chauncy Head acknowledged the Chair by his first (abbreviated) name calling him "Dave" , indicating they know each other. The chair made no attempt to correct this "informality" and should have insisted on being addressed in the proper manner. However this corrective gesture was not forthcoming.
- 2) We feel strongly that the Chair should have declared what is a clear "conflict of interest" prior to the meeting and stepped down to allow the meeting to be chaired by another unbiased council member.
- 3) The agenda order was changed without prior warning such that the sports hall proposal was put first rather than the housing development. We believe that this was done deliberately to ensure that the sports hall application was approved first, otherwise a refusal to approve the housing development meant that the sports hall application would subsequently be irrelevant. We suggest that the Chair knew this and was supportive of / influential in this change for reasons that suited his desired outcome of "approval", strongly suggesting collusion.
- 4) Although the Chair claimed that the change in application order would be taken into account, and that the "objection" speaker would be "listened to sympathetically on that score", the person speaking against the development was completely "wrong-footed" by the agenda change and could not complete his full objection. To date no explanation has been given for this change in agenda and we can only draw the conclusion that this was done to favour an "approval" scenario and diminish the strength of the objection case.

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

5) The claim that local people will benefit from a sports hall is false and unproven /quantified as evidenced by a similar model has been used without success (public uptake) at Ward Freeman school (run by the wife of the Chauncy Head). There was no quantitation of how frequently or what proportion of the public will access this sports hall which is a key part of the justification for its construction. The Chair / DMC did not seek any binding guarantees from the proposers - why was that?

6) The residents assessment of on-road parking issues, congestion and safety concerns were initially supported by Highways in regard to a new junction and extra traffic from the proposed development / sports hall. Highways unexpectedly and without explanation reversed this decision and we want to know why? Their assessment of traffic issues was in complete contrast to that of local residents and all local residents are incredulous at the pathetic efforts of Highways to justify a "status quo" scenario. Existing traffic (with cars now parking further down into park road) has just been shifted north by the opening of the new ASDA, making Park road an even more dangerous place to live. We consider the Chair to be wholly ignorant and complicit with Highways in ignoring these genuine residents claims. I did send through photographic evidence to support the congestion and traffic parking habits of vehicles parked on-street - so contradicting the assessment of Highways. Why was our evidence disregarded?

7) There was no genuine effort of the DMC Chair to address any of the issues that had been raised by concerned and affected local residents, and the discussion was clearly "led" by the chair, and disregarded comments made by councillors against the proposed development, effectively biasing the decision to approve development.

8) The sports hall application was approved (but could have been irrelevant if the original order of the housing application had been declined). Again this strongly suggests collusion and mal-practice by the DMC.

9) Custom and practice suggest that when a vote is tied that the Chair should err on the side of the objectors rather than take great delight in stating that "I thought I would have the casting vote....and I therefore approve the application". This decision was taken despite strong opposition from 1) local and affected residents 2) Sport England 3) Ware Town council 4) local councillor petition, 5) The wildlife trust and 6) documented evidence that the removal of green field space was contrary to local and national directives.

10) after the Chair cast his deciding vote in favour of the applications he forgets to turn off his microphone and comments that he "expected to have to cast the deciding vote" and mentions Dr Gary Manchee to another officer next to him saying "that's Dr Manchee over there". When asked who he was by the officer at his side, the Chair states that Dr Manchee is the "driving force behind the objection and I expect him to appeal the decision and be hearing from him again". This in itself supports the conclusion that details of myself have been discussed and passed on to the Chair and his comments reflect a complete lack professionalism, a serious conflict of

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

interests and a bias towards the approval of the application. I have never met or seen Mr David Andrews in my life and I was not even in attendance at the meeting, however the Chair seemed to think he had recognised me when in fact he was mistaking me for my neighbour. The information about my description could have only come from the Head of Chauncy school (who does know me), which further substantiates our claim of collusion and mal-practice

Please review specific reference to myself etc. http://www.eastherts.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/127130

11) One councillor is currently associated with Ward Freeman school whose head is the wife of the Head of Chauncy school.

12) The aforementioned points are in keeping with recent allegations (addressed behind closed doors) against members of the committee and it is clear to us that aspects of the DMC is not "fit for purpose" and does not offer an independent and unbiased forum for discussion or debate wrt approval decisions.

Unless we, the local residents receive satisfactory explanations to the points raised, then it remains for us to pursue all options including legal challenge.

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

(Continue on separate sheet(s), as necessary)

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

C. Confidentiality of complainant and the complaint details

Only complete this next section if you are requesting that your identity is kept confidential

5. In the interests of fairness and in compliance with the rules of natural justice, we believe Members who are complained about have a right to know who has made the complaint and the substance of the allegation(s) made against him / her. We are, therefore, unlikely to withhold your personal details or the details of your complaint unless you have good reasons to believe that you have justifiable grounds, for example:
- to believe you may be victimised or harassed by the Member(s) against whom you are submitting a written complaint (or by a person associated with the same); or
 - may receive less favourable treatment from the Council because of the seniority of the Member against whom you are submitting a written complaint in terms of any existing Council service provision or any tender / contract that you may have or are about to submit to the Council.

Please note that requests for confidentiality or requests for suppression of the personal and complaint details will not automatically be granted. The Assessment Sub-Committee will consider the request alongside the substance of your complaint and the Monitoring Officer will then contact you with the decision. If your request for confidentiality is not granted, we will usually allow you the opportunity, if you so wish, of withdrawing your complaint.

However, it is important to understand that - in exceptional circumstances, where the matter complained about is very serious - we may proceed with an investigation (or other action) and may have no choice but to disclose your personal and complaint details, because of the allegation(s) made, even if you have expressly asked us not to.

Please provide us with details of why you believe we should withhold your name and/or the details of your complaint:

I represent a local residents group and as such represent their collective views and not those specifically of my own.

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

(Continue on separate sheet(s), as necessary)

D. Remedy sought

7. Please indicate the remedy or remedies you are looking for or hoping to achieve by submitting this complaint.

To have a full, truthful, transparent and unbiased process in which all relevant information is more equally weighted by officers without bias or association

(Continue on separate sheet(s), as necessary)

E. Additional information

8. Complaints must be submitted in writing. This includes fax and electronic submissions. Frivolous, vexatious and politically motivated tit-for-tat complaints are likely to be rejected.
9. In line with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, we can make reasonable adjustments to assist you if you have a disability that prevents you from making your complaint in writing. We can also help if English is not your first language.
10. If you need any support in completing this form, please contact the Monitoring Officer as soon as possible.

Monitoring Officer Contact details:

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

The Monitoring Officer – Simon Drinkwater
East Herts Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford
SG13 8EQ

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Monitoring Form – Local Assessments of Complaints Standards Committee - Assessment Sub Committee

Working towards equal opportunities

East Hertfordshire District Council is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity in both employment and service provision. We seek to ensure that no person receives less favorable treatment on the grounds of gender, race, or ethnic origins, marital status, disability, age, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, religion, trade union involvement or political belief or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

White	Mixed	Asian	Black	Chinese or other ethnic group
White British	White and Black	Indian	Caribbean	
White Irish	Caribbean	Pakistani	African	
Any other White	White and Black	Bangladeshi	Any other Black	
background	African	Any other Asian	background	Chinese
<input type="checkbox"/>	Any other mixed	background	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other
	background	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

*Categories used are those utilised by
the Office of Population Censuses and
Surveys

Do you have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on your ability that you wish to declare under the Disability Discrimination Act?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Dear Mr Hughes,

In acknowledging receipt of your letter dated 16th July 2015 I want to question the rationale for sending me an EHDC "code of conduct" document and requesting me to exemplify specifically where a breach or breaches of conduct have taken place.

I would have thought from my initial complaint letter to EHDC that it would be obvious to you where breaches had taken place and for what reasons? This further request seems to be bureaucratic in the extreme. Therefore some explanation of your request is requested.

I strongly suggest you watch the full webcast from the DMC meeting dated w/b 22nd June, which supports a conclusion of improper behaviour and gross-misconduct.

Under your EHDC headers I have stated where I believe that breaches have taken place.

Code of Conduct

Selflessness: David Andrews clearly did not act solely in terms of public interest and was demonstrably dismissive of objections from local councillors (who spoke at the meeting), local members of the public (and who spoke at the meeting), Sport England, the Wildlife trust and those councillors on the DMC who objected and who asked relevant questions regarding the proposals.

David Andrews took significant personal pleasure (as evidenced from the webex and on microphone) in casting what he claimed and expected to be the deciding vote in favour of the housing development. Clearly this was a personal issue for him and one he wanted to "push through".

Integrity: David Andrews clearly knows the Head of Chauncy school too well and the "familiarity" with which the Head of Chauncy school addressed David Andrews as "Dave" when addressing the DMC clearly showed that David Andrews's position was completely untenable in this respect.

Objectivity: Clearly the decision to approve both applications was not conducted with any objectivity since the over-whelming weight of evidence from local residents, Ware Town council, Roz Standley, Sport England, the Wildlife trust, and half of the councillors on the DMC indicated that the objection should have been upheld. David Andrews was openly dismissive of all the objections and questions raised against the development and acted (and voted twice) without any objectivity whatsoever before "pushing through" these applications. David Andrews can be seen and heard on microphone taking "satisfaction" in the outcome of the vote and in the "impact" that his casting vote had in favour of these applications.

David Andrews (on microphone) clearly "discusses me" with a council member next to him and makes reference to my potential "reaction" at the outcome of the vote and states clearly that "I would object" to the outcome. David Andrews even tries to "identify me" to one of his colleagues on the DMC at the meeting on microphone (although I was not even present). This further supports the conclusion that there could not have been any objectivity to the decision-making process because David Andrews had already decided which way he would vote, and video evidence clearly shows him discussing "his significant relief" (saying - "that was close"!) after he has cast his deciding vote. Taken together this is a completely damning reflection of his behaviour and conduct.

Openness: The agenda for the meeting was deliberately altered the day before it took place for one reason only and that was to allow a "higher probability of success" for both applications. There has been no satisfactory explanation as to why the agenda was changed at the last minute (which also completely wrong-footed the local resident speaking against the applications). Clearly, this agenda change was done deliberately to give "advantage" to the applications being approved, there can be no other reason. The agenda was known to David Andrews and supporters of the applications, and the late change in personnel of the DMC, included councillors clearly in support of these applications. One councillor, drafted in at late notice from outside the area, had previously strongly opposed development in his ward yet was very happy to support these applications. This further supports the "not in my backyard" attitude of councillors and shows a complete disregard for your requirement for "objectivity" in your guidelines?

It was obvious to all "interested parties" on the DMC that had the housing development application been heard first and refused, then there could be no sports hall, since the funding for the sports hall was solely dependent on the housing development being approved. Clearly, this was the sole reason for the switch in the "order" of the agenda and it could have only come from the DMC, which given the evidence above, indicates collusion and deception for which the Chair must be held accountable.

Repeatedly the objector speakers were told that "these applications are totally separate" by David Andrews, yet he clearly and repeatedly spoke of them as if they were one and the same which proves that he fully understood the implication of the agenda change.

Interests

2. Register of interests

While David Andrews has not "registered" any known pecuniary or vested interests (on record) in seeing the applications approved, by association and by his complicit actions at the DMC meeting, it is clear that he should have stepped aside to allow another councillor with no association with the Head of Chauncy to preside over this application hearing.

Other

My comments on David Andrews' conduct with respect to adherence to the statutory principles (as a member of EHDC) are below and follow the bullet-points in your code of conduct document (i.e. bullet point one being equivalent to point 1, bullet point two being equivalents to point 2 etc. etc.)

- 1) "championing the need of residents, the whole community and in a special way his constituents".
- 2) "dealing with representations or enquiries from residents, members of our communities and visitors fairly, appropriately and impartially"

Clearly and as outlined previously he acted totally against this requirement and blatantly acted in the interests of two limited companies, namely Chauncy School (CS) and Riversmead Housing Association (RHA), disregarding the appeals and factual data presented to him by a representative of the local residents (Mr Geoff Marshall) and councillor Rosalie Standley. David Andrews went on to show impunity towards those who raised questions about or objected to specific aspects of these applications. Data, in the form of traffic "metrics" and photographic evidence was provided by local

residents yet treated with impunity again by David Andrews and who steered the discussions away from genuine concerns and important information which questioned the "validity", lack of detail and impact on infrastructure that a new housing development would have within an area where his own constituents live.

I had contacted EHDC councillors and Highways department directly on several occasions, and eventually received acknowledgement from Highways who stated that they had opposed both applications. At no time did any of the DMC seek clarification or questioned me / local residents about any aspect of what we objected too or why? One needs to ask why that was? It is interesting to note that David Andrews was in the Highways dept. previously and strangely Highways completely reversed their "objection" status to an "approval" status in the face of clear and conclusive evidence of local residents. Mark Prisk MP has challenged Highways to explain such an "about face" on this matter in an area well known to have existing traffic issues which will only be exacerbated by a new housing estate in Park Road.

3) "not allowing other pressures / 4) exercising independent judgement etc....."

It is clear that Chauncy school desperately need funds and that selling land to a housing developer is the easiest way to raise money to off-set funding / financial problems. David Andrews knew this through his association with Chauncy school PLC and therefore it is questionable whether he could act in an impartial or objective manner with respect to the application to build on Chauncy school field.

In fact his whole "demeanour" and behaviour" was noted by almost everyone present who had come to hear the debate around these applications and who were in attendance at the DMC meeting. It was clear from the beginning that David Andrews' only objective was to see that these applications were approved irrespective of the well-rounded, data-driven objections and given all the local information and infrastructure knowledge which supported a "refusal to approve" decision.

5) "listening to the interests of all parties, including relevant advice from statutory and other professional officers".....remaining objective and making decisions on merit"

David Andrews only listened to officers like Kevin Steptoe and Tim Hagyard because they had concluded (for reasons only known to themselves) that none of the actual evidence / metrics provided by local constituents was relevant (which in itself shows an unacceptable contempt for local peoples' views / data). At no time did David Andrews challenge the original decision by Highways to object to these applications because it was in keeping with his own "objective" to approve both applications.

6) - 11)

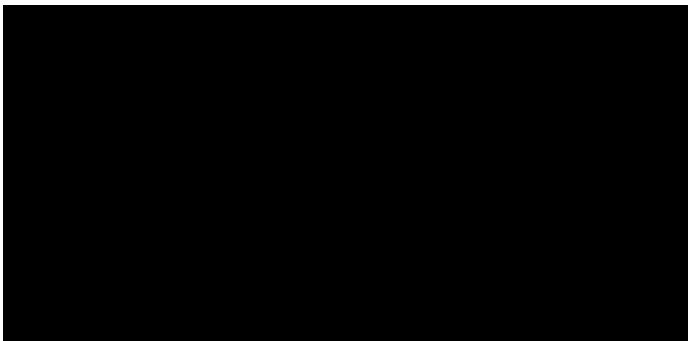
All these behaviours are essential in an officer but from what I have observed to date, David Andrews falls short of his duty as an objective, community focussed individual representing EHDC and this is the view of all who attended the meeting at which the applications were approved. I have nothing personal against this individual and we have never met.

In Summary, the decision to approve these applications (as was conducted) carried the most serious consequences for the local community and its infrastructure in terms of 1) its permanent loss of green space 2) unacceptable traffic congestion / control 3) the "removal" of local clubs by lying about the "redundancy" of the land and 4) further development along Park road (e.g. Asda, an expanding GSK). To have treated such a wide ranging set of objections (from local council, council members, national associations, key local individuals, local traffic surveys) with such open contempt, lack of objectivity and in such a dismissive manner has clearly breached the "codes of conduct" that the EHDC requires their officers to demonstrate.

David Andrews' actions and the aforementioned examples that I have highlighted above support the conclusion that this individual did not act in accordance with many of the "behaviours" as required by an officer of EHDC. Therefore I strongly suggest that the decision to approve both applications was led by a Chair who showed clear and demonstrable bias and a serious lack of objectivity overall. Given these facts, the processes leading up to and the decision to approve both applications must be considered as "unsafe" and in the interests of securing both the future credibility of EHDC (DMC) and to restore the "damaged" confidence of its constituents, these applications will require a much more democratic, fair and objective review.

I look forward to your response in due course.

Yours faithfully



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From:

GARY MANCHEE
16 September 2015 16:47

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'D'

Dear Mr Hughes,

Thanks you for your letter dated 14th September 2015.

I understand from colleagues and the press (in attendance at the meeting) that you concluded that Dr David Andrews had no case to answer with respect to his code of conduct in regard to the approval of the applications for a housing development and sports hall at Chauncy school?

A matter outstanding was the potential connection between David Andrews association and Riversmead Housing Association.

Recently we have discovered that David Andrews and a Jackie Trundall (Riversmead Housing Association) are well known to one another and serve on the same committee, this being the CVSBEH Management Board, Broxbourne (I direct you to the attachment to this mail).

We also understand that Riversmead Housing Association in fact do fund community projects which is very noble of them considering the lack of concern they show for local people next to whom they build their developments (I refer you to a previous article in the Mercury newspaper).

I do not think that you and your sub-committee colleagues appreciate what a disservice to the local community you are in danger of providing, neither do you seem to understand what damage to public confidence your decision-making will have nor do you sense what a poor reputation you have for fairness and impartiality. Self-policing must be the most stringent and impartial of of and we feel that the sub-committee has fallen far too short of this mark.

We suggest that this latest piece of evidence along with all the other information we have provided to you should be enough to warrant the initiation of another hearing of the DMC, where these applications can be heard by an impartial chair. In this way, all concerned will be allowed to engage in a fair and transparent review of these applications, which so far has not occurred.

I (we) await your response.

Regards,

Dr Gary Manchee (on behalf of local residents)

Hughes Jeff

From:

GARY MANCHEE

Sent:

18 September 2015 08:45

Dear Mr Hughes,

I must say that I remain completely baffled by the over-whelming support for David Andrews by your "committee", but maybe I shouldn't be given the yardstick by which I measure transparency and non-bias.

With regard to your remaining activity in this matter, I understand that another example of a link between David Andrews and Riversmead Housing Association occurred when he turned up (as a county councillor on local town business?) at Hoe Lane Ware, to support and speak on behalf of Riversmead for the provision of garages for a furniture re-cycle scheme (at a public consultation). I have all transcripts of this occurrence.

Why was he in attendance when clearly this was a local matter?

This can be substantiated by local residents and further supports the conclusion that David Andrews has a conflict of interests wrt Riversmead Housing Association. This should have been declared and this alone invalidates his chairing of the DMC at the meeting in question when Riversmead put the application forward.

It is clear that David Andrews and Riversmead Housing Association do indeed have an "association" going back a long way.

Also at your standards sub-committee meeting (where you vindicated David Andrews from 7/8 complaints from a number of local people), one of the councillors (an Angela Alder) is the vice/chair of the CVSBEH (a committee on which David Andrews serves I believe?).

Can you confirm that please? And if true, then in conclusion, do you not consider this in itself a conflict of interest and the presence of that person therefore fitting and proper?

Regards'

Dr Gary Manchee (On behalf of local residents)

Riversmead unveils plans to launch furniture recycle scheme
(27th June 2011)

Plans to use the basement garages at Hoe Lane, Ware, to accommodate a furniture recycle scheme are being unveiled by Riversmead Housing Association next week. Proposed plans will go on show at a public consultation on Wednesday 6th July 2011.

The aim of the furniture recycle scheme is to provide good quality and affordable second hand furniture and white goods to local people. Residents across East Herts will also be able to donate any unwanted furniture to the recycle scheme.

The proposed location of the furniture recycle scheme will be on the site of underused basement garages that are owned by Riversmead and have not been rented for two years. The garage area is also subject to acts of anti-social behaviour.

Local Hoe Lane residents and the wider community are invited to meet representatives from Riversmead and the Council for Voluntary Service for Broxbourne and East Herts (CVSBEH) to discuss the proposal and view the plans at the consultation, which is being held at garages 19-39, Hoe Lane, Ware, between 3.30pm – 7.30pm.

Jackie Trundell, Riversmead's Neighbourhood Services Manager, said: "Regenerating underused garage sites like this one brings significant benefits to the local community. Recycling unwanted furniture through this scheme will enable people to buy good quality, second hand furniture and household items at very reasonable prices.

"We would like to encourage local residents to attend the consultation and give their views on the proposal – our staff are happy to answer any questions."

Ian Richardson, Chief Executive, CVSBEH commented: "The CVS is committed to working in partnership with other agencies and local residents to find solutions to community need. Centrally located and affordable accommodation is essential to the development of a sustainable furniture re-use project that will benefit others through reducing fly tipping and providing an alternative source of affordable furniture locally.

Hughes Jeff

From: GARY MANCHEE
Sent: 05 October 2015 13:04
To: Hughes Jeff
Subject: David Andrews

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Mr Hughes,

It has been brought to my attention that David Andrews has previously acted outside his remit as a district councillor and on behalf of Riversmead Housing Association when Riversmead were trying to change the use of garages in Hoe Lane. I have witnesses who clearly saw and heard David Andrews speak on their behalf (RHA) and basically told local residents that "it was a done deal"! Now where have we heard that before?

I think it's time to "call time" on this councillor and his obvious close links with this housing development company? Clearly we consider that he is not fit to participate in anything that Riversmead are we would offer.

The local press obviously realise this and other councillors have also spoken publicly on this matter (I refer you to the recent Mercury Newspaper). EHDC is in danger of losing any reputation it has for serving the best interests of the public and for being anything other than a self-serving dictat.

I welcome your response.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Gary Manchee (on behalf of local residents)

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE – 24 NOVEMBER 2015

REPORT BY MONITORING OFFICER

COMPLAINT IN RESPECT OF DISTRICT COUNCILLOR K CROFTON

WARD(S) AFFECTED: NONE

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To consider a complaint in respect of District Councillor K Crofton.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Standards Sub-Committee, at its meeting held on 30 June 2015, considered a complaint alleging that District Councillor K Crofton had breached the Council's Code of Conduct.
- 1.2 The Sub-Committee agreed that consideration of the complaint be deferred to allow the Monitoring Officer to invite the complainant to particularise an element of the allegation. The complainant was requested to particularise their "...previous relationship (with Councillor Crofton) and that which he has had with an immediate family member..." in order for the Sub-Committee to form a view on its relevance to the complaint.
- 1.3 The Sub-Committee, at its meeting held on 10 September 2015, considered further information (see **Essential Reference Paper 'D'**) provided by the complainant on this aspect.
- 1.4 Following consideration of this further information, the Sub-Committee agreed to request the Monitoring Officer to obtain Councillor Crofton's comments on the information supplied by Mr Ashley regarding his relationship with Mr Ashley's family. The Monitoring Officer was also requested to investigate Mr Ashley's assertions regarding Councillor Crofton's membership of the Standards Sub-Committee that had considered code of conduct complaints against Mr Ashley that led to a decision being taken that they should be investigated. In so doing it deferred consideration of Mr Ashley's complaint.
- 1.5 As requested by the complainant, the web cast of the relevant Development Management Committee meeting that forms part of

his complaint will be made available to Sub-Committee members to view. The complainant has requested members confirm that they have viewed the web cast.

- 1.6 Mr Ashley has also requested an opportunity to respond to Councillor Crofton's response. This is a matter for the Sub-Committee to determine. Councillor Crofton has advised that he intends to respond orally (at the meeting).
- 1.7 The Monitoring Officer can confirm that Councillor Crofton chaired the meeting of the Standards Sub-Committee on 4 June 2014 that had agreed to refer a complaint alleging that (then Councillor) William Ashley had breached the Authority's Code of Conduct for investigation. Councillor Crofton was not a member of the Standards Sub-Committee (meetings) that subsequently considered the appointed Independent Investigating Officer's findings.

2.0 Report

- 2.1 Council has agreed a procedure for considering a complaint.
- 2.2 The Sub-Committee will consider the complaint and decide what action to take.
- 2.3 In appropriate cases, the Monitoring Officer may seek to resolve the complaint informally, without the need for a formal investigation. Members are reminded that having consulted the Independent Person, it was not considered that the complaint could be resolved informally.
- 2.4 Complaints are considered in accordance with the Standards Complaints assessment criteria set out in Appendix 2 of the Complaints Procedure (**Essential Reference Paper 'B'**)

3.0 The Complaint

- 3.1 The complaint is set out in the complaints form and accompanying documents that form **Essential Reference Paper 'C'**.

4.0 Procedure

- 4.1 A copy of the Council's complaints procedure is contained in **Essential Reference Paper 'B' – see Agenda Item 8.**

3.0 Implications/Consultations

- 3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Contact Officer: Jeff Hughes- Monitoring Officer
01279 502170
jeff.hughes@eastherts.gov.uk

Report Author: Jeff Hughes - Monitoring Officer

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

IMPLICATIONS/CONSULTATIONS

Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives (delete as appropriate):	People This priority focuses on enhancing the quality of life, health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities, particularly those who are vulnerable.
Consultation:	The Independent Person has been consulted.
Legal:	The procedures are in accordance with relevant legislation.
Financial:	None
Human Resource:	None
Risk Management:	The case should be determined in accordance with the legislation having regard to the relevant guidance.

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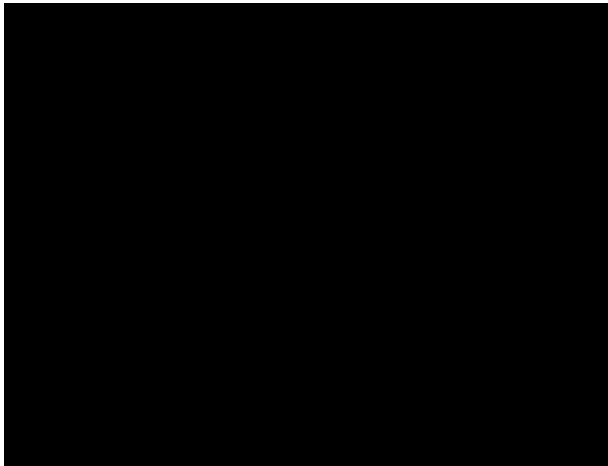


EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMPLAINT FORM : CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS

A. Your details

1. Please provide us with your name and contact details. Anonymous complaints will only be considered if there is independent evidence to substantiate the complaint.

Title:	Mr
First name:	William
Last name:	Ashley
Address:	
Contact telephone:	
Email address:	
Signature:	
Date of complaint:	23 rd December 2014

Your address and contact details will not usually be released unless necessary or to deal with your complaint.

The following people may see this form:

- Monitoring Officer of the Council
- Standards Committee members
- Council's Independent Person(s)
- The subject member(s)
- the Parish Clerk (if applicable)

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If you have serious concerns about your name and a summary, or details of your complaint being released, please complete **Section C** of this Form and also discuss your reasons or concerns with the Council's Monitoring Officer.

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Please tell us which complainant type best describes you:

- ☐ A member of the public
- ☒ An elected or co-opted Member of the Council
- ☐ An independent member of a Standards Committee
- ☐ A Member of Parliament
- ☐ A Monitoring Officer
- ☐ Other council employee, contractor or agent of the Council
- ☐ Other ()

2. Equality Monitoring Form - please fill in the attached form.

B. Making your complaint

3. Please provide us with the name of the Member(s) you believe have breached the Council's Code of Conduct:

Title	First name	Last name
Mr	Kenneth	Crofton

4. Please explain in this section (or on separate sheet(s)) what the Member is alleged to have done that you believe breaches the Code of Conduct. If you are complaining about more than one Member you should clearly explain what each individual person has done, with dates / witnesses to substantiate the alleged breach.

It is also important that you provide all the evidence you wish to have taken into account. For example:

- You should be specific, wherever possible, about exactly what you are alleging the Member said or did. For instance, instead of writing that the Member insulted you, you should state what it was they said or did to insult you.
- You should provide the dates of the alleged incidents wherever possible. If you cannot provide exact dates it is important to give a general timeframe.

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

- You should confirm whether there are any witnesses to the alleged conduct and provide their names and contact details if possible.
- You should provide any relevant background information or other relevant documentary evidence to support your allegation(s).

Please provide us with the details of your complaint. Continue on a separate sheet if there is not enough space on this form.

Complaint:

The following submission identifies areas of concern in relation to the conduct of Councillor Crofton in his capacity as a District Councillor who serves on the Development Management Committee. As a member of this committee Councillor Crofton has been party in the discussions and decision making process of the Committee where I have submitted planning applications.

The first issue relates to the Development Management Committee of 6th November 2013. Albeit that this refers to an incident in late 2013, it is significant to the issues which has since taken place and it is an important factor that is required in order to obtain a full picture of this complaint.

During this meeting a discussion was held by Members of DM Committee prior to reaching a decision. Cllr Crofton contributed to this discussion which was subsequently influential to the decision which was made. It is considered that applications that are presented before this committee should be considered on planning merits and not personal opinions of individuals or individuals who are influenced by third parties.

The following are comments made by Cllr Crofton and were publicly viewed on web cast extract of DM committee meeting of 6th November 2013, web cast number 337.

Councillor Crofton stated 'let's not make any bones about it, it's a retrospective planning application made by a Cllr from EHC and it is imperative we are transparent with our dealings with it.'. He continued to say that he 'believes there are other issues there at the farm that have to be looked or concluded.' He continued 'I believe we do not have the full picture as to what's been going on there. And that he would like officers to carry out a full investigation of the entire operation and present us with the facts. He didn't believe member had the facts. He continues 'there is enough interest in the public and press to consider a thorough investigation.'

Further to this DM Committee meeting, a complaint was submitted to the Council alleging that I had breached the Members Code of Conduct. This followed an investigation action and subsequently a report. This is simply raised in order to provide background and not to dwell on the allegation or its conclusion. The complainant has written numerous letters to the DM Committee of which the content is publicly available and was received by the committee prior to the DM Meeting of

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

6th November. Cllr Crofton was a recipient and makes reference to this correspondence in his address to the committee.

With this in mind, Cllr Crofton's choice of words (detailed above) 'there is enough public interest and the press', are considered not to be planning merits.

Cllr Crofton's request for an investigation of the entire operation is clearly stated and is supported in saying that it is his belief that he does not have the full picture as to the goings on. He did not provide an explanation to his request of a full investigation and no planning reasons were provided which is the purpose of the DM committee.

Following the conclusion of this committee and in the Council receiving the complaint alleging my breach, Cllr Crofton sat on the Standards Sub Committee as a Member of that Committee which were assigned to consider the complainants allegation which resulted in an investigation of my conduct. Cllr Crofton not only served as a Member on this Sub Committee, he also requested that he chaired the committee.

The Sub committee's conclusion was for an external investigation to take place. Cllr Crofton has also been quoted in the media following that decision.

Cllr Crofton himself became part of this investigation and was interviewed by the investigating officer, providing comments which were detrimental and bias to the investigation. Without quoting his interview, he has intimated that I have not declared interests, I have taken advantage of the planning department and not paid pre application fees.

In addition to the above Cllr Crofton should have recognised that our previous relationship and that which he has had with an immediate family member, should be considered when openly debating planning applications and ultimately influencing the decision.

Councillor Crofton was also part of the Stop Bennington Wind Farm Group at the time I was Vice Chairman of DC Committee. This active group was a group who then reported me to the standards sub Committee where it was found that there was no case to answer.

Councillor Crofton has served on the magistrate bench alongside me and he has also been an acquaintance of my father at social functions.

The issues presented above identifies the direct link Cllr Crofton has from the DM Committee of 6th November 2013 in requesting an investigation, to the Standards Sub Committee of 4th June 2014, to chairing the Sub Committee which in turn concluded that an investigation was to take place. His involvement continued with him playing an active part in that investigation by being party to an interview which took place on 17th July 2014.

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cllr Crofton has attempted to influence the process, not taking into account that his membership of the DM Committee is one of planning and not of personal opinion.

No tangible reasons have been provided by Cllr Crofton as to why an investigation should take place, he has not based his decision making process on receipt of a letter and a complaint made by an individual. He has used his position to influence a decision on a planning committee and on again on the Standards Sub Committee. It is the responsibility of individual Members of that Sub Committee to consider their position and not put their own interests and reasons before those that they should be clearly aware. Decisions are to be made on planning issues and should not include other issues. Cllr Crofton is a Senior Member and should have withdrawn from the relevant committees when confronted with a situation as this.

INTEGRITY: Councillor Crofton allowed himself to be influenced by an outside individual which affected his duty as a Member of the DM Committee during the meeting held on 6th November 2013. In chairing the standards sub committee of 4th June, Councillor Crofton had previously provided his personal view and did not enter the meeting with an open mind.

OBJECTIVITY: Councillor Crofton did not make a judgement on the planning merits of the planning application set out before him at the DM Committee of 6th November 2013. Councillor Crofton introduced other issues which were inappropriate and influenced the debate and ultimately the decision.

ACCOUNTABILITY: Councillor Crofton is accountable to the DM Committee and not an individual who objected to the planning application which was presented at the committee on 6th November. Accepting a position as a Councillor, this Member should be accountable for their decisions and actions.

OPENNESS: Councillor Crofton did not but should have provided reasons for his decision at DM Committee of 6th November. His comments on the planning application were not based on the application presented before him.

HONESTY: Councillor Crofton had a duty to advise on the personal relationship he had with me and my family. Councillor Crofton had three opportunities to so. At the DM Committee of 6th November, when chairing the Standards Sub on 4th June and when interviewed by the investigating officer on 17th July 2014.

LEADERSHIP: Councillor Crofton installed himself as the Chairman of the Standards Sub Committee of 4th June following his statement at the DM Committee of 6th November as discussed earlier in this submission. It was inappropriate for Councillor Crofton to chair this meeting as he did not enter this with an open mind and his view was not impartial.

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

(Continue on separate sheet(s), as necessary)

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

C. Confidentiality of complainant and the complaint details

Only complete this next section if you are requesting that your identity is kept confidential

5. In the interests of fairness and in compliance with the rules of natural justice, we believe Members who are complained about have a right to know who has made the complaint and the substance of the allegation(s) made against him / her. We are, therefore, unlikely to withhold your personal details or the details of your complaint unless you have good reasons to believe that you have justifiable grounds, for example:
- to believe you may be victimised or harassed by the Member(s) against whom you are submitting a written complaint (or by a person associated with the same); or
 - may receive less favourable treatment from the Council because of the seniority of the Member against whom you are submitting a written complaint in terms of any existing Council service provision or any tender / contract that you may have or are about to submit to the Council.

Please note that requests for confidentiality or requests for suppression of the personal and complaint details will not automatically be granted. The Assessment Sub-Committee will consider the request alongside the substance of your complaint and the Monitoring Officer will then contact you with the decision. If your request for confidentiality is not granted, we will usually allow you the opportunity, if you so wish, of withdrawing your complaint.

However, it is important to understand that - in exceptional circumstances, where the matter complained about is very serious - we may proceed with an investigation (or other action) and may have no choice but to disclose your personal and complaint details, because of the allegation(s) made, even if you have expressly asked us not to.

Please provide us with details of why you believe we should withhold your name and/or the details of your complaint:

N/A

(Continue on separate sheet(s), as necessary)

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

D. Remedy sought

7. Please indicate the remedy or remedies you are looking for or hoping to achieve by submitting this complaint.

For the monitoring officer to present this complaint to the Standards Sub Committee and to consider the evidence provided and to view the DM Committee web cast as identified within the submission.

That the Member who is subject to this complaint is provided with opportunities to re visit the Members code of conduct through training and/or awareness sessions with appropriate officer of the Council.

Consideration be given as to the Committees that this Member is assigned to and to ensure that the Member is aware of the role required of him when serving on committees.

That the Member is aware of his remarks made in a public arena and that these are available on the public web cast. Its is the responsibility of individual Members to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner and contain personal opinions which have been damaging. An apology is required on the three areas:

1. Comments made at DM Committee on 6th November 2013.
2. Allowing himself to be guided by his personal views and installing himself as chair of the standards sub committee.
3. Allowing himself to be interviewed by an investigating officer on the allegation made against me, and providing information which is unsubstantiated.

It is also the responsibility of a chairman to provide guidance and control of a meeting. It should be considered that the chairman of the committee (DM) is provided training on the role of a chairing a planning committee in order to guide Councillors on when inappropriate remarks are made which are not relevant to planning matters.

(Continue on separate sheet(s), as necessary)

E. Additional information

8. Complaints must be submitted in writing. This includes fax and electronic submissions. Frivolous, vexatious and politically motivated tit-for-tat complaints are likely to be rejected.

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

9. In line with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, we can make reasonable adjustments to assist you if you have a disability that prevents you from making your complaint in writing. We can also help if English is not your first language.
10. If you need any support in completing this form, please contact the Monitoring Officer as soon as possible.

Monitoring Officer Contact details:

The Monitoring Officer – Simon Drinkwater
East Herts Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford
SG13 8EQ

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Monitoring Form – Local Assessments of Complaints Standards Committee - Assessment Sub Committee

Working towards equal opportunities

East Hertfordshire District Council is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity in both employment and service provision. We seek to ensure that no person receives less favorable treatment on the grounds of gender, race, or ethnic origins, marital status, disability, age, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, religion, trade union involvement or political belief or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

White

White British
White Irish
Any other White
background

☒

Mixed

White and Black
Caribbean
White and Black
African
Any other mixed
background

☐

Asian

Indian
Pakistani
Bangladeshi
Any other Asian
background

☐

Black

Caribbean
African
Any other Black
background

☐

Chinese or other ethnic group

Chinese
Other

☐

*Categories used are those utilised by
the Office of Population Censuses and
Surveys

Do you have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on your ability that you wish to declare under the Disability Discrimination Act?

Yes

☐

No

☒

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STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE – 24 NOVEMBER 2015

AGENDA ITEM 9

ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER ‘D’

Councillor Crofton and I served as magistrates for a number of years. This also involved attending social occasions, and some of which I hosted at my home. This was separate from Council duties.

Councillor Crofton attended social engagements with my father who, until he passed away in June 2014, was a partner in my farming business which was the same business that submitted planning applications which the DM Committee considered and Councillor Crofton was a member of. The DM Committee of 6th November 2013 being one of them.

Councillor Crofton and my father sponsored a racing driver. Through this activity they became socially acquainted and attended racing meetings where hospitality was provided.

In addition I have referred to the Stop Benington Wind Farm Group. Councillor Crofton was an active member of this group who raised a complaint against me as the then Chair of DM Committee. Whilst this relationship is not a social one, it nevertheless put strain on the relationship which was once a personal one as described above. Not only was Councillor Crofton party to the complaint made via the Stop Benington Wind Farm campaign, he also made attempts to change my view and on number of occasions these took place in the Members retiring room.

The complaint made against me was not upheld and since, Councillor Crofton has unfortunately made it clear as to the relationship with including my father (who had no opinion on the wind farm). On 6th November, Councillor Crofton made his opinion clear with regards to my planning application. Without repeating his comments which were publicly documented via the web cast, it was clear that Councillor Crofton's intention was for an thorough investigation to take place.

It is believed that Councillor Crofton should have declared his previous relationship with me in his capacity as a magistrate with me, his relationship with my father and as a member of the campaign which had submitted a complaint against me. That same declaration should have been made as a member of the Standards Sub Committee and in his case as chair of that committee.

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