

Minutes of the meeting of the STANDARDS
HEARINGS PANEL held at 1.00 pm on
Tuesday, 5th May, 2015 at Meeting Room 3,
Civic Centre, Stone Cross, Northallerton

Present

Councillor R Kirk
M Rigby

Councillor J N Smith

Independent Person

Mr R C Pennington

Parish Council Representative

Mrs J Crampton

SHP.34 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

THE DECISION:

That Councillor J N Smith be elected Chairman for duration of the meeting.

(Councillor J N Smith in the Chair)

SHP.35 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

THE DECISION:

That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public were excluded from the meeting during consideration of the items of business at minute no SHP.39 on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as the Panel was satisfied that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

SHP.36 **ALLEGATIONS ABOUT A PARISH COUNCIL MEMBER**

The subject of the decision:

The Monitoring Officer presented a report about allegations that a Parish Councillor failed to comply with the provisions of the Parish Council's Code of Member Conduct.

The Panel heard from the Councillor against whom the allegations had been made.

Alternative options considered:

None.

The reason for the decision:

Having considered the Monitoring Officer's report and the accompanying documents, and having been notified that the complainant was no longer attending the Hearing, and having heard from the Councillor in person, the Panel made the following findings:-

The Panel concluded it had sufficient information from the complainant to address the issues and in the circumstances proceeded to deal with the complaint in the complainant's absence.

The Panel noted that the Councillor had suggested that a meeting of the Parish Council in December 2013 be cancelled, as he was out of the Country, and that other Councillors had not objected to the cancellation. However, the Panel had seen no evidence to suggest that the Councillor had used his position to cancel the meeting with a view to improperly conveying an advantage on himself and a disadvantage on the complainant.

The Panel had seen no evidence that the Councillor had lied about the circumstances of the cancellation, nor was there any evidence to support the allegation that the Councillor had used his position to prevent the complainant obtaining copies of the correspondence passing between the Councillors. Rather, the documents made it clear that the responses to requests for documents and information were dealt with by the Parish Council, rather than the Councillor individually.

It followed, therefore, that the Panel concluded there had been no breaches of the Code of Conduct in this case.

THE DECISION:

It is recommended that:-

- (1) the allegations be not upheld; and
- (2) the Parish Council be notified of the Panel's findings.

The meeting closed at 2.05 pm

Chairman of the Panel