

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL
ETHICAL GOVERNANCE AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

13 AUGUST 2025 AT 10.00 AM

PRESENT: Cllr CE Green - Chair
Cllr SL Bray, Cllr MB Cartwright, Cllr MA Cook, Cllr MJ Crooks, Cllr WJ Crooks,
Cllr KWP Lynch and Cllr LJ Mullaney (for Cllr A Pendlebury)

Also in attendance: Gordon Grimes, Independent Person and Gill Sinclair,
Investigator

Officers in attendance: Julie Kenny and Rebecca Owen

124. Apologies and substitutions

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Harris and Pendlebury, with the substitution of Councillor L Mullaney for Councillor Pendlebury authorised in accordance with council procedure rule 10.

125. Minutes of previous meeting

It was moved by Councillor W Crooks, seconded by Councillor Bray and

RESOLVED – the minutes of the meeting held on 24 June were confirmed as a correct record.

126. Declarations of interest

Councillor Cartwright declared that he knew the subject member in his role as Executive member for rural affairs but stated that this did not constitute an interest that would preclude him from taking part in the meeting.

Councillors J Crooks and W Crooks stated they knew the subject member as local councillors but did not consider him a close associate.

127. Matters from which the public may be excluded

On the motion of Councillor Cartwright seconded by Councillor J Crooks, it was

RESOLVED – in accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 10 of Part I of Schedule 12A of that Act.

128. Complaint 2024/26

The Ethical Governance & Personnel Committee considered the report of the independent investigator into a complaint about a parish councillor.

The investigator was present and had not called any witnesses. The subject member was in attendance.

Following introductions, the investigator presented the report which had found that the subject member had, on the balance of probabilities, breached the code of conduct when he accused the complainant of pressuring/coercing a colleague and when he told the complainant, in a forthright manner, to stop interrupting. The investigator found that this had breached the general obligation in the code of conduct in relation to treating others with respect.

In relation to a further allegation that the subject member had failed to treat the complainant with respect with questioning them about an agenda item, the investigator found that this did not amount to a breach of the code of conduct.

Members then asked questions of the investigator, following which the subject member was offered the opportunity to ask questions. The subject member then put his case forward and members asked questions of him.

The Independent Person was invited to comment on the case and in doing so indicated that he agreed with the findings of the investigator and also highlighted the power of an apology which may have prevented the complaint.

Being satisfied that all attendees had had the opportunity to speak, the meeting was adjourned for the committee to deliberate at 11.06am. The subject member indicated that he would prefer to receive the outcome after the meeting than await a response directly from the committee and left the room.

The committee, supported by the Monitoring Officer, Independent Person and the Democratic Services Manager, reconvened at 11.10am to reach a decision on the case.

Members were satisfied that the subject member had been acting in his capacity as a councillor at the time of the alleged incident.

Members considered whether the parish councillor's actions towards the complainant when making comments about the complainant pressuring or coercing a colleague and when he told the complainant to stop interrupting breached the code of conduct. They also considered the investigator's finding that no breach had occurred in relation to questioning the complainant on the content of a report. It was moved by Councillor Bray, seconded by Councillor Lynch and

RESOLVED –

- (i) The subject member's conduct towards the complainant when accusing them of pressuring / coercing a colleague did breach the parish council's code of conduct;
- (ii) The subject member's conduct towards the complainant when telling the complainant to stop interrupting, did breach the parish council's code of conduct;

- (iii) In relation to (i) and (ii) above, the following general obligation of the parish council's code of conduct was breached:

Respect

As a member:

I will treat others with respect

I will treat council officers, employees and representatives of partner organisations and those volunteering for the council with respect and respect the role they play.

- (iv) The subject member's conduct towards the complainant when questioning them in relation to an agenda item did not breach the parish council's code of conduct.

The committee then went on to consider whether any sanctions should be applied.

It was felt that the subject member should be contacted to inform him that his conduct fell short of that expected of a parish councillor and that he be reminded that he is responsible for his actions and should not blame the complainant for having prompted his behaviour, and that an apology at the time may have prevented the complaint escalating.

Members suggested that the subject member be requested to send a formal written apology to the complainant and that if this wasn't completed within one calendar month, further sanctions by way of publication of a press release would be imposed.

It was moved by Councillor Bray, seconded by Councillor Cartwright and

RESOLVED –

- (i) The subject member be informed that his conduct fell short of that expected of a parish councillor;
- (ii) The subject member be reminded that he is responsible for his behaviour and that he should have apologised at the time;
- (iii) The subject member be requested to send a formal written apology to the complainant;
- (iv) Should the apology not be forthcoming, a press release be issued.

(The Meeting closed at 11.25 am)

CHAIR