

Cheltenham Borough Council

Standards Hearing Sub-Committee – 16 May 2023 – 5pm

Alleged Breach of the Code of Conduct –

Councillor Cathy Hunt, Prestbury Parish Council

Accountable officer:

Claire Hughes, Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer

Ward(s) affected:

Prestbury

1. Introduction

- 1.1. By letter dated 5 March 2023 the Monitoring Officer received a complaint regarding the conduct of Councillor Cathy Hunt of Prestbury Parish Council.
- 1.2. The complainant alleges that Councillor Hunt has breached the Code of Conduct by acting in a manner which she considers to be bullying and aggressive.
- 1.3. Following an initial review of the complaint by the Monitoring Officer it was deemed appropriate for a full investigation to be conducted. Kate Seeley of the Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit was appointed to conduct the investigation.

2. Investigation

- 2.1. A full investigation into the allegations has now concluded. A copy of the final report is attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.2. After reviewing the report and consulting with the Independent Persons the Monitoring was satisfied that the matter should proceed to a hearing of the Standards Sub-Committee.

3. Process

- 3.1. Following the process set out in Appendix 2, the Sub-Committee are now asked to consider this case and determine whether, on the balance of probabilities a breach of the Code of Conduct has occurred.
- 3.2. If the Sub-committee determines that a breach has occurred they are then asked to consider

what, if any, sanctions should be applied.

3.3. As the Sub-Committee is aware, the sanctions that may be imposed in respect of breaches of the Code of Conduct cannot include anything that would prevent a Councillor performing their duties as a Councillor and therefore do not extend to either suspension or disqualification from the role.

3.4. The current available sanctions are one or more of the following:-

- a) Issue a formal Censure or Reprimand to the Member
- b) Report its findings to the Parish Council for information
- c) Recommend the Council or Committees remove the Member from appointments to Committees or Sub-Committees of the Council
- d) Recommend that the Parish Council arrange training for the Member
- e) Recommend to the Parish Council that all outside appointments to which the member has been appointed or nominated by that Authority are removed
- f) Recommend that the Parish Council excludes, the Member from the Council's offices or other premises for a specified period, with the exception of meeting rooms as necessary for attending Council, Committee and Sub-Committee meetings

Report author:

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Appendices

1. Investigating Officers Report
2. Procedure for Hearings

Background information:

None