

## CONFIDENTIAL

I totally refute the idea that my behaviour was in any way whatsoever insulting, offensive and intimidating.

Hilarie Owen produced a document on Net Zero which was considered by F & G P and forwarded to the full council. The full council decided to set up a working party to consider the proposals and others - not to implement the plan as written. There were wider local actions to be considered not just what Hilarie had put forward.

Martyn Hansen (chair PPC) and I (vice chair PPC) discussed the structure of the working party before the meeting and decided the best way forward was to organise like a committee or subcommittee. Unfortunately, the Standing Orders do not make reference to working parties. This meant an elected chairman, minutes being taken and forwarded to F & G P who would in turn pass them to full council for consideration.

On Friday 3 March the working party met for the first time in the parish office at 2.15pm.

When I first entered the room Hilarie said she was unwell. I think I asked if she felt up to having the meeting and she said yes. I asked should I sit at the other side of the table and she said she was not infectious. I sat at the far end anyway. In light of her subsequent allegations, I am very glad I did.

While waiting for the last member (Sandra Attwood) to arrive a discussion happened during which various thoughts were exchanged about various aspects of climate change and recent papers people had read.

Sandra Attwood was the last to arrive and sat on my right, between me and Hilarie.

Once all were present, I started the meeting by relaying what the PPC chair and I had agreed about structure. Hilarie Owen vociferously disagreed with this. She stated she wanted a looser arrangement without the formality. I pointed out that this was likely to lead to little being decided upon as there were a variety of views and a formal structure would channel things more easily to achieve an agreeable result for all.

I did not propose myself as chair during the meeting. I was proposed by Cathy Hunt. I then added in a jocular manner that I did not think I could second myself so would anyone second me. Sandra Attwood then made some observations and I readily accepted the idea of holding the office for no more than three meetings, thereafter it would be on a rotating basis. The idea being that I would get things started. Sandra duly seconded me.

Hilarie then again vociferously objected. She asked what authority I had to impose this way of doing things. I gently but definitely pointed out that I was vice chair of PPC and was speaking with the agreement of the PPC chair.

I was not denigrating or undermining the other councillors. I was not intending to humiliate Hilarie Owen.

Hilarie Owen then proceeded to question my ability to chair the group because my views on climate change did not match hers. My view is that there are serious problems with man-made climate change causes but I do not know the level of man-made to natural causes and I have serious doubts that the UK has the capacity to create the infrastructure required to achieve Net Zero in the time frame envisaged. This does not mean I do not believe man-made climate change is a factor nor does it mean that I think we should do nothing to make things better. I prefer milder language to

'emergency' because it frightens people – 'climate anxiety' is a serious concern with some young people. I had in the pre-meeting discussion referred to something I had read about possible farming benefits in the UK from warmer temperatures – this was merely said as something to add to people's thoughts. I think Dan Taylor and I had smiled at the thought of more British wine.

While Sandra and I were discussing the rolling chair concept, Hilarie constantly interrupted and tried to disrupt the conversation. I had to ask her politely to stop. She would not. I pointed out that her current behaviour was the reason why I felt the group needed a chair and that I was best placed to begin that role. I pointed out that I saw myself as an 'honest broker' in the light of previous bad feeling and behaviour before a previous full PPC meeting by Hilarie Owen and Cathy Hunt.

At this meeting Cathy had inadvisedly questioned Dan Taylor's use of paper in distributing Green Party flyers in Prestbury. Hilarie had said 'Just shut up' in a loud voice. I had been aware of the altercation but for a full account please ask Councillor Hamish Breach who witnessed the whole thing. I believe PPC chair Martyn Hansen subsequently had expressed his strong disapproval at both their behaviours.

During the meeting in question, I did not speak as Hilarie wrongly quotes me saying that Martyn was disgusted with her and Cathy's behaviour. I pointed out that both Martyn and I were disappointed in the way they had both conducted themselves. Cathy then apologised to me. Hilarie did not.

At no point did I say 'You are only here because of me'. It would be a silly thing to say. I knew her before she joined PPC but she made her own application. I certainly did not consider myself as a mentor. I did not shout at her. I was definite and clear but in no way shouting or screaming.

I pointed out when she got up to leave that this put the working party's future in peril. I certainly did not want her to leave as I believed she would have made a useful contribution. The remaining councillors settled down to the meeting. Hilarie returned a few minutes later to collect something and again left.

I am puzzled by Hilarie's description of me being 'red in the face'. My family say I never go red in the face, even after a long run. I find the idea that I was in any shape or form behaving in a physically threatening way distressing and equally puzzling. I was sitting at the opposite end of the table from Hilarie and at no point made the slightest movement out of my chair. I am hurt by this accusation. I believe I have three witnesses in the room who would agree with me. (Please ask Sandra Attwood, Dan Taylor and Cathy Hunt if they thought I was going to act in a violent way.)

We went on to have a very productive meeting. I enclose a copy of the minutes which show what we achieved.

In conclusion, I believe there was disagreement over how to set up the group and Hilarie Owen was very angry that she did not get her own way.

As I said, she returned a few minutes later. Would she have done that if she were genuinely in fear of violence? She did not appear to be shaking and she was most definitely not in tears at any time when in the PPC office.

Charles Taylor

22.03.2023