

# GOVERNANCE AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

## MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, 5 JANUARY 2016

**Councillors Present:** Steve Ardagh-Walter, Jeff Beck (Vice-Chairman), Chris Bridges, Graham Bridgman, James Cole, Barry Dickens, Lee Dillon, Rick Jones, Anthony Pick and Quentin Webb (Chairman)

### PART I

#### 19 Declarations of Interest

Councillors Jeff Beck and Anthony Pick declared an interest in Agenda Item 3, and reported that, as their interest was personal and prejudicial but not a disclosable pecuniary interest, they would not take part in the discussion or vote on this matter.

#### 20 Request for a Dispensation

*(Councillors Jeff Beck and Anthony Pick declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Agenda item 3 by virtue of the fact that they had previously applied for, and had been granted, a dispensation to speak and vote on the item in question. As their interest was personal and prejudicial they took no part in the debate or voting on the matter).*

The Committee virtually considered a report (Agenda Item 3) which pertained to an application for a dispensation from Councillors Howard Bairstow and David Goff to speak and vote on the A339/ Fleming Road Junction Compulsory Purchase Order, due to be discussed at the Special Full Council meeting on the 21 January 2016.

The Monitoring Officer recommended that both Members be granted a dispensation to speak and vote on this item at 21<sup>st</sup> January 2016 Special Full Council meeting on the basis that the interest was an 'Other Interest' and not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct. The potential for bias was limited in that the land, which was the subject of the CPO, was to be surrendered shortly after the relevant paperwork was completed.

All three Independent Persons (IPs) were consulted. Two of the IPs concurred with the Monitoring Officer while the third felt that a dispensation should not be granted:

1. Lindsey Appleton concurred with the view of the Monitoring Officer and stated that the potential for bias was limited in reality and she would be minded therefore to allow a dispensation in this case.
2. James Rees concurred with the view of the Monitoring Officer.
3. Mike Wall disagreed with the view of the Monitoring Officer and stated that 'On balance I would refuse dispensation. As there is an issue with perception and public confidence is relevant.'

Barry Dickens and Chris Bridges (Parish Council Representative) was of the view that the citizens of Newbury were best served by their Town Councillors having dispensation to participate and vote on the item. He felt that this dispensation should also apply to any further discussion on the subject.

Councillors Steve Ardagh-Walter, Graham Bridgman, Rick Jones, Lee Dillon, James Cole and Quentin Webb concurred with the view of the Monitoring Officer that a dispensation

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should be granted and stated that it should be applied at this meeting and any future meetings where this CPO was discussed.

**RESOLVED that:**

- a Dispensation be granted
- the dispensation permits Councillors Howard Bairstow and David Goff to speak and vote on items pertaining to A339/ Fleming Road Junction Compulsory Purchase Order.
- The dispensation be granted for the meeting on 10 December 2015 and any other meeting that discussed (in the sole opinion of the Monitoring Officer) the same issue or matters arising from the same issue.

**CHAIRMAN** .....

**Date of Signature** .....