

Hi Moira (19 January 2018)

Please accept my apologies as I am unable to attend, in person, the Governance and Ethics Committee on 31 January 2018. Instead, I submit the following submission.

I have been asked to comment upon the Standards Investigation at Woolhampton Parish Council (Report NPC1/17) which relates to a number of complaints made by the Chairman of Woolhampton Parish Council Councillor Mr Tony Renouf, against fellow Councillor Mr James Spackman.

As Clerk, my comments below should be seen as being neutral to all parties. I do not comment upon the complaints in relation to the Council's Code of Conduct as this is the role of the WBC appointed investigator. As part of his investigation I understand that both my Chairman Councillor Mr T. Renouf and Councillor Mr J. Spackman have been interviewed. In addition both Councillors have been provided with an opportunity to respond to the report and its findings. I can confirm that I have been interviewed by the appointed investigator.

I would like to make the following comments:

With respect to complaint 3, I was surprised that Midgham Parish Council Councillor Mr Derek Lombardo was not interviewed. This complaint was not upheld.

With respect to complaint 8, I was surprised that the West Berkshire Neighbourhood Watch lead Mrs Angela Money was not interviewed. This complaint was not upheld.

I would be grateful if you could confirm if the final reports recommendations are binding?

Section 9 – With respect to mediation, if accepted by both parties, is this something that West Berkshire Council can help with or is there a mediation service that can be recommended?

Section 9(3) - The recommendation is not explicit as to what training / guidance is required, any training recommended should seek to address any underlying weaknesses / training requirements.

Section 12 – Are you able to advise if there are any legal restrictions to the publication of the final report?

My personal view is that Councillor Mr J. Spackman is interested in local politics and has a number of good ideas. However, as I look back over the period to which the complaints relate, a lot of time and energy has been wasted. A number of meetings in part were difficult, unruly and disruptive. Relationships currently within the Council are strained. In part, due to actions outlined in the report and the subsequent feelings / reactions that these generated

I sincerely hope that the Council and its Councillors are able to find a way forward. I am prepared to help in that endeavour.

Kind Regards

Steve Brady
Clerk to Woolhampton Parish Council