

FACT FINDING SUMMARY

Complaint from a resident that a Member of Charnwood Borough Council failed to observe the Member Code of Conduct

Complaint Ref: MC07 23/24

A complaint was submitted by a member of the public ('the complainant') that a Member of Charnwood Borough Council ('the subject Member') failed to observe the requirements of the Member Code of Conduct.

The complaint centred on a social media posting concerning an incident in the local community. The complainant considered that the posting by a trusted community figure was unprofessional and resulted in the spreading of rumours and gossip.

In their response the subject member stated that the intention of the posting was to make residents aware that there was an incident and that it was potentially serious. The incident was unverified at the time and this was made clear in the post with the words "unconfirmed" being used. The subject member further added that their intention was not to alarm or mislead but to inform. The subject member has apologised and indicated in hindsight they should have verified the nature of the incident. In future they will be more cautious, notwithstanding that elected members and public figures at times need to pass on information to residents and the wider public quickly.

Having considered the complaint and the subject Members' response, the Monitoring Officer was of the view that the posting was not provocative or made with malice but with the good intentions of informing local residents and the wider public about an incident in the local community. The subject member has apologised for not verifying the details of the incident beforehand and committed to being more diligent and cautious in the future.

Therefore, in conclusion the Monitoring Officer concluded that the complaint does not merit further action or investigation and no further action is required.

View of the Independent Person

An Independent Person, Mark Shaw was consulted and after careful consideration of the complaint, in accordance with the local borough council's code of conduct and the findings of the Monitoring Officers investigation.

The Independent Person is of the opinion that the subject member's informal resolution is satisfactory and this complaint does not warrant further consideration or investigation.

Karen Widdowson

Monitoring Officer

23 April 2024