

STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE
11/11/2025 at 10.00 am



Present: Councillor Byrne (Chair)
Councillors Ghafoor, Harrison, Marland and Nasheen
Mark Reynolds, Independent Person

Also in Attendance:

Councillor Louie Hamblett
Councillor Mark Kenyon
Councillor Dave Murphy
Councillor Howard Sykes MBE
Councillor Lisa Navesey (part of the meeting)
Councillor Helen Bishop (part of the meeting)
Alex Bougatef, Director of Legal (Monitoring Officer)
Heather Moore, Assistant Director of Governance
Matthew Lewin, Legal Adviser to the Sub-Committee
Simon Goacher, Independent Investigator
Richard Cole, Association of Liberal Democrat Councillors
(representative of the four Subject Members)

1 **ELECTION OF CHAIR**

RESOLVED that Councillor Pam Byrne be appointed as Chair of the Sub-Committee.

2 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence received.

3 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of urgent business received.

4 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received.

5 **ASSESSMENT OF STANDARDS COMPLAINTS**

In accordance with the procedures for dealing with Member Code of Conduct complaints, consideration was given to a report of the Monitoring Officer detailing allegations of misconduct against four Councillors namely Councillors Mark Kenyon, Howard Sykes, Louie Hamblett and David Murphy, which alleged that:

- Councillor Kenyon had secretly recorded a meeting between Councillor Shah and members of the Shaw Independents group which took place in the Leader's office on 20 May 2024.
- Councillors Sykes, Hamblett and Murphy were aware that Councillor Kenyon was making that recording.
- All four councillors leaked the recording to a third party who then shared the recording online.

The Sub-Committee received a written representation by a barrister acting for Councillor Sykes, which was considered as a preliminary issue at the beginning of the hearing. The written

representation outlined that it was not possible to find that a breach of the Code of Conduct had occurred in relation to Councillors Sykes, Hamblett and Murphy in respect of the allegation in the complaint. However, there had been a conclusion of a breach of the Code regarding the investigation process, and this should not be dealt with in the proceedings. The Sub-Committee also heard representations from Councillor Sykes' representative and the investigating officer. The Sub-Committee heard the views of the Independent Person who considered that the Sub-Committee had no jurisdiction to deal with the new complaints against Councillors Sykes, Hamblett and Murphy, as the new allegations had not been put in writing to them, as required by the law, in line with the independent legal advice provided at the meeting.

The Sub-Committee proceeded to consider the report of the external investigating officer appointed to investigate the complaint related to Councillor Kenyon and the allegations that Councillor Kenyon had breached paragraphs 4.1 (confidentiality and access to information), 5.1 (bringing the role or council into disrepute) and 7.1 (use of resources) of the Code.

The Sub-Committee heard representations from the investigating officer, Councillor Kenyon's representative and Cllr Kenyon.

The Sub-Committee heard the views of the Independent Person who considered that Councillor Kenyon had breached the Code and that appropriate sanctions would be for Councillor Kenyon to apologise, and for the matter to be reported to the full Council for noting.

All Members of the Sub-Committee requested that their individual vote be recorded on the following matters:

That Councillor Kenyon had breached paragraph 7.1 of the Code (misuse of resources)	
Byrne	Against
Ghafoor	Against
Harrison	For
Marland	Against
Nasheen	For

That the findings of the Sub-Committee be reported to the full Council for information	
Byrne	Against
Ghafoor	Against
Harrison	For
Marland	Against
Nasheen	For

That Councillor Kenyon be recommended to provide a personal apology to Councillors Hince, Shah and Navesey	
Byrne	For
Ghafoor	For
Harrison	For
Marland	For
Nasheen	For

That the Group Leader be recommended to remove Councillor Kenyon from Committees or Sub-Committees of the Council	
Byrne	Against
Ghafoor	Against
Harrison	For
Marland	Against
Nasheen	For

RESOLVED that the Sub-Committee finds that:

1. It had no jurisdiction to consider the new complaints regarding the alleged failure of Councillors Sykes, Hamblett and Murphy to co-operate with the investigation, in breach of paragraph 8.2 of the Code of Conduct, as the new allegations had not been made the subject of a formal written complaint and section 27(9) of the Localism Act 2011) requires an allegation to be made in writing before it can be dealt with under the Council's statutory arrangements for code of conduct complaints.

2. Councillor Kenyon had breached the Code of Conduct as he had disclosed confidential information in breach of paragraph 4.1 of the Code and that he had brought his role and the Council into disrepute in breach of paragraph 5.1 of the Code.

3. The following sanctions be applied:

- a. To make the findings of the Sub-Committee public.
- b. To recommend that Councillor Kenyon sends a personal apology to Councillors Shah, Hince and Navesey.

The meeting started at 10.15 am and ended at 3.45 pm