

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

At a meeting of this Committee held on
12 December 2017

(Present) **Councillor Roberts (Chairman)**
Councillors Deakin, De'Asha, J Jackson, Jones, Lynch, Maloney
and Sims

(Not Present) **Councillors P Jackson and J Johnson**

(Present as an **Councillors Bell and Grunewald.**
observer)

13 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Jackson and J Johnson.

14 **MINUTES**

* **Resolved that the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2017 be approved and signed.**

15 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS**

No Declarations of Interest from Members were made.

16 **CODE OF CONDUCT MATTER**

A report was submitted which informed Members that a number of complaints against Councillor Gomez-Aspron had been received by the Monitoring Officer who had dealt with it in accordance with the Procedure for Dealing with Complaints regarding Breach of the Code of Conduct for Members. This procedure had previously been approved by the Standards Committee and was attached to the report.

Following initial consideration (Stage 1) and consideration of alternative resolution (Stage 2), the Monitoring Officer decided that the 13 complaints warranted investigation. The Council's Deputy Monitoring Officer was tasked with conducting the investigation. On completion of the investigation the Deputy Monitoring Officer produced a report which was submitted to the Monitoring Officer. The report and its appendices were attached at Addendum 1 to the report.

In compliance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011, the Monitoring Officer had sought the views of the Council's Independent Person. Those views were attached at Addendum 3 to the report. The Committee was obliged to consider the views of the Independent Person before it reached its determination as to whether the Code of Conduct had been breached.

The Monitoring Officer had provided a copy of the report to the complainants, the Independent Person and to Councillor Gomez-Aspron.

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Both Councillor Gomez-Aspron and the Independent Person had been invited and were in attendance at the committee to enable members of the committee to ask questions of them.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer also attended the Committee and presented her findings as investigating officer.

Councillor Gomez-Aspron had made his submission which had been published at Addendum 2 to the report. He spoke to the submission and answered questions from Members.

The Independent Person also presented her report and findings to the Committee.

After hearing the submissions and asking questions for clarification Members were asked to determine whether they believed, based on the information contained in the report and presented at the Committee, that Councillor Gomez-Apron's behaviour constituted a breach of the code of conduct.

- * **Resolved that the public be excluded from the meeting during deliberations.**

Reason (under Local Government Act 1972)

Information relating to an individual (Para 1 Scheduled 12A)

Councillor Gomez-Aspron, the Independent Person, officers and members of the press and public here left the meeting and were recalled to the meeting following the Committee's deliberations.

The Monitoring Officer read out the decisions on the individual complaints.

- * **Resolved that:**

- (1) **the Committee agreed that Councillor Gomez- Aspron was acting in his role of Councillor regarding all 13 complaints;**
- (2) **the findings in respect of Councillor Gomez-Aspron's conduct be published;**
- (3) **Councillor Gomez-Aspron was found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct (Section 1.1 and/or 1.2) in respect of those complaints noted as upheld in the table below;**
- (4) **Councillor Gomez-Aspron be censured by this Committee;**
- (5) **Councillor Gomez-Aspron be strongly encouraged to attend the Member Training session arranged for ICT and Social Media;**
- (6) **the Leader be requested to remove Councillor Gomez-Aspron from the Personnel Appeals Committee; and**

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- (7) the Leader be requested to replace Councillor Gomez-Aspron as Armed Forces Champion for the Council with another Member.

Complaint 1	Part Upheld
Complaint 2	Upheld
Complaint 3	Upheld
Complaint 4	Upheld
Complaint 5	Upheld
Complaint 6	Not Upheld
Complaint 7	Upheld
Complaint 8	Upheld
Complaint 9	Part Upheld
Complaint 10	Part Upheld
Complaint 11	Upheld
Complaint 12	Upheld
Complaint 13	Upheld

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