

Notice of Meeting

STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE (HEARING)

Tuesday, 21 July 2009 - 10:30 am
The Chamber, Civic Centre, Dagenham

Members: Councillor Mrs K J Flint, Mr K Madden and Jennifer Spearman

13 July 2009

R. A. Whiteman
Chief Executive

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AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Appointment of Chair**
3. **Declarations of Interest**
4. **Members' Code of Conduct (Pages 1 - 9)**
5. **Procedure for Dealing with Local Hearings (Pages 11 - 20)**
6. **Monitoring Officer Report - MC9-08 (Pages 21 - 136)**
7. **Any other public items which the Chair decides are urgent**
8. **Private Business**

Private Business

The public and press have a legal right to attend Council meetings such as the Standards Sub-Committee (Hearings), except where business is confidential or certain other sensitive information is to be discussed. The list below shows why items are in the private part of the agenda, with reference to the relevant legislation (the relevant paragraph of Parts 1 to 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended. Paragraph 7c – information presented to a Standards Committee or to a Sub-Committee of a Standards Committee set up to consider any matter under regulations 13 or 16 to 20 of the Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008, or referred under section 58(1)(c) of the Local Government Act 1972).

9. Any other confidential or exempt items which the Chair decides are urgent

MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

THE TEN GENERAL PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE CONDUCT OF MEMBERS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The principles as set out below define the standards that Members should uphold

Selflessness - Members should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

Honesty and Integrity - Members should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

Objectivity - Members should make decisions on merit, including when making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.

Accountability - Members should be accountable to the public for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities, and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to their particular office.

Openness - Members should be as open as possible about their actions and those of their authority, and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.

Personal judgement - Members may take account of the view of others, including their political groups, but should reach their own conclusions on the issues before them and act in accordance with those conclusions.

Respect for others - Members should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. They should respect the impartiality and integrity of the authority's statutory officers and its other employees.

Duty to uphold the law - Members should uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.

Stewardship - Members should do whatever they are able to do to ensure that their authorities use their resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

Leadership - Members should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.

MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

PART 1

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Introduction and interpretation

1. (1) This Code applies to **you** as a member of an authority.
- (2) You should read this Code together with the general principles prescribed by the Secretary of State.
- (3) It is your responsibility to comply with the provisions of this Code.
- (4) In this Code
 - “meeting” means any meeting of
 - (a) the authority;
 - (b) the executive of the authority;
 - (c) any of the authority’s or its executive’s committees, sub-committees, joint committees, joint sub-committees, or area committees;

“member” includes a co-opted member and an appointed member.

Scope

2. (1) Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) to (5), you must comply with this Code whenever you
 - (a) conduct the business of your authority (which, in this Code, includes the business of the office to which you are elected or appointed); or
 - (b) act, claim to act or give the impression you are acting as a representative of your authority,and references to your official capacity are construed accordingly.
- (2) Subject to sub-paragraphs (3) and (4), this Code does not have effect in relation to your conduct other than where it is in your official capacity.
- (3) In addition to having effect in relation to conduct in your official capacity, paragraphs 3(2)(c), 5 and 6(a) also have effect, at any other time, where that conduct constitutes a criminal offence for which you have been convicted.

- (4) Conduct to which this Code applies (whether that is conduct in your official capacity or conduct mentioned in sub-paragraph (3)) includes a criminal offence for which you are convicted (including an offence you committed before the date you took office, but for which you are convicted after that date).
- (5) Where you act as a representative of your authority
 - (a) on another relevant authority, you must, when acting for that other authority, comply with that other authority's code of conduct; or
 - (b) on any other body, you must, when acting for that other body, comply with your authority's code of conduct, except and insofar as it conflicts with any other lawful obligations to which that other body may be subject.

General obligations

3. (1) You must treat others with respect.

(2) You must not

- (a) do anything which may cause your authority to breach any of the equality enactments (as defined in section 33 of the Equality Act 2006);
- (b) bully any person;
- (c) intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is or is likely to be
 - (i) a complainant,
 - (ii) a witness, or
 - (iii) involved in the administration of any investigation or proceedings,

in relation to an allegation that a member (including yourself) has failed to comply with his or her authority's code of conduct; or

- (d) do anything which compromises or is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, your authority.

4. You must not

- (a) disclose information given to you in confidence by anyone, or information acquired by you which you believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, except where
 - (i) you have the consent of a person authorised to give it;

- (ii) you are required by law to do so;
 - (iii) the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or
 - (iv) the disclosure is
 - (aa) reasonable and in the public interest; and
 - (bb) made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the authority; or
- (b) prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.
5. You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute
6. You
- (a) must not use or attempt to use your position as a member improperly to confer on or secure for yourself or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage; and
 - (b) must, when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of your authority
 - (i) act in accordance with your authority's reasonable requirements;
 - (ii) ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes); and
 - (c) must have regard to any applicable Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986.
7. (1) When reaching decisions on any matter you must have regard to any relevant advice provided to you by
- (a) your authority's chief finance officer; or
 - (b) your authority's monitoring officer,
- where that officer is acting pursuant to his or her statutory duties.
- (2) You must give reasons for all decisions in accordance with any statutory requirements and any reasonable additional requirements imposed by your authority.

PART 2

INTERESTS

Personal interests

8.(1) You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where either

- (a) it relates to or is likely to affect
 - (i) any body of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management and to which you are appointed or nominated by your authority;
 - (ii) any body
 - (aa) exercising functions of a public nature;
 - (bb) directed to charitable purposes; or
 - (cc) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union),

of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management
 - (iii) any employment or business carried on by you;
 - (iv) any person or body who employs or has appointed you;
 - (v) any person or body, other than a relevant authority, who has made a payment to you in respect of your election or any expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties;
 - (vi) any person or body who has a place of business or land in your authority's area, and in whom you have a beneficial interest in a class of securities of that person or body that exceeds the nominal value of £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital (whichever is the lower);
 - (vii) any contract for goods, services or works made between your authority and you or a firm in which you are a partner, a company of which you are a remunerated director, or a person or body of the description specified in paragraph (vi);
 - (viii) the interests of any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25;
 - (ix) any land in your authority's area in which you have a beneficial interest;

- (x) any land where the landlord is your authority and you are, or a firm in which you are a partner, a company of which you are a remunerated director, or a person or body of the description specified in paragraph (vi) is, the tenant;
 - (xi) any land in the authority's area for which you have a licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy for 28 days or longer; or
- (b) a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting your well-being or financial position or the well-being or financial position of a relevant person to a greater extent than the majority of other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the electoral division or ward, as the case may be, affected by the decision.
- (2) In sub-paragraph (1)(b), a relevant person is
- (a) a member of your family or any person with whom you have a close association; or
 - (b) any person or body who employs or has appointed such persons, any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of which they are directors;
 - (c) any person or body in whom such persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000; or
 - (d) any body of a type described in sub-paragraph (1)(a)(i) or (ii).

Disclosure of personal interests

- 9.(1) Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) to (7), where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority and you attend a meeting of your authority at which the business is considered, you must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent.
- (2) Where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority which relates to or is likely to affect a person described in paragraph 8(1)(a)(i) or 8(1)(a)(ii)(aa), you need only disclose to the meeting the existence and nature of that interest when you address the meeting on that business.
- (3) Where you have a personal interest in any business of the authority of the type mentioned in paragraph 8(1)(a)(viii), you need not disclose the nature or existence of that interest to the meeting if the interest was registered more than three years before the date of the meeting.
- (4) Sub-paragraph (1) only applies where you are aware or ought reasonably to be aware of the existence of the personal interest.
- (5) Where you have a personal interest but, by virtue of paragraph 14, sensitive information relating to it is not registered in your authority's register of members' interests, you must indicate to the meeting that you have a

personal interest, but need not disclose the sensitive information to the meeting.

- (6) Subject to paragraph 12(1)(b), where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority and you have made an executive decision in relation to that business, you must ensure that any written statement of that decision records the existence and nature of that interest.
- (7) In this paragraph, “executive decision” is to be construed in accordance with any regulations made by the Secretary of State under section 22 of the Local Government Act 2000.

Prejudicial interest generally

10. (1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority you also have a prejudicial interest in that business where the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

(2) You do not have a prejudicial interest in any business of the authority where that business

- (a) does not affect your financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in paragraph 8;
- (b) does not relate to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to you or any person or body described in paragraph 8; or
- (c) relates to the functions of your authority in respect of
 - (i) housing, where you are a tenant of your authority provided that those functions do not relate particularly to your tenancy or lease;
 - (ii) school meals or school transport and travelling expenses, where you are a parent or guardian of a child in full time education, or are a parent governor of a school, unless it relates particularly to the school which the child attends;
 - (iii) statutory sick pay under Part XI of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, where you are in receipt of, or are entitled to the receipt of, such pay;
 - (iv) an allowance, payment or indemnity given to members;
 - (v) any ceremonial honour given to members; and
 - (vi) setting council tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Prejudicial interests arising in relation to overview and scrutiny committees

11. You also have a prejudicial interest in any business before an overview and scrutiny committee of your authority (or of a sub-committee of such a committee) where
- (a) that business relates to a decision made (whether implemented or not) or action taken by your authority's executive or another of your authority's committees, sub-committees, joint committees or joint sub-committees; and
 - (b) at the time the decision was made or action was taken, you were a member of the executive, committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee mentioned in paragraph (a) and you were present when that decision was made or action was taken.

Effect of prejudicial interests on participation

12. (1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), where you have a prejudicial interest in any business of your authority
- (a) you must withdraw from the room or chamber where a meeting considering the business is being held
 - (i) in a case where sub-paragraph (2) applies, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence;
 - (ii) in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at that meeting;unless you have obtained a dispensation from your authority's standards committee;
 - (b) you must not exercise executive functions in relation to that business; and
 - (c) you must not seek improperly to influence a decision about that business.
- (2) Where you have a prejudicial interest in any business of your authority, you may attend a meeting (including a meeting of the overview and scrutiny committee of your authority or of a sub-committee of such a committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise.

PART 3

REGISTRATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Registration of Members' interests

13. (1) Subject to paragraph 14, you must, within 28 days of

- (a) this Code being adopted by or applied to your authority; or
- (b) your election or appointment to office (where that is later),

register in your authority's register of members' interests (maintained under section 81(1) of the Local Government Act 2000) details of your personal interests where they fall within a category mentioned in paragraph 8(1)(a), by providing written notification to your authority's monitoring officer.

- (2) Subject to paragraph 14, you must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any new personal interest or change to any personal interest registered under paragraph (1), register details of that new personal interest or change by providing written notification to your authority's monitoring officer.

Sensitive information

14. (1) Where you consider that the information relating to any of your personal interests is sensitive information, and your authority's monitoring officer agrees, you need not include that information when registering that interest, or, as the case may be, a change to that interest under paragraph 13.

- (2) You must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any change of circumstances which means that information excluded under paragraph (1) is no longer sensitive information, notify your authority's monitoring officer asking that the information be included in your authority's register of members' interests.

- (3) In this Code, "sensitive information" means information whose availability for inspection by the public creates, or is likely to create, a serious risk that you or a person who lives with you may be subjected to violence or intimidation.

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Procedure for Local Standards Hearings

1. Interpretation

- (a) “Member” means the Member of the Council who is the subject of the allegation being considered by the Standards Committee, unless the context indicates otherwise. It also includes the Member’s nominated representative.
- (b) “Investigating Officer” means either the Ethical Standards Officer of the Standards Board for England (ESO) who referred the report to the Council (and includes his or her nominated representative) or in the case of matters that have been referred for local investigation and matters which have been referred by the Standards Committee to the Monitoring Officer for investigation, references to the Investigating Officer mean the person appointed by the Monitoring Officer to undertake that investigation (which may include the Monitoring Officer, and his or her nominated representative).
- (c) “The Matter” is the subject matter of the Investigating Officer’s report.
- (d) “The Standards Committee” refers to the Standards Committee or to any Standards Sub-Committee to which it has delegated the conduct of the hearing.
- (e) “The Democratic Services Officer” means an Officer of the Council responsible for supporting the Standards Committee’s discharge of its functions and recording the decisions of the Standards Committee.
- (f) “Legal Adviser” means the Officer responsible for providing legal advice to the Standards Committee. This may be the Monitoring Officer, another legally qualified Officer of the Council, or someone appointed for this purpose from outside the Council.
- (g) “The Chair” refers to the person presiding at the hearing.

2. Modification of Procedure

The Chair may agree to vary this procedure in any particular instance where he/she is of the opinion that such a variation is necessary in the interests of fairness.

3. Representation

The Member may be represented or accompanied during the meeting by a Solicitor, Counsel, or, with the permission of the Committee, another person. Note that the cost of such representation must be met by the Member, unless the Council has agreed to meet all or any part of that cost in accordance with its terms and conditions of its policy in relation to Member indemnities.

The council has in place insurance to meet the legal cost of any elected or co-opted member of the council to cover all reasonable and necessary costs charged by a

representative appointed to represent the member/co-opted member who is charged with being in breach of the Member Code of Conduct. The terms and conditions of any insurance cover shall be in accordance with the council's insurance policy currently in force.

4. Pre-Hearing Procedure (ESO's Report)

Upon reference of a matter from an ESO for local determination following completion of the ESO's report, the Monitoring Officer shall:

- (a) Arrange a date for the Standards Committee's hearing;
- (b) Send a copy of the report to the Member and advise him/her of the date, time and place for the hearing;
- (c) Send a copy of the report to the person who made the allegation and advise him/her of the date, time and place for the hearing;
- (d) Request the Member to complete and return the model Pre-Hearing Forms A, B, D and E, as recommended by the Standards Board for England within 14 days of receipt;
- (e) In the light of any Pre-Hearing Forms returned by the Member, determine whether the Standards Committee will require the attendance of the ESO and any additional witnesses at the hearing to enable it to come to a properly considered conclusion at the hearing, and arrange for their attendance;
- (f) Prepare a Pre-Hearing Summary Report setting out the course of the allegation, investigation and Pre-Hearing Process and highlighting the issues which the Standards Committee will need to address; and
- (g) Arrange that the agenda for the hearing, together with the Pre-Hearing Summary Report and copies of any relevant documents are sent to:
 - (i) All Members of the Standards Committee who will conduct the hearing;
 - (ii) The Member;
 - (iii) The person who made the allegation; and
 - (iv) The Investigating Officer.

5. Pre-Hearing Process (Local Investigation)

Upon receipt of the final report of the Investigating Officer including a finding that the Member failed to comply with the Code of Conduct for Members or the Standards

Committee finds that the matter should be considered at a formal hearing, the Monitoring Officer shall:

- (a) Arrange a date for the Standards Committee's hearing;
- (b) Send a copy of the report to the Member and advise him/her of the date, time and place for the hearing;
- (c) Send a copy of the report to the person who made the allegation and advise him/her of the date, time and place of the hearing;
- (d) Request the Member to complete and return the model Pre-Hearing Forms A, B, D and E, as recommended by the Standards Board for England within 14 days of receipt;
- (e) In the light of any Pre-Hearing Forms returned by the Member, determine whether the Standards Committee will require the attendance of the Investigating Officer and any additional witnesses at the hearing to enable it to come to a properly considered conclusion at the hearing, and arrange for their attendance;
- (f) Prepare a Pre-Hearing Summary Report setting out the course of the allegation, investigation and Pre-Hearing Process and highlighting the issues which the Standards Committee will need to address; and
- (g) Arrange that the agenda for the hearing, together with the Pre-Hearing Summary Report and copies of any relevant documents are sent to:
 - (i) All members of the Standards Committee who will conduct the hearing;
 - (ii) The Member;
 - (iii) The person who made the allegation; and
 - (iv) The Investigating Officer

6. Legal Advice

The Standards Committee may take legal advice from its legal adviser at any time during the hearing or while they are considering the outcome. The substance of any legal advice given to the Standards Committee should be shared with the Member and the Investigating Officer if they are present.

7. Setting the Scene

At the start of the hearing the Monitoring Officer shall introduce each of the Members of the Standards Committee, the Member (if present), the Investigating Officer (if present) and any other Officers present, and shall then explain the procedure which the Standards Committee will follow in the conduct of the hearing.

8. Preliminary Procedural Issues

The Standards Committee shall then deal with the following preliminary procedural matters in the following order:

(a) **Appointment of Chair**

An Independent Member shall be appointed as Chair.

(b) **Disclosures of Interest**

The Chair shall ask Members of the Standards Committee to disclose the existence and nature of any personal or prejudicial interests;

(c) **Quorum**

The Chair shall confirm that the Standards Committee is quorate, i.e. one Councillor Member and two Independent Members.

(d) **Hearing Procedure**

The Chair shall confirm that all present know the procedure which the Standards Committee will follow in determining the matter.

(e) **Proceeding in the absence of the Member**

If the Member is not present at the start of the hearing:

- (i) the Chair shall ask the Monitoring Officer whether the Member has indicated his/her intention not to attend the hearing;
 - (ii) the Standards Committee shall then consider any reasons which the Member has provided for not attending the hearing and shall decide whether it is satisfied that there is sufficient reason for such failure to attend;
 - (iii) if the Standards Committee is satisfied with such reasons, it shall adjourn the hearing to another date
 - (iv) if the Standards Committee is not satisfied with such reasons, or if the Member has not given any such reasons, the Standards Committee shall decide whether to consider the matter and make a determination in the absence of the Member or to adjourn the hearing to another date.
- (f) **Exclusion of Press and Public**
- (i) The Standards Committee may exclude the Press and public from its consideration of the matter where it appears likely that confidential or exempt information will be disclosed in the course of this consideration.

- (ii) The Chair shall ask the Member, the Investigating Officer and the legal adviser to the Standards Committee whether they wish to ask the Standards Committee to exclude the Press or public from all or any part of the hearing. If any of them so request, the Chair shall ask them to put forward reasons for so doing and ask for responses from the others and the Standards Committee shall then determine whether to exclude the Press and public from all or any part of the hearing.
- (iii) Where the Standards Committee does not resolve to exclude Press and public, the agenda and any documents which have been withheld from the Press and public in advance of the meeting shall then be made available to the Press and public.

9. A failure to comply with the Code of Conduct

The Standards Committee will then address the issue of whether the Member failed to comply with the Code of Conduct in the manner set out in the Investigating Officer's report.

- (a) The Chair shall ask the Member to confirm that he/she maintains the position as set out in the pre-hearing summary

(b) The Pre-Hearing Process Summary

The Chair will ask the legal adviser or the Democratic Services Officer to present his/her report, highlighting any points of difference in respect of which the Member has stated that he/she disagrees with any finding of fact in the Investigating Officer's report. The Chair will then ask the Member to confirm that this is an accurate summary of the issues and ask the Member to identify any additional points upon which he/she disagrees with any finding of fact in the Investigating Officer's report.

- (i) If the Member admits that he/she has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct in the manner described in the Investigating Officer's report, the Standards Committee may then make a determination that the Member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct in the manner described in the Investigating Officer's report and proceed directly to consider whether any action should be taken (Paragraph 11).
- (ii) If the Member identifies additional points of difference, the Chair shall ask the Member to explain why he/she did not identify these points as part of the pre-hearing process. He/she shall then ask the Investigating Officer (if present) whether he/she is in a position to deal with those additional points of difference directly or through any witnesses who are in attendance or whose attendance at the hearing can conveniently be arranged. Where the Standards Committee is not satisfied with the Member's reasons for failing to identify each additional point of difference as part of the pre-hearing process, it may decide that it will continue the hearing but without allowing the Member

to challenge the veracity of those findings of fact which are set out in the Investigating Officer's report but in respect of which the Member did not identify a point of difference as part of the pre-hearing process, or it may decide to adjourn the hearing to allow the Investigating Officer and/or any additional witnesses to attend the hearing.

(c) Presenting the Investigating Officer's Report

- (i) If the Investigating Officer is present, the Chair will then ask the Investigating Officer to present his/her report, having particular regard to any points of difference identified by the Member and why he/she concluded, on the basis of his/her findings of fact, that the Member had failed to comply with the Code of Conduct. The Investigating Officer may call witnesses as necessary to address any points of difference.
- (ii) If the Investigating Officer is not present, the Standards Committee shall only conduct a hearing if they are satisfied that there are no substantial points of difference or that any points of difference can be satisfactorily resolved in the absence of the Investigating Officer. In the absence of the Investigating Officer, the Standards Committee shall determine on the advice of the Monitoring Officer which witnesses, if any, to call. Where such witnesses are called, the Chair shall draw the witness's attention to any relevant section of the Investigating Officer's report and ask the witness to confirm or correct the report and to provide any relevant evidence.
- (iii) No cross-examination shall be permitted but, at the conclusion of the Investigating Officer's report and/or of the evidence of each witness, the Chair shall ask the Member if there are any matters upon which the Standards Committee should seek the advice of the Investigating Officer or the witness.

(d) The Member's Response

- (i) The Chair shall then invite the Member to respond to the Investigating Officer's report and to call any witnesses as necessary to address any points of difference.
- (ii) No cross-examination shall be permitted but, at the conclusion of the Member's evidence and/or of the evidence of each witness, the Chair shall ask the Investigating Officer if there are any matters upon which the Standards Committee should seek the advice of the Member or the witness.

(e) Witnesses

- (i) The Standards Committee shall be entitled to refuse to hear evidence from the Investigating Officer, the Member or a witness unless they are satisfied that the witness is likely to give evidence which they need to

hear in order to be able to determine whether there has been a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct.

- (ii) Any Member of the Standards Committee may address questions to the Investigating Officer, to the Member or to any witness.

(f) **Additional Evidence**

At the conclusion of the evidence, the Chair shall check with the Members of the Standards Committee that they are satisfied that they have sufficient evidence to come to a considered conclusion on the matter.

- (g) If the Standards Committee at any stage prior to determining whether there was a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct are of the opinion that they require additional evidence on any point in order to be able to come to a considered conclusion on the matter, the Standards Committee may (on not more than one occasion) adjourn the hearing and make a request to the Investigating Officer to seek and provide such additional evidence and to undertake further investigation on any point specified by the Standards Committee. All parties to the complaint will be informed if and when this occurs.
- (h) Determination as to whether there was a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct
 - (i) At the conclusion of the Member's response, the Chair shall ensure that each Member of the Standards Committee is satisfied that he/she has sufficient information to enable him/her to determine whether there has been a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct as set out in the Investigating Officer's report.
 - (ii) Unless the determination merely confirms the Member's admission of a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct (as set out in Paragraph 9(b) (i) above), the Standards Committee shall then retire to another room to consider in private whether the Member did fail to comply with the Code of Conduct as set out in the Investigating Officer's report.
 - (iii) The Standards Committee shall take its decision on the balance of probability based on the evidence which it has received at the hearing.
 - (iv) The Standards Committee's function is to make a determination on the matter. It may, at any time, return to the main hearing room in order to seek additional evidence from the Investigating Officer, the Member or a witness, or to seek legal advice from or on behalf of the Monitoring Officer. If it requires any further information, it may adjourn and instruct an Officer or request the Member to produce such further evidence to the Standards Committee.

- (v) At the conclusion of the Standards Committee's consideration, the Standards Committee shall consider whether it is minded to make any recommendations to the Council with a view to promoting high standards of conduct among Members.
- (vi) The Standards Committee shall then return to the main hearing room and the Chair will state the Standards Committee's principal findings of fact and their determination as to whether the Member failed to comply with the Code of Conduct as set out in the Investigating Officer's report.

10. If the Member has not failed to follow the Code of Conduct

If the Standards Committee determines that the Member **has not failed** to follow the Code of Conduct in the manner set out in the Investigating Officer's report the Committee will then consider whether it should make any recommendations to the authority with a view to promoting high standards among members.

11. Action consequent upon a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct

- (a) The Chair shall ask the Investigating Officer (if present, or otherwise the legal adviser) and the subject Member whether, in their opinion, the Member's failure to comply with the Code of Conduct is such that the Standards Committee should impose a sanction and, if so, what would be the appropriate sanction.
- (b) The Chair will then ensure that each Member of the Standards Committee is satisfied that he/she has sufficient information to enable him/her to take an informed decision as to whether to impose a sanction and (if appropriate) as to the form of the sanction.
- (c) Any Member of the Standards Committee may address questions to the Investigating Officer or to the Member as necessary to enable him/her to take such an informed decision.
- (d) The Chair should then set out any recommendations which the Standards Committee is minded to make to the Council with a view to promoting high standards of conduct among Members and seek the views of the Member, the Investigating Officer and the legal adviser.
- (e) The Standards Committee shall then retire to another room to consider in private whether to impose a sanction, (where a sanction is to be imposed) what sanction to impose and when that sanction should take effect, and any recommendations which the Standards Committee will make to the Council.
- (f) At the conclusion of their consideration, the Standards Committee shall return to the main hearing room and the Chair shall state the Standards Committee's decisions as to whether to impose a sanction and (where a sanction is to be imposed) the nature of that sanction, and when it should take effect, together with the principal reasons for those decisions, and any recommendations which the Standards Committee will make to the Council.

- (g) The Standards Committee has power to impose any one or a combination of the following sanctions:
- censure of that Member
 - restriction for a period not exceeding six months of that Member's access to the premises of the authority or that member's use of the resources of the authority, provided that those restrictions meet **both** the following requirements:
 - (i) they are reasonable and proportionate to the nature of the breach; and
 - (ii) they do not unduly restrict the person's ability to perform the functions of a Member.
 - partial suspension of that Member for a period not exceeding six months
 - suspension of that Member for a period not exceeding six months
 - that the Member submits a written apology in a form specified by the Standards Committee
 - that the Member undertakes such training as the Standards Committee specifies
 - that the Member participates in such conciliation as the Standards Committee specifies
 - partial suspension of that Member for a period not exceeding six months or until such time as the Member has met **either** of the following restrictions:
 - (i) they have submitted a written apology in a form specified by the Standards Committee; or
 - (ii) they have undertaken such training or have participated in such conciliation as the Standards Committee specifies
 - suspension of that Member for a period not exceeding six months or until such time as the Member has met **either** of the following restrictions:
 - (i) they have submitted a written apology in a form specified by the Standards Committee; or
 - (ii) they have undertaken such training or have participated in such conciliation as the Standards Committee specifies

12. Reference back to the Ethical Standards Officer

If, at any time before the Standards Committee has determined upon any appropriate sanction, the Standards Committee considers that the nature of the failure to comply with the Code of Conduct for Members is such that the appropriate sanction would exceed the powers of the Standards Committee, the Standards

Committee may instruct the Monitoring Officer to request the Ethical Standards Officer to resume responsibility for the conduct of the matter, and may adjourn the hearing until the Monitoring Officer advises the Standards Committee of the Ethical Standards Officer's response to such a request.

13. The Close of the Hearing

- (a) The Standards Committee will
- (i) announce its decision on the day of the hearing and provide the Democratic Services Officer with a short written statement of their decision, which the Democratic Services Officer will deliver to the Member as soon as practicable after the close of the hearing; and
 - (ii) give its full written decision as soon as possible but within two weeks of the hearing to the relevant parties:
 - the Member
 - the complainant
 - the Standards Committee of any other authorities concerned
 - the Standards Board for England.
- (b) The Chair will thank those present who have contributed to the conduct of the hearing and formally close the hearing;
- (c) Following the close of the hearing, the Democratic Services Officer will agree a formal written notice of the Standards Committee's determination and the Monitoring Officer shall arrange for the distribution and publication of that notice (or a summary of that notice, where required) in accordance with Regulation 20 of the Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008.

14. Appeals

The Member may appeal against the decision of the Standards Committee by writing to the President of the Adjudication Panel for England, ensuring that his letter sets out the grounds for such an appeal, includes a statement as to whether or not he consents to the appeal being heard by way of written representations, and is received by the President within 21 days of the date of the written notice of decision under Paragraph 13(d).

STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE (Hearing)**21 July 2009****REPORT OF THE COUNCIL'S MONITORING OFFICER**

COMPLAINT AGAINST A COUNCILLOR REF: MC9-08	FOR DETERMINATION
<p>Summary:</p> <p>The subject member is a member of both Barking and Dagenham council and of the Greater London Authority (GLA). A complaint was submitted about the subject member's conduct it being alleged that he had breached the Code of Conduct in place in both authorities.</p> <p>The GLA standards sub committee met on 20 October 2008 and there decided to refer the matter for investigation.. The standards assessment sub committee of Barking and Dagenham council initially had dismissed the complaint on 6 November 2008 as disclosing no breach of the Code of Conduct. However, the complainant asked for a Review of that decision and on 3 December 2008 a differently constituted meeting of the standards sub committee decided to refer the matter for investigation. I appointed Sanjay Prashar, Deputy Head of Law to carry out the investigation. Helen Sargeant was appointed by the GLA to investigate a potential breach under the GLA Code of Conduct.</p> <p>Given the common ground between the two authorities, the standards committees of both Barking and Dagenham council and of the GLA decided to conduct concurrent investigations and, if the investigation found a breach of the Code, to hold concurrent hearings.</p> <p>Sanjay Prashar and Helen Sargeant presented their final investigation report to both standards sub committees of Barking and Dagenham and the GLA (which met separately) on 29th April 2009. Their joint report found there to have been a breach of the Code of Conduct of both authorities. The standards committees of both authorities accepted the report findings and decided that the matter progress to a final hearing.</p> <p>Given that both committees are dealing with the same matter, the standards committees of both authorities have agreed to hold their final hearing concurrently with the other. This means that while the standards committees of each authority will be convening to hear the evidence and make its own decision they will convene at the same time and place to hear the evidence together. The two standards committees will elect a chair on each side and agree an overall chair for the purpose of the main hearing. After all the evidence has been heard the two committees will retire to reach their own decision although they can confer with each other during the course of the hearing.</p> <p>Mr. Prashar will attend the meeting to present the joint investigation report which is</p>	

attached at Appendix A. Ms. Sargeant is unable to attend.

The hearing must be conducted in accordance with the Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008 and guidance issued by the Standards Board for England. The Regulations provide that a standards committee may conduct a hearing using such procedures as it considers appropriate in the circumstances. The Guidance requires the standards committee to hear the evidence relating to the complaint before reaching its decision on the evidence before it. The monitoring officers of both Barking and Dagenham Council and of the GLA will be in attendance to advise their respective committees as to procedure.

After hearing all the evidence the standards committee is required to make a finding of fact whether the member has failed to comply with the code of conduct or not and even if it finds a breach it must also determine whether any sanction should be imposed.

Under Reg. 19 (3) of the Regulations the standards committee may impose any of the following sanctions in the event that it finds that the subject member breached the Code of Conduct of the relevant authority:

- (a) censure of that member;
- (b) restriction for a period not exceeding six months of that member's access to the premises of the authority or that member's use of the resources of the authority, provided that those restrictions—
 - (i) are reasonable and proportionate to the nature of the breach; and
 - (ii) do not unduly restrict the person's ability to perform the functions of a member;
- (c) partial suspension of that member for a period not exceeding six months;
- (d) suspension of that member for a period not exceeding six months;
- (e) that the member submits a written apology in a form specified by the standards committee;
- (f) that the member undertakes such training as the standards committee specifies;
- (g) that the member participate in such conciliation as the standards committee specifies;
- (h) partial suspension of the member for a period not exceeding six months or until such time as the member submits a written apology in a form specified by the standards committee;
- (i) partial suspension of the member for a period not exceeding six months or until such time as the member has undertaken such training or has participated in such conciliation as the standards committee specifies;
- (j) suspension of the member for a period not exceeding six months or until such time as the member has submitted a written apology in a form specified by the standards committee;
- (k) suspension of the member for a period not exceeding six months or until such time as that member has undertaken such training or has participated in such conciliation as the standards committee specifies.

It is a matter for the standards committee as to which sanction is appropriate in the light of the evidence they hear. The Monitoring Officers of the respective authorities will

ensure that copies of the Standards Board for England Guidance in relation to sanctions are available at the hearing to assist members in this regard.

Recommendation:

The Standards Sub-Committee is asked to consider the report and make one of the following findings:

1. that the subject member has not failed to comply with the code of conduct of Barking and Dagenham council ('the council');
2. that the subject member has failed to comply with the code of conduct of the council;

but that no action needs to be taken in respect of the matters which were considered at the hearing; or
3. that the subject member has failed to comply with the code of conduct of the council and that a sanction should be imposed.

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Consultees:

Margaret Freeman – Senior Democratic Services Officer

Background papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

Standards Board for England Local Assessment Guidance

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Appendix A

Case Reference: Sept-05/ MC9/08

Report of an investigation under Section 59 of the Local Government Act 2000 into an allegation concerning Councillor and Assembly Member Richard Barnbrook.

Contents

- 1 Executive summary**
- 2 Councillor and Assembly Member Richard Barnbrook's official details**
- 3 The relevant legislation**
- 4 The evidence gathered**
- 5 Summary of the material facts**
- 6 Conclusion on the material facts**
- 7 Councillor Rush and Assembly Member Richard Barnbrook's additional submissions**
- 8 Reasoning as to whether there have been failures to comply with the Code of Conduct**
- 9 Findings**

Appendix A Schedule of evidence

Appendix B Conduct of the investigation

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Richard Barnbrook has been a Councillor for Barking and Dagenham (“LBBD”) since his election on May 5 2006, and has been an Assembly Member of the Greater London Authority (“GLA”) since his election on May 5 2008.
- 1.2 Councillor Rush is a Councillor for Barking and Dagenham, and has Executive portfolio responsibilities for Safer Neighbourhoods and Communities.
- 1.3 Councillor/ Assembly Member Barnbrook was filmed in an interview by Simon Darby, Deputy Leader of the BNP outside Southwark Cathedral. The interview appeared on his website, YouTube and his blog on the Daily Telegraph website.
- 1.4 The interviewer introduces Richard Barnbrook as “Richard Barnbrook BNP General Assembly Member for London.”
- 1.5 Richard Barnbrook states during the recording that *“In Barking and Dagenham alone 3 weeks ago, there was a murder of a young girl. We don’t know who’s done it, her girlfriend was attacked inside an educational institute. Again, 2 weeks ago there was another attack by knives on the streets of Barking and Dagenham where two people were murdered”*
- 1.6 Councillor Rush complained to the GLA on 25 September 2008 that she knew the statements to be lies, and her complaint to LBBD on 7 October 2008 was that this was false information. She considered that the relevant breach of the Code of Conduct (“the Code”) was disrepute.
- 1.7 The Code needs to be read together with the Relevant Authorities (General Principles) Order 2001, and the relevant principles here are honesty and integrity, and leadership.
- 1.8 The Monitoring Officers of both LBBD and the GLA instructed a joint investigation further to the referral from their relevant Standards Committees sub-committees.
- 1.9 Mr Barnbrook wrote a letter to the Barking and Dagenham Recorder signing himself off as both Assembly Member and Councillor, which was published on 11 December 2008 which stated *“..To my mind it makes little difference whether there were one or three murders – just one murder is too many!”*
- 1.10 Mr Barnbrook met with the investigators and said that he knew at the time that he made the statements that they were inaccurate.
- 1.11 Mr Barnbrook said with regards his first allegation of a murder that the reason he had said that there had been a murder was that it *“came out wrong”* because of the speed of his delivery. He had meant to say that that the woman was from Barking & Dagenham and murdered in Newham.

- 1.12 Mr Barnbrook confirmed with regards his second allegation that there were two murders, that he knew at the time that he made the statement that they were on life support. He said that they did not die.
- 1.13 Councillor Rush's main concern was the impact of these statements on the community in terms of fear of crime, and their effect in undermining the public's confidence in local government and the police. Mr Barnbrook denied in his meeting that this was the case. Councillor Rush stated at her investigation meeting that the statements undermined the trusted messenger relationship built up with the council/police and the community, she felt that the fear of crime was a significant issue in the borough, and moreover that there was a disparity between actual incidents of crime and fear of crime the latter of which adversely affected the quality of life of all people in the Borough. Mr Barnbrook in his meeting with the investigators accepted that as a politician he should make sure that what he says is accurate, as by stating that there have been murders will raise the fear of crime.
- 1.14 The interview was filmed and then posted on his website although at the time he knew the statements to be incorrect. The recording was not live. Mr Barnbrook said that although he himself did not view the blog until someone from London Mothers Against Knives told him of the complaint, he took responsibility for the content of the blog.
- 1.15 Mr Barnbrook was asked by the national BNP whether he wanted to leave the video on the blog after becoming aware of its inaccuracies and he said he wanted it to remain because of his belief in gun crime, and thought it would be removed within 4-6 weeks anyway. Mr Barnbrook said in his meeting with the investigators that he thought that the blog had been removed in view of the inaccuracies.
- 1.16 Mr Barnbrook said that he would not apologise for the statements until knife crime is over. He stated that he regretted saying that there were two murders when there were not (in respect of one assertion made in his blog), and did not regret stating that there was another murder (in respect of the other assertion).
- 1.17 Mr Barnbrook said that he did not believe that he misled people as murders are happening. He was provided with a letter (document 14) which the investigators had been given, which was from the Metropolitan Police Service in Barking and Dagenham which showed that there had been no murders in the period that he had asserted that there were and that the number of murders in LBBDD were decreasing. Mr Barnbrook said that he did not trust the police figures and had made a Freedom of Information Act request and had different figures which he would supply to the investigators. However, the evidence provided by Mr Barnbrook did not verify this.
- 1.18 Mr Barnbrook in his response to the draft investigation report stated that it had not been his intention to mislead anyone and the inaccuracies were unintentional. During the meeting with investigators, he made it clear that he knew that the statements were incorrect, and the investigators concluded that he did not attempt to remedy this, as he did not re-record the video.

1.19 In his response to the draft investigation report, Mr Barnbrook apologises for passing on information that was incorrect and said that he actually meant to say attempted murders and that this was not picked up in the editing of the recording. However, Councillor Rush in her response to the draft report provided new evidence from the Metropolitan Police to show that there had been no serious incidents in that period at all, which included anyone on life support. Mr Barnbrook in his meeting with investigators said that he knew at the time of the statement that they were on life support, and said in his response to the draft report that they were attempted murders.

1.20 If we accept the evidence from the Metropolitan Police then this does raise serious concerns as to the conduct of Mr Barnbrook both in the statements made in recording the video, and then the evidence he has provided both at the meeting with investigators and his response to the draft investigation report. At his meeting with us in January, he said that the second statement “came out wrong” and he meant to say that they were on life support as he knew that they were. In his response to the investigation report, he has said that he meant to say attempted murders but due to the editing this was not picked up. However the evidence from the Metropolitan Police show that there were no serious incidents during this period. The investigators are minded to conclude that this new evidence raises concerns about Mr Barnbrook’s evidence provided at the meeting with investigators as to why he initially made inaccurate statements.

1.21 Mr Barnbrook has provided documents to demonstrate that people are murdered in London because of knife, gun or other weapons, and has provided newspaper articles that show the impact of such crimes.

1.22 Council Rush has provided documents to demonstrate that fear of crime affects peoples behaviour and attitudes.

1.23 As a result of our investigation, we consider that:

- (a) Mr Barnbrook was giving the impression that he was acting as an Assembly Member of the GLA, and a Councillor of LBBD
- (b) Mr Barnbrook failed to comply with the Code of Conduct of both the GLA and the LBBD, by bringing his office and the respective authorities into disrepute.

2. Councillor and Assembly Member Richard Barnbrook's official details

- 2.1 Councillor and Assembly Member Richard Barnbrook was elected to Barking and Dagenham Council on 5 May 2006 and as an Assembly Member on the London Assembly on 5 May 2008, each for a term of four years. He was Leader of his party at the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham during 2006/07 and 2007/08.
- 2.2 Councillor and Assembly Member Richard Barnbrook currently serves on the following committees at the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham: Assembly, Ceremonial Council and the Development Control Board. He is a representative on the Dagenham Gateway Community Housing Partnership and he was also a member of the Scrutiny Management Board during his first two years of office. He is a member of the following London Assembly committees: Audit Panel, Budget Monitoring Sub-Committee and the Health and Public Services Committee.
- 2.3 Councillor and Assembly Member Richard Barnbrook gave a written undertaking to observe the Code of Conduct of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham on 4 May 2006 and the Code of Conduct of the Greater London Authority on 3 May 2008.
- 2.4 Councillor Barnbrook was unable to attend training sessions on the Code of Conduct held at Barking and Dagenham on 3 and 24 September 2007 and 9 January 2008, but subsequently signed to confirm that he had read the training material provided.
- 2.5 Assembly Member Barnbrook received training on the Code of Conduct from the Greater London Authority on 8 July 2008 from the Monitoring Officer.

3. The relevant legislation

The Code of Conduct

3.1 At the time of the complaint both the Greater London Authority (“the GLA”) and the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham (“LBBD”) had adopted the Model Code of Conduct as set out in the schedule to the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007 as their Codes of Conduct, and the GLA had made slight amendments to it.

3.2 The Relevant Authorities (General Principles) Order 2001 sets out the principles which are to govern the conduct of members of relevant authorities in England, which include the GLA and the LBBD. The LBBD has these principles in its preamble to the Code. The GLA has amended its Code so that it reads:

Paragraph 1 (2) of the GLA Code of Conduct

“You should read this Code together with the general principles prescribed by the Secretary of State, which are as follows:

Selflessness

You should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

Honesty and Integrity

You should not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

Objectivity

You should make decisions on merit, including when making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.

Accountability

You should be accountable to the public for your actions and the manner in which you carry out your responsibilities, and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to your particular office.

Openness

You should be as open as possible about your actions and those of your authority, and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.

Personal Judgement

You may take account of the views of others, including their political groups, but should reach your own conclusions on the issues before you and act in accordance with those conclusions.

Respect for Others

You should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. You should respect the impartiality and integrity of the authority's statutory officers, and its other employees.

Duty to Uphold the Law

You should uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in you.

Stewardship

You should do whatever you are able to do to ensure that your authority uses its resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

Leadership

You should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.”

3.3 Paragraph 2 of the GLA and LBBB Codes states:

“ 2. —(1) Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) to (5), you must comply with this Code whenever you—

(a) conduct the business of the Authority (which, in this Code, includes the business of the office to which you are elected or appointed); or

(b) act, claim to act or give the impression you are acting as a representative of the Authority,

and references to your official capacity are construed accordingly.

(2) Subject to sub-paragraphs (3) and (4), this Code does not have effect in relation to your conduct other than where it is in your official capacity.

.....”

3.4 Paragraph 5 of the respective Codes state:

“You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute. “

4. Evidence Gathered

The Complaint

Councillor Rush's complaint to the GLA is as follows (Document 4 of the Schedule of Evidence):

"Please note that this is on Richard Barnbrook's blog which introduces him as a Greater London Assembly Member. It is also on youtube. On the basis of the comments made in the latter part of the video where Richard Barnbrook quite clearly states that 3 weeks ago a young girl was murdered in an education establishment in Barking and Dagenham I know this to be an absolute lie. He also goes to claim a further 2 murders in the borough in the last 2 weeks which is also a lie. On making these false statements not only on his blog but on You tube which has a world wide audience I believe that Richard Barnbrook has brought his position as an elected member of the GLA into disrepute he has also tried to damage the reputation of the GLA and its elected Members as well as Barking & Dagenham Council, the fact that Barking & Dagenham is on public record as a Safe place to live is brought into disrepute by his total lack of honesty and integrity...I am very much aware of all the incredible work that is being done by the GLA and its members alongside London boroughs to tackle knife crime in the capital and I am very disappointed that all an elected Assemblyman can do is to mock the efforts of others and to openly and outrageously lie to whip up fears in the London community."

Councillor Rush's complaint to the LBBB is as follows (Document 5 of Schedule of Evidence):

"That a video recording of an interview, which appeared on Richard Barnbrook's blog and on You Tube, appeared to focus on and criticise the Borough, and include false information. Councillor Rush considered that the statements made during the interview resulted in the councillor acting in a way which brought his honesty and integrity as a councillor into disrepute, and also, by association, the Council. She also considered that the councillor's actions were at odds with two principles within the Code of Conduct: a duty to uphold the law and leadership."

4.1 Oral evidence (meetings with Councillor Rush and Mr Barnbrook)

i. Councillor Rush

- First viewed video blog on/around 24 September 2008 on Mr Barnbrook's¹ Daily Telegraph blog.
- Blog was also posted on Mr Barnbrook's own website and on YouTube
- Found statements to be inflammatory (inflamed fears in the community and across London), that dealing with community fears/fear of crime is a responsibility that any elected member should take seriously.

¹ All references to Mr Barnbrook are to Councillor/ Assembly Member Barnbrook

- Because of her portfolio Councillor Rush knew that these statements were untrue
- Statements seem to be attempting to undermine confidence in public safety, confidence with the police, and are directly at odds with the principle of leadership
- Councillor Rush said that across London, politicians are working hard to reassure the elderly/ young people that the streets are safe and by what Mr Barnbrook has said he has deliberately set out to inflame fear and undermine the public's trust and confidence in local government and the police.
- Presented letter from the Metropolitan Police in Barking & Dagenham confirming that according to its statistics there were no murders in Barking and Dagenham during the 3 weeks preceding the posting of the video blog.
- Presented letter from Mr Barnbrook to local newspaper published on 11 December 2008 and headlined "Number of murders not relevant" in support of assertion that Mr Barnbrook knew the statements to be wrong and yet kept them posted on website
- Mr Barnbrook made the statements knowing them to be untrue
- Considered that Mr Barnbrooks actions brought the Council into disrepute because statements undermine trusted messenger relationship built up by Councillor Rush/the police with the community and undermined their message of reassurance with regards murders in the borough.
- Following a murder there is a lot of effort by the Community Safety Strategic Partnership to reinforce the community message. The Partnership has worked hard to reassure the community and they are responding to that message. The kind of comment from Mr Barnbrook "throws that all off side". that she had people coming up to her to state "three murders – what are you keeping from us?"
- Fear of crime is a main issue in the Borough
- Disparity between actual and fear of crime
- Fear of crime affects quality of life of all people in the Borough
- Young people more likely to join gangs and older people are less likely to leave home after dark when there is a perception of crime

- In LBBD Mr Barnbrook was the leader of the Opposition until his election to the GLA. The new leader of the Opposition does not have the same profile as Mr Barnbrook. The BNP's reputation is taken seriously and they are a legitimate party in Barking & Dagenham.
- Would like a public apology and a period of cooling off for a few months so that he is not allowed in the chamber until he understands that there are certain standards for elected members that he has to abide by, for example, sitting outside the Chamber for a couple of months

ii. Councillor/ Assembly Member Barnbrook

- Considered complaint to be a personal attack on him by Councillor Rush
- Has used blogs as a communication tool since “approximately 2004/2005”
- Checks contents of blogs and takes responsibility for these although he did not have time to see the final version of the blog in question.
- Initially he said that prior to the video going out, there was a murder of a young African Caribbean woman in Barking & Dagenham, and there were two other fatal attacks. He later said that that the woman who was killed was from Barking & Dagenham but was killed outside the area in Newham, and in relation to the other two attacks, the people did not die.
- With regards the first incident, Mr Barnbrook said that the statement “came out wrong” because of the speed of his delivery. With regards the second incident, Mr Barnbrook said that he “spoke too soon” and knew at the time that they were on life support.
- Did not himself view the video containing the statements giving rise to this complaint until (*London Mothers against knives*) *told me about the complaint*”
- Was asked by national BNP officials whether he wanted to leave video on blog after becoming aware of inaccuracies. He believed that the overall tenor still stands, and that it should be left on the website regardless of the misstatement. Indicated that his belief in gun crime [was] strong enough to keep it on his website and that he was of the view that it “*would be removed in 4-6 weeks anyway*”

- Felt that that the information was not correct, but *“until knife crime is over I will not apologise”*
- Did not regret making the statements, but he did regret not putting the correct information over, and it would have been better if the correct information had been put across. He regretted saying that there were two murders when there were not, but did not regret referring to the other murder.
- Mr Barnbrook said he had an audit process for screening information before publishing it. This was through the media, police and public.
- With reference to the article in the local newspaper in December 2008, he said that what he was saying was that nothing is being done in the Borough, even if one person dies or three, something still has to be done.
- Denied that his comments undermined the public’s trust and confidence in local government and in the police, as the police don’t have power or resources to deal effectively with knife crime. Politicians should say what is happening and he is feeding back to the community what is happening in real life.
- Thought that the blog had been removed in view of the fact that there had been inaccuracies.
- If he had said three murders took place, that wouldn’t have been inaccurate because murders have happened in the Borough.
- If he had said that people are dying by the knife that would also have been accurate. *“I don’t believe that I misled them, there are murders happening”*.
- He added *“but I could have made lots of other reports if I’d wanted to undermine police and the Borough. If I had to go through this again, I would do it again, but making sure it was accurate.”*
- Comments were to show that this is happening, it was not enough for politicians to say it is all going nicely.
- He said that he did not trust the figures from the Metropolitan Police and had made a Freedom of Information request and had different figures returned.
- He said that his actions were not intentional

Specific responses to Allegation 1

- There was a murder but that in fact it involved a woman from the Barking and Dagenham area being murdered outside the Borough (in Newham)
- Had in fact meant to say that there had been a murder of a girl from Barking and Dagenham and that the statement “*had come out wrong because of speed of delivery*”

Specific responses to Allegation 2

- Acknowledged stating that there were two murders but that in fact “*the two people didn’t die, they were critically ill but didn’t die*”
- Accepted that at the time of making the statement he knew that the two individuals were in fact on life support
- Confirmed that both individuals in fact survived

4.2 Documentary evidence

Councillor Rush

- Letter from Hugh Boyle to Councillor Rush: ‘Barking and Dagenham – Murder Statistics’ dated 9 December 2008
- Undated newspaper article – ‘BNP’s Barnbrook under fire over ‘YouTube murder claim’. Barking and Dagenham Recorder
- Newspaper article – statement of Councillor Barnbrook in the Barking and Dagenham Recorder: ‘Number of murders not relevant’ dated 11 December 2008

5. Summary of material facts

1. Councillor/ Assembly Member Barnbrook was filmed in an interview outside Southwark Cathedral. He is introduced as “Richard Barnbrook BNP General Assembly Member for London”(the transcript of the blog is at Document 3).
2. The blog appeared on www.richardbarnbrook.com, YouTube, and the Daily Telegraph website.
3. He states during the recording that “..In Barking and Dagenham alone 3 weeks ago, there was a murder of a young girl. We don’t know who’s done it, her girlfriend was attacked inside an educational institute. Again, 2 weeks ago there was another attack by knives on the streets of Barking and Dagenham where 2 people were murdered..”
4. Councillor Rush, member for LBBB made a complaint to both the GLA and the LBBB about the content of the blogs that she had seen on or around 24 September 2008. The GLA’s Assessment Sub-Committee on 20 October 2008 decided that there was enough evidence to instruct the Monitoring Officer to investigate whether there had been a breach of the Code of Conduct, and considered that Mr Barnbrook was acting in his capacity as an Assembly Member.
5. The LBBB’s Review Sub-Committee decided that there was enough evidence to instruct the Monitoring Officer to investigate whether there had been a breach of the Code of Conduct, and considered that Mr Barnbrook was acting in his capacity as a Councillor of Barking & Dagenham.
6. The Monitoring Officers of both LBBB and the GLA instructed a joint investigation.
7. Mr Barnbrook wrote a letter to the Barking & Dagenham Recorder, signing himself off as both Assembly Member and Councillor, which was published on 11 December 2008 which stated “*this is typical of the unhelpful approach taken by so many politicians today. They seek to whitewash and sidetrack the genuine concerns of the man in the street by raising issues which are simply irrelevant. Violent street crime is a grave concern for all of us who live in Barking & Dagenham and in London. To my mind it makes little difference whether there were one or three murders – just one murder is one too many! We need to focus on what, if anything, is being done about it, and I will simply trying to do just that. Arguing about numbers won’t solve anything.*”
8. Councillor Rush met with the investigators on 16 January 2009, and Mr Barnbrook met with the investigators on 6 February 2009. The summary of their evidence presented in the meeting is contained in section 4 above and the record of their meetings are set out at Documents 17 - 19.
9. Councillor Rush stated in her original complaints to the LBBB and the GLA that both Mr Barnbrook’s assertions relating to murders were lies. She said in her meeting with the investigators that she knew that they were lies because of her

portfolio responsibilities (she is portfolio holder at Barking & Dagenham for Neighbourhoods and Communities).

10. Councillor Rush said in her complaint to the GLA that she considered the statements on the blog breached the general principles of honesty and integrity, and the code of conduct (as it brought the authority into disrepute). She also said this in her complaint to the Assessment Sub-Committee of the LBBD, as well as including the general principles of duty to uphold the law and leadership. In her meeting with the investigators she also added the other general principles of Duty to Uphold the Law, and Leadership.
11. Mr Barnbrook met with the investigators on 6 February 2009. He said in his meeting with the investigators that he knew at the time that he made the statements that there had not been fatalities in Barking & Dagenham.
12. He said with regards to the first allegation of a murder that the reason he had said that there had been a murder was that it “*came out wrong*” because of the speed of his delivery. He had meant to say that that the woman was from Barking & Dagenham and murdered in Newham.
13. Mr Barnbrook confirmed with regards the second statement of his allegation that there were two murders, he knew at the time that he made the statement that they were on life support. He said that they did not die. (However, see paragraphs 7.3 and 7.4)
14. Mr Barnbrook took responsibility for the blog although he did not check its content until (London Mothers Against Knives) told him about the complaint.
15. A letter was sent to him by email from the legal team at the GLA on 23 October 2008 following the meeting of the Assessment Sub-Committee enclosing the Decision Notice. The Decision Notice set out details of the complaint, and the decision and the reasons for it.
16. A letter was sent to him from LBBD following the meeting of the Review Sub-Committee enclosing the Decision Notice. The Decision Notice set out details of the complaint, and the decision and the reasons for it.
17. The recording of the video was not a live recording.
18. Mr Barnbrook in the investigation meeting said that the video was usually on the personal blog for three weeks. He thought it would be removed within 4-6 weeks. The blogs appeared on the internet, without restriction.
19. Mr Barnbrook accepted he was asked by the national BNP if he wished to remove the blog, and he determined that it should remain on the internet as he believed that the overall tenor still stood regardless of the misstatement. (The investigators did not ascertain when this communication took place).
20. Mr Barnbrook said that he would not make an apology.” He said that “*I would say that the information that was given over was not correct. But until knife crime*

is over, I will not apologise.” Mr Barnbrook acknowledged he had made a misstatement and *“I do regret saying that two people died and they didn’t, but I don’t regret saying about the murder”*.

21. Mr Barnbrook wrote a letter to a newspaper, signing his name off as both Assembly Member and Councillor which was published in the Barking & Dagenham recorder on 11 December 2008. He said in this article that *“to my mind it makes little difference whether there were one or three murders - just one murder is too many!”*
22. A letter dated 9 December 2008 from Barking & Dagenham Metropolitan Police to Councillor Rush shows that murder figures are decreasing and that there were no murders in the period to which Mr Barnbrook referred. Mr Barnbrook disputes this as factual information. He had made Freedom of Information Act requests and said that he had different figures returned. The documentation that Mr Barnbrook has provided do not provide murder statistics for the LBBD, but are crime statistics.
23. At the time of the meeting with Mr Barnbrook on 6 February 2009, the recordings were still on the internet, but have since been taken down.
24. Councillor Rush in her response to investigators on the draft investigation report provided evidence to show that not only were there no fatalities but there were no serious incidents during the period 1 September – 24 September 2008.
25. Mr Barnbrook in his response to the draft investigation report apologised for passing on information that was incorrect, said that he actually meant to say “attempted murders”, and also stated that he did not apologise for trying to highlight a genuine problem in order to encourage something to be done about it.

6. Conclusion on facts

1. That Councillor Rush in her complaint considered the statements to be a lie, and Mr Barnbrook in his statements said that he knew at the time of making these statements that they were not correct. Councillor Rush in her meeting on the 16 January 2009 states that “because of her portfolio responsibilities she knows these statements to be false.”

The Metropolitan Police Service in Barking & Dagenham have confirmed this by letter and said that there was one murder on April 19 2008 and not in the 3 week period alleged by Mr Barnbrook. The letter also shows that the murder rate has been decreasing.

2. Councillor Rush’s main concern as she says in her statement is the impact of these statements on the community in terms of fear of crime, and that they undermine the public’s confidence in local government and the police. Mr Barnbrook denied in his meeting that this was the case. Councillor Rush said that it undermined the trusted messenger relationship built up with the council/police and the community, that the fear of crime is the main issue in the borough, and the fear of crime affects the quality of life of all people in the borough. However, Mr Barnbrook accepted the point made to him in the meeting with investigators that as a politician he should make sure that what he says is accurate, as if he says there have been two murders and there haven’t this will raise the fear of crime.
3. That the blog was filmed and then posted on Mr Barnbrook’s website although at the time he knew the statements to be incorrect. He gave the reason for this as the “speed of delivery”. The recording was not live. Mr Barnbrook although he himself did not view the blog until someone from London Mothers Against Knives told him of the complaint, said that he took responsibility for the content of the blog.
4. Mr Barnbrook was asked by the national BNP whether he wanted to leave the video on the blog after becoming aware of its inaccuracies and he said he wanted it to remain because of his belief in gun crime, and thought it would be removed within 4-6 weeks anyway.
5. Mr Barnbrook said that he would not apologise for the statements although stated that he regretted saying that there were two murders when there were not, and did not regret stating that there was another murder.
6. However, in his response to the investigation report, he has apologised for passing on information that was incorrect, that he meant to say that there were attempted murders, although did not apologise for trying to highlight a genuine problem in order to encourage something to be done about it.
7. Councillor Rush has provided evidence from the Metropolitan Police in response to the draft report that show that there were no serious incidents during that time period, which includes nobody on life support.

8. Mr Barnbrook also said that he did not believe that he misled people as murders are happening. He said that he did not trust the police figures and had made a Freedom of Information Act request and had different figures which he would supply to the investigators. However, the evidence provided by Mr Barnbrook does not verify this.

7. Councillor Rush and Councillor/ Assembly Member Richard Barnbrook's additional submissions

The investigators would like to thank both Councillor Rush and Councillor/ Assembly Member Barnbrook for providing them with various documents. Apart from the documents set out in the Schedule of Evidence these have not been included in the report but have been collated as background papers, and we can provide these to the Committee, Monitoring Officers, Mr Barnbrook and the complainant on request. We recognise the significance they attach to these documents, but because of the narrow remit of this investigation, we do not consider them to be strictly relevant.

Councillor Rush's evidence not used

7.1 Councillor Rush provided the investigators with documents which she considered showed that fear of crime was a key concern of people, that the use of knives is increasing and as to why people carry knives.

Mr Barnbrook's evidence not used

7.2 Mr Barnbrook provided the investigators with newspaper articles which suggested that violent crime statistics were in disarray as crime figures had been misreported (however this did not include murder rates), as well as newspaper articles about knife crime. He also provided the investigators with responses to FOI requests about crime figures, numbers of murders in Barking and Dagenham, numbers in London admitted to hospital as a result of injuries sustained using knives, guns or other weapons and the destination of discharge from hospital,

7.3 Comments on Councillor Rush's comments on draft report

Councillor Rush disputes the assertion put forward by Mr Barnbrook that when referring to the occurrence of an incident on the streets of Barking and Dagenham* having resulted in two murders, he had in fact intended to state that the two victims did not die but were placed on life support before recovering.

She has produced evidence sourced from the Metropolitan Police that there were in fact no reported incidents in Barking and Dagenham during the period between 1-24 September 2008 which resulted in any individual suffering critical injuries requiring intensive care.

This evidence appears to cast doubt over the accuracy of the evidence provided by Mr Barnbrook during his investigation interview.

However, whilst the investigators have no reason to doubt the validity of the Metropolitan Police data, some uncertainty remains as to when the original video footage was taken, and as a consequence, whether the time period to which the data relates corresponds with the time period to which Mr Barnbrook refers in his blog. The investigators have sought verification from Mr Barnbrook's Personal Assistant as to the date of production of the video, however, he was unwilling to assist in this regard.

* Mr Barnbrook refers on the blog to this incident having taken place “two weeks ago”

7.4 Comments on Mr Barnbrook’s comments on draft report (our comments in italics)

We have considered Mr Barnbrook’s comments with care and taken them into account in formulating our final report. Where appropriate, we have included his comments and responded to them in the main body of the report.

- I accept the general validity of the complaint but do not accept that the inaccuracy of my statement was deliberate.

Mr Barnbrook stated at our meeting with him that with regards the first murder that the information came out wrong because of the “speed of delivery”, and the second statement was wrong because “he spoke too soon”. At the time he made the recording with regards this second statement he admitted at the interview with us that when he was making the statement he knew that it was wrong and that they were on life support.

- I did not know that the data contained in the recording was incorrect. I would not have posted the recording if I had known that it was incorrect.

This is different to the information that he provided at the meeting with us. He admitted at the meeting that he did know that the information was not correct.

- Once I realised that the data was incorrect, the recording was removed from the internet on my instruction within 24 hours.

At our meeting with Mr Barnbrook, he admitted that he knew that the information was inaccurate when he made the recording. He would have been informed of the complaint made by Councillor Rush after the meeting of both Assessment Sub-Committees of both the GLA and LBBB and also the Review Sub-Committee of LBBB and therefore would have been informed that the video was on the internet at this time. It was not until the investigators spoke to him at their meeting in January 2009 that he removed the statements.

- Although I knew that the video was to be used for some purpose, I did not know the exact timing or media that would be used to convey it.

In our meeting with him, he said that the BNP national website had asked him if he wanted to leave the recording on there.

- The speed of the delivery of the report, meant that some of the remarks I had intended to make, did not come out as I had intended them.

As we stated this was not being published live, so it could have been re-recorded.

- I had meant to say that one girl from Barking and Dagenham had been murdered in Newham, not that she had been murdered within the Barking and Dagenham borough.

This is addressed already in the report.

- The other two cases I mentioned were attempted murders and, at the time, the victims were in intensive care. Very fortunately these victims pulled through.

In the recording he states that they were murders.

- When I stated that these were “murders” I had actually meant “attempted murders”. This was not picked up in the editing of the report.

He did not state this in his recording, he did not re-record, and he did not say this in our meeting with him, or when we sent him a copy of the record of our meeting to review.

- The message I was trying to convey, in filming the report, was that knife crime in the borough of Barking and Dagenham is high and proportionately one of the highest in London. My intention in highlighting this was to make people aware of this in order to engage and encourage them to join in combating the problem rather than to frighten people or to criticise the Metropolitan Police.

Mr Barnbrook in the video states that various murders have taken place due to knife crime and this is factually incorrect.

- The Metropolitan Police statistics that they publish are inaccurate.

We have addressed this.

- I apologise for passing on information that was incorrect. It had not been my intention to mislead anyone and the inaccuracies were unintentional.

At his meeting with us, he stated that he would not make an apology. He has now apologised for passing on information that was incorrect. He knew at the time he made the statements that they were incorrect and the video was not re-recorded.

- I do not apologise for trying to highlight a genuine problem in order to encourage something to be done about it.

The recording emphasised that there had been murders in Barking & Dagenham which he knew was factually incorrect.

- I consider that the complaint is part of a political campaign against me.

We have been addressing the issue as to whether this is or is not a breach of the Code of Conduct.

Richard Barnbrook

15 April 2009

8. Reasoning and findings as to whether there been a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct

Capacity

8.1 Both the GLA and LBBB Codes of Conduct only apply to a member acting in their official capacity. Paragraph 2 (1) of the Code requires that a member must comply with the Code whenever they:-

- (a) conduct the business of the Authority (which, in this Code, includes the business of the office to which you are elected or appointed); or
- (b) act, claim to act or give the impression you are acting as a representative of the Authority.

The GLA

8.2 The Assessment Sub-Committee at its meeting of 20 October 2008 decided as set out in its Decision Notice (enclosed at Document 10) that *“Mr Barnbrook appeared to hold himself out as an Assembly Member and therefore the alleged conduct of the member fell within the scope of the Authority’s Code of Conduct.”*

The LBBB

8.3 The Assessment Sub-Committee sitting on 6 November 2008 to consider this complaint concluded that Mr Barnbrook was at the time of presenting his video blog not acting in his official capacity as a representative of LBBB. It decided to take no further action in response to the complaint. Councillor Rush however sought a review of the decision and the LBBB Review Sub Committee sitting on 3 December 2008 determined that the matter should be referred to the Monitoring Officer to investigate

8.4 Although the Decision Notices do not give any further detail, the Standards Board Case Review 2008 provides on page 3 that:

“the issue of whether a Member has been representing an Authority or acting in a private capacity is something which must be established...Ideally this will be established when assessing complaints. However, sometimes it will only become clear during an investigation.”

8.5 To that end we do not propose to review in detail the decisions on scope. However, with regards the GLA at the beginning of the blog, he is introduced as Richard Barnbrook BNP General Assembly Member for London and therefore it can be said that he was at the very least acting, claiming to act or giving the impression that he was acting as a representative of the Authority.

Does the behaviour breach paragraph 5 of the Code? - Disrepute

8.6 Paragraph 5 of the Codes of both authorities provide that a member must not conduct themselves in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing their office or authority into disrepute.

8.7 At Q43 on page 55 of the Standards Board for England's publication the Case Review 2007, the following guidance on the meaning of disrepute is given:-

“In general terms, disrepute can be defined as a lack of good reputation or respectability.

In the context of the Code of Conduct, a member's behaviour in office will bring that member's office into disrepute if the conduct could reasonably be regarded as either

(1) Reducing the public's confidence in that member being able to fulfil their role; or

(2) Adversely affecting the reputation of members generally, in being able to fulfil their role.

Conduct by a member which could reasonably be regarded as reducing public confidence in the authority being able to fulfil its functions and duties will bring the authority into disrepute.”

8.8 Q44 in the Case Review sets out the significance of the words “could reasonably be regarded”:-

“An officer carrying out an investigation about someone allegedly breaking the Code of Conduct does not need to prove that a member's actions have actually diminished public confidence, or harmed the reputation of the authority, in order to show a failure to comply. The test is whether or not a member's conduct “could reasonably be regarded” as having these effects.

The test is objective and does not rely on any one individual's perception. There will often be a range of opinions that a reasonable person could have towards the conduct in question. Members will have failed to comply with the Code if their conduct “could reasonably be regarded” by an objective observer as bringing their office or authority into disrepute.

- 8.9 In summary, disrepute can be categorised as conduct which when viewed objectively, could reasonably be regarded as damaging or reducing the public’s confidence in the member or members generally in being able to fulfil their role or in the authority being able to fulfil its functions and duties.
- 8.10 The GLA is a strategic authority. Its principal functions are the promotion of economic and social development, wealth creation and promoting the improvement of the environment in Greater London. It must exercise these functions in the way that best improves the health of people in London, achieves sustainable development in the United Kingdom and contributes towards the mitigation of, or adaptation to, climate change, in the United Kingdom. It also has particular functions in relation to, amongst other things, policing. The GLA is part of the wider GLA Group which includes the Metropolitan Police Authority (“the MPA”). The GLA has the power to direct the Functional Bodies on how they are to exercise their functions and the Mayor has the power to appoint to certain senior roles in those Bodies and is himself Chair of the MPA. One of the Mayor’s priorities is prevention of crime, which includes prioritising on prevention of gun and knife crime. The London Assembly consists of 25 elected members who hold the Mayor to account through scrutiny, approval of budgets and investigation of issues of importance to London.
- 8.11 The LBBD is a Unitary Authority with a statutory responsibility for delivering a range of services to the local community. It is made up of 51 councillors who are elected at local elections every four years. The Borough is divided into 17 areas called “wards”. Each ward elects three Councillors. In addition to its adoption of the Model Code of Conduct, the Authority also includes a range of protocols within its Constitution. This includes a Protocol relating to Communications for Council Members.

This states as follows:

1. It is the policy of Barking & Dagenham Council to be open, honest and accurate in dealing with the media at all times. Our press and marketing activity supports and promotes the wide range of activities Executive Members and Council Officers undertake as they work on behalf of residents to build communities and transform lives.
2. All elected members of the Council, whatever political party, have a duty both to the Council and to residents to ensure that in commenting on the policies and work of the Council, they make every effort to ensure that everything they say, whether verbally or written (for example in leaflets), is factually correct. Although Members are entitled to comment on Council policies, they must not knowingly explain Council policies in factually incorrect terms.
3. Inaccurately explaining Council policies can result in tension in the community and damage the reputation of the Council and its work on behalf of all residents that live in the borough.
4. Failure to follow this Protocol could lead to a Member being in breach of the Members’ Code of Conduct. Breach of the Code will be referred to the Standards Committee.

8.12 It is necessary in the context of the above to consider the impact of Mr Barnbrook's statements (which he knew to be inaccurate) and whether they could reasonably be regarded as:

(a) reducing the public's confidence in that member being able to fulfil his role;

or

(b) in the authority being able to fulfil its functions; or

(c) adversely affecting the reputation of members generally in being able to fulfil their role

8.13 We noted in our conclusion on the facts that Mr Barnbrook knew at the time he made the statements that they were untrue. He did not re-record the video even though it was not a live feed. When questioned by the BNP national party as to whether it should remain on the internet, he agreed that it should because of his belief in gun crime. He said that he took responsibility for the blog but said he did not view the blog until the London Mother's Against Knives person informed him of the complaint.

8.14 However, in his response to the draft report, Mr Barnbrook states that the inaccuracy of the statements was not deliberate, he did not know that the data contained in the recording was incorrect, and that he removed the recording from the internet within 24 hours of realising the data was incorrect. This appears at odds as to the comments he made in the interview with us.

8.15 At our meeting with us Mr Barnbrook clearly stated that he would not make an apology, although regretted not putting the correct information over. We were also told by Councillor Rush about Mr Barnbrook's high profile in Barking & Dagenham. We are aware that he was leader of the BNP group in Barking & Dagenham from 2006-2008. We are also aware of the wide audience that the internet reaches.

8.16 We noted that on 11 December 2008 he wrote a letter to the Barking & Dagenham Recorder where he stated that there has been a complaint by Councillor Rush about precisely how many murders had taken place in the borough. He said "*To my mind it makes little difference whether there were one or three murders – just one murder is one too many!.. Arguing about numbers won't solve anything.*" However, we are aware from the letter dated 9 December 2008 from the Barking & Dagenham Metropolitan Police Service that at the time that he made the statements there were no murders in Barking & Dagenham during that period in which he said there were three. Mr Barnbrook has himself admitted in his statement of his awareness that the three murders he asserts in his statement did not end in fatalities in Barking & Dagenham.

8.17 Councillor Rush has told us that the issue of knife crime is the main issue in the LBBB, and we are aware of the high profile this issue has across London, including the work that the GLA does on preventing knife crime.

8.18 We are aware that politicians do make generalisations and comments to score political points and we have had to carefully consider the statements made by Mr

Barnbrook in this respect. The statements that Mr Barnbrook made were about two very specific incidents reporting three murders. He knew at the time he made those statements that they did not take place within the LBBB, but the statements he made suggested that they did. He knew that the video was then put on a blog, and at the very least thought it would be up there for 4-6 weeks.

8.19 The question for us as investigators is whether this brings his office or either authority into disrepute. We consider that on the facts presented Mr Barnbrook has been at the very least dismissive of providing people with correct information and at the most showed wilful disregard for the truth. Mr Barnbrook has demonstrated his concern with knife crime, both in the meeting with the investigators, and the subsequent evidence that has been provided to us. At his meeting with us he was clear that he did not want to apologise for the factually inaccurate reporting, whilst knife crime still exists. However, in his response to the draft report he apologises for passing on information that was incorrect and said that he meant to say that the two murders in Barking & Dagenham were in fact attempted murders and that this was not picked up in the editing, that it was not his intention to mislead anyone and the inaccuracies were unintentional. Whilst we have concerns with the last two points, this did appear to be an apology for inaccurate reporting. However, Councillor Rush in her response to the draft report has provided evidence to show that there were no serious incidents in the LBBB during the period at all which includes any resulting in a person being kept on life support. This is particular relevant for the second claim as Mr Barnbrook in his recording said that two people had been murdered; in his meeting with us said that he knew at the time that they had not been murdered but were on life support; and in his response to the draft report has said that he meant to say that they were attempted murders. If Councillor Rush's evidence from the Metropolitan Police is accepted and if it is the same period that Mr Barnbrook is talking about, then we have strong reservations about the accuracy of the evidence provided by Mr Barnbrook during the investigation.

8.20 As stated earlier, the Code needs to be read together with the general principles.

The Code of Conduct Guide for Members 2007 states the following:

“These principles define the standards that members should uphold, and serve as a reminder of the purpose of the Code of Conduct.

As these principles do not create a statutory obligation for members, the Standards Board cannot accept allegations that they have been breached.

However, you should be aware that a failure to act in accordance with these general principles may amount to a breach of the Code of Conduct. For example, by placing yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned, your conduct may be “conduct which could reasonably be regarded as bringing a member’s office or authority into disrepute” as stated in paragraph 5 of the Code of Conduct.”

8.21 As Councillor Rush points out in her complaint, she considers the relevant general principles are “honesty and integrity” and these are explained in the General Principle Order as “*you should not place yourself in a situation where your honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour*”. She added in the investigation meeting and in communication with the Monitoring Officer of LBBB that leadership was another principle that was important and we would agree that is relevant here. This principle reads “*You should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence*”.

8.22 The general principles were recommended by the First Nolan Committee reviewing Standards in public life. They were recommended on the following basis:

“We can say that conduct in public life is more rigorously scrutinised than it was in the past, that the standards which the public demands remain high, and that the great majority of people in public life meet those high standards. But there are weaknesses in the procedures for maintaining and enforcing those standards. As a result people in public life are not always as clear as they should be about where the boundaries of acceptable conduct lie. This we regard as the principal reason for public disquiet. It calls for urgent remedial action.”

8.23 The Nolan Committee’s third report stated local councillors are aware “*that high ethical standards are critical to maintain public confidence in local government.*”

We can also look to the GLA Standards committee’s terms of reference as these include “*promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by the Mayor, Assembly Members, and co-opted members.*” The LBBB Standards Committee terms of reference highlight the need to “*promote and maintain high standards of conduct by Members and Employees*”

8.24 Mr Barnbrook has said to us that he knew that what he was saying at the time was untrue, and this does seem at odds with the general principles of honesty and integrity, and leadership. Councillor Rush said that by making false statements this did undermine public confidence in the police and Councillor Rush. However Mr Barnbrook denied that in his meeting with us. The documentary evidence provided by both Councillor Rush and by Mr Barnbrook unfortunately does not assist us on this point. We consider that a Councillor/Assembly Member, as a leading member of the community, should uphold high standards of behaviour. Lord Bingham noted in *Porter v Magill* [2001] UKHL 67 and as recently reported in *(R (Mullaney) v The Adjudication Panel for England* [2009] EWHC 72 (Admin)) that “*..public powers are conferred as if upon trust that those who exercise powers in a manner inconsistent with the public purpose for which the powers were conferred betray that trust and so misconduct themselves.*” It is noted that a core purpose of the statutory conduct regime is to increase public trust

in local government by putting in place a framework to govern the behaviour that the public can reasonably expect from those it elects to represent it.

- 8.25 If the public were aware that Mr Barnbrook was in fact putting out statements that he knew were false, we consider that this could reasonably be regarded as undermining public confidence in both Members and the authorities as a whole in being able to fulfil their functions.
- 8.26 We have considered the issue of freedom of expression briefly and whether there could be any infringement of this right here. In APE 0414, the courts said *“It is important that the restraints should not extend beyond what is necessary to maintain proper standards in public life and that political expression is afforded a higher level of protection.”* We consider that a politician should be able to put across their political views, and make political statements regardless of whether other political parties or member of the public disagree with them.
- 8.27 However, the difference here is that Mr Barnbrook made statements which he knew at the time were inaccurate, which we consider were at the very least dismissive of the truth and at the most displayed a wilful disregard for factual accuracy. This is in our view a behaviour that must fall within the remit of the Code of Conduct and the standards regime.
- 8.28 We consider that in the context of this case, by knowingly putting false statements on the internet on a high profile issue, Mr Barnbrook, who is a high profile local politician has acted in a manner that could reasonably be regarded as:
- a) Reducing the public’s confidence in that member being able to fulfil their role; and
 - b) adversely affecting the reputation of members and the role of both Councillor and Assembly Member generally; and
 - c) reducing public confidence in the respective authorities ability to fulfil their functions and duties. Trust in elected representatives is essential and by knowingly making untrue statements it could reasonably be regarded that Mr Barnbrook may have damaged public confidence in, and harmed the reputation of elected representatives.

9. Finding

In conclusion, we find that Mr Barnbrook has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct of both the GLA and the LBBB, by bringing his office and the respective authorities into disrepute.

Schedule of evidence (documents in separate bundle)

A: Complaint and relevant correspondence

Doc No	Date	Description	Pages
1		Code of Conduct of the Greater London Authority	1-10
2	July 2008	LBBB Members' Code of Conduct	11-20
3		Transcript of the statement made by Councillor/ Assembly Member Barnbrook.	21-22
4	25/09/08	Councillor Rush's complaint to the GLA	23-24
5	07/10/08	Councillor Rush's complaint to LBBB	25-26
6	20 21/10/08	<i>and</i> Emails between Councillor Rush and Nina Clark, providing further details of her complaint	27-28
7	07/10/08	Letter to Helen Sargeant from Councillor Rush	29-30
8	08/11/09	Emails between Councillor Rush and Nina Clark, requesting a review of the LBBB Assessment Sub-Committee decision	31-35
9	07/11/08	LBBB Assessment Sub-Committee Decision Notice	36-38
10	22/10/08	GLA Assessment Sub-Committee Decision Notice	39-40
11	23/10/08	Letter to Councillor/ Assembly Member Richard Barnbrook from Stephen Gee: 'Complaint against Richard Barnbrook, Assembly Member', attaching Decision Notice of 20/10/08	41-43
12	03/12/08	Review Summary of LBBB Standards Sub-Committee: 'Standards Sub-Committee (Review) MC9/08	44-45
13	13/02/09	Email to Councillor/ Assembly Member Richard Barnbrook from Helen Sargeant: 'Sept/05'	46-48
14	09/12/08	Letter from Hugh Boyle to Councillor Rush: 'Barking and Dagenham – Murder Statistics'	49

B: Other relevant Evidence			
15	Undated	Newspaper article – ‘BNP’s Barnbrook under fire over ‘YouTube murder claim’’. Barking and Dagenham Recorder.	50
16	11/12/08	Newspaper article – statement of Councillor Barnbrook in the Ilford Recorder: ‘Number of Murders not relevant’.	51
C: Meetings with Councillor Rush and Councillor/Assembly Member Richard Barnbrook and comments on draft report			
17	16/01/09	Notes of Standards Investigation with Councillor Mrs V Rush	52-56
18	06/02/09	Notes of Standards Investigation with Councillor/Assembly Member Richard Barnbrook	57-62
19	16/01/09	Notes of Standards Investigation with Councillor Mrs V Rush with Councillor Rush’s comments	63-68
20	18/03/08 and 01/04/09	Email Comments from Councillor Rush on draft report	69-72
21	15/04/09	Comments from Richard Barnbrook on draft report	73

Conduct of investigation

The Monitoring Officers of Barking & Dagenham and the GLA jointly requested that this investigation was undertaken by Satish Mistry, Interim Deputy Head of the GLA, and Sanjay Prashar, Deputy Head, Corporate Law and Employment. Helen Sargeant, Senior Legal Adviser, GLA was assisting Satish Mistry at the GLA. Since Mr Mistry's departure on 26 February 2009 Helen Sargeant, Senior Legal Adviser, GLA has been undertaking the investigation on behalf of the GLA.

Throughout this report we have referred to Councillor/Assembly Member Barnbrook as Mr Barnbrook for ease of reference.

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Schedule of Evidence

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Evidence

Schedule of evidence

Complaint against Councillor and Assembly Member Mr R Barnbrook by
Councillor Ms V Rush

Case No: Sept-05/ MC9/08

A: Complaint and relevant correspondence

Doc No	Date	Description	Pages
1		Code of Conduct of the Greater London Authority	1-10
2	July 2008	LBBB Members' Code of Conduct	11-20
3		Transcript of the statement made by Councillor/ Assembly Member Barnbrook.	21-22
4	25/09/08	Councillor Rush's complaint to the GLA	23-24
5	07/10/08	Councillor Rush's complaint to LBBB	25-26
6	20 and 21/10/08	Emails between Councillor Rush and Nina Clark, providing further details of her complaint	27-28
7	07/10/08	Letter to Helen Sargeant from Councillor Rush	29-30
8	08/11/09	Emails between Councillor Rush and Nina Clark, requesting a review of the LBBB Assessment Sub-Committee decision	31-35
9	07/11/08	LBBB Assessment Sub-Committee Decision Notice	36-38
10	22/10/08	GLA Assessment Sub-Committee Decision Notice	39-40
11	23/10/08	Letter to Councillor/ Assembly Member Richard Barnbrook from Stephen Gee: 'Complaint against Richard Barnbrook, Assembly Member', attaching Decision Notice of 20/10/08	41-43
12	03/12/08	Review Summary of LBBB Standards Sub-Committee: 'Standards Sub-Committee (Review) MC9/08	44-45
13	13/02/09	Email to Councillor/ Assembly Member Richard Barnbrook from Helen Sargeant: 'Sept/05'	46-48
14	09/12/08	Letter from Hugh Boyle to Councillor Rush: 'Barking and Dagenham - Murder Statistics'	49

B: Other relevant Evidence

15	Undated	Newspaper article - 'BNP's Barnbrook under fire over 'YouTube murder claim''. Barking and Dagenham Recorder.	50
16	11/12/08	Newspaper article - statement of Councillor Barnbrook in the Ilford Recorder: 'Number of Murders not relevant'.	51

T:\Legal Advice Legal Services\Legal Advice Standards Committee (LA-SC)\Local Determinations\Local Assessment - ASC\5-Sept 2008\Correspondence Accepted\Sep-05 Rush\Investigation\Investigation report\Draft report\Schedule of Evidence v1.doc

C: Meetings with Councillor Rush and Councillor/Assembly Member Richard Barnbrook

17	16/01/09	Notes of Standards Investigation with Councillor Mrs V Rush	52-56
18	06/02/09	Notes of Standards Investigation with Councillor/Assembly Member Richard Barnbrook	57-62
19	16/01/09	Notes of Standards Investigation with Councillor Mrs V Rush with Councillor Rush's comments	63-68
20	18/03/08 and 01/04/09	Email Comments from Councillor Rush on draft report	69-72
21	15/04/09	Comments from Richard Barnbrook on draft report	73

CODE OF CONDUCT OF THE GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

PART 1

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Introduction and interpretation

1. — (1) This Code applies to **you** as a member of the Greater London Authority ("the Authority").

"Member" means the Mayor of London, the Deputy Mayor, members of the London Assembly and includes: a co-opted member and an appointed member; a co-opted member of a committee or sub-committee or advisory committee or advisory sub-committee of the Assembly. In this Code, the term co-opted member has the meaning given to it by section 49 of the Local Government Act 2000, and the Independent Members of the Standards Committee shall be regarded as co-opted members of the Authority.

(2) You should read this Code together with the general principles prescribed by the Secretary of State, which are as follows:

Selflessness

You should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

Honesty and Integrity

You should not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

Objectivity

You should make decisions on merit, including when making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.

Accountability

You should be accountable to the public for your actions and the manner in which you carry out your responsibilities, and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to your particular office.

Openness

You should be as open as possible about your actions and those of your authority, and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.

Personal Judgement

You may take account of the views of others, including their political groups, but should reach your own conclusions on the issues before you and act in accordance with those conclusions.

Respect for Others

You should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. You should respect the impartiality and integrity of the authority's statutory officers, and its other employees.

Duty to Uphold the Law

You should uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in you.

Stewardship

You should do whatever you are able to do to ensure that your authority uses its resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

Leadership

You should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.

(3) It is your responsibility to comply with the provisions of this Code.

(4) In this Code—

"meeting" means

- (a) any meeting of the Assembly;
- (b) any meeting of any of the Assembly's committees, sub-committees, joint committees, joint sub-committees, advisory committees or advisory sub-committees;
- (c) any meeting of the Standards Committee;
- (d) any occasion at which the Mayor or Deputy Mayor or a member of the Assembly exercises executive functions in respect of any matter

(5) In relation to a parish council, references to an authority's monitoring officer and an authority's standards committee shall be read, respectively, as references to the monitoring officer and the standards committee of the district council or unitary county council which has functions in relation to the parish council for which it is responsible under section 55(12) of the Local Government Act 2000.

Scope

2. —(1) Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) to (5), you must comply with this Code whenever you—

(a) conduct the business of the Authority (which, in this Code, includes the business of the office to which you are elected or appointed); or

(b) act, claim to act or give the impression you are acting as a representative of the Authority,

and references to your official capacity are construed accordingly.

(2) Subject to sub-paragraphs (3) and (4), this Code does not have effect in relation to your conduct other than where it is in your official capacity.

(3) In addition to having effect in relation to conduct in your official capacity, paragraphs 3(2)(c), 5 and 6(a) also have effect, at any other time, where that conduct constitutes a criminal offence for which you have been convicted.

(4) Conduct to which this Code applies (whether that is conduct in your official capacity or conduct mentioned in sub-paragraph (3)) includes a criminal offence for which you are convicted (including an offence you committed before the date you took office, but for which you are convicted after that date).

(5) Where you act as a representative of the Authority—

(a) on another relevant authority, you must, when acting for that other authority, comply with that other authority's code of conduct; or

(b) on any other body, you must, when acting for that other body, comply with your authority's code of conduct, except and insofar as it conflicts with any other lawful obligations to which that other body may be subject.

(6) In this Code "relevant authority" has the meaning given to it by section 49 of the Local Government Act 2000. It also includes any "functional body" as defined in section 424 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999.

General obligations

3. —(1) You must treat others with respect.

(2) You must not —

(a) do anything which may cause the Authority to breach any of the equality enactments (as defined in section 33 of the Equality Act 2006);

(b) bully any person

(c) intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is or is likely to be —

(i) a complainant,

(ii) a witness, or

(iii) involved in the administration of any investigation or proceedings,

in relation to an allegation that a member (including yourself) has failed to comply with his or her authority's code of conduct;

(d) do anything which compromises or is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, the Authority; or

(e) provide or offer to provide a reference for any candidate for employment or promotion with the Authority

(3) In relation to police authorities and the Metropolitan Police Authority, for the purposes of sub-paragraph (2)(d) those who work for, or on behalf of, an authority are deemed to include a police officer.

4. You must not —

(a) disclose information given to you in confidence by anyone, or information acquired by you which you believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, except where —

(i) you have the consent of a person authorised to give it;

(ii) you are required by law to do so;

(iii) the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or

(iv) the disclosure is—

(a) reasonable and in the public interest; and

(b) made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the authority; or

(b) prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.

5. You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute.

6. You—

(a) must not use or attempt to use your position as a member improperly to confer on or secure for yourself or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage; and

(b) must, when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of your authority—

(i) act in accordance with your authority's reasonable requirements;

(ii) ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes); and

(c) must have regard to any applicable Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986.

7. —(1) When reaching decisions on any matter you must have regard to any relevant advice provided to you by—

(a) your authority's chief finance officer; or

(b) your authority's monitoring officer,

where that officer is acting pursuant to his or her statutory duties.

(2) You must give reasons for all decisions in accordance with any statutory requirements and any reasonable additional requirements imposed by your authority.

PART 2

INTERESTS

Personal interests

8. —(1) You have a personal interest in any business of the Authority where either—

(a) it relates to or is likely to affect—

(i) any body of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management and to which you are appointed or nominated by the Authority;

(ii) any body—

(aa) exercising functions of a public nature;

(bb) directed to charitable purposes; or

(cc) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union),

of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management;

(iii) any employment or business carried on by you;

(iv) any person or body who employs or has appointed you;

(v) any person or body, other than a relevant authority, who has made a payment to you in respect of your election or any expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties;

(vi) any person or body who has a place of business or land in the Authority's area, and in whom you have a beneficial interest in a class of securities of that person or body that exceeds the nominal value of £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital (whichever is the lower);

(vii) any contract for goods, services or works made between the Authority and you or a firm in which you are a partner, a company of which you are a remunerated director, or a person or body of the description specified in paragraph (vi);

(viii) the interests of any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25;

(ix) any land in the Authority's area in which you have a

beneficial interest;

(x) any land where the landlord is the Authority and you are, or a firm in which you are a partner, a company of which you are a remunerated director, or a person or body of the description specified in paragraph (vi) is, the tenant;

(xi) any land in the Authority's area for which you have a licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy for 28 days or longer; or

(b) a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting your well-being or financial position or the well-being or financial position of a relevant person to a greater extent than the majority of—

(i) (in the case of authorities with electoral divisions or wards) other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the electoral division or ward, as the case may be, affected by the decision;

(ii) (in the case of the Greater London Authority) other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the Assembly constituency affected by the decision; or

(iii) (in all other cases) other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the Authority's area.

(2) In sub-paragraph (1)(b), a relevant person is—

(a) a member of your family or any person with whom you have a close association; or

(b) any person or body who employs or has appointed such persons, any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of which they are directors;

(c) any person or body in whom such persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000; or

(d) any body of a type described in sub-paragraph (1)(a)(i) or (ii).

Disclosure of personal interests

9. —(1) Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) to (5), where you have a personal interest in any business of the Authority and you attend a meeting of the Authority at which the business is considered, you must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent.

(2) Where you have a personal interest in any business of the

Authority which relates to or is likely to affect a person described in paragraph 8(1)(a)(i) or 8(1)(a)(ii)(aa), you need only disclose to the meeting the existence and nature of that interest when you address the meeting on that business.

(3) Where you have a personal interest in any business of the authority of the type mentioned in paragraph 8(1)(a)(viii), you need not disclose the nature or existence of that interest to the meeting if the interest was registered more than three years before the date of the meeting.

(4) Sub-paragraph (1) only applies where you are aware or ought reasonably to be aware of the existence of the personal interest.

(5) Where you have a personal interest but, by virtue of paragraph 14, sensitive information relating to it is not registered in the Authority's register of members' interests, you must indicate to the meeting that you have a personal interest, but need not disclose the sensitive information to the meeting.

(6) Where the Mayor or Deputy Mayor makes any decision which affects a matter in which he or she has a personal interest (within the meaning of paragraph 8 above) that must be disclosed in accordance with paragraph 9(1) and in accordance with any relevant procedure of the Authority.

Prejudicial interest generally

10. —(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), where you have a personal interest in any business of the Authority you also have a prejudicial interest in that business where the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

(2) You do not have a prejudicial interest in any business of the Authority where that business—

(a) does not affect your financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in paragraph 8;

(b) does not relate to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to you or any person or body described in paragraph 8; or

(c) relates to the functions of the Authority in respect of—

(i) housing, where you are a tenant of the Authority provided that those functions do not relate particularly to your tenancy or lease;

(ii) school meals or school transport and travelling expenses, where you are a parent or guardian of a child in full time education, or are a parent governor of a school, unless it relates particularly to the school which the child attends;

(iii) statutory sick pay under Part XI of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, where you are in receipt of, or are entitled to the receipt of, such pay;

(iv) an allowance, payment or indemnity given to members;

(v) any ceremonial honour given to members; and

(vi) setting council tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

11 (1) You also have a prejudicial interest in any business before a scrutiny committee or sub-committee of the Assembly where:

(a) that business relates to a decision made, or action taken, by another of the Assembly's committees, subcommittees, joint committee or sub-committee of which you are a member or any matter for which the member has been appointed as a representative of or adviser to the Mayor; and

(b) At the time the decision was made or action was taken, you were a member of the committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee mentioned in paragraph (a) and you were present when that decision was made or action was taken.

11 (2) However sub-paragraph (1) does not apply where you attend the meeting of the scrutiny or sub-committee of the Assembly for the purpose of answering questions or otherwise giving evidence relating to that decision or action.

Effect of prejudicial interests on participation

12. —(1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), where you have a prejudicial interest in any business of the Authority—

(a) you must withdraw from the room or chamber where a meeting considering the business is being held—

(i) in a case where sub-paragraph (2) applies, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence;

(ii) in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at that meeting;

unless you have obtained a dispensation from the Authority's Standards Committee; and

(b) you must not seek improperly to influence a decision about that business.

(2) Where you have a prejudicial interest in any business of the Authority, you may attend a meeting (including a meeting of a scrutiny committee or

scrutiny sub-committee of the Assembly) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise.

PART 3

REGISTRATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Registration of members' interests

13. —(1) Subject to paragraph 14, you must, within 28 days of—

(a) this Code being adopted by or applied to the Authority; or

(b) your election or appointment to office (where that is later),

register in the Authority's register of members' interests (maintained under section 81(1) of the Local Government Act 2000) details of your personal interests where they fall within a category mentioned in paragraph 8(1)(a), by providing written notification to the Authority's monitoring officer.

(2) Subject to paragraph 14, you must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any new personal interest or change to any personal interest registered under paragraph (1), register details of that new personal interest or change by providing written notification to the Authority's monitoring officer.

Sensitive information

14. —(1) Where you consider that the information relating to any of your personal interests is sensitive information, and the Authority's monitoring officer agrees, you need not include that information when registering that interest, or, as the case may be, a change to that interest under paragraph 13.

(2) You must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any change of circumstances which means that information excluded under paragraph (1) is no longer sensitive information, notify your authority's monitoring officer asking that the information be included in your authority's register of members' interests.

(3) In this Code, "sensitive information" means information whose availability for inspection by the public creates, or is likely to create, a serious risk that you or a person who lives with you may be subjected to violence or intimidation.

THE TEN GENERAL PRINCIPLES GOVERNING
THE CONDUCT OF MEMBERS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The principles as set out below define the standards that Members should uphold

Selflessness - Members should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

Honesty and Integrity - Members should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

Objectivity - Members should make decisions on merit, including when making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.

Accountability - Members should be accountable to the public for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities, and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to their particular office.

Openness - Members should be as open as possible about their actions and those of their authority, and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.

Personal judgement - Members may take account of the view of others, including their political groups, but should reach their own conclusions on the issues before them and act in accordance with those conclusions.

Respect for others - Members should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. They should respect the impartiality and integrity of the authority's statutory officers and its other employees.

Duty to uphold the law - Members should uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.

Stewardship - Members should do whatever they are able to do to ensure that their authorities use their resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

Leadership - Members should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.

MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT

PART 1

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Introduction and interpretation

1. (1) This Code applies to you as a member of an authority.
- (2) You should read this Code together with the general principles prescribed by the Secretary of State.
- (3) It is your responsibility to comply with the provisions of this Code.
- (4) In this Code

"meeting" means any meeting of

- (a) the authority;
- (b) the executive of the authority;
- (c) any of the authority's or its executive's committees, sub-committees, joint committees, joint sub-committees, or area committees;

"member" includes a co-opted member and an appointed member.

Scope

2. (1) Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) to (5), you must comply with this Code whenever you
 - (a) conduct the business of your authority (which, in this Code, includes the business of the office to which you are elected or appointed); or
 - (b) act, claim to act or give the impression you are acting as a representative of your authority,and references to your official capacity are construed accordingly.
- (2) Subject to sub-paragraphs (3) and (4), this Code does not have effect in relation to your conduct other than where it is in your official capacity.
- (3) In addition to having effect in relation to conduct in your official capacity, paragraphs 3(2)(c), 5 and 6(a) also have effect, at any other time, where that conduct constitutes a criminal offence for which you have been convicted.

- (4) Conduct to which this Code applies (whether that is conduct in your official capacity or conduct mentioned in sub-paragraph (3)) includes a criminal offence for which you are convicted (including an offence you committed before the date you took office, but for which you are convicted after that date).
- (5) Where you act as a representative of your authority
 - (a) on another relevant authority, you must, when acting for that other authority, comply with that other authority's code of conduct; or
 - (b) on any other body, you must, when acting for that other body, comply with your authority's code of conduct, except and insofar as it conflicts with any other lawful obligations to which that other body may be subject.

General obligations

3. (1) You must treat others with respect.

(2) You must not

- (a) do anything which may cause your authority to breach any of the equality enactments (as defined in section 33 of the Equality Act 2006);
- (b) bully any person;
- (c) intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is or is likely to be
 - (i) a complainant,
 - (ii) a witness, or
 - (iii) involved in the administration of any investigation or proceedings,
 in relation to an allegation that a member (including yourself) has failed to comply with his or her authority's code of conduct; or
- (d) do anything which compromises or is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, your authority.

4. You must not

- (a) disclose information given to you in confidence by anyone, or information acquired by you which you believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, except where
 - (i) you have the consent of a person authorised to give it;

- (ii) you are required by law to do so;
 - (iii) the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or
 - (iv) the disclosure is
 - (aa) reasonable and in the public interest; and
 - (bb) made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the authority; or
 - (b) prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.
5. You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute
6. You
- (a) must not use or attempt to use your position as a member improperly to confer on or secure for yourself or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage; and
 - (b) must, when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of your authority
 - (i) act in accordance with your authority's reasonable requirements;
 - (ii) ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes); and
 - (c) must have regard to any applicable Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986.
7. (1) When reaching decisions on any matter you must have regard to any relevant advice provided to you by
- (a) your authority's chief finance officer; or
 - (b) your authority's monitoring officer,
- where that officer is acting pursuant to his or her statutory duties.
- (2) You must give reasons for all decisions in accordance with any statutory requirements and any reasonable additional requirements imposed by your authority.

PART 2

INTERESTS

Personal interests

8.(1) You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where either

- (a) it relates to or is likely to affect
 - (i) any body of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management and to which you are appointed or nominated by your authority;
 - (ii) any body
 - (aa) exercising functions of a public nature;
 - (bb) directed to charitable purposes; or
 - (cc) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union),

of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management

- (iii) any employment or business carried on by you;
- (iv) any person or body who employs or has appointed you;
- (v) any person or body, other than a relevant authority, who has made a payment to you in respect of your election or any expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties;
- (vi) any person or body who has a place of business or land in your authority's area, and in whom you have a beneficial interest in a class of securities of that person or body that exceeds the nominal value of £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital (whichever is the lower);
- (vii) any contract for goods, services or works made between your authority and you or a firm in which you are a partner, a company of which you are a remunerated director, or a person or body of the description specified in paragraph (vi);
- (viii) the interests of any person from whom you have received a gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £25;
- (ix) any land in your authority's area in which you have a beneficial interest;

- (x) any land where the landlord is your authority and you are, or a firm in which you are a partner, a company of which you are a remunerated director, or a person or body of the description specified in paragraph (vi) is, the tenant;
 - (xi) any land in the authority's area for which you have a licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy for 28 days or longer; or
 - (b) a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting your well-being or financial position or the well-being or financial position of a relevant person to a greater extent than the majority of other council tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the electoral division or ward, as the case may be, affected by the decision.
- (2) In sub-paragraph (1)(b), a relevant person is
- (a) a member of your family or any person with whom you have a close association; or
 - (b) any person or body who employs or has appointed such persons, any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of which they are directors;
 - (c) any person or body in whom such persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000; or
 - (d) any body of a type described in sub-paragraph (1)(a)(i) or (ii).

Disclosure of personal interests

- 9.(1) Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) to (7), where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority and you attend a meeting of your authority at which the business is considered, you must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent.
- (2) Where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority which relates to or is likely to affect a person described in paragraph 8(1)(a)(i) or 8(1)(a)(ii)(aa), you need only disclose to the meeting the existence and nature of that interest when you address the meeting on that business.
- (3) Where you have a personal interest in any business of the authority of the type mentioned in paragraph 8(1)(a)(viii), you need not disclose the nature or existence of that interest to the meeting if the interest was registered more than three years before the date of the meeting.
- (4) Sub-paragraph (1) only applies where you are aware or ought reasonably to be aware of the existence of the personal interest.
- (5) Where you have a personal interest but, by virtue of paragraph 14, sensitive information relating to it is not registered in your authority's register of members' interests, you must indicate to the meeting that you have a

personal interest, but need not disclose the sensitive information to the meeting.

- (6) Subject to paragraph 12(1)(b), where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority and you have made an executive decision in relation to that business, you must ensure that any written statement of that decision records the existence and nature of that interest.
- (7) In this paragraph, "executive decision" is to be construed in accordance with any regulations made by the Secretary of State under section 22 of the Local Government Act 2000.

Prejudicial interest generally

10. (1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority you also have a prejudicial interest in that business where the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.
- (2) You do not have a prejudicial interest in any business of the authority where that business
 - (a) does not affect your financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in paragraph 8;
 - (b) does not relate to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to you or any person or body described in paragraph 8; or
 - (c) relates to the functions of your authority in respect of
 - (i) housing, where you are a tenant of your authority provided that those functions do not relate particularly to your tenancy or lease;
 - (ii) school meals or school transport and travelling expenses, where you are a parent or guardian of a child in full time education, or are a parent governor of a school, unless it relates particularly to the school which the child attends;
 - (iii) statutory sick pay under Part XI of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992, where you are in receipt of, or are entitled to the receipt of, such pay;
 - (iv) an allowance, payment or indemnity given to members;
 - (v) any ceremonial honour given to members; and
 - (vi) setting council tax or a precept under the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

Prejudicial interests arising in relation to overview and scrutiny committees

11. You also have a prejudicial interest in any business before an overview and scrutiny committee of your authority (or of a sub-committee of such a committee) where
- (a) that business relates to a decision made (whether implemented or not) or action taken by your authority's executive or another of your authority's committees, sub-committees, joint committees or joint sub-committees; and
 - (b) at the time the decision was made or action was taken, you were a member of the executive, committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee mentioned in paragraph (a) and you were present when that decision was made or action was taken.

Effect of prejudicial interests on participation

12. (1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2), where you have a prejudicial interest in any business of your authority
- (a) you must withdraw from the room or chamber where a meeting considering the business is being held
 - (i) in a case where sub-paragraph (2) applies, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence;
 - (ii) in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at that meeting;unless you have obtained a dispensation from your authority's standards committee;
 - (b) you must not exercise executive functions in relation to that business; and
 - (c) you must not seek improperly to influence a decision about that business.
- (2) Where you have a prejudicial interest in any business of your authority, you may attend a meeting (including a meeting of the overview and scrutiny committee of your authority or of a sub-committee of such a committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the business, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise.

PART 3

REGISTRATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Registration of Members' interests

13. (1) Subject to paragraph 14, you must, within 28 days of
- (a) this Code being adopted by or applied to your authority; or
 - (b) your election or appointment to office (where that is later),
- register in your authority's register of members' interests (maintained under section 81(1) of the Local Government Act 2000) details of your personal interests where they fall within a category mentioned in paragraph 8(1)(a), by providing written notification to your authority's monitoring officer.
- (2) Subject to paragraph 14, you must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any new personal interest or change to any personal interest registered under paragraph (1), register details of that new personal interest or change by providing written notification to your authority's monitoring officer.

Sensitive information

14. (1) Where you consider that the information relating to any of your personal interests is sensitive information, and your authority's monitoring officer agrees, you need not include that information when registering that interest, or, as the case may be, a change to that interest under paragraph 13.
- (2) You must, within 28 days of becoming aware of any change of circumstances which means that information excluded under paragraph (1) is no longer sensitive information, notify your authority's monitoring officer asking that the information be included in your authority's register of members' interests.
- (3) In this Code, "sensitive information" means information whose availability for inspection by the public creates, or is likely to create, a serious risk that you or a person who lives with you may be subjected to violence or intimidation.

Faint, illegible text covering the majority of the page, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side.

3

3

20

Reporter:

on the subject of headlines, there's going to be a story breaking in Thameside in Manchester very soon about the way the council has taken it upon itself to monitor the news and meet up with editors and journalists so the news isn't too damaging to Labours regime up there, quite sinister. But headlines of a different nature and different problems here in London and in Barking and Dagenham specifically, can you briefly tell us about this?

Richard:

Yes I will do, I must say this is an indication our democracy is actually failing: when you get people telling the media what they should and should not put forward to [the] general public, giving the general public the wrong impression what is going on in their neighbourhoods. So yes, what we have here are three stories, back to back, over the last 3 weeks with the, what I would say is the rotten face of Labour.

Here we have Val Rush who is non the executive for law and order and community working, or non working as I see it, and many other people agree with me in Barking and Dagenham. This is simply a photo opportunity: front page, on a free newspaper, going to every single door of the Labour party, now doing a clean up job in Barking and Dagenham. Well low and behold, 3 [or] 4 years ago we were out there on the streets, no press coverage, no fancy headlines, just getting on quietly with cleaning up the community, by removing graffiti and making the place more aesthetic, and more pleasing to the eye and the people living there: a tidier community. And the next story is again Val Rush saying no to knife crime. Now this only came out in, I think about 3 weeks ago, if I am correct.

Reporter:

This is a petition about knife crime.

Richard:

It is.

Reporter:

Where did they get that idea from?

Richard:

Do you know I think it is that we started ours in January/February this year: London's mother's against knives, and they've jumped on the bandwagon again. But what is more disgusting is that Labour now are bringing in the clergy to do their dirty work. Now I presume this priest is a very good Christian and serves the community very well, but I think this is tactless and I think this gentleman should be kept outside the political arena. He can have his views, but do not push them in front of the community.

Reporter:

It is would you say it is an abuse of the Church and an abuse of a local newspaper, would you not?

Richard:

Oh definitely, the irony is, we have been asking the labour councillors in barking and Dagenham, and also here with Boris Johnson and the Assembly, to do more about the knife crime: giving manage to sensors out and also trying to protect school people. Remember, this year alone, up till now, there's been 27 murders of youths between the ages of 13 and 17 by knife crimes, with several thousand more being attacked by knives. In Barking and Dagenham alone 3 weeks ago, there was a murder of a young girl. We don't know who's done it, her girlfriend was attacked inside an educational institute. Again, 2 weeks ago there was another attack by knives on the streets of barking and Dagenham where 2 people were murdered. And last week, at the end of last week, a girl, a young girl, going to one of the schools in barking and Dagenham, a secondary school, and actually threatened to murder another girl because they had some little dispute in the playground. Thank god it was actually stopped. Now the point is we have been saying to Barking and Dagenham "get the metal magnet knife arches on the school gates". They say to us, "there's no knives in schools, no-one's been threatened by knives in schools". This is a problem affecting all of our community, and Barking and Dagenham are simply falling behind what we are doing, at a slow pace. We will push this project further and further forward, both in City Hall and [in] Barking and Dagenham. And the point I want to make quite clearly here is, whatever policies we put forward, whatever motions

we put forward, Labour and the conservatives simply follow behind by doing half the job that we do without the resources or authority to carry it through. We will get these things resolved

Note – unsure what he said for text in red

22

-----Original Message-----

From: Councillor Rush, Valerie [mailto:Valerie.Rush@lbbd.gov.uk]

Sent: 25 September 2008 17:27

To: John Biggs

Subject:

Importance: High

~~John, can you help please, I have spent ages this afternoon filling in on line a Standards Board complaint form for GLA every time I have submitted it its crashed, im going to send it over to you (see below) could you please ensure it gets to the right people.~~

~~Complaint to GLA Standards Board regarding the conduct of Richard Barnbrook.~~

~~Can I please ask that you firstly follow the link and watch a short video made by Richard Barnbrook and his publicly funded GLA PA.~~

~~<http://www.richardbarnbrook.com/2008/09/a-tale-of-two-cathedrals/>~~

~~Please note that this is on Richard Barnbrooks blog which introduces him as a Greater London Assembly Member. It is also on youtube.~~

~~At the beginning of the video Richard Barnbrook is introduced by his GLA PA as Assemblyman Richard Barnbrook.~~

~~On the basis of the comments made in the latter part of the video where Richard Barnbrook quite clearly states that~~

~~3 weeks ago a young girl was murdered in an education establishment in Barking and Dagenham~~

~~I know this to be an absolute lie~~

~~He also goes on to claim a further 2 murders in the borough in the last 2 weeks which is also a lie.~~

~~On making these false statements not only on his blog but on You tube which has a world wide audience I believe that Richard Barnbrook has brought his position as an elected member of the GLA into disrepute he has also tried to damage the reputation of the GLA and its elected Members as well as Barking & Dagenham Council, the fact that Barking and Dagenham is on public record as a Safe place to live is brought into disrepute by his total lack of honesty and integrity~~

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26/09/2008

I would make you aware that I have already lodged a formal complaint with the Monitoring Officer at Barking & Dagenham Council.
I can provide a recording of the video as evidence
I am very much aware of all of the incredible work that is being done by the GLA and its member alongside London boroughs to tackle knife crime in the capital and I am very disappointed that all an elected Assemblyman can do is to mock the efforts of others and to openly and outrageously lie to whip up fears in the London community.

Thank you.

Regards,

Cllr Val Rush

Executive Member for Safer Neighbourhoods
and Communities

Tele No. 0208 595 1587

email: val.rush@lbbd.gov.uk

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Complaint Form

Complaints Against Members of the Council

Please note

- we can only accept complaints in writing
- one of our officers may contact you personally to go through the details of your complaint
- your identity will normally be disclosed to the subject Member other than in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Standards Committee where relevant criteria is met.

About You

title: Mr Ms Mrs Miss Councillor Other (please specify).....

first name VAL surname RUSH

address 421 LODGE AVE

DAGENHAM postcode RM9 4QO

daytime telephone 0208 595 1587 evening telephone.....

email val.rush@lbbd.gov.uk

Please consider the complaint I have described below and in the evidence attached. I understand and accept that the details will normally be disclosed to the Member, particularly if the matter goes through to investigation.

signature [Signature] date 7th Oct '08

Your Complaint

Who are you complaining about?

Please give the name of the Member/s or statutory co-opted member/s who you consider has broken the Code of Conduct.

RICHARD BARNBROOK

Please tick here if you work for the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham

Please tick here if you are a Member of the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham

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Complaint Form

What are you complaining about?

Please provide us with as much information as you can about your complaint to help us to decide whether or not it should be investigated. Include the date(s) and details of the alleged misconduct, and any information that supports the allegation. We can only investigate complaints that a Member has broken the local Code of Conduct. Please continue on a separate sheet if there is not enough space on this form.

ON 24TH SEPT '08 A VIDEO APPEARED ON RICHARD BARNBROOKS
BLOG AND ON YOUTUBE WHICH REALLY APPEARED TO FOCUS /
CRITICIZE THE BOROUGH & PRESS ARTICLES
MORE IMPORTANTLY IN THE LATTER PART OF THE VIDEO
HE CLAIMS THAT "IN THE LAST 3 WEEKS A YOUNG
GIRL HAD BEEN MURDERED IN AN EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT
IN B & D AND IN THE LAST 2 WEEKS 2 MEN HAD
BEEN MURDERED IN B & D" THESE 2 STATEMENTS
ARE LIES. THERE HAVE BEEN NO RECENT MURDERS
IN THE BOROUGH.

If you would like some advice about filling in this form, or would like the information on audio or in enlarged print, please contact Margaret Freeman on 020 8227 2134. You can also email her at margaret.freeman@lbbd.gov.uk

If you wish to complete this form online, please go to the following link:

<http://www.lbbd.gov.uk/9-council/complaints/complaints-members.cfm>

Evidence (if this applies)

Please attach to this form copies of any correspondence, documents, names and details of witnesses, and any other evidence that you feel is relevant to your complaint. Please avoid sending us large amounts of background information that is not directly related to your complaint.

Please tick the box if you would like us to return the evidence to you.

Please send this form to:

Ms Nina Clark
The Monitoring Officer
London Borough of Barking & Dagenham
Civic Centre
Dagenham RM10 7BN

From: Clark Nina
Sent: 21 October 2008 10:45
To: Councillor Rush, Valerie
Cc: Councillor Fairbrass, Charles; Councillor Smith, Liam
Subject: PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Councillor Rush

Thank you for your email. Your additional comments are helpful and I can assure you that any joint approach to dealing with your two complaints will be in accordance with Standards Board guidance as would be the case if we dealt with them separately.

Regards
Nina

Nina Clark
Divisional Director of Legal and Democratic Services
London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
Room 152, Civic Centre,
Dagenham, RM10 7BN

Phone: 020 8227 2114; Mobile 07971 111416
Email: nina.clark@lbbd.gov.uk
Fax: 020 8227 2252
Website: www.barking-dagenham.gov.uk

Most Improved Council of the Year 2008

Together we will build communities and transform lives
Protect the environment and save trees; please only print if essential

From: Councillor Rush, Valerie
Sent: 20 October 2008 18:46
To: Clark Nina
Cc: Councillor Fairbrass, Charles; Councillor Smith, Liam
Subject: PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL
Importance: High

Dear Nina,

Ref MC9/08 Complaint against Cllr Barnbrook

I refer to your letter dated 16th Oct 08 where you advised that you have spoken to officers at the GLA about a joint approach in dealing with my complaint. While I can fully appreciate and understand the sense in adopting this I would need to be reassured that both parties are signed up to a vigorous and robust approach in this matter.

In your final paragraph you asked that I expand slightly on my complaint to LBBD as to which part of the Members Code of Conduct I consider Cllr Barnbrook has breached, please see outline below:

Honesty and integrity

Members should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

I believe that in his video launched on 24th September 2008 on his GLA website and youtube (which you have a copy of) in stating that "in the last 3 weeks a young girl had been murdered in an education establishment in Barking & Dagenham. And further "that in the last 2 weeks 2 young men had been murdered in the borough as well". That Cllr Barnbrook knew that these statements were false, and therefore has placed himself, and as technically a spokesman for his party on the Council in a situation where his honesty and integrity may be questioned.

Duty to uphold the Law

Members should uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.

Leadership

Members should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.

If I may link these 2 together please, I believe that lying to the public in this manner is directly at odds with with principle Duty to.....and the nature of the lie, in that it attempts to undermine confidence in public safety, the council and their partners the police is at odds with Leadership.

To inflame public fears, and heighten public perception in this negative manner is I believe totally against the Principles as set out in the Members Code of Conduct.

Regards,
Cllr Val Rush
Executive Member for Safer Neighbourhoods
and Communities

Tele No. 0208 595 1587
email: val.rush@lbbd.gov.uk

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Doc: 7

LONDON BOROUGH of BARKING and DAGENHAM

Helen Sargeant
Senior Legal Adviser – Employment and Governance
Legal and Procurement Group
Greater London Authority
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
More London
London SE1 2AA

7th October 2008.

Dear Helen,

Thank you for your letter of 7th October. Below please see further detail as requested.

On 24th September Richard Barnbrook put a video on his blog which is entitled "Greater London Assembly Member", this video was also put onto youtube.

The first part of the video does not really concern the GLA, but I strongly believe that the latter does.

In which he states that in the last 3 weeks a young girl had been murdered in an Education Establishment in Barking & Dagenham, he also claimed that in the previous 2 weeks 2 men had been murdered.

These 2 statements are in fact lies.

He then goes on to state that as an Assembly member he has tried at every opportunity to raise these issues, he states that the GLA and the Mayor "Boris" are failing the people of London, and that only he and his party know how to deal with the issues.

He is also claiming to be leading on a campaign London Mothers Against Knives, when the Mothers Against Knives campaign is copywrited, and Richard Barnbrook is well aware of this.

I honestly believe that by stating these lies on video which can potentially be viewed by millions under the banner of "Greater London Assembly Member" he has brought into question his honesty and integrity as an elected Member and therefore brought the GLA into disrepute.

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It is also my honest opinion that to make false statements such as this just inflames fears across communities.

I have no problem at all with Richard Barnbrook knowing who is making this complaint, as you will see by my Portfolio responsibility I would be failing in my duty if I did not bring this to your attention.

I enclose a copy of the video.

Yours faithfully



Cllr Val Rush
Executive Member for
Safer Neighbourhoods
And Communities

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DOC:8

From: Councillor Rush, Valerie
Sent: 08 November 2008 19:09
To: Clark Nina
Subject: FW: Emailing: Cllr Richard Barnbrook My Telegraph.htm STANDARDS BOARD DECISION
Importance: High

Nina, in my members post i received a copy of the Decision Notice with regard to my complaint against Cllr Barnbrook.

The Standards Board state that no action will be taken because in the video basically there is nothing to tie Cllr Barnbrook into B & D

I am amazed that the Board has taken this rather simplistic standpoint, bearing in mind that Cllr Barnbrook makes a number of references in the video to what "we" have been doing in Barking & Dagenham, and by "we" he is of course referring to himself and his party.

But I am appealing the decision of the Board and would draw their attention to below, which is one of the sites mentioned in my complaint where Cllr Barnbrook posted the video, as you can see it quite clearly refers to him as Cllr Richard Barnbrook and on the right hand side quite clearly refers to Barking and Dagenham.

Regards,
Cllr Val Rush
Executive Member for Safer Neighbourhoods
and Communities

Tele No. 0208 595 1587
email: val.rush@lbbd.gov.uk

From: Councillor Rush, Valerie
Sent: 08 November 2008 18:59
To: Councillor Rush, Valerie
Subject: Emailing: Cllr Richard Barnbrook My Telegraph.htm

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liz

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Cllr Richard Barnbrook

London

I Blog About:

Cllr Richard Barnbrook



A Tale of Two Cathedrals

Wednesday, September 24, 2008, 04:42 PM GMT [General]

It's been a while since I've uploaded any video to my blog and since I am very short of time at the moment, this little clip affords me the opportunity to make my point in a minimal amount of time. All being well I should be able to upload a little more video tomorrow concerning something completely different. Despite the hysteria and violence of the far-left I must say I enjoyed my time in Cologne greatly. Speaking to the Pro Cologne organisers afterwards I take it that they are genuinely satisfied with their weekend's work, after all every knows about the plan to disfigure this beautiful city now.

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10/03/2009


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Tags: [BNP](#), [Cologne](#), [Richard Bambrook](#), [Southwark](#)
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[7 comments]

Add a Comment:
Preview

Some HTML is allowed. BRs will be inserted automatically and URLs will be autolinked.


Comments

 Ah yes how is Southwark? Still full of your pals in the police taking kickbacks from drug dealers? All that palaver about a masjid. Good news it wasn't a Synagogue, huh?

Kisangani Oyebo Phd

September 24, 2008


05:17 PM GMT

 Dear Mr BNP, What are your feelings re: the economic downturn? It just occurred to me that we could both do well on this one and I had a modest proposal. Do you think it's worthwhile we forget our differences once things get really bad? Join forces (temporarily) so to speak as PLOD is the real enemy? Could you set some mercury tilt switches under their vehicles? (They are very nervous once we appear). There is a list of elements in Hertfordshire, London & Sussex that need getting rid of. In return I'm sure we could come to some arrangement. Yours Sincerely, Shanghai Joe, Commissar, 765th Coy, Grand Old Army of the Proletariat.

Shanghai

September 24, 2008

05:35 PM GMT

 You say, "disfigure this beautiful city now."

What you fail to explain is that the proposed mosque is not near the famous Dom. Indeed, Cologne's World Heritage status was recently threatened by a non-Muslim proposal.

Cologne has more to it than just the main tourist traps. As you (and Bomber Darby) are aware, if anyone changed the architecture of Cologne, it was the Allies in the fight against Nationalists like your party.

So, Islamification is building a big mosque? Will they be preventing people from attending the Dom?

(Cue one of the slugs to slime about not being able to have cathedrals in Saudi)

THEN you have the temerity to talk about jumping on the bandwagon about knife crime campaigns! Priceless hypocrisy from Max headroom.

You talk about Christianity and then you have a go about a clergyman speaking out in the press. "He can have his views..."! You then try, in your pitiful way, to patronise him by saying that you are sure he's serving

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his community very well. Welcome to the real BNP.

You're not bothered about Christianity, you just want a chance to knock people with minority views or beliefs.

"We have been asking..Labour Council ...and even Boris Johnson to do more about knife crime, giving out mandatory sentences...!"

How can anyone take you seriously when YET AGAIN you fail to understand the jurisdiction of the Mayor. Please buy a book on Constitutional Law and stop making a tit out of yourself.

As regards your purported conversation with B & D Council over metal detectors in schools, provide proof.

You still haven't answered the questions about knives on previous posts. Shortly, I shall list them in full until you answer.

Eric The Fish

September 24, 2008

07:08 PM GMT



What you want is to get English Heritage to say what and what cannot be in a mosque, get our muslim compatriots to go through an extensive planning process and get the proposal rejected even by the inspector.

tiger stripes

September 24, 2008

07:25 PM GMT



I'd be very interested to know which church Cllr Barnbrook attends every week and who his Parish Priest is.

H

September 25, 2008

05:28 PM GMT



Why St Georges of course! Rev Bigott? Does he realise little baby Jesus didnt have fair hair + blue eyes?

Kisangani Oyebo Phd

September 25, 2008

05:35 PM GMT



I do think Mr Barnbrook has made some quite dramatic errors in his statements regarding knife crime in a certain East London borough.

liz

September 25, 2008

06:14 PM GMT



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The Standards Sub-Committee (Assessment)

Assessment Summary -- 06 November 2008

Case No:	MC/09/08
Date Received:	07.10.08
Date Assessed:	06.11.08

Allegation:

That during an interview which was subsequently featured on a blog and on You Tube, the councillor had appeared to focus on and criticise the Borough and include false information.

The complainant alleged that the councillor:

- (1) had acted in a way which had brought his honesty and integrity as a councillor into disrepute and also, by association, the Council; and
- (2) had acted at odds with two principles within the Code of Conduct: a duty to uphold the law and leadership.

Assessment outcome:

Having considered the allegations and supporting information, the Committee agreed to take no action in respect of the complaint. The Committee concluded that during the conduct giving rise to the complaint, the councillor was not acting in his official capacity as a member of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, nor giving the impression of acting in his official capacity or as a representative of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, thereby bringing his actions outside the scope of the Code of Conduct.

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Any such request by the complainant must be received in writing within 30 days from the date of this notice, explaining in detail on what grounds the decision should be reviewed. Any request should be sent to me as the Council's Monitoring Officer at the Civic Centre, Dagenham, Essex RM10 7BN.

A request for a review will be dealt with within a maximum of three months of receipt. I will write to all the parties mentioned above, notifying them of the outcome of any such review.

Additional Help

If you need additional support in relation to this or future contact with us, please let us know as soon as possible. If you have difficulty reading this notice we can make reasonable adjustments to assist you, in line with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2000.

This decision notice is sent to the complainant and the Member against whom the allegation was made.

Signed

Date 7 November 2008

Nina Clark
Monitoring Officer
London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

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DECISION NOTICE

Reference MC9/08

Complaint

On 6 November 2008 a Sub-Committee of the Council's Standards Committee considered a complaint from Councillor Mrs V Rush concerning the alleged conduct of Councillor R Barnbrook, a Member of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham. 3

A general summary of the complaint is set out below:

That a video recording of an interview, which appeared on Richard Barnbrook's blog and on You Tube, appeared to focus on and criticise the Borough, and include false information.

The complainant considered that the statements made during the interview resulted in the councillor acting in a way which brought his honesty and integrity as a councillor into disrepute, and also, by association, the Council.

The complainant also considered that the councillor's actions were at odds with two principles within the Code of Conduct: a duty to uphold the law and leadership.

Decision

In accordance with Section 57A(2) of the Local Government Act 2000, as amended, the Sub-Committee decided that no action should be taken on the allegation. 3

Reasons for decision

The Sub-Committee considered that there was no evidence on the video recording of Councillor Barnbrook at any time being introduced as, or acting as, or giving the impression of acting as, a councillor of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

Right of review

At the written request of the complainant, the Standards Committee can review and change a decision not to refer an allegation for investigation or other action. A different Sub-Committee to that involved in the original decision would undertake such a review. 38

THE ASSESSMENT SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE GREATER LONDON
 AUTHORITY'S STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING OF 20TH
 OCTOBER 2008

DECISION NOTICE

GLA Case Reference: Sept-05/08

Complaint

On 20th October 2008, the Assessment Sub-Committee of the GLA's Standards Committee convened in private and considered a complaint from Councillor Valerie Rush concerning the alleged conduct of Mr Richard Bambrook, Assembly Member.

Set out below is a brief and general summary of the complaint:

The Complainant alleges that Mr Richard Bambrook, Assembly Member, made statements on the internet about the death of a young girl murdered in an education establishment, and two further murders, all in the borough of Barking and Dagenham, and that these statements are untrue.

Decision

In accordance with Section 57A(2) of the Local Government Act 2000, as amended, the Assessment Sub-Committee decided to refer the allegation to the Monitoring Officer with an instruction to investigate the matter in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008.

Reasons for decision

In accordance with its terms of reference, the Assessment Sub-Committee carefully considered the written correspondence from the Complainant, and also watched the internet footage of the statements.

On the information and evidence before it, and having regard to the Standards Board for England's Guidance, the Assessment Sub-Committee decided that the complaint did merit further action for the following reasons:

1. Richard Bambrook appears to hold himself out or allows himself to be held out as an Assembly Member and therefore the alleged conduct of the member falls within the scope of the Authority's Code of Conduct;
2. If the statements made by Richard Bambrook, Assembly Member, are false then this could be a potential breach of paragraph 5 of the Code of Conduct "You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute."

Confidentiality and publication

Taking into account the fact that the Complainant did not request, when asked, that her identity and a summary of her complaint be kept confidential, and taking into account the public interest and whether any such disclosure would prejudice any investigation, the Assessment Sub-Committee decided that these details should be provided to Mr Bambrook.

Accordingly, this Decision Notice has been sent to the Complainant, Richard Bambrook, Assembly Member and will be published by the GLA for a period of 6 years starting from 20th October 2008.

Signed *Alan Mayhew* Date *22/10/08*
Chair of the Assessment Sub-Committee

Signed *Richard* Date *22/10/08*
The GLA's Monitoring Officer

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DOC 511

Legal & Procurement Group

City Hall
The Queen's Walk
London SE1 2AA
Switchboard: 020 7983 400
Minicom: 020 7983 4458
Web: www.london.gov.uk

Richard Barnbrook
Assembly Member
City Hall

Our Ref: SG/Legal
Your Ref:
Date: 23rd October 2008

Richard.barnbrook@london.gov.uk

Dear Richard

Complaint against Richard Barnbrook, Assembly Member

Further to previous communications, I'm writing to inform you that, on 20 October 2008, the Assessment Sub-Committee of the GLA's Standards Committee considered a complaint about your alleged conduct.

The Sub-Committee's decision is contained in the Decision Notice enclosed.

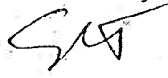
Please note that it has been decided that the complaint should be investigated. I will be in touch to explain in more detail how this investigation will be conducted. However, general details about this process are available at the link below, in particular, at pages 16-19 (Stages 5-6 Section B):

<http://www.london.gov.uk/gla/complaints-members/docs/member-complaints-procedure.pdf>

Details on how the decision will be published are contained in the Decision Notice enclosed, and are also available at the above link.

If you require any other assistance in relation to this matter, please do not please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Stephen Gee
Senior Legal Adviser
Employment & Governance

020 7983 4590
Stephen.gee@london.gov.uk

Direct telephone: 020 7983 4590 Fax: 020 7983 4700 Email Stephen.gee@london.gov.uk

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DECISION NOTICE

GLA Case Reference: Sept-05/08

Complaint

On 20th October 2008, the Assessment Sub-Committee of the GLA's Standards Committee convened in private and considered a complaint from Councillor Valerie Rush concerning the alleged conduct of Mr Richard Barnbrook, Assembly Member.

Set out below is a brief and general summary of the complaint:

The Complainant alleges that Mr Richard Barnbrook, Assembly Member, made statements on the internet about the death of a young girl murdered in an education establishment, and two further murders, all in the borough of Barking and Dagenham, and that these statements are untrue.

Decision

In accordance with Section 57A(2) of the Local Government Act 2000, as amended, the Assessment Sub-Committee decided to refer the allegation to the Monitoring Officer with an instruction to investigate the matter in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Standards Committee (England) Regulations 2008.

Reasons for decision

In accordance with its terms of reference, the Assessment Sub-Committee carefully considered the written correspondence from the Complainant, and also watched the internet footage of the statements.

On the information and evidence before it, and having regard to the Standards Board for England's Guidance, the Assessment Sub-Committee decided that the complaint did merit further action for the following reasons:

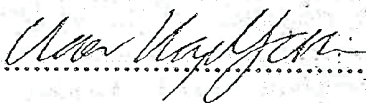
1. Richard Barnbrook appears to hold himself out or allows himself to be held out as an Assembly Member and therefore the alleged conduct of the member falls within the scope of the Authority's Code of Conduct;
2. If the statements made by Richard Barnbrook, Assembly Member, are false then this could be a potential breach of paragraph 5 of the Code of Conduct "You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute."

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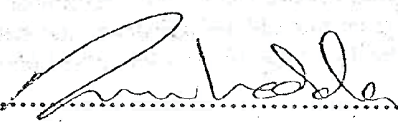
Confidentiality and publication

Taking into account the fact that the Complainant did not request, when asked, that her identity and a summary of her complaint be kept confidential, and taking into account the public interest and whether any such disclosure would prejudice any investigation, the Assessment Sub-Committee decided that these details should be provided to Mr Barnbrook.

Accordingly, this Decision Notice has been sent to the Complainant, Richard Barnbrook, Assembly Member and will be published by the GLA for a period of 6 years starting from 20th October 2008.

Signed  Date 22/10/08

Chair of the Assessment Sub-Committee

Signed  Date 22/10/08

The GLA's Monitoring Officer

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DOC:12

THE STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE (REVIEW)

Wednesday, 3 December 2008
(11:30 am - 1:00 pm)

Present: Councillor Mrs P A Northover, Mr K Madden and Mr D Sandiford

5. **Apologies for absence**

None.

6. **Appointment of Chair**

Delbert Sandiford was appointed as Chair.

7. **Declarations of Interest**

None.

8. **Monitoring Officer Report - Complaint MC/9/08**

The Monitoring Officer introduced the report regarding a review request by the complainant following the assessment of the complaint on 6 November 2008 by a Standards Sub-Committee. The decision at that time was that no action be taken as the allegations did not, in the Assessment Sub-Committee's view, amount to a breach of the Members' Code of Conduct.

Having considered the report and additional supporting documentation, the Review Committee **agreed** to refer the complaint to the Monitoring Officer for investigation because potential breaches of the Code of Conduct had been disclosed.

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The Standards Sub-Committee (Review)

Review Summary – 3 December 2008

Case No:	MC/09/08
Date Received:	07.10.08
Date Assessed:	06.11.08
Date Review Request Received:	08.11.08
Date Reviewed:	03.12.08

Allegation:

That during an interview which was subsequently featured on a blog and on You Tube, the councillor had appeared to focus on and criticise the Borough and include false information.

The complainant alleged that the councillor:

- (1) had acted in a way which had brought his honesty and integrity as a councillor into disrepute and also, by association, the Council; and
- (2) had acted at odds with two principles within the Code of Conduct: a duty to uphold the law and leadership.

Assessment outcome:

Having considered the allegations and supporting information, the Committee **agreed** to take no action in respect of the complaint. The Committee concluded that during the conduct giving rise to the complaint, the councillor was not acting in his official capacity as a member of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, nor giving the impression of acting in his official capacity or as a representative of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, thereby bringing his actions outside the scope of the Code of Conduct.

Review outcome:

The Review Sub-Committee considered the allegations and additional supporting documentation, which included further correspondence from the complainant, and agreed to refer the complaint to the Monitoring Officer for investigation as a potential breach of the Code of Conduct had been identified, namely:

Paragraph 5 You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute.

The Sub-Committee also considered that the alleged conduct may have conflicted with the general principle in the Code relating to Honesty and Integrity.

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Helen Sargeant

From: Matthew Kleebauer
Sent: 05 December 2008 16:39
To: Helen Sargeant
Subject: FW: GLA Investigation Sep 05

DOC: 13

-----Original Message-----

From: Matthew Kleebauer
Sent: 05 December 2008 16:26
To: Richard Barnbrook
Subject: GLA Investigation Sep 05

Richard,

Please see attached



Letter to Richard Barnbrook.doc...
decision notice.pdf
(136 KB)

Matthew Kleebauer
Administration Officer
Legal & Procurement Group
GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY
Tel: 0207 983 4972

Helen Sargeant

From: Helen Sargeant
Sent: 13 February 2009 16:24
To: Richard Barnbrook
Cc: Simon Darby
Subject: Record of meeting 6 February 2009 - By email and internal mail

Please find attached letter and record of meeting.



Letter to Richard Barnbrook 13...
Record of meeting 6 Feb 09.doc...

Helen Sargeant
Senior Legal Adviser - Employment and Governance
Legal and Procurement Group
Greater London Authority
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
London
London SE1 2AA

T: 020 7983 4483
F: 020 7983 4700

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Legal & Procurement Group

Richard Barnbrook
Assembly Member

Richard.barnbrook@london.gov.uk

Private & Confidential

City Hall
The Queen's Walk
More London
London SE1 2AA
Switchboard: 020 7983 4000
Minicom: 020 7983 4458
Web: www.london.gov.uk
Our Ref: **HS/Legal**
Your Ref:
Date: 13/02/2009

Dear Mr Barnbrook,

Ref: Sept/05

I write further to our interview of 6 February 2009 and enclose as agreed two copies of the record taken from the interview.

Record:

I would be grateful if you could review the record and make any alterations you consider necessary from your recollection of the interview. Please then sign and date the declaration at the end of the interview record and initial the bottom of each page, returning one copy to me to the above address by Friday 20 February 2009. Should you not sign and return a copy of the interview record by this date I will assume that you accept and agree with its content.

The copy of the interview record has been provided to you solely to enable you to confirm the accuracy of the interview. It should not be disclosed or used for any other purpose. You are, however, able to disclose these documents to your solicitor, should you choose to appoint one, or other representative, for the purpose of seeking advice in relation to this investigation.

If, on reading the interview record, you have any additional comments that you feel are relevant to the investigation, please address these to me in writing in a separate document and send it to the above address, or by sending an email to helen.sargeant@london.gov.uk. Alternatively you can telephone me directly 020 7983 4483.

Yours sincerely

Helen Sargeant
Senior Legal Adviser – Employment and Governance

Direct telephone: 020 7983 4486 Fax: 020 7983 4700 Email: Helen.sargeant@london.gov.uk

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Working together for a safer London

DOC 314

TERRITORIAL POLICING

Councillor Val Rush
Executive Member for Safer Neighbourhoods & Communities
Barking & Dagenham Council
Civic Centre
Dagenham

KG - Barking & Dagenham Borough

9th floor
Maritime House
1 Linton Road
Barking
IG11 8HG

Telephone: 02082175557
Facsimile: 02082175
Email: Hugh.Boyle@met.police.uk
www.met.police.uk

Your ref:
Our ref:

9 December 2008

Dear Val

Barking & Dagenham – Murder statistics

You requested information with regard to incidents of murder within Barking & Dagenham Borough for the period 24 August – 24 September 2008 inclusive. I can confirm that there were no murders for that period this year.

The most recent murder, also the only one recorded in the current financial year 2008/09 was on Saturday 19 April 2008 at Corals Bookmakers in Barking. The victim was Mr Leslie Bones. Two men have subsequently been convicted for this offence.

To assist you in any further enquiries and highlight that such offences have significantly decreased in the past three years the following statistics may be of use.

FY – 2008/09 – total one (1)

FY – 2007/08 – total three (3)

FY – 2006/07 – total six (6)

Yours sincerely,





Hugh Boyle
Inspector
Performance & Review Unit
Barking & Dagenham Police

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Emergency: 020 8594 8356

NHS DIRECT
0845 4647 for 24-hour health information and advice
ELECTRICITY
Eastern: 01708 384000; London: 020 8298 9898
DENTIST: For the relief of pain and other urgent conditions, registered NHS patients should contact their own dentist. For emergency dental treatment NHS: 020 8554 9865

WEEKEND WEATHER

Today (Thursday)	Tomorrow (Friday)	Saturday	Sunday
			
Sunny intervals Max temp 10C; Min 8C	Heavy rain Max temp 8C; Min 5C	Heavy rain Max temp 5C; Min 5C	Sunny intervals Max temp 7C; Min 4C

TRAVEL

TRAINS AND TUBES

C2C: A full Saturday service runs from Barking to Upminster with minor re-timings to Laindon and Ockendon. Barking to Upminster and Barking to Grays via Rainham: full Sunday service runs, with minor re-timings to Laindon and Ockendon. Due to engineering works in the Grays area, Rainham services will be re-timed to run 15 minutes later from Barking and Grays.

National Express: No service on Saturday and Sunday between Liverpool Street and Stratford.

DISTRICT LINE: Suspended on Saturday and Sunday between Barking and Upminster; Replacement bus services operate.

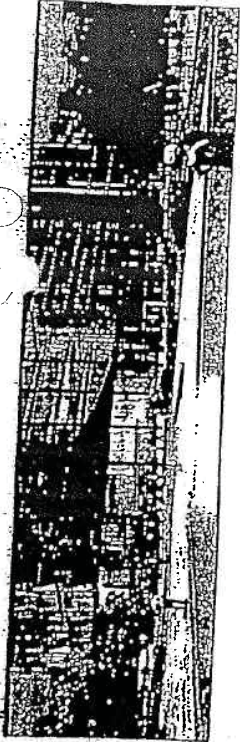
HAMMERSMITH & CITY LINE: No service on Saturday and Sunday between Plaistow and Barking.

JUBILEE LINE: Suspended on Saturday and Sunday between Stanmore and Waterloo; Replacement bus services operate.

METROPOLITAN LINE: Suspended on Saturday and Sunday between Harrow-on-the-Hill and Aldgate. Rail replacement bus services operate.

Barking and Dagenham Recorder offices at Media House, 539 High Road, Ilford Essex IG1 1UD and is part of Archant London

ARCHANT LONDON



HCM said the development, promoting six car spaces, would not include parking spaces.

Sivan Housing has not yet lodged a planning application to Barking and Dagenham Council. A Swan spokesman said: "We are still at a very early stage of discussions with the local authority about the proposed development at Cambridge Road."

BNP's Barnbrook under fire over 'YouTube murder claim'

THE British National Party deputy leader in Barking and Dagenham and London Assembly member Richard Barnbrook is under investigation after he claimed on a video-sharing website three murders had taken place in the borough.

He could be suspended from City Hall for up to six months if a complaint by Labour Cllr Val Rush is upheld.

Goresbrook ward Cllr Barnbrook is said to have maintained three murders - including two fatal stabbings - had happened in the borough as he criticised Mayor Boris Johnson in a clip posted on YouTube via his website.

Met Police figures show one murder was officially recorded in Barking and Dagenham in the past 12 months to September.

Cllr Rush, Barking and Dagenham executive member for community safety, lodged the complaint which is being investigated by a Greater London Authority (GLA) standards sub-committee.

She said: "If the investigation discovers that Cllr Barnbrook brought his position into disrepute and therefore the GLA into disrepute, I am hoping their standards board takes the necessary steps."

"We can't have duly elected members of either the GLA or a local authority inflame fears of Londoners and residents of Barking and Dagenham by lies."

City Hall said Cllr Barnbrook could be forced to apologise, undergo training and be suspended for six months depending on its findings.

Cllr Barnbrook said: "The GLA are going into the investigation



● **PROBE:** Cllr Richard Barnbrook and Cllr Val Rush as we speak, it could be two or three weeks. People at the GLA are quite thorough. Cllr Rush said: "I am thankful to the GLA and its standards board for taking the complaint seriously."

For all the latest news log on to www.bbreconline.co.uk

Doc
5

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Provided by CLR Bush at
16/1/09
Meeting
DOC 16

Male machismo leads to early exit

IT'S A fact of life the majority of men die before women, and Redbridge is no exception, female average life expectancy 81.6 years compared to 77.5 years for males.

It perhaps isn't surprising, as men are genetically programmed to be bigger risk takers and that approach to life can lead to a premature exit, especially if you have a penchant for high-risk sports.

However, the majority of us are more likely to be found watching TV or taking the dog for a walk, so why the disparity between the longevity of men and women?

The answer is the totem of male health, totem because we're happy to dance around

the subject without really addressing it.

Male machismo and globally adopted metaphors such as "soldiering on", "not letting the side down" and "taking it like a man" have led to a male mindset associating a visit to the doctor with being weak, unnecessary, or a waste of time.

This means conditions often go untreated, and problems build up.

I believe many men have a subconscious fear of the health service because our contact with it is minimal, largely confined to the beginning and end-of-our lives, with a brief mid-term dalliance at the maternity ward when our children are born.

Women are more familiar and at ease in the health system through prolonged association with it through birth, bringing up children, and inevitable visits to the doctor.

Attitudes require a major change. Men need to understand care and treatment don't equate with weakness.

You can't put a price on good health because if you don't have it there isn't much else you can enjoy.

Greater personal responsibility for our health is the key to a healthier life and remains a priority with NHS Redbridge.

EDWIN DOYLE,
Chairman NHS Redbridge

I and disgusted by the centre's closure

Ittec member
Club for the
partially
has been giving
life to blind

for 20 years.
located at different
addresses, some where
with difficulty safely
bringing members
in from homes

for five years at
1 Gresham Drive
road car park

Although this centre was established primarily for daytime use by, and in support of, people in the borough with learning difficulties, it also gave excellent accommodation for our "once a month" meetings - and to other groups.

Since early this year there have been repeated threatened closures of Chadwell Centre, culminating in the declared closure in July of 2009.

We attended a "Chadwell Consultation" in October, which was called by the Learning Disability Partnership. We were invited to give our views on the proposed closure.

Based on reasoning, prioritised exclusively by relevance to the current policies of "care in the community" for those with

learning difficulties, the centre is now to close.

In the past decade various mayors and councillors have acknowledged how greatly our community depends on help from the private voluntary sector.

I am saddened, not to say disgusted, that this closure of the Chadwell Centre seems based on limited criteria, and demonstrates just how little our cost-free usefulness is now appreciated.

This action will undoubtedly put at risk our ability to continue the Focus Club's good works - and I think we shall be missed.

JOHN GOUGH
Queenborough Gardens
Ilford

operating double standards on masts

Wilson Chowdhry (Letters, November 27) is concerned at plans for a mobile phone mast at the junction of the main college building. As it is not possible with the agreement, where was the concern then? I had a primary school field and play area, special needs school. Perhaps the college

Mr Chowdhry mentions studies from such organisations as the World Health Organisation. Local councils have received specific planning guidance from his own Labour Government that they are not able to take into account any such information in considering mobile phone masts applications.

He also suggests the mast plan for this junction was made by the local councillors, of which I am one. Well Mr Chowdhry should be aware such applications are made by mobile operators not local councils. We just consider their merits.

Number of murders not relevant

THE complaint made against me by Councillor Rush as to precisely how many murders I said had taken place in the borough, is typical of the unhelpful approach taken by so many mainstream politicians today.

They seek to whitewash and sidetrack the genuine concerns of the man in the street by raising issues which are simply irrelevant.

Violent street crime is a grave concern for all of us who live in Barking and Dagenham and in London.

To my mind, it makes little difference whether there were one or three murders - just one murder is one too many!

We need to focus on what, if anything, is being done about it, and I was simply trying to do just that. Arguing about numbers won't solve anything.

CLLR RICHARD
BARNBROOK, BNP
Greater London
Assembly

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Notes of Standards Investigation Interview with Councillor Mrs V Rush
16 January 2009
Committee Room 3
Barking Town Hall
11.30-12.30

Present: Sanjay Prashar, Deputy Head of Law; Corporate Law + Employment LBBD (SP)
 Helen Sargeant – Senior Legal Adviser Employment and Governance (HS);
 Satish Mistry Deputy Head of Law (SM) – GLA
 Elly Leathers (EL) (notes)

Councillor Mrs V Rush (VR)
 Morgan McSweeney, Political Assistant Majority Party (MM)

After introductions Satish explained what the meeting was for and how it would be conducted.

VR On/ around 24 September 2008 I found a found a video posted on Cllr Barnbrook's Daily Telegraph Blog. It had also been posted on You Tube and on his own Richard Barnbrook blog in which he attributes himself as a London Assembly member for the GLA.

I presume you have watched the video – he is seen holding up a number of newspapers and criticising articles.

What concerned me greatly is one section of the video where he says that in the three weeks prior to the video a young girl had been murdered in an educational establishment in Barking and Dagenham and that two young men had been murdered in the borough.

Because of my portfolio responsibilities I knew these statements to be false. I also felt them to be incredibly inflammatory.

Dealing with community fears/fear of crime is a responsibility that any elected member should take seriously. By stating lies on film I feel he inflamed fears in our community (not just in Barking and Dagenham but across London).

I feel when you take up public office and sign to uphold duties of office there is a code of conduct you sign up to – specific and well laid out for Barking and Dagenham / GLA.

This covers:

- Honesty and integrity
- Duty to uphold the law
- Leadership

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 C:\Documents and Settings\eleathers\Local Settings\Temporary Internet Files\OLK5C\Draft minutes Cllr Rush 160109.doc

Lying in this manner is directly at odds with the principle to uphold the law. It seems to be attempting to undermine confidence in public safety, confidence with the police, and directly at odds with the principle of leadership.

Across London we are working hard to reassure people that the streets are safe and we are always reassuring the elderly / young people that the streets are safe and by what Councillor Barnbrook has said he has deliberately set out to inflame fear and undermine the public's trust and confidence in local government and the Police.

I watched the DVD several times and decided to make a complaint because I felt that strongly.

SM Is there anything else you would like to add?

VR (Presents letter) Written statistics from Barking & Dagenham Police identify:

2006/07	6 murders in the borough
2007/08	3 murders in the borough
2008/09	1 murder in the borough

We are talking financial years here— therefore only recorded murder this year was on the 19 April which was nowhere near the time span Councillor Barnbrook was referring to.

This evidence shows how far we have come in Barking and Dagenham in the fight against such crime. Lies in the video undermine the work we have done.

SM This letter is unsigned.

VR This is because it came by email. The inspector said he would send me a copy though we haven't received it. I will get a signed copy and forward it to you.

SM Anything else you would like to introduce?

VR To give you an idea of the character of the man what we have learnt in Barking and Dagenham since 2006 is the fact that he doesn't pay too much attention to the truth but will stand up and speak at great length and even if what he is saying is not the truth people will listen.

[VR refers to a letter in the local papers]

[She stated that a letter was sent (11/12/08) to two local papers (Cllr Mrs Rush read the article) and he refers to himself as both Councillor Barnbrook and Greater

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London Assembly and he said it made no difference as to how many deaths there had been]

This letter appeared in the local paper headlined 'number of murders not relevant'.

Whilst I agree arguing about numbers does not solve anything I think that it is very relevant the simple fact that there were no murders. There is a big difference between no murders and one or three.

HS How did you come across the blog?

VR Politically – I am the Labour group's secretary. I sweep through a number of blogs on a daily basis.

HS How well read do you think these blogs are?

VR They are.

MM We had a resident labour party member tell us about the blog. Don't know what the number of hits are though.

VR It is on You Tube as well. There are links to his political party on his blogs so people who are not politically minded, looking at You Tube may pick up the blog. Regarding the number of hits, it appears to be well used.

MM It is easy to find on google. It wasn't difficult to find on You Tube.

SP Is the video still on the blog.

VR It is on all of them.

HR Why do you think it brings the council into disrepute?

VR When we have had a murder, not the last April, but the year before, we work with the Police and there is an awful lot of effort by the Partnership on community reassurance. Myself/Police will go into the community and reinforce community message. We have done a lot of that over the last two and a half years. Community have been responding well to reassurance message. Great relationships have built up with the Police. There is a trusted messenger relationship across the borough.

This throws that all off side. I have had people come up to me and say three murders – what are you keeping from us? I have had to say that they did not take place, but we are on the back-foot. When we have come so far in good community relations and our young people are engaging with the Police, it is frustrating to then have to say that this did not actually happen.

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Cllr Rush 160109.doc C:\Documents and Settings\leathers\Local Settings\Temporary Internet
Files\OLK5C1\Draft minutes Cllr Rush 160109.doc

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Another example: Councillor Barnbrook is very good at inflaming situations. We have had an incident of TB in a primary school. We had one case. Once again Councillor Barnbrook has inflamed the community. He was at the school filming children. Parents demanded he turned the cameras off. He would have you believe that all the children had TB. It makes people fearful.

SM Can I ask – in your perception that there is anything particular in relation to Councillor Barnbrook's own position that makes it important for him to be careful what he says?

MM Fear of crime is the main issue in boroughs. There is a disparity between actual and fear of crime. Not just a reputational problem. Affects quality of life of all people in borough. People won't engage. Young people are more inclined to join gangs when there is a perception of crime. Also affects business. Older people are likely to leave their house after dark. If you come to the town centre in the evening it is remarkably quiet, and therefore this affects the borough.

Councillor Barnbrook is not currently the leader of the opposition but he was in 2006. There is now a new Leader of the Opposition who does not have the same profile as Councillor Barnbrook. The BNP's reputation is taken very seriously and they are a legitimate party. Councillor Barnbrook does hold sway with a good number of people in Barking and Dagenham. I think that in other boroughs people would also be able to pick out Richard Barnbrook. He then uses that profile to inflame situations and uses topics such as murder.

SM If there is credible evidence that fear of crime has increased more here than in other London boroughs and also you said that when this is discussed it increases people's anxiety levels. If you could provide evidence of this that would be useful.

VR We can get that.

SM Do you think Councillor Barnbrook made his comments knowing them to be false or is he just misconceived?

VR He made the comments knowingly. I don't have a personal assistant, someone who proof reads press statements – Councillor Barnbrook, as an assembly member, has far more access to correct and accurate information.

MM In his letter he acknowledges the evidence is wrong yet leaves the information on his website.

MM At worst he is lying, at best, it is a disregard for the truth. It is reckless and irresponsible without checking with the police and council. If he had checked with the Police and local authority, they would have confirmed the facts as being untrue.

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C:\Documents and Settings\leathers\Local Settings\Temporary Internet Files\OLK5C\Draft minutes Cllr Rush 160109.doc

55

The BNP is different to elsewhere in Britain. It is seen as credible, so when he says something like that a lot of people would believe him.

SM So you are saying that it is not that it is Councillor Barnbrook, but also because he is an influential politician.

SP Are you able to give examples of people approaching you regarding the blog?

VR A number of examples. It is very hard to deal with people's perception of crime. The only way you can do that is by being very honest with people. It is about reassurance and then people's perceptions change. We have seen it in other boroughs where people start to feel safe. We have now got to say we have to change people's perceptions. Changing people's perceptions is very difficult.

SM One last thing. In terms of outcomes, as the complainant what would you like to see as an outcome?

VR I think I would like a public apology to the residents of Barking and Dagenham and London. I think that a period of time of cooling off until Councillor/Assemblyman Barnbrook understands that there are certain standards for elected members that he has to abide by. For example, sitting outside the Chamber for a couple of months.

VR Impact also on his role as Assembly Member. I cannot see how you can impose on one and not the other – I assume that the standards are the same at the GLA and at LBBD.

SM If the matter proceeds, it will be a matter for the respective Standard Committees.

We will put together a transcript and send to you. If you could get it back to us by the following week with any other evidence. When it comes to producing a draft report we will invite your comments at that stage.

End of interview.

I have read these notes and accept them as a true and accurate record of the interview

Signed.....

Dated.....

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Cllr Rush 160109.doc C:\Documents and Settings\leathers\Local Settings\Temporary Internet
Files\OLK5C\Draft minutes Cllr Rush 160109.doc

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Friday 6 February 2009

DOC: 18

Notes of Standards Investigation with Councillor and Assembly Member Mr R
Barnbrook

Friday 6 February 2009

Committee Room 8

City Hall

14:00 – 15:30

Present:

Councillor and Assembly Member Mr R Barnbrook (RB)
Sanjay Prashar, Deputy Head- Corporate Law and Employment LBBB (SP)
Helen Sargeant, Senior Legal Adviser Employment and Governance (HS) - GLA
Satish Mistry, Deputy Head of Law (SM) - GLA
Lisa Newman, Trainee Solicitor (LN) - GLA

RB stated that he thought this complaint was a personal attack on him and was upset about other recent complaints that had been made about him, which he considered to be personal also.

SM explained the format of the interview

HS Question 1. For how long have you used website blogs in your political capacity as a tool for communicating to the electorate?

RB said that he hasn't and that he doesn't use blogs. He said he hasn't got the knowledge to do this. RB said that this is either done by his aides or the BNP film crew. HS asked how long RB had appeared on blogs.

RB said from approximately 2004/ 2005. RB said that he doesn't use 'google' as a means of disseminating information but that he understands that other websites lift and use the content from his blog.

HS Question 2. We understand that the blog can be viewed on You Tube and the Daily Telegraph website. Is it posted elsewhere?

RB said that he dictates to aides who type content onto the blog, and they read it out to him. He said that he takes responsibility for the content of his blog. He didn't know the process for the content appearing on other websites.

SM asked if he checked the content.

RB said he did and that he takes responsibility for this.

SM asked RB if he had looked at the statement in question on his blog.

RB said no, that he didn't recall looking at this one, and that he didn't have time to see the final version.

HS Question 3. Do you know how many hits have been entered against the blog?

RB said he was too busy to look at these and that he doesn't follow them.

HS Question 4. You were specific in your comments that there were 2 incidents of knife attacks in the B&D area within a stated period resulting in 3 deaths. From where did you source this information?

RB said that prior to the video going out, there was a murder of a young African Caribbean woman in Barking and Dagenham. The other incidents were two fatal attacks in Corsebrook ward and Parsloes ward.

HS read out what the blog said about these three incidents. RB clarified that the woman who was killed was from Barking and Dagenham but was killed outside the area in Newham.

SM clarified with RB that he said on the video that the attack was in Barking and Dagenham.

RB said that this statement "came out wrong" because of the speed of his delivery. RB meant to say that the woman was from Barking and Dagenham and murdered in Newham.

SM asked whether there was evidence to support this? RB said yes.

SM clarified that what RB meant to say was that there had been a murder of a girl from Barking and Dagenham. RB said this was correct and what he had meant. RB said he has evidence to show the occurrence of this.

SM referred back to the second statement on the blog where RB had said that there were two murders. RB said that this is what he had said - but that the two people didn't die, they were critically ill, but didn't die. RB said he "spoke too soon." He knew at the time of the statement that they were on life support.

HS asked if this statement was still on the blog? RB said he didn't know because he doesn't check it and hasn't been asked to pull it.

SM said "before we move on, can I put something to you. You said that you don't check the blog, but you said you take responsibility for it and you didn't know [about the possible inaccuracy] until you got the complaint. You then took the opportunity to view the blog?"

RB said "no, well I was in front of the camera, I generally know what I say, but no... that's not true, I did look at the blog (Mothers Against Knives) told me about the complaint. I then had a brief look at this". He said that he now accepts that there were two inaccuracies.

RB said the videos are usually on the personal blog for three weeks.

SM asked whether RB had looked at the blog and noticed the inaccuracies?
RB said "no". He said that the national BNP party including legal asked him whether he wanted to leave it up as he did believe that the overall tenor still stands that it should be left on there regardless of the misstatement and that he said yes. RB said his belief in gun-crime is strong enough to keep it on the website and that he was of the view that this would be removed in 4-6 weeks anyway.

RB said that he felt because _____ had made comments about the school, then the blog should remain.

SP Question 5. Do you have a system for verifying statistical data or other factual information before publicising it?

RB said verification was from three sources:

1. Media
2. Police
3. Public

He said that the information from the public was very important and said "I always believe without question and will report. This is the same in this situation. I was told [about the incidents] by the public and I confused what they were saying".
RB said that he did have a system to verify the information that the public gave him in this case. He said he got the information as to the location of the attacks but that he mixed up exactly where the attack took place.

SP "from what you have said, can you tell us if there is an audit process for screening information before publishing it?"

RB said "yes", by using 1. the press 2. the police and 3. local community (leaks). RB said he sometimes used his first-hand notice of witnessing the incident, such as witnessing a cordoned off crime scene and asking the police what has happened.

SP said "we are concerned that this wasn't the case here. Your statement was inaccurate."

RB said that in this case, it was because he spoke too quickly and got it wrong. RB said the filming was very rushed and he spoke too quickly. "I dispute that. I didn't try and cause scaremongering. That's just politics and I made a statement."

SP asked "why wasn't this picked up on the video before going on the blog?"

RB said that "they must have assumed that the details were correct. There have been attacks in Barking and Dagenham so it would be likely that this could be true."

SP Question 6. Do you accept that the details regarding the murders which you gave on your blog were factually inaccurate?

RB said he accepted that the evidence was factually inaccurate but that he will not make an apology. "I won't accept the fact that knife crime doesn't exist. I will take responsibility, but will not apologise".

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SM asked whether RB would apologise for the statement being inaccurate?

RB said "no, I would say that the information that was given over was not correct. But until knife crime is over, I will not apologise". RB said that a mistake was made, it was not malicious but could be seen as aggressive. RB said that he did not regret making the statements, but he did regret not putting the correct information over, and it would be have been better if the correct information had been put across. He regretted saying that there were two murders when there were not.

SM clarified that the officers present are not responsible for making a decision in this case.

SP said "can I just say that we will not be taking a decision on this, we are just . We are just looking at whether you have brought your office into disrepute".

RB asked for clarification on what 'disrepute' means.

HS. SM and SP all said that this depends on what facts are established in this case

SP Question 7. Do you regret making the statement?

RB said "No, I do regret saying that two people died and they didn't, but I don't regret saying about the murder".

SP Question 8. The complainant has referred the investigation officers to a letter sent by yourself to 2 local newspapers in December 2008. In the letter you suggest that it made no difference as to how many deaths there had been. Do you still subscribe to that view and if so why?

RB said that what he was saying here is that nothing is being done in the Borough, even if one person dies or twenty, something still has to be done.

SM Question 9. If you knew the information to be inaccurate why was it (the video) left on the blog at the time of the letter being published?

RB said "I thought it would have been pulled."

SM Question 10. Are you aware of whether it (the video) is still on the blog?

RB said he thought it would have been removed, especially if there are inaccuracies.

HS asked if the video was still on there?

RB said they will be removed because of the inaccuracies, but it was not an apology.

SM Question 11 As a local politician do you feel you have a role in managing the public's perception of crime both in B and D and in London generally?

RB asked "can you be more accurate as to 'control'? I think that the politician should report what is happening."

SM said "but the difference here is that they were inaccurate. Do you accept that you have a higher level of responsibility?"

RB said "I could have said that three murders took place, that wouldn't have been inaccurate, murders have happened in the Borough, it was the speed of my delivery. I could have said that people are dying by the knife and that would have been accurate. I don't believe that I misled them, there are murders happening."

RB said that 3 murders took place at Chadwell Heath.

SM said "you say that but police figures say the number of knife crime is decreasing."

RB said that he can see that knife crime is happening.

SM said "but you were talking about murders [in this statement]."

RB said that he didn't trust the figures and that he had made a Freedom of Information Act request and had different figures returned.

SM said that the Monitoring Officer would need to see those figures. SM said that if RB's figures were different, that was important.

RB said he also had figures from local papers.

SM clarified that the police figures show that there were no murders in the period RB was talking about.

RB said that there were figures from the Met police coming out at that time, showing that there were murders in London.

SP said that RB's statement was in relation to Barking and Dagenham, and not London as a whole.

SM agreed and said that it was important to compare figures before this can be investigated further and asked RB to provide the documentation.

SM Question 12. What would you say in response to the proposition that the comments which form the subject matter of this investigation would have had the effect of undermining the public's trust and confidence in Local Government and in the Police?

RB said that he doesn't believe this to be the case. He said the police don't have the resources. It doesn't undermine the police as the police don't have the power to deal with this.

SM asked whether RB thought his comments undermined politicians?

RB said "no, politicians should say what is happening. They should tell people that they should petition government to solve this problem. I feed back to the community what is happening in real life."

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RB said that parents say to him that the police can't do anything because they have no resources, and therefore what is the point of me complaining because the police are not able to do anything.

SP said that he thought the interview should go deeper at this point. "I accept what you are saying, but whenever you provide factual data, you have (as a politician) got to make sure that this is accurate. If you say there have been two murders and there hasn't, this will raise the fear of crime. This is what is in contention. No one is questioning your role as a politician, but if you rely on information to make a point, this must be accurate."

RB said "I accept that, but I could have made lots of other reports if I'd wanted to undermine police and the Borough. If I had to go through this again, I would do it again, but making sure it was accurate." RB said his comments were to show that this is happening, it was not enough for politicians to say it is all going nicely.

SM said that he thought that completed the questioning and asked RB if he had any questions.

RB said that his actions weren't intentional.

SM told RB that this would be dealt with independently and asked what documentation RB would like to leave for the Monitoring Officer.

RB said he would like to leave all of the evidence he had and that he had lots about knife crime in the Borough.

SM clarified whether RB would be using this as evidence to show the level of knife crime in the Borough? He asked RB to identify what relates particularly to this complaint and police statistics.

RB said he would ask Simon Darby to do this.

It was agreed that RB would submit his evidence by Friday 13 February 2009.

I have read these notes and accept them as a true and accurate record of the interview

Signed.....

Dated.....

DOC:19



Phone: 020 8227 4394
Fax: 020 8227 3698
Email: Sanjay.prashar@lbbd.gov.uk

Our address
1 Town Square
Barking
Essex IG11 7LU

Fax

To:	Lisa Newman	From:	Sanjay Prashar
Fax:	Recipient's fax number	Date:	Example: 2 March 2009
Subject:	Subject title -notes of standards investigation interview		
Pages:	Number of pages including this one 6		

Urgent For review Please reply Please comment

Message:



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with SP

Notes of Standards Investigation Interview with Councillor Mrs V Rush
16 January 2009
Committee Room 3
Barking Town Hall
11.30-12.30

Present: Sanjay Prashar, Deputy Head of Law; Corporate Law + Employment LBB
(SP)
Helen Sargeant – Senior Legal Adviser Employment and Governance (HS);
Satish Mistry Deputy Head of Law (SM) – GLA
Elly Leathers (EL) (notes)

Councillor Mrs V Rush (VR)
Morgan McSweeney, Political Assistant Majority Party (MM)

After introductions Satish explained what the meeting was for and how it would be conducted.

VR On/ around 24 September 2008 I found a found a video posted on Cllr Barnbrook's Daily Telegraph Blog. It had also been posted on You Tube and on his own Richard Barnbrook blog in which he attributes himself as a London Assembly member for the GLA.

I presume you have watched the video – he is seen holding up a number of newspapers and criticising articles.

What concerned me greatly is one section of the video where he says that in the three weeks prior to the video a young girl had been murdered in an educational establishment in Barking and Dagenham and that two young men had been murdered in the borough.

Because of my portfolio responsibilities I knew these statements to be false. I also felt them to be incredibly inflammatory.

Dealing with community fears/fear of crime is a responsibility that any elected member should take seriously. By stating lies on film I feel he inflamed fears in our community (not just in Barking and Dagenham but across London).

I feel when you take up public office and sign to uphold duties of office there is a code of conduct you sign up to – specific and well laid out for Barking and Dagenham / GLA.

This covers:

- Honesty and integrity
- Duty to uphold the law
- Leadership

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Lying in this manner is directly at odds with the principle to uphold the law. It seems to be attempting to undermine confidence in public safety, confidence with the police, and directly at odds with the principle of leadership.

Across London we are working hard to reassure people that the streets are safe and we are always reassuring the elderly / young people that the streets are safe and by what Councillor Barnbrook has said he has deliberately set out to inflame fear and undermine the public's trust and confidence in local government and the Police.

I watched the DVD several times and decided to make a complaint because I felt that strongly.

SM Is there anything else you would like to add?

VR (Presents letter) Written statistics from Barking & Dagenham Police identify:

2006/07	6 murders in the borough
2007/08	3 murders in the borough
2008/09	1 murder in the borough

We are talking financial years here— therefore ^{THE} only recorded murder this year was on the 19 April which was nowhere near the time span Councillor Barnbrook was referring to.

This evidence shows how far we have come in Barking and Dagenham in the fight against such crime. Lies in the video undermine the work we have done.

SM This letter is unsigned.

VR This is because it came by email. The inspector said he would send me a copy though we haven't received it. I will get a signed copy and forward it to you.

SM Anything else you would like to introduce?

VR To give you an idea of the character of the man what we have learnt in Barking and Dagenham since 2006 is the fact that he doesn't pay too much attention to the truth but will stand up and speak at great length and even if what he is saying is not the truth people will listen.

[VR refers to a letter in the local papers]

[She stated that a letter was sent (11/12/08) to two local papers (Cllr Mrs Rush read the article) and he refers to himself as both Councillor Barnbrook and Greater

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London Assembly and he said it made no difference as to how many deaths there had been.]

This letter appeared in the local paper headlined 'number of murders not relevant'.

Whilst I agree arguing about numbers does not solve anything I think that ^{WHAT} it is very relevant the simple fact that there were no murders. There is a big difference between ^{is} no murders and one or three.

HS How did you come across the blog?

VR Politically – I am the Labour group's secretary. I sweep through a number of blogs on a daily basis.

HS How well read do you think these blogs are?

VR They are. – VERY

MM We had a resident labour party member tell us about the blog. Don't know what the number of hits are though.

VR It is on You Tube as well. There are links to his political party on his blogs so people who are not politically minded, looking at You Tube may pick up the blog. Regarding the number of hits, it appears to be well used.

MM It is easy to find on google. It wasn't difficult to find on You Tube.

SP Is the video still on the blog.

VR It is on all of them.

HR Why do you think it brings the council into disrepute?

VR When we have had a murder, not the last April, but the year before, we work with the Police and there is an awful lot of effort by the Partnership on community reassurance. Myself/Police will go into the community and reinforce community message. We have done a lot of that over the last two and a half years. Community have been responding well to reassurance message. Great relationships have built up with the Police. There is a trusted messenger relationship across the borough.

This throws that all off side. I have had people come up to me and say three murders – what are you keeping from us? I have had to say that they did not take place, but we are on the back-foot. When we have come so far in good community relations and our young people are engaging with the Police, it is frustrating to then have to say that this did not actually happen.

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Another example: Councillor Barnbrook is very good at inflaming situations. We have had an incident of TB in a primary school. We had one case. Once again Councillor Barnbrook has inflamed the community. He was at the school filming children. Parents demanded he turned the cameras off. He would have you believe that all the children had TB. It makes people fearful.

SM Can I ask – in your perception that there is anything particular in relation to Councillor Barnbrook's own position that makes it important for him to be careful what he says?

MM Fear of crime is the main issue in boroughs. There is a disparity between actual and fear of crime. Not just a reputational problem. Affects quality of life of all people in borough. People won't engage. Young people are more inclined to join gangs when there is a perception of crime. Also affects business. Older people are likely to leave their house after dark. If you come to the town centre in the evening it is remarkably quiet, and therefore this affects the borough. UNLIKE

Councillor Barnbrook is not currently the leader of the opposition but he was in 2006. There is now a new Leader of the Opposition who does not have the same profile as Councillor Barnbrook. The BNP's reputation is taken very seriously and they are a legitimate party. Councillor Barnbrook does hold sway with a good number of people in Barking and Dagenham. I think that in other boroughs people would also be able to pick out Richard Barnbrook. He then uses that profile to inflame situations and uses topics such as murder.

SM If there is credible evidence that fear of crime has increased more here than in other London boroughs and also you said that when this is discussed it increases people's anxiety levels. If you could provide evidence of this that would be useful.

VR We can get that.

SM Do you think Councillor Barnbrook made his comments knowing them to be false or is he just misconceived?

VR He made the comments knowingly. I don't have a personal assistant, someone who proof reads press statements – Councillor Barnbrook, as an assembly member, has far more access to correct and accurate information.

MM In his letter he acknowledges the evidence is wrong yet leaves the information on his website.

MM At worst he is lying, at best, it is a disregard for the truth. It is reckless and irresponsible without checking with the police and council. If he had checked with the Police and local authority, they would have confirmed the facts as being untrue.

The BNP is different to elsewhere in Britain. It is seen as credible, so when he says something like that a lot of people would believe him.

- SM So you are saying that it is not that it is Councillor Barnbrook, but also because he is an influential politician. *THIS IS NOT WHAT WE SAID - IT IS BECAUSE HE IS NOT ONLY CLLR BARNBROOK BUT ALSO ASSEMBLY MAN AND BELIEVE.*
- SP Are you able to give examples of people approaching you regarding the blog? *BY SOME BE AN INFLUENTIA POLITICIAN*
- VR A number of examples. It is very hard to deal with people's perception of crime. The only way you can do that is by being very honest with people. It is about reassurance and then people's perceptions change. We have seen it in other boroughs where people start to feel safe. We have now got to say we have to change people's perceptions. Changing people's perceptions is very difficult. *BUT WE ARE CONSTANTLY WORKING ON THIS*

SM One last thing. In terms of outcomes, as the complainant what would you like to see as an outcome?

VR I think I would like a public apology to the residents of Barking and Dagenham and London. I think that a period of time of cooling off until Councillor/Assemblyman Barnbrook understands that there are certain standards for elected members that he has to abide by. For example, sitting outside the Chamber for a couple of months. *SUSPENSION*

VR Impact also on his role as Assembly Member. I cannot see how you can impose on one and not the other - I assume that the standards are the same at the GLA and at LBBD.

SM If the matter proceeds, it will be a matter for the respective Standard Committees.

We will put together a transcript and send to you. If you could get it back to us by the following week with any other evidence. When it comes to producing a draft report we will invite your comments at that stage.

End of interview.

I have read these notes and accept them as a true and accurate record of the interview
Signed... *[Signature]* WITH MINOR AMENDMENTS
Dated... *7.2.09*

Sent: 01 April 2009 17:39
To: Prashar Sanjay
Subject: Fw: Serious Violence information

Sanjay

I am sorry this has taken a little time to get the information to you but I am sure you will understand the police pressures at the moment

I am now confident that the information provided by Inspector Boyle. Below evidences that there were NO individuals on life support during the period Cllr Barnbrook refers to in his evidence/interview

Cllr Val Rush

From: Hugh.Boyle@met.pnn.police.uk
To: Councillor Rush, Valerie
Sent: Wed Apr 01 17:31:12 2009
Subject: Serious Violence information
Val,

The following information taken from the CRIS crime reports relate to offences classified as Most Serious Violence (MSV) reported in the period 1 - 24 September 2008 for Barking & Dagenham Borough.

- a) 17 offences are classified as MSV - these are either injury to head or cuts to the body (based on revised Home Office counting rules)
- b) all the injuries were subsequently deemed non-serious.
- c) apart from hospital admissions for triage purposes, there were no critical injuries requiring intensive care (on life support).

Regards
Hugh
H Boyle
Inspector
P & R Unit - KG
755557
07801 794672

-----Original Message-----

From: Councillor Rush, Valerie [mailto:Valerie.Rush@lbbd.gov.uk]
Sent: 31 March 2009 17:15
To: Boyle Hugh - KG
Subject: RE: Your request - what is needed !
Importance: High

Hugh,
Could you please provide me with the following information please.

Information is requested on the number of victims of recorded serious violence (Most Serious Violence) on Barking & Dagenham Borough between 1 - 24 September 2008. I am particularly interested in the number who sustained such serious injuries that they were hospitalised, including those on life support machine/ in intensive care.

Thank you.

Regards,
Cllr Val Rush
Executive Member for Safer Neighbourhoods
and Communities
Tele No. 0208 595 1587

17/04/2009

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email: val.rush@lbbd.gov.uk

From:

It is the policy of the MPS that:

MPS personnel (or agents working on behalf of the MPS) must not use MPS systems to author, transmit or store documents such as electronic mail (e-mail) messages or attachments:

- * containing racist, homophobic, sexist, defamatory, offensive, illegal or otherwise inappropriate material;
- * containing material requiring a protective marking higher than RESTRICTED, (and not higher than NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED across the internet) without the use of approved encryption;
- * containing personal data for use other than in accordance with the notification(s) under the Data Protection Act, 1998 of the system(s) from which the data originates.

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- * containing personal data for use other than in accordance with the notification(s) under the Data Protection Act, 1998 of the system(s) from which the data originates.

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70

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[Click here to report this email as spam](#)

From: Councillor Rush, Valerie
Sent: Wed 18/03/2009 19:42
To: Prashar Sanjay
Subject: RE: Investigation Report

Thank you Sanjay, I fully understand the position. There are another couple of comments I will advise you on and its up to you what is done with them.

Cllr Barnbrook refers to 2 individuals who he states were on life support, and who did not die, when he made the blog.

Can I please advise you that to my certain knowledge bearing in mind that I am always briefed by the Borough Commander on all critical incidents when they happen in the borough, that during the timescale that Cllr Barnbrook was referring to in the video there were no such incidents or individuals.

The Only incident where a young man was stabbed in the borough and then driven to Newham by his friends before calling an ambulance and police, and who did end up on life support and was very lucky to recover happened just before Christmas.

So well outside the time that your investigation was covering.

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Regards,

Cllr Val Rush

Executive Member for Safer Neighbourhoods

and Communities

Tele No. 0208 595 1587

email: val.rush@lbbd.gov.uk

Response to Investigation Report
Case Reference: Sept-05/MC9/08

I have read the above report into the allegation made against me by Councillor Rush and wish to make the following points:

- I accept the general validity of the complaint but do not accept that the inaccuracy of my statement was deliberate.
- I did not know that the data contained in the recording was incorrect. I would not have posted the recording if I had known that it was incorrect.
- Once I realised that the data was incorrect, the recording was removed from the Internet on my instruction within 24 hours.
- Although I knew that the video was to be used for some purpose, I did not know the exact timing or media that would be used to convey it.
- The speed to the delivery of the report, _____ meant that some of the remarks I had intended to make, did not come out as I had intended them.
- I had meant to say that one girl from Barking and Dagenham had been murdered in Newham, not that she had been murdered within the Barking and Dagenham borough.
- The other two cases I mentioned were attempted murders and, at the time, the victims were in intensive care. Very fortunately these victims pulled through.
- When I stated that these were "murders" I had actually meant "attempted murders". This was not picked up in the editing of the report.
- The message I was trying to convey, in filming the report, was that knife crime in the borough of Barking and Dagenham is rife and proportionately one of the highest in London. My intention in highlighting this was to make people aware of this in order to engage and encourage them to join in combating the problem rather than to frighten people or to criticise the Metropolitan Police.
- The Metropolitan Police statistics that they publish are inaccurate.
- I apologise for passing on information that was incorrect. It had not been my intention to mislead anyone and the inaccuracies were unintentional.
- I do not apologise for trying to highlight a genuine problem in order to encourage something to be done about it.
- I consider that the complaint is part of a political campaign against me.

Richard Barnbrook

15 April 2009

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