

### STANDARDS COMPLAINT DECISION NOTICE

<b>Complaint ref</b>	IAT Number 016885	
<b>Subject Member</b>	Councillor AW Johnson	
<b>Council</b>	Herefordshire Council	
<b>Date of decision</b>	18 October 2018	
<b>Breach of the code (Y/N)</b>	Yes at F.1 of the Herefordshire Council Code of Conduct Link to code is <a href="#">here</a>	
<b>DECISION</b>		
<p>On 18 October 2018, the monitoring officer considered a complaint alleging that Councillor AW Johnson may have acted in breach of the code of conduct for members. The appointed independent person was consulted in considering the matter.</p> <p>The monitoring officer and the independent person concluded that Councillor AW Johnson did breach the code of conduct. The reasons for this are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There may be elements of interpretation within the Hereford Times article dated 20 August 2018 where Councillor Johnson is quoted but not in speech marks that <i>“he did not realise that a complaint against a member of his party had been upheld.”</i></li> <li>• Councillor Johnson was made aware at the time that a complaint against a member of his group had been upheld by the monitoring officer. A copy of the outcome letter had been sent to him as the then Group Leader so that he was aware of outcome. This was in July 2017.</li> <li>• There is no evidence that Councillor Johnson intended to deceive the Hereford Times as the complaint was dealt with a year previously. Councillor Johnson in the article is quoted as saying <i>“It would be inappropriate for me to comment until I at least know what the thing was about”</i>. With some sympathy as to how this article has been published without Councillor Johnson’s full response. It is however inaccurate to say that he was unaware of the complaint and the decision.</li> </ul> <p>It is recommended that Councillor Johnson apologise to Councillor EJP Harvey as he was aware of the outcome and to request a correction to the Hereford Times.</p> <p>The relevant section of the Herefordshire Council Code of Conduct is:</p>		
F	<p>Honesty</p> <p> Holders of public office should be truthful.</p>	F.1 Be truthful