

STANDARDS COMPLAINT DECISION NOTICE

Complaint ref	020398
Subject Member	Councillor Margaret Davies
Council	Clifford Parish Council
Date of decision	28 July 2020
Breach of the code (Y/N)	Yes

DECISION

On 28 July 2020, the monitoring officer considered a complaint alleging that Councillor Davies may have acted in breach of the code of conduct for members. The appointed independent person was consulted in considering the matter.

The monitoring officer and the independent person concluded that Councillor Davies did breach the code of conduct.

Summary of complaint

An allegation was received that Councillor Davies

- Failed to leave a meeting of the Clifford Parish Council held in May 2018 after a schedule 1 interest had been declared.
- discussed one item on the minutes of the February 2020 meeting of the Clifford Parish Council where she had declared a schedule 1 interest.

Reasons for decision

The 2012 code of conduct is clear at section 5 (a) that the member with a pecuniary interest should withdraw from participating. Removing oneself from the table and sitting at the back is not sufficient. I accept although this was the practice in many councils it did not reflect good practice especially for planning applications. As this was on advice of the clerk I find a technical breach but make no recommendations as this practice has now changed.

Commenting on the accuracy of the minutes for an item that you have an interest in, is a breach of the code. Councillor Davies had an interest in the matter and therefore even the minutes being approved at the next meeting is covered by the interest and there should have been no participation.