

STANDARDS COMPLAINT DECISION NOTICE

Complaint ref	022114
Subject Member	Councillor C Hadley
Council	Pencombe Parish Council
Date of decision	18 February 2022
Breach of the code (Y/N)	Yes

DECISION

On 18 February 2022, the monitoring officer considered a complaint alleging that Councillor Hadley may have acted in breach of the code of conduct for members. The appointed independent person were consulted in considering the matter.

The monitoring officer concluded that Councillor Hadley did breach the code of conduct.

Summary of complaint

An allegation was received that Councillor Hadley:

1. That statements made by Councillor Hadley to the clerk of the parish council were false and that this led to a false allegation being submitted to Herefordshire Council.
2. Councillor Hadley had failed to declare an interest by virtue of a family connection in respect of land owned by the complainant
3. The parish council had failed to investigate the matter.

Reasons for decision

Point 1

The conversation which led to Councillor Hadley speaking to the clerk took place when he was not acting as a councillor. Councillor Hadley relayed the information to the clerk and the clerk took action which they felt was appropriate. The code of conduct does not seek to govern what a councillor does in their private life so I find no breach of the code in this respect.

Point 2

The complainant asserted that there was a family connection in that a relative owned adjoining land to the complainants. This would amount to an Other Declarable Interest, if an interest needed to be disclosed. In the circumstances of the planning application in question it is not considered that there was any impact on the welfare or financial position of a family member and therefore there was no need to disclose an other declarable interest. It was noted that Councillor Hadley has declared interests in other matters under discussion at parish council meetings so is aware of his responsibilities in this respect.

However, there is no declaration of interest form for Councillor Hadley so there is a finding of a breach of the code of conduct. Councillor Hadley is to submit an up to date form within 28 days.

Point 3

We have noted the correspondence between the clerk to the parish council and the complainant. Complaints against a parish council are outside of the jurisdiction of Herefordshire Council.