

STANDARDS COMPLAINT DECISION NOTICE

Complaint ref	019795
Subject Member	Councillor Roger Page
Council	Bromyard and Winslow Town Council
Date of decision	27 August 2020
Breach of the code (Y/N)	Yes

DECISION

On 27 August 2020, the deputy monitoring officer considered a complaint alleging that Councillor Page may have acted in breach of the code of conduct for members. The appointed independent person was consulted in considering the matter.

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

Summary of complaint

It was alleged that Councillor Page:

- brought the Bromyard and Winslow Town Council into dispute by consorting with a known property developer who had recently purchased commercial property in Bromyard on a publicly available video
- Failed to declare an interest when the matter of appointing co-optees was considered at a meeting of the Bromyard and Winslow Town Council meeting held on 25 November 2019

Reasons for decision

The reasons for the decision were that Councillor Page can be seen on the video footage in his mayoral regalia. Councillor Page has confirmed that he gave consent for the video to be shot at the land owned by a well known property developer who had recently purchased commercial property in Bromyard. He would have been better advised not to have attended dressed in his regalia and holding himself out as the Mayor and without the support of a Council officer. It looked as though he sought personal attention during his visit.

With regard to the failure to declare a conflict of interest at the council meeting on 25 November 2019:

- a) Councillor Page had previously met one of the proposed co-optees and knew he was an employee of the property developer referred to above.
- b) Councillor Page had invited third parties to make donations to the Mayor's Charity and on the day of the council meeting he had received, on behalf of the Council, a donation from that property developer which was accepted on the day of the appointment and selection of co-optees.
- c) The employee of the property developer was appointed as co-optee of the council and Councillor Page used his casting vote to confirm the appointment.
- d) Councillor Page should have declared **a conflict of interest** and excused himself from the appointment process for the co-optees, because at the time of voting and the casting

vote for the appointment of the co-optee, he had met the successful applicant, knew he was employed by the property developer and had received a financial donation from that property developer to the Mayors Charity, immediately before the council meeting started.

- e) Holders of public office have a duty to declare interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- f) In addition, holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.