

STANDARDS COMPLAINT DECISION NOTICE

Complaint ref	34 00496
Subject Member	Councillor J Preece
Council	Leominster Town Council
Date of decision	31 May 2022
Breach of the code (Y/N)	Yes

DECISION

On 31 May 2022, the Senior Solicitor, Governance considered a complaint alleging that Councillor Preece may have acted in breach of the code of conduct for members. The appointed independent persons were consulted in considering the matter.

The Senior Solicitor, Governance concluded that Councillor Preece did breach the Leominster Town code of conduct.

Summary of complaint

The complainant alleged that Councillor Preece breached the Leominster Town Council code of conduct and specifically the following paragraphs:

5.2.8 D Accountability as Cllr Preece was not accountable to the public for their decisions and actions in relation to a planning application

5.2.8 F Honesty as Cllr Preece had not been truthful in that it was Cllr Preece that proposed support for a planning application that was considered at a meeting of Leominster Town Council Highways and Planning committee on at the 22 November 2021 which he subsequently stated not to support on 28 February 2022.

Reasons

The Senior Solicitor, Governance carefully considered the comments of both the complainant, Cllr Preece and Independent Persons.

Copies of the minutes of the relevant Highways and Planning meeting and the clerk's hand written note of the meeting have been provided and both show that the proposer for the motion to support the planning application in question with no objection was the subject matter.

A copy of the minutes of Highways and Planning committee of 28 February 2022 have also been provided which show that there was discussion of the same planning application and issues were raised by members of the public but no attributable responses from the members of the committee are recorded. However Cllr Preece has confirmed in his response to the complaint that he did propose the motion to support the planning application on 22 November 2021 (although Cllr Preece now states that he had reservations on the access and position of the proposed development) and that Cllr Preece did in the 28 February 2022 meeting state that he did not want the proposal (on the basis of the access).

I would advise that Cllr Preece makes a public apology.