



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
STANDARDS HEARING SUB-COMMITTEE

Held: TUESDAY, 21 APRIL 2026 at 5.00pm

P R E S E N T :

Mr Simon Smith – Chair
Councillor Cank
Dr Edward Thompson

Also Present:

Ms. Amy Owen-Davis – Deputy Monitoring Officer
Ms. Jessica Skidmore – Governance Services Officer

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7. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Simon Smith was appointed as Chair.

There were no apologies for absence.

8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare their interests in the business to be discussed.

There were no declarations of interest.

9. HEARING PROCEDURE

The Deputy Monitoring Officer submitted and summarised the hearing panel procedure.

RESOLVED:

That the Hearing Panel Procedure be noted.

10. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

11. PRIVATE SESSION

The meeting moved into Private Session to consider firstly, whether the rest of the hearing should be in private or not and secondly whether the papers should retain confidentiality for the duration of the hearing.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer recommended that the meeting be conducted in public as there was no overwhelming reason why proceedings should be held in private. In relation to the papers which comprised the complaint it was advised those should retain their status of being private as they contained matters for which there would be a reasonable expectation of confidentiality, however the report suitably anonymised could be made public following the meeting if findings were made on a breach of code of conduct and upheld by the Standards Committee due to convene after the hearing.

The Sub-Committee addressed the Appellant, Councillor Kitterick, in which he had noted that he was comfortable to proceed in Public Session.

The Sub-Committee were agreed that the meeting should reconvene in public session for the purpose of openness and transparency and that the confidentiality of the papers should be retained until the outcome of the hearing.

RESOLVED:

1. That the press and public be permitted to remain in the meeting for consideration of the complaint against a Councillor,
2. That the papers for the meeting remain private as they are deemed to contain “exempt” information, in accordance with the provisions of Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended and as defined in the Paragraph detailed below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, and taking all circumstances into account, it was considered that the public interest in maintaining the information as exempt outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

Paragraph 1

Information relating to any individual

Paragraph 2

Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual

Paragraph 7a

Information which is subject to any obligation of confidentiality

Paragraph 7c

The deliberations of a standards committee or of a sub-committee of a standards committee established under the provisions of Part 3 of the Local Government Act 2000 in reaching any finding on a matter referred under the provisions of section 60(2) or (3), 70(4) or (5).

12. HEARING OF THE DEPUTY MONITORING OFFICER'S REPORT INTO A COMPLAINT AGAINST COUNCILLORS, COMPLAINT NUMBER 11/2025

Amy Owen-Davis, Deputy Monitoring Officer, submitted a report providing details of an investigation into complaint number 11/2025 against Councillor Kitterick and outlined the Standards process to date.

It was noted that a transcript of the relevant Council meeting had been circulated to all parties and agreed as an accurate record. The Sub-Committee, following discussion with Councillor Kitterick, agreed that it was not necessary to play or consider the audio recording provided and would rely on the transcript as the record of proceedings.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer outlined the legal framework for consideration of the complaint and drew specific attention to Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights in relation to freedom of expression. It was advised that Members must consider whether the comments made constituted political speech, which would attract enhanced protection, or whether they were personal in nature and therefore subject to restriction. Relevant case law and guidance were highlighted in the report to assist Members in reaching their determination.

Councillor Kitterick was invited to address the Sub-Committee. He set out his position that the comments in question were made within the context of political debate and were intended to challenge decision-making and hold other Members to account. He stated that robust language was an inherent part of political discourse and that his comments did not exceed acceptable boundaries. He further expressed concern that any finding of breach could have a detrimental impact on freedom of expression and democratic debate.

Members of the Sub-Committee discussed the report and sought clarification from Councillor Kitterick on the context and nature of his remarks. It was noted that Councillor Kitterick confirmed he had been acting in his capacity as a Councillor at the time of the incident and did not dispute the accuracy of the transcript. He acknowledged that, with hindsight, some wording may have been expressed differently, however maintained that his conduct did not amount to a breach of the Code of Conduct.

The Independent Person, Michael Edwards, was invited to give his views in relation to the complaint. He advised that, whilst acknowledging the importance of political debate, he considered that certain comments made extended beyond political expression and were personal in nature. He supported the

conclusions of the report and advised that the Sub-Committee should determine where the boundary lay between robust political debate and unacceptable conduct.

In response to questioning, Councillor Kitterick indicated that he would be willing to undertake further training, if required, but did not consider an apology to be appropriate in the circumstances.

At the conclusion of submissions, Councillor Kitterick was given the final opportunity to sum up his case. Following this, Councillor Kitterick left the meeting while the Sub-Committee retired to deliberate and reach its decision.

The Sub-Committee then withdrew to consider the matter in private session. Following full and detailed consideration of the report, the transcript and the representations made by all parties, the Sub-Committee reconvened in public session to deliver the recommendations of the Sub-Committee.

The Chair announced that the Sub-Committee had reached a decision having taken into account all of the evidence presented.

RESOLVED:

- a) **That Councillor Kitterick has breached paragraph 2(a) of the City Council's Code of Conduct by failing to treat others with respect.** On 18th September 2025, in the course of a speech at Full Council concerning a Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman report of maladministration, Councillor Kitterick, in referring to Councillor Dawood, attacked the *person* not the *issue* by making an irrelevant and unwarranted reference to his taking of Councillor's Allowances. This was disrespectful and designed to humiliate.
- b) A separate complaint of disrespect displayed towards Councillor 2 was, on balance, not found to have constituted "disrespect" because although the comments were offensive and designed to embarrass Councillor 2, they were broadly related to the issue under debate and benefitted from the protection afforded to 'political expression' under Article 10(2) of the European Convention on Human Rights.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Hearing Panel makes the following recommendations to the Standards Committee:

- i) That Councillor Kitterick provide Councillor Dawood with a written apology within 14 days.
- ii) That there be a press release of the findings.
- iii) That the Deputy Monitoring Officer arranges training for Councillor Kitterick on the Code of Conduct, noting his verbal agreement to attend the same.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7:07pm.