

Griffiths, Susan

From: Mike Dudfield <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 26 August 2017 12:37
To: Griffiths, Susan
Subject: Re: Hearings Sub-Committee 22 September 2017
Attachments: Response to Bell's submission - 23.08.rtf

Sue,

Thank you for this and the previous emails. Attached is my response to Councillor Bell's statement and Forms A-C. In response to your questions -

1. I do not intend calling any witnesses.
2. I do not intend asking for any part of the hearing to be in private. There is no reference in my report or any of the appended documents to any subject matter concerning legal proceedings involving the Football Club and I am not aware of any such proceedings. Councillor Bell's statement has two paragraphs specifically relating to his involvement with the Football Club none of which appears to me to be either sensitive or prejudicial to the future of the Football Club. Logistically, it would be very difficult for a hearing to be stopped (and the press and public removed) on each occasion anyone wants to refer to the Football Club.
3. I do not intend asking for any part of the report or appended documents to be withheld from the public.
4. I do not intend calling any additional witnesses.

When you send the papers to the Standards Committee members, can you please send a hard copy to me so that I have the full papers in the same format and page documentation that the Committee has. My home address is [REDACTED]

Thanks

Mike

From: Griffiths, Susan
Sent: Friday, August 18, 2017 3:44 PM
To: Dudfield, Mike
Subject: Hearings Sub-Committee 22 September 2017

Hi Mike,

I attach letter in relation to the above Hearing.

I have sent the same information in an e-mail, however in order to follow the formal process I have replicated this in a letter.

Kind Regards, Sue

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West Lancashire Borough Council

Standards Complaint - Councillor Roger Bell, Burscough Parish Council

Response to Councillor Bell's submissions

Meeting on 30 June 2016

Councillor Bell raises the question of the capacity in which he attended this meeting claiming that he was invited as a representative of OPSTA. It is disappointing that Councillor Bell raises that issue now when he could have raised it earlier. It was raised in his privileged email to me of 04 April and, in my reply of 05 April, I asked him questions so that I could investigate his claim. I received no response to that email and no response to the draft report which was sent to him on 10 May. I have recently spoken to Ms Fellowes regarding Councillor Bell's claim. When I mentioned OPSTA Ms Fellowes asked what it was because she had never heard of the organisation. She told me that the previous meetings in which she had been involved concerned the relationship between Martin Mere and the footpath to the railway station and other marketing matters involving Martin Mere and Burscough. She was aware that Councillor Bell was a Parish Councillor but not that he held any other representative position. She accepts that her telephone invitation to Councillor Bell was to discuss marketing matters and did not specifically refer to his position as a Councillor. He had been invited with the other Parish Councillors on a previous occasion but had not attended.

As to the conversation that took place between Councillor Bell and Mr Brooks, prior to undertaking any interviews, I received a telephone call from Councillor Bell and one of the points that he made was to request that I interviewed Ms Fellowes. In her statement Ms Fellowes confirms that Councillor Bell made the reference to shooting all the pink-footed geese on several occasions and that he related it to his views regarding the Football Club's proposal for a new stadium. She goes on to say that she felt uncomfortable at what Councillor Bell was saying and that his attitude was aggressive. This does not seem to suggest the making of a humorous comment.

Parish Council Meeting on 13 July 2016

Councillor Bell does not deny swearing and he accepts that he was rude to the Chairman of the Parish Council. He seeks to blame that on the Chairman's 'consistent failure to follow standing orders'. Regardless of the reason for his behaviour, if he was disrespectful to the Chairman it must follow that his conduct was disrespectful to the other Parish Councillors present and Mr Brooks whose proposal was being debated.

The majority of Councillor Bell's response centres on his disagreement with Mr Brooks' proposal regarding the branding theme which he had proposed to the Parish Council. Councillor Bell had the right at the meeting to question the proposal. The issue I have investigated is the manner in which he did that and his conduct in a public meeting when members of the public were in attendance. It is not part of my remit to consider the validity of the proposal.

Mike Dudfield
26 August 2017