



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

Report of an investigation by Wilkin Chapman LLP, appointed by the Monitoring Officer for South Kesteven District Council, into allegations concerning Councillor Tim Harrison.

Dated: 29 October 2024

# VOLUME 2

# SCHEDULE OF EVIDENCE

wilkin chapman llp  
solicitors

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a limited liability partnership registered in England number OC343261  
authorised and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority

## Appendix A

### Schedule of evidence taken into account and list of unused material

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16	WC 2	Complaint of Councillor Jeal 03.03.24 (clown)
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### List of unused material

Investigator's notes, file correspondence and drafts



## **SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL COUNCILLOR CODE OF CONDUCT**

(Adopted by South Kesteven District Council at Council on 25 November 2021)

### **Purpose of the Code of Conduct**

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist you, as a Councillor, in modelling the behaviour that is expected of you, to provide a personal check and balance, and to set out the type of conduct that could lead to action being taken against you. It is also to protect you, the public, fellow Councillors, Local Authority Officers, and the reputation of local government. It sets out general principles of conduct expected of all Councillors and your specific obligations in relation to standards of conduct. The Local Government Association encourages the use of support, training and mediation prior to action being taken using the Code. The fundamental aim of the Code is to create and maintain public confidence in the role of Councillor and local government.

### **General principles of councillor conduct**

Everyone in public office at all levels; all who serve the public or deliver public services, including ministers, civil servants, Councillors, and local authority officers; should uphold the Seven Principles of Public Life, also known as the Nolan Principles.

Building on these principles, the following general principles have been developed specifically for the role of Councillor:

In accordance with the public trust placed in me, on all occasions:

- I act with integrity and honesty
- I act lawfully
- I treat all persons fairly and with respect
- I lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of Councillor.

In undertaking my role:

- I impartially exercise my responsibilities in the interests of the local community
- I do not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person
- I avoid conflicts of interest
- I exercise reasonable care and diligence
- I ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with my Local Authority's requirements and in the public interest

## **Application of the Code of Conduct**

This Code of Conduct applies to you as soon as you sign your declaration of acceptance of the office of Councillor or attend your first meeting as a co-opted member and continues to apply to you until you cease to be a Councillor.

This Code of Conduct applies to you when you are acting in your capacity as a Councillor which may include when:

- You misuse your position as a Councillor
- Your actions would give the impression to a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of all the facts that you are acting as a Councillor

The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:

- At face-to-face meetings
- At online or telephone meetings
- In written communication
- In verbal communication
- In non-verbal communication
- In electronic and social media communication, posts, statements, and comments

You are also expected to uphold high standards of conduct and show leadership at all times when acting as a Councillor.

Your Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Conduct, and you are encouraged to seek advice from your Monitoring Officer on any matters that may relate to the Code of Conduct. Town and parish councillors are encouraged to seek advice from their Clerk, who may refer matters to the Monitoring Officer.

## **Standards of councillor conduct**

This section sets out your obligations, which are the minimum standards of conduct required of you as a Councillor. Should your conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken.

Guidance is included to help explain the reasons for the obligations and how they should be followed.

### **General Conduct**

#### **1. Respect**

As a councillor:

- 1.1 I treat other councillors and members of the public with respect.**
- 1.2 I treat local authority employees, employees and representatives of partner organisations and those volunteering for the local authority with respect and respect the role they play.**

Respect means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word.

Debate and having different views are all part of a healthy democracy. As a Councillor, you can express, challenge, criticise and disagree with views, ideas, opinions, and policies in a robust but civil manner.

You should not, however, subject individuals, groups of people or organisations to personal attack.

In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously. Rude and offensive behaviour lowers the public's expectations and confidence in Councillors.

In return, you have a right to expect respectful behaviour from the public. If members of the public are being abusive, intimidatory or threatening you are entitled to stop any conversation or interaction in person or online and report them to the local authority, the relevant social media provider, or the police. This also applies to fellow councillors, where action could then be taken under the Councillor Code of Conduct, and local authority employees, where concerns should be raised in line with the local authority's councillor officer protocol.

## **2. Bullying, harassment and discrimination**

As a councillor:

**2.1 I do not bully any person.**

**2.2 I do not harass any person.**

**2.3 I promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person.**

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate, or injure the recipient. Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident, happen face-to-face on social media, in emails or phone calls, happen in the workplace or at work social events and may not always be obvious or noticed by others.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as conduct that causes alarm or distress or puts people in fear of violence and must involve such conduct on at least two occasions. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a person in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person.

Unlawful discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on local authorities. Councillors have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the local authority's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services.

### **3. Impartiality of officers of the council**

As a councillor:

#### **3.1 I do not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the local authority.**

Officers work for the local authority as a whole and must be politically neutral (unless they are political assistants). They should not be coerced or persuaded to act in a way that would undermine their neutrality. You can question officers in order to understand, for example, their reasons for proposing to act in a particular way, or the content of a report that they have written. However, you must not try and force them to act differently, change their advice, or alter the content of that report, if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

### **4. Confidentiality and access to information**

As a councillor:

#### **4.1 I do not disclose information:**

- a) given to me in confidence by anyone**
- b) acquired by me which I believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, unless:**
  - i. I have received the consent of a person authorised to give it.**
  - ii. I am required by law to do so.**
  - iii. The disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or**
  - iv. the disclosure is:**
    - 1. reasonable and in the public interest; and**
    - 2. made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the local authority; and**
    - 3. I have consulted the Monitoring Officer prior to its release.**

#### **4.2 I do not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of my role as a Councillor for the advancement of myself, my friends, my family members, my employer, or my business interests.**

#### **4.3 I do not prevent anyone from getting information that they are entitled to by law.**

Local authorities must work openly and transparently, and their proceedings and printed materials are open to the public, except in certain legally defined circumstances. You should work on this basis, but there will be times when it is required by law that discussions, documents, and other information relating to or held by the local authority must be treated in a confidential manner. Examples include personal data relating to individuals or information relating to ongoing negotiations.

#### **5. Disrepute**

As a councillor:

##### **5.1 I do not bring my role or local authority into disrepute.**

As a Councillor, you are trusted to make decisions on behalf of your community and your actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public. You should be aware that your actions might have an adverse impact on you, other councillors and/or your local authority and may lower the public's confidence in your or your local authority's ability to discharge your/its functions. For example, behaviour that is considered dishonest and/or deceitful can bring your local authority into disrepute.

You are able to hold the local authority and fellow councillors to account and are able to constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes undertaken by the council whilst continuing to adhere to other aspects of this Code of Conduct.

#### **6. Use of position**

As a councillor:

##### **6.1 I do not use, or attempt to use, my position improperly to the advantage or disadvantage of myself or anyone else.**

Your position as a member of the local authority provides you with certain opportunities, responsibilities, and privileges, and you make choices all the time that will impact others.

However, you should not take advantage of these opportunities to further your own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly.

#### **7. Use of local authority resources and facilities**

As a councillor:

##### **7.1 I do not misuse council resources.**

**7.2 I will, when using the resources of the local authority or authorising their use by others:**

- a) act in accordance with the local authority's requirements; and**
- b) ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the local authority or of the office to which I have been elected or appointed.**

You may be provided with resources and facilities by the local authority to assist you in carrying out your duties as a councillor.

Examples include:

- Office support
- Stationery
- Equipment such as phones, and computers
- Transport
- Access and use of local authority buildings and rooms

These are given to you to help you carry out your role as a councillor more effectively and are not to be used for business or personal gain. They should be used in accordance with the purpose for which they have been provided and the local authority's own policies regarding their use.

**8. Complying with the Code of Conduct**

As a Councillor:

- 8.1 I undertake Code of Conduct training provided by my local authority.**
- 8.2 I cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination.**
- 8.3 I do not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved with the administration of any investigation or proceedings.**
- 8.4 I comply with any sanction imposed on me following a finding that I have breached the Code of Conduct.**

It is extremely important for you as a councillor to demonstrate high standards, for you to have your actions open to scrutiny and for you not to undermine public trust in the local authority or its governance. If you do not understand or are concerned about the local authority's processes in handling a complaint you should raise this with your Monitoring Officer.

**Protecting your reputation and the reputation of the local authority**

## **9. Interests**

As a councillor:

### **9.1 I register and disclose my interests.**

Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Monitoring Officer to establish and maintain a register of interests of members of the authority.

You need to register your interests so that the public, local authority employees and fellow councillors know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest.

The register is a public document that can be consulted when (or before) an issue arises. The register also protects you by allowing you to demonstrate openness and a willingness to be held accountable. You are personally responsible for deciding whether or not you should disclose an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for you to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also important that the public know about any interest that might have to be disclosed by you or other councillors when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of local governance is maintained.

You should note that failure to register or disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest as set out in **Table 1**, is a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.

**Appendix B** sets out the detailed provisions on registering and disclosing interests. If in doubt, you should always seek advice from your Monitoring Officer.

## **10. Gifts and hospitality**

As a councillor:

- 10.1 I do not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the local authority or from persons who may apply to the local authority for any permission, licence, or other significant advantage.**
- 10.2 I register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 within 28 days of its receipt.**
- 10.3 I register with the Monitoring Officer any significant gift or hospitality that I have been offered but have refused to accept.**

In order to protect your position and the reputation of the local authority, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you because you are a councillor. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, you do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a councillor, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. It is also important to note that it is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with your duties as a councillor. If you are unsure, do contact your Monitoring Officer for guidance.

## **Appendix A – The Seven Principles of Public Life**

The principles are:

### **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

### **Integrity**

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must disclose and resolve any interests and relationships.

### **Objectivity**

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

### **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

### **Openness**

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

### **Honesty**

Holders of public office should be truthful.

### **Leadership**

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

## **Appendix B – Registering interests**

Within 28 days of becoming a member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests)** which are as described in "The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012". You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 2 (Other Registerable Interests)**.

**"Disclosable Pecuniary Interest"** means an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you are aware of your partner's interest, within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below.

**"Partner"** means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

1. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.
2. A 'sensitive interest' is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the councillor, or a person connected with the councillor, being subject to violence or intimidation.
3. Where you have a 'sensitive interest' you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

### **Non participation in case of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest**

4. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in **Table 1**, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion, or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest.
5. Where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet Member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

### **Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests**

6. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your Other Registerable Interests (as set out in **Table 2**), you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

### **Disclosure of Non-Registerable Interests**

7. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in Table 1) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise, you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.
8. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **affects** –
  - a) Your own financial interest or well-being.
  - b) A financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate; or
  - c) a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under Other Registerable Interests as set out in **Table 2**

You must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied:

9. Where a matter (referred to in paragraph 8 above) **affects** the financial interest or well-being:
  - a) To a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
  - b) a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise, you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

10. Where you have an Other Registerable Interest or Non-Registerable Interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet

member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it.

**Table 1: Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation</b>	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
<b>Sponsorship</b>	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
<b>Contracts</b>	Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</li> <li>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</li> </ul>
<b>Land and Property</b>	Any beneficial interest in land which is

	within the area of the council. 'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.
<b>Licenses</b>	Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer
<b>Corporate tenancies</b>	Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) the landlord is the council; and</li> <li>(b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of</li> </ul>
<b>Securities</b>	Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and</li> <li>(b) either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</li> <li>(ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/ her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

\* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

\* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

**Table 2: Other Registrable Interests**

You must register as an Other Registerable Interest:

- a) any unpaid directorships
- b) any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority
- c) any body:
  - (i) exercising functions of a public nature
  - (ii) directed to charitable purposes or
  - (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)  
of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management

**From:** Graham Watts <Graham.Watts@southkesteven.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 03 March 2024 19:43  
**To:** Cllr Graham Jeal  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Code of Conduct Complaint against clrr Harrison

Good evening Councillor Jeal,

Thank you very much for your complaint – you will receive a formal acknowledgement in due course.

Regards  
Graham

**Graham Watts**  
**Assistant Director (Governance and Public Protection) and Monitoring Officer**  
South Kesteven District Council,  
Council Offices, The Picture House,  
St Catherines Road, Grantham,  
Lincolnshire, NG31 6TT  
Tel: (01476) 406224  
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**From:** Cllr Graham Jeal <graham.jeal@southkesteven.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 3, 2024 4:02 PM  
**To:** Graham Watts <Graham.Watts@southkesteven.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Code of Conduct Complaint against clrr Harrison

Graham,

I would like to place a code of conduct complaint against clrr Harrison for the description of a fellow councillor as a "clown".

In accepting the role of councillor we all agree to follow the South Kesteven District Council Code of Conduct which incorporates the Nolan Principles. I believe that this post is in breach of 5 of the 7 Nolan principles. Namely:

- **Selflessness:** Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. Making unsubstantiated public slurs on fellow councillors is not in the public interest.
- **Integrity:** Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

A public slur on a fellow councillor in an attempt to divert attention from legitimate failings within the administration shows a low level of integrity and is not in the public interest. This is unbecoming language of an elected representative and brings the council into disrepute.

- **Objectivity:** Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Public discriminatory slurs breach the requirement to act without bias or discrimination.

- **Honesty:** Holders of public office should be truthful.

This dishonest social media post is a totally dishonest slur against a fellow councillor who is doing their job pointing out failures in the administration.

- **Leadership:** Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Cllr Harrison enjoys a leadership position within the administration by virtue of his chairmanship of a committee, therefore he is using his added responsibility to elevate his false and dishonest slur of a fellow councillor.

I know you will attend this this urgently, I reserve the right to present a copy of this complaint to the press – but I am sure that you will understand that I consider this behavior unbecoming of a councillor and should be attended to immediately

Yours faithfully

Graham Jeal



## SOUTH KESTEVEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

## COMPLAINT AGAINST A DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

## MONITORING OFFICER ASSESSMENT DECISION NOTICE

**Subject Member: Councillor Tim Harrison**

**Complainant: Councillor Graham Jeal**

**Date of Assessment: 21 March 2024**

**Summary of complaints:**

Councillor Tim Harrison is alleged to have described a fellow Councillor as a 'clown' on a social media post.

**Alleged breach of the Councillor Code of Conduct:**

Councillor Tim Harrison is alleged to have breached the following aspects of the Nolan Principles contained within the Councillor Code of Conduct:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Honesty
- Leadership

**Summary of response from the Subject Councillor:**

Councillor Harrison indicated that he stands by every word in the post, with the main emphasis being that Councillor Jeal indicated in response to bins not being collected that this was the most unhappy he had seen people, which Councillor Harrison claimed as being ridiculous. Councillor Harrison added that if Councillor Jeal does not want responses to his posts he should not publish posts.

In further correspondence with Councillor Harrison where I challenged the public perception of the comment in the context of the post, he explained that the proof is in the lexical semantics and that he most definitely did not call Councillor Jeal a clown, with there being no reference to Councillor Jeal - merely a comment. Councillor Harrison was of the view that if Councillor Jeal assumes he is a clown from the statement included in the post that is just subjective.

**Information considered:**

I have reviewed the content of the complaint submitted by the complainant.

I have reviewed the response of the Subject Councillor to the allegations made against him, together with subsequent correspondence regarding the perception of the post and subsequent comment, which is the subject of the complaint.

**Assessment:**

Councillor Harrison was elected to the Council in May 2023. He is Deputy Leader of the Council's Grantham Independent Group and Chairman of the Council's Governance and Audit Committee. Councillor Harrison has attended Councillor Code of Conduct training since the commencement of this municipal year.

The post referenced in the complaint provides a clear link to the business of South Kesteven District Council. This demonstrates that the Subject Councillor is acting in an official capacity. The Councillor Code of Conduct was therefore engaged.

The first assessment stage in the procedure for dealing with complaints against Councillors consists of a jurisdictional test. The complaint, taking the above information into account, complied with the principles of the jurisdictional test which meant it passed through to the second assessment stage.

As part of the second assessment stage the following assessment was undertaken against the following criteria included in the procedure for dealing with complaints against Councillors:

Sufficient evidence

I am satisfied that there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate whether or not a potential breach of the Code of Conduct occurred in respect of this complaint.

Alternative action

I have given due consideration to alternative, more appropriate, remedies that should be explored first, including the possibility of informal resolution between the two parties and whether any offer from the Subject Councillor to settle the complaint informally is reasonable.

The Subject Councillor refutes that a breach of Code of Conduct has occurred and that the complaint is vexatious in nature. In view of this, I do not consider there is any possibility of resolving the matter informally.

Robust political debate

Where a complaint is made by a Councillor against another Councillor, a greater allowance for robust political debate may be given, bearing in mind the right to freedom of speech.

I do not believe the comment made can be quantified as robust political debate and it is also my view that this crosses the line associated with a Councillor's right to the freedom of speech.

## Seriousness

I have given due consideration as to whether the complaint is malicious, vexatious, politically motivated or 'tit-for-tat'.

I do not believe the complaint has been submitted in a malicious or vexatious manner and do not consider it to be politically motivated or tit-for-tat.

## Public interest

I have given due consideration as to whether it would be in the public interest to refer the complaint for investigation or other action and whether it is serious enough to warrant any available sanctions.

I do not believe that it is in the public interest to refer this complaint for formal investigation, subject to the conditions of this notice being complied with.

In assessing the complaint, I did not feel it necessary to request further information from the complainants, Subject Councillor or any other witnesses.

## Conclusion

The post published by Councillor Harrison contains a title 'what a clown world' with a photograph of Councillor Jeal with a quote 'bins generate as much unhappiness as I have ever seen', which is a link to an article on lincsonline.co.uk.

A subsequent comment from Councillor Harrison then reads:

*"It speaks volumes for Mr Jeal's quality of life if having a bin collected late one week is the most unhappiness he has ever seen. Maybe he should get out in the town more, happy to take you around New Street, Greyfriars, Riverside .... This comment is beyond that of a clown it is downright insulting to those in town that are really struggling. Taxi for Jeal ..."*

I believe that a reasonable member of the public reading this post would insinuate that Councillor Harrison is implying that Councillor Jeal's comment is beyond that of a clown, thereby insinuating that Councillor Jeal is himself either a clown or something perceived as being worse than a clown. This is not consistent with the following part of the Councillor Code of Conduct which I do not believe a reasonable member of the public would expect from someone in public office:

### 1. *Respect*

*As a councillor:*

*1.1 I treat other councillors and members of the public with respect.*

**Independent Person considerations:**

The first Independent Person believes that these comments cross the bar of freedom of speech and constitute a breach of the Councillor Code of Conduct.

The second Independent Person agrees with the assessment set out in this Decision Notice.

**Monitoring Officer Decision:**

That Councillor Tim Harrison is found to be in breach of paragraph 1.1 of the Councillor Code of Conduct, but no further action be taken subject to:

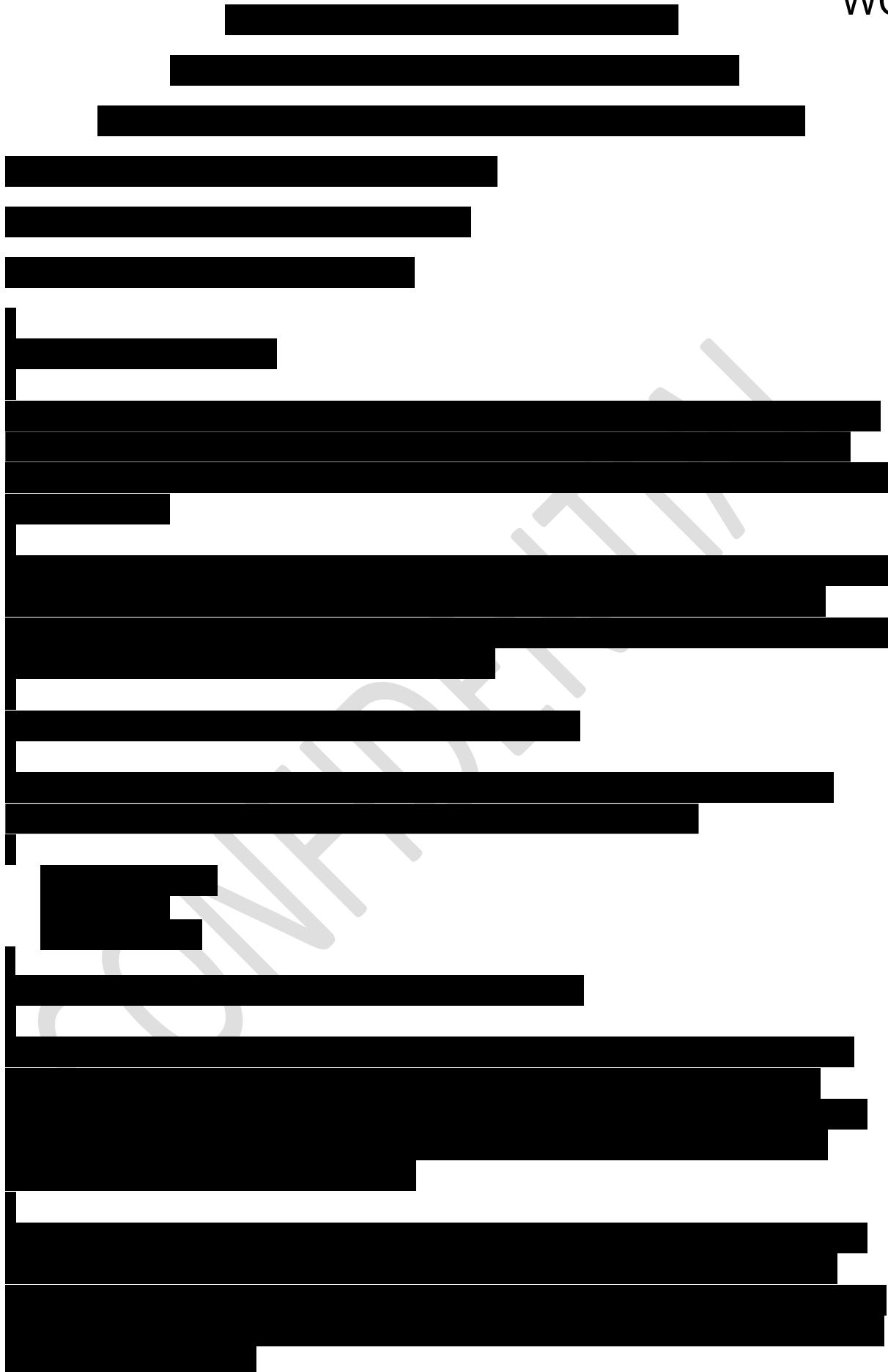
- i) The comment commencing “*it speaks volumes ...*” being removed in its entirety from Councillor Harrison’s Facebook post titled “what a clown word”.
- ii) The issuing of an apology to Councillor Graham Jeal which, in the opinion of the Monitoring Officer, is appropriate and genuine.

Graham Watts  
Monitoring Officer  
South Kesteven District Council



Country	Percentage (%)
United States	13
Canada	14
United Kingdom	16
Germany	17
France	18
Italy	19
Spain	20
Australia	21
New Zealand	22
Japan	23









A black and white image featuring a series of horizontal bars of varying lengths and positions, creating a sense of depth and motion. The bars are mostly black, with some white and grey highlights. A large, faint, circular watermark is visible in the center.

A large black rectangular redaction box covers the majority of the page content. In the lower right corner, there is a faint, diagonal watermark that reads "DEFINITIVE".

The image shows a document page with several black rectangular redaction bars. A large, diagonal watermark reading 'CONFIDENTIAL' is printed across the page. The text is in a bold, sans-serif font, oriented diagonally from the bottom-left towards the top-right. The background of the page is white.



A high-contrast, black and white image showing a series of horizontal bars of varying lengths and positions, creating a abstract, stepped effect. The bars are composed of thick black lines on a white background. The lengths of the bars decrease from left to right, creating a sense of depth or a staircase-like pattern. There are several white spaces and black spaces of varying widths, some with irregular edges, suggesting a digital or abstract source.





Country	Percentage (%)
United States	78
Canada	75
United Kingdom	74
Germany	73
France	72
Japan	71
Australia	70
South Korea	69
Spain	68
Italy	67
Belgium	66
Netherlands	65
Portugal	64
Mexico	40
Argentina	38

A large black rectangular redaction box covers the majority of the page content. A faint, diagonal watermark with the word 'CONFIDENTIAL' is visible through the redaction, along with other faint, illegible text.

CONFIDENTIAL



[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]









**From:** Graham Watts <Graham.Watts@southkesteven.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 04 March 2024 20:16  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Code of Conduct Complaint against cllr Harrison

FYI

---

**From:** Graham Watts  
**Sent:** Monday, March 4, 2024 3:25 PM  
**To:** Cllr Tim Harrison <Tim.Harrison@southkesteven.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: Code of Conduct Complaint against cllr Harrison

**Private and confidential**

Good afternoon Tim,

I note your sentiment and perspective. However, my question back to you would be what would a neutral member of the public think when reading the post? It is this that I have to consider when assessing the complaint.

I believe there is a strong insinuation in the post that you are linking Cllr Jeal's comments to that of your phrase "this comment is beyond that of a clown". The comment you are referring to was Councillor Jeal's, so surely someone reading your post would assume you are referring to him as a clown as a result of your comments. I will of course need to liaise with the Independent Persons who will also need to undertake the same assessment – they may have a different view to me.

From my politically neutral perspective, not having had the chance to speak to the Independent Persons at this stage, my initial view is that this crosses the line and can be resolved and closed with a simple apology.

Regards  
Graham

---

**From:** Cllr Tim Harrison <[Tim.Harrison@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:Tim.Harrison@southkesteven.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 4, 2024 2:59 PM  
**To:** Graham Watts <[Graham.Watts@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:Graham.Watts@southkesteven.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** Re: Code of Conduct Complaint against cllr Harrison

Hi Graham,

Whilst I respect your point, the proof is in the lexical semantics, I most definitely did not call Cllr Jeal a clown, there is no reference to Cllr Jeal merely a comment, . The statement clearly says this comment is beyond that of a clown. If Cllr Jeal then assumes he is a clown from that statement that is just subjective. So, I am sorry I will not apologise for Cllr Jeal's presupposition.

Kind regards

*Tim J Harrison*

**Tim Harrison Councillor for Grantham St. Wulfram's Ward**



**SOUTH KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**From:** Graham Watts <[Graham.Watts@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:Graham.Watts@southkesteven.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 4, 2024 12:54 pm  
**To:** Cllr Tim Harrison <[Tim.Harrison@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:Tim.Harrison@southkesteven.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: Code of Conduct Complaint against clrr Harrison

**Private and confidential**

Good afternoon Tim,

Appreciate that we have just spoken but would welcome your views so that I can close this one down.

Just on this particular complaint – whilst I am content with the majority of the post I would welcome your views with regard to the use of the word 'clown' where you say "this comment is beyond that of a clown ..." and whether you believe this is an appropriate and respectful term to use with which to describe a fellow Councillor? I have not completed my assessment but my initial view is that calling another member or describing them as a 'clown' would be in breach of the 'respect' aspect of the Code of Conduct.

If you agree with me a simple apology for use of the term would be enough for me to close the complaint via an informal resolution. If you disagree, however, I will continue with the assessment.

Please could you let me know how you would like to proceed?

Thanks  
Graham

**Graham Watts**  
**Assistant Director (Governance and Public Protection) and Monitoring Officer**  
South Kesteven District Council,  
Council Offices, The Picture House,  
St Catherines Road, Grantham,  
Lincolnshire, NG31 6TT  
Tel: (01476) 406224  
Email: [graham.watts@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:graham.watts@southkesteven.gov.uk)  
[www.southkesteven.gov.uk](http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk)

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**From:** Cllr Tim Harrison <[Tim.Harrison@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:Tim.Harrison@southkesteven.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 3, 2024 10:20 PM  
**To:** Graham Watts <[Graham.Watts@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:Graham.Watts@southkesteven.gov.uk)>; CLLR - ALL COUNCILLORS <[CLLRALL@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:CLLRALL@southkesteven.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** Debbie Mewes <[debbie.mewes@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:debbie.mewes@southkesteven.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** Re: Code of Conduct Complaint against cllr Harrison

Dear Graham,

I really do hope you are not still logged in on a Sunday. Yet again I stand by every word in this post and I am more than happy that I went public with the ridiculous claim that this was the most unhappy Cllr Jeal had seen people. If Cllr Jeal does not want responses to his posts then he should not post. Utter nonsense.

Kind regards



Tim Harrison Councillor for Grantham St. Wulfram's Ward



SOUTH KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**From:** Graham Watts <[Graham.Watts@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:Graham.Watts@southkesteven.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 3, 2024 7:43:30 PM  
**To:** Cllr Tim Harrison <[Tim.Harrison@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:Tim.Harrison@southkesteven.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** Debbie Mewes <[debbie.mewes@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:debbie.mewes@southkesteven.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** FW: Code of Conduct Complaint against cllr Harrison

Good evening Councillor Harrison,

Please see below a further complaint submitted against you. As with the previous complaints, please could you provide me with your response to the allegations made?

Many thanks  
Graham

**Graham Watts**

**Assistant Director (Governance and Public Protection) and Monitoring Officer**

South Kesteven District Council,  
Council Offices, The Picture House,  
St Catherines Road, Grantham,  
Lincolnshire, NG31 6TT  
Tel: (01476) 406224  
Email: [graham.watts@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:graham.watts@southkesteven.gov.uk)  
[www.southkesteven.gov.uk](http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk)



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**From:** Cllr Graham Jeal <[graham.jeal@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:graham.jeal@southkesteven.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 3, 2024 4:02 PM  
**To:** Graham Watts <[Graham.Watts@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:Graham.Watts@southkesteven.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** Cllr Penny Milnes <[penny.milnes@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:penny.milnes@southkesteven.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** Code of Conduct Complaint against cllr Harrison

Graham,

I would like to place a code of conduct complaint against cllr Harrison for the description of a fellow councillor as a "clown".

In accepting the role of councillor we all agree to follow the South Kesteven District Council Code of Conduct which incorporates the Nolan Principles. I believe that this post is in breach of 5 of the 7 Nolan principles. Namely:

- **Selflessness:** Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. Making unsubstantiated public slurs on fellow councillors is not in the public interest.
- **Integrity:** Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

A public slur on a fellow councillor in an attempt to divert attention from legitimate failings within the administration shows a low level of integrity and is not in the public interest. This is unbecoming language of an elected representative and brings the council into disrepute.

- **Objectivity:** Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Public discriminatory slurs breach the requirement to act without bias or discrimination.

- **Honesty:** Holders of public office should be truthful.

This dishonest social media post is a totally dishonest slur against a fellow councillor who is doing their job pointing out failures in the administration.

- **Leadership:** Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Cllr Harrison enjoys a leadership position within the administration by virtue of his chairmanship of a committee, therefore he is using his added responsibility to elevate his false and dishonest slur of a fellow councillor.

I know you will attend this this urgently, I reserve the right to present a copy of this complaint to the press – but I am sure that you will understand that I consider this behavior unbecoming of a councillor and should be attended to immediately

Yours faithfully

Graham Jeal

**From:** Cllr Tim Harrison <Tim.Harrison@southkesteven.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 21 March 2024 14:58  
**To:** Graham Watts  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: Monitoring Officer Decision Notice - complaint by Councillor Jeal

Good afternoon Graham,

As you state we are at an impasse, the complaint was that I called him a clown. I clearly did not. Again this same councillor [REDACTED], anyone watching that broadcast would quit rightly wonder as to why a leader claimed [REDACTED]. Demonstrating again unfair handling of the process.

Kind regards



**Tim Harrison Councillor for Grantham St. Wulfram's Ward**



**SOUTH KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**From:** Graham Watts <Graham.Watts@southkesteven.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 21, 2024 1:22:04 PM  
**To:** Cllr Tim Harrison <Tim.Harrison@southkesteven.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Monitoring Officer Decision Notice - complaint by Councillor Jeal

**Private and confidential**

Good morning Councillor Harrison,

Further to the complaint submitted against you from Councillor Graham Jeal, I now attach a decision notice setting out the outcomes of my assessment, in consultation with the two Independent Persons.

You will see that I believe a breach of the Code of Conduct has occurred, but do not intend to take any further action subject to the conditions of the decision being met which are detailed in the notice.

Please ensure that confidentiality is maintained in relation to this decision notice.

Kindest regards  
Graham

**Graham Watts**

**Assistant Director (Governance and Public Protection) and Monitoring Officer**

South Kesteven District Council,  
Council Offices, The Picture House,  
St Catherines Road, Grantham,  
Lincolnshire, NG31 6TT  
Tel: (01476) 406224  
Email: [graham.watts@southkesteven.gov.uk](mailto:graham.watts@southkesteven.gov.uk)  
[www.southkesteven.gov.uk](http://www.southkesteven.gov.uk)



SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL

**STATEMENT  
FRONT COVER**

Name:	Graham Jeal
Position Held	Councillor South Kesteven District Council

**wilkin chapman llp**  
solicitors

Cartergate House,  
26 Chantry Lane,  
Grimsby  
DN31 2LJ

a limited liability partnership registered in England number OC343261  
authorised and regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority.

## STATEMENT of: Councillor Graham Jeal

1. I am a Conservative Councillor for South Kesteven District Council (the Council). I am Leader of the Conservative Group. I am not formally a member of any of the Council's Committees but as Leader of the Conservative Group, I attend most Scrutiny Committee meetings. I represent Grantham St Vincents ward.
2. I understand that Wilkin Chapman LLP solicitors have been asked to investigate my complaints against Councillor Harrison in respect of his conduct on social media.
3. Councillor Harrison first came on my radar just prior to the 2023 election when he did a series of social media posts/comments making fun of [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]
4. Councillor Harrison and [REDACTED] so Councillor Harrison made a particularly venomous attack on him. Councillor Harrison shared and promoted videos online of [REDACTED] suggesting he was asleep in public meetings [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] – this caused enormous distress to [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] The level of viciousness was reserved for somebody who was clearly unwell. This was something I have never seen before in public office.
5. Shortly after the election I did actually reach out to Councillor Harrison on a Governance and Audit issue in an attempt to help him. I have come to the view, clouded by his hounding of [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED], that he is not fit for public service and unfit to hold a leadership position in the Council such as Chair of Governance and Audit. I believe such behaviour towards [REDACTED] by Councillor Harrison contributed to the decline in [REDACTED] health.
6. The relationship between the groups at the Council has been toxic and unprofessional for a long time, but it has gotten significantly worse since the last election. Swearing in the Chamber has become normalised over the last couple of years. Coming from a professional background I have always found that slightly difficult. Overnight, when Ashley Baxter was elected leader, you could see all of the sensible people in the Council sort of pushed to one side and louder more antagonistic councillors now in control.

7. The outcome of this behaviour deters people from the Council and is detrimental to getting officers to join the Council. There are good people on the Council and good officers but most of them now, frankly, are saying 'I've got better things to do with my time'. I find myself thinking, what on earth have I signed myself up for?
8. The small number of complaints being investigated are dwarfed; this is the absolute tip of the iceberg – there are dozens that have not made it to investigation. The Code of Conduct process is openly mocked now, and the fact that the behaviour is pushing good councillors away is a real threat to our local democracy and public service in general.

### *Councillor Harrison's social media post containing the word 'clown'*

9. I write colourful columns and I write them to be interesting, but I understand where the line is. To me, that post crosses the line. I can't think of any environment where that would be acceptable, outside of a circus venue.
10. I have worked for many companies, and I have owned companies. I would never tolerate somebody referring to another person as a clown either as an employer, employee or business owner.
11. We all say silly things or have a bad day, but this was not a one off, it is a pattern of behaviour that has been normalised. At the minute, there is no line, in that there is swearing in the Chamber and comments being made online. I see a direct line between that kind of behaviour and members of staff being attacked, which has happened twice now in the last month. I think there is a major problem. This is bringing the members, the Council and officers into disrepute and making it difficult to recruit members and officers for the Council.

Jeal v Harrison V2

The figure consists of two groups of horizontal bars. The top group contains 15 bars, and the bottom group contains 10 bars. Each bar is black and has a varying length. In the top group, the first bar is the longest, followed by a short bar, then a long bar, and so on. In the bottom group, the first bar is very long, followed by a short bar, then a long bar, and so on. Some of the bars contain white internal segments, which are longer in the top group and shorter in the bottom group. The bars are arranged in a staggered pattern, with some bars overlapping others.

23. I was leaned on quite heavily not to start this process and there is a clear disrespect for the process. I was told 'what's the point in spending the money with a third party?' and 'you're wasting your time'. That is victim shaming.
24. I have been under pressure to withdraw these complaints from the Leader and senior officers and former chair of standards. People, quite frankly, I would have expected better from. As leader of a political group, I have a welfare obligation and cannot stand aside and see the Council, its members and officers brought into disrepute.
25. It has been widely said 'we've got control of the Standards Committee, we're definitely going to throw it out, you'll be the laughing stock for spending the money'. The Code of Conduct is openly mocked.
26. It is my opinion that these complaints should at least be documented and in the public domain. None of this is calming down.
27. If a chair were to be thrown in a Council meeting, something which has happened before, and it strikes an elderly member on the back of the head injuring them seriously, what will the Council have done to prevent that?
28. Given what has happened in the last 10 years, it is unacceptable. It is not a party-political point because attacks happen against all parties. I do think Councillor Harrison knows what he is doing – from his treatment of [REDACTED] over the period of a couple of years, I think it is about intimidation.
29. I do concede that not enough councillors have had social media training and do not understand the dangers. Most think, 'I was only liking it, it's not the end of the world'. You take on an added responsibility for liking it. Under English law, ignorance is not a defence.

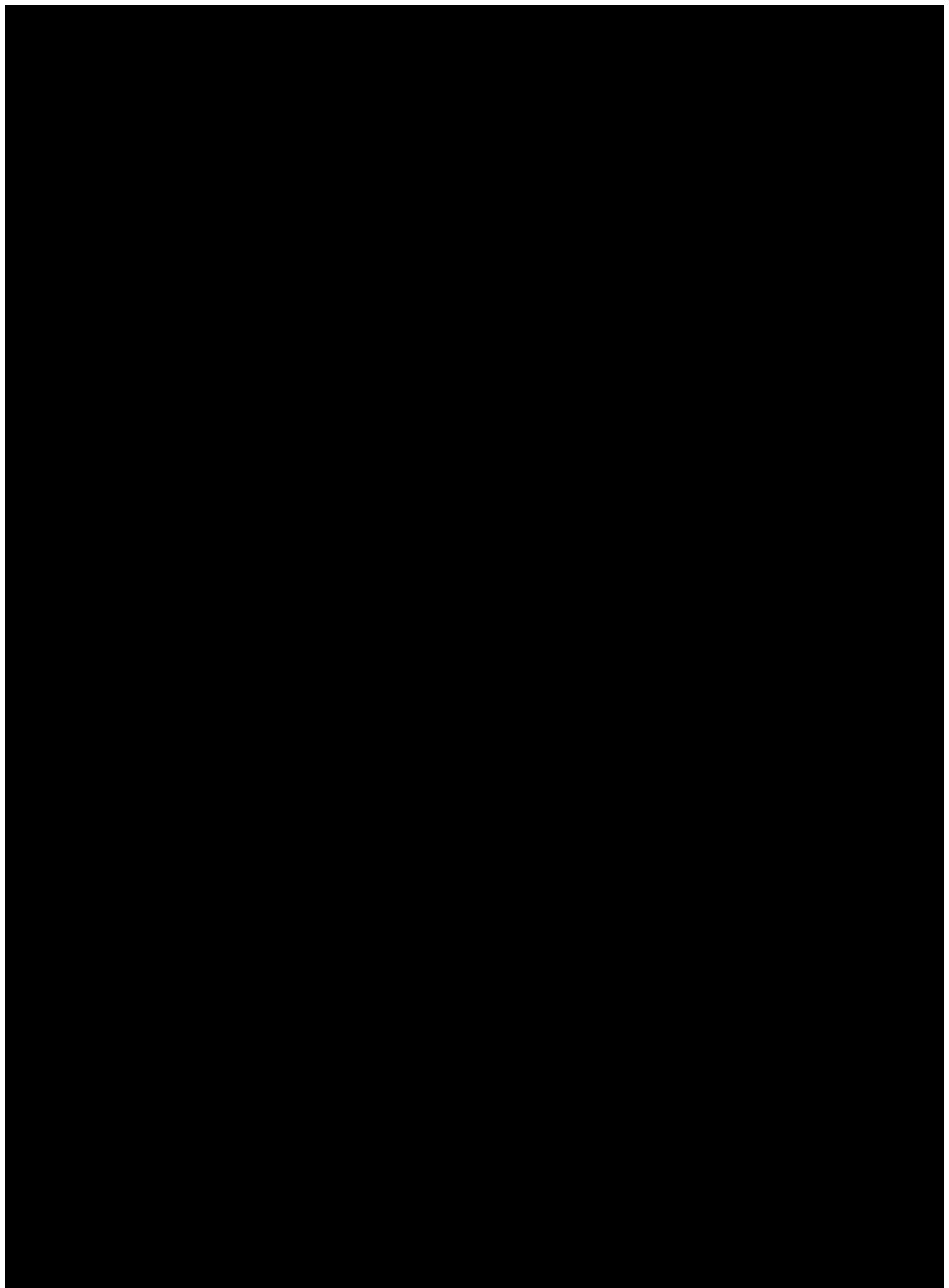
I, Councillor Graham Jeal, declare that this statement is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signed by:

30 August 2024

Signed ..... Date .....

DA2EF81D26ED4F8...



## Jeal v Harrison V1

## Jeal v Harrison V1

## Interview Transcript – Councillor Harrison

TH - Councillor Tim Harrison

EC - Estelle Culligan

GT - Gill Thompson

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EC: So, that is the recording which has started, and I can see that, yes, it's coming up with my speech. So, thank you very much Councillor Harrison for joining us this afternoon, if we could just introduce ourselves, I am Estelle Culligan and I am a Partner in the Regulatory team.

GT: I'm Gill Thompson and I'm a Regulatory Executive in the Regulatory team.

TH: And I'm Tim Harrison District Councillor for South Kesteven St Wulfram's Ward.

EC: Thanks very much everybody. So, Councillor Harrison if we just start off with some general questions about your background with the Council I believe you were first elected in May 2023 is that right?

TH: Yep.

EC: You hadn't been a Councillor there before?

TH: No.

EC: Okay, thank you. And you represent the is it the St Wulfram's Ward?

TH: It is yeah.

EC: Yeah. And can you explain to us if you can remember them all which committees you sit on and if you are chair of any committees.

TH: I sit on 11 different committees I'd be struggling to remember them all....

EC: Oh gosh.

TH: Erm, Chairman of Governance and Audit.

EC: Right, okay, okay. Erm, and just thinking about the training that you've undertaken since you became a Councillor there is some listed on your website but it doesn't mention on, on the Council's website but it doesn't mention code of conduct training, have you ....

TH: Yeah, I did code of conduct training as well, yeah.

EC: Right, okay, thank you. Do you remember when that was?

TH: Erm no I wouldn't I don't I'd have to go to Dem Services to find that out.

EC: But it was part of the package of training that you had..

TH: Yeah.

EC: As a new Councillor? Do you remember whether that covered dealing dealings on social media?

TH: It did yes.

EC: Right, okay, thanks very much. Erm, that's great. So just moving on to the specific issues of the complaints and we'll take them in turn, erm, and if you're confused at any point then we can sort of slow down and I can point you to what we are talking about because there is a lot and there's a lot of different posts and a, err, you know, a lot of different comments and that sort of thing, so

*TEXT REMOVED WHICH IS IRRELEVANT TO THIS COMPLAINT*

TH: ... I was getting pestered constantly with these emails pinging through....

EC: Yeah.

TH: ....about this sort of stuff and I said to Graham then, deal with it as you see fit Graham. I've, I've, I've got not further response, I don't really want to engage with it, I think it's all nonsense my own personal point, I said you tell me before I personally think it's vexatious where 28, comp.... it's 26 different complaints came through to me, at, all, I'm told in the end. 26 different complaints in the short period of time, tell me when that's ever happened before, and not been seen as vexatious? Now....

EC: Yep.

TH: ....the problem with the Tories as, is because I'm a, I'm my own man, I speak my own mind, and I call things as they are, they don't like it ....

EC: Yes.

TH: ....and they don't like being erm outshone on social media....

EC: Yeah.

TH: ....but as I said to Graham Watts, what, what perplexes me is this has come to you. I said to Graham Watts I'm perfectly happy for you Graham to say yeah we find against him on all these and I won't even fight it with you, you can go against me, you can put me black marks against me err, as a Councillor, because ultimately there is nothing really more that can be done,

EC: Yes.

TH: ....um, so do that, I won't fight against it, we'll save the Council some money as in, because you, you guys are going to be costing us money, quite clearly....

EC: Yes.

TH: ....I said we'll save a lot of money and everybody will be happy. The Tories will have their bit, they'll have their black mark against me, erm, jobs done, and everybody's happy, but no, it's got passed on to you and I don't see why that is really. I can't, when I've said to Graham I'll happily not contest your decision. So the whole thing....

EC: The problem, yeah, the difficulty, the difficulty for Graham is that under your, under the arrangements and under the localism act it's, it's difficult to make a finding on some of these things without going through a more thorough investigation, it's, he can't on everything make, make a decision, that's the difficulty, so that's why he's constrained to put some of these things through, if he thinks they're serious enough to a further investigation, so that, erm, I mean you may say oh I wouldn't contest it but others, err, you know if he starts doing that for one person then he can't necessarily do that for everybody for other complaints that come through against other people, so there is a process unfortunately, and that's the process that he's, he's got to go through, so that's why we are where we are today.

TH: Right.

EC: Erm....

TH: Which is pretty much what Graham said, he said he's got a process to go through but I, I still don't quite understand it, but fair enough, if that's what we've got to do, that's what we've got to do.

EC: Yeah, and we are dealing with it as swiftly as we can aren't we Gill? Erm, so, erm, thank you very much for that. So if we move on Councillor Harrison to the second complaints, and these are some complaints that Councillor Jeal raised against you, erm, again to do with some online posts and online comments, sorry, my screen has gone a bit funny, just let me get that off. So, this is basically on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March, again this year, you posted a picture of Councillor Jeal and a link to an online article "Bins generate as much unhappiness as I've ever seen", that was the comment that Councillor Jeal made, and your, your post contained the words "What a clown world", and then you commented on your post to say "It speaks volumes for Mr Jeal's quality of life if having a bin collected late one week is the most unhappiness he has ever seen. Maybe he should get out in the town more, happy to take you around New Street, Greyfriars, Riverside. Councillor Steve Cunnington", oh sorry, "Earlesfield and Redsteps would happily take you around" Noulton Court, etc, "Kinoulton Court, etc. This comment is beyond that of a clown, it is downright insulting to those in town that are really struggling, Taxi for Jeal". So that's what you posted, do you remember that?

TH: Yeah, yeah.

EC: Again, err, and I'm sorry I'm not clear about this, was that on again your Facebook page?

TH: Yeah.

EC: Right, okay. Erm, so in your response to Graham, you said that you didn't actually call him a clown, you were merely commenting, this is err, this, this comment is beyond that of a clown. You said you didn't actually call him a clown.

TH: Yeah. Councillor Jeal's complaint if I, if I remember correctly, the actual words of the complaint where I called him a clown, I didn't.

EC: Yes.

TH: So, that's the end of that complaint, I didn't call him a clown.

EC: Yes. But you can see how the, the way it comes....

TH: How he reads it is on him again isn't it? It's not my problem how people interpret what I put, I'm very careful about what I type and how I type it...

EC: Yeah.

TH: ....I, particularly because of what I learned about social media posts. Err, in, in the err.....

EC: At the training?

TH: ....code of conduct.

EC: Yeah.

TH: In the code of conduct training, so I put specifically, that comment is worse than that of a clown, that is not saying he's a clown, it's saying his comment was worse than that of a clown in the fact that he is saying he has never seen people in this town as unhappy as when they didn't get their bin collected one week. So, I didn't call him a clown, as his complaint is, and in my eyes his complaint was I called him a clown. I didn't call him a clown, that should therefore be the end of the complaint. I can't see how, how is interpretation of what I put again, as with [REDACTED], is on him. I cannot be responsible for how people interpret what I put. I put specific comments, the, the, how people interpret that, there could be someone who interprets that completely different to how Councillor Jeal interpreted it. I cannot be responsible for how people interpret what I put. I get what.....

EC: Yeah but....

TH: ....I get what you're saying....

EC: Yeah.

TH: ....and I get that maybe he did interpret it that way. The fact that he's offended by that, then maybe he should take stock of what he actually says. My, my comment was clearly....

EC: Yeah. I think it, yeah, sorry carry on.

TH: ....no, sorry, my comment was clearly there to show him that that comment was offensive to people that are living in damp houses, that are....

EC: Yeah.

TH: ....that can't afford to buy their shopping, can't afford to turn the heating on, err, and stuff like that, so, Mr Jeal has done numerous of these columns in the paper and I'm the one sitting here in the middle of the town, getting people come up to me and give me grief saying you Councillor's don't understand what's going on...

EC: Yeah.

TH: ....so that, that, you know my comment that with that, and I, I'll stand by that and if you, if you find your result that yeah that's offensive then I'll stand by what you find. Erm...

EC: Yeah, and...

TH: You know...

EC: Yeah, I mean, I know what you're saying about that's, you didn't call him a clown, and how he takes it that, that's his, that's his business, but when you read it and I think Graham said this to you in his, when he sent it to you, when you actually read it, any, any normal rational person reading that would associate Councillor Jeal with a clown, because of how you've posted it, and the thing is about the code of conduct and the issues of respect and err, harassment and all that sort of thing, the finding of a code of conduct it's not, it's not simply that oh I didn't intend, I didn't intend for anybody to be insulted by this comment, it's how your comments are perceived, do you see what I mean, that's, that's the issue under the code of conduct whether such a comment could be seen to be disrespectful, or, etc, so it's, it is really the sort of the man on the Clapham Omnibus test, it's not just about you saying well I speak as I find and, and whether he takes it that's way, that's his business, that can still be a breach of the code of conduct... I'm not saying it is, because we haven't come to our conclusions, but that, that's the purpose of the code of conduct, it's about dealing with people in a respectful way, not always pulling your punches, etc, but it's about what tips the line into personal abuse, and what, and what stays within the right side of robust political comment, and that was to be the next.

TH: What in that comment was personal to, to Mr Jeal other than.....

EC: The analogy of.

TH: ....that comment..

EC: ....possibly, and again I'm not saying...

TH: Yeah.

EC: ....because we haven't done our full assessment of this, you know our full investigation...

TH: Yeah, yeah.

EC: ....of this, and you know, so I'm not saying either way but, you known any normal person reading that would make the association in two-fold, first of all at the head of your post you say something like, I can't remember, is it, it's a clown's world, or something....

TH: A clown world, yeah..

EC: ...and then you say something and then you say, the, the, the comment is worse than that of a clown. The association is a clown and Councillor Jeal. You've, even though you haven't said Councillor Jeal is a clown. So I think, I think that's, that's probably why Graham's put it forward for, for a further consideration, so I'm just saying that's, you know, that's the....

TH: Yeah, yeah.

EC: that's the assessment that we....

TH: Well maybe Councillor Jeal will now in future be a bit more wary about what he posts, if I get that desired effect off him then I'm happy to take this on the chin and, and you find me guilty of erm, disrespect. I personally don't think it's disrespect, I think he has disrespected the people with the, with his, with his comment that he's put, I think that disrespectful to the very people that he works for, and me calling it out, I think, erm, well it got a lot of people was, there has been a lot of response to, to the ones particularly about Councillor Jeal because he is so out of touch.

EC: Right, okay, that's what I was going to ask you actually, so did that generated quite a lot of....

TH: Yes it did.

EC: ....and support for your comments....

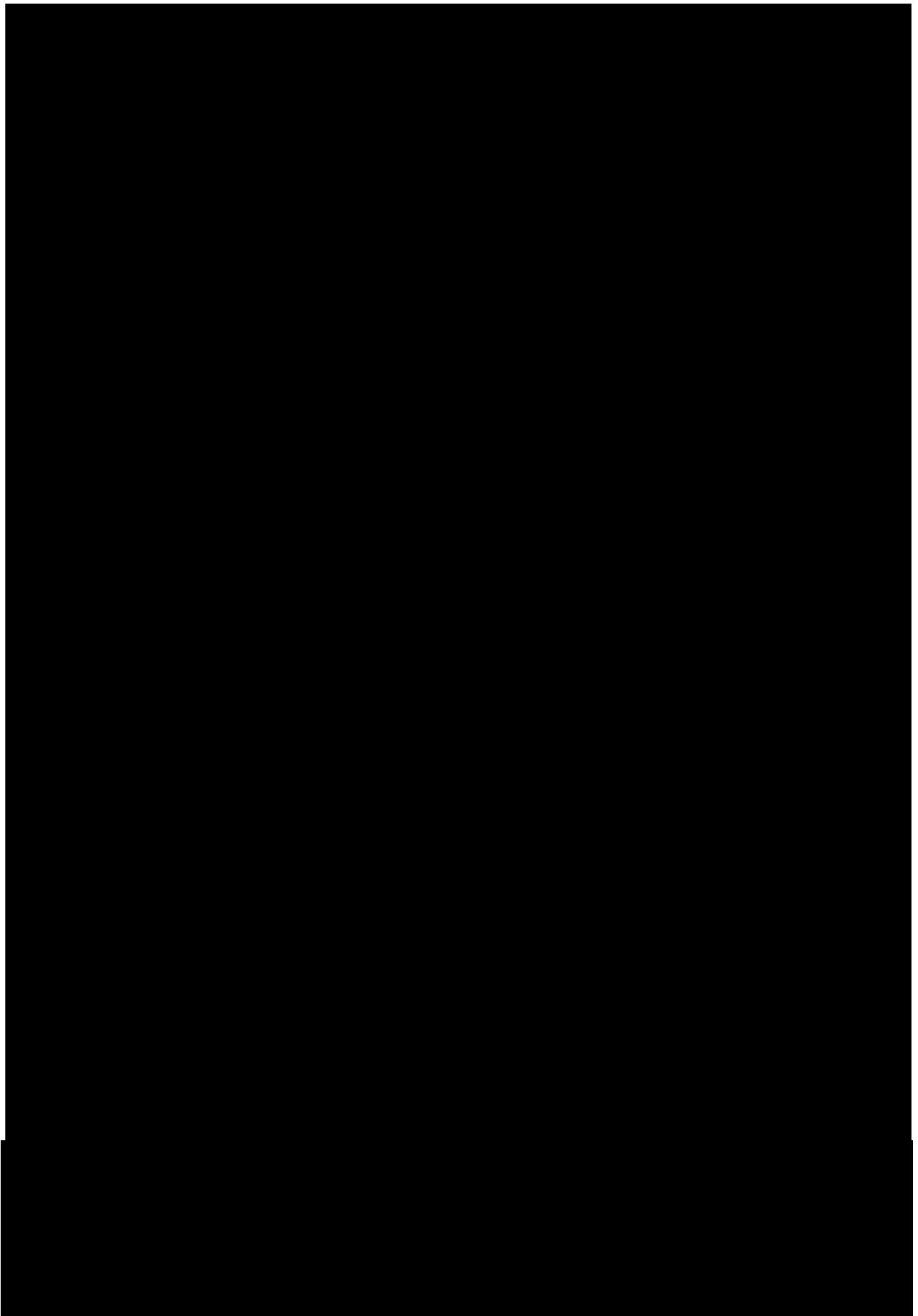
TH: Yes.

EC: ....basically, yeah, okay, alright then. That's very helpful, thank you very much. So I want to move on....

TH: Yeah...

EC: ....if that's okay...

TH: Yes, sure.





*TEXT REMOVED WHICH IS IRRELEVANT TO THIS COMPLAINT*

EC: Yeah, okay. Alright then Councillor Harrison. Well look, thank you very much. That was all I wanted to ask you, erm....

TH: Yeah.

EC: ... is there anything else that you want to say? Before we ...

TH: No, I'm sorry that you've had to spend time on this, it's a vast waste of resource and monies. I'm sure you've got far more important things to do. Erm, you won't get it again from me with, as regards [REDACTED] and Graham Jeal, we've realised they're

not worth our efforts, they're not worth, and erm, we just, we'll leave them in their own echo chamber because they're not getting any erm, stuff, erm, the mistake I made was biting.

EC: Yeah.

TH: That was the mistake I made. Everything, I stand by everything I did, but I just shouldn't have bitten because I gave him a bigger voice than he would have had if I hadn't of.....

EC: Yeah.

TH: [REDACTED]

EC: I understand. Well listen, thank you very much. Just bear with me one second, I'm going to stop the recording if I can.

TH: Yep.

EC: Just bear with me. Stop recording.

*END OF RECORDING*

*I certify that this is an accurate note of my interview with Estelle Culligan and Gill Thompson on Tuesday 16 July 2024.*

*Signed.....*

*Dated.....*

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 22 July 2024 14:21  
**To:** Tim.Harrison@SouthKesteven.gov.uk  
**Subject:** (97613/248, 97613/246, 97613/243 and 97613/241) - Interview Transcript  
**Attachments:** Interview Transcript - Councillor Tim Harrison.pdf; Email Letter to Councillor Harrison enclosing interview transcript.pdf

Dear Councillor Harrison

Please find attached, for your consideration, a letter together with interview transcript.

The transcript itself is password protected for security. We have obtained a mobile number from the Council's website ending 569. I will therefore send the password to you via SMS shortly.

Should you have any queries please don't hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 06 August 2024 09:58  
**To:** Cllr Tim Harrison  
**Subject:** FW: (97613/248, 97613/246, 97613/243 and 97613/241) - Interview Transcript  
**Attachments:** Interview Transcript - Councillor Tim Harrison.pdf; Email Letter to Councillor Harrison enclosing interview transcript.pdf

Good morning Councillor Harrison

I refer to my email below and the attached letter and transcript.

I would be grateful if you could confirm your approval of the transcript as soon as possible.

Many thanks  
[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]  
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The transcript itself is password protected for security. We have obtained a mobile number from the Council's website ending 569. I will therefore send the password to you via SMS shortly.

Should you have any queries please don't hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards  
[REDACTED]

**From:** Cllr Tim Harrison <Tim.Harrison@southkesteven.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 06 August 2024 14:13  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re: (97613/248, 97613/246, 97613/243 and 97613/241) - Interview Transcript

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Good afternoon [REDACTED]

I have only had time for a cursory glance over all this, I am too busy. It all seems in order I am confident that you will have transcribed accurately. If there is any issue in the future we can always return to the video.

Kind regards

Tim Harrison Councillor for Grantham St. Wulfram's Ward

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
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Good morning Councillor Harrison

I refer to my email below and the attached letter and transcript.

I would be grateful if you could confirm your approval of the transcript as soon as possible.

Many thanks  
[REDACTED]

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**To:** Cllr Tim Harrison  
**Subject:** RE: (97613/248, 97613/246, 97613/243 and 97613/241) - Interview Transcript

Hello Councillor Harrison

Thank you for your email. I appreciate you are very busy but we would like you to sign the transcript. I will send it to you via DocuSign (which enables electronic signature and return) so if you could give it a read through that would be very much appreciated.

Kind regards

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Sent: Tuesday, August 6, 2024 2:13 PM  
To: [REDACTED]  
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Re: (97613/248, 97613/246, 97613/243 and 97613/241) - Interview Transcript

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Good afternoon [REDACTED]

I have only had time for a cursory glance over all this, I am too busy. It all seems in order I am confident that you will have transcribed accurately. If there is any issue in the future we can always return to the video.

Kind regards

Tim Harrison Councillor for Grantham St. Wulfram's Ward

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**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Re: Reminder: Complete with Docusign: Interview Transcript - Councillor Tim Harrison.pdf

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Hi [REDACTED]

I cannot sign this, I haven't had a copy of the video to compare it, plus I really do not have the time to spend going through it. As you are aware I do not get paid for this time and consider it a waste of my valuable time, where I can actually be achieving something for the constituents.

Kind regards

Tim Harrison Councillor for Grantham St. Wulfram's Ward

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Kind regards  
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