**Decision Notice – Councillor Breach of the Code of Conduct**

**Date:** 12 March 2022

**Reference: 9/2021/22**

**Publication of Notice:** 28 June 2022

**Subject Member:** Councillor Tanya Park, Eastleigh Borough Council

We notify all concerned parties in writing once we have determined a complaint. This decision notice will be sent to:

* The person making the allegation
* The Subject Member

A copy of this decision notice will be published on the Council’s website for the duration of Councillor Park’s Term of Office.

**Complaint:**

The Monitoring Officer investigated a complaint that an attendee at an Internal Briefing breached the Code of Conduct by failing to treat a Councillor respectfully.

**Details:**

On 28 February 2022, during an online internal Housing Briefing attended by Councillors and Officers, inappropriate and offensive language was used in an aggressive tone aimed at a fellow Councillor. It was not intended for the offensive words to be heard and the person was not aware they were unmuted. However, the words were heard by all in attendance and caused much anxiety and distress. An investigation immediately followed to ascertain who the person was as despite being given the opportunity to speak up and offer an apology they did not identify themselves in the moments that passed the incident.

Councillor Park was not aware that she had been heard and therefore did not admit she spoke the offensive words until 10 days had lapsed.

**Decision:**

Councillor Park was found the have breached the Code of Conduct through failing to treat another Councillor with respect.

The public, officers and fellow Councillors are right to have a high expectation that all Councillors will behave professionally and appropriately. Councillor Park has a responsibility to meet these expectations by maintaining high standards and demonstrating good conduct.

**Sanction:**

A formal letter was issued to Councillor Park setting out the breach of the Code identified. It was recommended that Councillor Park apologised to the Councillor and to those in attendance at the meeting. She was reminded that of the Council’s zero tolerance to this type of behaviour and that she ensured that in the future, as an elected Councillor, she always treats everyone with mutual respect and courtesy.

Councillor Park apologised to the Councillor and to those in attendance at the meeting.

**Formal reporting**

The Legal Principle is that there is a strong public interest in the disclosure of the final findings of the investigation which followed a formal procedure to investigate a complaint about the conduct of an elected Councillor when performing public duties. Transparency is essential to the maintenance of proper standards in public life.

This Decision will be reported to the next meeting of the Administration Committee which is scheduled to be held on 28 June 2022.

**Subject Member’s Right of Appeal:**

There is no right of an appeal against the decision taken by the Monitoring Officer.



Joanne Cassar

Executive Head of Governance (Monitoring Officer)