



First response

Scenario: Part 2

Linda Snell has asked for a review of the local assessment sub-committee decision to take no action in response to her complaint about Councillor Aldridge's behaviour at the parish meeting. Her letter requesting the review is attached.

You also receive a call from a member of the council's communications team informing you that the local paper has been haranguing him following a tip off that there is a further complaint. He has had ten phone calls and one email from a national paper. He wants to know what he can tell them.

Primrose Cottage
Farm Lane
Hill View Village

Dear Mr Smith

I received your letter on behalf of the standards committee with their decision not to look into the parish meeting complaints because there wasn't sufficient evidence. I was surprised by the decision particularly as the chair of the committee is Matt Crawford who knows all about Cllr Aldridge's behaviour due to his 'close connection' to Mrs Aldridge. I phoned the Standards Board for England and they told me it was your job to look into complaints about councillors now and I don't see why I should have to investigate and provide details of all the dates when Cllr Aldridge has lost his temper. What am I paying my taxes for?

I have complained about you to the leader of your council and I expect to have all my costs paid for my time and trouble in looking for the evidence you wanted. The parish clerk would not help me as he is frightened of Cllr Aldridge and said it was more than his job was worth to give me copies of minutes because Cllr Aldridge had instructed him not to let me into the parish council offices. I had to take a day off work and look through the minutes in the library and photocopy them.

1. On 1 June last year my sister was in the post office sending a birthday parcel to our mother and Cllr Aldridge was there, mouthing off. He had bumped into the community policeman outside and asked him what he was doing about the local teenagers riding their motorbikes around the village late at night. The policeman said he was talking with the district council about ASBO's, whatever they are.

Cllr Aldridge said everyone knew ASBO's were a waste of time and that the community policeman was a useless waste of space. He then said he was going to speak to the chief constable about him at the next police committee and he deserved to be sacked for not doing his job properly.

2. There was a parish meeting on 3 June 2007 - I remember this as it was my mother's birthday and Mr Jones, the bowling club secretary, asked to speak about the state of the bowling green at public question time. I clearly heard Cllr Aldridge mutter under his breath that Mr Jones was a 'dozy Welsh time waster' and he interrupted him and ruled the question out of order as no notice had been given. He just made up this rule. Poor Mr Jones was embarrassed because everyone heard what Cllr Aldridge said. The minutes mention that a question was asked - is that enough evidence for you?

3. On 30 July 2007, (MINUTES ATTACHED), at the next parish meeting the clerk arrived half an hour late because the roads were flooded and Cllr Aldridge was furious. He yelled and shouted at the clerk and said he would be having harsh words with him after the meeting and if he wanted to keep his job he had better improve his time keeping. Cllr Aldridge was annoyed because he cannot function without the clerk and got all flustered about the agenda and could not take notes for the minutes. The clerk was visibly shaken and upset and went bright red.
4. Now we get to the Christmas tree on the village green. The parish council meeting in November always approves the cost and where we will buy it from. But we always buy it from the local farmer Tony Archer. Cllr Aldridge said we would not be doing that this year as the previous provider, (he mentioned no names but we all knew who he meant), overcharged us and had been robbing us for years and his nephew could get us a cheaper one. When Tony Archer heard about this he said he was going to sue for libel.
5. In February this year we had a village dance to raise money to pay for the drainage of the allotments. Cllr Aldridge got very drunk and fell over. When Ed Grundy tried to help him up he called him a "f.....g busybody" and told him to mind his own business and he could get himself up off the floor. He then got in his car well over the limit in my opinion and drove home. I heard a rumour he was being done for drink driving as he was spotted by the community policeman.

Having done all your work for you will you now do something about this man? !!!!!

Yours sincerely

Linda Snell