



Alternative action masterclass

Examples of use of alternative action

Example A

Three members of a parish council were the subject of a complaint relating to failure to disclose a prejudicial interest at a meeting where a grant to a voluntary and community group was discussed.

All members were nominated representatives of the parish council on the voluntary/community group. All members believed they had the benefit of the exemption under the old Code of Conduct where their membership of the group was as a parish council representative.

All three members had not appreciated the further guidance from the Standards Board for England that such exemption did not cover decisions of a regulatory or financial nature.

Although there was a technical breach it was clear this was as a result of a lack of awareness of the guidance from the Standards Board for England.

The members were found to be in breach but recommended no further action.

The monitoring officer provided guidance to all parish councils in the district to ensure that they understood this specific issue and to remind them that guidance from the Standards Board for England regarding interpretation of the Code must be considered fully by members and any concerns raised with the monitoring officer.

Example B

A newly elected member was clearly having difficulties in understanding the Code, particularly their responsibility around declarations and/or personal/prejudicial interests.

The monitoring officer was contacted on a very regular basis to give advice to the member on their position before each meeting the member attended.

The monitoring officer contacted the group whip on the member's behalf and put in place a mentoring arrangement with a senior member of the group to assist the member in understanding their role.

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