



Ethics and Standards

Case Studies

1. Councillor X is a member of the Council's Standards Committee. She attends a court hearing in support of a councillor colleague (Councillor Y) who is being prosecuted for an affray at a council/community event. The councillor is found guilty in court and fined. As a result of the conviction, Councillor Y is referred to the Standards Committee for an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct.

Councillor X attends the Standards Committee hearing and upon reaching the "declaration of interests" item says that she attended the court in support of Councillor Y but that she was considering the matter with an open mind. She participates in the discussion and decision.

The Council subsequently receives a complaint from a member of the public not at the meeting alleging bias and predetermination on the part of Councillor X.

2. Councillor A is out with friends having a few drinks. He gets into an argument with somebody and punches him. An onlooker who knows Councillor A says 'you are a councillor, you should know better'. The onlooker makes a complaint against Councillor A, alleging a breach of the Council's Code of Conduct, citing the principles of integrity and accountability.
3. Councillor B is very active on social media. He attends a council meeting and is not happy with the fact that the majority group used up the whole 30 minutes allowed for motions and he couldn't move his own motion on car parking in the town centre. He is also unhappy that the Mayor allowed this to happen and ruled out a point of order when Councillor B tried to complain.

Councillor B goes out of the Town Hall once the meeting finishes and posts a video on his personal social media account where he heavily criticises the majority group – saying that it is his duty to make the residents of the Borough aware of what has just gone on. He refers to them as a disgrace to the Council and says that he knows where they live. He uses very offensive language in his 5-minute post. He particularly criticises the Mayor saying he is a puppet of the majority group and not fit to wear the chain of office. Again he uses 'industrial' language to get his points across.

He repeats the attacks the next morning in equally offensive terms.