

**CODE OF CONDUCT: STANDARDS BOARD NOTIFICATION
(Report by the Director of Central Services and Monitoring Officer)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In accordance with the procedure adopted by the Standards Board for England for the investigation of allegations, the Monitoring Officer has been notified of the Board's decision in respect of an allegation made against a Councillor serving on Godmanchester Town Council.

2. DETAILS OF THE CASE

- 2.1 It had been alleged that the Town Councillor had failed to treat others with respect, brought her authority into disrepute and potentially revealed information that was given to her in confidence. It was alleged that the Town Councillor excluded another Councillor from selected e-mail correspondence and thereby failed to treat others with respect. The complainant also believes that the Town Councillor tape recorded the proceedings of a public meeting without the permission of those concerned. In so doing, it was alleged that the Town Councillor showed lack of respect and consideration for others involved in the meeting and this also allegedly had implications in relation to confidentiality and the use of the recorded information. The complainant had stated that such behaviour is contrary to the principles of openness and transparency and that such illicit behaviour if proven could bring the Authority and Office into disrepute.
- 2.2 The Standards Board for England has decided that the allegation should not be referred to an Ethical Standards Officer for investigation having concluded that a potential breach of the Code of Conduct was not disclosed.
- 2.3 In reaching this conclusion, the Board has noted that the e-mail correspondence referred to explained that the Town Councillor had excluded the complainant and other Councillors from the e-mail list on the basis that they had already received copies of a set of minutes as group members. In addition, it was not considered from the information provided that the Councillor had persistently excluded the Member concerned from receiving e-mail correspondence on other occasions. In respect of the allegation concerning the tape recording, it was noted from a witness statement that the Councillors behaviour was allegedly suspicious during the meeting and that she was rummaging through her handbag several times during the meeting. However, it was not suggested that any recordings were obtained by the Councillor or that the information had been shared with a third party who was not present at the meeting to indicate that the Councillor had indeed recorded the meeting and shared that information as alleged. On the basis of the information provided, the Board concluded therefore that the alleged conduct did not disclose a potential failure to comply with the Code of Conduct.

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The Committee is invited to note that the Standards Board for England has agreed not to take any further action in relation to an allegation made against a Councillor serving on Godmanchester Town Council.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Letter received from the Standards Board for England dated 23rd October 2006.

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