

**CODE OF CONDUCT: STANDARDS BOARD NOTIFICATIONS**  
**(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 allegations made against Councillors serving on Catworth and Earith Parish Councils.

**2. DETAILS OF CASE 1**

- 2.1 The complainants and the Catworth Parish Councillor are next door neighbours. The complainants had stated that in 1992 they had purchased a property with a building plot and planning consent. At the time, there was an agreement reached between the complainants and the Parish Councillor (neighbour) to move the proposed site of the building back so that they were not overlooked. Earlier this year, the complainant submitted an application to which the Parish Councillor (neighbour) objected, allegedly ignoring the earlier agreement. It is alleged that in her letter of objection to the District Council, the Parish Councillor deliberately misled both the District and Parish Council by stating that the complainants had received a letter from the Land Registry advising of an error in the boundary shown on the plan. It was the complainant's belief that the Parish Councillor (neighbour) had fabricated this information to "bolster" her complaint.
- 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 reiterated that the Code of Conduct applies to Members whenever they act in their official capacity, including whenever they conduct the business of their authority or act, claim to be acting, or give the impression they are acting, in their official capacity or as a representative of their authority. From the information submitted, the Board have concluded that the Parish Councillor objected to the planning application in her private capacity and therefore the Code of Conduct did not apply.

**3. DETAILS OF CASE 2**

- 3.1 The complainant had alleged that a Councillor serving on Earith Parish Council had been orchestrating a vendetta against him through other people because he had been 'shown up' by the complainant in the past. The complainant stated that when the Councillor and another named individual were elected they had decided to take 'the law into their own hands and to start throwing health and safety laws around and most of them were aimed towards the football club'. The reason for this was, according to the complainant, who runs the football club, 'just to get at me'.

- 3.2 The Standards Board has taken the view that there was nothing to support the assertion that the Councillor had purposefully singled out the complainant in order to fulfil a 'vendetta', nor was there anything to show that the Councillor had unlawfully discriminated against the complainant, either directly or indirectly. Therefore, the Standards Board concluded that the allegation should not be referred to an Ethical Standards Officer for investigation, as there was no evidence to suggest that a breach of the Code of Conduct had been disclosed.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 The Committee is invited to note that the Standards Board for England has agreed not to take any further action in relation to allegations made against Councillors serving on Catworth and Earith Parish Councils.

#### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Letters received from the Standards Board for England dated 8<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> November 2007.

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