

Local Government Lawyer - Councillors who moved home 150 miles cleared of conduct breach

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Two councillors in Kent have been cleared of breaching their local authority's code of conduct after they moved home to Lincolnshire.

The monitoring officer at Swale Borough Council conducted an investigation after receiving 53 complaints about Cllrs Alan and Jean Willicombe, who have remained as elected members since their move.

The complaints alleged that the pair had failed to observe a part of Swale's code of conduct, which was adopted in 2012.

The relevant section says:

"As a member of Swale Borough Council, my conduct will in particular address the statutory principles... by:

- 1. championing the needs of residents - the whole community and in a special way my constituents, including those who did not vote for me - and putting their interests first;*
- 2. dealing with representations or enquiries from residents, members of our communities and visitors fairly, appropriately and impartially;....*
- 10. always treating people with respect, including the organisations and public I engage with and those I work alongside."*

In a statement the Monitoring Officer said: "Having considered all of the facts of the case it was decided that the actions of the Subject Members did not amount to a breach of the Code of Conduct."

Alan Willicombe [told the BBC](#) that he never thought he and his wife had done anything wrong.