

Case Summary - Eythorne Parish Council (Dover)

Case no. SFE-000138
Member(s): Councillor Christine Rogers
Date received: 20 Dec 2010
Date completed: 23 Mar 2011

Allegation:

The member failed to treat others with respect and bullied someone.

Standards Board outcome:

The ethical standards officer found that the member did not breach the Code of Conduct

Case Summary

It was alleged that Councillor Rogers phoned and emailed the clerk repeatedly before an extraordinary meeting on 22 October 2010 to try and persuade her not to call the meeting and that during that meeting Councillor Rogers deliberately humiliated the clerk by repeatedly demanding a word for word account of a motion that Councillor Rogers had proposed. It was further alleged that Councillor Rogers falsely accused the clerk of taking unauthorised actions and of serious financial impropriety.

The Ethical Standards Officer recognised that the clerk was distressed by Councillor Roger's conduct, however considered that this was due to her misunderstanding the issues that Councillor Rogers was trying to raise. The Ethical Standards Officer found nothing in the way that Councillor Rogers treated the clerk that could be described as disrespectful.

It was also alleged that Councillor Rogers received and opened post intended for the Council without the clerk's knowledge or consent.

The Ethical Standards Officer found that there was a longstanding arrangement whereby post intended for the Community Centre, which included the council office, was delivered to Councillor Roger's home if the Community Centre was closed. The Ethical Standards Officer found no evidence to suggest that Councillor Rogers' receipt or opening of council mail was of concern. It had been a long standing and well known arrangement and Councillor Rogers' willingness to receive and ensure the safe delivery of council mail was intended to assist the Council and was an arrangement that was valued by other members.

The Ethical Standards Officer considered that Councillor Rogers had not failed to comply with Eythorne Parish Council's code of conduct.

Relevant paragraphs of the Code of Conduct

Paragraph 3:

“(1) You must treat others with respect.

(2) You must not...

(b) bully any person”.

27 May 2011