

# **DORSET COUNCIL DECISION NOTICE**

Complaint Reference: 1  
Subject Member: Cllr N Ireland  
Date of Hearing: 7 July 2021  
Audit and Governance (Hearing) Sub-Committee

## **1. Summary of the Complaint**

The Complainant alleged that Cllr N Ireland acted inappropriately and in breach of Dorset Council's Member Code of Conduct by posting to social media and by emailing Members of the Western and Southern Area Planning Committee prior to their meeting on the 3rd October 2019 to ask they decline a planning application.

## **2. The Conduct of the Hearing**

The conduct of the hearing is as detailed in the Audit and Governance (Hearing) Sub-Committee minutes, a copy of which are appended to (and forms part of) this Decision Notice.

## **3. The Hearing Sub-Committee's Decisions**

3.1 The Hearing Sub-Committee's decisions are detailed in the appended minutes.

However, the Hearing Sub-Committee's key conclusions are also set out below.

3.2 Members of the Sub-committee having heard all of the views during the hearing and having read all the papers and taken account of the view of the Independent Person reached a unanimous decision to agree with the recommendations of the Investigating Officer and find that there has been a breach of the code, in particular the principles of public life.

3.3 The Sub-Committee commented that Councillors can have opinions and can express views but the way it has been done calls into question the integrity of the councillor, the planning process and the planning committee.

3.4 The Sub-committee decided that an apology from Cllr N Ireland to the next planning committee was an appropriate and proportionate response to the complaint.

*J Mair*

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Jonathan Mair  
Monitoring Officer

Right of Appeal: There is no right of appeal against the decision of the Audit and Governance (Hearing) Sub-Committee.