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## **COMPLAINT AGAINST COUNCILLOR MABBUTT**

Accountable Officer: Mark Jones - Head of Legal and Property Services – MK252962

Author: as above

### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 To consider whether to investigate a complaint against a Councillor for breach of the National or Local Codes of Conduct for Members of the Council.

### **2. Summary**

- 2.1 A complaint has been received against the named Councillor. The Standards Committee needs to decide whether the complaint should be investigated and if so how the investigation should be conducted.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 That the Committee decides whether, and if so how, it wishes to deal with the complaint against Councillor Mabbutt.

#### 4. **Background**

4.1 By an undated letter received at the end of December 1999 Councillor Morsley alleged that Councillor Mabbutt had breached paragraph 26 of the National Code of Conduct for members by issuing a press release. Attached as **Annexes** are the following documents:

- (a) the letter of complaint (**Annex A**);
- (b) the press release (**Annex B**); and
- (c) a letter from Councillor Mabbutt dated 18 January 2000 (**Annex C**).

#### 5. **Issues and Choices**

5.1 The press release relates to an item of business on the agenda of the Environment Committee that met on 21 December 1999. This was a confidential item relating to the letting of the new waste contract, due to start on 1 April 2000.

Paragraph 26 of the national code states:

“.....You should never disclose or use confidential information for the personal advantage of yourself or of anyone known to you, or to the disadvantage or the discredit of the council or anyone else.”

5.2 This Committee will need to decide whether the press release discloses “confidential information.” The fact that the Environment Committee was meeting to discuss the letting of the new waste contract was not, in itself, confidential. The agenda was a public document and, as is normal practice, the items on the agenda were clearly identified.

#### 6. **Implications**

6.1 Environmental

None.

6.2 Equalities

None.

6.3 Financial

None.

6.4 Legal

None.

6.5 Staff and Accommodation

None.

7. **Conclusions**

- 7.1 The Committee will need to decide whether it is appropriate to investigate this complaint and if so how to deal with the investigation.

Background Papers: None