

Annexe B

ESO's Report

**Schedule of Evidence
to be taken into account**

Schedule of Evidence taken into account

Background documents

- SK1 The Model Code of Conduct.
- SK2 Relevant Authorities (General Principles) Order 2001,
- SK3 Cllr Bowen-Williams' signed undertaking to observe the Code of Conduct dated 15 June 2004
- SK4 Road Traffic Act 1988, s5.
- SK5 Extract from the court records detailing Cllr Bowen-Williams' conviction on 13 December 2005.
- SK6 Press article 1
- SK7 Press article 2

Notes of Telephone Conversations, Letters, and Notes of Interviews with Witnesses

- SK8 Letter of allegation from Ms Craig dated 28 January 2006 (redacted)
- SK9 Note of an interview with Ms Craig on 31 March 2006 (redacted)
- SK10 Note of an interview with Cllr Bowen-Williams on 20 April 2006 (redacted)
- SK11 Note of an interview with Ms Lisa Courtney, Clerk to Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council, on 24 April 2006 (redacted)
- SK12 Letter from Cllr Bowen-Williams to Mr McCourt, Monitoring Officer, dated 13 March 2006 (redacted)
- SK13 Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 17 January 2006
- SK14 Letter from Cllr Bowen-Williams to Mr Kingston, ESO, dated 10 June 2006, in response to sight of a draft of my report (redacted)

and (b)[10];

(e) section 18 of the Audit Commission Act 1998[11];

(2) Section 16(1) of the Interpretation Act 1978[12] shall apply to a disapplication under paragraph (1) above as if it were a repeal, by an Act, of an enactment.

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State for Transport, Local Government and the Regions

Nick Raynsford

Minister of State Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions

5th November 2001

SCHEDULE

Article 2

THE MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT - PARISH COUNCILS

PART 1

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Scope

1. - (1) A member must observe the authority's code of conduct whenever he -

- (a) conducts the business of the authority;
- (b) conducts the business of the office to which he has been elected or appointed; or
- (c) acts as a representative of the authority,

and references to a member's official capacity shall be construed accordingly.

(2) An authority's code of conduct shall not, apart from paragraphs 4 and 5(a) below, have effect in relation to the activities of a member undertaken other than in an official capacity.

(3) Where a member acts as a representative of the authority -

(a) on another relevant authority^[13], he must, when acting for that other authority, comply with that other authority's code of conduct; or

(b) on any other body, he must, when acting for that other body, comply with the authority's code of conduct, except and insofar as it conflicts with any other lawful obligations to which that other body may be subject.

(4) In this code -

(a) "member" includes a co-opted member of an authority; and

(b) "responsible authority" means a district council or a unitary county council which has functions in relation to the parish councils for which it is responsible under section 55(12) of the Local Government Act 2000.

General Obligations

2. A member must -

(a) promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person;

(b) treat others with respect; and

(c) not do anything which compromises or which is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, the authority.

3. A member must not -

(a) disclose information given to him in confidence by anyone, or information acquired which he believes is of a confidential nature, without the consent of a person authorised to give it, or unless he is required by law to do so; nor

(b) prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.

4. A member must not in his official capacity, or any other circumstance, conduct himself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing his office or authority into disrepute.

5. A member -

(a) must not in his official capacity, or any other circumstance, use his position as a member improperly to confer on or secure for himself or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage; and

(b) must, when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of the authority -

(i) act in accordance with the authority's requirements; and

(ii) ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the authority or of the office to which the member has been elected or appointed.

6. A member must, if he becomes aware of any conduct by another member which he reasonably believes involves a failure to comply with the authority's code of conduct, make a written allegation to that effect to the Standards Board for England as soon as it is practicable for him to do so.

PART 2

INTERESTS

Personal Interests

7. - (1) A member must regard himself as having a personal interest in any matter if the matter relates to an interest in respect of which notification must be given under paragraphs 12 and 13 below, or if a decision upon it might reasonably be regarded as affecting to a greater extent than other council tax payers, ratepayers, or inhabitants of the authority's area, the well-being or financial position of himself, a relative or a friend or -

(a) any employment or business carried on by such persons;

(b) any person who employs or has appointed such persons, any firm in which they are a partner, or any company of

which they are directors;

(c) any corporate body in which such persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £5,000; or

(d) any body listed in sub-paragraphs (a) to (e) of paragraph 13 below in which such persons hold a position of general control or management.

(2) In this paragraph -

(a) "relative" means a spouse, partner, parent, parent-in-law, son, daughter, step-son, step-daughter, child of a partner, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, or the spouse or partner of any of the preceding persons; and

(b) "partner" in sub-paragraph (2)(a) above means a member of a couple who live together.

Disclosure of Personal Interests

8. A member with a personal interest in a matter who attends a meeting of the authority at which the matter is considered must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of that consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent.

Prejudicial Interests

9. - (1) Subject to sub-paragraph (2) below, a member with a personal interest in a matter also has a prejudicial interest in that matter if the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the member's judgement of the public interest.

(2) A member may regard himself as not having a prejudicial interest in a matter if that matter relates to -

(a) another relevant authority of which he is a member;

(b) another public authority in which he holds a position of general control or management;

(c) a body to which he has been appointed or nominated by the authority as its representative;

(d) any functions of the authority in respect of statutory sick pay under Part XI of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992[14], where the member is in receipt of, or is entitled to the receipt of such pay from a relevant authority; and

(e) any functions of the authority in respect of an allowance or payment made under sections 173 to 173A and 175 to 176 of the Local Government Act 1972[15] or section 18 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989[16].

Participation in Relation to Disclosed Interests

10. A member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must -

(a) withdraw from the room or chamber where a meeting is being held whenever it becomes apparent that the matter is being considered at that meeting, unless he has obtained a dispensation[17] from the standards committee of the responsible authority[18]; and

(b) not seek improperly to influence a decision about that matter.

11. For the purposes of this Part, "meeting" means any meeting of -

(a) the authority; or

(b) any of the authority's committees, sub-committees, joint committees or joint sub-committees.

PART 3

THE REGISTER OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Registration of Financial and Other Interests

12. Within 28 days of the provisions of an authority's code of conduct being adopted or applied to that authority or within 28 days of his election or appointment to office (if that is later), a member must register his financial interests in the authority's register maintained under section 81(1) of the Local Government Act 2000 by providing written notification to the monitoring officer of the responsible authority[19] of -

(a) any employment or business carried on by him:

(b) the name of the person who employs or has appointed him, the name of any firm in which he is a partner, and the name of any company for which he is a remunerated director;

(c) the name of any person, other than a relevant authority, who has made a payment to him in respect of his election or any expenses incurred by him in carrying out his duties;

(d) the name of any corporate body which has a place of business or land in the authority's area, and in which the member has a beneficial interest in a class of securities of that body that exceeds the nominal value of £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body;

(e) a description of any contract for goods, services or works made between the authority and himself or a firm in which he is a partner, a company of which he is a remunerated director, or a body of the description specified in sub-paragraph (d) above;

(f) the address or other description (sufficient to identify the location) of any land in which he has a beneficial interest and which is in the area of the authority;

(g) the address or other description (sufficient to identify the location) of any land where the landlord is the authority and the tenant is a firm in which he is a partner, a company of which he is a remunerated director, or a body of the description specified in sub-paragraph (d) above; and

(h) the address or other description (sufficient to identify the location) of any land in the authority's area in which he has a licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy for 28 days or longer.

13. Within 28 days of the provisions of the authority's code of conduct being adopted or applied to that authority or within 28 days of his election or appointment to office (if that is later), a member must register his other interests in the authority's register maintained under section 81(1) of the Local Government Act 2000 by providing written notification to the monitoring officer of the responsible authority of his membership of or position of general control or management in any -

(a) body to which he has been appointed or nominated by the authority as its representative;

(b) public authority or body exercising functions of a public

nature;

(c) company, industrial and provident society[20], charity, or body directed to charitable purposes;

(d) body whose principal purposes include the influence of public opinion or policy; and

(e) trade union[21] or professional association.

14. A member must within 28 days of becoming aware of any change to the interests specified under paragraphs 12 and 13 above, provide written notification to the monitoring officer of the responsible authority of that change.

Registration of Gifts and Hospitality

15. A member must within 28 days of receiving any gift or hospitality over the value of £25, provide written notification to the monitoring officer of the responsible authority of the existence and nature of that gift or hospitality.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Order)

The Order contains a model code of conduct as regards the conduct which is expected of members and co-opted members of parish councils. Under section 51 of the Local Government Act 2000, each authority must adopt a code of conduct applying to its members which must incorporate any mandatory provisions of the model code. Under section 51(5) of that Act, where an authority does not adopt such a code within six months of the Order coming into force, the mandatory provisions of the model code will apply to the members of the authority until it does.

Article 1 provides that this Order applies only to parish councils.

Article 2 provides that a model code for parish councils is set out in the Schedule to the Order, and states that all of its provisions are mandatory.

Article 3 makes transitional provision for eight months following the coming into force of the Order to disapply existing statutory provisions relating to the National Code of Local Government Conduct, members' interests, surcharge and declarations of office.

Statutory Instrument 2001 No. 1401

The Relevant Authorities (General Principles) Order 2001

THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Selflessness

1. Members should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

Honesty and Integrity

2. Members should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

Objectivity

3. Members should make decisions on merit, including when making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.

Accountability

4. Members should be accountable to the public for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities, and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to their particular office.

Openness

5. Members should be as open as possible about their actions and those of their authority, and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.

Personal Judgement

6. Members may take account of the views of others, including their political groups, but should reach their own conclusions on the issues before them and act in accordance with those conclusions.

Respect for Others

7. Members should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. They should respect the impartiality and integrity of the authority's statutory officers, and its other employees.

Duty to Uphold the Law

8. Members should uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.

Stewardship

9. Members should do whatever they are able to do to ensure that their authorities use their resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

Leadership

10. Members should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Order)

This Order specifies the principles which are to govern the conduct of members and co-opted members of relevant authorities in England and police authorities in Wales, in accordance with section 49(1) of the Local Government Act 2000.

Article 3(1) gives effect to the Schedule to the Order, and paragraph (2) of that article provides that the principles are expected to govern only the official conduct of members and co-opted members, apart from the second and eighth, which have effect on all occasions. The Schedule specifies the principles.

Under section 50 of the Local Government Act 2000, the Secretary of State may also issue a model code as regards the conduct which is expected of members and co-opted members of authorities. Where he does so, that model code must be consistent with the principles specified in this Order.

DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE OF COUNCILLOR


I, Robin Bowen-Williams, having been elected to the office of Councillor for the Parish of PARISH OF BLETCHLEY AND FENNY STRATFORD, MANOR SOUTH WARD, HEREBY DECLARE that I take the said office upon myself, and will duly and faithfully fulfil the the duties thereof according to the best of my judgement and ability.

I undertake to observe the Parish's approved Code of Conduct in the performance of my duties.

Dated 15/06/2004

(Signature) 

1. This declaration was made and subscribed before me

(a) _____ or (b) 
(Member of the Parish Council) (Clerk to the Parish Council)

Notes :

1. A person elected to the office of Parish Councillor shall make the above Declaration before or at the first meeting of the Parish Council after their election or, if the Council at that meeting so permit, before or at a later meeting of the Council.
2. The Declaration shall be made in the presence of a member of the Parish Council or the Clerk to the Parish Council and signed by that person at (a) or (b) above.
3. The completed Declaration must be handed to the Clerk of the Parish Council for their retention immediately after completion.
4. If an elected member of a Parish Council fails to comply with 1 and 2 above, their office shall become vacant.

(5) For the purposes of this section, a person shall be taken to be unfit to drive if his ability to drive properly is for the time being impaired.

(6) A constable may arrest a person without warrant if he has reasonable cause to suspect that that person is or has been committing an offence under this section.

(7) For the purpose of arresting a person under the power conferred by subsection (6) above, a constable may enter (if need be by force) any place where that person is or where the constable, with reasonable cause, suspects him to be.

(8) Subsection (7) above does not extend to Scotland, and nothing in that subsection affects any rule of law in Scotland concerning the right of a constable to enter any premises for any purpose.

Driving or being in charge of a motor vehicle with alcohol concentration above prescribed limit.

5.—(1) If a person—

(a) drives or attempts to drive a motor vehicle on a road or other public place, or

(b) is in charge of a motor vehicle on a road or other public place,

after consuming so much alcohol that the proportion of it in his breath, blood or urine exceeds the prescribed limit he is guilty of an offence.

(2) It is a defence for a person charged with an offence under subsection (1)(b) above to prove that at the time he is alleged to have committed the offence the circumstances were such that there was no likelihood of his driving the vehicle whilst the proportion of alcohol in his breath, blood or urine remained likely to exceed the prescribed limit.

(3) The court may, in determining whether there was such a likelihood as is mentioned in subsection (2) above, disregard any injury to him and any damage to the vehicle.

Breath tests.

6.—(1) Where a constable in uniform has reasonable cause to suspect—

(a) that a person driving or attempting to drive or in charge of a motor vehicle on a road or other public place has alcohol in his body or has committed a traffic offence whilst the vehicle was in motion, or

(b) that a person has been driving or attempting to drive or been in charge of a motor vehicle on a road or other public place with alcohol in his body and that that person still has alcohol in his body, or

(c) that a person has been driving or attempting to drive or been in charge of a motor vehicle on a road or other public place and has committed a traffic offence whilst the vehicle was in motion,



HM COURTS SERVICE
hmcs

Central
Buckingham
Magistrates
SK5

Jane Coles
Court Administration Manager

Walton Street
Aylesbury
Buckinghamshire
HP21 7QZ

DX 149920 Aylesbury 10

T 01296 554350
F 01296 554320

www.hmcourts-service.gov.uk

RECEIVED
16 MAR 2006

Our ref: JC/las
Your ref: SBE13980.06

Richard Owen
The Standards Board for England
1st Floor, Cottons Centre
Cottons Lane
London SE1 2QG

15TH March 2006

RECEIVED BY INVESTIGATIONS
DEPT DATE _____
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
DATE 16/3/06 BY _____

Dear Mr Owen

Ref: SBE13980.06

Please find enclosed as requested a certified extract of the court register relating to the conviction of Robin Bowen-Williams.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of any further assistance.

Yours sincerely

Jane Coles
Court Administration Manager

Mr Peter Hammersley, Area Director Thames Valley

MEMORANDUM of an ENTRY entered in the REGISTER of the CENTRAL BUCKS MAG COURT

REGISTER FOR 13.12.2005 Local Justice Area Code : 1129 (72) AM Page No. : 1

DEFENDANT - APPLICANT INFORMANT PLEA OFFENCES / COMPLAINT

Robin BOWEN-WILLIAMS Mr TVP
 130 Water Eaton Road
 Bletchley MK2 3AJ
 Milton Keynes
 05039592W B 25.04.1941 64
 No case level URN record.
 G
 FROM: DATE LAST PRE-CON:
 DVLA RESPONSE HAS NOT BEEN REQUESTED
 On 03.11.2005 at Drayton Parslow in the County of Buckinghamshire
 drove a vehicle, namely motor vehicle (Car), vauxhall astra
 M648 VMB on a road, namely Drayton Road, after consuming
 so much alcohol that the proportion of it in your blood,
 namely 82 milligrammes of alcohol in 100 millilitres of
 blood, exceeded the prescribed limit
 Contrary to Section 5(1)(a) of the Road Traffic Act 1988
 and Schedule 2 to the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988.
 H.O. Code :803/ 2 Proc. Code : 0 Remand Code : 0 Crime No. :
 No offence URN recorded.

Guilty Plea taken into consideration.
 Fine Only
 Crown Prosecutions Service
 have been disqualified from holding or obtaining a driving
 licence for 2 months Alcohol Reading: 82 blood .
 D20 notification sent to DVLA.
 Order made under Section 34(a) of the Road Traffic Offenders
 Act 1988 reducing the period of disqualification by 3 MONTHS
 if course completed by 13.07.2006
 Case counted for Mis Statistics.

Time to Pay To be paid by 28.12.2005
 BAL. 243.00

I certify the above extract to be a true copy.

Reshamling

mknews, January 4, 2006

www.lsnmedia.co.uk

Drink-driving councillor will not be resigning

A COUNCILLOR banned for drink driving says he will not be resigning.

Robin Bowen-Williams, a Bletchley and Fenny Town councillor, was breathalysed by police after his car veered off Drayton Road, Drayton Parslow, on November 3 at 7pm.

Mr Bowen-Williams appeared at Aylesbury Magistrates' Court on December 13. He was banned from driving for 12 months and ordered to pay a £200 fine.

He told *mk news*: "I was absolutely on the minimum side of being over the limit. "I had only had two pints."

But despite drink awareness posters being placed on town council noticeboards in Bletchley when asked if Mr Bowen-Williams had been following the campaigns he said: "No I have not."

The parish councillor said he would not consider resigning over the incident, adding: "I don't think you will find that any other councillors in this situation have resigned."

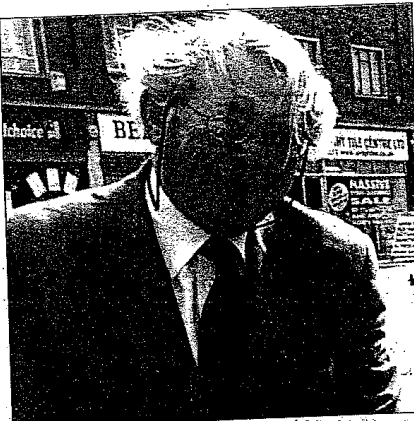
Mrs Jan Lloyd, chairman of Bletchley and Fenny Town Council said: "I'm not quite sure what you expect me to do."

"I am not prepared to say anything as I would be speaking on behalf of the whole council."

"All I will say is that it is unfortunate."

Regarding any possible resignation she added:

"This will be a decision for the whole council - I do not make any decisions on a lateral score."



Banned from driving: Cllr Robin Bowen-Williams

"These things go through the due legal process and that is it."

A police spokesman said: "Our advice is not to drink when driving. Any alcohol will impair your judgement."

alicia.babaee@mk-news.co.uk

mknews, January 11, 2006

www.lgnr

Resign calls mount for drink-drive councillor

PRESSURE is mounting on a town councillor to resign after he was found guilty of drink driving.

Last week we revealed that Robin Bowen-Williams, independent councillor for Bletchley and Fenny Town Council, had been caught driving while over the limit.

This newspaper has been flooded with calls and letters since the article calling for the former Tory MK councillor to resign.

Bowen-Williams, who was banned from driving for a year and ordered to pay a £200 fine, is the chairman of the Finances and General Purposes Board – the committee responsible for road safety in Bletchley.

It has emerged that Bowen-Williams may be reported to the Standards Board for damaging the council's reputation.

Milton Keynes Councillor Paul Bartlett said: "Mr Williams has let down many people in one of the worst ways possible and his arrogant approach to calls for his resignation are in themselves cause enough for him to go and not bring any further shame to his family, the Conservative Party and the local town council."

"The residents of Bletchley



Guilty: Robin Bowen Williams deserve better."

It is understood that there are to be official calls for the town council to reconsider his position.

Yesterday Jan Lloyd, chairwoman of Bletchley and Fenny Town Council said: "I do condemn the action of drinking and driving."

But would not say whether his position was safe, adding: "I do not take unilateral action. It will be for the whole council to decide."

Once again, Bowen-Williams dismissed the incident as 'unfortunate'. When asked by a reporter what his misfortune was, he replied: "That I am having to

waste time talking to you." He refused to say whether he would be standing down but added: "I find it very difficult to understand, when I am not the first by any means."

"I am interested to hear you have had so many letters. I am grateful for the enormous amount of support I have received."

A spokesman for the Standards Board said: "If someone feels that a member's conduct might have breached the Code of Conduct, for example that their behaviour has brought their office into disrepute, then they can make a complaint to us."

"The Standards Board will consider the allegation and the specific circumstances surrounding it and decide whether the matter warrants an investigation, taking into account factors such as whether it would be in the public interest to do so."

Ruth Jury, leader of the Conservative group, said that it should be left to Cllr Bowen-Williams and Bletchley and Fenny Town Council to decide whether he stays.

Bowen-Williams added that he regretted his actions. alicia.babae@mk-news.co.uk

SK8

28th January 2006

RECEIVED
01 FEB 2006

Dear Sir or Madam,

Re: Cllr Robin Bowen-Williams, Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council

I am writing regarding the above-named councillor, whom I believe has broken the code of conduct by bringing his office into disrepute.

Cllr Bowen-Williams was recently convicted of a drink driving offence after his car veered off the road and he was found to be over the limit. I enclose relevant press coverage concerning the incident. It is apparent that Cllr Bowen-Williams has not apologised for his behaviour, in spite of public outrage at what he did, and has sought to minimise the impact of his drink driving on other people.

Cllr Bowen-Williams has a long record of service as an elected councillor. I understand that this is not the first ban that he has received for drink driving.

Cllr Bowen-Williams chairs the Town Council's Finance and General Purposes Committee, which has responsibility for funding road safety measures in Bletchley, and also for implementing the Town Council's drinking control measures. He was also caught drink driving near Christmas, at a time when the Town Council had dedicated its noticeboards to a drink awareness campaign. I believe that the public have a right to expect that a councillor who is charged with managing these important issues should not bring their office into disrepute by drinking and driving.

Yours sincerely,



Maria Craig

Interview Record

Case number: SBE13980.06	Name of interviewee: Ms Maria Craig
Name of Investigator: Richard Owen	Role/status of interviewee: complainant
Date of interview: 31 March 2006	Time of interview: 14.10 – 14.25
Others present: none	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> RECEIVED BY INVESTIGATIONS DEPT DATE 2/4/06 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT DATE _____ BY _____ </div> <div style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; margin-left: 10px; vertical-align: middle;">RECEIVED</div> <div style="font-size: 1.2em; font-weight: bold; margin-left: 10px; vertical-align: middle;">13 APR 2006</div>
<p>Mr Owen confirmed that interviewee was aware that:</p> <p>He would be taking notes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The interview related to her allegation that Cllr Bowen-Williams has or may have failed to comply with the Council's Code of Conduct <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The information she provided may be used when drafting the report <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The information will be used to help the ESO reach one of 4 findings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If the matter is referred to the APE/Standards Committee the noted record of this interview may be submitted as evidence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If the matter is referred to the APE/Standards Committee the interview note may be made public. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The information is confidential and may not be disclosed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Asked if she had any questions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	

Ms Craig states that she knows Cllr Bowen-Williams in his capacity as a member of Bletchley & Fenny Stratford Town Council because she was a member of the council from 2000 – 2002.

Ms Craig states that she understands that Cllr Bowen-Williams had a previous conviction for drink-driving during the 1990s when he was a teacher at Lord Grey School, Bletchley.

I, Maria Craig, confirm that the above summary of the telephone interview held on 31 March 2006 is accurate and fair.

Signature



Date

10. ~~4~~ 06.

Interview Record



Case number: SBE13980.06	Name of interviewee: Cllr Robin Bowen-Williams
Name of Investigator: Richard Owen	Role/status of interviewee: subject member
Date of interview: 20 April 2006	Time of interview: 11.30 – 11.50
Others present: none	Location : telephone
Mr Owen confirmed that interviewee was aware that:	
He would be taking notes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The interview related to Ms Craig's allegation that Cllr Bowen-Williams has or may have failed to comply with the Council's Code of Conduct	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The information he provided may be used when drafting the report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The information will be used to help the ESO reach one of 4 findings	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If the matter is referred to the APE/Standards Committee the noted record of this interview may be submitted as evidence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If the matter is referred to the APE/Standards Committee the interview note may be made public.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The information is confidential and may not be disclosed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Asked if he had any questions	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Cllr Bowen-Williams confirmed that he had been convicted in December 2005 of driving whilst having consumed alcohol in excess of the legal limit.

Cllr Bowen-Williams states that he pleaded guilty to the charge but he did not have an opportunity to tell the court of any mitigating circumstances, as the duty solicitor who represented him took control. Cllr Bowen-Williams states that he would have mentioned that he believes he lost control of the car on a country road because his

tyre burst, not because he had been drinking. He states that the first person on the scene who helped him reposition his car, commented that he thought the tyre had blown, causing a wheel to sheer off and Cllr Bowen-Williams to lose control. No other vehicles were involved in the incident.

Cllr Bowen-Williams states that the incident took place at about 6.40 in the evening. He had consumed two pints of beer, of 3.7% alcohol content. He was only slightly above the legal limit for driving.

Cllr Bowen-Williams states that he had responded to the allegation made by Ms Craig by letter. Mr Owen states that the letter was not on file which might indicate it had not been received at the Standards Board. He promised to search for it. Cllr Bowen-Williams states that, if he can find a copy of his letter, he will provide it. Cllr Bowen-Williams states that, enclosed with his letter, was a copy of the minutes of a Town Council meeting which recorded its unanimous gratitude of the work he has done for the Council. Mr Owen promised to obtain a copy of this. Cllr Bowen-Williams states that at the time Mr Mabbot resigned from the Town Council, the two other Labour members on the council both voted in support of the motion recording its gratitude for Cllr Bowen-Williams' work for the community.

Cllr Bowen-Williams states that the statement made by Ms Craig that he had a previous conviction for driving whilst over the alcohol limit is completely untrue. He states that he has no previous convictions for this offence.

Cllr Bowen-Williams states that he does not see a significant link between his offence and his chairmanship of the Council's Finance and General Purposes Committee which funds road safety measures. Cllr Bowen-Williams states that he regrets the circumstances which caused his court appearance but the law has now taken its course and he has been punished. Cllr Bowen-Williams states that, although just over the legal limit, he does not feel he was incapable of driving on the evening in question.

Cllr Bowen-Williams states that he has been overwhelmed by the number of messages of understanding and sympathy he has received from local people, in writing, in person and by telephone.

I, Robin Bowen-Williams, confirm that the above summary of the telephone interview held on 20 April 2006 is accurate and fair.

Signature 

Date 1/5/2006

Interview Record

SK11

Standards Board
for England

Case number: SBE13980.06	Name of interviewee: Ms Lisa Courtney
Name of Investigator: Richard Owen	Role/status of interviewee: Town Clerk
Date of interview: 24 April 2006	Time of interview: 11.35 – 11.55
Others present: none	Location : telephone
<p>Mr Owen confirmed that interviewee was aware that:</p> <p>He would be taking notes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The interview related to an allegation that Cllr Robin Bowen-Williams has or may have failed to comply with the Council's Code of Conduct <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The information she provided may be used when drafting the report <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The information will be used to help the ESO reach one of 4 findings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If the matter is referred to the APE/Standards Committee the noted record of this interview may be submitted as evidence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If the matter is referred to the APE/Standards Committee the interview note may be made public. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The information is confidential and may not be disclosed <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Asked if she had any questions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	

Ms Courtney is Clerk to Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council. She has been in that role since July 2003.

Ms Courtney confirmed that the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the Council has the core responsibility on behalf of the Council for traffic, transport and road safety, amongst that committee's other responsibilities.

Onn

Ms Courtney states that for the last 15-18 months the Council has had a project to implement a drinking control area within the town centre. This does not prohibit drinking in public but it gives the Police enhanced powers to deal with drink related anti social behaviour. The drinking control area has only just been implemented as there was a long consultation and legal process to go through. Ms Courtney states that she cannot recall whether the project was under the control of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Ms Courtney states that she cannot recall if the Council's notice boards were given over to a drink awareness campaign in the run up to Christmas 2005 but it is possible.

Ms Courtney states that she is unaware of any previous conviction of Cllr Bowen-Williams for driving with excess alcohol prior to that in December 2005. She states that he has never disclosed any such earlier conviction in any documents she has seen.

Ms Courtney states that at the Council meeting on 17 January 2006 former Cllr Mobbott put forward a motion critical of Cllr Bowen-Williams. At Cllr Bowen-Williams' request the item was considered on the public part of the agenda. The motion was not passed. She states that the minutes make reference to Cllr Bowen-Williams' valuable experience as a councillor. Ms Courtney will send Mr Owen a copy of those minutes and the wording of Cllr Mabbott's motion.

I, Lisa Courtney, confirm that the above summary of the telephone interview held on 24 April 2006 is accurate and fair.

Signature

Lisa Courtney

Date

5/05/06

A

SK12

13 March 2006

for the attention of:
Philip McCourt Esq,
Milton Keynes Council,
PO Box 111, Civic Offices.
1 Saxon Court East,
Central Milton Keynes,
MK9 3HG

Dear Sir,

I respond to your letter of the third of this month which is clearly linked to other letters which I have received. These are a letter written on the ninth of February from Cottons Lane, London and signed on behalf of a Mr T. Blackpool, a letter written on the fourteenth of February from Cottons Lane, London and signed on behalf of a Mr M. Richards and a letter written on the twenty fourth of February from Cottons Lane, London and signed by a Mr R.Owen. I do hope that in responding to you I do all that is at present required but would ask if this is not the case that you inform me of whom so ever else I should be in touch.

Without trying to diminish either my own regret that the incident occurred or the embarrassment to others I feel it is possible to wonder if the coverage given in one of our local papers might be perceived as perhaps excessive (the other local publication has not referred to it). Although on every occasion when spoken to I stressed my regret and embarrassment it was only at the last that the same sorrow was mentioned) I think it worth pointing out that in the letters page of the newspaper of the four letters which were published one came from an address in Bletchley which simply does not exist, one from an address outwith the area of the Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council and two for whom an assurance was offered that a name and address had been supplied. This part of the story was continued and a reporter wrote of an office flooded with letters but no more were printed to sustain the argument.

When the issue was discussed by the Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council the reporter was not present in the room and the position which the Town Council took is reflected in its Minute FC10-06 of which a copy is enclosed.

As a final part of what I must repeat has been a reflection on what will always remain to myself a sad and embarrassing occasion in my life I have too to reflect upon what I can only describe as the all but astonishing range of support from the community in which I have lived and grown old for now forty and more years .

I hope that all of the above provides the sort of information from myself which you seek and can only conclude by expressing again my own sadness for the embarrassment which I have caused to others.

Yours faithfully,

Robin Bowen-Williams.

**Full Council Meeting
Tuesday 17th January 2006
Minutes**

Present: Jan Lloyd (Chair), Bruce Abbott, Sue Baird-Murray, Geoff Bennett, Robin Bowen-Williams, Paul Dodge, Keith Ely, Danny Galvin, Grant Gillingham, Tony Mabbott, Beryl Quigley, Shirley Rolfe, Joan Thomas, Lisa Courtney (Clerk)

Also Present: Neil Dodds, Thames Valley Police
2 Members of the public
1 Member of the press
Andy Ansell, Town Council Community Officer
Stephanie Clifton, Parish Ranger

FC001-06 Apologies
Apologies were received from Paul Ashby, Abass Hajir, Carolyn McIver, Dave McQue,

FC002-06 Any Other Business
Beryl Quigley – Water Eaton Road

It was agreed to bring agenda item 28.2 forward and to discuss after agenda item 9. Agreed that the discussion should be part of the public meeting.

FC003-06 Declarations of Interest
Grant Gillingham declared an interest in any planning matters which may arise, being a Member of the Development Control Committee.

FC004-06 Minutes of the last Meeting (excl Part 2)
The Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 20th December 2005 were accepted as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chair.

FC005-06 Matters arising from Minutes of the last Meeting – 20th December 2005
FC 262-05 Queensway design – the Clerk advised that Newton Leys is subject to planning gain contributions from the developer and not “roof tax”. The contribution referred to as “roof tax” is commonly used by MK Partnership and concerns the developments which they are involved with.

FC265-05 Albert Street Toilets – Bruce reported that MK DCC had agreed to the extra money required from planning gain to refurbish the toilets.

FC006-06 Minutes of the Community and Grants Meeting – 3rd January 2006
FC006-06.1 - The draft minutes were noted.

FC006-06.2 – Danny queried the decision reached by the committee not to install extra dog bins by Manor Fields. It was agreed that the Standing Orders be revoked in this instance to allow the matter to be discussed and considered again at the next Full Council meeting in February 2006.

1 of 5

Signed as a true record

FC007-06 Notes of the Entertainments Group Meeting - 3rd January 2006
The draft notes were noted and Members agreed that the date of Midsummer Madness 2006 will be 25th June 2006.

FC008-06 Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee – 10th January 2006
FC008-06.1 - The draft minutes were noted, these need to be redistributed as pages are missing from some copies

FC008-06.2 – Business Cards
Agreed that Members should let the Clerk know by the end of January 2006 if they would like some cards and the order will then be placed accordingly.

FC009-06 Neighbourhood Policing
Neil Dodds was in attendance at the meeting and gave a summary of issues over the past few months.

- Crime generally is falling, including burglary and car crime
- The police shop in Granby is now operational
- Policing was increased in Central Bletchley over the Christmas period
- There has been an increase of car crime around ASDA, Tescos and into Fenny Stratford over the recent weeks
- Traffic congestion around Asda / IKEA has been a problem
- TVP are working with SRB and other partners to consider the options for SRB sustainability
- Neighbourhood policing – Neill is reviewing the feasibility of neighbourhood policing in pockets of Bletchley
- Problems in Queensway, especially around Funland
- Problems in Leon Park and the need to continue meeting with the Residents' Association
- Problems with underage drinking
- The provision of CCTV in Queensway was briefly discussed and the Clerk reported that MKC are currently conducting a survey amongst Parish Councils regarding this provision.

FC010-06 Members Issues
FC010-06.1 - Tony spoke for the motion as attached to the agenda. He emphasized that this motion is not a personal attack on any individual but that a recent incident has led him to believe that the Town Council needs a policy to deal with these issues for the future.

The Clerk advised that the Town Council itself cannot discipline a Town Councillor – this can only be done by the Standards Board although the Town Council as a body could (if it chose to) report any incidents to the Standards Board. Additionally, the Town Council cannot impose its own code of conduct and any register as suggested in the motion, would be on a voluntary basis.

There followed a discussion about the proposed motion and a vote as follows:

In favour of the motion: (1) – Tony Mabbott

Against the motion: (10) Jan Lloyd Bruce Abbott, Sue Baird-Murray, Geoff Bennett, Paul Dodge, Keith Ely, Danny Galvin, Grant Gillingham, Jan Lloyd, Beryl Quigley, Joan Thomas

Abstentions: (2) – Robin Bowen-Williams and Shirley Rolfe

2 of 5

Signed as a true record

FC010-06.2 – Conduct of Robin Bowen-Williams

Tony Mabbott left the room at this stage along with a member of the press. Tony tendered his letter of resignation as a Town Councillor to the Clerk and this was advised to Members before the close of the meeting. Beryl Quigley requested a specific minute note that a Councillor has left the room, possibly because they did not get their own way and that this was unacceptable behaviour.

Keith Ely proposed the following motion, seconded by Beryl Quigley:

“The Council regrets that Councillor Bowen-Williams has been found guilty of drink driving and considers it to be a serious matter and necessary for the Councillor, not the Council to address. The Council does not however consider that Councillor Bowen-Williams should resign over this matter and trusts that he will continue to use his considerable experience for the benefit of the residents of Bletchley and Fenny Stratford”.

Members agreed unanimously to this motion, Robin Bowen-Williams abstained from voting. Robin publicly emphasized his own personal regret over the incident and regrets any problems that his actions may have caused others.

The member of the press returned to the meeting

FC011-06 Budget 2006/07

FC011-06.1 – Setting of Budget / Precept

Members noted and agreed to the recommendation from the Executive Team that the total budget is set at £440,500 with a precept of £405,100 – balance to come from reserves.

FC011-06.2 – Community Chest Grant from InterMK

Members noted the grant from InterMK of £100,000 for a children's play area at Granby and other physical improvements at the discretion of the Town Council. The Clerk had raised a query with InterMK about where the money could be spent and a reply is awaited.

Post meeting note – confirmation has been received that the money can be used for a play area in Granby and any other physical improvements in the parish area, not just in Granby.

FC012-06 Milton Keynes Council – Budget and Council Tax 2006/07

Noted with no specific response

FC013-06 Standards of Conduct in English Local Government: The Future

Noted with no specific response

FC014-06 Complaints and Compliments Procedure

Papers as attached to the agenda were noted and a request was made for the information to also include the following:

Summary of reports, Quantity received year to date

Number of open complaints, Number of closed complaints

The Clerk to review the feasibility of this request for the next Full Council meeting.

3 of 5

Signed as a true record

FC015-06 TCCO/Parish Ranger Report

The reports from the TCCO and Parish Ranger were noted. The TCCO advised that the drinking control area will be in force from 01.02.06

FC016-06 Community Safety Partnership / Safer Community Unit

Agreed that Jan Lloyd would attend on behalf of the Town Council

FC017-06 Financial Annual Return

The Clerk reported on the following:

Accounts for 2002/03 – have now been concluded by the external auditor, Hacker Young

Accounts for 2003/04 – have already been internally audited by Ian Hendry and the formal audit forms are awaited from Hacker Young. The deadline for submission is the end of February 2006.

Accounts for 2004/05 – Agreed to nominate Ian Hendry as the internal auditor

FC018-06 Community Orchard

Members noted that work is due to start on 25th January 2006. It was agreed that Robin Bowen-Williams should meet with contractors to determine the specific apples trees for planting.

FC019-06 Community Safety Wardens

Members noted the details as per the agenda

FC020-06 Reports from other Meetings

1. Spotlight on Bletchley Executive Group, 24.11.05 – minutes noted
2. Bletchley Task Force, 14.12.05 – minutes noted. It was noted that there was no specific reference in the minutes to the basketball sessions organised by Street Dreams and funded by the Town Council. Clerk to contact Richard Solly to find out what is happening with the basketball club.
3. Bletchley Task Force, 11.01.05 – minutes awaited
4. BDB Meeting, 21.12.05 – The consultation for Queensway is now completed and the preferred option from the consultation is Option1 (more contemporary design), along with some design principles from Option 2. Bruce reported that Remitone (owners of Stephenson House) have also purchased the Kwik Save site. Members discussed the parking facilities and work being carried out at the Stephenson House site. It was agreed that the entrances to the public car park are quite vague – Clerk to contact MKC to establish where the notices are to indicate the parking entrances and to progress with the car park review.
5. NAG Meeting, 11.01.06 – Minutes awaited. Jan advised that unfortunately residents appear to be leaving the NAG meetings and this is being addressed. The NAG has been extremely successful and responsible for many completed projects.
6. Editorial Team Meeting, 13.01.06 – All Councillors have been encouraged to write articles for the next edition. Distribution of the next edition will be mid April.
7. STARS, 11.01.06 – Danny Galvin attended the meeting. MK Council have a budget of £110m for major transport to 2016. It had been reported at the STARS meeting that the outcome of the bid for Bletchley Link 2 should be advised by June 2006.

4 of 5 Signed as a true record

FC021-06 Forthcoming Meetings

1. MK Association of Local Parish Councils – Robin Bowen-Williams to attend
2. CMK Public Transport Improvements Project – No representatives
3. Evaluation of the Spotlight on Bletchley SRB Scheme – noted, various Councillors will attend
4. SRB Celebration Event – noted
5. Clean Neighbourhood Environment Act – Agreed that staff should attend
6. Invite from Leighton Buzzard Mayor, James Goff Big Band – noted

FC022-06 Correspondence

The following items were noted:
Letter from MKC regarding CCTV requirements in Milton Keynes – agreed to take to C & G

FC023-06 Any Other Business

Beryl Quigley – Beryl asked the Clerk to find out what is happening along Water Eaton Road regarding the grass verges etc.

FC024-06 Questions from the Public

None

FC025-06 Confirmation of Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 21st February 2006 at 7.30pm in the Methodist Church Hall.

Members of the public and press left the meeting

Confidential Meeting

Members of the public and press were excluded from this part of the meeting as detailed on the agenda.

FC026-06 Matters arising from meeting on 20th December 2005 (Part 2)

None

FC027-06 Bletchley Development Board, Queensway Steering Group

The minutes from the meeting of 8th November 2005 were noted

FC028-06 Staffing Issues

FC028-06.1 Staff Salaries

The details as attached to the agenda were noted and agreed

FC028-06.2 – Councillor meeting

Noted

FC029-06 Abass Hajir

Members noted and agreed to accept the apologies for Abass for a 6 month period.

The Chair closed the meeting at 10.45pm

5 of 5

Signed as a true record

SK14

RECEIVED BY INVESTIGATIONS	
DEPT DATE	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
DATE	BY
15/6/06	

10th June 2006

for the attention of:
Mr S.Kingston,
The Standards Board of England,
Cottons Centre,
Cottons Lane,
London,
SE1 2QG

RECEIVED
15 JUN 2006

Dear Sir,

Ref SRE 13980.06 (Mr R.Owen)

Thank you for your letter of the thirtieth of last month and its attached documentation. The letter had arrived whilst I was away on holiday but I have now had the opportunity to consider the material in more detail.

Whilst happy to accept and, indeed, welcome the letter signed on your behalf, I must make comment on your remark on Page 3 of the "Reportunder Section59....." in respect of

1

1.2 "reasonably regarded as having brought his office or authority into disrepute"

I should wish to emphasise that
at no stage did I attempt to equivocate or hide the facts of the incident
from the first I sought to express my regrets although the one local newspaper which picked up the story for some time literally refused to allow such sentiment to appear in its pages
when the matter was formally discussed by the Town Council it was at my suggestion that the matter was brought out of the Part II business of that evening's meeting
I should wish to introduce again the point touched upon in the ultimate paragraph of page 1 of SK10
the offence for which I accepted punishment was at the lowest of levels which might be brought to the attention of the Court

I am also forced to ask as to what point the provisions in SK2 (especially 2) require a re-interpretation of SK1 which seems to deal throughout with direct involvement in the affairs of a Parish Council.

At a more general level I would also stress that I accepted without question the punishment imposed upon me by the Courts of Law of the land which has also left me, at least to ponder whether that old adage concerning second punishment for an offence no longer applies. Again I would draw attention to a fact which emerged as I considered my overall position and informed my Valuation Court Clerk of the situation – I sit as a Chairman of the Buckinghamshire Tribunal. He, at once, told me that it was quite unnecessary to have even informed him of the matter.

Returning again to the material which you sent I would wish it to be noted that

(SK9 bottom of Page 1) Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council did not exist in 2000 and Mrs Craig became a co-opted member sometime after the first elections to this body.

(SK9 Page 2 of 2) I retired in 1991 and the general statement is quite simply and utterly untrue and, even, malicious.

In conclusion I would mention two further points. Since this process has been under way I have been re-elected to the position of Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of the Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robin Bowen-Williams', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robin Bowen-Williams.