

**Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee**

**16 June 2017**

**Case Summary**

**1. Summary Statement**

- 1.1 Within its terms of reference, the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee has a duty to promote high ethical standards amongst Members. As well as complying with legislation and guidance, the Committee will need to demonstrate learning from issues arising from local investigations and case law. Furthermore it is advisable for the Committee to be kept informed of any particularly notable cases which are publicised as they may also add to learning at the local level.

**2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 Members are requested to note the contents of the report and the cases at Appendix 1 and to consider any issues for the Council.

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### **3. Strategic Resource Implications**

3.1 There are no resource implications arising from this report.

### **4. Legal and Statutory Implications**

4.1 By considering national cases of significance the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee will be better informed and placed to discharge its duty to promote high ethical standards.

### **5. Implications for the Council's Scorecard Priorities**

5.1 High standards of conduct are an essential part of good corporate governance and this in turn has a direct relationship with the delivery of high quality services.

### **6. Background Details**

6.1 As well as complying with legislation and guidance, the Ethical Standards and Member Development Committee will need to demonstrate learning from issues arising from local investigations and case law. Further, it would be advisable for the Standards Committee to be kept informed of any particularly notable case law which is publicised as this may also add to learning at the local level. Compliance with the law, decided cases, guidance and good practice will increase the effectiveness of the ethical framework within the authority and minimise the risk of challenge.

### **Nazi salute councillor 'could be guilty of misconduct'**

A Labour councillor who made a Nazi salute in a budget meeting could be guilty of misconduct in public office.

The councillor has been suspended for three months and ordered to undertake a course of "diversity training", but will keep his role as member.

The councillor has been barred from sitting on six council committees and told to apologise to the Standing Committee on Religious Education in Plymouth.

A separate investigation into the councillor's actions, by Plymouth City Council's monitoring officer, is believed to be still ongoing.

**Plymouth Herald, March 2017**

### **East Herts councillor slams colleagues on Twitter after social media conduct hearing**

A councillor took to Twitter to lash out at his colleagues, just hours after he was threatened with expulsion over his social media conduct.

East Herts District Council formally censured the councillor after he called opponents "thick" and "illiterate", and ordered him to attend social media training.

Standards sub-committee members subsequently agreed with a report that found the councillor had breached the council's code of conduct to treat the public with respect.

The councillor had argued with opponents on the social media site over whether the authority should hold prayers before its full council meetings.

He attempted to mitigate by saying he was provoked and defending not only himself but the majority of councillors who voted against stopping prayers.

The councillor was given one month to attend the training or he would be removed from the six committees he stood on.

**Hertfordshire Mercury, February 2016**