



KIRKBYMOORSIDE TOWN COUNCIL

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Kevin Hollinrake MP
9 Hanover House
Market Place
Easingwold
YO61 3AD

22nd July 2020

Dear Mr Hollinrake MP,

CODE OF CONDUCT

Please be advised that at the Ordinary meeting dated 20th July the Town Council received the Local Government Association's Model Member Code of Conduct and considered a response to the consultation on the need for strengthened sanctions.

The Town Council acknowledges the importance of high standards of conduct and behaviour of its members as being a fundamental requirement and expectation. Furthermore the Council agree that strengthened sanctions will enable councillors to be held to account for their behaviour in public office.

In January 2019, the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL), published a report on the current ethical framework. In summarising its recommendations, the CSPL said that strengthened sanctions "would enable councillors to be held to account effectively and would enhance the fairness and transparency of the standards process. Introducing a power of suspension and a model code of conduct will enable councillors to be held to account for the most serious or repeated breaches and support officers to address such behaviour, including in parish councils. Strengthening the role of the Independent Person and introducing a right of appeal for suspended councillors will enhance the impartiality and fairness of the process, which is vital to ensure that councillors are protected from malicious or unfounded complaints. Greater transparency on how complaints are assessed and decided in a system which is currently too reliant on internal party discipline will also provide a safeguard against opaque decision-making and provide reassurance to the public".

Recommendations 16 and 21 read as follows:

Recommendation 16: Local authorities (principal authorities, i.e. standards committees), should be given the power to suspend councillors, without allowances, for up to six months.

Recommendation 21: Section 28(11) of the Localism Act 2011 should be amended to state that any sanction imposed on a parish councillor following the finding of a breach is to be determined by the relevant principal authority.

There was also a recommendation that an individual councillor that is suspended, will have a right of appeal via the Local Government Ombudsman.

To date the Government has not responded to the CSPL report and it would be appreciated if you would make representation in your capacity as MP, requesting a review on progress of the implementation of the wider recommendations detailed in the Committee on Standards in Public Life 2019 report.

Your assistance and support in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Holroyd
Kirkbymoorside Town Mayor