

REPORT OF THE
Conduct Advisory Panel
PART II

1. Chairman's Report

- 1.1. On 9 December 2020, in accordance with the County Council's Arrangements for the Assessment, Investigation and Determination of Complaints under the County Council's Code of Conduct for Members ('Arrangements'), a Hearing Panel of the Conduct Advisory Panel determined a complaint against Councillor Woodward, a Member of the County Council.
- 1.2. The complaint related to Councillor Woodward's handling of a grant of £15,000 to the Rockets Motorcycle Display Team, made by the Executive Member for Countryside and Rural Affairs on 7 May 2019 under the Recreation and Heritage Executive Member Community Fund Grant Scheme, at the Decision Day of Councillor Woodward, then Executive Member for Recreation and Heritage.
- 1.3. The Hearing Panel considered the report of the Monitoring Officer and an Independent Investigator. Councillor Woodward also presented evidence to the Hearing Panel.
- 1.4. An Independent Person was also present at the Hearing Panel, in accordance with the Arrangements and the requirements of the Localism Act 2011.
- 1.5. The decision of the Hearing Panel, having sought and taken into account the views of the Independent Person, was that in his actions relating to the grant Councillor Woodward constituted a breach of paragraphs 3.4 and 3.7 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct as set out below:
 - 3.4 *Exercising independent judgement and not compromising your position by placing yourself under obligations to outside individuals or organisations who might seek to influence the way you perform your duties.*
 - 3.7 *Contributing to making the County Council's decision-making processes as open and transparent as possible.*
- 1.6. In coming to this position, the decision of the Hearing Panel was that:
 - 1.6.1. Councillor Woodward compromised his position on 14 January 2019 when approving the grants scheme by mentioning to officers a specific application he expected, from an organisation with which he had strong links.

- 1.6.2. Councillor Woodward put himself under an obligation to the Rockets to try to influence the decision making process, by failing to exercise independent judgement.
- 1.6.3. Following declaring his interest and putting into the public domain that he would not be making the decision, it is clear that Councillor Woodward reinvolved himself in the grant payment process by making contact with officers in relation to the Solent Stars.
- 1.7. The Chairman considered that there was no suggestion of dishonesty, but it was a unanimous decision that Councillor Woodward had lapsed in judgement.
- 1.8. The findings of the Hearing Panel have been published and are reported to the County Council, in accordance with the Arrangements and the decision of the Hearing Panel.

Further details can be found at the link below:

<https://democracy.hants.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=744&MId=7530&Ver=4>

COUNCILLOR KEMP-GEE
Chairman of the Conduct Advisory Panel