

STANDARDS (ASSESSMENT) SUB-COMMITTEE – TUESDAY 13 APRIL 2010

Complaint

The Standards (Assessment) Sub-Committee (13.4.10) considered a complaint submitted by Roger Allen, Chairman of the Holcroft Court Residents Association and received by the City Council's Monitoring Officer on Thursday 1 April 2010. The complaint, summarised below, concerned alleged misconduct by Councillor Ian Rowley, a Member of Westminster City Council.

The complaint alleged that by saying that he intended to attend with Mr Edward Baxter, a candidate in the City Council elections on 6 May 2010 this was an attempt to use the residents' meeting for political purposes and would therefore be a breach of paragraph 6 (ii) of the Members' Code of Conduct.

The complaint further alleges bullying and a lack of respect shown by Councillor Rowley in the way that he reacted to the request from the Chairman of the Residents Association not to attend the meeting with representatives of CityWest Homes by writing to all residents of Holcroft Court and also by asking to be contacted in writing only. In doing so, it was claimed that Councillor Ian Rowley had breached paragraph 3(b) of the Code of Conduct. His actions were not therefore objective or in the public interest. The complaint also questioned the use of resources in sending a letter by first class post to all 244 flats.

Decision

In accordance with Section 57 (A) (2) of the Local Government Act 2000, as amended, the Standards (Assessment) Sub-Committee decided that no action should be taken on the allegation.

The Sub-Committee considered the allegations set out in the complaint most carefully. It noted that it would usually be the case for the Cabinet Member/Deputy Cabinet Member/Ward Member to be accompanied by relevant Officers to meetings of the type referred to. It was not unreasonable for Councillor Rowley to want a CityWest Homes Representative. It was also noted that it was the right of the Residents' Association to control who did/did not attend.

The Sub-Committee were satisfied that on the information it had before it that there was no indication that a breach of the Members Code had occurred. There was no evidence of any intimidation or bullying. The Sub-Committee was also satisfied that Councillor Ian Rowley hadn't responded unreasonably in the circumstances in writing to all residents to explain why he had decided not to attend the meeting. Accordingly, it was decided that no further action be taken.

Right to Review

At the written request of the complainant a separate Standards Sub-Committee can review and change a decision not to refer an allegation for investigation or other action. A different Sub-Committee to that involved in the original decision will undertake the review.

The complainant's written request must be received within 30 days from the date of this notice, explaining in detail on what grounds the decision should be reviewed.

If anyone requires any further information or assistance please contact Mick Steward on 020 7641 3134; email: msteward@westminster.gov.uk

Signed: _____
Chairman, Mrs Liz Peace, CBE
Independent Member

Date: 19 April 2010