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21st August 2006

Dear Debbie;

Re; Investigation of allegation.

I do not believe that I have breached the Code of Conduct for the following reasons;

- I do not believe that Cllr Mrs P Gay has any financial connection with the developer or the land owner.
- I do not believe that Cllr P Gay has any other personal interest with the land owner or developer.
- I do not believe that this application would justify Cllr P Gay declaring an interest, as the site would have no/minimum impact on any property value that she may hold, as the property is of sufficient distant away as to not have an impact on her property.
- The proposed site is not 20-30 yards away from her property.
- At the first meeting of the planning committee I did not arrive until 20 minutes after the meeting had started and so I would be unaware as to if anyone declared an interest.
- If I am found to be in breach of the code, it then follows that all members of the committee and officers are also in breach of the code, as they are all fully aware of the location of Cllr P Gay's property in relation to the proposed development, this was born out on the site visit, where comments where made about calling into Cllr P Gay's house for coffee.
- I believe this complaint is politically motivated and have enclosed an e-mail sent to the local press by Cllr Sas.
- Cllr P Gay and myself was contacted by residents who are affected by this proposed development, but at no time did she indicate any opinion to the residents and so asked me to represent them at both meetings, which I duly did.

Yours truly,



Cllr Jonathan Gay

Jonathan Gay

From: Walker, Wendy - Bath [w.walker@westnews.co.uk]
Sent: 12 June 2006 09:23
To: Jonathan Gay
Subject: FW: NEWS RELEASE

Jonathan: do you want to make any comment on this "news release" we received today? Please reply either to Estelle Phillips or myself. All the best, Wendy W.

-----Original Message-----

From: Peter Sas [mailto:peter.sas@btinternet.com]
Sent: 11 June 2006 21:08
To: peter.sas@btinternet.com
Subject: NEWS RELEASE

LIKE MOTHER LIKE SON..... NEW INVESTIGATION INTO RADSTOCK COUNCILLOR

A senior B&NES councillor is facing investigation by the Standards Board for England following his actions at a development control committee meeting earlier this year.

Cllr Jonathan Gay, who represents Radstock as an "independent", is the first B&NES executive member to be investigated by the local government watchdog, following his participation in a planning application affecting an area very close to his mother's home in Writhlington.

"Last month Phyllis Gay was recommended for investigation by the watchdog responsible for local councillors' behaviour and actions," explains Cllr Peter Sas (Lab, Radstock). "This follows her active role in a planning application considered by the authority earlier this year."

An agreed code of conduct governs how personal interests should be declared and enacted. This usually means that councillors withdraw from meetings that deal with items that might be considered as having a direct interest or affect on them or their family.

"Planning applications in close proximity to someone's property are particularly sensitive cases," says Cllr Sas. "It would be reasonable to expect that councillors dealing with issues close to their own homes would be wise to avoid becoming involved."

Acting on further information supplied by Cllr Sas, the Standards Board for England have now appointed an Ethical Standards Officer to assess whether the case against Cllr Jonathan Gay should be handled centrally (by the national watchdog) or locally, by B&NES' own Standards Committee. There is also the option of taking no further action.

The case against Cllr Phyllis Gay has now been referred to B&NES monitoring officer, Vernon Hitchman, for consideration by the local standards committee. The committee can impose various sanctions, including suspension from office and formal reprimand.

"It's important that the general public have confidence in the probity and integrity of their elected representatives," says Cllr Sas. "The Standards Board for England was established to maintain public confidence in councillors at all levels. In local council terms, no-one is above the law."

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