

9th FEBRUARY 2023



SUFFOLK JOINT STANDARDS BOARD SUB-COMMITTEE

DECISIONS NOTICE

DECISIONS BY THE SUFFOLK JOINT STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE ON THURSDAY, 9 FEBRUARY 2023

Sub-Committee Members:

Councillor Paul Ekpenyong (Chair)
Councillor John Matthissen
Councillor Mike Norris

Complainants:

Councillor Derek Davis – Babergh District Council

Subject Member:

Councillor Sian Dawson – Babergh District Council

Officers:

T Halliday – Monitoring Officer, West Suffolk District Council
J Robinson – Deputy Monitoring Officer, Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils
J Snell – Deputy Monitoring Officer, Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils (Observer)
A Norman – Lead Officer for Overview & Scrutiny and Projects, Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils (Clerk)

In Attendance on Behalf of the Complainant

Councillor Clive Arthey – Babergh District Council (Observer)

On the 9th February 2023 the Suffolk Joint Standards Sub-Committee for Babergh and Mid Suffolk met to consider whether Councillor S. Dawson had breached the Code of Conduct for her behaviour as set-out in a complaint issued by Councillor D. Davis.

Councillor D. Davis alleged in his complaint against Councillor S. Dawson that she had breached Paragraph 1 of the Suffolk Code of Conduct (2012) by failing to treat others with respect by publishing a

“false, derogatory, disrespectful and offensive statement” regarding Councillor D. Davis in a Ward Member report to Hadleigh Town Council.

Councillor D. Davis put forward his reasonings for issuing the code of conduct complaint and provided evidence of the alleged behaviour from Councillor S. Dawson.

A statement was read out from Councillor J. Ward, Leader of Babergh District Council, which set out the reasonings behind Councillor D. Davis’ removal from his Cabinet position in April 2022 which formed the basis of the Code of Conduct complaint.

Councillor S. Dawson did not attend the Joint Standards Sub-Committee Hearing to put forward her reasonings for her behaviour.

Decision

We have considered the details of the complaint together with Cllr Davis’ explanations today. We have also considered the subject’s response and have given particular weight to Councillor Ward’s statement. We are particularly disappointed that Councillor Dawson has not appeared today nor sent an apology.

We are minded to determine that Cllr Dawson has breached parts 1, 4 and 5(1) of the Code of Conduct for Members and will now seek the view of an Independent Person before reaching our final decision.

Teresa Halliday
Monitoring Officer