

Code of Conduct Complaint – Cllr Nick Moon – apology read out at the 7th May 2024 Parish Council Meeting

I would like to put some context to the situation and read out an apology.

On 23rd August 2023, out of frustration with Mr Philip Bond's repeated attacks on members of the parish council and others and also dealing with a personal matter for me, my dear sister had just been diagnosed with terminal cancer, I posted on Sambourne and Middletown Facebook page the following post:

Speaking only as an individual and not in capacity as a Parish Councillor. Please note, Mr Bond. Following the posting of Mr Bond's sexist comments (Shake your tits it's Friday) on his Facebook site shared recently on Matters site.

This is the person who for his own personal gain has tried to bring down the village to be a laughing stock. All because he wants to follow in his father's footsteps and become Chairman of Sambourne Parish Council. And in him you would get a sexist pervert who puts up messages like this and carries on his personal Facebook page at least 30 images, which I'm happy to share, of scantily clad women who he is actively following.

I think everyone but the blinded few can see through all of his posturing and attacking of individuals who work so hard for the village and do so much for our village community.

I feel so sorry for his wife Mandy who has to live with this 'day to day' anxiety of what he will do next and who he will go for next. She has suffered so much and deserves better.

As a community we must draw the line and say no more Mr Bond enough is enough. The village matters to us all and nobody is going to bring us down for their own personal gain.

Mr Bond subsequently made a complaint to Warwickshire Police and there was a police investigation into the Facebook post by me. This was dealt with by way of a Community Resolution where I was asked to send a letter of apology to Mr Bond, which I duly did on 15th October 2023, which stated:

Dear Phil

I am writing to express my apology for any distress caused to you or your wife regarding my comments made on social media. I was at the time under considerable emotional stress, due to a very personal matter, but nevertheless this does not excuse my choice of words and for that I apologise.

I hope our village can return to the harmony our village has enjoyed for many years and that we will once again have a chance to speak on good terms.

Despite this apology having been given, Mr Bond advised the Monitoring Officer of Stratford District Council, the Principal Authority, that he wished to pursue his complaint under the Code of Conduct process.

Consequently, at the request of the Monitoring Officer, an external investigation was conducted. This produced a weighty report at a significant cost (tax payers money), which essentially focused on whether I was acting in capacity when I posted the original post, for which I had already apologised. The external investigator's report was passed to the Monitoring Officer at Stratford District Council for judgement.

The Monitoring Officer decided that there had been a breach of the Code of Conduct, whilst acting in capacity as a councillor. The Code of Conduct was found regarding Bullying/Harassment, Bringing the Council into Disrepute and Failing to Treat Others with Respect, relating only to the post of 23rd August 2023.

I have now been asked – and agreed – to apologise to Mr Bond at the Parish Council meeting (recognising that the apology previously was in my personal capacity).

Once again, I offer my apology to Mr Bond, but this time in my capacity as a Councillor, for any distress caused to you and your family regarding my comments made on social media and hopefully we can now draw a line under this matter, move on and avoid any further costs being incurred by taxpayers.

Cllr Nick Moon

7th May 2024