

Received 7.12.22



**Cllr Liam Bones**  
Conservative Councillor for Preston Ward



Dear Ms Laughton,

I would like to formally take this opportunity to request a review by an Independent Person from another local authority in accordance with the local arrangements. I believe the review should focus on one specific element of the complaint which I believe has been mishandled.

Firstly the issue of acting in my capacity as a Councillor. At no point in the interview did the investigating officer ask me about whether I was acting in my capacity as a Councillor. The article was published in my capacity as the Conservative party agent for North Tyneside and Deputy Chairman (Political) of North Tyneside Conservatives. The article published on North Shields life had no reference to my name or position, nor did it give the impression it was written by a Councillor - in fact in the initial complaint Cllr Wilson says "the website deliberately has no wording that may associate it with Cllr Bones". If the story could not be traced to having been written by me I could not have been giving the impression I was acting in my capacity as a Councillor.

Furthermore, the investigating officer himself in paragraph 8.15 of the initial report states "It does not appear that the Councillor was seeking to increase his personal profile, as his name did not appear in the story, however, we believe it to be more likely than not that the Councillor's motivation was, at least in part, based upon an intention to push his political agenda.". This makes clear that it is the investigating officers' view that the motivations for republication were political and therefore directly related to my roles within the Conservative party rather than my role within the authority. With this in mind the Code of Conduct was not engaged when the article was republished and the complaint should not have been upheld.

I look forward to hearing back from you on next steps.

Regards



Cllr Liam Bones

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