

Meeting Notes

Reference: Local Investigation no. SBE20011.07

Date of meeting 7th February 2008

(At the Council House, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove)

Attendees: Councillor John Tidmarsh and Vanessa Brown (Investigating Officer)

Purpose: to establish whether Councillor Tidmarsh knew the applicant and/or objector.

A letter briefly outlining the allegation being made had previously been provided to Councillor Tidmarsh.

A statement prepared by Councillor Tidmarsh has already been made available within which Councillor Tidmarsh states that he **did** know the applicant Mr. Naveed as he had purchased some gates from him approximately 15 years ago.

Meeting notes recorded by Vanessa Brown

The following matters were discussed:-

1. The details of the allegations were confirmed with Councillor Tidmarsh in that:

(a) at the Planning Committee that took place on the 16th July 2007 Councillor Tidmarsh made a declaration of a "Personal Interest" in relation to the planning application for the Cross Roads Garage (B/2007/0498). The declaration made was that "the owner of the property the subject of the application is a friend of his".

(b) That the interest declared should have been prejudicial.

(c) That in the course of the Planning Committee meeting Councillor Tidmarsh sought compensation for the parties involved and that included an objector who was a friend of his

Councillor Tidmarsh enquired how the allegations came about and Vanessa Brown confirmed that the allegations are based on the fact that Mr. Naveed, the applicant (owner of Cross Roads Garage) contacted the Council following the meeting to say that Councillor Tidmarsh was not a friend of his but was in fact a friend of someone who was objecting to the application, Mr Narang.

2. Councillor Tidmarsh confirmed that he had made that declaration in the terms accurately recorded and that he had done so in good faith. Councillor Tidmarsh confirmed that whilst he knew Mr Naveed he had not had contact with him for many years.
3. Councillor Tidmarsh confirmed the details in his statement that, approximately 15 years ago he purchased some gates from Mr Naveed who ran a gate business in Blackwell. He recalls a pleasant visit with his wife to the premises to make their purchase. In addition Councillor Tidmarsh recalled a further meeting with Mr Naveed at a Conservative Party social gathering.
4. Some years later Councillor Tidmarsh noticed that the business had moved from its location in Blackwell to its present location on the same plot as the Cross Roads Garage. Councillor Tidmarsh genuinely believed it was the same business because of the signage and assumed he it continued to be run by Mr Naveed.
5. Councillor Tidmarsh confirmed that he had attended the site visit prior to the Planning Committee meeting held on 16th July 2007, and he assumed that the gate company and the garage were all **one** business. He felt it would therefore be appropriate to make the personal interest declaration even though it had been approximately 10 years since he had last seen Mr Naveed.
6. Vanessa Brown confirmed that the relevant part of the recording of the Planning Committee meeting of the 16th July 2007 had been transcribed and that a copy would be made available for Councillor Tidmarsh. The transcript was briefly considered. Councillor Tidmarsh agreed that he had made the comments recorded and that he had made them as a way to try and solve the planning issue.
7. Councillor Tidmarsh and Vanessa Brown discussed the fact that the person who in fact ran the gate business was separate to the person who ran the garage. Also that the person who ran the gate business was Mr Naryng who was the objector and that Mr. Naveed owned the garage and was the applicant in the matter.
8. Councillor Tidmarsh confirmed that the assumption he had made was that both the gate business and the garage were one unit and thus he would have dealt with Mr Naveed when he purchased the gates. Following on from that assumption, Councillor Tidmarsh made the declaration believing that he knew the applicant.

9. Councillor Tidmarsh confirmed that it had been such a long time since he had seen Mr Naveed that if he walked in the room with a dozen people he would not be able to pick him out. Further he confirmed that he did not see/recognise Mr Naveed (or Mr Narang) at the Planning Committee on 16th July 2007.

10. Councillor Tidmarsh and Vanessa Brown discussed the comment made in the statement provided by Councillor Tidmarsh "...it now appears that although involved he (Mr Naveed) was not in fact the Applicant." Vanessa Brown confirmed that Mr Naveed was the applicant although an agent spoke on his behalf at the Planning Committee meeting.

Councillor Tidmarsh was quite visibly astounded by the full extent of the allegations being made once he realised that he had made a mistake with regard to the declaration. Vanessa Brown felt it appropriate to end the meeting to allow Councillor Tidmarsh the opportunity to fully absorb the details and that a further meeting should be arranged in the near future. Councillor Tidmarsh showed very genuine concern at his mistake and stressed that his intentions were entirely honest and honourable

I Councillor Tidmarsh confirm that I have read the above and agree its content and I have been given the opportunity to amend, delete and/or add any additional comments.

.....
Councillor Tidmarsh

.....
Vanessa Brown (Investigating Officer)

Signed as an accurate record of discussions between Councillor Tidmarsh and Vanessa Brown on 7th February 2008.

[ORIGINAL DOCUMENT SIGNED BY COUNCILLOR
TIDMARSH AND VANESSA BROWN]