

CONFIDENTIAL

NOTES OF AN INFORMAL RESOLUTION MEETING WITH CLRS KNEALE AND G ALLMAN OF ASHBY TOWN COUNCIL – 13 NOVEMBER 2020

(THIS IS A SUMMARY OF THE MAIN POINTS COVERED IN THE DISCUSSION, NOT A VERBATIM RECORD)

MEETING FACILITATED BY ELIZABETH WARHURST, HEAD OF LEGAL AND COMMERCIAL SERVICES AND MONITORING OFFICER, NWLDC

EW introduced the meeting and thanked both Cllrs for attending. The meeting had been arranged by EW in response to a complaint which had been made about Cllr Allman by Cllr Kneale.

In summary, Cllr Kneale's complaint centered around the discussion which took place during the public question and answer session at the meeting of Ashby Town Council in July 2020, when Mr Jarmin was invited to speak. Mr Jarmin was asking questions regarding the Anti-racism march which had recently taken place in Ashby. This led to the agenda item on the anti-racism motion (and letter from Cllr Coxon) being brought forward and details of complaints which had been made about Cllrs Bigby and Kneale being discussed in an open meeting. Cllr Kneale was concerned about this as she believed that it was suggested that she had taken place in an unlawful act by being part of the march and also that the complaints about her and Cllr Bigby were referred to, when they were confidential. These concerns were exacerbated as Cllr Kneale believes that the discussion was not spontaneous and was pre planned.

Cllr Kneale confirmed that this was a good summary of her concern and she had some other questions to ask.

The following matters were discussed:

In response to a question from Cllr Kneale about how the information regarding the complaints about her and Cllr Bigby were shared with Cllr Harrison, Cllr Allman said that he had not seen the complaints which had been made.

In response to a question from Cllr Kneale about contact with Mr Jarmin outside the meeting, Cllr Allman advised that he had never met Mr Jarmin. He had only spoken to him on the telephone to give him some general advice about how to ask a question at a council meeting.

In response to a question from Cllr Kneale about whether Cllr Allman had attended the meeting with prepared statements suggesting that he had been in contact with Mr Jarmin outside the meeting, Cllr Allman said that he Mr Jarmin had asked about the process for asking a question at the meeting and he had prepared his chairmans notes to enable him to manage the meeting, which he had thought could be difficult. He had prepared a typed note to help him manage the meeting and respond to Mr Jarmin.

Cllr Allman said that he had a general discussion with Jack Fargher ahead of the meeting to enable preparations to be made for the meeting.

Cllr Allman said that Mr Jarmin had shared his general concerns about the conduct of Cllrs Kneale and Bigby and he had advised him that any complaint would need to be addressed to EW or JF.

In response to Cllr Kneale's concern regarding the statement he made about the "unlawful" nature of the BLM march, Cllr Allman stated that he made the statement in his role as Mayor of the ATC. The role of Mayor was an important civic role, with it only being second in line to the Crown. As

such he felt that it was important not to be seen as condoning the event and it was important to make a statement at the Council meeting. He advised that he had gone into Ashby on the day to show Leadership in this role.

In response to a question from Cllr Kneale about whether Cllr Allman accepted that his involvement and approach at the meeting had caused upset and distress, Cllr Allman said no.

EW asked whether Cllr Allman could understand that Cllr Kneale was upset and distressed (if he didn't accept a part in that), Cllr Allman said yes.

EW asked whether with the benefit of hindsight, he might have managed the situation at the meeting differently. Cllr Allman said that there were often unexpected situations arising at meetings and he would have preferred it if the complaints had not been mentioned. That said, couldn't think of any changes he would have made to the management of the meeting.

There was a discussion about the use of the term "sub-judice" which was used by Cllr Harrison in the meeting. EW advised that this means a matter which was already under a judicial process, and perhaps Cllr Harrison had meant the comment to refer to the complaints already having been submitted to the MO.

Cllr Kneale advised that she wished to reflect on the meeting and review the notes of the meeting from EW and consider how she wished to proceed with her complaint.

EW thanked both Cllrs Kneale and Allman for their time and attendance at the meeting.