

Richard Vallery-Peters

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Mrs Christine Barkshire-Jones
Head of Legal Services
Hastings Borough Council
Aquila House
Breeds Place
Hastings
East Sussex

Tuesday 9th April 2013

Dear Mrs Barkshire-Jones,

Ref: Breach of the Code of Conduct by Councillor Emily Westley

On Saturday 6th April 2013, I was made aware of a rumour circulating in Hastings & St Leonards, that Labour Councillors were spreading misinformation about me by claiming that I had defected to UKIP and was standing as the UKIP candidate in the forthcoming County Council elections. I laughed this off as nothing could be more ludicrous as I am no longer a member of any political party. However, yesterday, Monday 8th April 2013 I was again made aware of the rumour but this time I was told the name of the Councillor who is alleged to have been spreading the rumour and that the rumour had been published on Twitter, (a social media system of which I personally disapprove).

Prior to going to the Conquest hospital for treatment this morning, (I have recently undergone major surgery), I sent an email to Mr Burgess who is the Chairman of Hastings & Rye Conservative Association, asking if he was aware of the tweet and if so, would he supply me with a copy. This afternoon he duly posted a copy through my letterbox. When I read the printout, (I enclose a copy for your information). I was shocked that a sitting Councillor would publish such a statement on a social media network that they know to be untrue and contacted my solicitor Mr Andrew Gurney of Gurney Haden Solicitors, Ashford, Kent, who agreed with me that the statement that Cllr Westley has published about me is criminal libel. I then telephoned you directly to ascertain the correct format of making an official complaint against Cllr Westley.

I have, while typing this complaint, taken a call from my solicitor who informed me that other far more serious statements from other persons yet to be identified have been published on Cllr Westleys' Twitter account as a result.

I regard Councillor Westleys' conduct to be in violation of the Code of Conduct adopted by the local authority on 21 June 2012, its' provision under Chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011 and the standing orders made under Chapter 7 of that Act and Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972.

I make the complaint under the Hastings Borough Council Constitution,
Chapter 5 Part 1 Sub Para 2(b) act, claim to act or give the impression you are acting as a representative of
the authority.

Chapter 5 Part 3 Sub Para (1) You must treat others with respect
Chapter 5 Part 5 You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be
regarded as bring your office or authority into disrepute.

It is clearly stated in the Role of Members,
Paragraph 35: Members have a duty under their Code of Conduct to treat others with respect.
Paragraph 36: A member must not when acting as a member or in any other capacity: bring the Council or
his/her position as a member into disrepute or use his/her position as a member improperly to gain an
advantage or disadvantage for him/herself or any other person.

It is my view and that of my legal representative that the 'tweets' by Councillor Westley are seriously
defamatory and criminally libellous. This matter should be heard by the authoritys' Standards Board at the
earliest opportunity. I look forward to your response in due course.

Regards aye,

Richard Vallery-Peters



Emily Westley Labour @emilywestley 7 Apr
@HastingsRyeCons I see you have a defector for ESCC election to #UKIP. I bet your glad to get rid of that criminal Richard Vallery-peters!
Details



Liam Atkins
@liamatkinsbiz

Follow

@emilywestley @HastingsRyeCons What's your evidence for that Emily?

Reply Retweet Favorite More

3:05 AM - 7 Apr 13



Emily Westley Labour @emilywestley 7 Apr
@liamatkinsbiz @hastingsryecons reports in @HastingsObs
Details



Liam Atkins @liamatkinsbiz 7 Apr
@emilywestley Reports of being a "criminal" or defecting?
Details



Emily Westley Labour @emilywestley 7 Apr
@liamatkinsbiz about him wearing military medals he was not permitted to wear .. Defecting he announced in the pub
Details

@
is a
reply.

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