

Mathew Buckley
Head of Legal and Democratic Services
East Riding of Yorkshire Council
County Hall
Beverley
HU17 9BA

Dear Mathew

LA/SASC/182/Parnaby/East Riding of Yorkshire – Standards Board investigation

Having submitted my comments on this investigation to your designated colleague, a copy of which I include as a follow on for your convenience, it is apparent that regardless of the abundance of evidence regarding several code of conduct misdemeanours contained within this latest document only four relatively more minor points are to be investigated by your department on behalf of the Standards Board.

The points under investigation depend entirely on whether the panel believe my own evidence or Cllr. Parnaby's customary denials. The result should be a foregone conclusion, given his now well-known avoidance of the truth, whereas on the other hand I don't believe anyone could ever accuse me of lying.

Unfortunately the outcome, whatever it is, will not be known for a considerable time whilst meanwhile Cllr Parnaby continues on his, now well documented, path of corruption through County Hall. He should of course have been suspended long ago and awaiting court proceedings by now.

By contrast this latest report and most of my many previous letters on this subject contain several incidents of readily provable breaches of the code of conduct by this councillor.

It is I believe your duty to act on this information which I bring to your attention. I would suggest that you begin with the very simple to prove but nevertheless of major significance breach of the code of conduct, details which I outline in my report following, identified as Item 6, regarding Cllr Parnaby chairing meetings, **behind-closed-doors**, of his cabinet which approved huge payments to his friends without disclosing his personal involvements.

His close personal friendship with those mentioned can be easily confirmed and the minutes of these meetings are also readily available to you and due to the illegality of his actions should be made available to the general public who have after all paid for his dishonesty and will undoubtedly demand to know the full facts.

Your given duty to uphold the conduct of elected members should ensure a swift outcome of this matter after which we can move onto the next breach of the code of conduct which could be a caravan from Swifts or holidays by courtesy of the Wright Group or should you prefer I will find you some more alternatives.

Kind Regards

Peter Robinson

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24th August 2017

██████████, Solicitor
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Dear ██████████

LA/SASC/182/Parnaby/ East Riding of Yorkshire – Standards Board Investigation

It is noticeable from the documentation provided that the Standards Committee investigation endeavours to separate the wrongful use of the planning system by council officers, for which there is an abundance of written evidence, from the remaining complaints against Cllr. Parnaby. The evidence against him can only be described as multiform and as such, attempts to exclude any given events would unacceptably dilute this input.

For the same reason, as this document, on its journey through County Hall, might well suffer some degree of redaction, I have decided that, in order to negate this, it will also be distributed into the public domain (following removal of some private information only).

Item 1: Cllr. Parnaby`s association with Cllr. Phyllis Pollard

As one of his closest friends I had always accompanied him on every canvassing opportunity usually together with our wives, when he changed his constituency, from Cottingham to Beverley Rural, my wife and I became acquainted with Cllr Phyllis Pollard. We only ever saw Phyllis during election times and consequently there would be long gaps in our association. These many canvassing days often ended with a pub meal on the way home when my wife and I would repeatedly be re-acquainted with Steve`s appraisal of Cllr Pollard. This was never extensive but usually outlined how he had persuaded her to become a councillor and always with what became the standard catch phrase, “she is a lovely lady but she doesn`t know what day it is”.

Cllr. Parnaby`s propensity to get involved in planning matters for certain people is well known and not refutable, it would obviously be advantageous for him to keep Phyllis Pollard in the position of Chairman of the Planning Committee should she be vulnerable to manipulation. The evidence that this maybe so, although circumstantial, is nevertheless compelling.

The three examples I use all illustrate how Cllr Pollard has used her position as chairman to get planning applications approved despite huge opposition from authoritative sources, all of these applications involved close friends of Cllr. Parnaby.

1. The supermarket application for Station Road, Cottingham ironically involved a friend I introduced him to many years earlier. Phyllis Pollard in voting for this finely balanced issue went against the advice of the council's own planning officers and the consultants England and Lyle who were engaged by the authority said it would have a significant adverse effect on the village with a predicted 34% loss of trade for local traders. There were also 240 individual letters and two petitions totalling 1,567 signatures all objecting.

The Cottingham councillors also opposed the application and later invited Cllr. Pollard to meet them in order to explain her actions. This offer was declined and led eventually to the deselection of three very good conservative councillors. The fourth Cottingham councillor, Helen Green, although very happy to have her photograph in the newspaper on 23 November 2012 along with other objectors, actually supported the application when it was later discussed by Cllr. Pollard's planning committee. Unlike the other Cottingham councillors who remain deselected, Helen Green was the only one not to be deselected and now enjoys the benefits of sitting on several committees including the Western Area Planning Sub-Committee, the Licencing Committee and is also the Vice Chairman of the Fire Authority.

Although Phyllis Pollard chose to ignore all the professional advice and the very real potential traffic problems, with the location already gridlocked several times daily when the nearby level crossing closed, this problem did not escape the attention of the supermarket operators and consequently the developers failed to obtain a tenant for the site.

2. Controversial plans from the same above applicants for yet further development at the KP Club at Kilnwick Percy also got approved when Cllr Pollard used her casting vote, stating that she sympathised with concerns of over development but felt that the damage had already been done (probably by her committees previous decisions). Strong objections from the Parish Council and the ward councillor were ignored, other councillors urged the planning committee to reject the scheme saying that club development had already devastated the area.
3. Phyllis Pollard also used her chairman's vote to scrape through the huge Brough South development for 750 new homes in an area with a proven very significant tidal flood risk from the River Humber, which involved another friend of Cllr. Parnaby, against the wishes of the parish and town councils amid claims that the area was already swamped with new houses and could not cope with any more.

Item 2: Parnaby family holidays by courtesy of local builders Wright Group

It is common knowledge that he and his family have enjoyed the use of an apartment in Menorca belonging to Wrights Group (builders) on many occasions prior to 2011, sometimes he and his wife Celia took other relatives with them including:-

Step daughter

Her husband

Celia Parnaby`s sister

And possibly

Why has he never declared this in the register of interests?

Prior to the above date he and his wife also holidayed on a yacht belonging to the same company for a week in Guernsey. On another occasion I was also present whilst he was on board this yacht on the south coast.

Why has he never disclosed this in the register of interests?

Item 3: A top of the range Mobile Home for Cllr. Parnaby from the Swift Group

When Stephen Parnaby`s house was flooded in 2007 he received a Mobile Home from this local caravan company, living in it for approximately 18 months whilst his house was refurbished after which Swifts moved it up to Ryedale for his weekend and holiday use. This caravan company does not deal with the general public.

Why did he not declare this in the register of interests?

Item 4: A £7million Planning Approval for Swift Group

Whilst Cllr Parnaby was threatening my planning application with having to be appealed, due to my refusal to allow him and his builder associate to be involved, the same planning case officer Emma Lancaster was bending over backwards in order to facilitate the Swift application for 108 homes ref. 10/03018/STPLF. This site was in a very poor position well outside walking distances of any facilities and not on a bus route, whereas our site was undoubtedly one of the best positioned of any sites available.

Swifts were even allowed to reduce their required 25% requirement of affordable housing to a nominal number, "given Swifts urgent need for funds".

Both sites were in the flood zone and Emma Lancaster allowed Swifts to forego the required Sequential Test due to it having a less than 1 in 100 (i.e. moderate) risk. Our site was in a 1 in 200 (i.e. low) risk designation and not only did she insist on a Sequential Test she also failed to agree that it was done acceptably.

Although the Swift site was brownfield it required the release of a huge greenfield area which in turn facilitated the release of another vast area of land which was part of the plan known as Project 2000.

Project 2000 involved a consortium which included friends of Cllr. Parnaby`s and was/is intended to fill the whole area between Cottingham, A1079, Orchard Park and Beverley Road, Hull. A land bid identified as COT 45 was submitted for a large part of this in the

Local Plan only for it to fail as not fulfilling the transport criteria. Undeterred Cllr Parnaby's Cabinet bypassed the system by allowing it to be included on the Local Plan at the very last minute as possible future expansion land for the Swift Group, thereby opening up various other possibilities in the future as it is now designated land.

Item 5: Manipulation of senior council officer appointments.

Councillor Parnaby has a close personal friendship with Alan Menzies, Director of Planning and Economic Regeneration. Other councillors have recently criticised Cllr Parnaby for promoting Alan Menzies and giving him an enormous pay rise without going through the proper channels. Others have said that Menzies should have got the position of Chief Executive when Nigel Pearson retired, I believe that Cllr Parnaby acted in the way he did in order to placate his friend and make up for him not getting the top position simply because Alan Menzies is worth more to him in his current role given Cllr. Parnaby's propensity to get involved in planning issues.

Whilst several planning officers including Stephen Hunt, in what can only be described as an organised conspiracy, refused to provide the paid for Pre-Application written response for our site, despite months of requests, Alan Menzies by contrast on the 26 September 2016 readily provided a glowing report to the Eastern Area Sub-Committee consisting of **no less than 44 pages** in favour of a smaller application for friends of councillor Parnaby's. (Application No. 16/02231/OUT). This application did not go to Cllr. Pollards committee and was in fact turned down however the Decision Notice from the planning dept. actually indicated what changes to make in order to get it passed next time.

Item 6: The scandal of early retirement discretionary payments for Cllr. Parnaby's friends

Cllr Parnaby chaired the Cabinet **behind-closed-doors** meeting 13 April 2010 when a £360,000 discretionary payment was agreed for Sue Lockwood on her early retirement.

Sue Lockwood, who was in her mid-50s, was controversially awarded a large **backdated** pay rise just over a year previously, supposedly in an effort to "recruit and retain staff". Her total remuneration package for 2008 to 2009 was £135,646.

Cllr. Parnaby should firstly have declared his close personal relationship with Sue Lockwood and her husband Darryl Stephenson and the matter should not have been dealt with by his behind-closed-doors cabinet but rather the full council which would almost certainly have voted against. Secondly Cllr. Parnaby would have known of her intention to join her husband in retirement when the "recruit and retain" pay rise was given and the only reason for it was in order to enhance her retirement settlement.

The following month after a huge outcry Cllr. Parnaby had the temerity to defend this decision as benefiting the council and the taxpayers.

Darryl Stephenson's situation mirrors that of his wife, Darryl was the Chief Executive when this retirement scheme was implemented in 1999. In 2002 his huge £36,000 pay rise prior to his early retirement in 2005 led to a protest march in Beverley and him requiring police protection. Darryl Stephenson's own early retirement settlement was never made public

probably because this was also decided behind closed doors and on that occasion without a whistle blower present.

Cllr. Parnaby`s friendship with this couple extends well past a professional relationship as they have always enjoyed visits to the others houses and dining out together and even arrange walks together.

Item 7: The Arvato never ending fiasco

After 12 years of avoiding entering his directorship of this company in the register of interests, as required by the Code of Conduct, despite requests from various people Cllr. Parnaby has finally been compelled to do so, but not before 14 letters from myself, Caroline Lacey and Mathew Buckley. 8 letters involving 9 people at the auditors KPMG and ERYC, one meeting between KPMG and ERYC and an undisclosed number of discussions at County Hall.

This is an outrageous waste of tax payers money in order to get this councillor to do what he should have done in the first place twelve years ago.

In order to finally bring this Arvato matter to a conclusion Cllr. Parnaby has to firstly answer the following questions.

1. Has he ever visited any Arvato, Bertelsmann or any associated company offices in Germany, or travelled abroad as a guest of any Arvato, Bertelsmann or associated company.
2. Has he ever travelled outside the East Riding on any purpose to do with Arvato, Bertelsmann or any associated company.

In conclusion

Having previously invited any Conservative Group Councillor to a free lunch, should they believe anything contained in my months of correspondence on this subject to be incorrect, without any takers, it follows that they obviously all know it to be true. This is also substantiated by the inability of Cllr. Parnaby to refute or even simply deny any of the many allegations.

Allegations which are only limited by the attention span of the readers, you ask for more and I will supply.

Yours sincerely

Peter Robinson