

## LETTER TO POTTO PARISH COUNCILLOR ELLEN MARY ('ELMA') GRIFFIN - 20<sup>th</sup> JULY 2024

Dear Councillor,

My name is Nigel WARD. I am an investigative journalist with a keen interest in local democracy. As I believe you are aware, I investigate the conduct of those in public office and I submit my articles to various press outlets, including *Private Eye* and the *North Yorks Enquirer*, where well over twenty articles have been published under my by-line:

- <http://nyenquirer.uk/category/towns-parishes/potto/>

In my fifteen years of publication, I have concerned myself only with individuals in their capacity as elected or paid Public Servants and I have never, and would never, report on, or intrude upon the privacy of, those who no longer stand in service of the public.

My Potto articles have, until now, focussed upon the actions of Potto Parish Council as a body corporate and how it has been led by Councillor Andrew WILDE and managed by the Clerk/RFO, Mrs Joanne STOREY.

However, I feel that now is the time to turn my attention to the input of individual Councillors and, as one of the longest-serving members (since February 2010), it is right and proper to begin with you and, specifically, your own input into the way in which the Council has conducted its business, particularly during the two years since the publication of PKF LITTLEJOHN LLP's extraordinary Public Interest Report (PIR) and up to, and including the recent FRC, with its associated Investigation Fees.

I hope that you will have read my articles and thus recognised the great lengths I go to to provide fair and accurate evidence, in great depth of detail, largely culled from the Council's own published public record.

My Editors have asked me to ensure that I have offered you every opportunity to comment - your so-called 'Right of Reply' - before submitting anything for publication

My investigation thus far of your own input into the Council's business leaves me, I confess, somewhat puzzled - not least because you have been described to me as a thoroughly decent woman with an exemplary moral compass. And yet, my investigations have disclosed many instances, perhaps because of the extreme brevity of the Council's Minutes (often vague and/or incomplete), in which it has proved difficult for me to square your private reputation with the actions of the body corporate of which you are an active part.

To this end, I have appended a 'first draft' of an article which contains a number of salient questions.

I would be most grateful if you would be so good as to furnish me with your answers to these questions, in the spaces immediately below where I have written "**Councillor GRIFFIN responded:**" ideally, in **red type**, thereby allowing me to ensure that I have presented your perception of your record as a public servant in a fair and honourable way.

I thank you in advance for your full co-operation.

Yours faithfully,

Nigel WARD