

### What went wrong and who is responsible? Episode 8.

In Episode 7 we looked at the process by which Newby and Scalby Town Council decided to commission the Northern Director of the Society of Local Council Clerks to produce what was described as an “independent investigation” into various grants that had been successfully applied for by Helen. We have previously noted that Judge Flanagan avoided placing the words “independent” and “investigation” together in the way that N&STC always does - a fact from which we can draw our own conclusions.

The Maoni Report is 20 pages long and contains detailed and complex information but, helpfully, Newby and Scalby Town Council have provided a brief summary on their website that provides a useful starting point. Of course, we understand that the Council are only putting their partisan and vindictive version forward so we will compare what they say with the findings of Judge Flanagan and the Information Commissioner. This is what the Town Council claims:

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## Publication of Maoni Report & Return of Grant Funding

30th June 2025

Newby & Scalby Town Council is pleased to provide an update regarding grant funding awarded to the Council in January 2023, and subsequently returned to the Woodsmith Foundation in February 2024.

In January 2024, Newby & Scalby Town Council discovered the apparent misuse of a substantial grant that it had been given by a local charitable organisation.

The grant had been given for a particular project at the Council's Community Hub and was subject to specific terms and conditions. The Council discovered that the former Head of Hub and Community Services, who was supervised by the then Chairman, had apparently not complied with the terms and conditions and the charitable organisation had queried the use of its grant.

Newby & Scalby Town Council appointed an independent consultant with considerable experience in local government practice to investigate the grant application process, Council governance practices, project delivery and associated matters. The investigation's findings are set out in the “MAONI” report.

The Council determined the report to be confidential because it contained staff and employment information, but an application was made to the Information Commissioner's Office by a local resident for disclosure of the report and the Commissioner has now decided that it is in the public interest to disclose the report, subject to deletion of some personal information.

We are reminded of the popular television show - “Would I lie to you?” when we read the first sentence “Newby & Scalby Town Council **is pleased to provide an update** regarding grant funding awarded to the Council in January 2023, and subsequently returned to the Woodsmith Foundation in February 2024.” As the Compare of the TV show would say - “It is, of course, a lie.” The Town Council spent over a year desperately trying to avoid the Maoni Report from being exposed to daylight and have been forced by the Information Commissioner to release it to the public. What is clear is that this misinformation was not approved by the whole Council but only a small and as yet unidentified cabal. Questions have been asked and, of course, not answered but we find that time and persistence can provide more details - especially when the Information Commissioner becomes involved.

So now we move on to lie number two - “Newby & Scalby Town Council **discovered the apparent misuse of a substantial grant** .....” We will examine this extraordinary claim in Episode 9.