

Questions from members of the public

Audit and governance committee, 25 January 2022

Question from Claire Trumper

Does the audit and governance committee agree that the council's formal complaints process against councillors and co-opted members does not give a defendant licence to disregard UK laws on privacy, data protection and defamation and that in practice this means that in their written defence statement a defendant

- (i) may not make defamatory statements
- (ii) may only write about matters relevant to the complaint
- (iii) and when writing about relevant matters may not be reckless with regard to privacy and confidentiality?

Response

Under the council's code of conduct arrangements, the member subject to a complaint, will be asked to make a written representation to the monitoring officer, which must be taken into account when deciding how the complaint is dealt with.

That written reply is a matter for them and they are responsible for the content which should not breach any UK laws.