

COC090
Investigation report Appendix 2
REDACTED

Complaint about a councillor's conduct received 25.09.24

Dear Sir or Madam

Relevant background: After five years of noise disturbances and continual breach of licence conditions from the venue in Ledbury known as The Barn, I was forced to move house in April of this year. I was not supported adequately by Ledbury Town Council and Herefordshire Council. (Please see records involving the then Deputy Town Mayor **REDACTED** as an example, who resigned from his post following an investigation of his behaviour during a council meeting that I spoke at to raise my concerns on 28.9.24. This period of five years also involved intimidation, physical and verbal abuse from the owner of the venue **REDACTED**. He would also point me out to his customers as 'the' complainant. He continues to point me out to members of the public. The whole situation is well documented and has had a detrimental impact on my home life and both physical and mental well-being of which I have had to seek help from my GP. The situation has also caused my family a great deal of stress.

Incident: On 17th September 2024 shortly before 5pm, I was standing outside my work place (**REDACTED**, Ledbury) with my work colleague **REDACTED**. Councillor Sinclair and Councillor Bradford were walking by together and stopped directly in front of me. Councillor Sinclair is well aware of the background (as above). He looked directly at me and I noted his mocking tone when he said to Councillor Bradford the very words 'Let's go to The Barn for a drink tonight'. Understandably I found this very upsetting indeed and lost my composure. I also observed him laughing at me. They then both walked further down the road. Since this incident Councillor Sinclair has stated that I used threatening behaviour and that I ran after him which is not true. What actually happened was that I ran down the road to catch them up to merely inform Councillor Sinclair that he would regret what he had said because I intended to report the incident to the Ledbury Town Council and the Police the following morning. I found his words and behaviour completely disrespectful, antagonising and not the behaviour that I would expect from somebody in his position. I am aware that councillors have a code of conduct to adhere to.

Since the incident I was made aware of the following email below that was sent from Councillor Sinclair's private email address to seventeen other people, including **REDACTED**, the owner of The Barn (first recipient). Also included is Leader of Herefordshire Council Jonathan Lester (sent to his private email address). It was also sent to **REDACTED** the NHCA chairman (sent to his private email address). I was shocked to see this. Also attached to the email is a PDF entitled 'Don't Mention The Barn' which is a copy of my brother's initial complaint to Ledbury Town Council. It features his personal contact details and these were shared with the seventeen recipients.

Councillor Sinclair's email is as follows.

Subject: 'Winding People Up'

'Winding people up is fun, I got a spectacular bite on Tuesday. Please read the attached; for mentioning The Barn, I am being reported to the police and monitoring officer. This nutter ran down the road after Tony and myself, he was very 'threatening' and got very upset because I laughed at him. The idiot went visited the LTC office, to complain, to be told they can do nothing. His brother reported me to the Chief Exec of Herefordshire Council and the police, how scary. Even better, he reported me to Bill Wiggin MP, he must have been getting advice from REDACTED the NHCA chairman, who loves a good liar.'

I was astounded to read the above email which clearly shows that following my brother's initial complaint, Councillor Sinclair is not taking the matter seriously. Just as concerning is his use of language, referring to me as a 'nutter', an 'idiot' and a 'liar'.

The incident has been reported to West Mercia Police. Reference number CDS-143573-24-2200-002.

I would be very grateful if you could please investigate this matter.

As you can imagine I have been fully supported over the past five years by my friends and my family. I have included recent emails from my brother to Ledbury Town Council and Jonathan Lester. (Please note, my brother documented the date of the incident incorrectly)

Yours faithfully

David Thomas

I am trying to move on with my life and put the last five years behind me. I have found the recent incident involving Councillor Sinclair goading behaviour extremely upsetting, disrespectful and intimidating.

I believe Councillor Sinclair has not adhered to his professional code of conduct because he has not treated me, a member of the public, with respect. I view his behaviour as harassment. He has also disclosed confidential information to others and brought Ledbury Town Council and other colleagues into disrepute.