

Final submission – Eamonn O’Nolan

When I started to seek answers about the behaviour of the former Clerk of WTC, who had deleted the entire contents of the Clerk’s email accounts before leaving her job, I expected that the Council would also be looking for the same answers. This turned out not to be the case, as you will by now have gathered. What followed was a major exercise in secrecy, obstruction, a cover-up, and a total denial that anything untoward had happened.

Some time later, it became apparent that the Clerk had also been involved in some questionable transactions with a supplier of signage. Similarly, the Council decided that this was not to be shared with the good taxpayers of Woodbridge, despite the non-delivery of about £4000 worth of signs which had been paid for in advance.

So I went to the Press.

As a result, a floodgate opened. Four Councillors, including two Mayors, lodged complaints against me. In total, the various Councillors each reckoned that I had infringed about seven (7) clauses of the Suffolk Code, making a total of 27 individual breaches which the adjudicator had to spend public money investigating. I have no idea what this exercise has cost, but I will be seeking that information.

It was clear to me when I read the complaints that there had been some discussion, or perhaps even Collusion, as Trump would put it, between three of the complainants, in that they each identified exactly the same clauses and sub-clauses in their complaints. This itself seemed to resemble a sledge-hammer approach at least, and perhaps even a form of bullying. A single complaint would have had the same effect.

I am pleased that all but one of the complaints failed to satisfy the independent adjudicator. I am not a bully, I did not cause three members of staff to quit their jobs, I did not lie to the Press. He had some strong words to say about how Woodbridge Town Council conducts itself when challenged. He even said that the data deletion issue, which the Council had wished to keep under wraps should not in fact have been discussed in camera, because the former Mayor herself had previously publicly discussed it.

This all came down to a total lack of transparency at the Council. I do not regret speaking to the Press, and the fury which that unleashed within the Council says more about the make-up of the council than it does about the rather innocuous disclosures which, had they been managed in a mature fashion by the Council, would have been water under the bridge by now.

These views are my own, and I am not writing as a Councillor.

Eamonn O’Nolan
6th March 2019