



CODE OF CONDUCT – COUNCILLOR MALCOLM WRIGHT

This notice confirms the determination by the City Council of a complaint to the Standards Board for England that Councillor Malcolm Wright, a member of the City Council, failed to comply with the City Council's Code of Conduct, by not declaring a personal and prejudicial interest at meetings of the Planning Development Control Committee held on 29 July 2004 and 16 February 2006, when a planning application for alterations to the Wallers Ash Shooting Ground, South Wonston was considered.

The complaint was considered by the Standards Committee of the City Council, at its meeting held on 20 November 2006. The Committee determined that there had been no failure by Councillor Wright to comply with the relevant provisions of the Code of Conduct, for the following reasons:-

- (a) with regard to the first allegation relating to the Planning Development Control Committee held on 29 July 2004, it had been established that Councillor Wright was not present at that meeting and so there was no case to answer (in addition, it was noted that the complainant had withdrawn that allegation by fax dated 17 July 2006).
- (b) with regard to the second allegation relating to the Planning Development Control Committee held on 16 February 2006:-
 - (i) Councillor Wright's personal interest in the application in relation to the location of his house was not prejudicial, because the existing noise levels were below the level which would give rise to annoyance; the likely reduction from construction of bunds was not so significant as to benefit Councillor Wright; and construction traffic would not affect Councillor Wright; Councillor Wright had correctly declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest at that meeting.
 - (ii) Councillor Wright's membership of the Clay Pigeon Shooting Association was not a personal interest, as it would not affect his wellbeing and therefore no prejudicial interest could exist;
 - (iii) at the time of the February 2006 meeting, Councillor Wright had ceased to be a member or part-owner of the Rack and Manger Gun Club for eighteen months and had not had any further involvement with its management. The decision could not therefore be reasonably regarded as affecting him to a greater extent than other council tax payers or inhabitants in the area, and therefore there was no personal interest arising from his previous relationship with this organisation.

The full report of the external Investigating Solicitor, matters of record and statements and Councillor Wright's response can be inspected at the City Offices, Colebrook Street, Winchester. The report to the Standards Committee (which contains a summary of the external Investigating Solicitor's report) is available on the City Council's website at: www.winchester.gov.uk

7 December 2006

Stephen Whetnall
City Secretary and Solicitor