

Notes of Interview held with Catherine Waudby and the Complainant (C) on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2019, C was accompanied at the interview by a friend.

C explained that they are a resident of Burnley. They wished to remain anonymous during the complaint process given their knowledge of how Councillor Hosker has treated people who have previously complained about him.

- 1. How did you become aware of the comment/ endorsement of the comment made by Councillor Hosker?** I saw the comments of Councillor Hosker on his Borough Councillor/ County Councillor Facebook page which is open to the public. It is useful to know what councillors are doing in the Borough. I vote in elections and have an interest in politics.

Clarify the exact string of text that we are concerned with

I am concerned with his endorsement of calling of Julie Cooper MP a "robbing biatch" and his comments that she was "Taking the P."

- 2. When did you become aware of Councillor Hosker's comment/ endorsement?**

I became aware of the comments on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2019 and complained the same day. I note that the comments were posted on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2019.

- 3. Do you regularly look at Councillor Hosker's Facebook account?** I don't look at his account on a regular basis, but I have looked at it from time to time. I am politically engaged and interested in politics. I am concerned about how women are treated in politics, and feel it is important that if there is wrongdoing that the person should be challenged.

- 4. Why did you feel it appropriate to complain?**

My issue is not with Councillor Hosker's politics, it's about the personal abuse he gives out. I think Councillor Hosker needs to be challenged about his behaviour which is unacceptable for any elected representative or anyone in public life. I also want to point out that this is not an isolated incident as I am aware that there have been previous complaints made to the Council about his behaviour.

- 5. What is it about Councillor Hosker's actions that concern you?**

The comments are abusive, for example, liking a comment that calls someone a "robbing biatch" is abusive to women and is also libellous as accuses the MP of criminal activity e.g. robbing.

That the abuse / inappropriate comments keep happening, despite Councillor Hosker having been asked to attend training on social media. I feel that Councillor Hosker needs to learn from his conduct, and the only way to do this is to keep raising issues. I do not think he has any understanding that he has no control over how people use

his posts on social media and he doesn't appear to take any responsibility for his actions.

**6. Do you consider his action to be appropriate to be made in a public arena?**

Absolutely not. His social media platform has a large number of followers and is a public page. I do not think he understands why it's his responsibility to ensure that what he posts is appropriate.

**7. Which principles of the Code of Conduct do you consider he breached?**

I consider that Section 3 (1) of the code has been breached which requires councillors to treat others with respect. I also consider that he has breached Section 3 (2) which prohibits the bullying of another person. I consider he bullies people, and women in particular, in two ways; by the comments he posts on social media and secondly by bullying people who seek to challenge him. He then accuses the Council/ complainant if the complaint is taken through the proper channels that they are wasting tax payers' money.

There is a definite issue about gender – he targets women. The use of the language is misogynistic.

**8. Do you consider that it makes any difference that Councillor Hosker put a disclaimer on his Facebook account?**

This does not make a difference. Councillor Hosker needs to understand that the disclaimer does not absolve him from his responsibility as an elected member.

**9. Councillor Hosker has indicated that he does not wish to co-operate with the investigation given you have asked to remain anonymous, and "the dubious circumstances surrounding the timing"**

He needs to understand people want to remain anonymous because of how he treats people when they do complain. I refer to the abuse that Joannie Greenwood received when she made a complaint against him.

This is not a politically motivated complaint, it is about challenging abusive behavior and holding him to account.

**10. Do you wish to make any further comment?**

I have observed his conduct on social media particularly with regard to women. I am aware that he has abused other people on social media and how he reacts when people challenge him. On social media the way things escalate is by people reading comments and this can incite hatred/ nastiness. I would not want to get to a situation where someone is harmed as a result of his actions. He needs to take responsibility for his actions on social media, and I consider it is important to stand up against this behaviour.