

Appendix to Minutes

THE ASSESSMENT SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY'S STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING OF 2 DECEMBER 2008

DECISION NOTICE

GLA Case Reference: NOV-02/08

Complaint

On 2 December 2008, the Assessment Sub-Committee of the GLA's Standards Committee convened in private and considered a complaint from Richard Barnbrook, member of the London Assembly concerning the alleged conduct of Mr Murad Qureshi, member of the London Assembly.

Set out below is a brief and general summary of the complaint:

The complainant alleges that Murad Qureshi on his personal blog "launched into gratuitous personal attack upon Richard." The blog states "It would be easy to dismiss Barnbrook as a joke figure, and his rambling incoherent contributions at Mayor's Question Time have certainly reduced him to an object of ridicule." The complainant states that he is dyslexic, his disability is resulting in a personal (non political) attack on him, and considers this is bullying.

Decision

In accordance with Section 57A(2) of the Local Government Act 2000, as amended, the Assessment Sub-Committee decided that no action should be taken on the allegation.

Reasons for decision

In accordance with its terms of reference, the Assessment Sub-Committee carefully considered the written correspondence from the Complainant (sent on his behalf), the extract from the personal blog of Murad Qureshi, referred to by the Complainant, extracts from the Standards Board for England's publications "*The Code of Conduct, Guide for Members 2007*" and relevant extracts from the Standards Board for England's "*The Case Review 2007*"

On the information and evidence before it the Sub-Committee considered the following paragraphs of the Code of Conduct. Paragraph 2 (1), "*you must comply with this Code whenever you (a) conduct the business of the Authority; or (b) act, claim to act or give the impression you are acting as a representative of the Authority*", paragraph 2 (2), "*Subject to sub-paragraphs (3) and (4), this Code does not have effect in relation to your conduct other than where it is in your official capacity*", paragraph 3 (1) "*You must treat others with respect*" and paragraph 3 (2) "*You must not bully any person*". The Assessment Sub-Committee decided that the complaint did not merit any further action

to be taken. It considered that the alleged conduct of the member did not fall within the scope of the Code, as the member was not conducting the business of the Authority, or acting, claiming to act or give the impression that he was acting as a representative of the Authority.

However, the Committee wanted to make it clear that this did not mean that Members' blogs would always fall outside the scope of the Code, and any future complaint about the contents of a blog would have to be looked at carefully based on the facts.

The Assessment Sub-Committee also considered the two potential breaches under paragraphs 3 (1) and 3 (2), and they looked to the guidance from the Standards Board for England to assist them, in particular pages 8-10 of the *Guide for Members*, and pages 23-36 of the *Case Review 2007*. They did not consider that there appeared to be a breach of the Code by Mr Qureshi with regards these provisions, as they did not consider that his conduct constituted bullying or not treating someone with respect.

Right of review

The Complainant has the right to ask for this decision to be reviewed, by writing to the GLA's Monitoring Officer, Fiona Ledden, within 30 days from the date of this notice, and explaining in detail on what grounds the decision should be reviewed.

If a request for a review is received, this will be dealt with by the Review Sub-Committee of the GLA's Standards Committee within a maximum of three months of receipt.

Any Review Sub-Committee will be comprised of individuals who were not involved in the original decision, and the Review Sub-Committee can review and change a decision not to refer an allegation for investigation or other action. If there is a request for a review, all the parties mentioned above will be notified in writing of the outcome.

Confidentiality and publication

Taking into account the fact that the Complainant did not request, when asked, that his identity and a summary of his complaint be kept confidential, and taking into account the public interest and whether any such disclosure would prejudice any investigation, the Assessment Sub-Committee decided that these details should be provided to Murad Qureshi, member of the London Assembly.

Accordingly, this Decision Notice has been sent to the Complainant, Murad Qureshi and will be published by the GLA for a period of 6 years starting from 2 December 2008.

Signed



Date 5 December 2008

Claer Lloyd-Jones
Chair of the Assessment Sub-Committee

Signed

Date 5 December 2008

Satish Mistry
The GLA's Deputy Head of Law