

**THE ASSESSMENT SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE GREATER LONDON  
AUTHORITY'S STANDARDS COMMITTEE MEETING  
OF 15 JUNE 2009**

**DECISION NOTICE: NO FURTHER ACTION**

**GLA Case Reference: May – 02/09**

**Decision**

The Assessment Sub-Committee decided unanimously that no further action should be taken on the complaint.

**Complaint**

On 15 June 2009, the Assessment Sub-Committee of the GLA's Standards Committee met in private and considered a complaint from Mr Shaun Lee, a member of the public, concerning the conduct of Mr John Biggs, London Assembly Member.

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

In a letter dated 23 February, John Biggs' Personal Assistant responded to correspondence from the Complainant to explain that John Biggs was not related to the Great Train robber, Ronald Biggs.

In response to this, the Complainant wrote to John Biggs on 26 February 2009 demanding an explanation as to how he could have the same surname as Ronald Biggs, but not be related to him. In the same letter, the Complainant also demanded to know John Biggs' policies on transportation, crime and education in London.

The Complainant complained that John Biggs failed to respond to his letter dated 26 February 2009.

**Reasons for decision**

The Assessment Sub-Committee carefully considered all correspondence from the Complainant, the GLA's corporate procedures relating to the handling of correspondence; and relevant guidance from the Standards Board for England.

On the information and evidence before it, the GLA's Sub-Committee considered the following paragraphs of the Code of Conduct:

Paragraph 2 – Scope – *“You must comply with this Code whenever you – (a) conduct the business of the Authority (which, in this Code, includes the business of the office to which you are elected or appointed); or (b) act, claim to act or give the impression you are acting as a representative of the Authority, and references to your official capacity are construed accordingly”.*

*Paragraph 3 (1) – “You must treat others with respect.”*

The Assessment Sub-Committee decided that, in the course of his dealings with the Complainant, John Biggs was clearly acting in his official capacity, and was therefore required to comply with the GLA’s Code of Conduct.

The Assessment Sub-Committee decided, however, that John Biggs’ conduct did not breach paragraph 3(1) of the GLA’s Code of Conduct.

As a matter of principle, the Assessment Sub-Committee considered that it was only likely to be in exceptional circumstances, that a Member’s failure to respond to correspondence could amount to a breach of paragraph 3(1) of the Code. Applying this test in the context and circumstances of this case, and taking into account the fact that John Biggs’ PA responded to the Complainant’s first letter, the Assessment Sub-Committee considered that John Biggs’ failure to respond to the Complainant’s letter of 26 February 2009 could not amount to a breach of paragraph 3(1) of the Code.

In all the facts and circumstances of this complaint, the Assessment Sub-Committee concluded therefore that John Biggs did not breach the GLA’s Code of Conduct.

### **Confidentiality and publication**

The Complainant, Mr Lee, did not request that his identity and a summary of his complaint be withheld from John Biggs, and taking into account the public interest and whether any such disclosure would prejudice any investigation, the GLA’s Assessment Sub-Committee decided that these details should be provided to John Biggs.

This Decision Notice has been sent to the Complainant, Mr Lee, and John Biggs and will be published by the GLA for a period of 6 years starting from 15 June 2009.

### **Composition of the Assessment Sub-Committee**

Throughout its meeting, the GLA’s Assessment Sub-Committee was composed of the following Members:

- Claer Lloyd-Jones (Independent Member and Chair for the meeting)
- Sam Younger (Independent Member)
- Murad Qureshi (London Assembly Member)

Signed Claer Lloyd-Jones

**Date** 18 June 2009

### **Chair of the Assessment Sub-Committee**

Signed Stephen Gee

**Date** 18 June 2009

**For and on behalf of the GLA’s Head of Legal and Procurement and Monitoring Officer**