

**INTERNAL ARBITRATION PURSUANT TO THE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (2020) (*'the Act'*)**

Internal Arbitration Process – Kingston City Council, IAP 2026-10

Applicant: Councillor Hadi Saab

Respondent: Councillor Caroline White

Councillor Conduct Officer: Ms Freya Carlson

Hearing date: 2 July 2026

Place of hearing: City of Kingston, 1230 Nepean Highway, Cheltenham

Internal Arbiter: Dr Lily O'Neill

DECISION

I have determined that Cr White breached the relevant standards when she implied that Cr Saab improperly received a financial benefit from a grant to the Druze Community Charity of Victoria. I find that Cr White made this allegation without evidence and that in doing so she breached clause 2(1) of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct (*'Code of Conduct'*).

Cr White is suspended from the office of Councillor for a period of two calendar months in relation to this breach. This suspension is to commence the day after the next Council meeting following this decision.

I also find that Cr White breached the relevant standards when she endorsed a Facebook comment that implied, without evidence, that Cr Saab was worthy of suspicion from Kingston City Council monitors.

I find that in doing so, Cr White breached clause 2(1) of the Code of Conduct. In relation to this breach, I order that Cr White undertake training on the appropriate use of social media.

In relation to the other allegations contained in the Application, I have found that no other breaches of the relevant standards have been made out, and therefore no other findings of misconduct are made out.

Dr Lily O'Neill

Arbiter

19 August 2026

STATEMENT OF REASONS

The Application

1. The Application dated 19 March 2026 by the Applicant, Councillor Hadi Saab, alleges that the Respondent, Councillor Caroline White, breached several of the standards of conduct of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct as contained in Schedule 1 of the *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020* ('Code of Conduct'). The Application seeks findings of misconduct to be made against Cr White.
2. The allegations contained in the Application relate to conduct, particularly in emails, social media and online videos, by Cr White on 15 January 2026, 18 January 2026, 21 January 2026, 22 January 2026, 27 January 2026, 1 February 2026, 23 February 2026, 28 February 2026, 1 March 2026, 4 March 2026 and 5 March 2026.
3. The Application and accompanying material from the Applicant allege that Cr White breached multiple standards of conduct (appended to this Decision) including relating to:

Standard 1 – Performing the role of a Councillor

Standard 2 – Behaviours

Standard 3 – Good governance

Standard 4 – Integrity

4. I first heard from the parties at an online Directions Hearing on 13 May 2026. At that Directions Hearing, I set the matter down for a hearing on 2 July 2026. Both before the online Directions Hearing, and between the Directions Hearing and the Hearing, I received several queries from the parties, via the Councillor Conduct Officer, in relation to provision of their materials and related matters.
5. The hearing took place in the City of Kingston Town Hall. Present during the hearing were Ms Carlson, Cr Saab and Cr White. The hearing was transcribed. Neither party was legally represented.
6. The amount of material submitted by both parties was voluminous. I read and considered all this material both prior to the hearing, and for the writing of this Decision. In parts of this Decision I have referred to certain pages of this material.
7. At the heart of the allegations contained in the Application is a 2024 grant made by Kingston City Council (KCC) to the Druze Community Charity of Victoria ('the Druze grant'). This \$75,000 grant (\$25,000 per year for three years) was made by KCC in June 2024.
8. At the time of the grant, Cr Saab was an officeholder of this organisation. When the grant was being considered by councillors, he declared a conflict of interest and excluded himself from decision-making process in relation to this matter.

9. Cr White's concerns with the grant include that the headquarters of the Druze Community Charity of Victoria are located in neighbouring City of Greater Dandenong; the claim that half their members reside in KCC was "unverified"; that the grant had not been recommended by council staff; and that the grant did not meet the KCC grant criteria (Respondent's Annexures p. 26-30).
10. Amongst other allegations, Cr Saab alleges that the manner in which Cr White has campaigned against the Druze grant has breached the Code of Conduct, including by implying that he improperly benefitted from the grant.
11. Cr White's other concerns mentioned in the hearing are noted here for completeness. They include but are not limited to:
 - the development of Kingswood Golf Course and a related missed appeal date to VCAT (described as an accident by KCC);
 - issues with the State Labor government;
 - the appointment of monitors to KCC; and
 - \$15,000 of political donations that Cr Saab received, 'including a donation from the Druze Religious Organisation President', although I note that the Respondent's Annexures put the amount of these political donations at \$10,500.

Arbiter's jurisdiction

12. I was appointed to hear this matter pursuant to the Act. It provides that an arbiter may hear an application that alleges 'misconduct' by a Councillor (s 143); requires that the Application be examined by the Principal Councillor Conduct Registrar (the Registrar) who, if satisfied that the outlined conditions are met (s 144) appoints an arbiter to hear the matter (s 149). 'Misconduct' is defined as a breach by a councillor of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct (s 3).
13. I am satisfied that the Registrar has fulfilled his obligations under section 144 of the Act. In making this finding, I note the concern by Cr White that the Registrar should not have referred the matter to me given she believed that Council had not taken sufficient or appropriate steps to resolve the matter.
14. It was clear to me from both the Application and the hearing that given the animosity between the two parties, this matter could not be resolved by the Council itself (see s 144(1)(c)(i) and (ii)).

The hearing

15. The hearing was categorised by high levels of animosity between Crs Saab and White. Cr White took multiple spontaneous breaks throughout the hearing, including several threats to walk out on the proceedings. Cr White also made clear to me that she would appeal my eventual decision should she deem it necessary, and that she believed that the hearing represented an 'abuse of process'.

16. Cr White, through her material and oral evidence, also made repeated references to many Council and State issues, including the Druze grant, as well as references to complaints she has allegedly made to the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission (IBAC) and the Fair Work Commission. I have read all the material provided by both parties but have given weight to issues raised only where they are relevant to the allegations contained in the Application.
17. I was clear in the Directions Hearing that witnesses should only be called if they could add evidence relevant to the matters contained in the Application. Both the Applicant and Respondent called several witnesses, who, despite my warning, did not provide any material that could assist the process.
18. I do not criticise the witnesses in this regard but simply observe that in calling them, both the Applicant and Respondent prolonged the hearing unnecessarily, and wasted witnesses' time.
19. Similarly, much of the very large amount of material I was provided with by both the Applicant and Respondent was not relevant to the Application and therefore unnecessarily added to the cost of this proceeding.
20. Despite this acrimony, the proceeding was finalised on the hearing date, with both parties agreeing that there was nothing further they wanted to add.
21. I will go through each allegation in turn, in the order they are raised in the Application.

Alleged Misconduct

Druze grant Notice of Motion

22. Prior to the February Council meeting Cr White drafted five separate Notices of Motion (NOMs). One of these February Notices of Motion (hereinafter 'Druze February NOM'), circulated to all councillors, the monitors and the KCC staff, in draft form from 18 January 2026 stated:

'That Council:

1. *Resolve to stop any further grants funding to the Druze Organisation in the Dandenong Council LGA.*
2. *Resolve to seek a refund of \$25,000 grant funding paid to the Druze Organisation in the Dandenong Council LGA.*
3. *Resolves to provide Councillors with details and copies of any documentation of engagement with Labor State Government Ministers and their advisors regarding the Druze Grant payments and related payments made to Cr Saab.'*

23. In response to this draft Druze February NOM, Cr White received a 22 January 2026 email from a council officer stating, in part, that the Druze February NOM was 'defamatory and objectionable in nature and language in references to "payments made to Cr Saab".'

24. Cr White's consistent response to this advice was that council officer advice is not legal advice.
25. This motion, particularly the section stating 'and related payments made to Cr Saab', is alleged by Cr Saab to breach multiple provisions of the Code of Conduct.
26. Cr White then read out the Druze February NOM word for word, as well as four other NOMs she proposed for the forthcoming Council meeting, on a reel on her Instagram page titled 'carolinewhiterealindependent'. I have viewed this video. She also posted this reel to other social media fora, and repeated different forms of these words in emails dated 22 January 2026.
27. The Code of Conduct has been put in place to provide minimum standards of behaviour for local councillors. My job as the arbiter in this matter is to enforce the Code of Conduct.
28. The Code of Conduct stipulates numerous standards of behaviour for councillors, including that they treat other councillors (and others) with 'dignity, fairness, objectivity, courtesy and respect' (clause 2(1)). It further provides that 'nothing in the Model Councillor Code of Conduct is intended to limit, restrict or detract from robust public debate of issues in a democracy' (clause 5).
29. The Code of Conduct clearly envisages that 'robust public debate' should be conducted in a manner that also upholds 'dignity, fairness, objectivity, courtesy and respect', among other standards.
30. The ability to conduct 'robust public debate' entitles Cr White to, among other things, probe, where the evidence justifies it, grants made by Council.
31. Likewise, 'robust public debate' entitles Cr White to query the probity of any councillor if there is evidence to support such a query. She must do this in a manner that is consistent with 'dignity, fairness, objectivity, courtesy and respect' and the other standards contained in the Code of Conduct.
32. I find that the words 'and related payments made to Cr Saab' clearly imply that Cr Saab improperly received a financial benefit from the Druze grant. I have not seen any evidence that justifies the making of such an assertion. Cr Saab's involvement in the organisation is not evidence of wrongdoing.
33. I find that Cr White made this allegation without evidence. I am satisfied that these comments were therefore a deeply unfair slur and thus breached clause 2(1) of the Code of Conduct which prescribes that councillors should treat others with dignity, fairness, objectivity, courtesy and respect.

Further allegations

34. Cr Saab also alleged that a 27 January 2026 email from Cr White to a council officer (cc all Councillors) which stated:

Notice of Motion – Druze Grant

In terms of the original first point, being there were issues with the acquittal process and potential conflict of interest with Cr Saab completing the paperwork, I'll need further information regarding how this could look moving forward ...

35. Cr Saab alleges that this email continued 'the same insinuation of impropriety'. I find that it is not clear what Cr White was intending to say in relation to the Druze grant in this email. I therefore find no breach of the Code of Conduct.
36. Cr Saab further alleges (Items 4 and 5, Application) that in drafting a NOM in relation to a potential conflict of interest held by a staff member, and then broadcasting this NOM via her Instagram reel, Cr White breach confidentiality.
37. I note that Cr Saab has provided me with a partial, undated, email from an unknown council officer that states this NOM should be heard confidentially given it deals with a member of staff. I find that there is insufficient detail in the Application or the hearing for these allegations to be properly made out.
38. Accordingly, I find no breach of the Code of Conduct in relation to these allegations.

23 February 2026 story/post

39. Cr Saab alleges that a social media story from Cr White that linked to a Herald Sun article titled 'Move to gag controversial debates at City of Kingston council slammed as 'censorship'' breached the Code of Conduct, particularly clauses 1(e)(ii), 4(1)(a) and (b).
40. The post contained the hashtag #governmeharder daddy, a satirical meme that takes issue with people who call for greater political freedoms but also want crackdowns on political matters they don't agree with. I find that this post falls squarely into 'robust public debate' and does not breach any other aspect of the Code of Conduct.

28 February 2026 – Facebook post "Labor's liar of the week"

41. Cr Saab alleges that a 28 February 2026 post by Cr White that 'awarded' Sonya Kilkeny MP the 'Labor liar of the week award' and linked to an Australian Financial Review (AFR) article titled 'Kilkenny faces referral to parliamentary privileges committee' breached clauses 2(1)(a), 4(1)(a) and 4(1)(b). Cr White's comments on the page included calling Sonya Kilkeny a "suburb destroyer" and that "she's covering up corruption for the CFMEU crime syndicate".
42. I find that Cr White's comments on the AFR article are 'robust public debate' about political issues that Cr White advocates for, particularly given they are made with reference to evidence that could be seen as supportive contained in the AFR article.

43. I find that this post can be characterised as ‘robust public debate’ and does not breach any aspect of the Code of Conduct.

1 March 2026 – social media post depicting Sonya Kilkenny with fire on her legs

44. Cr Saab alleges that a 1 March 2026 social media image re-posted by Cr White showing Sonya Kilkenny MP with AI-created burning trousers breached clauses 2(1)(a) and (b) and 4(1)(a). Cr Saab alleges that the post ‘normalises violent imagery’ and depicts Ms Kilkenny as a witch.
45. I disagree with Cr Saab’s view on this image. I think it is a visual image of a political position that Cr White has advocated for continually – the picture is alleging that Ms Kilkenny is a ‘liar liar, pants on fire’.
46. Cr White has continually argued that Ms Kilkenny MP was not honest in her dealings as planning Minister in relation to the Kingston Golf Course, and this image is consistent with those arguments. I do not comment on the substance of Cr White’s political position, merely that it is one she advocates for, and that, as the provided newspaper article attests, there is some evidence for.
47. I find that this post falls squarely into ‘robust public debate’ and does not breach any other aspect of the Code of Conduct.

4 March 2026 – social media story titled ‘No rest for the wicked’ sharing an article from The Australian newspaper

48. Cr Saab alleges that a 4 March 2026 social media image titled ‘No rest for the wicked’ and linking to an article in The Australian newspaper breached clauses 2(1)(a), 4(1)(a) and 4(1)(b) of the Code of Conduct. It is unclear from the Application which article from The Australian this allegation refers to.
49. In the hearing, Cr Saab alleged that Cr White was the source for this story, and that therefore she breached council confidentiality. Cr White denied being the source for this story. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, I give Cr White the benefit of the doubt.
50. I find no breach of the Code of Conduct in relation to this allegation.

4 March 2026 – social media story titled ‘They lie!’ sharing an article from The Australian newspaper

51. Cr Saab alleges that a 4 March 2026 social media image titled ‘They lie!’ and linking to an article in The Australian newspaper (titled ‘New information challenges minister’s denial he threatened council over ‘witch hunt’’) breached clauses 4(1)(a) and 4(1)(b) of the Code of Conduct.
52. Again, I find that the ‘they lie!’ comment is made in relation to an article that contains some evidence that could support that view.

53. I find that this post falls squarely into 'robust public debate' and does not breach any other aspect of the Code of Conduct.

5 March 2026 post on the South East Community Forum

54. Cr Saab alleges that a 5 March South East community forum post commenting on an article in The Australian (titled 'New information challenges minister's denial he threatened council over 'witch hunt') on Minister Nick Staikos' decision to appoint monitors to KCC breached clauses 2(1)(a), 4(1)(a) and 4(1)(b) of the Code of Conduct.
55. In particular, Cr Saab takes issue with Cr White's comments 'Minister Staikos misused his power to threaten and intimidate young women in local government, and that Victoria is a "special type of corrupt".'
56. Again, I am satisfied that these comments find some substantiation in The Australian article, and that therefore this post falls squarely into 'robust public debate' and does not breach any other aspect of the Code of Conduct. Again, to clarify, I do not comment on the accuracy of this characterisation, merely that Cr White had sufficient material to justify making it.

15 January 2026 comment "dodgy grants for religious groups in Dandenong"

57. Cr Saab alleges that a comment by Cr White on Council Watch Victoria Inc's Facebook page that talked of, among many other complaints on KCC spending, 'dodgy grants for religious groups in Dandenong' breached clause 2(1)(a), (b), (c), and 4(1)(a) and (b).
58. I note that in this full post, Cr White says:

Kingston just loves spending ratepayers money – full stop. whether its labor budget blowout pool, or \$359K worth of stickers sorry artwork for it. Awards for mates. Dodgy grants for religious groups in Dandenong. Ah rainbow ticks, what else? \$300K+ on some social media marketing pages that get absolutely no traction But will they spend it on defending our livability form their labor mates who are thrashing this state??? I highly doubt it. [sic]

59. As I said earlier, Cr White is entitled to raise concerns with the probity of Council spending. I find that this post falls squarely into 'robust public debate' and does not breach any other aspect of the Code of Conduct.

5 March 2026 – South East Community Forum post about KCC monitors

60. Cr Saab alleges that a 15 January 2026 Facebook comment by Cr White on monitors appointed to KCC breached clauses 2(1)(a), 4(1)(a) and 4(1)(b) of the Code of Conduct.
61. Cr White posted a 100% emoji to the comment:

They purported to claim to the community to oppose the development, but dropped the ball when building a case, as the Councillors were Labor party hacks looking to climb the ladder they're not going to upset the Labor machine.

62. Cr White then posted:

Chuck in a couple state government operatives sorry monitors to threaten the independent councillors with suspension or administration & bam DA's golf course scam is alive & kicking in Kingston

63. As per paragraph 56 above, there is some substantiation for the claim that the appointment of monitors was politically motivated. I therefore find Cr White did not breach the Code of Conduct in relation to this comment.

64. However I note that had Cr White provided the names of the monitors appointed to KCC (rather than referring to them in general terms) I would have found differently on this point.

65. Similarly, Cr White can point to some evidence – particularly the missed VCAT appeal – that there were probity issues around the development of the Kingston golf course. Again, I do not comment on the merit of these arguments, merely that they can be made.

15 January 2026 social media comment “early stage communism”

66. Cr Saab alleges that a 15 January 2026 Facebook comment by Cr White on a Council Watch Victoria's page breached clauses 4(1)(a) and 4(1)(b) of the Code of Conduct. The comment responded to another's comment, saying:

Early stage communism? 😊 I'd say we're well and truly there

67. Cr Saab alleges that this infers that this comment portrays 'Council as authoritarian, unaccountable and illegitimate'.

68. I disagree with Cr Saab's characterisation of this comment. I see this comment as stating a disagreement in political ideology.

69. I do not find any breach of the Code of Conduct in relation to this comment.

Undated laughing emoji to Facebook comment that “the monitors should concentrate on monitoring Hadi Saab”

70. Cr Saab alleges that an [undated in the version given to me] laughing emoji posted by Cr White's official Facebook page to a comment on Council Watch Victoria Inc Facebook page breached clauses 2(1)(a), 4(1)(a) and 4(1)(b) of the Code of Conduct. The comment by a third party said:

The monitors should concentrate on monitoring Hadi Saab

71. In her Respondent Submissions, Cr White states that she has the following disclaimer on her social media which states “I do not speak on behalf of Kingston City Council, but in my capacity as an individual”. She further gave a range of different reasons as to why social media interactions, including liking or the laugh emoji, were not an ‘endorsement’ of the views in that post.
72. Rather, she claimed they were a “thank you ... for offering personal and political solidarity in the face of intense professional hostility” or “empathising with a community member's anger”, among other reasons.
73. There have been several other arbiter decisions in this jurisdiction on the meaning of social media reactions, particularly ‘likes’. In *Iwasaki v Yildiz, Internal Arbitration Process – Merri-bek City Council (IAP 2025-3)* it was found that:

‘it is generally accepted that when a user “likes” a post on Facebook, it serves as an expression of acknowledgment and agreement with the content of that post.’
74. In *Oxley v Saab Internal Arbitration Process – Kingston City Council (IAP 2025-5)* the arbiter found that *Iwasaki v Yildiz* decision did not apply for reasons that were highly context specific.
75. A laughing emoji is a less clear endorsement of a post than a ‘like’. Whether or not it is an endorsement is highly context specific.
76. I find that in light of the animosity Cr White clearly feels for Cr Saab and communicates regularly via social media, her laughing emoji signalled endorsement of the post on the Council Watch Victoria Inc Facebook page.
77. I also find that the Council Watch Victoria Inc post implies, without evidence, that Cr Saab is worthy of suspicion from KCC monitors.
78. I find that Cr White endorsed this view without evidence and that in doing so she breached clause 2(1) of the Code of Conduct because agreeing with a comment that Cr Saab is worthy of suspicion from monitors, without evidence, is clearly antithetical to showing him ‘dignity, fairness, objectivity, courtesy or respect.’

Sanction

79. Cr White is suspended from the office of Councillor for a period of two calendar months in relation to the Druze February NOM breaches.
80. This suspension is to commence the day after the next Council meeting following this decision. I am imposing a significant penalty for several reasons, being:
 - Cr White continued to use of phrase ‘and related payments to Cr Saab’ in the Druze February NOM even after being explicitly told by a council officer that it was ‘objectionable’.
 - Cr White has maintained, including in the hearing, that she had done nothing wrong in implying, without evidence, that Cr Saab had improperly received a financial

benefit from the Druze grant. I note that she has not apologised to Cr Saab nor made any attempt to remedy this implication.

81. In relation to the endorsement of the post on the Council Watch Victoria Inc Facebook page, I direct that Cr White undertake training on the appropriate use of social media.

Dr Lily O'Neill
Arbiter
19 August 2026

Model Councillor Code of Conduct

Schedule 1 of the Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Amendment Regulations 2024

Definitions

In this Schedule—

discrimination means unfair or unfavourable treatment of a person on the grounds of an attribute specified in section 6 of the **Equal Opportunity Act 2010**.

Standards of Conduct

1. Performing the role of a Councillor

A Councillor must do everything reasonably necessary to ensure that they perform the role of a Councillor effectively and responsibly, including by—

- (a) representing the interests of the municipal community by considering and being responsive to the diversity of interests and needs of the municipal community; and
- (b) being fit to perform the role of a Councillor when acting in that capacity or purporting to act in that capacity; and
- (c) diligently using Council processes to become informed about matters which are subject to Council decisions; and
- (d) not performing or purporting to perform any responsibilities or functions of the Chief Executive Officer; and
- (e) acknowledging and supporting the Mayor in the performance of the role of the Mayor, including by—
 - (i) respecting and complying with a ruling of the Mayor as the chair of Council meetings (unless dissenting from the ruling in accordance with the Council's Governance Rules); and
 - (ii) refraining from making public comment, including to the media, that could reasonably be perceived to be an official comment on behalf of the Council where the Councillor has not been authorised by the Mayor to make such a comment.

2. Behaviours

- (1) A Councillor must treat others, including other Councillors, members of Council staff and members of the public, with dignity, fairness, objectivity, **courtesy and respect**, including by—

- (a) not engaging in demeaning, abusive, obscene or threatening behaviour, including where the behaviour is of a sexual nature; and
 - (b) not engaging in behaviour that intentionally causes or perpetuates stigma, stereotyping, prejudice or aggression against a person or class of persons; and
 - (c) not engaging in discrimination or vilification; and
 - (d) supporting the Council, when applying the Council's community engagement policy, to develop respectful relationships and partnerships with Traditional Owners, Aboriginal community controlled organisations and the Aboriginal community; and
 - (e) supporting the Council in fulfilling its obligation under the Act or any other Act (including the **Gender Equality Act 2020**) to achieve and promote gender equality; and
 - (f) ensuring their behaviours and interactions with children are in line with the Council's policies and procedures as a child safe organisation and obligations under the **Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005** to the extent that they apply to Councillors.
- (2) A Councillor, as an individual at the workplace, must take reasonable care for their own health and safety and take reasonable care that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons by—
- (a) adhering to applicable systems and policies put in place by the Chief Executive Officer to manage risks to health and safety in the workplace; and
 - (b) complying, so far as the Councillor is reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given by the Chief Executive Officer to manage risks to health and safety.
- (3) A Councillor must act in accordance with any policies, practices and protocols developed and implemented under section 46 of the Act that support arrangements for interactions between members of Council staff and Councillors.

3. Good governance

A Councillor must comply with the following Council policies and procedures required for delivering good governance for the benefit and wellbeing of the municipal community—

- (a) the Council's expenses policy adopted and maintained under section 41 of the Act;

- (b) the Council's Governance Rules developed, adopted and kept in force by the Council under section 60 of the Act, including in relation to—
 - (i) conduct in Council meetings or meetings of delegated committees; and
 - (ii) requesting and approval of attendance at Council meetings and meetings of delegated committees by electronic means of communication; and
 - (iii) the Council's election period policy included in the Council's Governance Rules under section 69 of the Act, including in ensuring that Council resources are not used in a way that is intended to influence, or is likely to influence, voting at a general election or by-election;
- (c) the Council's Councillor gift policy adopted under section 138 of the Act;
- (d) any direction of the Minister given under section 175 of the Act.

4. Integrity

- (1) A Councillor must act with integrity, exercise reasonable care and diligence and take reasonable steps to avoid any action which may diminish the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of local government, including by—
 - (a) ensuring that their behaviour does not bring discredit upon the Council; and
 - (b) not deliberately misleading the Council or the public about any matter related to the performance of their public duties; and
 - (c) not making Council information publicly available where public availability of the information would be contrary to the public interest.

Note

See the public transparency principles set out in section 58 of the Act.

- (2) A Councillor must not, in their personal dealings with the Council (for example as a ratepayer, recipient of a Council service or planning applicant), expressly or impliedly request preferential treatment for themselves or a related person or entity.

5. The Model Councillor Code of Conduct does not limit robust public debate

Nothing in the Model Councillor Code of Conduct is intended to limit, restrict or detract from robust public debate of issues in a democracy.