

PREESALL TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of the Town Council held on Monday 4 March 2019
at 7.00pm at Preesall Youth and Community Centre, Lancaster Road, Preesall**

Present: Cllrs B Burn (Deputy Mayor), R Drobny, R Lawson, J Mutch, P Orme, N Pattrick, T Reilly.

In attendance: Alison May, clerk to the town council.

239a(1) Apologies for absence

Cllr Black, Cllr McCann, Cllr Woodhouse

239b(1) Absent without apology

None

240(2) Declaration of interests and dispensations

Cllr Drobny – member of Junior Law Society

241(3) Public participation

No members of the public were present

242(4) Exclusion of the press and public

Resolved: not to exclude the press and public.

Councillors discussed the articles in the Blackpool Gazette and the Garstang Courier newspapers and the opinion column in the Garstang Courier regarding allegations in each paper of a councillor being bullied. Other alleged bullying was also mentioned.

Councillors noted the inaccuracy of the dates quoted in the articles and that once again allegations were made regarding the improper handling of council funds, even though this had been fully investigated by the monitoring officer at Wyre who had found no evidence of alleged wrongdoing. Those making the allegations had been found to be in breach of the code of conduct and asked to apologise for their inappropriate behaviour.

Resolved: that the clerk:

- 1) Write a letter of complaint to the Editor at JPI media in Preston detailing the council's concerns that it had not been given the opportunity to respond to the coverage, either before or after publication; the council's disappointment that the reputation of the council, councillors and the clerk had been impugned by JPI's defamatory remarks in the Garstang Courier and a request for the online articles to be removed.
- 2) Seek legal advice from NALC.

There being no further business, the Mayor closed the meeting at 7.43pm.