

## **Complaint GOV 46**

### **Factfinding following telcon with Councillor Bob Bayman (BB) and the Monitoring Officer (MO)**

BB explained that the Parish Council was made up of a group of Councillors with mixed levels of experience and they were united by a willingness to learn and learn from their mistakes. If they felt they could do better then they would and learn from the process. He had done the training and was happy to learn on the job and continue to improve in the role.

He was the Chair of the group and felt they were all trying to do their best by the parish and residents. They had no other agendas. He was pleased with the group and how they operated.

With regard to the complaint, BB explained that it was handled as best they could. The quotes were read out by a Councillor and perhaps it would have been better if the Clerk had read them out. They were checked before to ensure that only the Councillor and the Clerk knew who the quotes were from therefore this allowed all the Parish Councillors to take part in the discussion and decision.

MO asked if it was normal practice not to say who the quotes were from?

BB responded that this was normal practice to avoid favouritism and any interests.

BB went on to explain that it was difficult enough to find contractors to do work for the Parish Council. That is why the Councillor got involved due to the struggle to get quotes. Two quotes in all areas had been received for the project. Only the Councillor who had got the quotes, knew who the quotes were from.

MO stated that the complainant had sent in further information that said the project had now gone over the £5,000 threshold which affected financial procedure rules.

BB explained that there were various elements to the project and some areas had come about as a consequence of the first quotes as others rooms would be affected by the work eg. decorating other rooms besides the office. He said they did the right thing and stood by the decision. If all the work was added together then perhaps it would be over but it depended how the regulations were interpreted and they weren't trying to get the works through under the £5,000.

BB stated that the contracts had been awarded away from anyone they knew and therefore there was no one swayed by personal or financial interests as they had checked on the night that no one knew who the contractors were.