



LONDON BOROUGH OF ENFIELD

**COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY,
28TH JANUARY, 2015 AT 7.00 PM**

**WRITTEN RESPONSE TO URGENT QUESTION
(TABLED)**

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LONDON BOROUGH OF ENFIELD**COUNCIL – 28 JANUARY 2015****(TABLED)****Item 13.1: Written response to urgent Councillor Question****Reply from Councillor Taylor, Leader of the Council:**

I have dealt with this set of issues in exactly the same way I would deal with all such issues and allegations of misconduct. This is in line with advice and the rules from my National party.

On receipt of any allegations I discuss with the Chief Whip of my group the allegations and the member is interviewed by the Chief Whip. If the matter is of a nature which is beyond the remit of the local group it is referred by the Chief Whip to the National party. They take a view as to the best course of action. Such a referral took place promptly after the member informed me of the matter on January 21st.

On 22nd January, the National Party decided to issue an administrative suspension and the Councillor has been removed from all of the committees he sits upon. As you will be aware this requires the Council to approve the changes which it will do this evening. The National Party statement re the suspension has been widely covered in the press and there is no benefit in me simply repeating it.

It is now for the National Party to take the action it sees fit and it is not a matter of local group determination.

With regards to any reference to the Councillor Conduct Committee I understand that the Monitoring Officer is seeking clarification of the issues raised in the press coverage before considering what course of action should be followed.

Of course, like Cllr Neville, I treat the reputation of the Council most seriously but I recall that in the case of Councillor Joannides, it took some time for the Conservative Party to carry out a full review after he was suspended, presumably because it was following due process. While I recognise there was no conviction in that case I simply make the point that rules of natural justice and a proper investigation should always take place. I would anticipate that being concluded in the near future.

From my recollection when Councillor Joannides was suspended from the Conservative group it was anticipated that the investigation would last about five weeks which I am sure was to ensure a fair and proper process was followed. I believe that it took a significantly longer time for it to reach a conclusion within the Conservative Party.

I trust that this makes clear that as far as the local Labour group is concerned this is a matter for the National Party.

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