BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

STANDARDS PANEL

10.00am 30 OCTOBER 2026

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL, NORTON ROAD, HOVE, BN3 3BQ - HTH/CC

DECISION LIST

Part One

3 HEARING OF AN ALLEGATION THAT A COUNCILLOR HAS FAILED TO COMPLY WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS (EXEMPT CATEGORY 2)

1. A meeting of the Standards Panel was convened to consider and determine an allegation by Councillor Amanda Grimshaw (the Complainant) that Councillor Ty Galvin (the Subject Member) had failed to follow the Council's code of conduct for councillors (the Code). The allegation was that the Subject Member had placed his hand firmly on the Complainant's buttock as they posed for photographs as Mayor and Deputy Mayor when attending a Sussex University graduation event on 25th July 2025. That allegation and reports of other inappropriate comments towards women were referred for investigation by an external investigating officer. The investigating officer concluded that witnesses described a pattern of behaviour in which the Subject Member made inappropriate and sexualised remarks to female officers and to a prospective councillor, that on balance the Subject Member had touched the Complainant inappropriately at the graduation event and that he had thereby failed to follow a number of provisions of the Code.

2. The Hearing Panel were advised by the Deputy Monitoring Officer (DMO) that under the Council's Arrangements, the hearing could only be chaired by an Independent Person. The Independent Person designated to chair the hearing was Paul Cummins. Mr Cummins was unable to attend the hearing in person due to a back injury but was able to attend remotely by MS Teams. The DMO further advised the Panel that whilst members of a committee in a local authority in England had to attend in person, Mr Cummins' role was solely to chair the meeting. He did not have a vote and was not a decision maker. The Panel resolved therefore to appoint Mr Cummins as chair and he presided remotely.

3. The Panel considered with care representations from Brighton and Hove

News, the Investigating Officer and the Subject Member's representative as to whether the hearing should take place in public or private. The Panel also received legal advice from the DMO and deliberated in closed session. The Panel's view was that exceptionally in this case, the need for the Council as a data controller to protect the rights and freedoms of individuals referred to in the investigation officer's report overrode the general public interest in transparency, having regard to the sensitive nature of the evidence, the junior status of staff witnesses and that a decision notice giving the outcome would be published in any event. The Panel were not satisfied that a partial exclusion of public and press would be practical given the interrelated nature of the evidence. The panel therefore resolved to exclude the press and public from the remainder of the meeting.

4. The Panel were advised that the Complainant was not able to attend the hearing. The Panel considered representations from the Subject Member's representative and the investigator and received legal advice from the DMO as to whether it should adjourn the hearing. After deliberating in closed session, the Panel determined that it should not adjourn the hearing. Whilst it was desirable that the Complainant attend in person to respond to questions from the parties and the Panel, the Panel was mindful of the parties wish to proceed without the delay which would be caused by an adjournment and the effect that such delay might have on the wellbeing of the Complainant and Subject Member.

5. The Panel considered carefully the evidence put forward by the investigating officer, her representations as to the Code and her responses to questions put to her by the Subject Member's representative and the Panel themselves. The Panel also considered carefully the evidence and representations put forward by the Subject Member's representative and his responses to questions put to him by the Investigating Officer and the Panel. The Panel considered the evidence of the Subject Member and his responses to questions. The Panel also received the views in writing of one of the Council's Independent Persons.

6. The Panel found the evidence of the staff witnesses and the prospective councillor to be consistent and credible. They described a pattern of inappropriate, sexually suggestive and unwanted comments towards them, including about their appearance, offers of alcohol and invitations to attend events at Brighton Racecourse. The Panel found such testimony to be sufficiently relevant and proximate to be treated as similar fact evidence when considering the Complainant's allegation as to the Sussex University graduation event.

7. It was clear to the Panel that the Complainant held a genuine belief that she had been touched inappropriately by the Subject Member when they both posed for photographs at the graduation event. The Panel recognised that a victim of such conduct may not disclose the incident until they reach a safe space which may be sometime afterwards. The Panel also recognised that the Complainant was discharging the civic role of Mayor at

the time and would have been concerned to maintain the dignity of that office by not drawing immediate attention to the incident.

8. Whilst the Complainant and the Subject Member were the only two witnesses as to the incident itself, the Panel were mindful of the evidence of a Council officer to whom the Complainant spoke in person after the incident, expressing her anger and disgust at the Subject Member's conduct. The words recalled by the officer were consistent with those the Complainant asserted she had used and were memorable to the officer as they were more robust than the language he was used to the Complainant using.

9. Having regard to the Complainant's evidence, that of the Council officer and the similar fact evidence, the Panel considered that on balance it was more likely than not that the Subject Member had touched the Complainant inappropriately and that his conduct was intentional.

10. The Panel considered that the Subject Member was acting as a councillor at the time of the incident. He was attending the graduation event as Deputy Mayor and was wearing the chains of that office. As such, the Code applied to his conduct.

11. The Panel considered that by his conduct, the Subject Member had failed to treat the Complainant with respect contrary to paragraph 1.1 of the Code. His conduct had been unwanted, demeaning and distressing to the Complainant and violated her dignity. For the same reasons, the Panel also considered that the Subject Member had sexually harassed the Complainant contrary to Paragraph 2.2 of the Code.

13. In addition, the Panel considered that by so acting towards the Complainant when she was carrying out the role of Mayor and him Deputy Mayor, he had adversely affected the dignity of both civic offices and had thereby brought his office and the authority into disrepute contrary to paragraph 5.1 of the Code.

14. The Panel resolved to publish its findings and report them to full Council. In addition, the Panel resolved to adopt the following sanctions:-

    (a) the Panel will write to the Subject Member recommending he apologise to the Complainant;

    (b) the Panel recommends to full Council that:-

        (i) the Subject Member not be appointed to any body to which it makes appointments,

        (ii) he be formally censured;

        (iii) he be removed from all committees and subcommittees;

(c) the Monitoring Officer to offer the Subject Member appropriate training.

15. The Complainant and the Subject Member have a right of appeal against this decision as set out in the Council's arrangements.

…….
Paul Cummins
Independent Chair of the Standards Panel