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CODE OF CONDUCT

COMPLAINT AGAINST DEPUTY J GOLLOP

FINDINGS OF THE INVESTIGATION PANEL

Deputy John Gollop is a Member of the States of Deliberation.

In November 2020 Mr Richard Friedrich lodged a complaint with the States' Members Code of Conduct Panel complaining about the actions of Deputy John Gollop at a public meeting to discuss noisy motorbikes and scooters held at Moore's Hotel on 19th November 2020. During the meeting he noticed that Deputy Gollop appeared to be looking at images of women on his iPad which appeared to be inappropriate. He therefore believed that Deputy Gollop's behaviour breached sections 9 and 11 of the Code of Conduct for States' Members.

Section 9 is in the following terms:

Members shall at all times treat other Members, civil servants and members of the public with respect and courtesy and without malice, notwithstanding the disagreements on issues and policy which are a normal part of the political process.

Section 11 is in the following terms:

Members shall act in good conscience and exercise the privileges and discharge the duties of public office diligently and with civility, dignity, care and honour.

Following review of the complaint, the Chairman determined that prima facie evidence had been submitted to support it. An Investigation Panel to consider the case was therefore established and Deputy Gollop was asked to respond to the complaint.

The Investigation Panel was convened and comprised The Very Rev'd John Guille as Chairman of the States Members' Code of Conduct Panel, Dame Mary Perkins D.B.E. and Advocate Louise Hall.

Deputy Gollop provided an initial written response to the complaint and Deputy Ferbrache subsequently forwarded a statement on Deputy Gollop's behalf, as a political colleague, which he had assisted Deputy Gollop to write. Deputy Gollop was afforded, in accordance with the procedures for hearing complaints under the Code, the opportunity to present his case in person to the Investigation Panel, which he did. Mr Friedrich was also afforded the opportunity to appear in person to speak about his complaint, which he did.

The complainant and Deputy Gollop appeared before the Panel separately and each explained clearly how he saw the matter and the context in which Deputy Gollop's actions should be considered.

Mr Friedrich explained that he went to the meeting and happened to sit near Deputy Gollop. While glancing around he caught sight of the screen of Deputy Gollop's iPad and was surprised by what he saw on it. He took photographs of the screen as he did not really know what else to do. He thought further on the matter later and decided he should submit a Code of Conduct complaint.

He explained what he believed he had seen and what he thought of it. He was embarrassed by the actions of a Deputy and felt that it could not be addressed in the context of the public meeting. It was not appropriate behaviour in public, especially not for a Deputy.

He felt that Deputy Gollop's actions in looking at such photographs in public were disrespectful to those attending the meeting. He felt that they were also disrespectful to the particular person whose image he was looking at.

Deputy Gollop explained that he was at the meeting because he believed that something should be done about noisy motorbikes and scooters.

Deputy Gollop explained that he was using his personal iPad and the photographs were personal ones. He explained why he was looking at the photograph of one particular lady and simultaneously at a medical website. Mr Friedrich had made incorrect assumptions about

what he was looking at and why. However, he acknowledged that his actions could be regarded as disrespectful to the person who was in the photograph and an intrusion into her life and, further, that he may not have shown her sufficient respect.

We accept Deputy Gollop’s explanation of why he was looking at the particular images which were the subject of Mr Friedrich’s complaint. Nevertheless, in respect of the complaint that Deputy Gollop had breached section 9 of the States’ Members Code of Conduct because of his actions as a public figure at a public meeting, and taking into account Deputy Gollop’s acknowledgment, in our judgment by his actions Deputy Gollop was in breach of section 9 of the States’ Members Code of Conduct.

However, in respect of Mr Friedrich’s complaint that Deputy Gollop had breached section 11 of the States’ Members Code of Conduct, that point was not pursued and in our judgment Deputy Gollop's actions were not in breach of section 11 of the States’ Members Code of Conduct.

We think that this case falls under section 38 in that, although we find that the complaint has been substantiated, it was a minor breach of the Code of Conduct and it can therefore be disposed of by cautioning Deputy Gollop. If such caution is accepted, a report of our decision will then be forwarded to the Presiding Officer and to Her Majesty’s Greffier, so that the report can be made available to members of the public.

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Advocate L. Hall

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Dame Mary Perkins D.B.E.

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The Very Rev’d J. Guille

Dated 8th December, 2020