

City of Rockingham
S5.96C Record of information about conduct

Date sent	Whom the complaint is made about	Person making the complaint	Complaint Number	Code of Conduct Breach	Date and Findings
5 February 2026	Mayor Lorna Buchan	Mr Phil Edman	01/2026	Code of Conduct Breach: Clause 8(1)(a), 8(2)(b) and 9(c) of the City of Rockingham Code of Conduct Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates 8. Personal integrity <i>(1) A council member, committee member or candidate – (a) must ensure that their use of social media and other forms of communication complies with this code;</i> <i>(2) A council member of committee member – (b) must comply with all policies, procedures and resolutions of the local government.</i> 9. Relationship with others <i>A council member, committee member or candidate – (c) must not use offensive or derogatory language when referring to another person;</i>	Date and Findings: 20 April 2026 That the Behaviour Complaints Committee: MAKES a finding that in respect to Behaviour Complaint 01/2026 the Respondent has breached clauses 8(1)(a), 8(2)(b) and 9(c) of the Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates. NOTES that the breach should be assessed at the minor end of the scale. DETERMINES that in accordance with clause 12(4)(b) of the Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates a plan is prepared requiring the Respondent to undertake training in relation to the roles and responsibilities of an Elected Member and Mayor including those in relation to the use of social media, to minimise the risk of future breaches, and this training is to be completed within a period of six months. DIRECTS the Chief Executive Officer: - in accordance with clause 12(5) of the Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates, to consult with the Respondent when preparing the plan; and - To implement the plan. DIRECTS the Chief Executive Officer to provide a written notice to the Complainant and the Respondent of the finding of the Behaviour Complaints Committee and the reasons for the finding in accordance with clause 12(7) (a) of the Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates.

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Former Complaint Register – Register of Minor Breaches

*From 1 January 2026, complaints are managed under the new Local Government Inspector system. However, the publication requirements for earlier findings still apply during the transitional period. Under Regulation 25(3) of the Local Government (Local Government Inspector) Regulations 2025, local governments must continue to publish findings made before 1 January 2026 under the former law (the Local Government Act 1995, ss.5.110 and 5.121, now repealed). This register therefore includes all pre-2026 “minor breach” findings and the actions ordered. **Note: The transitional period means the period beginning on 1 January 2026 and ending on 15 October 2027.***

Date sent	Whom the complaint is made about	Person making the complaint	Complaint Number	A description of the minor breach that the standards panel finds has occurred	Details of the action taken under section 5.110(6)
6 July 2020	Cr Rae Cottam	Cr Hayley Edwards	SP084 of 2020	Complaint Regulation 7 - Securing personal advantage or disadvantaging others Re – Social Media Comment 11/06/2020	CEO wrote to Local Government Standards Panel lodging complaint 6 July 2020 (D20/116603). Advice received 16/12/2020 LGSP – Breach found. 9 February 2021 LGSP ordered the following: (extract only refer to CRM 13402/2021 for full order) – 1. Councillor Rae Cottam, a councillor for the City of Rockingham publicly apologise, as specified in paragraph 2, or failing compliance with paragraph 2, then paragraph 3 below shall apply. 2. At the ordinary council meeting first occurring after the expiration of 28 days from the date of service of this Order on her, Councillor Cottam shall: a. attend the relevant ordinary council meeting; b. ask the presiding person for his or her permission to address the meeting to make a public apology to the public; c. make the apology immediately after Public Question Time or during the Announcements part of the meeting, or at any other time when the meeting is open to the public, as the presiding person thinks fit; and d. address the Council and public as follows, without saying any introductory words before the address, and without making any comments or statement after the address:

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- "I advise this meeting that:*
- i. A complaint was made to the Local Government Standards Panel, in which it was alleged that I contravened the Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007 (WA) when I used derogatory language to comment on the Facebook post of a local community member.*
 - ii. The Panel found that I breached regulation 7(1)(b) of the said Regulations and that my conduct was in breach of the City's Code of Conduct and deserving of a penalty.*
 - iii. I accept that I should not have engaged in the relevant conduct.*
 - iv. I now apologise to the public and my fellow Councillors."*
- 3.** If Councillor Cottam fails to, or is unable to, comply with the requirements of paragraph 2 above THEN, within the next 28 days following the ordinary council meeting referred to in paragraph 2 above, the Chief Executive Officer shall arrange for the following notice of public apology to be published in no less than 10 point print or font:
- a. on the Facebook Page of the City of Rockingham;
 - b. on an appropriate page of the website of the City Rockingham; and
 - c. be published in every City of Rockingham public or community newsletter (whether in electronic or print copy) (if any):

PUBLIC APOLOGY BY COUNCILLOR RAE COTTAM

A complaint was made to the Local Government Standards Panel, in which it was alleged that I contravened the Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007 (WA) when I used derogatory language to comment on the Facebook post of a local community member.

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					<i>The Panel found that I breached regulation 7(1)(b) of the said Regulations and that my conduct was in breach of the City's Code of Conduct and deserving of a penalty. I accept that I should not have engaged in the relevant conduct.</i> <i>I now apologise to the public and my fellow Councillors.</i> Cr Cottam made the following address at the 23 March 2021 Ordinary Council Meeting: <i>"I would like to let everybody know that:</i> <i>A complaint was made to the Local Government Standards Panel, in which it was alleged that I contravened the Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007 and when I used derogatory language to comment on the Facebook post of a local community member.</i> <i>The Panel found that I breached regulation 7(1)(b) to the said Regulations and that my conduct was in breach of the City's Code of Conduct and deserving a penalty. I accept that I should not have engaged in that relevant conduct, and I now apologise to the public, the gallery and my fellow Councillors."</i> The address is recorded in the 23 March 2021 City of Rockingham Council Minutes and can be listened to via the audio recording of that meeting. The minutes and recording are available on the City's website: https://rockingham.wa.gov.au/meetingrecordings
30 August 2022	Mayor Deborah Hamblin	Ms Teresa Ong	20220139	The Local Government Standards Panel found that Mayor Hamblin, an elected member for the City of Rockingham committed one minor breach under the <i>Local Government Act 1995</i> (Act) and Regulation 22 of the <i>Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Regulations 2021</i> when at the Council Meeting held on 23 August 2022, she failed to declare an interest in relation to a donation made by the President of the Tourism Rockingham	The Complaints Officer referred the complaint of minor breach to the Local Government Standards Panel (Panel) on 30 August 2022. (D22/156744) On 15 August 2023 advice was received from the Panel that a breach occurred. The Panel ordered Mayor Hamblin to make a public apology, pursuant to section 5.110(6)(b)(ii) of the Act: 1. Mayor Deborah Hamblin ("Mayor Hamblin"), an elected member for the City of Rockingham,

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				Board to her 2021 Local Government electoral campaign.	publicly apologise, as specified in paragraph 2 below, or failing compliance with paragraph 2, then paragraph 3 below. <u>PUBLIC APOLOGY</u> 2. At the ordinary council meeting first occurring after the expiration of 28 days from the date of service of this Order on her, Mayor Hamblin shall: a. attend the relevant ordinary council meeting; b. ask the presiding person for his or her permission to address the meeting to make a public apology to the public; c. make the apology immediately after Public Question Time or during the Announcements part of the meeting, or at any other time when the meeting is open to the public, as the presiding person thinks fit; and d. address the Council and public as follows, without saying any introductory words before the address, and without making any comments or statement after the address: “I advise this meeting that: i. A complaint was made to the Local Government Standards Panel, in which it was alleged that I contravened the Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Regulations 2021 when, at the Council Meeting held on 23 August 2022, I failed to declare an interest in relation to a donation made by the President of the Tourism Rockingham Board to my 2021 Local Government electoral campaign. ii. The Panel found that by behaving in this manner I committed one breach of Regulation 22. I accept that I should not have acted in such a manner, and I now apologise to the City and the Council, for having done so.”
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				3. If Mayor Hamblin fails to, or is unable to, comply with the requirements of paragraph 2 above in the required timeframe then, within the next 28 days following the ordinary council meeting referred to in paragraph 2 above: a. Mayor Hamblin shall cause the following notice of public apology to be published in no less than 10-point print, as a one-column or two-column display advertisement in the first 10 pages of the "Sound Telegraph" newspaper; and b. the Chief Executive Officer of the City of Rockingham shall arrange for the following notice of public apology to be published in no less than 10-point print or font: i. on the Facebook page of the City of Rockingham; and ii. in an appropriate place on the website of the City of Rockingham; and iii. in the next occurring issues of all City of Rockingham community and public newsletters (if any) (whether in electronic or print copy): PUBLIC APOLOGY BY MAYOR DEBORAH HAMBLIN A complaint was made to the Local Government Standards Panel, in which it was alleged that I contravened the Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Regulations 2021 when, at the Council Meeting held on 23 August 2022, I failed to declare an interest in relation to a donation made by the President of the Tourism Rockingham Board to my 2021 Local Government electoral campaign. The Panel found that by behaving in this manner I committed one breach of Regulation 22.
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					I accept that I should not have acted in such a manner, and I now apologise to the City and the Council, for having done so. In accordance with paragraph 2 of the Panel Order, at the Ordinary Council Meeting of 26 September 2023, the Mayor made the Public Apology during the announcements part of the meeting at 6.38pm.
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