

MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY
STANDARDS COMMITTEE HEARING
20TH DECEMBER, 2006

Member the subject of the Complaint :	Cllr Jack Colbert
Complainant:	Mr. F. Kirkham
Standards Board Case Ref No.	SBE 16213.06
Chair:	Mrs. Carole Roberts (Independent Member)
Members of the Committee:	Councillors V Best, E. Clein, P. Johnson and D. Phillips (Independent Member)
Monitoring Officer:	D. Wright
Referring E.S.O.	Steven Kingston
Clerk of Hearing:	H. Peek
Investigating Officer:	S. Bourne
Date of Report:	December 2006

SUMMARY OF ALLEGATION

Mr. F. Kirkham, Head of Operations, Audit Commission has alleged that Councillor Colbert made offensive, sexist and inappropriate remarks of a personal nature to Mrs. J. Tench when she attended the meeting of the Authority on 19th September, 2006 with press and public present.

NO SANCTION

The Committee considered all relevant issues including the representations of Cllr Colbert, and in particular that he had apologised verbally at the meeting, and subsequently in writing. The Committee also considered the pressures that Cllr Colbert was under at the time, as set out in his letter of apology, that Cllr Colbert never had any intention of causing any offence or disrespect, and that this was an isolated incident. In all of the circumstances, the Committee considered that it is not appropriate to impose any sanction.

RECOMMENDATION TO AUTHORITY

However, the Committee recommends to the Authority that training on behaviour and conduct in meetings be offered to all Members and relevant officers with a view to promoting even higher standards of conduct amongst Members.