

Former councillor to face Standards Commission

Former councillor and Director of the Scottish Newspaper Society, John McLellan will face The Standards Commission for Scotland in October when a hearing has been scheduled.

The Conservative councillor, who is also a High Constable of Edinburgh, was named as the elected member whose behaviour was deemed “manifestly unacceptable” by Pinsent Masons Partner, Julian Diaz-Rainey, complaining to the council after an alleged incident at the lawyers’ Edinburgh offices in October 2021.

This apparently took place during a visit to the office by then Cllr McLellan and others to read a report compiled by Susanne Tanner KC into council failings. The report was not emailed to councillors to read, and Ms Tanner insisted that all members came to the offices to read it in person. The report investigated the mishandling by council officials of sexual abuse allegations against former social worker Sean Bell who took his own life, and it was considered essential that confidential information was kept that way.

Mr McLellan was accused of shouting at a junior female member of the legal team during his visit to read the report. He is also said to have used his mobile phone when asked not to.

Although Mr McLellan said to The Edinburgh Reporter that he

had referred himself to the Standards Commission over the allegation, he also said at the time that he denied all allegations and that he was confident he would be cleared.

The former councillor is also a journalist and former news editor with The Edinburgh Evening News and The Scotsman.

Council Leader, Cammy Day said: “This is of course yet to be decided at the hearing but it is a serious matter – even though Mr McLellan is no longer a councillor. It means that the Commission cannot take any action, such as suspension, which it could do if an allegation that a serving councillor is in breach of the councillors’ code of conduct is ever upheld.

“But this is the role of the Standards Commission, and I am sure they will deal with the matter fairly.”

The hearing will be held at a venue [to be confirmed](#).



John McLellan Conservative Councillor PHOTO © The Edinburgh Reporter



Former councillor, John McLellan second from left on duty on 5 July 2023 when His Majesty The King received the Honours of Scotland. PHOTO ©2023 The Edinburgh Reporter



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