

The Standards Commission and Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park Authority v Sid Perrie

Description

The Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority (LLTNPA) Board meeting on Monday (9th March) considered a paper on the Standards Commission for Scotland (SCS) decision to suspend Sid Perrie, the locally elected member of Balloch, for six months for sending six emails ([see here](#)). Public bodies which come under the aegis of the SCS are legally required to consider the findings of SCS hearings within three months.

The short paper to the board (Item 7 [see here](#)) recommended members to consider and note the decision of the SCS Hearing. It was accompanied by a copy of the SCS decision, which was published on 18th ([see here](#)) and a copy of the version of the LLTNPA Code of Conduct agreed by the board in June 2024..

Heather Reid, the Convener of the LLTNPA and the complainant in this case, asked board members present if they had any comments on the complaint process and the decision. Not a single member did.. After a short period of silence, Heather Reid then commented and I managed to record part of what she said verbatim that it had been **a lengthy process, involving several National Park officers** designed to uphold the Code of Conduct for those involved in public life.

This was a public admission that Dr Reid, appointed by the Scottish Government, had used the staff resources available to her to pursue a complaint against another board member, the locally elected representative for Balloch. Sid Perrie had, in his six emails, been trying to raise concerns about the planning process behind the Flamingo Land planning application ([see here](#)), ([here](#)), ([here](#)) and ([here](#)), a matter of public interest, including how local residents he represented had been sidelined.

If any LLTNPA board member present had had concerns about staff involvement in the complaints process, it would have been very difficult for them to say so because ([see here](#)) the Code of Conduct forbids any criticism of staff in public:

3.8 I will not undermine any individual employee or group of employees, or raise concerns about their performance, conduct or capability in public. I will raise any concerns I have on such matters in private with senior management as appropriate.

Dr Reid's presence as the complainant will have acted as a further deterrent to any board member wishing to offer a critical comment. I had missed the start of the meeting so I do not know if Dr Reid had declared a potential conflict of interest as regards this item she should have done so and if she did, why she thought it appropriate that she chair any discussion.

In addition Board Members had also been informed that the decision could be appealed and, as a result, a number of those who had supported the complaint against Sid (I will consider this in a further post) may have judged it best to remain silent.

Staff involvement in the complaint v Sid Perrie

My previous posts (links above) showed how Dr Reid had forwarded Sid Perrie's first email on 26th August 2024, which had raised serious questions about the role of senior staff in the Flamingo Land planning process, to those senior staff within the hour. That information was obtained NOT from the Ethical Standards Commission's report on their investigation into Dr Reid's complaint but from information obtained by Sid Perrie through a Subject Access Request before he went off sick. The LLTNPA's response to the SAR is 536 pages long and not in date order, making it very difficult to follow. As a result I had missed a number of key pieces of information, including these two emails sent by Dr Reid on 26th August after Sid had sent his first email at 9.03

default watermark

From: [Heather Reid](#)
To: [Christopher Spray](#); [Ronnie Erskine](#); [Sarah Drummond](#); [Claire Chapman \(claire.chapman@tabardit.co.uk\)](#); [Colin Lee](#); [Martin Earl](#); ["william.sinclair@argyll-bute.gov.uk"](#); [Maurice Cory](#); [Hazel Sorrell](#); ["rbrock@pkc.gov.uk"](#); [David Mackie](#); [David Fettes](#); [Iain Shonny Paterson](#); [Richard Johnson](#)
Cc: [Douglas Smith](#)
Subject: Email Correspondence from Sid Perrie
Date: 26 August 2024 11:57:25

Dear Board Member,

I am writing in respect of the email that was sent to you by Board Member Sid Perrie earlier this morning making serious but unfounded allegations against the National Park Authority and its staff. I have today met with senior officers and our external legal support and I can confirm that the National Park Authority does not have a conflict of interest in relation to the Lomond Banks planning application (2022/0157/PPP). The Report and Recommendation of the Director of Place on that application will be published on 2 September 2024 and the site visit, hearing and determination will take place before the Board on 16 September 2024. I would advise you that it is important that you do not respond to Mr Perrie's email or forward it to any other party or respond to any media enquiries in relation to it. I will be issuing a formal response to Mr Perrie later today and will share a copy of that email with you.

Kind regards,

Heather

In less than three hours of receiving Sid's email detailing serious concerns about the Flamingo Land planning process (including the evidence from Parkswatch posts), Dr Reid had informed fellow board members that she met with senior officers, some of whom were subject of the allegation, and lawyers and decided these were unfounded. What Dr Reid did was akin to a police officer receiving allegations of a crime, forwarding the allegations to the suspect/s, asking them if they did it and then telling their fellow police officers no crime had occurred.

It then took another 1 hour 45 minutes for Dr Reid to inform Sid Perrie what she and senior staff had decided:

From: [Heather Reid](#)
To: ["Alexander Perrie"](#)
Cc: ["claire.chapman@"](#); ["Colinlee@"](#); ["david.fettes@"](#); ["david@"](#); ["Hazel.Sorrell@west-dunbarton.gov.uk"](#); ["earlm@stirling.gov.uk"](#); ["maurice.corry@argyll-bute.gov.uk"](#); ["navidforoutan@"](#); ["rcjohnson9@"](#); ["sarahdrmmnd@"](#); ["william.sinclair@argyll-bute.gov.uk"](#); ["ronni.erskine@"](#); ["C.J.Spray@"](#); ["IanShony.Paterson@"](#); ["Mairi.Gougeon.msp@parliament.scot"](#); ["Ross.Greer.msp@parliament.scot"](#); ["jackie.baillie.msp@parliament.scot"](#); ["ministerforca@gov.scot"](#)
Subject: RE: Conflict of interest
Date: 26 August 2024 13:42:33

Dear Sid,

I, senior staff and our legal advisor have carefully considered the substance of your allegation. It is considered that your allegation against the Park Authority and its staff is unfounded. Further, it is not accepted in any way that the National Park Authority nor its staff have a conflict of interest in relation to the determining of the planning application in principle for development at West Riverside and Woodbank House (REF 2022/0157/PPP) by Flamingo Land Ltd.

Accordingly, the Report and Recommendation of the Park Authority's Director of Place will be published on 2nd September 2024 and the Board will proceed with its site visit, hearing and determination of that application on 16th September 2024.

Regards,

Heather

Heather Reid

Convener

Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park

www.lochlomond-trossachs.org

www.twitter.com/lomondrossachs

www.facebook.com/lomondrossachs

Note how Dr Reid copied MSPs and Scottish Ministers into an email addressed including the private email addresses of board members, exactly what Sid did, and for which SCS found him guilty of breaching the Code of Conduct. While Dr Reid has an official LLTNPA email, most other board members do not.

In February I decided to check out whether the Ethical Standards Commission (ESC), who investigated Dr Reid's complaint, knew about this correspondence (I sent them a copy of the first email above) or had any information to counter the allegations Sid Perrie had made. I received this quick and very helpful reply:

From Info Ethical Standards 
To Nick Kempe , Info Ethical Standards 
Subject FOI 299 - Response

 Reply  Forward  Archive  Junk  Delete  More 

18/02/2026, 13:46

Thank you for your email of the **13th of February 2026**, requesting the information below.

I am responding to your request under the terms of the [Freedom of Information \(Scotland\) Act 2002](#) (FOISA).

1) Did Heather Reid ever supply a copy of the email above, dated 26th August, to the ESC or make your staff aware that such an email existed?

No, we were not provided a copy of the email dated 26 August, sent from the Convener to the Board, at 11:57.
We were not aware of this email.

2) Does the ESC hold any further information (I can find none in the case papers) relating to Dr Reid's claim in the email she sent on 26th August that the NPA "does not have a conflict of interest in relation to the Lomond Banks planning application"? That wording is broader in scope to that included in para 31 of your report in that the reference to conflicts of interest includes both staff and board members. What I am trying to establish is whether the ESC was ever provided with any information to substantiate the claims Dr Reid made in her emails. If not, that's fine, but if so, could you please provide me with that information.

No, we were not provided with further information other than what is shown in the case papers.

In terms of Freedom of Information, we do not hold this information.
I hope this response has been helpful.

If you are unhappy with how your request for information has been handled, you should write back to us at info@ethicalstandards.org.uk.
Your request for review should be made within 40 working days and should explain why you are dissatisfied with our response.

If you are not content with the outcome of our review, you may apply directly to the Scottish Information Commissioner for a decision.
Generally, the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the review procedure provided by the Ethical Standards Commissioner.

More information can be found on the Scottish Information Commissioner's website: www.foi.scot/your-rights.

Kind regards, James

James Coburn (He / Him)
Information Management and IT Officer
Tel: 0131 347 3890

www.ethicalstandards.org.uk

This e-mail comes from the office of the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland, Thistle House, 91 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh, EH12 5HE.
To find out more about how we treat your personal data please go to: <http://www.ethicalstandards.org.uk/privacy-policy/>

What this response establishes is that when ESC conducted their investigation into the complaint against Sid Perrie they were unaware that Dr Reid had immediately involved staff in deciding how to respond to a complaint about them. (While I did not ask ESC explicitly whether they had seen a copy of Dr Reid's second email, it is not in evidence they refer to). Nor were the ESC ever provided with any information to substantiate Dr Reid's claims that Sid Perrie's allegations were unfounded.

The evidence therefore suggests that Dr Reid not only used LLTNPA staff resources to pursue her complaint against Sid Perrie but also that both she and the staff concerned were selective with the evidence they presented to the ESC. It appears they manipulated the complaints process to suit their interests. This raises the question why the ESC is not more pro-active in trying to establish the truth? Why for example does the ESC not ask complainers like Dr Reid as a matter of course whether they have provided ALL the information relevant to a complaint and then sign a declaration to that effect. If the ESC had done that in this case, my belief is Dr Reid's complaint, backed by LLTNPA officers,

would have collapsed.

If the Code of Conduct for those in Public Life meant anything, it should have been Dr Reid and not Sid Perrie who was up before the Standards Commission for her unethical behaviour and for failing to hold her senior staff to account. As it is I am hopeful that the corruption at the heart of the LLTNPA will now be exposed. An appeal against the Standards Commission for Scotland decision in Sid Perrie's case was lodged with the Sheriff Court yesterday.

Category

1. Loch Lomond and Trossachs

Tags

1. Governance
2. LLTNPA
3. planning
4. Scottish Government

Date Created

March 11, 2026

Author

nickkempe

default watermark