**Standards Complaint – Decision Notice**

**Meeting of: Standards Assessment Panel**

Jeremy Thomas (Monitoring Officer)

 Chris Ballinger (Independent Person)

Jill McCleery (Independent Person)

Ben Simpson (Independent Person)

**Oxford City Council Officers**

Emma Griffiths (Legal Advisor)

Catherine Phythian (Clerk)

**Date of meeting:** 29 July 2015

**Complaint against:** Councillor Mary Clarkson

**Complainant:** Mrs Madelaina Eftekhari

**Date of Complaint:** 4 June 2015 ( received 6th July 2015)

**Complaint**

The complainant alleges that Councillor Clarkson “used (abused) her position to harass and assassinated my character and damaging my professional reputation” and “she has abused her position of trust to make false allegation against me, damaging my professional landlady. As well as violating my tenant’s right to family life”.

**Consideration**

The Monitoring Officer reviewed the complaint and consulted with the Independent Persons appointed by the City Council to advise on Standards complaints, at a Standards Assessment Panel meeting on 29 July 2015. The purpose of the consideration was to determine whether the complaint merited investigation.

The Monitoring Officer wrote to Councillor Clarkson with a copy of the complaint and asked Councillor Clarkson if she would like to provide a response. Councillor Clarkson provided copies of the email correspondence between herself and the complainant and Oxford City Council officers in the HMO Enforcement and Planning Enforcement teams.

The Monitoring Officer and Independent Persons considered the following evidence at the meeting convened on 29 July 2015, - the complaint and the e mail correspondence between Councillor Clarkson and the complainant. The Monitoring Officer and Independent Persons also had regard to the Oxford City Council Members’ Code of Conduct in particular the following paragraphs:

* You must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned, must not behave improperly and must on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.
* You must not do anything that compromises or is likely to compromise the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of the council.
* You must treat others with respect and ensure that you are aware of and comply with all legal obligations that apply to you as a member of co-opted member of the council and act within the law

**Decision**

Having considered all of the written material the Monitoring Officer and Independent Persons were satisfied that the complaint did not merit investigation.

The Monitoring Officer and Independent Persons considered that, on the basis of the information provided to them by the complainant and Councillor Mary Clarkson, Councillor Clarkson had in her dealings with the complainant been polite; had behaved appropriately in referring residents' complaints to the appropriate officers; and had not used undue influence to require those officers to investigate those complaints.

The Panel concluded that no further action was required in respect of the complaint.

Dated 31st July 2015.