

Motion of Censure

This proposed motion of censure concerns two areas of conduct by Councillor David Whipp which are considered to have affected the proper and efficient running of Barnoldswick Town Council.

1. Use of personal email for Town Council business

Barnoldswick Town Council has taken a number of steps to establish and implement an official email system for councillors.

- **10 September 2025 – Minute 25/46, Councillor Email Addresses:** Council resolved to set up a Council email address for councillors who did not have one.
- **11 March 2026 – Minute 25/113, Council Email Addresses:** Council resolved that, from **1 April 2026**, all councillors should use a **barnoldswick.gov.uk** email address for Town Council business.
- **15 April 2026 – Minute 25/130, Council Email Addresses:** Council recorded that nine of the twelve councillors had already been set up with the new email addresses and that a draft email usage policy had been circulated.
- **8 July 2026:** Council made further decisions regarding councillors who were not using the official Council email system, including their involvement in committees, working groups and project roles.

Despite these decisions and the arrangements put in place, Councillor David Whipp has continued to use a personal email account for Town Council business rather than the official Council email address.

Steps taken by Council to understand and support

The Council's email system has changed on **27 August 2026**. The current Council email service is hosted on a separate server and is not a Microsoft email service.

The Council has sought to understand during Council meetings whether there are any other barriers affecting Councillor Whipp's ability to carry out Council business and use the official email system.

The Council has also provided an opportunity to discuss this:

- a letter was sent on **19 August 2026** to Councillor Whipp's home address, to meet with the Clerk, the Chair of the HR & Staffing Committee and the Chair of the Council;
- the same invitation was also hand-delivered to Councillor Whipp in the agenda pack for the **9 September 2026 Full Council meeting**; and
- the purpose of the proposed meeting was to understand whether there were any difficulties or barriers that the Council could help to address.

To date, Councillor Whipp has not engaged with that invitation.

The Clerk also explained the Council's concerns to Councillor Whipp by email on **15 September 2026**, sent to his personal email address. The Clerk explained that continuing to use a personal email account for Council business creates a risk to the Council because Council correspondence and information are not being managed through the official Council email system.

The concern is therefore that decisions made by Full Council have not been followed, despite the Council having put an official email system in place and having made efforts to understand whether there are any barriers preventing its use.

2. Conduct at the Full Council meeting on 9 September 2026

At the Full Council meeting on **9 September 2026**, a number of interventions by Councillor Whipp affected the progress of Council business.

Council recognises that councillors are entitled to ask questions, challenge proposals and put forward different views. Robust debate is an important part of Council meetings.

The concern here is not that Councillor Whipp disagreed with other councillors. It is the manner in which the discussion took place and the effect this had on the progress of the meeting, including repeated interruptions which affected councillors' ability to provide delegated updates and the presentation of information which was subsequently shown to be inaccurate.

As a result, the **Asset Transfer** and **Pride in Place** matters could not be completed at the 9 September meeting. They were subsequently brought back to an **Extraordinary Full Council meeting** so that Council could continue its consideration of them.

This required additional Council time to deal with business that had been scheduled for the original meeting.

Proposed Motion

That Barnoldswick Town Council formally censures Councillor David Whipp for:

1. **Continuing to use a personal email account for Town Council business despite Full Council's decision that councillors should use the official Council email system; and**
2. **Conduct at the Full Council meeting on 9 September 2026 which affected the progress of Council business and contributed to matters being carried forward to an Extraordinary Full Council meeting.**

This motion asks the Council to formally record its disapproval of the two matters set out in the motion: the continued use of a personal email for Council business and the conduct at the Full Council meeting on 9 September 2026.

A vote in favour means that the member agrees that these matters should be formally censured by the Council. A vote against means that the member does not agree that the Council should formally censure Councillor Whipp on these matters.