

CONFIDENTIAL

R e p o r t o f I n v e s t i g a t i o n

F i n a l

**Report of an investigation by Tim Darsley,
appointed by the Monitoring Officer
of BCP Council
into allegations concerning Councillor Lisa Lewis
of BCP Council**

Case Reference:

6 D e c e m b e r 2 0 1 9

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 BCP Council is a unitary authority, formed in April 2019 from the former Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Councils. Serving a population of some 400,000, the Council comprises 76 councillors.
- 1.2 Councillor Lisa Lewis was elected to the new Council on 2 May 2019. She serves the West Southbourne ward.
- 1.3 On 5 August 2019, Councillor Lewis re-tweeted from her Twitter account an article from the Dorset Eye, an on-line magazine. The article criticised the activities of Rachel Riley and described her as, amongst other things, a fascist and an Israeli state terrorist sympathiser. It also made reference to the killing of MP Jo Cox. There was a subsequent exchange of tweets between Rachel Riley and Councillor Lewis.
- 1.4 In the days following her tweet, the Council received three Code of Conduct complaints concerning Councillor Lewis' actions. The complainants were; [Redacted], [Redacted] and [Redacted]. Their complaints are shown below:

The complaints:

[Redacted]

Using her social media to bully/intimidate Rachel Riley who has a differing opinion to hers. She shared an article on Rachel Riley on her Twitter account in which the article states that she (Rachel Riley) will be responsible for her own murder. I have screen shots or you can simply go on Twitter to fully review the content.

I am a constituent in Bournemouth West and whilst on Twitter I came across content that I believed was unacceptable and does not meet the code of conduct that Bournemouth Council has in place.

The content is in regards to Councillor Lisa Lewis in which on Monday 5th August on Twitter I came across Councillor Lisa Lewis's Twitter page in which she promoted and liked an article from Dorset Eye, which I believe to be hate speech. Councillor Lewis shared this content via retweeting and 'liking' this on her personal Twitter account (@Elisalew). I came across this promoted content in which I saw a discussion in which Rachel Riley (Countdown TV presenter) shared on Twitter that Councillor Lewis had shared an article from Dorset Eye that contained the following quote from the article she shared.

"The more these 'far right enablers' spew the greater the number realise what a bunch of sickos they are. At some point another Jo Cox moment will happen but this time it will not just be MP's who are at great risk. Rachel Riley and her goons will only have themselves to blame if some loose cannon stoops to another loathsome low".

Link to Dorset Eye article for full context:

<https://dorseteye.com/pointless-poisonous-celebrity-attacks-the-canary/>

I believe that this is hate speech towards another citizen and that by Councillor Lewis sharing and liking this content on her personal Twitter page it is in breach of Bournemouth Council code of conduct.

Councillor Lewis has since removed her retweet of the article but as of writing this email she still likes the article on her personal Twitter page. She did respond to Miss Riley in which she stated "I believe Corbyn and Formby when they say 0.06% of Labour members were found to have been or made anti/Semitic remarks. More concerned with your comments re Canary!" I believe this does not show a genuine concern in regards to apologising to Mrs Riley or wanting to apologise for the content she has shared and liked on her personal Twitter account.

Alongside my main complaint I would also like to add the fact that the article describes Miss Riley as a "fascist and an Israeli state terrorist sympathiser". Although this may be just in the line of free speech, I do believe it is in breach of the council's code of conduct.

According to Mrs Riley's Twitter posts, Mrs Riley did try to go through local Labour candidate for Bournemouth West to make a complaint. His response was to block her on Twitter. Because of this I felt that it was my responsibility as a concerned constituent to file an official complaint through the council and to the committee.

Below I have attached relevant screenshots of Councillor Lewis's Twitter page and content that is evidence for the committee.

I thank you for your time and I am more than happy to be at service to the committee to answer any questions or provide further assistance.

All local councillors or sub committee should review this content and come to decision of what action should or should not be taken against her.

Redacted

Lisa Lewis posted on Twitter a link to an allegedly anti-Semitic article. She retweeted a Dorset Eye article which stated or implied that Rachel Riley;

1. is in the pay of Israel
2. may become responsible for a murder - possibly her own.

Such implied criticism is in clear breach of the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism as adopted by BCP and by the Labour party who have now suspended Ms Lewis. I am Jewish and was, until recently, a Labour voter. Redacted

Redacted. These points are of no direct relevance to my complaint but may help to explain the extent of my anger. I consider Ms Lewis to have breached the following elements of the BCP code of conduct: 3.1; 3.2a;5;6

I do not consider Ms Lewis to be a fit and proper person to be a councillor. At the very least, she should be suspended from the Council until the outcome of the Labour party investigation into her conduct is determined. At best, I consider she should be dismissed from office

Redacted

On the 7th August it was reported in the local press that Lisa Lewis had retweeted an article from the Dorset Eye website, which makes the claim that the TV Countdown host Rachel Riley was in league with the Israeli government. The tweet then goes on to make a somewhat sinister and vaguely threatening connection with the murder of Jo Cox.

Rachel Riley has worked hard to combat antisemitism on social media and any objective assessment of her activities would confirm that this is her concern rather than promoting the interests of Israel. Since this come to light, I am aware that Ms Lewis has been suspended from the Labour Party but I have not seen coverage of any response from Ms Lewis, either explaining or apologising for the seemingly offensive action in passing on these views. In view of this, I would like to complain regarding the conduct of this councillor and feel it would be appropriate for Ms Lewis to be called before the standards committee to explain her actions.

In particular, I would like to know if she did not fully agree with the article why did she not qualify this on twitter? I had thought that Ms Lewis's actions must have taken place before she took up her role of councillor, but on checking the article does seem to have been published after since then. I am concerned to note that that Ms Lewis's activity on social media could call her judgement into doubt as well as her ability to represent all the members of her ward.

Please let me know the outcome of this complaint. Here is the link to the article: <https://dorseteye.com/pointless-poisonous-celebrity-attacks-the-canary/>

I would ask that Ms Lewis is called before the standards committee to explain her actions in this regard and then make the appropriate apologies.

- 1.5 Following the initial assessment of the complaints, the Chairman of the Standards Committee decided that all three should be referred for investigation.
- 1.6 The Monitoring Officer appointed me to carry out an investigation into the complaints on 26 September 2019.

2. Councillor Lewis' official details

- 2.1 Councillor Lewis was elected to BCP Council on 2 May 2019. She is a member of the Labour Group.
- 2.2 She is one of two members representing the West Southbourne ward.
- 2.3 Councillor Lewis received induction training for members shortly after her election. A copy of the Code of Conduct is readily available to her.
- 2.4 Councillor Lewis is the Vice-Chairman of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee and is a member of the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee. She is also a member of the Corporate Parenting Board and the Charter Trustees of Bournemouth.

3. The relevant legislation and protocols

The Localism Act 2011

- 3.1 Section 27(1) of the Localism Act 2011 places a relevant authority under a statutory duty to 'promote and maintain high standards of conduct by members and co-opted members of the authority'.
- 3.2 Under section 27(2) of the Act, a relevant authority 'must, in particular, adopt a code dealing with the conduct that is expected of members and co-opted members of the authority when they are acting in that capacity'.
- 3.3 BCP Council is a relevant authority. Its Code of Conduct is published in the Council's Constitution, last updated on 9 September 2019.
- 3.4 This investigation is carried out in relation to the Council's Code of Conduct and under the provisions of the Council's arrangements for considering complaints.

The Code of Conduct of BCP Council

3.5 The following paragraphs of the Code of Conduct are relevant:

This Code of Conduct sets out the conduct that is expected of councillors and co-opted members when acting in that capacity.

General Obligations

2.1 A Councillor must -

- (b) treat others with respect.

2.2 A Councillor must not -

- (a) do anything which may cause the Council to breach any of its duties under the equalities legislation.
- (b) bully any person.
- (g) behave in a way which could reasonably be regarded as bringing their role or the Council into disrepute.

4. The evidence gathered

Documentary and on-line evidence

4.1 I have taken account of the following information:

- An article published in the Dorset Eye on 3 August 2019.
- Tweets by Councillor Lewis and responses on her Twitter account from 5 August 2019.

Oral evidence

4.2 I have taken account of oral evidence through interviews with;

- Redacted, complainant,
- Redacted, complainant, and
- Councillor Lisa Lewis, the subject member.

4.3 The interviews were recorded. The written records of the interviews were sent to the interviewees for the confirmation of accuracy. The dates of sending the record and of the confirmation that the record is accurate are shown at the end of the record.

4.4 Redacted did not wish to be interviewed in connection with my investigation. He did supply me with a statement in response to a number of questions that I sent him.

4.5 Redacted's statement and the records of interviews are shown at documents 5 to 8.

5. Findings of fact

- 5.1 The three complaints are about the same conduct on the part of Councillor Lewis, namely her re-tweet of the Dorset Eye article on 5 August 2019 and the subsequent exchange with Rachel Riley.
- 5.2 The concerns of the complainants are similar. They maintain that the Dorset Eye article was disrespectful in its criticism of Rachel Riley and intimidatory and threatening to her through its reference to 'another Jo Cox moment'. One called the article hate speech; another felt it was anti-Semitic.
- 5.3 The complainants believe that by re-tweeting the article, Councillor Lewis endorsed and promoted the sentiments in the article. In doing so, they allege she breached a number of the requirements of the Council's Code of Conduct.
- 5.4 Members are required to follow the Council's Code of Conduct when they are acting in their role as a councillor. This is known as their official capacity. The Code does not apply in a member's private life.
- 5.5 It is therefore necessary to establish whether Councillor Lewis was acting as a councillor when she made her tweets. In order to do this, I have set out below the undisputed facts about the matter.

Undisputed facts

- 5.6 The Dorset Eye describes itself as 'an online citizen media magazine in which local, national and international members of the public have their voices heard'.
- 5.7 On 3 August 2019, it published an article headed *Pointless poisonous celebrity attacks The Canary* (document 1). The Canary is another online magazine about which Rachel Riley had tweeted in the context of the Stop Funding Fake News campaign.
- 5.8 The Dorset Eye article directed a number of comments at Rachel Riley, including:

Rachel Riley (of Countdown) has been working, not so clandestinely, for (or with) the Israeli state propaganda machine.

she is quite obviously (if only to me) a fascist and an Israeli state terrorist sympathiser.*

The more these 'far right fascist enablers' spew the greater the number realise what a bunch of sickos they are.

- 5.9 The article also made reference to the murder of MP Jo Cox in 2016:

At some point another Jo Cox moment will happen but this time it will not just be MP's who are at great risk. Rachel Riley and her goons will only have themselves to blame if some loose cannon stoops to another loathsome low.

- 5.10 On 5 August 2019, Councillor Lewis re-tweeted the Dorset Eye article from her Twitter account (document 2). She did not add any comments of her own to the re-tweet.
- 5.11 [Redacted] states that Councillor Lewis also 'liked' the Dorset Eye article. Councillor Lewis couldn't remember whether she 'liked' it but felt that she probably had.
- 5.12 Also on 5 August, Rachel Riley tweeted about Councillor Lewis' re-tweet, commenting on the claim that she was working for Israel and the reference to Jo Cox (document 3). She also tweeted; *Do you think I deserve to be murdered?*
- 5.13 Councillor Lewis responded by tweeting; *I believe Corbyn and Formby when they say 0.06% of Labour members were found to have been or made anti/semitic remarks. More concerned with your comments re Canary!* (document 4).
- 5.14 Rachel Riley in turn replied; *State of this racist @Elisalew. Responds to: Do you think I deserve to be murdered? With: I'm more concerned you're trying to stop a racist fake news site from making money from it. WOW!!!* (document 4).
- 5.15 Councillor Lewis made no further tweets on the subject. Rachel Riley exchanged tweets about Councillor Lewis' actions with Labour Party prospective parliamentary candidate David Stokes.
- 5.16 [Redacted], [Redacted] and [Redacted] submitted Code of Conduct complaints against Councillor Lewis shortly after 5 August.

Official capacity

- 5.17 A member is acting in their official capacity when they are conducting the business of their authority. The Code of Conduct does not apply in a member's private life.

- 5.18 [Redacted]’s view was that once someone became a public figure, their Twitter account was no longer private. She did not therefore believe that Councillor Lewis was acting in a private capacity.
- 5.19 [Redacted] told me that it was clear that Councillor Lewis was a councillor so she had that responsibility. He felt she should have known better than to give publicity to a social media message which breached the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism which had recently been accepted by BCP Council.
- 5.20 He accepted that Lisa Lewis was entitled to a private point of view on Twitter. But the Dorset Eye was a political magazine and, in the circumstances, he felt that Councillor Lewis was acting as a councillor.
- 5.21 Councillor Lewis told me that she wasn’t speaking as a councillor when she re-tweeted the Dorset Eye article. She didn’t use her Twitter account to deal with Council business. She didn’t have any social media account that she used for Council business. She was acting in a private capacity when she used her Twitter account.
- 5.22 Councillor Lewis’ Twitter account is under the name of Lisa Lewis. At the time, she included ‘Labour Councillor’ as one of her activities, amongst a number of others.
- 5.23 I have examined Councillor Lewis’ postings on her Twitter account since before August 2019. She is an active Twitter user, making many tweets and re-tweets, principally on national political, social and environmental issues. I found no postings about her activities at BCP Council or about the business of the Council generally.

6. Reasoning as to whether there has been a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct

- 6.1 The key test of whether Councillor Lewis was acting in her official capacity is whether she was conducting the business of her authority.
- 6.2 Her Twitter account is not identified as that of Councillor Lisa Lewis and she does not use it to discuss, or deal with Council business. A constituent interested in Councillor Lewis' Council activities would not find such information on Twitter.
- 6.3 At the same time, I do not believe that a member of the public viewing Councillor Lewis' Twitter account would interpret her activities there as part of her Council duties.
- 6.4 The particular issue of the future of the Canary and the views of the Dorset Eye is clearly not the business of BCP Council.
- 6.5 In these circumstances, I find that;
- When she made her tweets concerning the Dorset Eye article, Councillor Lewis was not acting in her official capacity.

7. Summary of Findings

- 7.1 In summary, I have found that;
- **Councillor Lewis was not acting in her official capacity when she made her tweets concerning the article in the Dorset Eye. The Code of Conduct was therefore not applicable to those actions.**
- 7.2 The reasoning for my findings is set out in section 6 above.
- 7.3 Councillor Lewis, [Redacted], [Redacted] and [Redacted] were sent draft copies of this report on 25 November 2019.
- 7.4 Councillor Lewis responded to say she accepted that it was a true representation of the facts regarding our interview. She also commented on her knowledge of Rachel Riley and the need to check material thoroughly before re-tweeting it (document 9).

- 7.5 [Redacted] accepted that Councillor Lewis did not make her comments in her role as a councillor. He was, however, concerned that public servants could share such content privately. He reiterated his view of Councillor Lewis' re-tweet despite the context (document 10).
- 7.6 [Redacted] responded to say that she profoundly disagreed with the conclusion of the Report (document 11).
- 7.7 [Redacted] did not respond to the Draft Report.
- 7.8 This is my final report. It will be forwarded to the Monitoring Officer who will complete the remaining stages of the Council's complaints procedure.

8. Schedule of evidence appended

Document no.	Description
1	Text of article in the Dorset Eye, 3 August 2019
2	Re-tweet of Dorset Eye article by Councillor Lewis on 5 August 2019
3	Tweet from Rachel Riley responding to Councillor Lewis' re-tweet of the Dorset Eye article, 5 August 2019
4	Exchange of tweets between Councillor Lewis and Rachel Riley, 5 August or thereabouts
5	Statement of Redacted
6	Record of interview with Redacted
7	Record of interview with Redacted
8	Record of interview with Councillor Lisa Lewis
9	Response of Councillor Lisa Lewis to the Draft Report of Investigation
10	Response of Redacted to the Draft Report of Investigation
11	Response of Redacted to the Draft Report of Investigation

Document 1: Text of article in the Dorset Eye, 3 August 2019

Pointless poisonous celebrity attacks The Canary

For a while now Rachel Riley (of Countdown) has been working, not so clandestinely, for (or with) the Israeli state propaganda machine (either associated or non associated – it amounts to the same thing)*. The attempt has been to lie and deceive people in to believing that Jeremy Corbyn, and those media who seek to stand up to the hate and lies of right wing zionists and terror supporters against Palestinian women, men and children, are anti semitic. Whether she is paid for her hate and propaganda is not for me to say but she is quite obviously (if only to me)* a fascist and an Israeli state terrorist sympathiser.

** Updated to avoid confusion. We are all aware of those who have to have it spelt out.*

She lies with impunity. For example:



However her campaign of lies and hate has backfired. By publishing her tweet the Canary has attracted many more subscribers; is changing its model and has attracted many who agree with the following:

<https://twitter.com/KtKevlt/status/1157584216193978369?s=20>

The more these 'far right fascist enablers' spew the greater the number realise what a bunch of sickos they are. At some point another Jo Cox moment will happen but this time it will not just be MP's who are at great risk. Rachel Riley and her goons will only have themselves to blame if some loose cannon stoops to another loathsome low.

In a democracy people should feel comfortable expressing themselves. Unfortunately Rachel Riley is like the spoilt child who was invited to the party and then shat on the carpet. No more invites for her unless you enjoy smelly stains.

Douglas James

**Document 2: Re-tweet of Dorset Eye article by Councillor Lewis on
5 August 2019**



Document 3: Tweet from Rachel Riley responding to Councillor Lewis' re-tweet of the Dorset eye article, 5 August 2019



Document 4: Exchange of tweets between Councillor Lewis and Rachel Riley, 5 August or thereabouts



Document 5: Statement of Redacted

I was scrolling on Twitter and saw that Rachel Riley (Countdown TV star) has commented that a Labour Councillor (Lisa Lewis) had shared (retweeted) and liked an article from Dorset Eye titled 'Pointless poisonous celebrity attacks the canary'. I clicked on Councillor Lewis's Twitter page to try and understand more, which I then discovered that she was one of my local councillors at Bournemouth Borough Council. I then felt I had a role as a local resident to find out the full context and whether or not this was something to make a formal complaint about directly to the council.

I clicked on Councillor Lewis's Twitter page and then clicked on the shared article from Dorset Eye. My first issue with the shared article is that it calls Rachel Riley a fascist and Israeli state sympathiser (first paragraph) because Miss Riley has been outspoken of anti-semitic persons and organisations. My interpretation of this quote is that it is name calling Miss Riley because of her calling out of persons and organisations that she believes are anti-semitic. However my main complaint is that the article in which Councillor Lewis shared on her Twitter page was the third paragraph in the article. "The more 'far right fascist enablers' spew the greater the number realise what a bunch of sickos they are. At some point another Jo Cox moment will happen but this time it will not just be MP's who are at great risk. Rachel Riley and her goons will only have themselves to blame if some loose cannon stoops to another loathsome low". My interpretation of this quote is that it justifies the killing of someone like Miss Riley because of her critique of a political view that she has. I believe this breaks three principles of the Bournemouth Council code of conduct, first is Honesty and integrity and second is Respect for others of which these two ultimately means you break the Leadership principle.

Because of these two specific pieces in the article I believe its intentions are to attack Miss Riley because of her objections to specific persons and organisations that are attacking their own political beliefs. I also believe that the two specific pieces in the article show prejudice toward Miss Riley for her Pro-Jewish views by using hate speech. In my opinion because of Councillor Lewis's actions of sharing (retweeted) and liking this article on her Twitter page that she is in agreement with the context and content of the article.

I have attached screenshots from my phone of which should help show you some evidence backing my claims and answer some of your questions.

**Document 6: Record of telephone interview with [Redacted],
9 October 2019**

1. I introduced myself and explained my appointment and role. I advised you that I would be recording the interview and you consented to this.
2. You told me you were resident in the BCP area. You had no direct connection or involvement with the Council although your husband was a friend of Councillor Williams and you met socially with him and his wife. You confirmed that you had submitted your complaint on 7 August.
3. You said you followed a number of people on Twitter, including Rachel Riley. You had seen references to an article in Dorset Eye, which you had followed up. You also followed the Dorset Echo on Twitter and it was from there that you had picked up that Councillor Lewis had re-tweeted the Dorset Eye article.
4. You said that, by the time you got to Councillor Lewis' Twitter account, she had deleted the tweet. You hadn't seen the actual tweet yourself but you had seen the Dorset Eye article.
5. In your view, someone didn't re-tweet an item without approving it. By re-tweeting the article, Councillor Lewis had repeated its content and had endorsed it.
6. You added that Dorset Eye was notorious for the comments that it made and you would be surprised if Councillor Lewis wasn't aware of that.
7. The elements of concern in the article included the claim that Rachael Riley was in the pay of the Israel State propaganda machine and was a fascist.
8. You felt that the reference to *another Jo Cox moment* was appalling. You believed that; *this time it will not just be MPs who are at great risk*, was a threat.
9. You said that; *Rachel Riley and her goons will only have themselves to blame if some loose cannon stoops to another loathsome low*, had implications on two levels. Firstly, it would be Rachel Riley's fault if someone else was murdered. And secondly, it might be that Rachel Riley herself was at great risk. The assertion was clearly threatening and intimidating and was intended to be.

10. I asked about your view that equality laws had been breached. You said this referred to way in which particular ethnic or religious groups were treated. You believed that Bournemouth Council had adopted the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism. This made it clear that it was possible to criticise the actions of the Israeli government without turning that into criticism of the State of Israel or criticism of Jewish people around the world.
11. Regarding Councillor Lewis' role in making the tweet, you pointed out that it was made from the account that she used as a councillor. She didn't have a separate account for Council business, as far as you were aware.
12. You believed that once someone became a public figure, their twitter accounts were no longer private. You felt it was irrelevant that her account wasn't headed as Councillor Lewis.
13. You did not therefore believe that Councillor Lewis was acting in her private capacity. Once you were in a public position, any Twitter account was in the public domain.
14. You confirmed that you believed Councillor Lewis had breached the provisions of the Code of Conduct concerning; treating others with respect, causing the Council to breach equality laws, bringing the Council into disrepute and failing to have regard to the Council's Code of Publicity.
15. In summary, you felt that for a councillor to re-tweet something so obviously and intentionally offensive was completely unacceptable. It made her, in your view, unfit to continue in office.

Sent to witness for confirmation	12 October 2019
Agreed by witness as an accurate record	12 October 2019

**Document 7: Record of telephone interview with [Redacted],
11 October 2019**

1. I introduced myself and explained my appointment and role. I advised you that I would be recording the interview and you consented to this.
2. You told me you were a resident of Bournemouth and had no direct connection or involvement with the Council.
3. You confirmed that you had become aware of Councillor Lewis' tweet from an article in the Bournemouth Echo. You had looked up the tweet and had also gone on to view the Dorset Eye article.
4. You confirmed that Councillor Lewis had re-tweeted the Dorset Eye article without adding any comments of her own.
5. You saw the re-tweeting of the article as condoning it. By sharing the article, she had effectively repeated the words and the sentiments of it. You understood it was this action that had resulted in Councillor Lewis' suspension from the Labour Party.
6. You said there were two parts of the tweet that really bothered you.
7. The article said that Rachel Riley was in league with the Israeli government. You had looked through Rachel Riley's tweets. She did a lot to combat anti-Semitism but you hadn't found anything supporting the Israeli government. To say that a Jewish person was only there as an agent of the Israeli state was, you felt, anti-Semitic.
8. Further, the article went on to say that it would be a shame if something happened to Rachel Riley like had happened to Jo Cox. That wasn't something that a councillor should be saying and could be considered as incitement.
9. You thought that, at best, it had been incredibly careless for a serving councillor to pass that on. At worst, it associated her with that wing of the Labour Party that thought that anyone who stood up against what they believed deserved what they got.
10. You thought that the reference to what happened to Jo Cox was intimidating and threatening.
11. I asked you about the role of Councillor Lewis when she made the re-tweet. You said it was clear she is a councillor so she had that responsibility. She should have known better than to give publicity to a social media message which breached the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism which had recently been accepted by BCP Council.

12. You accepted that Lisa Lewis was entitled to a private point of view on Twitter. But there a diversity of people living in her constituency and you wondered how they felt if their councillor was coming out with those opinions. They would wonder if they were going to get a fair hearing from her.
13. You felt that Dorset Eye was a mouthpiece of a particular political point of view. If you were a councillor and you liked their tweet you couldn't say, oh forget I'm a councillor on that one. You felt that, in the circumstances, she was acting as a councillor.
14. You confirmed that you thought Councillor Lewis had breached the Code of Conduct by passing on, without any qualification, the Dorset Eye article. You couldn't see how any sensible person could think she didn't agree with it.
15. Her action didn't show respect for others and was bullying.
16. You felt the criticisms of Rachel Riley were just not objective. If you went through her tweets, they were about anti-Semitism - there was nothing about Israel. The article was not correct and had shades of anti-Semitism.
17. You said you were not trying to make Councillor Lewis' life difficult. You would like her to make a public response in the press, to say what she actually felt about the matter and whether she would be continuing to follow Dorset Eye. She needed to be open to all the people in the Bournemouth community, including Jewish people.

Sent to witness for confirmation	12 October 2019
Agreed by witness as an accurate record	22 October 2019

**Document 8: Record of interview with Councillor Lisa Lewis,
15 October 2019**

1. I introduced myself and explained my appointment and role. I advised you that I would be recording the interview and you consented to this.
2. You told me you had been elected to the new BCP Council on 5 May 2019. As a new councillor you had received induction training but you weren't sure whether this had included the Code of Conduct.
3. You confirmed you had seen the Dorset Eye item on Twitter on 6 August. You said there was a great deal to learn as a new councillor and you had been busy in your personal life. You were having a very busy morning when you re-tweeted the article. You hadn't read it properly. You had been concerned about the Canary, which you subscribed to.
4. You had been upset that someone would use their celebrity status to denigrate the Canary. You felt that you had to stand up for it.
5. You accepted you were wrong not to have read the whole article properly. You had left out the last page and the link. When Rachel Riley had responded, you didn't really know what she was talking about.
6. You couldn't remember whether you had liked the Dorset Eye tweet. You felt you probably had. You confirmed you hadn't added any comments in the re-tweet.
7. The reason for you re-tweeting the article was to stand up for the Canary. You agreed that you had given the Dorset Eye article further exposure.
8. Had you read the article properly, you wouldn't have re-tweeted it because you didn't like the sort of language it used. When you had read it through, you were shocked and horrified that you had done so. You had been in too much of a rush and had been really careless.
9. You said that re-tweeting something didn't necessarily mean that you endorsed it. You didn't feel that you had totally endorsed the article. You hadn't been fully aware of all its content.
10. You confirmed that you had responded once to Rachel Riley but after you had properly read the article you stopped looking at the subject.
11. I put to you the specific points of concern that the complainants had with the Dorset Eye article that you had re-tweeted.

12. *Rachel Riley is working for Israeli State propaganda.* You said you didn't know about that so you wouldn't like to comment.
13. *She is quite obviously a fascist.* You said you wouldn't like to say that about anybody.
14. *She is an Israeli state terrorist sympathiser.* You said that also was not a nice thing to say about anybody.
15. Although these items were in the top half of the article, you said they hadn't really registered.
16. *These far right fascist enablers ... they are a bunch of sickos.* You said you were uncomfortable with that and you wouldn't associate yourself with that description.
17. *Another Jo Cox moment will happen ...not just MPs who are at great risk. Rachel Riley and her goons ... only have themselves to blame ... if some loose cannon stoops to another loathsome low.*
18. You said the insinuation there was thoroughly awful. That was why you felt so bad for weeks afterwards. You hadn't taken that in at the time. You felt ashamed that you would re-tweet something like that.
19. You accepted that the reference could be threatening and intimidating to Rachel Riley. It was a really bad thing to direct to anybody.
20. I asked you about your role in making the re-tweet.
21. You said you weren't speaking as a councillor when you re-tweeted the article. Your Twitter account was labelled Lisa Lewis. You didn't use the account to deal with Council business. You didn't have any other social media account that you used for Council business. You said you were acting in a private capacity when you used your Twitter account.
22. I put to you the requirements of the Code of Conduct that the complainants allege you had breached.
23. You accepted that, reading the whole article, it didn't seem that you treated Rachel Riley with respect.
24. You accepted that if Rachel Riley was being tweeted the article many times, it could be intimidating.
25. Regarding equality laws, you didn't feel that the article was anti-Semitic. You had Jewish relations. You had good friends who were Jewish and they didn't see that it was anti-Semitic. If you had thought it was anti-Semitic, you wouldn't have sent it.

26. You said that if the article was found to be anti-Semitic, you would be very willing to go on further training on the subject.
27. You had read out an apology for your action to the last BCP Council meeting. It had been careless and you wanted people to know that you didn't endorse what you sent. You regretted causing people upset. You had learned a tough lesson and you would be much more careful in future.
28. You had been advised not to speak to the local press about the matter so you hadn't done so.

Sent to witness for confirmation	17 October 2019
Agreed by witness as an accurate record	

Document 9: Response of Councillor Lisa Lewis to the Draft Report of Investigation

Dear Tim Darsley,

Thank you for your email and the attachment draft report. I apologise for omitting to reply previously but I confess I was too unhappy about the whole episode.

I have read through your draft report and accept that it is a true representation of the facts, regarding our interview.

I would just like it to be mentioned that I did not at the time of retweeting know that Rachel Riley is Jewish.

Also, because the article was in the Dorset Eye I assumed wrongly that it would be acceptable but I now know that I should not make assumptions and should check everything through carefully and thoroughly before retweeting.

Kind regards

Lisa

Document 10: Response of [Redacted] to the Draft Report of Investigation

I appreciate your hard work on this investigation. I think you're right on the context that Mrs Lewis did not make these comments in her official role as councillor, however I'm worried that this may set a bad precedent that public servants can make or share such content in a private setting without it being brought to light. Although I don't want the conclusion changed I think there may be a point of making a note that the content was racist despite the context.

Thanks Tim.

[Redacted]

Document 11: Response of [Redacted] to the Draft Report of Investigation

Many thanks for this. You will not be surprised when I say I profoundly disagree with your conclusion.

Regards

[Redacted]