

Complaint lodged over e-mail hacking allegations

TENDRING: Internal investigation clears Labour group

By Amie Keeley

A LABOUR group cleared of allegations it hacked opposition members' e-mails has lodged a formal complaint over the saga.

Conservative Neil Stock, leader of Tendring District Council (TDC), said someone acting on behalf of the Labour group had illegally accessed Tory councillors' e-mails.

But an internal investigation concluded there was no evidence to support the allegations, which were made during a council meeting on July 3.

The accusation was made after a message from Cllr Nick Turner, TDC's environment boss, was leaked. The e-mail said £3million of sea defence funding in Holland-on-Sea should be axed if his party did not win a by-election there.

Now Labour councillor Garry Calver – who was named by Cllr Stock in his statement to the council – has submitted a complaint over the matter to TDC.

Meanwhile Cllr Ivan Henderson, leader of Labour on TDC, has lodged a complaint on behalf of the group.

Cllr Calver said: "The allegation made by Cllr Stock is

entirely untrue and he cannot be allowed to smear the reputation of other councillors in such a manner without being held to account for his actions. This man is the leader of the council and should be setting an example in terms of behaviour."

But Neil Stock described the complaint as "laughable" and has called on the Labour group to divulge how they came across the e-mail.

"The complaint is laughable. The Labour group is trying to cover up for the fact that they made a huge mess-up with this issue. They still won't say how the e-mail ended up in their



DISPUTE: Councillors Garry Calver, left, and Neil Stock

hands. They think they have got a smoking gun but it just isn't. This is a waste of tax payers money spending time and effort on an investigation which

is just nonsense. I haven't made accusations against anybody, I explained what the situation looked like to me," he said.

"We did not know a question on this subject was going to come up at council, but I agreed to it and the comment was made with what knowledge I had and I think it was a reasonable statement."

Yesterday a spokesman for TDC said: "We can confirm that the council has received two complaints from the Labour Group and these will be looked into under our normal procedures."

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