

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

22nd July 2024

REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER – MR C GRIFFITHS

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: Resolven and Tonna

Referral from the Ombudsman

Purpose of the Report

1. To receive a final copy of the decision notice in respect of Councillor Dean Lewis, elected member of Neath Port Talbot County Borough County Council as investigated and now referred to the Standards Committee by the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales (“the Ombudsman”)

Background

2. As Monitoring Officer, I received a referral from the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales (“the Ombudsman”) relating to an alleged breach of the Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council Member’s Code of Conduct.
3. On the 11th March 2024, members of the Standards Committee resolved that Councillor Dean Lewis should be given the opportunity to make representations to the Committee, either orally or in writing, in respect of the findings of the investigation and that delegated authority be granted to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the Standards Committee to agree a timetable for a hearing to be convened.
4. Both Councillor Lewis and the Ombudsman agreed that this matter was suitable to be dealt with by way of written representations
5. At its meeting on the 17th June 2024 Standards Committee concluded that Councillor Lewis had breached the Code of Conduct and sanctioned him with a four calendar month suspension.
6. A copy of the Decision Notice is attached at Appendix 1.
7. Councillor Lewis’s suspension took effect from the 9th July 2024 as no appeal was made to the Adjudication Panel for Wales

Financial Impact

8. There are no financial impacts associated with this Report.

Integrated Impact Assessment

9. There are no integrated impacts associated with this Report

Workforce Impacts

10. There are no workforce impacts associated with this Report

Legal Impacts

11. The ethical framework of Members is as derived from the Local Government Act 2000 and the Members Code of Conduct is as set out in the Constitution of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council ("the Council") as created by the Conduct of Members (Model Code of Conduct) (Wales) Order 2001.

Consultation

12. There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations

13. It is recommended that members note the Decision Notice included at Appendix 1 of this report,

Appendices

14. Appendix 1 – Decision Notice

List of Background Papers

15. None

Officer Contact

Mr Craig Griffiths

Head of Legal and Democratic Services / Monitoring Officer

Telephone 01639 763767

Email: c.griffiths2@npt.gov.uk