

# NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## STANDARDS COMMITTEE

13 July 2018

### REPORT OF THE HEAD OF LEGAL SERVICES – C.GRIFFITHS

#### Matter for Information

Wards Affected: All

#### Recent decision of the Adjudication Panel for Wales relating to Members Code of Conduct Breaches

#### Purpose of the Report

1. To draw to Members attention a recent decision of the Adjudication Panel for Wales as the subject matter of this reports falls within the remit of the Standards Committee.

#### Background

2. On the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2018 the Adjudication Panel for Wales published its findings in the case of former Conwy County Borough Council member Dr Stuart Anderson. The matter had been referred to the Panel by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales in July 2017 as a result of complaints that Dr Anderson had:
  - (a) Made unfounded allegations against council staff;
  - (b) Had involved himself in an issue in which he had a prejudicial interest;
  - (c) Had widely circulated personal comments about a senior officer;
  - (d) Had attempted to compromise the impartiality of an officer;
  - (e) Had shared confidential information.
3. The Panel found that Dr Anderson had breached the Members Code of Conduct on 9 separate grounds and disqualified him from office for 18 months.

4. A copy of the Adjudication Panel for Wales' decision is attached at Appendix 1 for information.
5. The decision, although not setting out in full detail the allegations against Dr Anderson, provides useful guidance on the interpretation of key parts of the Code.
6. The reason for bringing it to Members attention today is that it provides some useful guidance with some practical examples on how the Adjudication Panel for Wales feels the Members Code of Conduct maybe breached and the possible consequences this might have.

### **Financial Impact**

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

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

8. There are no equality impacts associated with this Report

### **Workforce Impacts**

9. There are no workforce impacts associated with this Report

### **Legal Impacts**

10. 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**

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

### **Recommendations**

12. That Members note the report of the Adjudication Panel for Wales regarding compliance with the Members Code of Conduct

### **Appendices**

13. Appendix 1 – Decision of the Adjudication Panel for Wales of the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2018

**List of Background Papers**

14. The Constitution of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council incorporating the Members Code of Conduct

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