

## STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Decision Notice – Hybrid Meeting, 29<sup>th</sup> July, 2024 at 10.00am.

The Committee agenda is available [here](#).

The recording of the meeting is available [here](#).

Present: R. Hendicott (Chair); Councillors R.M. Birch, J.E. Charles and C.P. Franks; G. Olphert and G. Watkins (Independent Members); and Councillor P. Summers (Town and Community Council Representative).

Also present: Councillor V.P. Driscoll and his representatives, Mr. Joseph Broadway and Mr. Garth James; Mr. Gwydion Hughes and Ms. Heather Coutanche (representing the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales' Office).

### AGENDA ITEM 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE –

These were received from L. Tinsley (Vice-Chair) and R. Alexander (Independent Members).

### AGENDA ITEM 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –

No declarations were received.

### AGENDA ITEM 3. REPORT RELATING TO A COMPLAINT AGAINST COUNCILLOR V.P. DRISCOLL IN RESPECT OF THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL (MO/HLDS) –

#### RESOLVED –

(1) T H A T Councillor Driscoll failed to comply with paragraph 4 (d) of the Members' Code of Conduct which states that "You must not do anything which compromises, or which is likely to compromise, the impartiality of those who work for, or on behalf of, your authority "insofar as;

- Councillor Driscoll's actions relating to the use of his Council email address on three occasions for personal interests.

(2) T H A T Councillor Driscoll failed to comply with paragraph 6 (1)(a) of the Members' Code of Conduct which states that "You must not conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your Council into disrepute" insofar as

- Councillor Driscoll's failure to update the Council about the occupancy of 50C Holton Road which had the potential to impact on the mutual relationship of trust that existed between the Council its elected Members, and the public.

(3) T H A T Councillor Driscoll failed to comply with paragraph 15 (1)(b) of the Members' Code of Conduct "Subject to sub-paragraph (4), you must in 28 days of your election or appointment to office (if that is later), register your personal interests, where they fall within a category mentioned in paragraph 10 (2)(a), in your authority's register of members' interests by providing written notification to your authority's monitoring officer" insofar as

- Councillor Driscoll's failure to register his interest in relation to Unit 5 Biglis House which had the potential to impact on the mutual relationship of trust that existed between the Council its elected Members, and the public.

(4) T H A T, having regard to the resolutions above and the aggravating factors relating to a previous Standards Committee decision, which led to Councillor Driscoll being suspended for one month on that occasion, which included a failure to make a declaration, Councillor Driscoll be suspended from being a Member of the Vale of Glamorgan Council for a period of three months.

(5) T H A T Councillor Driscoll be advised of his right to appeal against the Committee's determination within a period of 21 days of receiving notification, by giving notice in writing to:

The Registrar  
Adjudication Panel for Wales  
Government Buildings  
Spa Road East  
Llandrindod Wells  
Powys  
LE1 5HA

and that the notice of appeal must specify:

- the grounds for appeal, and
- whether or not the person giving notice of the appeal consents to the appeal being conducted by way of written representations.

(6) T H A T, subject to an appeal (if any), the findings of the Standards Committee as detailed in Resolutions (1) – (4) above be publicised in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Investigations (Functions of Monitoring Officers and Standards Committees) (Wales) Regulations 2001, as amended.

#### Reasons for decisions

(1-4) Having regard to all the evidence submitted to the meeting of the decisions

of the Committee the mitigating factors presented by Mr. Joseph Broadway on Councillor Driscoll's behalf and the mitigating and aggravating factors presented by the Ombudsman's representative, Mr. Gwydion Hughes, at the meeting, and in the interests of promoting and maintaining Ethical Standards in Public Life.

(5-6) To comply with the Local Government Investigations (Functions of Monitoring Officers and Standards Committees) (Wales) Regulations 2001, as amended.