

**PANEL DYFARNU CYMRU
ADJUDICATION PANEL FOR WALES**

NOTICE OF DECISION

TRIBUNAL REF. NO. APW/008/2021/022/CT

RE: REFERENCE ABOUT ALLEGED BREACH OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Respondent:

Former Councillor Paul Dowson

Relevant authorities concerned:

Pembrokeshire County Council

Representation and attendance:

Respondent: Did not attend and was not represented.

PSOW: Ms K Shaw, counsel (with Mr L McAndrew, PSOW investigator);
Mr J. Harries, Interim Deputy Monitoring Officer

1. A Case Tribunal convened by the President of the Adjudication Panel for Wales has considered a reference in respect of the above Respondent.
2. At a hearing on 22nd August 2022, the Case Tribunal found by unanimous decision that Former Councillor Paul Dowson failed to comply with the Pembrokeshire County Council Code of Conduct as follows:
 - 2.1 The Case Tribunal found that in 2020, the Respondent falsely and publicly accused Cllr Beynon of sharing a pornographic video of a girl under the age of 17, something which is factually untrue. In doing so, he brought his office and his Authority into disrepute contrary to paragraph 6(1)(a) of the Code of Conduct. When the Respondent later repeated and insinuated those false allegations, he bullied Cllr Beynon, contrary to paragraph 4(c) of the Code of Conduct.
 - 2.1.1 Between September 2020 and February 2021, the Respondent falsely and publicly accused Marc Davies of being an ex-offender, something which is factually untrue. The Respondent repeated the allegations against Mr Davies between September 2020 and February 2021 despite having been informed by Mr Davies in September 2020 that he was referring to a different person. Former Councillor Dowson chose not to act on this information until February 2021 when he then apologised and accepted that they were untrue. In doing so, he brought his office and his Authority into disrepute contrary to paragraph 6(1)(a) of the Code of

Conduct. When the Respondent repeated those false allegations, he harassed Mr Davies, contrary to paragraph 4(c) of the Code of Conduct.

- 2.2 The Case Tribunal found that the Respondent misinformed people when he posted online that the Welsh Government's Relationships and Sex Education curriculum aims to teach 3-year-old children about masturbation; and to teach 13-year-old boys and girls about anal sex. He repeated this misinformation in an email to a fellow Member of The Council when he also said that lesson plans for 11-year-olds and upwards contained reference to bondage, anal sex, facial ejaculation and more. There was no basis for these statements. In making them, the Respondent wilfully misinformed people. In doing so, he brought his office and his Authority into disrepute contrary to paragraph 6(1)(a) of the Code of Conduct.
- 2.3 The Case Tribunal found that on 12th April 2021, the Respondent engaged in a conversation on Facebook with a member of the public called Timothy Brentnall, who at the time was using the name "Timothy St John". At one point in the conversation, the Respondent replied to Mr Brentnall with words which included "...I heard you are on the register but it's not been proven so I'm not spreading it around. Better man than you". In doing so, the Respondent falsely suggested that Mr Brentnall was subject to registration as a sex offender, to seek to discredit him in a wilful and harmful way. In doing so, he brought his office and his Authority into disrepute contrary to paragraph 6(1)(a) of the Code of Conduct.
- 2.3.1 The Case Tribunal found that the Respondent provided a fabricated exhibit to the PSOW's investigation in a deliberate attempt to mislead that investigation. In doing so, he brought his office and his Authority into disrepute contrary to paragraph 6(1)(a) of the Code of Conduct.
3. The Case Tribunal decided by unanimous decision that Former Councillor Paul Dowson should be disqualified for three years from being or becoming a member of Pembrokeshire County Council or of any other relevant authority within the meaning of the Local Government Act 2000, with effect from the date of this notice.
4. The Respondent has the right to seek the leave of the High Court to appeal the above decision.
5. Pembrokeshire County Council and its Standards Committee are notified accordingly. The full decision report will be published on the APW website in due course.

TOM MITCHELL

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Chairperson of the Case Tribunal

SUSAN HURDS

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Panel member

DEAN MORRIS

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Panel member

22nd August 2022