



**23 November 2020**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

## **FIFE COUNCILLOR SUSPENDED FOR DISRESPECTFUL BEHAVIOUR**

A Fife Councillor, Tony Miklinski, was suspended by the Standards Commission at a Hearing held online on 23 November 2020, from attending two meetings of the full Council. A Hearing Panel of the Standards Commission found that Councillor Miklinski had failed to treat two members of the public with courtesy and respect and, further, that he had engaged in behaviour towards them that amounted to harassment. In doing so, he had contravened the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

Mr Mike McCormick, Chair of the Hearing Panel, said: "the requirement for councillors to behave in a respectful manner towards members of the public is an important part of the Code, as a failure to do so can undermine public confidence in the role of a councillor and in the Council itself.

The Standards Commission considers that councillors should be able to assist their constituents and conduct themselves in a constructive, respectful and, courteous manner without resorting to being offensive or providing misleading information.

In this case, the Respondent had failed to conduct himself in an appropriate manner."

The Panel noted that the complaint before it concerned a dispute between a local residents' group and the owners of a country house, which was used as a wedding venue. Cllr Miklinski provided advice to the residents' group. The Panel found that Cllr Miklinski had made unfounded and serious allegations about the owners on the residents' group's Facebook page, and that he had supplied incorrect and unverified information that had the potential to damage their business in an email to a wedding guest. The Panel determined that Cllr Miklinski had failed to treat the owners with courtesy and respect, as required by the Code. It concluded that, in respect of the Facebook post, Cllr Miklinski had also engaged in behaviour towards the owners that amounted to harassment.

A full written decision in respect of the Hearing will be issued and published on the Standards Commission's website within 14 days.

Notes:

The Councillors' Code of Conduct is based on nine key principles, which include integrity, honesty and transparency.

Paragraph 3.2 of the Code requires councillors to respect their colleagues and members of the public and treat them with courtesy at all times. Paragraph 3.6 states that bullying or harassment is completely unacceptable and will be considered to be a breach of the Code.

The Standards Commission works independently of Government and political parties. It promotes and enforces Codes of Conduct for councillors, as well as individuals appointed to a wide range of national and regional public bodies across Scotland such as the Accounts Commission, the Scottish Qualification Authority, Sport Scotland, Scottish Water and the Scottish Police Authority and many other organisations, including NHS Boards and further education colleges.

Further information on the work of the SCS can be found at <http://www.standardscommissionscotland.org.uk/>

**ENDS**

**Issued by the Standards Commission for Scotland. For further information please contact the Standards Commission on 07790 389999 or [enquiries@standardscommission.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@standardscommission.org.uk)**