

For immediate release

North Lanarkshire Councillor censured for breach of the Councillors' Code of Conduct

The Standards Commission for Scotland, at a hearing held in Motherwell on 6 April 2017, censured Councillor Rosa Zambonini of North Lanarkshire Council for a breach of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

The Hearing Panel found that Councillor Zambonini, admitted that she had failed to take steps to register her remunerated employment as an office manager for a MSP, until 8 August 2016, although her employment commenced on 23 May 2016. This was despite the Code and Ethical Standards Regulations requiring councillors to register any remunerated employment within one month.

The Hearing Panel noted that Councillor Zambonini publicly announced, via a posting on a social media site, on 22 May 2016 that she would now be working for the MSP. It was accepted, therefore, that there had been no deliberate attempt on her part to conceal her employment.

The Panel Chair, Mrs Julie Ward, in delivering the Hearing Panel's decision said:

"Whilst accepting there was no intent to conceal information, the Hearing Panel considered that the requirement to register remunerated employment is an integral part and absolute requirement of the Councillors' Code of Conduct as it provides the opportunity for openness and transparency in a councillor's role and affords members of the public the opportunity to consider whether a councillor's interests may or may not influence the decision-making process."

For further information contact the Standards Commission on 0131 348 6666 or by email to enquiries@standardscommission.org.uk

6 April 2017

Note for editors:

(1) It should be noted that complaints in terms of the Councillors' Code are made to the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland (CESPLS). It is for the CESPLS to investigate and determine if any matter should be referred to the Standards Commission for Scotland as alleged breach of the Councillors' Code. It is for the Standards Commission for Scotland to determine if there has been a breach and if so proven, to issue an appropriate sanction.

(2) The Hearing Panel concluded that the Respondent had breached paragraphs 4.3 and 4.7 of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.