

29 November 2022

## PRESS RELEASE

**At an Adjudication Hearing held yesterday (28 November) former Councillor Ruth Wilson (Mid and East Antrim Borough Council) acknowledged that a comment she made on Facebook in 2018 was a breach of the Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors.**

The post in question stated:

*'PRIDE DAY!! Pouring Rain Incessantly Dropping Everywhere'*, followed by a biblical quotation. In her comment, former Councillor Wilson posted: *"Hopes it soaks them through to the skin"*.

She agreed that in making it she had breached the Local Government Code of Conduct for Councillors by bringing her position as a councillor into disrepute, and by failing to treat others with respect and consideration.

Assistant Commissioner Ian Gordon found the former councillor displayed little foresight as to her words and posts, and that she had failed in her duty to understand and comply with the Code.

However, he felt that it was in the wider public interest to deal with this case in a proportionate manner and that on the basis of Ms Wilson agreeing to follow the Code in the future, no further action should be taken against the former councillor.

He stated that this was not a case which would have merited disqualification, and, as Ms Wilson is not a sitting councillor, the sanction of suspension would also not be relevant.

The Assistant Commissioner said that her acknowledgement that she had breached the Code, and her agreement to abide by it in the future, were proportionate outcomes which were in the wider public interest.

He emphasised that it was the duty of all councillors to understand and comply with the Code of Conduct and its Guidance, and stressed the importance of them receiving proper training on this issue.

### Notes:

The Acting Commissioner's full written decision will be made available shortly on the Commissioner's website at:

<https://nipso.org.uk/nlgcs/hearings-and-adjudication-decisions/>

**ENDS**

For further information contact Andrew Ruston on 07503640551 or [communications@nipso.org.uk](mailto:communications@nipso.org.uk)