

**Summary of a report issued under section 69 of the
Local Government Act 2000
Case Number: 202501464**

The Ombudsman received a complaint that a Member (“the Member”) of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (“the Council”) had breached the Code of Conduct in failing to declare a relevant interest.

The Member attended a Planning Committee meeting on 15 May 2025 that considered granting a Certificate of Lawful Proposed Use or Development (“CLPUD; a document that confirms proposed use or works does not require planning permission), in relation to a change of use for a building within the area he represented, from a pub (“the Pub”) to a shop. The Member spoke in favour of the CLPUD being granted and did not declare any interest beforehand.

The Member had previously been the Chair of a social club (the Club”) within the same area, but had been replaced as Chair on 6 April. The Member had updated his entry in the Council’s Register of Interests on 11 April to reflect that he no longer had an interest in the social club.

The Complainant said that during the Planning Committee meeting the Member spoke as if he was still the Chair of the Club, and that an individual who had previously acted as the Member’s PA had contacted officers of the club recently, referring to the Member as “still the only officially elected club chairman.” He said that during the Member’s speech, he spoke of the Club as being in direct competition with the Pub, and said his wife was employed by the Club as the Secretary.

The Complainant felt these links constituted a personal and prejudicial interest, so the Member should have declared this and followed the Code in relation to his participation in the meeting.

As the Member had provided sufficient evidence that his own interest in the Club had ended, the Ombudsman did not consider this to constitute a personal interest. However, as the Member's wife was still employed by the Club (albeit on sickness absence since 6 April and had not been paid), this was considered to be a potential personal interest, although it was unlikely to be significant enough to be considered a prejudicial one.

The investigation concluded that the Member should have considered declaring his wife's employment as a personal interest, and this was a potential breach of the Code. However, given that the Member was not a member of the Planning Committee, his influence was limited to his speech in favour of the CLPUD, which was one he was entitled to make.

The investigation noted that while the Member did not formally declare any interest, as he referred to his and his wife's links with the Club in his speech the Committee members were aware of this information, so could take it into account when making their decisions how to vote. Given the lack of any demonstrable adverse impact from the Member's actions, the Ombudsman did not consider that this one-off, minor breach was sufficient to warrant further action.

15 September 2025