

Cllr Cathy Scott

Our Ref: JM/SD/HC

Date: 7 July 2020

Dear Cllr Scott

I am writing to you in an official capacity on behalf of the Council to say a number of things on the Council's behalf about matters which have appeared in various newspaper articles and / or social media commentary.

I am writing to you, rather than to Danny Lockwood directly, as doing that may only serve to put this matter back into the public eye, should he choose to respond publicly. It's a matter for you I think ultimately to decide but there would be nothing to stop you sharing some or all of this with him if you think it may help.

On behalf of the Council I want to apologise to you that an email that you had sent to the Director of Economy and Infrastructure about a matter raised with you by Mr Zaman appears to have been shared (or at least it's contents) with Mr Lockwood. You had a not unreasonable expectation that it would be considered by the appropriate part(s) of the Council and an appropriate response given. It was not your expectation that the contents would become the subject of newspaper article(s) and social media commentary and in the article(s) and commentary the contents taken out of context to criticise you.

As far as I am concerned the email was simply sent in response to a query that you had received from someone who has a number of businesses in your Ward. There is nothing improper in an elected member passing on the concerns of a business owner to a team or department manager for investigation.

It appears to me that Mr Zaman contacted you and suggested that he had been the victim of some vendetta and was being unfairly targeted by the council's environmental enforcement team and that you asked for that to be looked at. I don't believe that, in doing this, you were either suggesting that the claim was true or that you were advocating on behalf of Mr Zaman. I take the view that you were simply asking for this matter to be looked at on behalf of a constituent. The matter related to bins and was unrelated to any court proceedings that the Council is undertaking. I note also that you are not a witness in any proceedings for the defence in any prosecution cases the Council is currently undertaking.

As Monitoring Officer, on behalf of the Council I would strongly refute any suggestion that you had acted improperly by raising your constituent's concerns in this manner.

Regards



Julie Muscroft
Service Director - Legal, Governance and Commissioning

cc: The Chief Executive
The Leader