

EMAIL JOHN CRUDDAS TO DANIEL FENWICK 22 SEPTEMBER 2019

Dear Daniel Fenwick

Thank you for your two letters of 18 September. As you correctly anticipate in the response to mine dated 5 August 2020, there are several points that I find unsatisfactory. However, my purpose now is to turn to your second letter.

The issue under consideration I believe is nothing less than trust in a senior local politician, the Leader of the Council, and whether he sought to subvert democratic processes to secure party political advantage. Given the seriousness and the nature of the complaint, I must say that I am very concerned at the content and tone of your letter which is focussed on timing.

If I might pursue this, would it be the case at the 1 October Assessment Panel session that the meeting is likely in noting your report simply to conclude that the complaint is “timed out” and therefore, there is nothing to consider. Should that be the case I would think that that action would bring the Council into local public disrepute.

I turn now to the three questions you raise:

- a. I was first made aware of the comments made by the Council Leader at his conservative councillors group meeting by a reporter at the Romford Recorder during Monday 13 July.
- b. I then submitted my complaint in writing on Friday 17 July. I hardly think this constitutes a material delay.
- c. This issue only came to light because a then Member of the Conservative Group decided at that time in July to go public with his recording of the meeting which contained Cllr White’s comments. I understand that it was he who brought the issue and his recording to the Romford Recorder. Clearly, it would not have been possible for me to raise a complaint until the matter came to my attention, which was 13 July. Given this the whole point about a three month period to raise complaints is spurious. There could be no complaint until the matter came to light.

I must reiterate, this is an issue of significant public concern and as such demands a proper investigation. Failure to do so will reflect very badly on the political and administrative leadership of Havering Council.

Yours

Jon cruddas