

Andrew Weavers

From: Andrew Weavers
Sent: 01 June 2016 11:34
To: Roger Buston - Cllr - own email
Cc: Dennis Willetts - Cllr - own email
Subject: Complaint

Dear Councillor Buston

I have received a complaint from Councillor Bourne regarding the comments made by yourself both in the Daily Gazette online and paper versions on 27 May 2016 in relation to Travellers.

Under the Equalities Act, Travellers are a group with protected characteristics and accordingly the language used in your comments may have potentially amounted to a breach of that part of the Members Code of Conduct which states "Members must not do anything to breach equalities laws". The Council as a public authority is required to comply with the public sector equality duty. This in turn means that the Council (including councillors) when making decisions or publishing information must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Councillor Bourne is concerned that your comments as reported do not do anything to foster good relations and are actually stigmatising whole communities . Furthermore it is wrong for a councillor as a community leader to use the phrase "deprived minority group" to gain favour with local residents which is mocking and unkind. You also made reference to this group being able to afford "brand new lorries and vans", further inciting fear and loathing in local residents and the wider population.

I do need to remind you that councillors need to be aware of the public sector duty at all times and particularly when making public comments.

I should be grateful if you would consider the contents of your comments and whether you are prepared to make an apology otherwise I will have no alternative but to deal with this matter in accordance with the Council's Localism Act Arrangements together with the previous complaint by Councillor Bourne referred to in my email dated 16 May 2016.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Andrew

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