



Resources: Legal & Governance

Director of Legal and Governance: Gillian Duckworth
Town Hall SHEFFIELD S1 2HH DX: 10580 SHEFFIELD
Tel: 0114 2734018
Email: Gillian.Duckworth@sheffield.gov.uk
Website: www.sheffield.gov.uk

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Mr Martin Brighton
(sent by email)

Dear Mr Brighton,

I apologise for the delay in providing a response to your questions to Council on 2nd September. As you may have noticed I wasn't in the Chamber on the day and have picked this matter up since returning from leave.

1 "Whilst the Council Leader said here last June that it is Council policy that complainants or whistleblowers must not be targeted and gagged, can this council confirm, with evidence, that those who have reported possible and actual abuse of school pupils have not been targeted or gagged?"
(For example, one document records: quote: "approximately 12 cases where a child was allegedly harmed by a teacher who was White British")"

The Council does not target and gag complainants and whistleblowers. It is not possible to provide evidence to prove a negative

2 "On 3 December 2014 the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People & Families, stated,

"If any concerns about child protection, please get in touch with me."

2.1 Has any person or group since then raised any such concerns, and have those concerns since been resolved ? (no details , just a generic reply)

2.2 Given the local and regional, current and historical, concerns about child safeguarding, can this council be absolutely certain that there are not, nor have been, any attempts made to cover up reports of child safeguarding concerns, in any way, including suppressing the complaints or targeting the complainants?"

I understand 2.1 was responded to in the Council chamber.

2.2 please can I refer you to the minutes of the Council meeting dated 7th January 2015, where Dr Kathryn Houghton presented her independent report on the subject to the Chamber.

3 "From the Government Response to the 9th Report of the Communities and Local Government Select Committee 2014/15:-

3.1 The RMBC ruling party and administration were determined as having an ingrained culture of bullying, intimidation and denial.
How is the SCC ruling party any different?"

Please can I refer you to the minutes of the Council meeting dated 7th January 2015, where Dr Kathryn Houghton presented her independent report on the subject to the Chamber

3.2 “The 9th report, paragraphs 74 and 75 refer to examination of the conduct of RMBC officers who now work for other authorities and also of councillors in other authorities whose history determined culpability of willful neglect, and calls for investigation into those persons. Given the council’s response to this citizen from 5 November 2008, and since, how much progress has been made on the Government’s recommendations referred to in paragraphs 74 and 75, whilst ensuring politically independent scrutiny compliant to paragraph 78 and whistleblowing compliance to paragraph 80 ?”

Please can I refer you to the minutes of the Council meeting dated 7th January 2015, where Dr Kathryn Houghton presented her independent report on the subject to the Chamber

4 “In this chamber, the council leader was asked how many of the issues raised by this citizen via questions in this chamber to the council leader had been resolved. The leader declined to say. However, had the leader said 'one', it would have been a gross exaggeration.
4.1 Would the leader please explain this giant zero to this chamber?”

This rhetorical question is not capable of a meaningful reply.

5. “Last but not least, will the council please note that the practice of whitelisting has been seen working within the housing department and take appropriate action?”

I don’t understand the question. If you can be more specific I will be able to consider how this may be an issue.

Yours sincerely

GILLIAN DUCKWORTH
Director of Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer