

Correspondence with the Office of Emma Lewell-Buck MP

From: mick.dawson@theharbourview.co.uk

Date: 26/03/2020 (12:03:46 BST)

To: Emma Lewell-Buck MP

Cc: Cllr Angela Hamilton, Cllr David Francis

1 Attachment - [MPemailsDec19Jan20.pdf](#)

Dear Emma,

Two months ago I gave my home phone number in Amble to your husband in good faith to give to a Keith Palmer whom I assumed was your new Office Manager. When I returned his call he made it very clear that he was determined to suppress the truth about UK Dock's shelter on River Drive. He said that any future emails from me to your office would be ignored, just filed away.

That was not what I expected to hear and I wrote and told you about the call in the evening of 13th of January only to discover his threat had been carried out when I got the auto-reply. This is the standard response to new enquiries by email to establish a contact address but I am not a new contact so it looks like Mr Palmer had used it to suppress communication. As you know I have been corresponding freely with your office for some time now, initially via Rebecca, and now mostly via Cllrs Hamilton and Francis.

I attached a copy of the letter from a solicitor supporting my claim that the Council had misled the Ombudsman and because the charges I made against him were fairly serious I copied Mr Palmer the email and it so he could respond if he so wished. It was to give you the main idea of what I was trying to put to Mr Palmer over the phone, that the Council were misleading the Ombudsman to cover over misdemeanours in Planning. The ward Councillors were copied in as a warning to be similarly cautious in their dealings with Mr Palmer.

I needed to establish whether it was incompetence rather than malice that my email to you had been suppressed so I wrote to you again the following morning, giving my address etc. and received another auto-reply suggesting it was not incompetence but a deliberate action.

In the second email, I had attached [the Case Papers ZA4803 from 20-Oct-16 to give Mr Palmer](#) some background to my links with your office. It shows that since we met at a Labour party meeting about three years ago I thought I had established a good working relationship with your office. No-one except Mr Parker had said or even implied that it was a vexatious one until I returned his call on January 13th.

I also took the opportunity to repeat "Nicola Robeson has confirmed that UK Docks were not given permission for their shed retrospectively which makes one wonder why they told you and Angela that they had." Mr Palmer will have seen that even if you have not and it might be instructive to get his view on it.

I had not copied Mr Buck into either email yet it was he who responded, 14-Jan-20, defending Mr Palmer in no uncertain terms. It appears that the entrapment has hauled in Mr Buck as well as myself. What looks to have been a set up arranged by the pair of them has now backfired.

Mr Buck had neither been copied the letter from the solicitor nor the brief history of my dealings with your office yet he says that: "Mr Palmer correctly informed you that MPs have no influence over the Local Government Ombudsman, and he suggested that a possible course of action may be to complain further to the Local Government Ombudsman and suggested you take legal advice."

- Firstly he was implying that I had suggested that you should try and influence the Ombudsman. You know quite well that I have done nothing of the sort and I understood from Mr Palmer that this was not a matter for Parliament but I think it is;

- Secondly and this is very important. It appears that he had not seen a copy of the solicitor's letter because he is suggesting I take legal advice!

We, and I in particular, have found in our dealings with the Town Hall that they always, if they want to ignore a complaint, respond to it with a denial or a non sequitur. Likewise Mr Buck in his defence of Mr Palmer has steered the conversation away from the fact that the Council have misled or lied to the Ombudsman to the implication that you could influence them, and on top of that, there is the suggestion that I take legal advice when Mr Palmer knows that I have already done it. Unless Mr Palmer has a better suggestion, the only way to stop Councils using the Ombudsman to cover over the wilful lack of planning enforcement or any other misdemeanours they wish to obscure, is for Parliament to act. The best way, I believe, is for Parliament to make it a criminal offence to give misinformation/misrepresentation to the Ombudsman or Councils like South Shields will continue to do it.

My phone call to Mr Palmer put me in mind of the response I got from the Council when I complained to the Chief Executive that they had misled the Ombudsman and that was another reason why attached the letter from my solicitor to the first email. The response then, was to claim that I was an unreasonable and persistent complainant, as a way of avoiding the subject of the complaint i.e. giving misinformation/misrepresentation or misleading to the Ombudsman. Firstly, it is a lie to say that one single complaint to the Council about them deceiving the Ombudsman is persistent. Secondly, when one looks at the evidence it was not unreasonable to claim that the shed was 3m taller than planned which is verified by looking at the evidence. Thirdly, you will see from Mr Buck's defence of Mr Palmer that the pair of them now want to add vexatious to that libellous list. Mr Palmer would have done well to have read my email of the 20th October 2016 and the copy of the letter to the solicitor before he persuaded Mr Buck to accuse me of being vexatious.

Mr Buck says he was listening to the call, and his comment that Mr Palmer was polite, informative and accurate implies that I was none of these. Mr Palmer did not tell me that Mr Buck was listening so you will have to take my word against the pair of them that I was not polite. Secondly he may have been accurate to say that you have no influence over the Ombudsman but so what, no-one ever suggested you had any. To put his email to me, 14-Jan-20, into context please see the top of page 4 on the attached file – MPemailsDec19Jan20.pdf.

If they recorded the call you will be able to judge for yourself whether I was polite or not. Again, if there is no recording, it is my word against theirs. All I can say that if the pair of them thought I was not polite then my sudden change in behaviour can only be attributed to Mr Palmer.

I've made no secret of my view that your deselection and Angela's exclusion from the Council's Labour Group were associated and driven by Executive at the Town Hall and the nature of Mr Buck's response on behalf of Mr Palmer has all the hallmarks of the Council's Executive written all over it:

[/Your email seriously undermines Mr Palmer's, Emma's and the Office's integrity](#) and it is a very serious matter. I am very sorry that Emma is unable to help you further with this case and I consider this matter to be closed./

[Mr Buck is entitled to his own views about Mr Palmer](#) but they are not mine and you should quiz the pair of them with reference to the attached file before you decide whether it is me or Mr Palmer that is undermining the integrity of your Office.

Kind regards

Michael