

UK Docks Slipway Enclosure.

Please see [the attached document, 'Messrs Buck and Palmer'](#). In brief, it shows how the corruption relating to UK Docks shed had spread from South Tyneside Council to the Office of the MP for South Shields in early 2020 and it looks it was done behind the MP's back i.e. when she away in Parliament challenging the now disgraced Prime Minister.

I hope that much is clear from the attachment, which was posted as Shed and Corruption – Part 17 about a week ago. It is a corrected copy of the one sent out two weeks ago under a private email to the MP for South Shields to catch her before the Parliamentary Summer recess gave me until September 5th to refine it but since then I have found an email confirming that I had established contact with her office Manager, Rebecca Heath nee Atkinson, as early as 2016.

Also, I had assumed that *name@parliament.uk* addresses were issued centrally but discovered last week that they are also issued by an MP's Constituency Office and presumably by her or his office manager. In January 2020, Simon Buck said he was the manager for the South Shields office in early 2020 and it appears that it was he, who allocated *palmerk@parliament.uk* to Mr Palmer.

More importantly one does not have to go very deeply into the correspondence of mid January 2020 to realise that it is more of a personal attack on the MP for South Shields rather than a personal attack the one who had proof that the Council were giving misinformation to the Ombudsman to hide wrong doing by their Planning Officers.

When the short comings of the attack were pointed out to Mr Palmer a month later, [Mr Buck was ordered to shoot the messenger](#):- *"Thank you for your recent emails. However, I must draw your attention to your continued vexatious, slanderous and personal attacks on a valued member of staff working from the Office of Emma Lewell-Buck MP Staff employed by Members of Parliament are protected under the Parliamentary Behaviour Code which is put in place to ensure a safe working environment and to safeguard them from bullying and harassment.*

UK Docks shed on their slipway off River Drive.

Mr Cunningham chose to pass the Tyne Gateway Assn drawings to support UK Docks false claim that they had approval for their shed, following the meeting at the Town Hall on the 25-Nov-13 and it was Mr Haig who said it was acceptable, 6 hours later:-

KH advised that they had seen the plans which were date stamped 1996, the structure is 15.5m. Proper drawings were on file and there is nothing illegal about the structure. KH advised that PC was honest and fair. With regard to conditions 3 & 4, these related to cladding of the structure, initial drawings showed blue cladding, which was agreed.

TGA Committee Meeting, 25-Nov-13

Whether Peter Cunningham was fair is not relevant but it turned out that neither he nor Ken Haig were honest. As we had left the meeting without any evidence that the shed has been built to the approved height (it was why the meeting had been called after all) I wrote and asked Mr Cunningham for a copy of the plans that Mr Haig said we were supposed to have seen and received a [copy of the plans passed to him by UK Docks on the 6th September 2013](#).

The [approved drawing from 1996 showed a landward end of 12.7m](#) which had a built height of 15.5m and the rest of the history of the shed, is one of deceit. Mr Cunningham chose to pass me a cropped copy of 8296/2 along with an unapproved from 1997 drawing to start that history.

Mr Haig did not declare his interest in UK Docks and Mr Cunningham was quite happy to initiate the misuse of the Council's Complaint Procedure to rather than admit that the shed was nearly 3m taller than planned.

This was done by removing the complaint from Planning Enquiries that the shed was in breach approved plans with respect to its height, paving the way for the Head of Development Services to substitute with one that said that it was not, six months later and bypassing the admission by the Planning Manager on the 13th February 2014 that it was indeed taller than planned.

Proof of the breach in planning control was realised by Senior Planning on the Town Council as soon as 8296/2 was recovered from their archive in [September 2013 and work stopped on the shed for two and a half months](#). It restarted within days of the two meetings of November the 25th 2013. Messrs Haig, Watson, an employee of Mr Haig, and I were present at both and we all knew that the shed was taller and wider than planned. I deliberately excluded myself from association them, Councillor John Anglin and the Principal Planning Officer and their support of UK Docks with a claim that the shed was a metre wider than planned, when I discovered I could measure it from without the site in December 2013.

Sticking with its height, it appears that the Planning Manager had the choice of admitting that the shed was too tall, thus contradicting his Principal Planning Officer but he did not do it. Instead of correcting Mr Cunningham for lying to the likes of the TGA etc. he chose to repeat the lie about the shed's height. The choice then passed to the Head of Development Services but Mr Mansbridge then had the additional problem of having to caution his Planning Manager, as well as the Principal Planning Officer and so on, until we get to the Chief Executive as I explained in the Shed and Corruption – Part 1 ([page 11 before I got to the CEO](#)).

There was a rare instance of honesty by the Planning Manager when discussing the height of the shed by reference to an approved drawing when he said:- *“the current structure is not built to ‘approved’ plans”* but this was removed from the timeline we shared with the Council by Mr Mansbridge overwriting the original complaint, that the shed was too tall and nothing had been done about it, with a new complaint that it had been built to the approved height and the extra width, while it was a material consideration, it could be ignored.

I told the Ombudsman that the shed was 3m taller than planned by reference to the drawing 8296/14 which [was approved by the Council in 2013](#) especially as it was the one to which I referred when Mr Atkinson admitted that we were right about the shed's height but a Senior Planning Officer undermined my case by telling her that it was not to scale. That was an outright lie of course but it got Messrs Cunningham, Atkinson, and Mansbridge off the hook.

In 2015 the Council had trouble in reconciling the truth about the shed with what they had told the Ombudsman so were were accused of making allegations by the Council's Corporate Lead:- *“The matters and allegations raised by your constituent are well documented and have been subject to a number of enquiries from Mr Dawson and other local residents over a lengthy period of time.*

In 2016 after seeking advice from a solicitor I wrote directly to Chief Executive and I quote:- *“I ask you to look again at this because there is a clear contradiction between what the Council were telling the LGO and what is known. Why your staff should misrepresent the facts to the LGO is for you to determine. That they have misinformed the LGO should be admitted and corrected and that is what this letter is about.*

That resulted in a personal attack on me by his Corporate Lead who had proved her worth to him the year before with her lie about us making allegation about the shed. When I had told her that I had [consulted a solicitor about situation with UK Docks](#) and what his advice was, she refined her attack, in October 2016, by saying:- *“The issue of the height of the shed was dealt with in the Council's stage 2 response to your complaint and then also discussed further with you at a meeting in July 2014. As the complaint has exhausted the corporate complaints procedure, the Council would not reconsider the issue afresh as it does not materially change the complaint. I therefore consider the Local Government Ombudsman's decision final.*

The issue of height was dealt with in the actual stage 2 when the Planning Manager said:- *the current structure is not built to approved plans.*

The Council's stage 2 response was a fiction created by the Head of Development Services to introduce a complaint based on the fraudulent misrepresentation about the shed's height based on and unauthorised drawing. The claim that their complaints process had been exhausted was a whitewash which was [explained in Shed and Corruption – Part 16](#), and there was only ever one complaint that they had been seriously misleading the Ombudsman and one can justly add Mr Swales and his Corporate Lead, Mrs Johnson to the list of those let off the hook. She then added:- *“We will not acknowledge or respond to any issues that have already been the subject of investigation by the Council, or by the Local Government Ombudsman. Any such correspondence from you will be read and placed on file, but we will not acknowledge or respond to it.*

Late in 2015 it came to my notice that UK Docks regularly breached the fifth condition by using their shed on a Sunday but the Council responded by confusing the South Tyneside Council with the Tyne and Wear Development Corporation:- *The Authority's view is that condition 5 should not have been imposed because the site already had the benefit of unrestricted working hours.*

This was not resolved before Mrs Johnson imposed her Omertà, *not acknowledging or responding to correspondence* which was in place when UK Docks started to lengthen their shed in 2017.

In 2018 I raised a complaint about the conduct of Cllr Anglin as it was he, and the Chair of the TGA who organised the Town Hall meeting of the 25th November 2013 were Mr Cunningham felt confident enough to claim that UK Docks shed was compliant with plans that had obviously not been approved. A council solicitor did not uphold my complaint and she did this by repeating the misinformation about the height given to the Local Government Ombudsman by a Senior Planning Officer of South Tyneside Council and concluded:-

If you are dissatisfied with my decision not to investigate your complaint further, then under the Council's protocol for dealing with allegations of breaches of the Members' Code of Conduct you may request the Monitoring Officer to reconsider this decision. You can request a review by emailing monitoring.officer@southtyneside.gov.uk or in writing to Mike Harding, Monitoring Officer, South Tyneside Council, Town Hall & Civic Offices, Westoe Road, South Shields, NE33 2RL.

My request for a review was never acknowledged because the of Chief Executive's decision to back his Corporate Lead in 2016, when she said:- *I therefore consider the Local Government Ombudsman's decision final.*

In the spring of 2019 UK Docks were asked by a Councillor to produce evidence to back their claim that they had approval for their shed but had none she was told they had been given permission for

it retrospectively. I knew that to be another lie and I did not want it to replace the lie that they had approval for their shed before it was erected in 2013 and raised the issue with the latest Monitoring Officer in May:- *Dear Monitoring Officer, The whole point of the original complaint, which I have attached, made when UK Docks restarted work on the enclosure in January 2014, was that they had not applied for retrospective planning permission and as far as I am aware they had not before they applied for permission to extend it, 20-05-2014. You can confirm that this is true.*

In the Autumn of 2019, I made it clear that the only way to put a stop to Councils like South Tyneside giving misinformation/misrepresentation to the Local Government Ombudsman to hide malpractice or wrongdoing in their Planning and Building Control sections was to raise the issue in Parliament and ask them to make it a Criminal Offence to lie to the Ombudsman. Leaving it as a civil matter is no good, as explained in the opening paragraph of the attached file.

Meanwhile I had trouble in establishing that UK Docks had not been given permission for their shed retrospectively and it was only confirmed by the Council on the 19th December 2019 that they had not been given permission at all for the shed we see today and [we see the misuse of 'exhausted' again](#):- *"I understand that all complaints procedures regarding this matter have been exhausted both internally within the Council and externally.*

Three weeks later I get the call from Mr Buck requesting my home phone number for his colleague Mr Palmer which ends up, a month and a half later, the misapplication of a Parliamentary Code to hide the truth about the shed. Messrs Buck and Palmer condensed into two months what had taken Council three years – giving the TGA a misleading drawing at the meeting in November 2013 to the Corporate Lead's misuse of Section F, now section 7 of the their staff code against me in October 2016.

The Buck/Palmer attempt to malign me failed on two counts:

- 1) principally because I had not established any direct contact with the MP for South Shields until well after my dealings finished with the first Inspector for the Ombudsman said, 15-April-2015:
- 2) the UK Parliament Behaviour Code was not relevant. Please see that I had exchanged two messages in the days between 19th December and the 8th January, with the MP:-

23 December 2019

*Good afternoon Mick, I am aware Angela and David are dealing with this, please can you let me know if there is anything needed from me.
Best wishes, hope you have a lovely Christmas
Emma, on Monday, 23 December 2019*

24 December 2019

*Dear Emma,
Thank you for responding to my email to Angela and the offer of help.
Apologies for using your home email address but I wanted you to know where I'm at with the Council and Parliament does not sit until 7-Jan-20.
[private message re: MP for Jarrow]
I cannot really write to her directly as it would just get referred back to Anne-Marie Trevelyan and I really think she is not that interested, though she should be. I hope to be back in touch when Parliament resits.
Congratulations in retaining your seat. All the best for the New Year.
Kind regards,
Michael.*

It looks like Messrs Buck and Palmer were not aware that Emma had picked up my message to Angela on the 23rd on her phone and it looks like whoever was in charge of the Council when I started the Shed and Corruption series, asked Paula Abbott to resurrect the Complaints Restriction first placed in 2016, on April 29th 2021. They were first imposed because Mr Swales did not want to admit that South Tyneside Council staff had been lying to the Ombudsman.

Mr Swales had resigned in September 2020 and the Leader of the Council had gone two months later and on the 30th April, the Council had decided to appoint Mr Tew to be the new Chief Executive and he was officially appointed to the post in August 2021 and it appears that Ms Abbott was given the task to wipe the slate clean because she would have been unaware of the history of the shed, before the appointment of Mr Tew was confirmed.

On whose order the code of silence was reimposed, we can only guess but I think we need look no further than the leader of the team that appointed him. The team appears to have been headed by Cllr Tracy Dixon and it looks like Ms Abbott once she was appraised of [the truth in Shed and Corruption – Part 4](#), that refused to keep it hidden and it fell to Alison Hoy to enforce the code of silence again and it took her less than 15minutes.

I had written to the [Monitoring Officer on April 29th 2022 questioning the reimposition of the code of silence](#) by Ms Abbott and the timing of the letter was deliberate:- *Mrs Johnson sensibly dropped the scattergunning business after my response but I see Paula Abbott has included it again in her false accusations made against me in her email/letter to me a year ago. Please remind her that when the approved plans say that the shed is 2.7m taller than planned it is not unreasonable to say that it is taller than planned and the same thing goes for the width.*

I wrote to Mr Tew in May 2022, to let him know after he had time to settle down in his new appointment as Chief Executive Officer of South Tyneside Council, [how his staff had managed to hide the truth about the shed's height for six and a half years](#). There was a lot of detail given him including a request that he looked the approved drawing 8296/14 and I told him:- *"I have pointed out on numerous occasions, as Ms Hoy can verify, there has only ever been one complaint that South Tyneside Council have been giving misinformation to the Local Government Ombudsman and it is not unreasonable to say that a structure is taller than planned when it is taller than planned.*

[The value of 8296/14](#) in proving the shed to have been built not only wider but taller than planned cannot be underestimated. Not only did a Senior Planning Officer lie to the Ombudsman when he told her it was not to scale, the Planning Manager did not bring it to a meeting expressly organised to view it in July 2014 and the Principal Planning Officer removed the original complaint, upon which it was based, from Planning Enquiries in January 2014. The twist in the tale is that the [Planning Manager approved it in October 2013](#).

Michael Dawson
3rd August 2022.