

## **The dissection of response made by Mr Buck, 14-January-20:**

Dear Mr Dawson, Thank you for your email sent this morning following from Mr Palmer's telephone conversation to you yesterday afternoon.

The first thing to note is that the morning's email was in response to a rejection (auto-response) of the 13th, and I attached toELB20Oct16.pdf as an addition to my personal details that were requested to show that Emma and I held the same view about the Council and UK Docks. I go on to explain that I was living in South Shields when UK Docks extended their shed and at the end posed the question about what Mr Palmer should do with her emails. To continue with the criticism:

I wish to address two points you raised. I was present during the conversation between Mr Palmer and yourself. I am afraid your recollection of the conversation was not a true account. Mr Palmer was polite, informative and accurate.

If I had been informed that Mr Buck was listening he would have got an earful of what I think about UK Docks, the Port of Tyne and the Council. My views of those with an interest vested in them are well known and I need not repeat them here. By implication, Mr Buck said I was lying and was rude to Mr Palmer. Whether I was rude or not, is only his opinion and I have asked for a copy of the phone call but not received it and can only conclude that if one was made, it has been deleted as it would have shown that I was quite polite considering the provocation I was put under. If Mr Buck had checked he would of seen that I have always been on the amiable side of formal in my communications Emma or her office, see toELB20Oct17.pdf (note I had got the year wrong and it has been corrected).

You will have to ask Mr Buck what he means by accurate. He was suggesting that I was making allegations about UK Docks and the Council but if he looked at the evidence rather than what Mr Palmer was telling him, he would have seen that it was not me who told the Ombudsman that the shed had been built to the approved height, it was a Senior Planning Officer from South Tyneside Council.

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.

One needs to fully pursue the internal complaints process of the office with whom one is in dispute (exhausted internally within the Council is the expression used by the current Monitoring Officer) before one can go to the Ombudsman and I have never been in dispute with the Emma's or any other MP's Office and please allow me to point out that Emma and I met in September 2017 at the CLP meeting at Hedworth Hall and after that, Emma got to know my progress via her office manager, Rebecca, and more recently Councillors Hamilton and Francis.

The main reason I question the accuracy of Mr Palmer's recall of the conversation is the fact that, out of all the documents regarding the troubles we have had with the Council since September 2013, I chose the letter from Peter Dunn and Co to attach to my email to Emma of the evening of the phone call because it was proof that the Council had been lying to the Ombudsman.

I said Mr Palmer because while he and the other Ward Councillors received a copy, Mr Buck did not. Mr Palmer had let me assume he had taken over from Mr Buck so there was no point in sending him a copy. Likewise Mr Buck was not copied into my email of the morning of the 14th but Mr Palmer was and need I say anything more!

When UK Docks told both Emma and Cllr Hamilton that they had been given permission for their shed retrospectively it was a sea-change. It not only exposed the claim made by the Council that the shed had been approved as a fraud but it looked like they, the Council and UK Docks, wanted to replace that lie with a new one – that permission had been granted for the shed retrospectively.

Mr Palmer implied that I sought help from Emma in trying to influence the Ombudsman and anyone who has been on the case will know there is not an ounce of truth in the implication and one need look no further than the fact that Ombudsman's decision was made in April 2015 and my contact with Emma was established about 18 months later.

Finally, your suggestion that Mr Palmer, or any other staff member for that matter has been "warned off helping" Emma "by an official at the Town Hall" and then making references to the CLP trying to deselect Emma, is not only untrue but an unwarranted accusation. 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.

The Constituency Labour Party did deselect her but I have not heard why. Cllr Hamilton was excluded from the Council's Labour Group at the same time and one can only conclude that it was for the same reason and the most plausible was UK Docks. Are they saying that Emma was not deselected or that my view was unwarranted? Perhaps Mr Palmer can give a more warranted one? What gives the game away is his desire to see the matter to be closed. Mr Palmer indicated over the phone that it was his wish and it has been the wish of quite a few at the Town Hall over the years as well.

The first time we had anything in writing was from Planning Officer in charge when he said of a meeting in November 2013 that the shed was built to approved plans:

*Mr Dawson – once again – I have measured this on site and have copied the 1996 plans across to you twice already (attached again for your use) and I have explained during our meeting that the base and height of the structure are compliant...this is the end of the matter as far as I am concerned. Made on the 20th December 2013.*

This was the original misrepresentation about UK Dock's shed and it combines two lies:

1. the base was compliant, i.e. laid out to an approved plan – it was not – the base laid in 2001 was for a structure 1m wider and 5.5m longer than approved;
2. the height of the structure was compliant, i.e. had been approved – it had not, the attached plans had not been approved – both the approved plans that we know of give an approved height nearly 3m lower than that built.

Up till then he had been telling people over the phone that it had been approved which was why the meeting was called. Since the meeting he has been telling people over the phone that the variations from the approved plan were not material and the deviation was only minor. Indeed those misrepresentations repeated as late as 2019.

Simon Buck  
Office Manager for the Office of Emma Lewell-Buck MP  
Member of Parliament for South Shields

Notice that Mr Palmer is not the Office Manager for the MP for South Shields.

**End of criticism.**