

From: Sally Burns
Sent: 02 November 2016 08:30
To: Ged Curran; Paul Evans
Subject: What happens to the 'alternative' questionnaire on council tax

Dear Mr Curran

I'm getting in touch with you and Mr Evans because of concern expressed at the news that you are planning to return replies to Cllr Alambritis' alternative questionnaire to the Mitcham & Morden Labour party. We were horrified when we first saw the letter sent round wards with its extremely partial and misleading information, biased questionnaire and clear indication that the Leader of the Council's mind was already made up, so were very relieved to hear that the replies would be excluded from the official consultation. But are worried about what now happens to these replies.

We think there are several problems here - many residents, on seeing the official reply paid envelope addressed to the civic centre, and no indication that this was not the proper consultation, will have assumed that their response would only be seen by council officials. It's quite possible that some of these respondents may not want local councillors to find out what they said on the questionnaire, in which they had to reveal their name and address. But secondly, is it legal to redirect mail in this way without first getting the permission of the senders?

We are also concerned that if the only people who see these responses are Cllr Alambritis and colleagues, but the results are then used to back up whatever course of action they choose, there is no way of checking their validity. This is not something I like writing, but I'm afraid in the current local political climate it is what many people are thinking.

Undermining his council's own consultation surely constitutes bringing the good name of the council into disrepute? I'm sure that this is something you will be investigating, but the combination of this factor, plus the deceptive manner in which this was done seems to us, at the very least, totally unethical and, we think, quite possibly against the rules of conduct for councillors.

We look forward to hearing your response to this particular query, and the outcome of your investigations,

best wishes

Sally Burns

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