

Mon, Mar 27, 11:27 AM

From: Karen McGowan

Dear Michael,

It was good to see you at the South East Local Area Committee (LAC) meeting on Wednesday 23 March 2023. I am writing to raise concerns over recent communications that have gone out from you regarding the South East LAC meetings. As you will be aware the primary purpose of the Local Area Committees (LACs) is to promote the involvement of local people in the democratic process and to bring decision making closer to local people. I can understand that you are trying to help us in making more people aware of the meetings. However, the information you are sharing is not accurate, has upset members of the public and unnecessarily increases the workload for the officers. The two occasions I am referring to are:

A post you put on facebook asking people to contact either Jayne Foulds, SE LAC Manager or our MP Clive Betts if residents wanted to comment on the Local Plan. Unfortunately when this was posted on facebook the closing date for residents to make comments had already passed. This created a lot of work for the officers in having to respond back to several residents explaining.

Secondly, was the letter that had been delivered to local residents on Owlthorpe regarding housing development inviting them to come to the South East LAC meeting on 23 March as this will be discussed. I have two serious concerns about this type of communication:

1. Housing development on Owlthorpe was not on the agenda to be discussed. The LAC would need to request the relevant officers from planning, housing etc to be present at the meeting if this was on the agenda. This meant that residents could not get answers to their questions and left them feeling frustrated.
2. No correspondence should go out to residents regarding the South East LAC meeting unless it comes directly from the South East LAC.
3. The letter was sent out in the name of the South East LAC Manager -Jayne Foulds. Doing this is fraud as Jayne was not aware of the letter, had no previous sight of the letter and had given no permission for it to go out in her name.

As you saw at the meeting this created a lot of anger, confusion and frustration for both officers and more importantly members of the public that attended the meeting. The theme of 'Volunteering' for the meeting had been clearly publicised many weeks prior.

I hope this explains why I am requesting you not to put out any future communications regarding the South East Local Area committee. We welcome you sharing the South East LAC facebook posts as widely as possible but you are not to create a separate document with incorrect information. As Chair I needed to raise this with you and request that this does not happen again.

If you have any problems or queries please do not hesitate to contact me and we look forward to seeing you at future South East LAC meetings.

Many thanks

Councillor Karen McGowan
Birley Ward
Chair of South East Local Area Committee