

Councillor Chris Read – Leader of the Council

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7th October 2020

Mr G Dempsey

By email

Dear Mr Dempsey

Council Meeting – 30th September 2020

Thank you for submitting a question for the above Council meeting.

You ask “I request that RMBC provide clarity about the first rejection of a recent adult survivor's petition (and other petitions) with this very vague and confusing phrase:

“I thank you for your petition which I have rejected as potentially libellous / relates to a particular official of a public authority.”

There are 11 criteria set out in the council's constitution which explain the circumstances in which a petition will be deemed not valid. Amongst these are:

- Potentially libellous, false or defamatory statements.
- a petition that refers to a particular official of a public body

The principle in both cases is that council is not a meeting where it is appropriate to discuss the specifics of any individual, be they members of staff or of the public. Natural justice would suggest that they should have the right to reply to any allegations about them, which is not possible within the confines of a council meeting.

Any complaints about a member of staff would be subject to the council's complaints procedure, and issues about the circumstances of an individual member of the public should be submitted to the relevant service.

Yours sincerely



**Councillor Chris Read
Leader of Rotherham Council**