

WRITTEN ANSWERS FOR COUNCIL

10TH DECEMBER, 2014

Cabinet Meeting – 15th October, 2014

Question – Minute No. C71(1) (Post Abuse Support Arrangements) Councillor Parker referred to the current number of referrals for support and whether there had been a marked increase following the publication of the Jay Report and asked if this included the Roma Community in terms of the numbers of underage marriages in Rotherham.

Answer – The Directorate have not seen any significant increase in Roma referrals leading to a social care assessment, with only one new assessment being commenced since September as detailed below:-

Month	New Social Care Assessments
January	5
February	
March	2
April	1
May	
June	
July	
August	7
September	1
October	
November	
December	
Grand Total	16

There has not been any evidence to suggest an increase in the number of underage marriages in Rotherham.

Whilst referrals for support are treated with appropriate confidentiality, there is nothing to indicate to social care that there is a growing issue of underage marriages in Rotherham.

Questions to Cabinet Members and Spokespersons

Question 17 - Supplementary Question - Councillor Cowles pointed out that Rachel Reeves was not the only Labour Member who had recently discovered that immigration had damaged the lives of many people that Labour founded to support. Ed Milliband attacked the Prime Minister last week for missing his migration target and Yvette Cooper on the 18th November, 2014 asked for a call for action to control the impact of migration especially on low skills, jobs and wages. So in the space of a couple of years Labour had gone from screeching racist at anyone that mentioned this issue to saying it was now a massive problem. Epidemics like Harvard Professor Economics George Borger indicate that high income earners won while low income earners lost and the bosses of large companies were winners while the low skilled and low paid working class were losers. The Leader was, therefore, asked which one he which one did he want to get rid of and which one did he wish to keep – immigration or the welfare state?

Answer - Firstly, full Council is a meeting which should be focussed on the business of Rotherham Council and as such should not be a forum for party political debate about national Policy. As you are well aware, immigration and the welfare state are national Policy issues, and not matters of Policy that this Council has any direct control or influence over. It is not within either my gift or that of the Council to change immigration Policy or the welfare state, so it is a pointless question.

That said, our key role is to translate national policy into the best outcomes for our citizens. In terms of the welfare state, a good example of this is our “fund for change” scheme, which we adopted when the Government transferred the responsibilities for crisis loans and grants from the department for Work and Pensions to Local Councils. In terms of immigration, we have no local control over where people choose to live. Our duty is to promote community cohesion. We also play a key role in ensuring a good supply of appropriate housing for our residents, and that the quality of provision meets decent standards. Our recently adopted Local Plan Core strategy makes such provision, and the recent decision to introduce the selective licensing scheme will improve accommodation standards in many private rented properties. I could give many other examples to illustrate the point, but would welcome your suggestions on how we could translate these national policies into the best outcomes for our citizens.