

CASE A

HILTON BOROUGH COUNCIL - COUNCILLOR PETER CITRINE

Summary

It was alleged that Councillor Peter Citrine published a political leaflet on behalf of the local Liberal Democrats suggesting that people should boycott the shops in the high street belonging to Councillor Leo Hall, the Conservative council leader. This was in response to the council's decision to introduce car-parking charges in the town centre, which the Liberal Democrats were campaigning against. The complainant is an employee of Councillor Hall. She works in a pet shop and alleges that Councillor Citrine is jeopardising her livelihood by effectively encouraging people to patronise another pet shop 200 yards away.

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Miss Marjorie Dawes
76 Ferry Lane
Hilton
HT2 6KJ

6th January 2005

Dear sirs,

I wish to complain about an article that has appeared in a political newsletter that has been distributed to thousands of homes in *Hilton* in December 2004 under the name of Cllr. Peter *Citrine* of *Hilton Borough Council* and *Hilton Liberal Democrats*.

The article in question refers to car parking charges and tells people which shops to boycott owned by Mr. *Hall*. I am employed by Mr. *Hall* and I believe to encourage people to boycott his shops will disadvantage me and the other members of staff who work for him. I have already had people speak to me to say they have boycotted the shop as they have been told not to use the shop. It is my very livelihood Cllr. *Citrine* has put in jeopardy.

Having researched your website and looked up the terms of reference it clearly states that "A member must not in his official capacity, or any other circumstance, use his position as a member improperly to confer on or secure for himself or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage." As there is another pet shop (*Pampurred Pets*) in *Hilton High Street* only 200 yards from the shop I work in (*Pets Paradise*) it is abundantly clear that Cllr. *Citrine* by his actions is seeking to advantage my rivals as well as seeking a political advantage for him and to the disadvantage of all of us who work there.

Your terms of reference under (2) also states that "A member must (a) treat others with respect." I think the way Cllr. *Citrine* has used and named the businesses has an affect on my livelihood and is not treating me or my work colleagues fairly or with respect.

What he has done has caused a great deal of harm with the potential to cause job losses for his own political gain and to the financial advantage of our local competitors.

I, nor any of the staff employed by Mr. *Hall* are members of any political party, are not active in supporting any political party, nor stood in any elections. We are not political people. All we want to do is to protect our jobs. The newsletter seeks to put in jeopardy the livelihood of me and my work colleagues. If this is how you allow Councillors to conduct themselves then there is little wonder the general public hold them in scant regard.

Surely this type of newsletter brings not only Cllr. *Citrine* into disrepute but also the authority he represents.

As the Standards Board for England has been set up to deal with this type of complaint I would ask you to investigate this matter as I believe I have been discriminated against, treated disrespectfully, had Hilton Borough councils' reputation tarnished by the actions of Cllr. Citrine who has used his position improperly to forward his own political advantage and to seek a financial advantage for our local competitors to the disadvantage of me and my work colleagues.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter, I enclose a copy of the offending newsletter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "M. Dawes".

Miss Marjorie Dawes