



Lib Dems - Press Release

The Independent Report Says Pay Increase Was Unlawful

Lib Dems Demand Better Leadership for Surrey Heath Residents

The processes behind payments made to the former **Surrey Heath Borough Council (SHBC)** Chief Executive were “unlawful” and “unprecedented,” an independent report prepared by law firm Browne Jacobson has found.

“It’s all very well for Surrey Heath Council Tory Leader, Alan McClafferty, to apologise and then to claim that, of course, things are much better now, and to make platitudinous statements about his Party being ‘committed to moving the council forward’ but this episode simply proves that the **Conservatives in Surrey Heath are not fit to lead the Council.**” Says the Lib Dem Council Group Leader Sashi Mylvaganam.

The heavily redacted report was critical of leading Conservative Councillors for ignoring Council policies in allowing the then Chief Executive to receive a massive pay increase and other benefits.

It was only after the May Election in 2019 that 10 newly elected Liberal Democrat Group reviewed the Council’s accounts and established the facts about the salary hike. They found that the borough’s Chief Executive’s salary was increased by some 30% to a reported £158,000 with a number of back dated payments also being made to her

“When the huge pay increase was offered to the Chief Executive in January 2019,” added Cllr Sashi Mylvaganam, “36 of the 40 Surrey Heath Councillors were Conservatives. Without the new Lib Dem councillors, there is no doubt this whole fiasco would have gone undetected and would still be going on today.”

In addition to the unlawful pay increase, the report was also critical of the way the CEX’s expenses were handled, and states that she was allowed to buy a BMW car at a fraction of its true value

The report also make clear that that Exec members, some of them are still councillors, knew about the proposed pay increase in 2018.

Cllr Sashi Mylvaganam continued, “Current Conservative Council members need to ask themselves if their senior Members are fit to be Councillors at all, let alone sitting on the Council’s ruling Executive.” Surrey Heath Liberal Democrats demand that these councillors reconsider their position.

And, in addition, we demand that the deposed conservative Ex Leaders Richard Brooks, (Town Ward) who is heavily implicated in this episode & his deputy Charlotte Morley (Watchetts ward) should resign from their Council Seats immediately.

END

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