

Arun District Council
Arun Civic Centre
Maltravers Road
Littlehampton
West Sussex
BN17 5LF

Tel: 01903 737500

Fax: 01903 737707
DX: 57406 Littlehampton
Minicom: 01903 732765



e-mail: ian.sumnall@arun.gov.uk

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Please ask for:
Ian Sumnall
Strategy Department
x37600

Members of the Eco-Town Select Committee

Councillor Bence	Councillor Mrs Briggs
Councillor Buckland	Councillor Chapman
Councillor Mrs Smee	Councillor Tyler
Councillor Dr Walsh	Councillor Wensley

Our Ref: IS/gls

Dear Councillor

Bias and Predetermination

Matters have been raised about possible bias and predetermination of Members of the Select Committee on the Eco-Town at Ford. I have considered these cases with the assistance of the Council's Solicitor, Wendy Ashenden-Bax.

One example relates to the involvement of Councillors participating in the election campaign of a prospective candidate in the Yapton by-election. I regard that this activity was a minor role in delivering campaign leaflets carried out by a number of persons, and was part of an election campaign. No view was expressed in this specific issue as far as I am aware.

The second instance relates to a question asked by a County Councillor at a County Council meeting. I have listened to the web cast of this matter and regard that while a rhetorical question was asked "is this an Eco Town at Ford or an Eco Fraud", this was part of a considered question. No actual view was expressed for, or against, the proposition. The slightly cynical questioning of what was proposed was scepticism of the Government's intention. The purpose of this question was clearly to elicit further factual information about the proposal. Again, I do not regard this as having expressed bias or predetermination.

I am therefore prepared to state that I accept that all Members can legitimately and objectively participate as Members of the Eco-Town Select Committee.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ian Sumnall".

Ian Sumnall
Chief Executive

Copied to: Councillor Mrs Brown
Councillor McDougall
Wendy Ashenden-Bax
Jane Fulton