Re: Petition Against the Kimpton Traveller Site

Dear Mr Scully,

It is good to know we have a campaigning MP willing to work hard on local issues, for this I applaud you.

It is disappointing that you have decided to campaign against sites for Travellers. A flat refusal to consider a Traveller site is not what we expect from a Member of Parliament and brings you no credit at all.

Traveller site provision should be given the same consideration as planning application for any other kind of accommodation. Do you also believe other forms of accommodation should not be provided beyond government requirements? (This is not a rhetorical question, I expect an answer.) Whether someone wants to live in a caravan or a house should make no difference towards your attitude to them whatsoever. Everyone has a right to live in the way they see fit, and I expect Parliament to defend minority groups, not make their lives difficult.

Investing in a Traveller site is exactly the same as investing in local infrastructure, housing, schools, and healthcare. To differentiate as you have done is partisan and prejudiced.

You also need to be aware that local needs assessments are notoriously unreliable as they do not take into account the needs of local Travellers forced into housed accommodation against their will because of a lack of caravan site provision.

Finally, your flyer contains an important mistake in that you do not capitalise the word Traveller. Traveller and Gypsy refer to recognised ethnicity in the same way that British or Bangladeshi does and it is disrespectful not to give Travellers the same courtesy you would expect from others when referring to your own ethnicity.

I believe you are a better person than this, and that you should be working to ensure that all citizens of Sutton and Great Britain have adequate and sufficient provision to their needs so they can live their own lives as they see fit, and therefore contribute to society. This attempt to limit access to Sutton for groups some people consider to be ‘other’ is prejudiced and therefore beneath you. I strongly urge you to withdraw your petition.

Yours sincerely,

David Gullen