



Andrew Rosindell M.P.

Member of Parliament for Romford

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Andrew Blake Herbert

Chief Executive at the London Borough of Havering
Town Hall
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Wednesday 26th July 2023

Dear Andrew Blake Herbert

I am writing to you today to express my deep concern about the recent incident in which a nearly 90-year-old woman was fined for dropping a piece of paper on the ground in Angel Way, Romford.

As you know, this incident has sparked anger and outrage among local residents across the borough and has also made the national media.

The video of the incident shows the woman clearly struggling to walk, accompanied by a friend at the time. When members of the public intervened to inform the enforcement officers that she was nearly 90 years old, they were told that the council had given them a zero-tolerance policy to people dropping litter. There was no judgement or common sense displayed, by the enforcement officers, of which there seemed to be a total of four present on the scene.

From watching the video, I can honestly say that I find their whole approach and reactions to be completely unacceptable. There is no excuse for fining a vulnerable elderly woman for such a minor offense. The enforcement officers should have shown some discretion in this case. None was displayed from what I could see.

I also cannot understand why four officers were present. Why was there so many and why did two of them appear to hide around the corner. The look of this whole situation gives Romford and Havering a very bad image.

There is no way to prove that the woman dropped a piece of paper on the ground. It is possible that the officers simply saw her picking up a piece of litter and assumed that she had dropped it.

I am glad to see that the council has cancelled the fine and offered their apologies to the lady. However, I believe that this incident raises serious questions about the training and conduct of the enforcement officers. I urge you to order a review of how these officers are being trained and deployed and what their purpose actually is.

M.P.'s Constituency Office:

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If it is simply to target people who are easy to fine to bring in more revenue, that that is completely wrong, and I cannot support that. Others have come to me with further complaints of a similar nature since this incident.

Local people deserve to be treated with respect and compassion, especially by those who are supposed to be enforcing the law.

I hope that you will take the necessary steps to ensure that this type of incident never happens again and would request more information about how enforcement in Romford Town Centre is operated.

Are the enforcement officers Havering Council employees, or are they contractors? What training and instructions are they given? How many of these officers are employed and where are they assigned to? Is a group of four officers walking around together the normal policy? What are the details of any review you will now conduct following this incident?

Thank you for your time and consideration of this very serious matter.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Rosindell M.P.

CC Cllr. Ray Morgan (Leader, Havering Council)
Cllr. Keith Prince (Leader of the Opposition, Havering Council)