

At full Council on 6 November Cllr Randerson asked if I was aware that his emails were being intercepted and not delivered to his in box. Cllr Jefferson stated that she also had experience of this.

I was aware of the technological capacity of our system and the law surrounding this matter, but not aware that any emails were being intercepted. Thus I arranged a meeting with David Kitson and other officers to seek clarity.

SBC owns the email system and has the right to manage it as it deems appropriate.

Officers may declare a correspondent to be an unreasonable complainant. This is not the decision of one officer acting on his or her own. Once a correspondent has been deemed as unreasonable, incoming emails are redirected to the Unreasonable Complainants mailbox rather than being delivered to the intended recipients. Any such emails are viewed on a regular basis so that they may be forwarded to an addressee where a part of the content is considered not to be unreasonable. This process of redirection is quite different from both legal and practical points of view from that of interception, thus my response in the chamber.

Please note that SBC has policies in place to cover the management and usage of the email system and all members will have signed documents to say that they understand and accept those policies.

The overarching reason for the current practice is to protect Officers and Members from unreasonable stress, abuse and inappropriate content.