

Conservatives call for action regarding jailed Labour Councillor

Friday, 11 February, 2022



Statement from the Conservative Group on Scarborough Borough Council:

As people may be aware Labour Councillor Theresa Norton was recently jailed for her part in the Insulate Britain protests. As we speak, she is currently in prison along with several of her comrades. Unfortunately, she did not receive a sentence greater than 12 weeks so was not disqualified as a Councillor.

Also, as we speak, she is still a Labour Councillor. She has not had the whip withdrawn, she still sits on the Council's Standards committee and as far as we are aware, she has had no action against her from either the Labour Party at a national level, at local level from the Labour Group Leader Cllr. Liz Colling or by Scarborough Borough Council.

What is worse is the deafening silence coming from Cllr. Siddons, who is supposed to be leading the Council. At no point has he made a statement on her multiple arrests, which generated national headlines or her recent conviction.

With the lack of action or a statement, many inferences are bouncing around the Council. We are unsure if Cllr. Siddons is endorsing her behaviour and the behaviour of Insulate Britain. We don't know if he is, because Cllr. Siddons is trying to sweep this under the carpet, but she is featured prominently in a new Labour Party leaflet that has been distributed this week. The leaflet distributed in the Weaponness & Ramshill and in Eastfield wards shows Norton front and centre of a group photo of Labour Councillors with the caption "Your Labour Team". It is clear that the local Labour Party are happy to have her as their poster girl.

Cllr Derek Bastiman, Leader of the Conservative Group added:

"For four years when I was Leader of Scarborough Borough Council, I had to sit and take dozens of grandstanding lectures from Cllr. Siddons about "openness and transparency". Yet here he is, as Leader, and one of his Party's Councillors are in prison and he thinks it's not worth putting out a statement or making a comment to the press. I believe that he is trying to sweep this under the carpet and hope that all will be forgotten about."

Cllr Heather Phillips, Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group added:

"Cllr. Siddons had the gall to repeatedly lecture the previous Conservative administration about "openness and transparency" while he was in opposition. It is extremely hypocritical of him to remain silent when his Councillor is in prison. The silence from the Labour Party both locally and nationally makes you wonder which side of the fence they are on when it comes to the behaviour of groups like Extinction Rebellion and Insulate Britain".