Wealden
District Council

Nusrat Ghani MP, Kieran Mullan MP,
Mims Davies MP
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

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25 November 2025
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Dear Ms Ghani MP, ME Davies MP and Dr Mullen MP,

I refer to your letter of 19 November 2025.

Your letter implies that you are seeking to work with the Council, but both in your letter and elsewhere, you continually attack the Council, Rachel and me personally. In your respective roles as Members of Parliament and Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons, we wonder if you have signed up to the Debate not Hate campaign? I ask you to reflect on whether writing a letter on House of Commons paper that accuses another public body and elected representatives of 'gaslighting' and pushes false narratives in this way is consistent with that pledge.

We understand as well as anyone how serious this issue is for Crowborough. However, we all have a duty as community leaders to act in our community interests whilst not actively stoking hatred and division. I ask you to reflect on your role in this.

I am therefore not going to respond to every political attack in your letter with one of my own. But let us be clear - our Council did not propose this plan. We have formally opposed this plan. We have not agreed anything with the Home Office. We have not received (nor yet been offered) a penny from the Home Office. We have, however, challenged the Home Office professionally and effectively and worked with our public sector partners to do so.

You asked us to correct the record about public meetings and I am very happy to do so. As you say, on the 10 November we held a Scrutiny meeting with the Home Office in attendance, with the public invited to attend and watch online. On the 13 November,

working with Crowborough Town Council we hosted a public meeting, which Ms Ghani attended, again open to the public and hosted online. Finally, most recently, we held our Full Council meeting on the 19 November with the Council unanimously passing a motion to oppose the Home Office plans - again open to the public and hosted online.

Your regular demands that the Council take action that would be unlawful and your exaggerations about its planning powers are just unhelpful. We have sought advice from leading King's Counsel and will use this advice to hold the Home Office to account. For reasons which should be obvious, we cannot publish that advice.

You have complained that we haven't met a minister, having failed to invite us to attend a meeting you secured. I am pleased to say that we now have an appointment with the Minister.

It is clear from your letter that you do not intend to take a constructive approach and so I see no point in continuing this correspondence.

Yours sincerely



Cllr James Partridge
Leader of the Council and Governance, Waste and Local Economy Portfolio Holder