Dear Sara

I write further to your email dated 11th October, 2019 on behalf of the Kirton and Trimley Community Action Group. We would ask East Suffolk Council to re-visit their response to our Freedom of Information Request for the following reasons:

**Matter 1**

·         To be clear, the reason we made our request is because the Council / Lichfields claimed in evidence, at the Inspector’s Hearing, that just under 30% of incoming containers passing through the Port of Felixstowe are off-loaded within 30 miles of the Port.  It is KATCAG’s contention this figure is closer to 1%

·         The Council (ESC) is arguing the reason for designating Innocence Farm as employment land arises from the need to accommodate the growth requirements of the Port of Felixstowe.  However, if there are no significant ‘Port-related operations’ to be accommodated, it follows there is no “need” to despoil this prime agricultural land, and the Council’s justification fails.

·         **This gives rise to a question of fact** and is the reason why Andrew Cann, on behalf of KATCAG, asked the Lichfields representative to spell out where, exactly, these many thousands of containers were being off-loaded.  That is the main thrust of the FOI, which still needs to be answered by ESC.

·         We can see from the Council’s reply that it is attempting to distance itself from its own evidence base and, because of the points above, we’re not surprised by that. If the “Need” for this land cannot be supported, then all other ‘soundness’ issues become an irrelevance.

·         In summary, we contend, it is not sufficient for the Council to answer our FOI by making reference to a stakeholders meeting that was wholly compromised by the composition / interests of its participants! Nor to say the Port is supportive, when it has been careful to distinguish between its particular need and the more general need of the shipping industry as a whole. Let us please note the Port has qualified its support for the adoption of Innocence Farm as employment land  by stating publicly any need is for “trade-related” use, not for any purpose of its own.

·         Please answer the question we have asked and tell us where, within 30 miles of the Port, this vast number of containers are being off-loaded.

**Matter 2**

·         ESC’s reply completely avoided answering the FOI request, in all respects.  Instead of being given a proper answer to our question, we were treated to a lengthy and thoroughly unjustified treatise about the arguments for and against commercial privacy

·         This, despite our FOI request making clear we were not asking to be given the names of companies or any other information that could possibly be categorised as ‘private’

·         Our FOI asked simply for information to be provided that will, almost certainly, be on record with ESC or could be established with minimal research

·         Please answer the question we have asked and preserve us from a diatribe about an issue we took fully into account, when framing our FOI request.

If ESC chooses to provide a proper response to the two FOI requests we have raised, then all well and good.  This said we would ask that you advise our route of appeal if we continue to feel the Council is failing to properly address questions which they should have no problem answering.

Kind regards,

Stephen Wrinch

Kirton and Trimley Community Action Group

CC’d to Annette Feeney – For the attention of the Inspector, please