



## **SPECIAL MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 24 JUNE 2025**

### **COMMENTS RECEIVED**

#### **Comments received from Leicestershire County Council Social Workers**

“To the Councillors/Cabinet Members of Leicestershire County Council,

We are writing to request the immediate reversal of the recent decision to remove certain flags such as the Pride flag and Disabled Workers' flag.

If we do not publicly oppose this, there might be a public perception that we are complicit in these actions. We need to be clear that the Social Workers of Leicestershire County Council overwhelmingly do not support this action.

It is vitally important that there is a visible symbol from the council that we are supportive of marginalised groups. This does not stop with a flag and will need continual work to support all, but a flag is an important outward symbol. Removing these flags promotes exclusion and marginalisation — it implies people represented by those flags are not welcome. This is in direct contradiction to the values and ethics of each and every Social Worker employed by Leicestershire County Council.

To be clear, there is no opposition to the proposed flags being flown such as the Union flag — it is about the active removal of other flags.

Although there are many people within the local authority who do not agree with the policy, we are writing this from a Social Work perspective due to the Social Work England standards. I have outlined these below and how the removal of certain flags contradicts our registrations. The specific standards this decision is relevant to are:

- Promote the rights, strengths and wellbeing of people, families and communities
- Establish and maintain the trust and confidence of people
- Act safely, respectfully and with professional integrity
- Promote ethical practice and report concern

In order to promote the rights of individuals, the respective flags are a positive outward symbol of support of already marginalised groups. It is also a positive step towards equality and equity. I am also reminded that the local authority has a strong commitment to anti-discrimination values. A flag is another important symbol of this.

It would be difficult to maintain confidence of the people we support from the affected communities if we were to stand by and not loudly object to the proposed action.

Given our duty to act with professional integrity, supporting or remaining silent during the removal of these flags goes against the integrity we are bound and proud to abide by. It would not be possible to promote ethical practice and be accountable for our practice if we were not loudly saying that we oppose the actions of removing certain flags.

We are committed to working for the people of Leicestershire as we have been collectively for many years. We want to abide by the standards we are signed up to and by the policies of the local authority. In order to do this and maintain our professional integrity, we are calling for an immediate reversal of the decision to remove certain flags from County Hall including, but not limited to, the Pride flag and the Disabled Workers' flag.

Yours sincerely"

### **Comment by the County Council regarding members' role as a Corporate Parents**

"As corporate parents to our children in care and care leavers and in line with 'Our Promise to Children in Care and Care Leavers' as agreed with partners, we would want to demonstrate a commitment to celebrating and valuing all of our children and ensure that any decisions made take account of this and that visibly the authority celebrates each of them."

### **Comments against the Policy received via the County Council Complaints Team**

#### **Message from the Customer**

Sent on 13/06/2025 14:40:03

"I am disgusted at Reforms Flag Policy change. The content of the policy, the lack of consultation and the manner in which its reportedly been done

As an ex-employee of Leics County Council in the education department I am horrified at this move. I was once so proud of working at County Hall and felt the council truly understood its population.

I am not directly represented by any of the flags that have been banned, but the act of flying inclusive flags does represent me. No longer.

You have not only alienated vulnerable groups in our community, but allies of those groups How is this unifying apart from building hatred and disenfranchisement.

Shame on you."

**Message from the Customer**

Sent on 14/06/2025

"Hi complaints team,

I might be sending this through the entirely wrong channel, if I am - please can somebody forward my complaint or pass me the details of the correct channel.

I would like to complain about the new british values flag rules policy. I completely disagree with this new policy - refusing to fly flags to mark events such as LGBTQ+ Pride Month, Gypsy Roma and Traveller History Month, and Windrush Day (flags which have all flown previously from the council building in Glenfield) in favour of flags that supposedly support british values is absurd. Celebrating our communitys differences is a key british value (mutual respect and tolerance) and crucially Leicestershire thrives BECAUSE of its diversity and not in spite of it. I think now, more than ever, it is important to show support for the people in our diverse community and flying a flag is a simple yet clear message that we are doing that.

When my complaint is responded too, please can you give me the details of the meeting where this decision was made and either direct me to the published minutes or let me know how I submit an FOI request."

**Message from the Customer**

Sent on 14/06/2025 15:55:04

"A recent EOM of the cabinet was recently called, with one item on the agenda, countys flag policy. My complaint is against the cabinet members and their lack of discussion or transparency in changing this policy, or the affect it will have on employees and residents. It was a pre determined decision. Along side my complaint I would also like to request a freedom of information on this "cost saving scheme" before a policy is changed it is good practice to show the public exactly how much this will save the tax payer, and mitigation to be discussed. On balance, I would also like to request an FOI for the cost of setting up the EOM of the cabinet."

**Message from the Customer**

Sent on 20/06/2025 14:20:09

"My complaint is [REDACTED] removing the pride flag from the county council building promotes homophobia. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I feel like [REDACTED] [they are] personally attacking the LGBTQ community in Leicestershire and [REDACTED] removing the flag because of [REDACTED] homophobic views. This has nothing to do with saving money as the council cannot even give an estimated figure of savings. British values include LGBTQ values and equality, celebrating people from all walks of life, not just cis white straight men. This incident must be investigated as a hate crime. The council is rife with homophobia and bigotry, which is illegal in the work place. the LGBTQ community in Leicestershire now doubts the council and is fearful of the council."

**Comment in support of the Policy submitted via the Complaints Team**  
**Message from the Customer**

Sent on 15/06/2025 13:50:03

“Greetings, I write to complain that it is only complaints that are listed on the Council’s website. No where is the opportunity made available for people to congratulate, or say well done, to either an individual councillor or employee. This is a ridiculous situation and indicates that no one ever gets anything right. Well, believe me, that couldn’t be farther from the truth. As a Veteran I have had numerous dealings the many departments, in the Council, and I have never had anything other than maximum support. I have had many dealings with the Lord Lieutenant’s office with nothing but praise for the support I have received. The remainder of the Council, from Highways to finance, remembrance, and all other departments, has never been anything other than outstanding.

What brought me to make this observation was that I wanted to congratulate the Leader of the Council, on the common-sense decision, that has been taken, in respect of what Flags will be flown daily. If permission is given to other groups, such as the LGBTQ, then is it only fair that I request that a flag for Geminis, and Left-Handed people be flown? Not of course forgetting Dog Owners.

Please include a link to the positive, or better still remove all negative links, and just have a link to comments.”