



Madam Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons
Chairman of Ways and Means
House of Commons London SW1A 0AA

Cllr James Partridge
Leader of Wealden District Council
Council Offices
Vicarage Lane
Hailsham
BN27 2AX

23 April 2026

Dear Cllr Partridge,

Judicial Review by Crowborough Shield

I write following the very welcome news that on Monday 20th April 2026, Mr Justice Mold granted permission for the Judicial Review brought by Crowborough Shield CIC against the Home Office to proceed to an oral hearing.

As you will be aware, Crowborough Shield CIC resubmitted their Judicial Review application on 9th March 2026. In the application they named Wealden District Council (WDC) as an interested party given its role as the Local Planning Authority.

Sadly, I note that on 23rd March 2026, WDC acknowledged service of the claim, but stated it did not intend to make submissions in relation to it. This followed a video posted on social media by the Green Party Deputy Leader, Cllr Rachel Millward, dismissing the prospects of a successful challenge and indicating WDC's ruling Coalition would not answer the calls of residents for it to act in relation to the Home Office's use of Crowborough Training Camp.

Presuming that as per the shared leadership arrangement, with the role of Leader alternating annually, Cllr Millward's stance on this will become even more important once she takes over the role of Leader of the Council. Can you please confirm when this will be?

Despite the defeatist approach of WDC and insulting claims by Cllr Millward that Crowborough Shield CIC were raising "false hopes", I was delighted to hear Mr Justice Mold has granted permission for the claim to proceed to a Full Hearing in the High Court. He has ordered that the claim be heard over one & a half days, with the hearing to be before the end of July.

Given this progress and the beneficial impact for residents the Home Office losing a Judicial Review on their use of Crowborough Training Camp as asylum accommodation would have, WDC should reconsider its attitude and get involved in the legal action, at the very least by making submissions as an interested party.

The idea the Home Office might extend its stay if it lost a court case is based on a naive assumption they actually plan to move out next year. Their refusal to confirm they will move out of the site by 22nd January 2027 indicates the 12-month period is only being cited due to the restricted period the Q Regs allow, making it vital every opportunity is taken to challenge their use of the site.

I hope you will decide today to instruct officers that WDC will take part in this vital challenge to the Home Office. If an extra £50,000 could be found to mark the 100th Birthday of Winnie the Pooh, bringing the total planned spending on this to £500,000, surely you can find the resources to support Crowborough Shield in their legal action.

Yours sincerely,

Nusrat Ghani MP