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Brighton County Court: Claim number 5BN03502

Bennett v Brighton & Hove City Council

District Judge Pollard (or Judge Acting)
Brighton County Court



Dear Sir or Madam

I acknowledge receipt of District Judge Pollard's Court Order dated 8 March 2007. I also acknowledge the receipt of the Notice of the Case Management Conference listed for 27 March 2007. I shall attend.

I seek consent for my reader, Miss Satu Vilkama, to attend and to sit next to me in the barristers' row. She has perfect sight and hearing and she can relay to me any words that I do not hear. She can also assist me with the documentation. She has perfect English.

I submitted a draft version of this letter (Document 63) to Liz Woodley, solicitor for the Council so that she could make comments. Accordingly, she telephoned me on 22 March 2007 and we had an amicable discussion. It seems that I was under a misapprehension as to the stage we had reached. I did think that the hearing on 27 March 2007 would be 'merely' to discuss damages and costs and then the matter would be over. Not so, it seems. The Council has not admitted liability and apparently I have the choice of not continuing the case or letting it go to trial. I have achieved practically all the physical improvements I wanted in the Council venues to assist hearing impaired people. So I am tempted to discontinue the case, having achieved that. However, if I did that I would probably not receive damages or 'costs'/compensation. Also, it would not be clear that I had won the case and this is important to me as I want to encourage other disabled people throughout the country to seek improvements in their areas, after having exhausted all non-legal remedies.

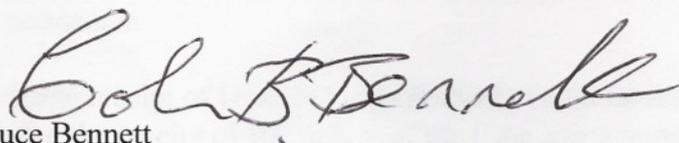
I did consider drafting a Consent Order for the Judge to address. However, I think it's better just to explain my predicament to the Judge and seek his help in resolving the matter. The main issue underlying this case was on 2 February 2005 and the claim has so far generated 63 Documents and eaten up a lot of my time and resources. Obviously, I do not want to consume any more of those, and those of the Council and taxpayer, unless absolutely necessary. I have seven witness statements but as so much time has elapsed it might be difficult for the witnesses to remember everything.

I suspect that as the Council does not want to admit liability, this word means a lot to them. It doesn't mean so much to me. I'm not seeking to rub the Council's nose in its perceived previous poor behaviour. If a way can be found to draw up a Consent Order that perhaps avoids the word 'liability' but makes it clear that I had achieved what I wanted to achieve and that allows me to receive damages and compensation then perhaps that is the way forward. I use the word compensation as I believe 'costs' has a narrower meaning in courts.

My readers have expended some two hundred hours in reading, writing and organising all the documents in this case and also attending court. Besides that, of course, I have expended my own time. In addition, my readers and I have consumed many hours in 'scanning' and uploading these documents on to my blog and thence to my website. My blog address is bennetsworld.blogspot.com I am not claiming any compensation for this work as it was not strictly necessary in this matter but I did it to further the 'empowerment' of disabled people nationally.

I attach a Note (Document 62) for the use of the Court. It explains where we stand with respect to the improvements that I sought and that the Council agreed to make. I submitted to Liz Woodley a draft version of this and it seems that the Council is broadly happy with it except for what I consider to be some trifling and puzzling points. This version of the note is exactly the same as the draft one except that I have changed the word 'must' to 'might' towards the end of 6. I have also added 7. and 8. Nothing else has changed except the date. I would like the Court to adopt this Note.

I have sent the final versions of Document 62 and Document 63 by e-mail to Liz Woodley today.



Colin Bruce Bennett

24 March 2007