2 Arch Grove
Long Ashton
Somerset
BS41 9BW
24th September 2015

Dear [redacted],

IPSO Reference 04989-15

Thank you for your letter of 21st September. I am glad to see that we are making progress towards a resolution which corrects the factual issues with Mr Littlejohn's article while not impeding his freedom to express his views.

Again following the numbering used in previous correspondence:

1. Thank you for the suggested clarification, which I am happy to accept.
4. Thank you for the suggested clarification, which I am happy to accept.
6. While not accepting that it would be reasonable to regard a small amount of food residue on non-recyclable ready meal packaging as having "alarming insanitary implications for infestation and decay", I am prepared to concede that Mr Littlejohn may be of such a delicate constitution as to find this prospect distressing. As a gesture of good will, I am prepared to drop this point.
8. I agree, it would not follow from the fact that the Waste Strategy 2007 advocates leaving the final decision on collection systems to councils that David Miliband did not call for a food waste caddy in every home. However, this does follow from that fact that no such call appears anywhere in the Waste Strategy 2007. The strategy document contains clear actions and targets in the Executive Summary. The only target in relation to food waste is to provide "support for anaerobic digestion through the new technologies programme, Renewable Obligations system, Private Finance Initiative (PFI) and a digestate standard that will establish the use of this technology in this country as in some other European countries". The entire section on food waste on p74 makes reference only to there being "strong arguments for encouraging more separate collection of food waste" and makes reference to "trials" of food waste collections already being under way. There is no specific call even for their expansion, let alone for food waste collections to be extended to every household. I therefore maintain that Mr Littlejohn's statement is incorrect, and that the section from "It reached its nadir" to "eat the leftovers" should be deleted.
9. I am grateful for the offer of an amendment, but I am unclear quite what is proposed. My interpretation is that you are suggesting deleting the section from "This lunacy…" through to "…emptied daily" and replacing it with something along the lines of "The drive to modernise waste legislation began with the 1975 Waste Framework Directive, the goal of which was to reduce the amount of material ending up in landfill." I would be grateful if you could confirm that this is what you have in mind.

10. I dispute that I have highlighted “a very few” authorities that took up Mr Pickles’ offer. The scheme was open to waste collection authorities in England, of which there are 354. There were 180 expressions of interest, some encompassing more than one authority (e.g. through joint bids and partnership arrangements) – and many others gave the issue careful consideration before deciding not to engage. As I have previously explained, there were some 130 applications for funding from 118 councils or groups of councils; of these, 90 (or 87, depending on which press release you read) were successful. Since the majority of councils to which it was available expressed interest in the scheme, it is hardly reasonable to say that “Councils simply ignored him”. As I indicated, it would be more accurate to say “Councils did the maths and realised that the money he offered wouldn't cover the costs of weekly refuse collections”.

I do hope we will be able to conclude this matter on the basis that I suggest.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Jones