

## **Review of Marilyn Smyth - Making a Difference**

I have had the pleasure of instructing Marilyn Smyth of Making a Difference to provide consultancy support and undertake independent investigation work on behalf of the Council, and I cannot recommend her highly enough. In over two decades of working in HR and organisational development across multiple sectors, Marilyn stands out as one of the most impressive professionals I have had the privilege of working alongside.

From our very first meeting, it was immediately apparent that Marilyn brings a rare and exceptional combination of qualities that truly set her apart in this field. Her depth and breadth of knowledge in employment law, workplace investigations, codes of conduct, and procedural governance is truly exceptional. However, what genuinely distinguishes Marilyn is the astuteness with which she applies that expertise. She has an extraordinary ability to see what others miss; cutting through layers of complexity and ambiguity with a clarity and decisiveness that is both remarkable and reassuring. Even in the most complex of circumstances, Marilyn identifies the critical issues with precision and provides advice that is not only legally sound but practical, pragmatic, and immediately actionable.

Her communication throughout every stage of the work has been nothing short of exemplary. Marilyn has a gift for explaining complex legal and procedural matters in a way that is accessible, clear, and empowering for all parties involved. She has kept stakeholders informed with a consistency and transparency that builds absolute confidence in the process. Equally impressive is the sensitivity and emotional intelligence she brings to what was an incredibly difficult and distressing situation. She handled the most delicate of matters with a compassion and humanity that put people at ease, without ever compromising on the rigour, objectivity, or thoroughness that the work demanded. This balance is exceptionally rare and speaks to both her character and her calibre as a professional.

The quality of Marilyn's written work deserves particular mention. Her report, correspondence, and advisory documentation have been of the highest standard; meticulously researched, impeccably structured, legally robust, and written with a precision and clarity that leaves no room for ambiguity. Everything she has delivered has been thorough, well-evidenced, and produced to a standard that I would hold up as best practice.

Above all, Marilyn operates with unwavering integrity and impartiality. In a field where trust and credibility are paramount; she is someone you can rely upon absolutely. Her professionalism, discretion, and ethical standards are beyond reproach. She brings not only the technical expertise to deliver outcomes, but also a genuine commitment to doing the right thing; her findings and recommendations have gone beyond the immediate scope of the case to identify systemic improvements that have the potential to benefit organisations and the wider sector for years to come.

Marilyn Smyth is, quite simply, outstanding. She has exceeded every expectation, and I would unreservedly recommend her and Making a Difference to any organisation seeking consultancy support or an independent investigator of the very highest calibre. Instructing Marilyn is one of the best professional decisions I have made, and I will not hesitate to do so again.

**Lee Pound**

**Director of HR, OD & Corporate Communications**