

**COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 19 MARCH 2020**

**Question to Philip Atkins  
Leader of the Council**

**By Susan Woodward**

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**Question**

Following the County Council's recent social media campaign recognising the 'inspirational' contributions of women to life in Staffordshire, will the Leader now commit to ensuring that the default form of address for all members, male and female, is the title 'Councillor plus surname' rather than the discriminatory use of 'Mr' for male councillors and 'Miss, Mrs or Ms' for female councillors?"

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**Reply**

I applaud the inspirational contributions of women to society and life in Staffordshire.

The proper title is County Councillor not Councillor. On your election ballot paper, you can choose how you are known. When officers are contacted by members of the public calling themselves councillor, to avoid confusion with parish and district councillors, a convention of preferred title or first name was adopted.

So, I would refer to myself as Philip Atkins, County Councillor for Uttoxeter Rural, and might be addressed in return as Mr Atkins or county councillor in any reply by an officer, as they may feel uncomfortable in addressing me by my first name.

This also avoids confusion where members have the same name, with for example County Councillor Charlotte Atkins.