



FSU
FREE SPEECH UNION

THE FREE SPEECH UNION
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[FREESPEECHUNION.ORG](https://www.freespeechunion.org)

Councillor Caroline Jackson
Leader
Lancaster City Council
Town Hall
Dalton Square
Lancaster LA1 1PJ

13th July 2022

Dear Cllr Jackson,

Cancellation of Roy 'Chubby' Brown's performance in Morecambe

I am writing to you in my capacity as General Secretary of the Free Speech Union. The FSU is a non-partisan, mass-membership public interest body that stands up for the speech rights of its members and campaigns for free speech more widely.

It was disappointing to see Lancaster City Council cancel the 19th August performance by the comedian Roy 'Chubby' Brown, scheduled to take place in Morecambe. Surely, if some people find Chubby Brown's comedy offensive, they have the option of not buying tickets. Why should those who enjoy his humour not be allowed to see him perform just because some people don't like his jokes? As it says on his website: "If easily offended please stay away!"

At the FSU we take no view on Chubby Brown's comedy routine, just as we do not advocate for specific points of view. However, we do believe strongly that unless laws are being broken, as opposed to some people finding something distasteful, members of the general public are mature enough to make up their own minds on what they wish to watch, read or listen to.

To deny them this opportunity would be a breach of their right to free speech, as well as Chubby Brown's right to freedom of expression. As Lord Justice Sedley said in *Redmond-Bate v DPP* (1999): 'Freedom of speech includes not only the inoffensive but the irritating, the contentious, the eccentric, the heretical, the unwelcome and the provocative, provided it does not tend to provoke violence. Freedom only to speak inoffensively is not worth having.'

I strongly encourage you to reverse your decision so that the people of Morecambe can decide for themselves whether his set is worth the ticket price or not.

I gather Chubby Brown is now unwell and may not be available on the 19th August. Nevertheless, rather than use this as an excuse not to reverse your decision, you should issue a public statement wishing him a

speedy recovery and saying you look forward to seeing him perform in Morecombe as soon as can be arranged.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Toby Young'.

Toby Young
General Secretary
The Free Speech Union
toby@freespeechunion.org

Cc: Mr Mark Davies, Chief Executive, Lancaster City Council