# Health Minister Maria Caulfield scrutinised for spreading 15-minute city conspiracy theory



Health Minister Maria Caulfield has come under scrutiny over claims that she promoted a conspiracy theory involving "15-minute cities" in her campaign literature. The 15-minute city concept focuses on making urban amenities accessible within a short walk from residents' homes, yet conspiracy theories suggest it aims to restrict personal freedoms.

Caulfield, who represents Lewes in East Sussex, included the claim in a letter to constituents, stating that political opponents intended to implement a road toll system linked to the concept. However, the local council document she referenced contained no such information.

Shadow Commons Leader Lucy Powell raised the issue in the House of Commons, highlighting that Caulfield’s assertions were contrary to a guide on conspiracy theories jointly prepared by Powell and Commons Leader Penny Mordaunt. Powell criticized Caulfield for disseminating damaging claims, while Mordaunt avoided directly addressing whether she should speak with Caulfield about the issue.

Caulfield defended her actions, claiming to have merely reflected rumors shared by constituents. She also emphasized her family's Jewish background, expressing distress over being inadvertently linked to antisemitism.

Additionally, the controversy coincides with broader discussions about MPs’ safety following threats related to a new exclusion policy for MPs under investigation for serious offenses. Commons Speaker Sir Lindsay Hoyle condemned these threats, labeling them an affront to democracy.

This incident brings attention to the influence of misinformation and its potential impact on political discourse and community relations.