

Leader of the Council - Councillor Chris Read

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The Rt. Honourable Greg Clark MP
Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
Department for Communities and Local Government
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
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10th May 2016

Dear Secretary of State

ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL – PROPOSED RETURN OF LICENSING FUNCTION

Further to the 12 month progress letter and evidence file submitted in February 2016 and in light of the outcome of the all-out elections, I am writing to ask you to consider the early restoration of powers for the licensing function.

As you will be aware, elected members have been working closely with Commissioner Ney since her arrival in February 2015 to make the necessary improvements in Rotherham.

There has been significant progress made to improve the licensing function, including the implementation of the new Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Policy which includes higher standards of the 'fit and proper person' test.

The Advisory Chair and members of the Licensing Board were involved in the development of the new taxi licensing policy, its implementation and have attended a significant number of case hearings, providing them with the experience required to make effective and confident decisions.

The outcome of the all-out local election held on 5th May has meant that the Advisory Chair of the Licensing Board has retained her seat whilst 15 of the 21 members of the same board have also been re-elected. I am, therefore, confident that the make-up of the Licensing Board will have sufficient experience to move forward.

A number of new senior managers are now in post, including the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment Services and Assistant Director of Community Safety and Street Scene, with overall responsibility for the licensing function.

Given the improvements made and evidence provided by Commissioner Ney demonstrating that the licensing function is operating well, I would welcome the return of non-executive powers to the Licensing Board.

We are under no illusions about the future challenges and are committed to ensuring that the highest quality services are delivered. We will continue to work with Commissioners to ensure that they are kept fully informed of future developments.

I look forward to a reply relating to the above and am happy to discuss this with you further.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "C. Read". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name of the signatory.

Councillor Chris Read
Leader of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council