



**Edward Timpson MP**

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families

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Councillor Rob Anderson  
Leader of the Council  
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20 March 2014

*Da Rob,*

I am writing in response to the Ofsted inspection report of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after children and care leavers published on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2014. The judgement that Slough's performance has again been rated as 'inadequate' gives me very considerable cause for concern. I am also disappointed that the ratings for both the looked after children and adoption services have deteriorated since those services were last inspected.

As you will be aware I take any failure to deliver services to children, young people and their families extremely seriously. Whilst I recognise the determination of you, elected members and your officers to address the shortcomings identified by Ofsted, I believe that a new and more decisive approach is needed if Slough is to improve to the point where it is providing a service at an acceptable level. To this end I am minded to use intervention powers under section 497A of the Education Act 1996 with respect to the Council's exercise of its children's social services functions.

I consider that new delivery arrangements are needed which give the children's services a chance to improve outside of local authority control for a period. I have therefore asked my officials to commission a review which will examine which alternative structure and governance arrangements will best support improvements in Slough. The review will examine how best to provide delegated children's services in Slough, consulting with the Council, key stakeholders in Slough and potential delivery partners. I will expect Slough Borough Council to fully co-operate with the review, providing officers' time and support where required.

I have asked my officials to consult you on the review and the statutory direction which will underpin it and they will be in contact very shortly.

I am copying this letter to Councillor Pavitar Mann (Commissioner for Education and Children), Ruth Bagley (Chief Executive) and Jane Wood (Strategic Director for Wellbeing).

Yours sincerely,  
Edward

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