



Edward Timpson MP

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families

Sanctuary Buildings 20 Great Smith Street Westminster London SW1P 3BT
tel: 0370 000 2288 www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus

Councillor Paul Lakin, Deputy Leader
Martin Kimber, Chief Executive
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
Riverside House
Main Street
Rotherham
S60 1AE

28 August 2014

Dear Councillor Lakin and Mr Kimber,

I have read, with horror, the appalling findings of the report into child sexual exploitation in Rotherham, written by Prof Alexis Jay. Like many others, I found the scale of the failure to safeguard children, over such a long period, genuinely shocking.

The Home Secretary has already announced a national inquiry that will investigate historic allegations of child sexual abuse. This will consider all the information which is available from the various published reviews and will identify any issues or allegations requiring new or further investigation. My interest is in ensuring, quickly, that the current arrangements for safeguarding children in Rotherham, in particular in respect of child sexual exploitation, are robust and enable children there to grow up as safely as possible.

I have seen the action plan issued alongside the report and would request that you urgently let me know, in more detail, the action you are taking to deal with the contemporary issues raised in the report. In particular I would like to be clear about the action you are taking: a) to deal with the concerns expressed in the report about risk assessment and risk management and b) to tackle the worries in the report about the continuation of work with individual children, for example following the absorption of the "risky business" project into the Council's social care team.

More widely I seek your reassurance that your safeguarding and child protection policies have a proper focus on identifying children who are victims of or at risk of exploitation and that you are providing appropriate help and support to them in the face of those risks and are keeping them as safe as possible. It should include any recent improvements to the service and your plan for further work in light of the report.

I would request that you respond to me on both of these points by 12 September. I have also agreed with Ofsted that Rotherham will receive an early inspection of its child protection and looked after children's services.

I hope you will agree that these actions will be important as an early step in reassuring families in Rotherham that action is being taken to address the very serious failings identified in the Jay report and that children are now properly safeguarded by the Council and its partners.

cc. Joyce Thacker (Strategic Director, Children & Young People's Services),
Steve Ashley (Independent Chair of Rotherham LSCB)

*Your sincerely,
Edward.*

Edward Timpson MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families