



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

Cllr Rob Anderson
Leader Slough Borough Council
St Martins Place
51 Bath Road
Slough
SL1 3UF

7 October 2014

Direction under section 497A (4B) of the Education Act 1996 to Slough Borough Council

I am writing, on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education, to issue Slough Borough Council with a Direction section 497A(4B) of the Education Act 1996.

It is my firm view that the proposals put forward in your letter of 23rd September would not put the services in question out of council control to secure the necessary improvements. The Secretary of State and I have therefore decided that the most effective and appropriate way of ensuring high quality services for children and families in Slough is to establish an independent Trust to deliver services on behalf of the Council. To be clear, we have taken this decision following the period of statutory consultation on the draft Direction, which ended on 19th September 2014, having fully considered your representations.

At this time, we have decided on the establishment of a Trust under section 497A(4), rather than section 497A(4A), of the Education Act 1996. This means that the Trust will perform the relevant functions on behalf of the Council. We welcome the commitment in your letter of 23rd September to participate fully in the design of a Trust, and our decision is therefore predicated on the Council's full and proper cooperation in the process. If this cooperation is not forthcoming, we may need to move to a model in which the Trust exercises the Council's children's social care functions instead of the Council.

The Direction (enclosed) therefore requires Slough Borough Council to cooperate with, comply with instructions from, and provide assistance to the Commissioner for Children's Social Care and the Secretary of State for Education. I intend to

appoint Eleanor Brazil as Commissioner for Children's Social Care in Slough. As Commissioner, she will be responsible for establishing the independent Trust and for overseeing improvement to services until the Trust is fully operational. It will be important for the Commissioner quickly to consider what further capacity the Council may need to ensure improvements to services during this transitional period.

Officials will now work with the Council, and the Commissioner, to determine the details of the Trust to be established. A joint Memorandum of Understanding should be agreed by 3rd November 2014. An important aspect of this Memorandum will be the planned timescale, which would then be subject to appropriate due diligence. It will of course be important to consider the future financial viability of the Council and the Public Sector Equality Duty fully throughout this process.

Our view is that you will need some additional capacity to engage fully in these next steps and limited funding will be available for this purpose, as well as for other reasonable set-up costs.

I am copying this letter to Pavitar Mann and Ruth Bagley.

*Yours sincerely,
Edward.*

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