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Rt. Hon. Eric Pickles
Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
Department for Communities and Local Government
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RE: INSPECTION OF ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Following the submission of my report to you on 27 January we met to discuss the suggestions that I had made for a possible intervention by you in Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.

You explained that you accepted my conclusion that the Council was failing to comply with its best value duty and that you were considering possible intervention to give the Council a new start and to put an immediate end to its failures. You outlined the intervention package that you were considering, and I am writing to confirm my view, as I indicated in our discussions, that such a package would be an effective means of achieving the desired improvements in Rotherham Council.

In particular, I agree that your proposal to direct that a team of five Commissioners, jointly or severally, exercise all the Council's executive functions, and certain other functions such as licensing and appointing a chief executive, having appropriate regard to any views of the Council's members, is an effective, and indeed better way, of delivering my intentions when I suggested in my letter of 27 January an "overseeing Commissioner with all the powers of the Council" and "holding the power to over-ride" decisions arrived by the authority's "normal decision making processes".

I understand that the proposed team of Commissioners would comprise a lead Commissioner, a “managing director” Commissioner to drive improvement in the Council, a Children’s Services Commissioner, and 2 other Commissioners.

Finally, I also agree, as we discussed, that full elections in 2016 would give the council a fresh political start, and that allowing the 2015 elections to go ahead would be an effective way of meeting my intentions to drive improvements and restore public trust and confidence in Rotherham.

LOUISE CASEY CB

Cc. Sir Bob Kerlake, Permanent Secretary