

Chief Executive's Office

Riverside House
Main Street
Rotherham
S60 1AE
Tel: (01709) 822770
E-mail: sharon.kemp@rotherham.gov.uk
*Email the Council for **free** @ your local library!*

Our Ref:	Direct Line:	Extension:	Please Contact:
SK/LH	(01709) 822770	22770	Sharon Kemp

31st October 2016

Ms Debjani Ghosh
Department for Communities and Local Government
2nd Floor North East Corner Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Dear Ms Ghosh

ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL – PROPOSED FURTHER DIRECTIONS

Further to the letter from Alex Powell dated 19th October 2016, I am responding on behalf of the Rotherham MBC's Senior Management Team following the Department's invitation for representations on the further directions proposed by the Secretary of State.

As Chief Executive of Rotherham MBC, I welcome the Lead Commissioner's report and the Secretary of State's proposals in response. The Council has been working closely with the Commissioners and has successfully been exercising decision-making on a range of functions since February 2016. The decision to return further powers to the authority in relation to licensing is an important step in our long-term improvement process.

The progress the Council has made since the arrival of the Commissioners is well documented in their 3 month reviews, as summarised in the Department's Revised Intervention Package. This progress has been driven to a significant extent by the corporate Improvement Plan "A Fresh Start" since May 2015.

A key feature of the Improvement Plan has been to create a culture of excellence in service delivery across the Council, including the licensing function. A new licensing policy has been in place since July 2015 and all existing licences were reviewed by February 2016. These and other improvements are documented in paragraphs 9 and 10 of the Revised Intervention Package. Commissioner Ney has been instrumental in the reform of licensing in Rotherham and will continue to provide oversight after the return of the function to the Council.

Given the continued improvements to the Council and licensing service which have been evidenced by Sir Derek Myers, the Senior Management Team is in agreement that the licensing function is now ready to return to the authority's decision making. The licensing service and Advisory Licensing Board have been performing well and the return of powers in this area will help us to progress towards further restoration of powers in the future.

As detailed in paragraph 14 of the Revised Intervention Package, we will continue to work with the Commissioners to ensure that they are kept fully informed and able to influence decision making even where decision making powers have been returned.

The Commissioners have worked tirelessly to bring about the changes which were needed at Rotherham MBC, in partnership with officers and councillors, and other organisations. Their mission to restore the Council to being a fit for purpose authority continues and, together with my colleagues, I am committed to working with them to continue the delivery of improvements in those service areas where they retain decision making powers. I trust that the Commissioners will be able to evidence continued progress and recommend the return of further powers in the future.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sharon Kemp". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Sharon Kemp
Chief Executive

Cc Alex Powell