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10th February 2015

Paul Rowsell
Deputy Director - Democracy
Dept. for Communities and Local Government
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

Dear Mr Rowsell,

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council: Final Representations following the Corporate Governance Inspection report and the Secretary of State's proposals

Further to my letters of 4, 5 and 9 February 2015, and our recent conversation, I am now in a position to confirm this letter as the Council's final representations, following the Corporate Governance Inspection (CGI) report and Secretary of State's proposals for intervention announced on 4 February.

In addition to the points I have raised in correspondence to date, please find enclosed a set of specific questions raised by Elected Members of the Council, which I would like to draw to your attention. While a number of these questions duplicate points I have already made in previous letters, I nevertheless feel that they should be formally noted as issues that Councillors are eager to address.

In these final representations please can I once again make clear that the Council recognises and accepts the conclusions of the CGI report and welcomes the appointment of Commissioners to drive forward its future improvement and recovery. There is an undisputed view across the Council that change and a fresh start is critical.

Inevitably, there may be points of detail, where opinions amongst some of those at the Council might differ to specific matters or points raised in the report - one example being the points raised in my letter of 5 February about the Icelandic bank investments. However, I am eager to now draw a line under the process of the Council's representations as none of these points of detail impact in any way on the urgent need to now work positively and proactively with the Department and do all we can together to ensure that the intervention measures proposed by the Secretary of State deliver the change, improvement and better outcomes needed by the people of Rotherham.

I also feel that this early conclusion to the Council's representations will allow both officers and members to move on as quickly as possible to begin to address the scale of the challenge faced. Whilst initial steps had already been taken to start to set out a cohesive programme of organisational recovery, via the Rotherham Improvement Board established with the LGA, it is vital that the Council now takes urgent steps with the Commissioners as soon as they are appointed, to agree a comprehensive strategy of improvement, fully reflective of the CGI report and Government's intervention measures.

At the heart of all this change must be the Council in its entirety - its Executive, all Elected Members, Senior Officers and all staff - better serving all of its residents. To do this and deliver the fresh start needed for Rotherham the Council has to change its culture and must become a more modern local authority; and it looks forward to supporting the Commissioners to make this happen.

I can confirm that these are the final representations to be made by the authority in the light of the CGI report and Secretary of State's statements on his proposed interventions and I look forward to working with you on the next steps.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information on any of the points raised in my recent correspondence.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jan Ormondroyd', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Jan Ormondroyd
Interim Chief Executive

cc: Sir Bob Kerslake, DCLG
Helen Edwards, DCLG
Louise Casey, DCLG
Gemma Penn, DCLG
Jacqueline Collins, RMBC

QUESTIONS FROM ELECTED MEMBERS REGARDING PROPOSED GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION AT ROTHERHAM MBC FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE REPORT

- What will be the Commissioners' specific roles and responsibilities?
- Will Commissioners just appoint *new* Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer and Finance Officer roles, or will they look at *existing* appointments?
- How will the process of appointments to outside bodies work? Will Commissioners *replace* all appointments now, or as vacancies occur? What will be the Council's representation and role on the Combined Authority in the light of Commissioner appointments?
- Will Commissioners be appointed before the House of Commons recess?
- Will Commissioners take over or replace the current 'Rotherham Improvement Board'?
- What will be the role of Councillors going forward?
- Will there continue to be a 'Cabinet'?
- How will the role of Commissioners be held to account? How will the decisions of Commissioners be scrutinised?
- What will be the role of Overview & Scrutiny, such as Health Scrutiny?
- Will there be a public right to recall on Commissioner decisions?
- How will the Council's Budget for 2014/15 go through full council?
- What are the implications for the Rotherham Health and Wellbeing Board?
- How will Councillors communicate with the Commissioners?
- Will Planning Board continue?
- How will the 3 MPs communicate with Commissioners? Will they have a formal role in scrutinising / reporting back with the Commissioners?