



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP

*Secretary of State for Communities and
Local Government*

***Department for Communities and Local
Government***

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Department
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The Rt Hon Justine Greening MP

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9 February 2017

Dear Sir Derek

Thank you for your letter of 10 November which included an update on progress and your view on returning additional functions to the Council.

We are pleased to note that the Council continues to comply with its best value duties for the services areas returned in February 2016. We are glad to hear that the mentoring support from the Local Government Association as well as their health checks and peer reviews have been of considerable benefit to identifying and addressing weaknesses in the Council.

We accept your advice that further improvements need to be demonstrated before children's services, human resources and asset management can be considered for return to the Council. We have also noted that the Council's review of alternative management arrangements for children's social care services will be completed by the end of March 2017. We expect a comprehensive update on returning these three functions to the council by May 2017 at the latest.

You have proposed returning nine service areas to the Council. Thank you for the evidence supporting this proposal, including additional information provided in

December 2016. The evidence makes clear that the Council has made significant strides on multiple fronts with the support of Commissioners.

We are satisfied with the evidence base provided to justify returning adult social care and NHS partnership, economic growth, town centres, external partnerships, ground maintenance and audit to the Council. We are 'minded to' return these services areas to the Council with Commissioners retaining powers of advice, with the exception of adult social care and NHS partnership, where we intend Commissioners to have powers of direction.

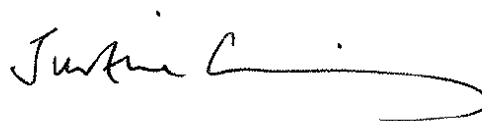
We want to acknowledge that good foundations have been laid for community safety, performance management and waste collection but we need further evidence that improvements are embedded before we can consider a return of these service areas. We expect to receive in due course a peer challenge report for community safety, an update on indicators developed to assess community cohesion, evidence of the impact of the improvement plan for waste collection, and evidence demonstrating greater effectiveness of the new performance framework.

On the basis of the evidence you have provided, Alex Powell of the Department for Communities and Local Government has today written a letter to Sharon Kemp, Chief Executive of the Council, signalling the Government's intention to exercise our powers of intervention under section 15 of the Local Government Act 1999 and return economic growth, town centres, external partnerships, ground maintenance, adult social care and internal audit to the Council to exercise.

We look forward to receiving your next three-monthly progress report and expect it will include an update on waste collection, community safety and performance management. We are grateful for the continued work of the Commissioner team, and wish to acknowledge the significant progress the team has driven forward in the Council, under your leadership, for the benefit of the people of Rotherham.



THE RT HON SAJID JAVID MP



THE RT HON JUSTINE GREENING MP