

Press release: James Brokenshire removes commissioners from Rotherham council after 3-year intervention

Communities Secretary, the Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, has today (18 September 2018) confirmed that he is concluding the government's intervention in Rotherham metropolitan borough council and [returning all powers to the authority](#).

The [intervention](#), which was jointly undertaken by the Ministry and the Department for Education, began in February 2015 following critical reports by Baroness Alexis Jay and Dame Louise Casey which uncovered significant failings at the council that contributed to child sexual exploitation in Rotherham.

Mr Brokenshire confirmed that following strong progress by the council he will return control of all services to them on Monday 24 September, including children's social care, and withdraw all 3 commissioners.

He added that this was on condition that the council commissions an independent progress review of delivery of services to be completed by 18 February 2019, before the directions expire on 31 March 2019.

The action follows the gradual return of selected functions to the council on 4 separate occasions since the intervention began in February 2015.

Communities Secretary, The Rt Honorable James Brokenshire MP said:

Vulnerable young people who should have been protected were repeatedly failed by Rotherham council, which is why the government stepped in to ensure these errors can never occur again.

I am pleased that strong progress has now been made at the council with the support of the commissioners.

The return of all powers to Rotherham council is not a decision that I take lightly, but I am satisfied that the council has learnt the lessons of the past and is now able to provide the services its residents deserve and expect.

Minister for Children and Families, Nadhim Zahawi MP said:

Every child, wherever they live, needs to have access to the right care and support so they can flourish in life. For too long the people of Rotherham were let down by the authorities in charge of protecting them.

The handing back of local children's services to the council marks an important step for this town. I am pleased that vulnerable children in Rotherham are now getting the help they need when they need it, and I hope to see continuing improvements through the independent review next year.

The then-Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and the then-Secretary of State for Education exercised their intervention powers on 26 February 2015 as Rotherham metropolitan borough council was failing to comply with its best value duty. These Directions expire on 31 March 2019.

Three commissioners have been working with Rotherham council. They are:

- Mary Ney (Lead Commissioner)
- Patricia Bradwell (Children's Social Care Commissioner)
- Julie Kenny CBE, DL (Supporting Commissioner)

There were originally 5 commissioners sent to Rotherham council, led by Sir Derek Meyers, who was also supported by Stella Manzie CBE and Malcolm Newsam with Mary Ney and Julie Kenney CBE acting as supporting Commissioners. Patricia Bradwell replaced Malcolm Newsam in May 2016 and Stella Manzie CBE left the council in February 2016. Mary Ney was appointed Lead Commissioner in place of Sir Derek Myers in March 2017.

Selected functions were returned to the council on 11 February 2016, 12 December 2016, 21 March 2017 and 12 September 2017.

The Secretary of State considered representations on his 'minded to' decision, which was announced on 23 July, until 16 August before a final decision.

As part of the decision-making process on the announcement, Mr Brokenshire and Mr Zahawi met with Rotherham's MPs on Monday, July 16 who indicated their support to conclude the intervention.