

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.

Further information

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.

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[Press release: Sentence increase for man who sexually assaulted girls for 25 years](#)



A Cambridge man who repeatedly raped 2 young girls and sexually assaulted 2 others has had his sentence increased after the Solicitor General, Robert Buckland QC MP, referred it to the Court of Appeal for being too low.

Sazzad Miah, now 83, carried out his abuse over a 25 year period. His first victim was abused between the ages of 4 and 15. His later victims were aged between 4 and 13.

In June this year, Miah was sentenced to 18 years imprisonment with a 1 year extended licence period at Cambridge Crown Court. Today, this has been increased to 25 years imprisonment with a 1 year extended licence period after the Solicitor General referred the case for being unduly lenient.

Commenting on the sentence increase, the Solicitor General said:

“I am pleased the Court of Appeal has agreed that Miah’s sentence deserved to be higher. To subject four vulnerable children to such horrific sexual assaults is an abhorrent crime which will undoubtedly have lasting impacts on the victims, and I hope today’s outcome will provide them with some comfort.”

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[News story: Have your say on the UK’s future trade negotiations](#)

You can now have your say on our prospective trade negotiations.

[Take part in the online consultations](#)

For the first time in over 40 years, the UK will be able to determine who we trade with and the public will have a say on the terms of these trading agreements.

We want to maximise our trade opportunities globally and across all countries – both by boosting our trading relationships with old friends and new allies, and by seeking a deep and special partnership with the EU.

In 6 month's time, the UK will have the opportunity to begin negotiating, signing, and ratifying Free Trade Agreements to bring them into force from January 2021.

In preparation for this, the UK Government is consulting with members of the public, businesses, trade experts, and any other interested organisations to help inform this work. This initial consultation process will inform our overall approach to our future trade relationship.

There are 4 online consultations:

- [Consultation on trade negotiations with the United States](#)
- [Consultation on trade negotiations with Australia](#)
- [Consultation on trade negotiations with New Zealand](#)
- [Consultation on the UK potentially seeking accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership \(CPTPP\)](#)

These agreements could:

- enable increased trade and investment
- secure access for UK exporters to the key markets of today and the future
- give consumers access to a greater range of products at lower prices
- make the UK more innovative, competitive and prosperous.

At the launch event International Trade Secretary Liam Fox said:

These consultations are about how we position ourselves as Global Britain. To build the export markets, investment opportunities and trading relationships of the future.

Trade affects us all – whether it is through the prices and availability of product on our supermarket shelves, to the resources available for our public services, to the jobs and investment on which we all rely.

Watch our video to find out more

[How will the consultations work?](#)

The benefits of trade agreements

- Boosting economic growth in the UK by encouraging more competition, investment and innovation.
- Contributing to global prosperity, by boosting economic growth in countries that the UK does business with through international supply chains.
- Increased global prosperity supports social cohesion within and between countries, and in turn political stability, which is one of the building blocks of our collective security.
- Some trade agreements can particularly benefit developing countries – trade can be a vital tool in boosting developing countries' economic growth and reducing poverty, while also providing UK consumers and businesses with goods at competitive prices.
- Trade is also an instrument of foreign policy and some countries use trade policy (including trade agreements) to advance standards and values.

Trade agreements aim to reduce trade barriers between countries. Barriers can be taxes charged on goods as they cross borders (tariffs), or different rules and regulations that can add to trade costs (non-tariff measures). Trade and investment barriers make it more difficult and costly to trade or invest overseas. Reducing these barriers can help the flow of goods, services and money for investment between countries, and help businesses to access markets they previously weren't able to. Consumers can benefit from access to a greater variety of products at lower prices.

Trade agreements do not prevent governments from regulating as they see fit, and they also do not require governments to privatise any services. The UK Government is committed to maintaining our high standards for consumers, workers and the environment, and to protecting our public services, in any future trade agreements that we conclude.

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