

Government confirms rapid review into Nottingham City Council

- Max Caller CBE appointed to take forward rapid review of Nottingham City Council
- Review will investigate the council's governance and risk management
- Recommendations will be made to the Local Government Secretary later this month

A rapid non-statutory review will be conducted into Nottingham City Council, the Local Government Secretary Robert Jenrick has confirmed today (2 November 2020).

The review will look into the serious governance and risk management issues associated with the council's private energy company Robin Hood Energy.

The council has agreed to this short, informal review to identify the issues it is facing and make recommendations for action that should be taken. The decision to carry out the review was taken following a number of issues raised in a Public Interest Report published in August by Grant Thornton.

The report highlighted the serious failure of the governance at the council since Robin Hood Energy was set up in 2015, including lack of effective risk management, plus failure to take on advice or pass on accurate and timely information.

The rapid review does not rule out a more formal, statutory intervention from the government in the future – a decision on which will be informed by this work.

Local Government Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

I have been monitoring the very serious situation at Nottingham City Council closely, including the collapse of their Robin Hood Energy scheme.

A review such as this is not undertaken lightly – councils have a duty to manage taxpayers' money responsibly and should be held to account where they are found to have failed to do so.

It is important we work together to turn the council around at this challenging time as they continue to support their community through the pandemic.

Nottingham Council has been allocated over £34.3 million in unringfenced funding since the start of the pandemic. In addition, the council's core spending power saw an increase of nearly £17.6 million this financial year even before additional emergency funding was announced.

Three independent reviewers have been appointed to carry out the review. Max Caller CBE will lead and will be supported by a financial reviewer, Julie Parker, as well as a commercial reviewer, Phil Brookes.

Lead reviewer, Max Caller CBE previously led the best value inspection into Northamptonshire County Council and was also the government commissioner in London Borough Tower Hamlets charged with improving the council's governance and culture. He has served as Chief Executive of London Boroughs of Barnet and Hackney Councils.

Financial reviewer Julie Parker is a former Chief Finance Officer (Section 151 Officer) at both Barking & Dagenham Council and Haringey Council and supported Max Caller CBE on the financial aspects of the best value inspection in Northamptonshire County Council.

Commercial reviewer, Phil Brookes is a Crown Representative at the Cabinet Office and has worked with a range of strategic suppliers to government in facilities and construction services. Phil previously worked in a number of roles across infrastructure investment, most recently for Balfour Beatty.

The findings of the review will be reported to the Local Government Secretary and published on GOV.UK once complete.

Office address and general enquiries