

Press release: James Brokenshire proposes to remove commissioners from Rotherham council after 3-year intervention

The government is set to end the intervention into Rotherham council 3 years after calling in inspectors, Communities Secretary, the Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, has announced today (23 July 2018).

The [intervention](#) began in February 2015 after Baroness Alexis Jay and Dame Louise Casey found significant failings at the council that contributed to child sexual exploitation in Rotherham.

Since then, the council has worked hard to turn services around.

Mr Brokenshire says in a [written ministerial statement](#) he is minded to return control of all services to the metropolitan borough council, including children's social care, and withdraw all 3 commissioners.

He adds this was on the condition the council receives an independent review before 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, Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

Vulnerable young people were repeatedly failed in Rotherham, which is why the government stepped in to ensure these errors can never occur again.

The council has made strong progress and, having carefully considered evidence provided by our commissioners, I am minded to return all powers.

This is not a decision I take lightly, but I am assured the council has turned itself around and is now providing the services that its residents deserve and expect.

Minister for Children and Families, Nadhim Zahawi MP said:

Keeping children safe is paramount and I am pleased to see the vast improvements Rotherham has made to its children's services, shown through its recent 'good' Ofsted rating. We all know that for too long, children and young people living there were failed by the

authorities in charge of protecting them.

In these cases the government will not hesitate to intervene and support improvements but it is down to strong leadership and the hard work of staff at Rotherham that they have been able to turn services around.

The 'minded to' decision to return the control of all services to the council marks a positive step for this town and I hope the community can continue to move towards a bright future.

Mr Brokenshire says the government is continuing to work with Rotherham council and the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner to secure funding for victims identified through the National Crime Agency's Operation Stovewood and will do so for as long as the need is there.

The council will now have a period of 4 weeks to make representations on the proposals before the Secretary of State makes a final decision.

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

- Mary Ney (lead commissioner)
- Patricia Bradwell (children's social care)
- Julie Kenny CBE, DL

Selected functions were returned to the council on 11 February 2016, 13 December 2016, 21 March 2017 and 12 September 2017.

The Secretary of State will consider representatives on his ['minded to' decision](#) until August 16 with a further decision to be made after that date.

Operation Stovewood is the National Crime Agency investigation into non-familial child sexual exploitation and abuse in Rotherham, between 1997 and 2013. It is the largest ever investigation into non-recent child sexual exploitation undertaken by law enforcement.

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