

# [Press release: Return of further powers to Rotherham](#)

The move to return the functions, which include community safety and waste collection, follows the [latest report](#) by the government-appointed Commissioner team that noted steady improvement by the council.

This council has already regained 8 powers in the last 9 months.

Communities Secretary Sajid Javid said:

The council is continuing to make progress under the watchful eye of our commissioners and the return of additional powers to Rotherham reflects this progress.

However, the commissioners will remain in place and continue to work with the council to help restore full democratic powers.

## **Steady progress by the council**

The Commissioner team, led by Mary Ney, who replaced Sir Derek Myers as Lead Commissioner in April 2017, outlined continuing improvements in her progress report of 18 May 2017.

The Communities Secretary will hand back control of the following functions to the council:

- performance management in each of the council's service areas
- waste collection
- community safety which includes community cohesion and domestic violence
- human resources
- asset management including both land and property assets

To give further assurance to residents, the community safety service will be returned with enhanced oversight by the commissioner team over services supporting victims of domestic violence. This would allow the relevant commissioner to veto any Cabinet decision if they feel necessary.

Commissioners will retain executive decision making power over children's social care services, special allowances, and also the appointment and dismissal of any statutory officers. They will also continue to have oversight over all returned functions.

Mr Javid will continue to receive 3-monthly reviews from the commissioners.

## Further information

Commissioners with executive responsibilities at Rotherham metropolitan borough council are:

- Lead Commissioner – Mary Ney
- Children’s Social Care Commissioner – Patricia Bradwell
- Supporting Commissioner – Julie Kenny CBE

The intervention is expected to end on 31 March 2019.

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## [Press release: Improving work health for a healthy economy](#)

A healthy population is the engine of a healthy economy, says Public Health England’s (PHE) Chief Executive.

Speaking at the opening of PHE’s annual conference, Duncan Selbie said we must look further than the NHS if we are to ensure everyone has a fair chance of good health.

PHE believes that health and wealth are 2 sides of the same coin. Having a job is the key to a long, happy and healthy life.

Illness among working age people costs the UK economy £100 billion a year. About 330,000 every year become unemployed because of health-related issues.

For every unemployed person who gets a job there is an estimated saving to society of £12,035 in a one-year period.

We take an estimated 137.3 million days of sick leave and more than a third of those (£46 million) are due to poor mental health and lower neck and back pain.

But workplace health and wellbeing programmes such as exercise, healthy eating and stop smoking support can make a real difference. Successful programmes such as these have been found to return £2 to £10 for every £1 spent, benefiting staff wellbeing and economic productivity.

Most big employers already have some plans in place that help to improve and protect their staff’s health but many small and medium enterprises (SMEs) do not currently benefit from such programmes.

PHE and Healthy Working Futures, a workplace health provider, has set out advice for SMEs, which account for 60% of private sector employment.

It gives SMEs a series of questions on health and wellbeing including smoking, fitness and sleep, which staff can answer anonymously, enabling them to assess the specific needs of their workforce and create tailored steps to improve their staff's health and wellbeing, based on evidence.

Later this week, Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) will also publish new guidelines on how businesses can improve their workers' health, with advice on physical and mental health.

PHE has also created a series of guidance for employers on important issues, such as musculoskeletal (MSK) and mental health, impacting on employees with Business in the Community. Further advice is being developed covering issues including:

- physical activity
- diet and weight
- drugs
- alcohol
- tobacco

Duncan Selbie, Public Health England (PHE) Chief Executive, said:

Work is the key to a long, happy and healthy life. But sickness absence and tackling early retirement due to ill health are still major challenges for the economy.

This new package of support for small businesses will help businesses improve the health of their staff.

We can no longer see the health service as the only solution to our ills. We've got individual responsibility, and so do employers. Keeping people healthy not only benefits the individual but also benefits the economy and the local community.

We must do more to improve health outcomes, and in turn the health and economic productivity of the country. I urge employers to take advantage of this support.

Mike Cherry, Chairman of the Federation of Small Businesses, said:

Improved wellbeing benefits individual businesses. But more than that, it helps the wider economy, government and public services, as well as the local communities where small businesses play such an important role. There's never going to be a 'one size fits all' approach and not every idea will work for every business – that's why we're very pleased to be working with Public Health England in particular to help smaller businesses and the self-employed.

The FSB will soon launch its first wellbeing campaign aimed at providing some simple ideas and suggestions that smaller firms can

look to adopt to support themselves and their staff. This sits alongside the medical and health advice service we already offer our members. We are delighted to receive the support of PHE for our campaign and we hope it acts as a catalyst for a positive conversation on wellbeing and mental health.

Louise Aston, Wellbeing Director, Business in the Community, said:

We are delighted to be working in partnership with Public Health England, taking an innovative co-production, whole person, whole system approach to producing a suite of interconnected toolkits that address the two leading causes of days lost at work – mental and musculoskeletal health.

Our suite of toolkits consolidates the very best evidence with the very best employer practice, aligned with freely available resources that are useful to all employers, wherever they are on their journey.

PHE and Business in the Community have developed a series of [toolkits for employers](#).

Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust introduced a physiotherapy service for staff with MSK absence from work because it was the second highest reason for sickness absence among staff, and employees had asked for support in this area in health and wellbeing surveys.

Following a successful pilot of early intervention for staff with MSK absence at Wansbeck General Hospital in 2014, the service was extended trust-wide in January 2016.

An additional whole-time equivalent physiotherapist was provided to deliver the service for staff who can either self-refer using the online referral system or be referred by their manager, ideally on the first day of absence.

Staff are then given an appointment with a physiotherapist within 3 days.

Findings show:

- 15% of staff (86) on short-term MSK absence were referred to the staff physiotherapy service
- absence length for staff on short-term absence was reduced by 31% when referred on first day of absence, compared to day 2 or more
- 25% of staff (44) on long-term MSK absence were referred to physiotherapy
- absence length for staff on long-term absence was reduced by 11% when referred on first day of absence, compared to day 2 or more

For further information on this case study, please contact Jaclyn Curry, Media and Communications Officer, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

on 0191 203 1654 or [jaclyn.curry@northumbria.nhs.uk](mailto:jaclyn.curry@northumbria.nhs.uk).

[Public Health England](#) exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. It does this through world-class science, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and the delivery of specialist public health services. PHE is an operationally autonomous executive agency of the Department of Health. Follow us on Twitter: [@PHE\\_uk](#) and Facebook: [www.facebook.com/PublicHealthEngland](http://www.facebook.com/PublicHealthEngland).

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## **Press release: Predatory paedophile has his sentence increased by 3 years**

Abingdon man who used fake online profiles to abuse children has his sentence increased by the Court of Appeal.

An Abingdon man who was using fake online profiles to abuse children has his sentence increased by the Court of Appeal following a referral under the Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme.

Alex Orr, 27, pleaded guilty to 16 offences against children including extreme pornography and arranging the commission of a child sex offence. Orr received a 6 year custodial term and a 4 year extended licence when he appeared at Oxford Crown Court in January. Today this sentence was increased to 9 years' imprisonment with a 4 year extension.

Orr created a fake Facebook profile and tricked young teenagers into performing sexual acts for him to view online. He also incited his victims to engage in sexual activity with other children, including one who was just 1 or 2 years' old.

Speaking after the hearing, the Attorney General Jeremy Wright QC MP said:

"This offender deceived a large number of young victims and manipulated them into doing unspeakable acts, resulting in serious psychological harm.

"Just because these crimes were committed from behind a screen doesn't make them any less serious. I hope the increased sentence shows how seriously the Courts take these matters."

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# News story: Better co-ordination to stop illegal waste carriers

The Environment Agency and Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) have agreed on steps to stop illegal waste carriers and improve road safety in England.

Sir James Bevan, Environment Agency Chief Executive, and Gareth Llewellyn, DVSA Chief Executive, signed an agreement today (12 September 2017) in London.

## **How being a waste carrier works**

Companies must [register as a waste carrier](#) if they:

- transport waste
- buy, sell or dispose of waste

However, some carriers operate illegally without the necessary licence, and don't dispose of waste legally.

Companies who use a waste carrier must [check they're registered to dispose of waste](#), and not allow the waste carrier to dispose of their waste illegally.

Every year waste crime costs taxpayers and businesses £1 billion. The Environment Agency spent almost £15 million stopping illegal waste activity between April 2015 and March 2016.

## **What the agreement will do**

The Environment Agency and DVSA will share intelligence and carry out joint operations in England to:

- stop waste being illegally transported
- target unsafe drivers and vehicles

The agreement will see:

- DVSA staff working within Environment Agency teams, making sure enforcement action is coordinated and effective
- information and intelligence shared between the 2 agencies, increasing the effectiveness of roadside enforcement activity on waste industry vehicles
- enforcement teams provided with up-to date and relevant intelligence about waste industry operators

A DVSA traffic examiner inspects a waste carrier

This will all help to:

- identify high-risk or illegal goods vehicle operators who are involved in the transport of waste
- reduce the number of seriously and serially non-compliant waste industry vehicles on England's roads

## **Report unsafe operators**

You can report any information you have about to unsafe vehicle operators to DVSA.

## **Building on years of joint work**

Sir James Bevan and Gareth Llewellyn (right) talk to Environment Agency and DVSA staff at a joint operation in London

For a number of years, the Environment Agency and DVSA have worked together to stop waste crime, making sure companies are operating legally and vehicle safety is improved.

Gareth Llewellyn said:

DVSA priority is to protect you from unsafe drivers and vehicles.

I am delighted that we will be working with the Environment Agency to tackle those who illegally transport waste. By combining our enforcement powers and intelligence we'll be able to target those who break the rules more effectively.

DVSA traffic examiners will issue fines to those waste carriers we find to be operating in an unsafe manner. These operators are putting themselves and other road users at risk and pose a danger to our environment.

Sir James Bevan said:

We want to protect people and communities from the impact that vehicle and waste crime can have and create a level playing field for all operators.

This memorandum of understanding with DVSA will help both organisations target the waste industry to improve compliance and vehicle and driver safety standards.

To help us with this, we are encouraging people to check with the Environment Agency if the company they are employing to take their waste away is a fully registered waste carrier.

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# [Press release: Your chance to take a look at preferred route for A303 Stonehenge scheme](#)

Secretary of State for Transport Chris Grayling announced the preferred route for upgrading the A303 at Stonehenge this week.

As part of the biggest government investment in roads in a generation, the £1.6 billion scheme includes the construction of a tunnel past one of the world's most famous prehistoric monuments, a free-flowing, mile-a-minute dual carriageway and a much-needed bypass north of Winterbourne Stoke.

Highways England is hosting drop-in sessions where members of the public are invited to call in to see the proposals and to discuss the preferred route with the project team.

Consultation on the proposed upgrade between Amesbury and Berwick Down attracted considerable feedback earlier this year and Highways England has used this to inform its choice of preferred route, including moving the position of the western portal to avoid conflict with the solstice alignment.

Highways England project director Derek Parody said:

We are pleased to offer an opportunity for people to find out what happens next and to understand the benefits we are working to deliver.

We have listened to feedback from more than 9,000 people and organisations in our consultation earlier this year, and from this, and further surveys and studies, we can move forward with a solution to help improve traffic flow, reduce rat running on surrounding roads, bringing improvements to local communities and benefits to the South West economy, while at the same time enhancing and protecting one of the UK's most iconic landscapes.

We will continue to work with all our heritage partners, and local communities to help shape the scheme's future development, and we look forward to giving everyone an opportunity to see the revised preferred route at these public sessions.

Further consultation on the details of the route will take place in 2018, but in the meantime, the public will be able to view information, including copies of the preferred route booklet, and meet members of the Highways England project team at this month's drop-in sessions.

The events will take place at:

**The Manor Barn, High Street, Winterbourne Stoke SP3 4SZ**

- Saturday 16 September 11am to 5pm
- Friday, 29 September 2pm to 8pm

**Antrobus House, 39 Salisbury Road, Amesbury SP4 7HH**

- Friday, 22 September 2pm to 8pm
- Saturday, 23 September 11am to 5pm

Details of the preferred route are also available on the [scheme consultation page](#).

**General enquiries**

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

**Media enquiries**

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.