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23rd February 2017

Debjani Ghosh
Department for Communities and Local Government
2 Marsham Street
Westminster
London
SW1P 4DF

Dear Ms Ghosh

ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL – PROPOSED FURTHER DIRECTIONS

Further to your letter dated 9th February 2017, I respond on behalf of the Council in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet. It is very much welcomed that after the review of evidence, the Secretary of State is proposing to return further powers to the Council namely that the Authority will be able to exercise executive functions in relation to adult social care and the Council's Partnership with the NHS, economic growth, town centres, grounds maintenance, external partnerships and audit.

It is noted that the Adult Social Care and NHS partnership will have enhanced oversight arrangements from the Commissioners and that the Council will be required to follow any written recommendations made by the Commissioners in relation to any Cabinet decision regarding this service area, so as to ensure the best value duty is met. We understand why such a power of direction has been proposed given both the national context of Adult Social Care funding and the want to have assurance that protection of the most vulnerable remains strong during a period of service delivery.

We understand that in policy areas where there are heightened risks the government may see value in enhanced oversight from Commissioners, and that this can also provide some assurance to the council.

We would like to make representation that consideration is given to returning to the Council the power to make appointments to outside bodies. If this power were to be returned, it is proposed that this would be exercised through Cabinet. Exercising this power through Cabinet will ensure a transparent process and also enable Commissioner oversight in their advisory position.

In conclusion, the Council remains committed to improvement and we will continue to work constructively with the Commissioners, Government Departments, regulators and other stakeholders to deliver best value for our residents. We will continue to provide evidence to the Commissioners and the public of the impact of our improvement actions and expect to engage in further correspondence over the coming months regarding the phased return of further powers based on this evidence.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sharon Kemp". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Sharon Kemp
Chief Executive