



Department
for Culture
Media & Sport

Sarah Champion MP
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Dear Sarah,

Thank you for your letter of 3 February to the Secretary of State, about the proposed closure of our offices at St Paul's Place in Sheffield.

In your second paragraph you have asked for a guarantee that all employees whose posts move to London as a result of the recent announcements will be offered those posts if they want them. The department is very likely to take the opportunity to achieve some of the significant headcount reductions it is required to achieve as a result of the Spending Round and its commitments under BIS2020 and it is therefore unlikely that all posts will be transferred to London. This is the reason that we can only say at this stage that they 'may' be offered to those affected employees, rather than 'will' be offered to them as some posts may be removed or changed. However, any posts which are moved from Sheffield and other regions to London as a result of these announcements will be 'ring fenced' for affected staff.

In your third paragraph you ask for a commitment to cover relocation costs. This forms part of the consultation we are undertaking with the Trade Unions and so no final decision has been made on payment of relocation costs or travel and subsistence costs, but the department is under considerable financial constraints and this will need to be taken into consideration as part of that decision. The Department is also offering all of the staff affected comprehensive support to find jobs in their desired location. This includes professional, external careers advice, time out of the office for job search and financial advice workshops.

You refer to the economic impact on Sheffield. The Government believes that while the individual cities and towns of the North are strong, if they are enabled to pool their strengths, they could be stronger than the sum of their parts. This means investing in better transport to connect up the North, backing the science and innovation strengths of the North, so that new ideas can be turned into new products and new jobs, investing in culture, housing and the quality of life to make the North a magnet for new businesses and talented people, devolving powers and budgets from London to local areas across the North and creating powerful new elected mayors who will give people in northern cities and towns a strong voice.

This year, the first Growth Deal projects are getting underway. The government has so far allocated almost £3 billion from the Local Growth Fund (LGF) to the North including £328 million over 5 years for Sheffield City Region alone. This is a crucial part of the devolution revolution that is underway - housing, infrastructure and other funding has been brought together in a single LGF pot, and put directly into the hands of local authorities and businesses to address the needs of their area. Since 2010, there are 359,000 more people in work in the North - more than the entire population of Wigan/Wakefield, and equivalent to 175 more people in work every day.

I hope this letter helps to allay your concerns.

Warm regards
Lucy Neville-Rolfe

BARONESS NEVILLE-ROLFE DBE CMG