



House of Commons
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Press Release – Embargoed until 00.01 on Friday 19th August

**Sarah Champion
Member of Parliament for Rotherham
Shadow Minister for Preventing Abuse and Domestic Violence
Friday 19th August, 2016**

Responding to the report published by the Communities and Local Government Select Committee on Government intervention in Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, in the wake of child sexual exploitation crisis, Sarah Champion Rotherham MP and Labour’s Shadow Minister for Preventing Abuse and Domestic Violence said:

“It is deeply frustrating that, two years on from Professor Jay’s Report into the child sexual exploitation scandal in Rotherham, the Government is not taking its oversight responsibility seriously. It is not enough to just impose a Commissioner on a local authority which has failed in its duty to protect children and then step away. The Government should be monitoring progress and lessons must be learnt, and shared, in order to avoid the need for future interventions both in Rotherham and local authorities across the country.”

“The Government should be focussing on ensuring failings that occurred in Rotherham are prevented in the future. That means best practice should be shared proactively between local authorities and the Government should be active in ensuring that it happens.”

“Legislative protections for whistleblowers – who were so important in the unearthing of the scandal in Rotherham – have still not been formalised by this government. This is shameful and must be acted on immediately.”

“The Government should bring together all departments in Whitehall who have a responsibility to mitigate these risks and ensure they are engaged in finding preventative solutions, such as the example given with taxi licensing in Rotherham.”

“If the Government continues to devolve powers to local authorities, whilst cutting their budgets and not sharing good practice, we will start to see more loopholes and miscommunications, which will ultimately leave children vulnerable.”

“I am pleased that my colleagues on the Communities and Local Government Select Committee are taking their duty to prevent a crisis in local authorities seriously. It is time for this Government to do the same.”

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

1. The following information will be available once the embargo is lifted at midnight:

NEWS STORY: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/communities-and-local-government-committee/news-parliament-2015/local-authority-commissioners-report-published-16-17/>

REPORT PDF: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmcomloc/42/42.pdf>

REPORT HTML:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmcomloc/42/4202.htm>

2. The Committee launched its inquiry in May 2016. It received more than 15 written submissions of evidence and held two public hearings. Written evidence and transcripts of the hearings are available [here](#).

3. In February 2015, the then Secretary of State imposed Commissioners in Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council on the basis of Professor Alexis Jay's report on child exploitation and Dame Louise Casey's best value inspection.

4. Commissioners in Rotherham took over the council's executive functions and were told to institute a "rapid improvement programme". The intervention is scheduled to end by 2019.