



Home Office

Safeguarding Unit
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Clive Jones
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Managing Director's Office
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3 April 2018

Dear Clive,

Thank you for your letters of the 12th and 13th of March 2018, seeking that the Government commission an independent inquiry into the cases of child sexual exploitation in Telford.

As you know, officials from the Home Office and the Department for Education visited Telford and Wrekin last year to learn about local responses to child sexual exploitation in the area. Following the visit, the Home Office's Director of Safeguarding, Jeremy Oppenheim, wrote to the Managing Director of Telford and Wrekin Council, to thank councilors and officials for the opportunity to visit, and noting the positive comments of the inspectorates in respect of your work.

While it is encouraging to note the progress that has been made, the Government believes it is important that we also learn lessons from what has gone wrong in the past. That is why we have set up the new national child safeguarding practice review panel to commission and oversee the review of serious child safeguarding cases which in its view raise issues that are complex or of national importance. The Secretary of State for Education has written to the chair of the panel asking them to look at places where these appalling crimes have happened, including Telford, and report on whether lessons have been learned and practices improved right across the system.

The Government has already set up the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse with broad terms of reference to look at whether institutions have failed in their duty to protect children from child sexual abuse in England and Wales. The Inquiry is an opportunity to expose what has gone wrong and learn lessons for the future. As you will be aware, the

Inquiry operates independently of Government and Government cannot comment on the detail of its investigations or direct its activities. However, the Inquiry has publicly announced 13 separate investigations, including one which is looking specifically at institutional responses to the sexual exploitation of children by organised networks. In describing this investigation, the Inquiry has said:

The systematic grooming and sexual abuse of children by groups of offenders in cities and towns of England and Wales is widespread. Building upon the body of work on child sexual exploitation following specific instances in places such as Devon and Cornwall, Oxford, Rochdale, Rotherham, and Telford, this investigation will assess the extent to which a wide range of relevant authorities have learned lessons, implemented recommendations, and put in place effective strategies to prevent child sexual exploitation in future.

As such, it would not be appropriate for Government to establish a second statutory inquiry to look at issues which are already well within the scope of the existing one. It is now for the Inquiry to decide how it takes forward this investigation without interference from Government. If you continue to feel that an additional review is needed, the Council is free to commission an independent expert to carry one out.

The Home Secretary has written in similar terms to Lucy Allan MP.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'RE' followed by a long horizontal line and a loop.

Rebecca Egan
Deputy Director, Safeguarding Unit