

Bolsover District Council

Standards Committee

15th June 2015

**Recommendations arising from Report of the Inspection of
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council**

Report of the Assistant Director – Governance and Monitoring Officer

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- To consider the actions taken as a result of the Committee's consideration of the Casey report into Rotherham MBC.

1 Report Details

- 1.1 At a special meeting of this Committee on 27 March 2015, members considered the best value inspection report carried out by Louise Casey into Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.
- 1.2 The report highlighted serious failures by the Council to address child sexual exploitation (CSE) in the town. A number of factors were to blame including a pervading culture of bullying, sexism and misplaced political correctness at the Council, a failure by members to hold officers to account through scrutiny and to represent the interests of local people and serious weaknesses in the Council's taxi licensing procedures.
- 1.3 The Committee made the following recommendations arising from the report:
 - (1) That reports to Licensing Committee include reference to the likely risks to the public;
 - (2) That Licensing Committee Members receive training on what constitutes a 'fit and proper person' to hold a hackney carriage/private hire vehicle drivers licence and the training include advice for Members where a Licensing applicant has a court case pending;
 - (3) That all Members of the Council receive awareness training on Child Sexual Exploitation;
 - (4) That the Annual Scrutiny Conference agenda includes an item for discussion that Scrutiny Members annually review their scrutiny processes at Bolsover to ensure that Scrutiny stayed strong.

- 1.4 Since the meeting on 27 March, a number of the recommendations have been progressed. The aim of this report is to apprise members of the action taken to address each of the recommendations.
- 1.5 Induction for all Licensing Committee members is scheduled for 11 June and included within that will be a discussion on what constitutes 'fit and proper' and advice for members on cases where the applicant has a court case pending. One of the issues with the existing legislation is that no such definition of fit and proper exists. Instead, members will be asked to apply a number of tests to determine whether an applicant is fit and proper. Although it is not intended to alter the Council's corporate report format, all reports to Licensing Committee on taxi licensing cases will include details of likely risk to the public.
- 1.6 It is proposed that an upcoming Council meeting contain an item for briefing members on child sexual exploitation. A more general half-day session on safeguarding is planned for the end of summer/early autumn to which all members are encouraged to attend.
- 1.7 Finally, members considered the Scrutiny Procedure Rules at the Annual Scrutiny Conference prior to the Constitution being approved at the Annual Council Meeting. In addition, the Assistant Director – Governance and Monitoring Officer gave an overview of some of the issues raised in the Rotherham report.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 To advise the Committee on action taken in respect of the recommendations arising from consideration of the recent inspection report into Rotherham Borough Council.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

- 3.1 None.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 None.

5 Implications

None.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 To note the report and action taken in respect of the recommendations made by the Special Standards Committee on 27 March 2015.

7 Decision Information

Is the decision a Key Decision? (A Key Decision is one which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards)	No
District Wards Affected	
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
N/A	
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