

Review of the response to the petition heard in the RMBC Council meeting on 23.5.18 - 22.10.18

For the Oversight and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) Meeting on 7.11.18

Please find included: **OSMB 7.11.18 RMBC Council Meeting on 23.5.18 – Petition transcript**

As noted in the transcript of the Council meeting on 23 May:

Therefore this petition calls on the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services (or the Chief Executive) in Rotherham Borough Council (RMBC) to:

issue a public statement giving the reasons for deciding to return 1400 copies of the publication.

The statement needs to take note of:

- 1 the fact that it was agreed that a leaflet produced by RMBC would be distributed along with Voices of Despair Voices of Hope;**
- 2 the further arrangements suggested in a meeting in April 2015 by the officer who facilitated and joined the trip to the Houses of Parliament and Downing Street on 25 March 2015.**

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With regard to the email from Mel Meggs on 26 June 2018 please note the following:

- 1 The petition on 23 May was addressed to **the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services AND the Chief Executive.**

To state *“As Mr Thomas is no longer employed by Rotherham MBC, the Council cannot action the specific request made in the petition.”* is EVASIVE and unacceptable.

- 2 Point 1 has not been addressed.

Please refer to (included):

OSMB 7.11.18 Rotherham support services for people affected by child sexual exploitation – leaflet 400 copies collected on 16.2.15

OSMB 7.11.18 Jo Smith - Collecting Public Information leaflets 16.2.15

- 3 Point 2 has not been addressed.
- 4 To state that *“that email sets out the reasons for the decision.”* is demonstrably **FALSE.**

Please also note below my email to Mel Meggs on 27 June (in response to her email on 26 June).

Sincere regards

Liam Harron

----- Original Message -----

From: Liam <lgha@btinternet.com>

To: Meggs, Mel <Mel.Meggs@rotherham.gov.uk>

Cc: McLaughlin, James <James.McLaughlin@rotherham.gov.uk>

Sent: 27/06/2018 06:22:47

Subject: Council Petition addressed on 23 May 2018 - response

Dear Mel

I wish I could thank you for your email (as far as I can recall your first ever contact with me), but I cannot.

I am not able to express adequately in words how profoundly shocking this first response is to the petition addressed by the adult survivor 'Elizabeth' on behalf of another adult survivor on 23 May, an adult survivor who in her own words *"joined a trip to the Houses of Parliament on 25 March 2015 ... Rotherham Borough Council paid for the coach for the trip."*

I can hardly believe that you have listened to what Elizabeth actually said in the Council Chamber on 23 May.

I am attaching a full copy of the transcript.

The first response to your email by the Adult Survivors Kampaign (ASK) has been the submission (by me on ASK's behalf) of an e-petition calling on the Council to ASK you as Acting Strategic Director of CYPS to apologise to adult survivors of CSE for the mistakes you have made in your email – please see copy attached.

If you are minded to quickly apologise and retract what you have said in your email yesterday there will be no need to proceed with the e-petition. I will copy James McLaughlin (Head of Democratic Services) into my email.

Regards,

Liam

PS

I note the statement at the bottom of your email and I genuinely look forward to the day, hopefully soon, when Rotherham's Children's Services will be rated outstanding.

From: Meggs, Mel
Sent: 26 June 2018 16:25
Cc: Hatton, Lesley
Subject: Council Petition

Dear Mr Harron

On 23 May 2018 the Council received the petition presented by the survivor known as 'Elizabeth' which requested the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services issue a public statement detailing his reasons for deciding to return 1400 copies of the publication 'Voices of Despair, Voices of Hope'.

The Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services at that time was Ian Thomas, who left the employment of Rotherham MBC in May 2018.

As Mr Thomas is no longer employed by Rotherham MBC, the Council cannot action the specific request made in the petition. However in a further petition a request has been made to disclose an email from Mr Thomas to the Commissioners, dated 5 August 2015, and that email sets out the reasons for the decision. The Council will be disclosing that email with appropriate redactions to preserve the anonymity of third parties.

Regards,

Mel Meggs

Acting Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Email: mel.meggs@rotherham.gov.uk

Before printing, think about the environment

Working with children, families and our partners, for Rotherham's Children's Services to be rated outstanding by 2018;

Children and young people are healthy and safe from harm

Children and young people start school ready to learn for life

Children, young people and their families are ready for the world of work

This will mean our children, young people and families are proud to live and work in Rotherham