



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

To all Councillors  
Telford & Wrekin Council

9<sup>th</sup> April 2018

Dear Councillors

**Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in Telford**

We know more today than we did in 2016 when a request for an inquiry was first made.

We now know that CSE is still happening in Telford. We now know the authorities do not always respond as we would hope. We now know that in addition to Operation Chalice, there have been other operations in Telford: not all victims got justice, not all perpetrators were charged, not all those affected have come forward.

In 2016 the Prime Minister told the House of Commons it was for the authorities in Telford to decide if there should be an independent inquiry into CSE. At that time, the authorities decided this was not necessary and wrote to the Home Secretary giving their reasons.

In 2018, an investigative journalist revealed the scale of CSE in Telford. The Council then agreed an inquiry was necessary and wrote to the Home Office to ask for a Government led inquiry. The Government again said that it was for the authorities in Telford to commission a local independent inquiry.

If Councillors are now agreed that a local independent inquiry should be held, this consensus is welcome. However, some Councillors have said although they accept the need for an inquiry, such an inquiry should not happen yet.

Anyone who has listened to a family, a victim or survivor will tell you the time to act is now. Not at some point in the future, not based on what may or may not happen within a national inquiry into child sex abuse in UK institutions (IICSA), not some years down the line.

The enormity of the national inquiry's remit would bury the needs of our community; that's why the Prime Minister was clear it was for the authorities locally to act. Telford's needs are our responsibility – a responsibility which we cannot and must not avoid.

Knowing what we know now, none of us can stand by passively and fail to act. That's why many have been asking for a Rotherham style inquiry. It can start now, it can focus on Telford. It cost Rotherham £123,000 and took 9 months to carry out. It's quick, it's nimble, it's what we need in Telford.

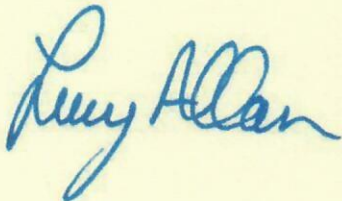
Officials might worry about logistics and limitations, but that is no reason to deny the community what it needs. If you as local councillors agree, there is nothing to prevent a local independent inquiry taking place now.

Local people elected us and gave us responsibility. People put their trust in us to represent them, not the Home Office officials or council officers; it's time to take on that responsibility.

A deferred inquiry, at some later date, as advocated by some, is no inquiry. To put it off to another day shows a failure to understand the impact CSE has had on the lives of those we represent. It suggests prevarication, or worse obstruction. It sends a message to the community that there is something to hide.

I urge all councillors to come together with the community and unequivocally support the proposal that a local independent inquiry be held and be held now.

Yours ever



Lucy Allan MP