

Councillor Peter Golds  
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Paul Rowsell  
Deputy Director – Democracy  
Department for Communities and Local Government  
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15<sup>th</sup> April 2015

*Dear Mr Rowsell*

**Re: Response to Further Directions, London Borough of Tower Hamlets**

I am writing in response to your letter of March 25<sup>th</sup> 2015. I wish to place on record that the council, in light of the previous directions, undertook a rigorous, competitive and, in my view as a committee member, transparent process to appoint both a Monitoring Officer and section 151 Officer.

All sides of the council were involved and the decision of the panel regarding both appointments was endorsed by the Mayor. The committee worked constructively and received appropriate assistance from the recruitment consultants, officers and the commissioners.

The process with regard to the appointment of the council's main officer would appear to be initially more problematic. However, the Mayor, councillors, officers, a commissioner and Dennis Skinner from the LGA held a useful and constructive meeting to prepare a way forward. This was the first time since 2010 that the Mayor and senior councillors had formally met.

Since then my group has met and we are unanimous that the council must establish the exact nature of the position. We believe that the holder of the position must have authority over council officers, and be able to manage and lead the officer team, whilst working closely with the executive to ensure the delivery of policy. The current situation, whereby the Head of Paid Service is restricted in his powers with relation to officers, is no longer sustainable. We

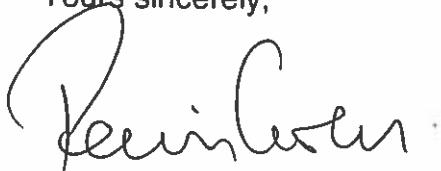
believe that an impartial senior officer will assist in the required checks and balances between the administration and the delivery of the work of the authority.

To achieve this, the powers of the post must, as soon as possible be agreed, recruitment consultants appointed, the position advertised externally and a process as rigorous as that undertaken in the recruitment of both the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer, be undertaken.

There are enormous issues facing this borough in the oncoming period and we believe a fair and rigorous selection process for a defined office will assist the council to proceed.

My group will work with other groups, the commissioners and the executive to achieve this end.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Golds', written in a cursive style.

**Councillor Peter Golds**  
**Island Gardens Ward**  
**London Borough of Tower Hamlets**