



Councillor Joshua Peck

The Right Hon. Eric Pickles MP
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5th December 2014

Dear Secretary of State

Best Value Review

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on 2nd December 2014 and considered the references to its role in the PWC Best Value review into Tower Hamlets Council.

The current members of the Committee share the view that the Overview and Scrutiny function is an important part of the governance arrangements of the Council and that adequate and effective scrutiny is essential to the Council achieving its Best Value Duty.

The Committee considers that its recent experience and the evidence of the PWC report is that this important scrutiny role has not always been adequately facilitated under the current governance arrangements of the Council. In particular, the Committee has raised concerns about:

- not being given timely access to information that would allow it to undertake scrutiny
- referrals from Full Council not being passed to the Committee in good time
- resolutions of the Committee not being actioned by officers (as identified by PWC)
- its minutes apparently having been substantially altered before it received them and its agreed minutes being challenged by officers
- difficulty in accessing the independent advice guaranteed to the Committee by the Council's constitution.

Given these concerns, the Committee formally resolved on 2nd December 2014 to write to you to request that consideration be given to ensuring that the remit of the Commissioners includes oversight of the operation of the governance arrangements that enable the



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Committee to discharge its role.

We would be happy to discuss any of this if that would be helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joshua Peck." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J" and a distinct "P" for "Peck".

Cllr Joshua Peck
Chair