



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

John Crabtree OBE
Chair
Birmingham Independent Improvement Panel
Sent via email

The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP
*Secretary of State for Communities and Local
Government*

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Dear John,

Birmingham City Council's Improvement Progress

Many thanks for your report dated 24 February 2017.

I am very grateful to you and your colleagues on the Improvement Panel for your continuing hard work and commitment to improving Birmingham City Council. I would also like to record my thanks to those who conducted the Independent Financial Review of the deliverability of the Council's budget.

It is encouraging to hear that you believe that the 2017/18 budget is achievable, and of the determination of the Leader and Cabinet to deliver the Council's financial plans. As you identify, both political support and managerial leadership are vital to ensure the Council gets onto a sustainable financial footing – and that means that the Council must address in parallel the issues you identify regarding culture, capacity and capability. I note the decisive action by the Council to appoint experienced individuals to the posts of interim Chief Executive and interim s.151 officer. I expect that the new interim Chief Executive will be keen quickly to drive further improvement.

In view of the scale of the challenge, and the risks you identify, I would like the Panel to continue to support the Council as it manages the transition in managerial leadership. I would also welcome an update on the remaining Kerslake recommendations, as you suggest. I would be grateful if you could report to me by the end of June.

Please continue to work closely with my officials, and let me know if there are any issues of which you think I should be aware before your next report.

THE RT HON SAJID JAVID MP