

The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP
Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
Department for Communities and Local Government
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

Executive Mayor's Office
Tower Hamlets Town Hall
Mulberry Place
5 Clove Crescent
London E14 2BG

21 March 2017

Contact: Gulshan Begum
Tel: 020 7364 6971
Fax: 020 7364 4999

mayor@towerhamlets.gov.uk
www.towerhamlets.gov.uk

Dear Secretary of State,

TOWER HAMLETS: DIRECTIONS AND FUTURE OVERSIGHT ARRANGEMENTS

I am writing to thank you for the letter of 16th March and to welcome your proposal to return democratic control to the Council, revoke the current Direction regime, and replace it with new oversight arrangements.

At our recent meeting, and through our exchange of correspondence, I have assured you of my commitment to drive continued improvement across the Council. I am pleased to have received your acknowledgement, endorsed by the Commissioners, of the tangible progress made since my election.

I am committed to leading the drive to improve the Council and am confident that I have the right senior management team in place to deliver. Set out in your letter and annex is the detail of the proposed new Direction that will be established from 1st April 2017 until 30th September 2018. The new Direction will require the Council to demonstrate progress against the Best Value Duty and involve the delivery of outstanding Best Value actions, which can be found in our Best Value Improvement Plan 2017–18. I understand that I will be required to publically and regularly report progress to your department, to chair a new cross-party Best Value Improvement Board providing oversight for all Council improvement activity, and to put in place arrangements for an independent review of the Council's progress and submit a report to Secretary of State by 1st August 2018. I welcome this proposed approach.

In your written statement to Parliament you made reference to the Direction allowing oversight of electoral administration. The Returning Officer is committed to continuing to improve electoral administration and the Best Value Improvement Plan 2017 contains activity regarding this and our work with the Cabinet Office on piloting voter ID. The Plan will be reported as part of the obligations of the new Direction.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



John Biggs
Executive Mayor of Tower Hamlets