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Jim Fitzpatrick MP  
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## HOUSE OF COMMONS

The Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP  
Secretary of State  
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government  
Fry Building  
2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF

Our Ref: ZA32130/RM

28 August 2018

Dear James,

I understand that you will shortly be considering the future of the Direction placed upon Tower Hamlets council, and must decide whether it has demonstrated sufficient progress to allow the direction to come to an end. In advance of this, I would like to share with you my thoughts on the progress I have witnessed in the council over the last three years.

Following the election of John Biggs as Mayor the council has undergone a significant journey of improvement to transform the culture of the organisation and become more outward looking and transparent. As I am sure you are aware, the council has delivered the majority of the Direction placed upon them, and have strong plans in place to achieve all outstanding actions through the delivery of their Best Value Improvement Plan. Such a transformation has been driven not just from a change in political leadership but also from a change in officer leadership. A new Chief Executive was appointed as well as new senior leadership, and this has helped to innovate and modernise council services.

The findings of the recent LGA Corporate Peer Challenge were very encouraging and evidenced the significant progress the council has made. The Peer Challenge highlighted the positive feedback from partners such as the NHS, voluntary sector and business organisations, and noted the open and collaborative approach the council has adopted. The council's engagement with key partners has transformed and improved over the last three years, and partners are optimistic about the future which was not the case under the previous political leadership. I can testify to this change in the council's interactions, having been engaged much more effectively and feedback I receive from residents suggests they are now actively involved in decision making and shaping service design and delivery.

Following years of disrepute under the previous Mayor, the council was in a very challenging position, with both its internal and external reputation damaged. I'm pleased that the recent local election results have provided an opportunity for political stability and has given the current administration a mandate to embed and strengthen the positive changes it has

implemented in the last three years. As the Peer Challenge highlighted, there are still challenges that Tower Hamlets must address, however unlike the challenges faced in recent years these are similar to those faced by many other council's across the country. Irrespective of whether you decide to lift the Di.rections, I am confident that with the committed political and officer leadership team in place, the council will build on the vast improvement it has made and achieve its aim of becoming a high performing council.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this with you further ahead of any decision you take on the future of the directions in the borough.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Jim Fitzpatrick', written over a faint circular stamp.

Jim Fitzpatrick MP

Cc: John Biggs, Executive Mayor - Tower Hamlets Council