



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Catherine Frances
Director General, Local Government,
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**Ministry of Housing, Communities
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2 Marsham Street
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Tony Reeves
Chief Executive
Liverpool City Council
Cunard Building
Water Street
Liverpool
L3 1AH

8 December 2020

Dear Mr Reeves,

As you are aware, Merseyside Police have been conducting an investigation which has resulted in a number of arrests made on suspicion of fraud, bribery, corruption and misconduct in public office, in December 2019, in September 2020 and most recently on 4 December 2020 in connection with offences of bribery and witness intimidation. This investigation involves a significant connection to Liverpool City Council.

As you are also aware, the Secretary of State has a range of powers available to him under the Local Government Act 1999 in relation to the 'Best Value' duty on councils. You met with the Secretary of State at his request on Monday 7 December and gave him a range of assurances about the steps you have taken to improve governance in the Council, to ensure that the Council is now operating properly and in line with the duty.

Following that conversation, and given the seriousness of the issues, this letter invites your authority to provide by 3pm on 11 December 2020:

- a) Information about any proposals or plans for your authority to enter into any commitment to dispose of, or otherwise transfer to third parties, or relating to the development of, any real property other than existing domestic property for the purposes of residential accommodation. This information should include identifying the property, and indication of its value, and the current position and likely future timetable for the disposal, transfer, or commitment relating to the development of the property.
- b) Information on the steps the authority has taken and proposes to take to secure effective governance, with particular reference to its planning, highways, regeneration and property management functions, and to provide regular updates to the department on these steps.

Lastly, I would also ask that you to keep me informed on a regular basis about the Council's ongoing response to these issues.

As the Secretary of State said to you when you spoke yesterday, the department stands ready to provide the council with the support it needs to ensure that it is able to support the people and City of Liverpool as effectively as possible at this challenging time.

I am copying this letter to your Authority's Section 151 Officer, and to its Monitoring Officer.

Your sincerely,

CATHERINE FRANCES