



**Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local
Government**

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Tony McArdle
Chair
Croydon Improvement and
Assurance Panel

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Dear Tony

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON – IMPROVEMENT AND ASSURANCE PANEL

I am writing in response to your letter of 5 February setting out the Improvement and Assurance Panel's initial assessment of the London Borough of Croydon's improvement progress. I would like to extend my thanks to you and your fellow Panel members for producing the report in such a short space of time.

I agree with your assessment of the magnitude of the challenges faced by Croydon. Your description of the steps that the Council is starting to take in order to address their past failings is encouraging and I have noted recent developments, such as the adoption of initial plans for asset management, which underline the determination to make progress. But I am also aware of the very real difficulties faced by the Council. In this context, the Panel's role will be critical.

I attach a copy of the Government's response to the Council's request for Exceptional Financial Support. In it, you will note the key and continuing role that the Panel will have both in supporting and challenging the Council as it seeks to make improvements and in providing assurance to me of their progress. I am already conscious of the important impact that the Panel's advice has had in helping the Council to make progress.

In the event of a failure by the Council to demonstrate sufficient progress in their recovery, I will consider whether it is right to use the Best Value powers available to me, including the appointment of Commissioners.

The deliverables you list in your initial assessment will be of great assistance in considering next steps in the context of your next report, due in April. My officials will also work with you as they consider what future milestones which could form the basis for further reports over the next 3 years.

RT HON ROBERT JENRICK MP