

5th November 2021

Department: Finance

Max Soule
Deputy Director, Local Government
Stewardship
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and
Communities
2 Marsham Street
London
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Contact Name: Steven Mair
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Our Ref:

Sent by email

Dear Mr Soule,

Slough Borough Council External Assurance Review

Thank you for your letter of 25th October 2021 and the opportunity to comment.

The Council welcomes the additional support from Commissioners and looks forward to working with them to continue to make large strides in righting the wrongs of the past and making the right decisions for our residents and town. All with the aim of helping the council to get itself back on a sustainable financial footing, improve its governance and provide high quality services in Slough.

The Council accepts both reports' findings and the comments. The work we have been doing since April this year has been very rigorous and comprehensive and has started positive action to ensure we address as many of the issues identified as soon as we are able to. Progress against our recovery plan, that covers a significant number of the recommendations made, was reported to Council in September and I have attached a draft of the report that will go to Cabinet and Council in November.

At this stage we would like to clarify that recommendation 15 c i) is to be interpreted as a plan to achieve the requirement, not the actual closing of the budget gap in that timeframe.

In respect of moving to all out Elections the Council understands that 4 year terms creates space to take longer term decisions without the distraction of yearly election preparations. In that vein a cross party working group has been considering the issues since 2021 and agreement has been reached to open consultation with residents in two weeks time. This will support the longer term decision making that is needed and provide political stability for the Council. The Council looks forward to continuing discussions about the timing and implementation of this recommendation with yourselves.

Please let me know if there is anything we can do in advance of the Commissioners starting.

Yours sincerely,



Steven Mair
Director of Finance and Acting Chief Executive (w/e 5/11/21)