



Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

Kim Bromley-Derry CBE DL
Managing Director Commissioner

Jim Taylor
Best Value Commissioner

By email:

commissioners@sandwell.gov.uk

Lee Rowley MP

*Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
for Local Government and Building
Safety*

***Department for Levelling Up, Housing
and Communities***

4th Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

27 July 2023

Dear Kim and Jim,

Thank you for your third report on the Sandwell intervention; I am grateful for your continued work and the diligence and professionalism that you and the team have shown.

I am pleased to note the Council have continued to work on the required improvements since December. It is encouraging to see the progress made against your '12 proxies for success' since the beginning of the intervention and that you are seeing closer working between the Council's Leader, Members, and officers.

There is still work to do, particularly to show that the improvements of the past fifteen months are both embedded and sustainable, but we are seeing a Council better placed to demonstrate this. In the next six months, to be assured of this, I expect to see evidence of the impact on residents from the new council processes and systemic changes put in place since the improvement began.

I have noted your key priorities for the Council to address in the coming months, particularly securing more strategic capacity and coherently tying the transformation programme to the medium term financial strategy. I fully support your decision that now is the right point for you to reduce the amount of time you spend in Sandwell and look forward to your assessment of the Council's response to this next challenge. Clear evidence that demonstrates Sandwell's resilience and capacity to take forward its improvement independently will be crucial if the intervention is to end as planned in March 2024.

I am grateful for all your continued hard work in Sandwell, and I recognise the on-going concerted efforts of staff and members across the Council. I look forward to receiving your next report in December 2023. In the meantime, as ever, if there is anything I can do to support you in your vital work, please do not hesitate to contact officials.

Yours sincerely,

LEE ROWLEY MP