



Department for Levelling Up,  
Housing & Communities

Gavin Jones  
Denise Murray  
Ged Curran  
*Via email*

**Lee Rowley MP**  
*Parliamentary Under-Secretary of  
State for Local Government and  
Building Safety*

**Department for Levelling Up,  
Housing and Communities**  
Fry Building  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

14 September 2023

Dear Gavin, Denise and Ged,

Thank you for your letter of 13 July providing an update on the intervention at Slough Borough Council, along with the opportunity to meet and discuss that report on 24 August. I am grateful for the work you are doing, your continuing commitment to make progress and your assessment of the current situation.

Your update is welcome. I was extremely concerned by the contents of the report which your predecessor team submitted in December 2022, as I highlighted in my response on 16 March 2023, in my statement to Parliament on the same day, and when we met the then-leadership of the Council on 22 March. As I indicated in the statement to Parliament, it was clear that things had to change.

Your latest report has been submitted after a period of change for the Council. May's elections brought new political leadership and, over recent months, the corporate leadership has also gone through a significant change. It was good news, therefore, to receive July's report which gave a more positive update and indicated cautious and early optimism that things are beginning to move in the right direction. I am pleased to see that the Council has made progress in some areas (including improvement in report quality and financial oversight, improved scrutiny arrangements and a successful move to all-out elections). Thank you for all of the work you and the Council have done in these areas, and in putting these building blocks in place for the future. It remains early days but these examples, I hope, will be the start of a more positive trend back to health for the Council.

At the same time, and whilst acknowledging those improvements, I still agree that the scale of the challenges facing Slough remain significant. Over the coming months, I do need to see a clear quickening of pace of improvement, evidence of further implementation, clear change being embedded throughout the Council's business model and greater grip on the financial position. I know that the new leadership of the

Council is keen to resolve the challenges facing Slough, and I know that they will be keen, as I am, to see that a resolution moves forwards as quickly as possible.

Thank you again for all of the work you have done and the support that you will continue to give the Council in the months ahead. With all of the changes at Slough in recent months, this is an excellent opportunity for the Council to make substantial progress towards resolving their Best Value failure. I know that they will be keen to take it.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lee', is centered below the text 'Yours Sincerely,'.

**LEE ROWLEY MP  
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT AND BUILDING SAFETY**