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Mr Maxwell Soule
Deputy Director, Local Government Stewardship
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF
(sent via email)

22nd September 2023

Dear Maxwell,

Statutory Intervention

We write in response to your letter dated 19 September 2023 confirming that the Secretary of State is minded to appoint Commissioners under the terms of a Statutory Intervention.

As the political and operational leadership of the organisation we acknowledge the analysis of the challenges contained within your letter and that things need to change and at pace, in order that the City Council can perform to the high standards that are required of us, and that the citizens of Birmingham deserve.

We welcome the appointment of the lead commissioner, Max Caller, to Birmingham City Council. We believe his knowledge of the City and his previous experience as a Non-Executive advisor to the authority will be an invaluable asset.

In response to your letter, there are some specific points that we wish to raise and would welcome further dialogue.

The Local Inquiry

We are keen to discuss the proposed format, scope and timelines for reporting in relation to the local inquiry you refer to in your letter. Birmingham City Council has already announced its intention to hold a Judge-led inquiry in relation to the causes of the Equal Pay liability that was announced in June, however, plans in relation to this are at an early stage. It would seem pragmatic to 'fold' the two inquiries into one.

Existing Interventions

We would welcome further discussion on the links and relationships between your proposed intervention and any existing statutory interventions already in place. Specifically, the Special Education Needs and Disability Commissioner (SEND) and the current intensive engagement Regulator for Social Housing Commissioner (RSH).

Inclusion and Diversity

Given the diverse nature of the City's population we believe that it is important the appointment of further commissioners is reflective of this to give confidence to our communities and broader stakeholders. This will be vital given the difficult decisions that the Council will need to make over the coming months.

To reiterate, we accept that change is needed and intend to work with the commissioner(s) in a collaborative way, with a focus upon meeting immediate challenges and setting the Council on the journey to long-term sustained improvement.

We look forward to hearing from you in relation to the above.

Yours sincerely,



John Cotton
Leader of Birmingham City Council



Deborah Cadman
Chief Executive of Birmingham City Council