

Max Soule
Deputy Director Local Government
Stewardship
Department for levelling up, Housing and
Communities
2 Marsham Street, London
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13th May 2024

Dear Max

PROPOSED MOVE TO A STATUTORY ASSURANCE AND IMPROVEMENT BOARD

Thank you for your letter of 8th May, consulting Liverpool City Council on the Secretary of State's proposals in response to the Commissioners' fifth report. This response is on behalf of the Council as a whole, following discussions with the Council's cabinet and other political group leaders.

We welcome the Commissioners' report, which fairly reflects the significant progress made on the council's improvement journey, while also recognising the further progress we still need to make to become the council the people of Liverpool need and deserve. The recommendation to conclude the role of Commissioners at the end of their current mandate on 9th June is well-evidenced, based on a shared understanding between the Commissioners and the Council. The Council has the right political and officer leadership and capacity to take full responsibility for our own decisions, and Commissioners can end their responsibilities with confidence that our improvement trajectory is well set.

We are pleased that the Secretary of State is minded to agree the Commissioners' recommendation, a commitment reinforced by Minister Simon Hoare in his positive call to Cllr Robinson. We also recognise that DLUHC wishes to have further assurance over a further 9 month period through the establishment of an Assurance and Improvement Board. We welcome this as a very significant step down from the Commissioner-led intervention model, and we commit to working with the Board and providing all necessary support. We particularly welcome the proposed appointment of Mike Cunningham QPM CBE as chair of the Board, providing valuable continuity with the dedicated and constructive role he has fulfilled as Lead Commissioner.

You can be assured that we would work constructively with the Improvement Board, with or without it having a statutory basis. However, we recognise that the new statutory directions provide additional assurance to government, necessary to enable the decision to end the role of Commissioners, and on this basis are happy to support them as drafted. We also support the timing of the mandate of the new Board until 31 March 2025.

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We will take the opportunity locally to express our thanks directly to the Commissioners for the contribution they have made to resolving a difficult period in the history of this council and helping us to look forward to the future with confidence.

Yours sincerely



Andrew Lewis
Chief Executive, Liverpool City Council