



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Max Soule
*Deputy Director, Local Government
Stewardship and Interventions*

**Ministry of Housing, Communities and
Local Government**
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Shokat Lal
by email

www.gov.uk/mhclg

22 January 2025

Dear Shokat,

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS: INTERVENTION

I am writing to inform you that the Minister for Local Government and English Devolution has appointed you as Assistant Envoy for the purposes of the Directions made on 22 January 2025 under section 15(5) of the Local Government Act 1999 in relation to the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

Assistant Envoys will have the roles and responsibilities set out in the Directions, a copy of which I enclose, along with a copy of the Explanatory Memorandum. Under the Directions, the Envoys will act jointly or severally and are accountable to the Minister in that you have been appointed by them and can have your appointment withdrawn by them. I have also enclosed terms of engagement that you will need to sign and return; your appointment is made on the conditions set out in the terms of engagement.

You will be joined by Kim Bromley-Derry CBE DL as Ministerial Envoy and Pam Parkes as Assistant Envoy, who we expect you to work with in supporting Tower Hamlets Council to meet its Best Value Duty. In particular, it is expected that you will act as advisor, mentor and monitor, providing comprehensive holistic support across the Authority to support cultural change and assist it to achieve the necessary improvements. The Envoys will be supported by Transformation and Assurance Board Leads, who the Authority are directed to appoint and who will oversee improvement work on specific best value themes.

You will be entitled to a fee for each day you act as an Assistant Envoy. You will also be entitled to reasonable expenses. Under the terms of the Directions, it is the Authority's responsibility to meet these costs and the Minister has set these fees for you at £1,000 per day. Fees are payable up to a total of 120 days per annum for both Assistant Envoys. These limits should not be exceeded without prior approval of the Minister. As to reasonable expenses, we would expect these to be in accordance with the rules for senior officers set out in the Authority's staff handbook.

In your role as a public appointee, it may be necessary to disclose information on your remuneration as part of annual accounts and you will be required to consent to the disclosure of this information. By accepting this appointment, you will be indicating your consent to this.

The Minister expects you to take an interest in matters across the Authority, beyond those identified in the Directions, given the importance of ensuring that the Authority is delivering best value in all that it does. You will play an important role in informing the Minister's response to the situation in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

You will wish to note that the Minister has asked that you and the other Envoys provide an update within the first four months of the intervention, and from then on a regular basis as agreed with the Ministry.

You are required to exercise care in the use of information that you acquire in the course of your duties and to protect information that is held in confidence. You must declare any personal or business interests which may, or may be perceived to, influence your judgements in performing your functions. These interests include (without limitation), personal direct and indirect pecuniary interests, and, any such interests of your close family members and/or of people living in the same household as you or your close family members. You are expected to ensure that acceptance of gifts and hospitality can stand up to public scrutiny. Similarly, care should be taken that no extravagance is involved with working lunches and other social occasions.

In your role as a public appointee, you must act appropriately and in accordance with the required standards. You are required to uphold the standards of conduct set out in by the Seven Principles of Public Life (as amended from time to time). You will be required to demonstrate your commitment to the principles and values of public service throughout your appointment.

Your appointment has the status of an office holder and not of an employee. Nothing in this letter shall be construed as, or taken to create, a contract of service or contract for services between yourself and MHCLG, the Crown, or the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

Should you have any queries or issues either now or during the Directions period please contact me in the first instance.

We are very grateful for your commitment to taking up this challenge to improve the performance of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets as Assistant Envoy.

Yours sincerely,

Max Soule
Deputy Director, Local Government Stewardship and Interventions