



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

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By Email

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Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to inform you that I have today published your seventh report, together with this response. Thank you for your continued commitment and support as you work with Slough Borough Council in what we recognise are challenging circumstances.

I am concerned that the tentative progress identified at Slough Borough Council in your previous report does not appear to have been sustained. Your report sets out that while some progress has been made, with the internal audit plan being delivered and the internal audit and counter fraud teams increasing visibility, targeting training, and becoming an indispensable part of good governance within the Council. However, the Council is still working to improve the implementation of audit recommendations and procurement compliance through better data use. There remain significant in year budget pressures and a lack of strategic focus and delivery of transformation of plans and programmes.

I share your concerns with the pace of change within the Council, and I note that on current trajectory you do not envisage that Slough will be meeting the Best Value duty by November 2026. Given the continued slow pace of progress I am mindful that, alongside addressing the basic requirements for the Council, we support the borough of Slough's longer-term development.

I am, therefore, today commissioning an external review, led by Dame Mary Ney with support from Will Godfrey, to assess the Council's improvement trajectory under intervention and identify what if any further support is required to drive immediate progress and to put the Council on a long-term sustainable footing. I expect the review to report back by May.

Your role as Commissioners remains unchanged, and it remains imperative that the Council does not lose sight of the scale of the improvement journey in front of them during this period. I am pleased that you are working closely with the Children's Services Adviser and SEND Commissioner appointed at Slough by the Department

for Education to ensure a coordinated approach to improvement in Slough, and I am grateful for your continued support in doing so over the coming months.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the council. I am copying this letter to Slough Borough Council's Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer.

Yours ever,

ALISON MCGOVERN MP

Minister of State for Local Government and Homelessness