Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

Baroness Taylor of Stevenage OBE
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Housing and Local Government
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Harry Catherall MBE
Carolyn Williamson OBE
Phil Brookes
Sir Steve Houghton CBE
By email

25 November 2026

Dear Ministerial Envoys,

I am writing to inform you that I have today published your second report, together with this response. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for your continued work in supporting and challenging Warrington Borough Council. I would also like to recognise the considerable work undertaken by members and officers at the Council as they continue to address the significant challenges facing the authority.

We welcome the progress made since your first report in developing ‘a clear plan for financial recovery’. It is encouraging to see that this has been underpinned by constructive joint working between members, officers and the Envoys, and that the difficult decisions necessary are being taken to support the Council’s financial sustainability.

However, as your report highlights, the real test now is delivery. I recognise that the challenge remains substantial and note your concerns about the pace of delivery to date. The Council must now urgently deliver significant savings and widespread transformation, dispose of major commercial assets, identify the remaining £30 million of savings and implement its refreshed Improvement and Recovery Plan, while continuing to deliver the essential services that residents rely on. Ensuring the Council has the required capacity and capability in place as soon as possible will be critical to swift progress.

We look forward to receiving your next report, when we expect to see clear evidence that the plans now in place are translating into measurable and sustainable improvement, and with the Council taking increasing ownership of its recovery as the intervention progresses. In advance of this, we would also welcome your assessment on whether the Council’s draft 2027/28 budget and any associated changes to the Medium-Term Financial Plan support the Council’s path to financial sustainability. We will continue to review the arrangements at Warrington to ensure it has the support required to accelerate its improvement.

Yours ever,

BARONESS TAYLOR OF STEVENAGE OBE
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Housing and Local Government