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Slough Borough Council

Growing a place of opportunity and ambition

Cllr Wal Chahal

Leader

Slough Borough Council

Observatory House

Windsor Rd, Slough SL1 2EJ

The Rt Hon Jim McMahon OBE MP

Minister for Local Government, Devolution and Regional Growth

2 Marsham Street

London

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27th October 2026

Dear Minister,

Thank you for your letter of 15th October 2026.

The Council acknowledges that it is not yet fulfilling its Best Value duties and as such accepts the need for continuing support through the intervention framework.

We welcome the Commissioners' Eighth Report and the External Review of the intervention, led by Dame Mary Ney and Will Godfrey. Progress has been recognised, but further work is needed to build organisational capacity, financial sustainability and improve key services. This has real consequences for residents, and the whole Council must work closely with officers to deliver lasting change. We will ensure that the whole Council considers the findings of the External Review carefully, so it informs the way we build our improvement plans.

The ILACS report, published this summer, was a significant moment. Services have been judged as requiring improvement or inadequate for 15 years, meaning that "a generation of children have been failed", as highlighted by the inspectors. There is a need for systemic change. The whole Council needs to get behind improvements in

vital services that have a lasting impact on communities- Children's Social Care, SEND services, Landlord Services and Housing Needs.

Despite progress on financial recovery, the Council's current position is still fragile. We must continue to improve the regulation, control and planning of our finances. This is particularly challenging at a time of rising demand and further underlines the need for transformational change in the way the Council delivers its services.

It is pleasing to see that The External Review acknowledges progress in some aspects of the Councils responsibilities, and we wish to build upon these as well as address underperformance. The refreshed approach to intervention with one integrated intervention team is to be welcomed in ensuring a single set of objectives and a clear line of sight on progress. The Council needs to work closely with your officials in introducing these changes to ensure an effective transfer of responsibilities and to protect business continuity.

The Review rightly recognises that, ultimately, our economy is the route to sustainability. Slough is a significant economic centre with the potential to expand the tax base, create opportunities for residents and make a greater contribution to the UK economy. The Council is interested in pursuing opportunities set out in the Review and will take this up with your officials. I have separately conveyed the Council's support for the Thames Valley MSA. Devolution will help us secure more benefits for Slough residents, working strategically with the other Thames Valley authorities.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my thanks to the outgoing commissioners who have played such a significant role in supporting the Council to achieve change and improvement. Whilst the Council has some distance to go, it is in a much stronger position to become a best value council over the next three years as a consequence of the advice and support of the current commissioners.

Yours sincerely,



Cllr Wal Chahal

Leader of Slough Borough Council