



**Department for
Communities and
Local Government**

The Rt Hon Greg Clark MP
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Dear Mr Crabtree

Thank you for your letter of 7 January 2016, in which you set out the Panel's view on progress by Birmingham City Council against the Kerlake recommendations a year on from the original report.

Like you I have been encouraged by the new Leader's clear commitment to fully implement the Kerlake recommendations, which he has made personally to me and also publically to the people of Birmingham. The next three months will be critical to see these words put into action.

I share your recognition of the scale of the remaining challenge facing the City. There are a few areas as set out in your letter which, if addressed over the next three months, will signal progress and have a real impact on the city. These include successfully setting the authority's long-term financial strategy; seeing a real change in the way the Council work with partners – taking a genuine transparent and collaborative approach; and the Chief Executive and senior officer team grasping the opportunity the Leader has given them to fully manage the delivery of the agreed polices and plans as set by him.

I appreciate the close working relationship your Panel has with my officials. I would like them, and us, to remain in regular contact over the coming months until your final report to me in March, so I can stay fully in touch with progress on these issues. And, as I said in my last letter, I would be grateful to hear from you in the meantime if there is any development that causes you to change your view.

Yours sincerely

THE RT HON GREG CLARK MP