



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP

*Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and
Local Government*

**Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local
Government**

4th Floor, Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF

Cllr Ian Ward
Leader of the Council
Birmingham City Council
The Council House
Victoria Square
Birmingham
B1 1BB

Tel: 0303 444 3450

Email: james.brokenshire@communities.gov.uk

www.gov.uk/mhclg

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Dear Ian,

Thank you for your letter of 14 June setting out your plans for a “New Model of Progressive Assurance” at Birmingham City Council in response to the Birmingham Independent Improvement Panel’s report of 31 March, the Council’s stocktake and the auditor’s reports.

I am prepared to endorse the model. In particular, I support the formal governance structure incorporating a Strategic Programme Board with Non-Executive Advisors (NEAs) each focussed on an area of concern, and acting as a strong and independent source of challenge, support and innovation. I note that the Council will appoint NEAs who are each highly respected individuals whose experience from across the sector speaks for itself, and who will not shy away from giving hard messages if needed. You have also explained that their work will be backed up by quarterly publication of feedback from statutory partnership chairs, opposition elected Members and key partners.

We have agreed that the Strategic Programme Board will report to Cabinet and also to me, three times a year. These reports will include individual commentary from the NEAs, as they see fit, and will be published, providing a clear mechanism whereby the Council’s progress can be established. This is reflected in my response, attached to this letter, to the Improvement Panel’s report.

I recognise the innovative approach you have taken in developing this model of oversight that may have a wider application across local government. I look forward to seeing its progress over the next 12 months.

RT HON JAMES BROKENSHERE MP