



## Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

Sir Tony Redmond  
Chair  
Nottingham City Council Improvement and  
Assurance Board

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### NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL – IMPROVEMENT AND ASSURANCE BOARD

I am writing in response to your second report, received on 6 May, updating me on the Improvement and Assurance Board's assessment of Nottingham City Council's progress since February. I would like to extend my thanks to you and your fellow Board members for producing a well-balanced and helpful report.

Your report recognises the progress the Council has made in implementing their Recovery Plan and addressing the issues previously identified. I am encouraged by the commitment of the executive team and the Council leadership to delivering the Plan. I fully agree with your assessment that we now need to see an increase in pace and delivery by the Council over the next quarter. This is especially so given the Council's stated intent to complete their Medium Term Financial Plan for 2022 and beyond by September. Progress against the Council's voluntary debt reduction programme, a credible and deliverable asset disposal programme, and continuing culture change, embedded in the Council's Constitution, will be essential to success. Progress in these areas will inform my decisions on our involvement with the Council and on its financial arrangements, and my final decision later in the year on any additional capitalisation support. In particular, given the clear recommendation in the non-statutory review on the need to limit the Council's borrowing, if there is any indication that the voluntary plan on debt is not delivering the required change I will need to strongly consider the need for statutory action to limit the Council's debt.

I am keen that the Board's ongoing work to monitor and scrutinise the Council's progress provides the challenge and assurance to help inform my decisions later in the year. I will be seeking reassurance in your next report that the Council has developed a credible strategy for long term transformation. Similarly, I will look for evidence that all Council staff are engaging with the improvement programme and the need for whole Council transformation. I would be grateful if the Board could continue to work with my officials to support these goals.

The Board's role in supporting and challenging the Council as it seeks to make progress continues to be of vital importance. I am pleased to read of the cooperation and support that you have received from the Council. Any faltering in this area would be of considerable concern and could lead to a reconsideration as to whether a more statutory approach might be appropriate to secure the improvements that are necessary.

I am most grateful to you for your continuing work with the Council and look forward to receiving your next report in August.

**RT HON ROBERT JENRICK MP**