



GOOD FOOD MATTERS

GROWING A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Jim McMahon

Minister for Local Government and Devolution

Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government

2 Marsham St,

London

SW1P 4DF

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Re: Support for Opposition to Government Intervention

Dear Mr McMahon

Good Food Matters Charity are writing to express our strong support for Croydon Council and our deep concern regarding the proposed appointment of government representatives to assume control of the Council's governance, recruitment, and decision-making functions.

As a valued partner, we have witnessed the Council's ongoing commitment to community engagement, transparent operations, and continuous improvement. Over the past few years, Croydon Council has taken significant steps to address past challenges and implement a comprehensive programme of reform and renewal.

These efforts include the adoption of a new governance model, strengthened financial controls, improved scrutiny functions, and an unwavering focus on delivering better outcomes for residents.

The Council has demonstrated clear accountability and an openness to external review and support. They are closely with partners and the local community to rebuild trust, promote inclusive decision-making, and invest in long-term solutions through its reset the balance with VCS initiative. While there is still work to be done, we hope the Council's trajectory is one of meaningful and measurable progress.

We firmly believe that local issues are best addressed through local, democratically elected leadership. The proposed intervention risks undermining the voice of the community and the integrity of local democracy. It also threatens the collaborative relationships that exist between the Council and its partners—relationships built on trust, shared values, and a mutual dedication to serving the diverse people of Croydon.

Furthermore, the community and voluntary sector is uniquely positioned to support Croydon Council. As non-profit organizations, we harness the power of community through volunteers, offering much better value and impact than large commercial companies that answer to shareholders rather than the Croydon community. We can mobilise and be agile in a way that is best highlighted by the VCS community response during covid. *We hope LBC remains committed and true to working with the VCS as promised during the current VCS reset.*

Our dedication to serving the community ensures that our efforts are aligned with the needs and interests of our diverse local residents.

We urge the government to reconsider this course of action and instead work constructively with Croydon Council to support good governance. Local government should reflect the will and interests of the community it serves. Disempowering that structure would set a concerning precedent and weaken the very foundation of local representation.

We ask the government to uphold the principles of democratic governance and community-led decision-making.

Amanda McGrath
Managing director

www.goodfoodmattes.org.uk
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