



Birmingham City Council

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Open Letter:

Birmingham Independent Improvement Panel:

This week we have seen the Birmingham City Council issued with its third auditor warning showing a clear inability of the current administration to manage the city's finances and 'simply cannot be trusted with public money'. Many of the residents I have spoken to are appalled at how the council is being run, how the council taxes are going up with a deteriorating level of service to its roads, waste collection and service in the city. Birmingham is reeling from its second set of bin strikes, first in 2017 and now 2019 which has cost the city over £7m and has opened the council to potential further financial risks. Council has been unable to keep its promises around funding the Commonwealth Games and the AMEY Highways Contract is a mess.

Now a few days ago, ATG- the provider for almost half the City's Home-School transport provision has gone into administration. Despite clear and repeated signs of financial distress and repeated concerns over the size of this one contract, the Council has done nothing for years, routinely extending the contract every year since 2013, unable to bring in changes necessary to improve and properly re-procure the service. The failure here has many of the same hallmarks as the retendering of the Veolia Contract- given years to secure more favourable terms, the council was unable to forward plan this to the benefit of residents

Significant in-year investment in adult social care from Government, and the extra social care precept tax to residents has not been translated to a boost in service and there is a risk that services to vulnerable adults may end up subsidising the Council's failures with the bin collections.

The council continues to have a blame culture blaming the background of national cuts, ignoring the fact that these cuts are proportionate to what every other council has faced despite which the vast majority of councils have never had a Section 24 auditors notice, and none have ever had more than one. It is this blame culture of the political leadership which continues to hold the city back as excuses are made for poor decisions and no one is willing to accept responsibility.

All these routine failures need to be brought to the attention of residents who are still being routinely failed by the political leadership in this council and desperately needs to drastically improve.

Sincerely,

Cllr Alex Yip JP

Sutton Wylde Green ward

Shadow Cabinet Member Children's Wellbeing

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