JASON PERRY
Mayor of Croydon

**Sarah Jones MP**
**Natasha Irons MP**
**House of Commons**
**London**
**SW1A 0AA**

**Mayor Jason Perry**
**Executive Mayor of Croydon**

16 September 2026

*Dear Sarah and Natasha,*

**South Norwood, Portland Road and High Street Rental Auctions**

Further to your social media videos and the petition launched on 17 August, I wanted to write with information that clarifies the position on High Street Rental Auctions and the work already underway to bring empty shops back into use.

I would hope neither of you would deliberately give residents a misleading impression of the Council's position. I will, therefore, assume that your campaign was launched without the full information, which I have set out below.

I agree that South Norwood High Street and Portland Road deserve investment, thriving businesses and fewer empty shops, which is why my Administration has been focusing on the issue. What residents deserve from their elected representatives is an accurate account of both the opportunities and the practical challenges.

Council officers were already discussing High Street Rental Auctions with MHCLG in July, before your petition was launched. In August, they followed up with three straightforward questions:

- How will the recently announced £10 million national funding package be allocated?
- Will there be a formal bidding process or additional funding rounds?
- What are the indicative timescales for local authorities to access funding?

The Department's response was explicit:

"As discussed previously, we announced a further £10 million of funding for HSRA implementation. The previous funding round closed in January 2026 and we are currently working through the detail of the new programme and how funding will be delivered. We expect to provide further information to local authorities shortly."

It continued:

**"At this stage, we are not yet in a position to confirm allocation mechanisms, whether there will be a formal bidding process, or precise timescales."**

These are basic questions about an announced funding programme. How much can councils access? How do they apply? When will the money be available? Your own Government is unable to answer any of them. Announcing funding, leaving those arrangements unresolved and then campaigning against councils over delivery is government by press release. Residents and businesses need a programme that works on the ground, not random partisan attacks that aren't informed by reality.