



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE

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FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE

30 August 1985

Prime Minister 2

To note that Sir Keith is cautious about the possibility of getting the ILEA out of County Hall by April 1987, and about the cost.

Ken

GLC COUNTY HALL

Thank you for your letter of 21 August, which was not received here until a week later. *2/9.*

I am glad to know that Sir Godfrey Taylor is keen to get to grips with the task of attempting to clear the riverside block of County Hall for disposal. I am sure that it is right that he should have an early discussion with Mrs Morrell.

Planning a relocation from their present quarters will obviously be a major task for the ILEA; I enclose, in case you have not seen it, a copy of their paper outlining the work and the costs involved. New accommodation would have to be adapted to provide a council chamber; planning and completing that in time for them to move in within a year of abolition would be a tall order. In the same period the ILEA will be preoccupied with shaking down their new support services established to replace those at present bought in from the GLC; there must be some doubt about their capacity to plan and execute a relocation in addition. I would not want them to be able to say that they were so preoccupied with dealing with the effects of abolition that they could not attend to other matters on which we are pressing them to concentrate, such as educational standards and high spending. I sympathise with Sir Godfrey's desire to set himself a tight deadline and I want to suggest no discouragement, but he will need to discuss with Mrs Morrell what would be practicable.

No doubt putting the worst possible face on it.

/We shall

Rt Hon Kenneth Baker MP
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We shall also have to consider in due course the financial terms of the relocation. You say that the London Residuary Body may offer some compensation to the ILEA to offset their relocation costs to some extent at least. Any relocation costs not so offset would of course fall on the education budget. I should be most reluctant to be forced to increase the ILEA's capital or recurrent budget to pay for alternative office accommodation; and I cannot imagine that you would be keen to give them the opportunity to say that abolition had increased their costs. I hope that this can be borne in mind.

I should be grateful if you would keep me closely in touch with the development of Sir Godfrey's thinking as to what solutions are feasible for County Hall.

I am sending copies of this to the Prime Minister and John Biffen and, in view of what I have said about the financial terms of the relocation, to Peter Rees.

Yours ever,

Keir

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