



COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM THE WEST OF ENGLAND
COMBINED AUTHORITY'S AUDIT COMMITTEE

This page is intentionally left blank

Statement received from the West of England Combined Authority Audit Committee re: Unlawful Expenditure report

At its meeting on 11 December 2023 the West of England Combined Authority Audit Committee considered the report and wished to put on record the following.

We cannot emphasise enough the significance of this matter as a governance issue. The most important point is that you as a committee must meet to consider this report, dispassionately.

It is not the role of Audit Committee to tell you the decision you should come to; but it would be unfortunate if a Committee meeting did not now take place with all 3 Unitary Authority Leaders (or their substitutes) present, within the legally required time frame. While our understanding is that Counsel's advice is that the Committee meeting would also be quorate with just 2 Unitary Authority Leaders present, that is not the recommendation of the Audit Committee.

The reputational damage to the Combined Authority has already been prolonged by the inability to meet last Friday.

The sooner this issue is noted the sooner the Authority can move ahead and deal with the important governance issues that have to be resolved.

We note that the external auditor is to issue a further report on Governance and so this issue requires the concentrated attention of the whole CA Committee.

Cllr Geoff Gollop

Chair of and on behalf of Audit Committee

12/12/23