



**LIVERPOOL
CITY REGION**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

METROMAYOR
LIVERPOOL CITY REGION

3 April 2020

LCRCAPQ20032020

Dear Dr Woodcock

Public Question Time – Combined Authority Meeting of 20 March 2020

Thank you for your two questions, which were submitted for consideration to the LCR Combined Authority held on the 20 March 2020. My response to your two questions is set out below.

With regards to your first question, I have asked the Monitoring Officer and the Statutory Scrutiny Officer to refer this question to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their consideration. Should the Committee identify appropriate proposals they will be referred back to the Combined Authority for their consideration. I will of course ask that you be kept informed of developments.

Having inquorate meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is something which I take very seriously as inquorate meetings could have a detrimental impact on the governance of the Combined Authority. I would like to re-assure you that behind the scenes a lot of work has been undertaken with the Leaders and Chief Executives of the constituent Local Authorities to explain the impact inquorate meetings has on the Overview and Scrutiny function and ask them to encourage Elected Members to attend meetings. Officers are also working directly with the Chair and Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to encourage them to make every effort to attend. This concerted effort ensured that the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was quorate.

I am sure you are aware that the issue of inquorate Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee's is not particular to the Liverpool City Region and is a challenge faced by other Combined Authorities across the Country. The reason for this is that the threshold for quorum is set at two thirds, which is in contrast to that of Local Authorities which is one third. I have made representations to Government on this matter and asked them to consider aligning the quorum threshold with that of Local Authorities.

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Furthermore, with the very recent temporary changes to The Local Government Act 1972, (via the Coronavirus Act 2020) we are looking to introduce the facility for Elected Members to dial in remotely to meetings of the Combined Authority and its Committees. This may also be one measure to improve attendance at Overview and Scrutiny Committees in the short term.

However, we recognise that more needs to be done to continue to improve attendance at meetings of the Committee and a number of options are being explored for possible implementation in the new municipal year.

Yours sincerely

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Metro Mayor, Liverpool City Region

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