

Gareth Sutton Executive Director
of Resources and Investment

Rebecca Brookes Director of
Legal and Governance

SYMCA

By email

South Yorkshire
Mayoral Combined Authority
11 Broad Street West
Sheffield, S1 2BQ

27 September 2024

Re: Former Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner Accounts and Budget Issue

Dear Gareth and Rebecca,

Thank you for your report, and for all the work you have put in to both identify and understand the challenges within the budgetary position we have inherited. I know you share my deep disappointment and frustration at these problems, which appear to be the result of mistakes that have been made and the breakdown of the systems that you have identified.

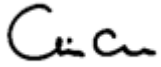
We will only ever be able to put South Yorkshire Police on a more secure footing, and continue to protect the communities of South Yorkshire, if we now properly and proactively contend with the financial position we are in. We must undertake that work with urgency. The budgets of South Yorkshire Police have been under strain for a number of years, but the longstanding accounting errors you have identified will no doubt provide us with further challenges.

As you know, I have been in contact with both the leadership of South Yorkshire Police and the government to begin discussions about how to best mitigate those challenges. The safety and security of the communities of South Yorkshire will always remain my most vital and most urgent priority. I know the new government share my concerns about the financial position of not just South Yorkshire Police, but across the wider criminal justice system in this country.

While I have confidence we will be able to find a path through those challenges, I am concerned that the errors you have unearthed were not noticed before I took charge, and have been ongoing for the five years before we took control of those systems this year. To provide me, you and the public of South Yorkshire with confidence that we understand what went wrong, I would therefore ask that in addition to the other steps that we are taking to control, manage and safeguard that budgetary process, you now commission an external, independent review of the processes that allowed those mistakes to be made by the office of the former PCC and to ensure that no other errors have been made. The transparency and accountability that should come through that process is vital if I am to ensure that the public of South Yorkshire can continue to have confidence in this system I am now charged with overseeing. While we cannot rectify the mistakes of the past, we can ensure that we understand why those mistakes were made.

I look forward to working with you to put South Yorkshire Police on a firm financial footing going forward, and continuing to serve the communities of South Yorkshire.

With best wishes,



Oliver Coppard

South Yorkshire's Mayor