



## CABINET OFFICE

Catherine Little  
Civil Service Chief Operating Officer  
and Cabinet Office Permanent Secretary

Rt Hon Dame Meg Hillier MP  
Chair, Public Accounts Committee  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

By email: [pubaccom@parliament.uk](mailto:pubaccom@parliament.uk)

15 May 2024

Dear Dame Meg,

### **MANAGING CENTRAL GOVERNMENT PROPERTY**

I am writing to you regarding Recommendation 1 of the *Managing Central Government Property* report. The Committee recommended that the department's new property database should be operational as soon as possible, and that the Cabinet Office should:

1. ensure that it uses the right expertise to advise on the procurement;
2. explore off-the-shelf digital options; and
3. set clear deadlines.

The Government agreed with the recommendation and informed the committee of a Spring 2024 implementation date. The update in December 2023 advised that delivery of the core system was on track. I am pleased to confirm that the initial configuration of the core database has been completed as planned.

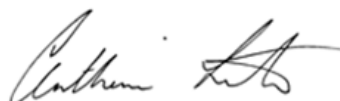
However, the department commissioned an independent accessibility audit report in January 2024, which advised in March 2024 that the platform fell materially short of legal and contractual accessibility requirements. As the system cannot be launched until these legal requirements are met, roll out will be delayed to October 2024.

Proactive engagement with the supplier and management remedies are in progress to mitigate the impact of this delay and a further audit is planned for July 2024. As a learning from the audit findings, we are conducting further due diligence on other aspects of the system to ensure that they are delivered to specification.

To mitigate the overall impact to the programme, concurrent roll out activities are now being planned and delivered. For example, user acceptance testing is continuing to take place while the accessibility issues are resolved.

Our confidence in the supplier rectifying the system's accessibility is high. The overall implementation plan is subject to a number of associated risks, inherent with a cross department, Information Technology transformation. These risks are being actively monitored and managed by a dedicated technical team.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Catherine Little', written in a cursive style.

**Catherine Little**

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