

PUBLIC ACCESS STATEMENT to AFA meeting 16 December 2020

By Jenni Gwynne

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Regarding the catastrophic risk in Financial Matters

As you know, the acknowledged as unthorough "investigation" of my Capital Accounting concerns used a materiality level of £1.3 million, and did not investigate transactions prior to 2018/19, as I was promised. This being the period when, as the Home Office Statutory Inspection by Dr Craig Baker concluded, Avon Fire & Rescue Service was primarily being run for the benefit of senior officers, costing the public hundreds of thousands of pounds in unjustified future pension payments etc.

I was led to believe that the thorough investigation of previous years transactions would happen when the above mentioned Deloitte "investigation" had reported. It did not. This despite the Deloitte "investigation" resulting in a catastrophic risk rating (23 out of 25) in Avon's Risk Register, and my concerns having been identified by the LGA as having credible potential for fraud and corruption.

Also, Avon have refused my Freedom of Information request to provide documents revealing what £765,000 spent on Land at Temple Back in 2014/15 was for, when no land was purchased. £498k of this was written out of the accounts with the sale of HQ land. Please note external works are not included in land assets, so it is hard to imagine what this expenditure was for.

Avon have also refused to provide requested information relating to the 2019/20 accounts, which Transparency Laws give the public the right to see.

Numerous AGEC meetings were cancelled during 2019/20, with Internal Auditors concluding there is a risk that appropriate oversight and attention was not given to their responsibilities, and that the AGEC and the AFA have not received continuous assurance regarding their responsibilities throughout the year.

As the AFA have gone back on their promise to me to investigate previous years, I am publicly appealing to members to obtain proof of what the £765,000 expenditure on Temple Back land was for.

I am also publicly appealing for the AFA to read the Government Legislation concerning Public Rights to inspect annual accounting records and clearly justify to me why I was refused the information that this clearly states I was entitled to receive.

I am not a nit-picker, and it was chiefly through huge effort and persistence on my part that the catastrophic risks in financial matters were finally exposed.

I do not believe the letter instructing me to go to the police or complain to the Information Commissioners Office, regarding the above refused information, represents Avon's stated values of Transparency, Integrity, Honesty and Respect.