PRESS RELEASE

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South West Councils Chair welcomes Prime Minister's backing for Devolution across the South West

Cllr Bill Revans, Chair of South West Councils and Leader of Somerset Council, has welcomed today's announcement during Prime Minister's Questions signalling Government support for greater devolution across the South West of England.

Responding to a question on devolution for the Wessex region, the Prime Minister expressed support for extending devolved powers and funding to the South West, including Wessex, as part of a wider commitment to strengthening local decision-making and unlocking economic growth.

Commenting on the announcement, **Cllr Bill Revans, Chair of South West Councils,** said:

Today's announcement is a significant and very welcome step forward for the South West. For too long, our region has not benefited from the same level of devolved powers and investment available elsewhere in England.

The South West is home to thriving communities, innovative businesses and nationally important industries, yet we continue to face challenges around transport, housing, skills, infrastructure and productivity that require locally-led solutions.

Through South West Councils and the Voice of the South West partnership, council leaders and chief executives across the region have worked together to make a strong case for greater devolution. Today's commitment from Government recognises both the strength of that collective voice and the enormous potential of our region.

Devolution is about bringing decisions closer to the people and places they affect. It is about giving local leaders the tools, funding and powers needed to drive economic growth, improve public services and create new opportunities for residents and businesses.

Importantly, devolution is not local government reorganisation. It is about transferring powers and resources from Whitehall to the regions, enabling us to shape our own future and deliver better outcomes for our communities.

There is much work still to do, but this is an encouraging milestone. We look forward to working constructively with Government, alongside our partners across the South West, to ensure our region secures the powers and investment it needs to thrive.

South West Councils will continue to work with local authority leaders, Government and regional partners to support progress towards a comprehensive devolution settlement that maximises opportunities for communities across the South West.