



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Max Soule

*Deputy Director, Local
Government Stewardship and
Intervention*

**Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government**

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Liz Watts
Chief Executive
South Cambridgeshire District Council

8 November 2024

South Cambridgeshire District Council Best Value Notice expired 8 November 2024

Dear Liz,

As you know, the department reissued a Best Value Notice (“Notice”) to South Cambridgeshire on 8 May 2024 as a formal notification that we had ongoing concerns regarding the authority and requesting that the council engages with the department to provide further assurance of improvement.

We recognise the council’s constructive engagement with the department throughout the period of the Notices, including your cooperation with the request for data about the impacts of the four-day working week trial.

As the Deputy Prime Minister set out in her letter to local authority leaders on 16 July and reiterated on 24 October at the Local Government Association conference, this government is committed to working as partners in power, with mutual respect underpinning our approach. This means an end to micromanaging local authorities.

Although it is not government policy to support a general move to a four-day working week for five days’ worth of pay, we recognise that local authorities are independent employers who are rightly responsible for the management and organisation of their own workforces. We encourage active and ongoing dialogue with the workforce and trade unions on any changes to local working arrangements. In turn, local voters are best placed to make decisions about the effectiveness of local authority services in their own areas.

With this in mind, the Notice will not be reissued.

It is important to ensure transparency in relation to these matters and a copy of this letter will be published on GOV.UK, in line with the Best Value Notices previously issued to the council. I encourage you to make a copy of this letter available on the council’s website, and to share it with

full council and the audit and governance committee. We will notify your external auditor of our decision.

Yours sincerely,

Max Soule

Deputy Director, Local Government Stewardship and Intervention