

25th June 2026

To All Town and Parish Councillors

Contact: Cllr Bridget Smith
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Dear Town and Parish Councillors,

I am writing following the Government's recent announcement confirming its intention to establish a Greater Cambridge Urban Development Corporation (UDC).

Many of you will already have seen media coverage of the proposal and may have questions about what it could mean for your communities and for local decision-making across Greater Cambridge.

The Government has said the new Development Corporation would be created to accelerate housing and economic growth in the area and help coordinate the delivery of infrastructure. While the details have yet to be worked through, the proposal is that the new body would take on many planning responsibilities currently held by local councils. In time, it could also become responsible for preparing future Local Plans once the current Greater Cambridge Local Plan has been completed.

South Cambridgeshire District Council has made clear that we support sustainable growth and investment in the infrastructure needed to support it. However, we are concerned that the Government's proposals could reduce local democratic accountability by transferring important powers away from councils whose members are directly elected by local residents.

These concerns are heightened because Greater Cambridge is already delivering on the government's ambition for growth. South Cambridgeshire is one of the highest-performing areas in the country for new homes, with planning permission already in place for around 37,000 homes. Through the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan, developed jointly with Cambridge City Council, we have also been planning for up to 77,000 homes and more than 100,000 jobs through a process informed by extensive public consultation and engagement with town and parish councils.


At present, there remain many unanswered questions. We do not yet know precisely how the Development Corporation would operate, how decisions would be made, how local communities would be represented, or what role elected councillors would have in shaping its priorities. We are seeking greater clarity from Government on these issues and will continue to press for strong local representation and meaningful community involvement in any future arrangements.

Town and parish councils are often the first to hear residents' concerns and aspirations about growth and development. Your local knowledge and understanding of your communities will remain essential as discussions about the future of Greater Cambridge continue. We are committed to keeping you informed as further details emerge and will continue to make the case that decisions affecting local communities should be shaped by those communities.

We will look to organise a briefing for town and parish councils, likely after the summer, once we know more about the government's plans.

Thank you for your continued service to your residents and communities.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Bridget Smith
Leader of the Council
South Cambridgeshire District Council