

September 2023 Update from Cllr Heather Williams

Leader of the Conservative Group at South Cambridgeshire District Council

Four-day working week

In September, South Cambs District Council received a second letter from local government minister Lee Rowley MP asking to stop the trial. We have continued to raise our concerns about the four-day week, especially the financial and reputational cost to residents.

The reports suggest that the administration has saved on agency fees so far by filling nine of 23 'hard-to-fill' posts – helped by the incentive of a four-day week. This should be considered in light of the full facts and figures, which show that **£189,153 extra** was spent in the first 3 months of the four-day week trial. These figures can be seen below:

Q4 2021/22 (without four-day week)	£1,148,728
Q4 2022/23 (with four-day week)	£1,337,881

The estimated costs for the four-day week for bin collections are also higher. This is due to the need to recruit two more bin crews with two more electric bin lorries. These costs are summarised below:

	3-month trial	Year 1	Year 2
Cost	£66,000 (£33,000 per council for SCDC and CCC)	£132,000	£207,000

We are currently scrutinising these figures and will continue to raise these concerns to ensure residents are getting value for money.

We do not believe it is right that 80% of elected councillors have not been given the opportunity to vote on the four-day week. With something like this, which has a huge impact on all residents, it should be decided in a way where all have a voice.

Above all, we want to make sure residents are getting the services they deserve from their local council. At present, we cannot see any reliable proof of improved service. Now, more than ever,

we need more working hours, more council officers and an even stronger work ethic – not fewer working hours, with residents paying for five days' work but only getting four days' work.

Changes to bin collection dates

As a result of the four-day week being extended to our refuse collection service and a route reconfiguration, there are changes to bin collections for over 80% of households in South Cambs. Bins will no longer be collected on Mondays. Everyone affected by the change should have had a letter explaining your new collection day.

By clicking the link below and putting in your postcode, you can find your new bin collection calendar for South Cambs.

www.scambs.gov.uk/recycling-and-bins/bin-collection-changes-from-september/

You can also click below to find out more general information about bin changes in Cambridgeshire.

www.scambs.gov.uk/binchanges

Road charging

At the most recent meeting of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, road charging was yet again raised for a debate and vote as part of the Local Transport Plan. This was despite leading politicians saying the proposed £5 per day Cambridge congestion charge would be taken off the table at the beginning of September.

The Plan was not approved by the Combined Authority as Peterborough Authority essentially had a veto. But road charging is still a contentious political issue in Cambridgeshire. The South Cambs representative at the Combined Authority meeting was clear that all options including road charging needed to be on the table and that there did need to be restrictions on cars. We have consistently spoken out and voted against all forms of road charging and will continue to campaign against it. We do not believe putting extra financial pressure on working people is appropriate especially in the current climate.

Fly tipping

South Cambridgeshire District Council receives around 1,600 reports per year regarding fly tipping. The Council is urging residents to do the right thing and properly get rid of their rubbish in the following ways:

- Consider giving it away for free on Facebook marketplace, Gumtree or taking to your local charity shop.
- If possible, reuse, repair or recycle your items before getting rid of them.
- Ensure you choose a reputable registered waste carrier disposal service.
- South Cambridgeshire District Council can arrange for collection of bulky items for many common household goods. We collect a maximum of nine items per collection. Up to three items can be booked for the minimum charge of £32.50. Additional items are then £5.50 each.
- Take your rubbish to one of Cambridgeshire's Household Recycling Centres.

We would like to encourage anyone that sees fly tipping to report it via the web link below.

www.scambs.gov.uk/recycling-and-bins/report-or-request/report-environmental-issues/

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