

**Dehenna Davison MP**  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State  
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities  
2 Marsham Street  
London  
SW1P 4DF

29 September 2022

Dear Minister,

On behalf of South East Councils (SEC) we would like to congratulate you on your promotion as a Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities with responsibility for devolution deals, county deals and local growth funding, and wish you well.

South East Councils is the voice of local authorities across the South East of England as a representative body of 45 councils. We are a cross-party membership association, and we campaign to ensure that the South East is a great place to work, live and do business.

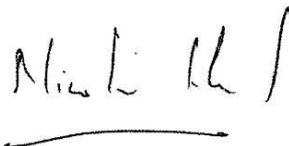
Much of our focus over the past year has been on what the levelling up agenda means for the South East. A recent report by the APPG for the South East, chaired by Sally-Ann Hart MP, of which SEC acts as the Secretariat, highlighted that much of the South East is as much in need of levelling up as parts of other regions including the North and Midlands, particularly coastal areas and airport towns, which were disproportionately impacted by Covid-19.

The South East is one of only two regions in the UK that continues to make a net contribution to the Treasury meaning levelling up the South East is a vital part of levelling up the country as a whole. Devolution of powers, including finance, would allow the South East to most effectively contribute to the Government's new Growth Plan 2022, helping to level up the whole of the UK.

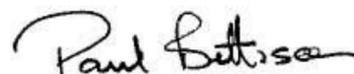
On October 19<sup>th</sup> we will host "Tomorrow's South East"- Summit of the South East (SOTSE), a vital opportunity for leaders across the region to discuss levelling up, the challenges and pressures facing local government and planning for growth. **We would welcome your attendance to say a few words.**

The South East is the UK's gateway to the world and with more control over its destiny, the region can do more, support more and deliver more for the UK. We look forward to working with you to ensure this happens.

Yours sincerely,



**Cllr Nicolas Heslop**  
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First Floor, Council Offices  
Argyle Road  
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Kent, TN13 1HG



**Cllr Paul Bettison OBE**  
Deputy Chair, South East Councils  
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