

Combined Authority Board

Wednesday 20 March 2024

Venue:	Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, Huntingdon PE29 3TN	
Time:	10.00 to 14.55 (break from 13:40 to 14:00)	
Present:	Mayor Dr Nik Johnson Councillor A Smith Councillor L Nethsingha Councillor A Bailey Councillor C Boden Councillor M Farooq Councillor S Conboy Councillor B Smith A Kingsley	Cambridge City Council (Statutory Deputy Mayor) Cambridgeshire County Council East Cambridgeshire District Council Fenland District Council Peterborough City Council Huntingdonshire District Council South Cambridgeshire District Council Chair of the Business Board
Co-Opted Members:	Councillor E Murphy J. Peach J O'Brien	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority Police and Crime Commissioner (substitute) Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care Board
Apologies	D Preston	Police and Crime Commissioner

Minutes:

1 Announcements, Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies for absence were reported as set out above. Councillor Lucy Nethsingha had advised that she would be arriving late and joined the meeting at 10:36.

The Mayor took the opportunity to thank two senior officers who would be leaving the Combined Authority: Nick Bell, Executive Director for Resources and Performance, and Steve Cox, Executive Director for Place and Connectivity. He thanked them both for their contributions; stating that they are leaving the authority in a better place than it was when they arrived.

Paying tribute to Mike Gough, a local campaigner who was tragically killed whilst cycling a few days prior to the meeting, the Mayor recognised the grief the community was feeling. Mike was a huge advocate for the benefits of cycling, active travel and for safe space on roads and pavements; inspiring the Mayor and many others to be interested in cycling. The Combined Authority is committed to improve road safety and continues to work with partners to that end. Mike's tragic death will not be forgotten, and his legacy will continue to shape progress towards a safer future.

2 Combined Authority Membership Update September 2023

The Board received a report outlining changes to the membership of board and committees of the Combined Authority.

It was resolved to:

- A Note the change in substitute Member from Cambridge City Council on the Combined Authority's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- B Note the change in appointment from South Cambridgeshire District Council on the Combined Authority's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- C Note the temporary change in substitute member from the Conservative Party on the Human Resources Committee on 8 **14** March 2024.

- D Note the appointment of substitute member from South Cambridgeshire District Council on the Combined Authority's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- E Note the temporary change in substitute member from the Conservative Group on the Combined Authority's Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 March 2024.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 31 January 2024 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Mayor. The minutes action log was noted.

4 Petitions

One petition was received and presented to the Combined Authority Board in accordance with section 5.34 of the Constitution.

The petition was presented by Emma Mayoux-Andrews who summarised that Stagecoach's reduction of the bus service to Littleport to only three buses per day poses a significant threat to the daily lives and economic activities of residents. With escalating train fares and decreasing reliability, coupled with rising car-related costs and inadequate pedestrian/cycling infrastructure to nearby Ely, the bus service serves as a vital link for commuting, accessing essential services, and reducing traffic congestion and pollution in light of population growth. The petition urges that the bus services in Littleport are not just maintained, but enhanced.

In response, the Mayor thanked Emma for communicating the strength of feeling and worry in the local community and confirmed that the necessity for bus travel from Littleport to Cambridge via Ely for employment and education is understood. Since receiving the detail of Stagecoach's change, officers have worked diligently to seek a solution that improves the base service from Stagecoach's current proposals.

This involves CPCA paying to double Stagecoach's commercial service from three to six journeys a day; maximising the possibility to have a service in place from April 14th. The tender for the enhanced service has now closed and officers are working through the responses.

The new service Stagecoach have registered, which provides three journeys in each direction each day does not have static times to what is currently in place. For example, merging previous 0600 and 0700 journeys from Littleport into a 0635. This, as well as ensuring that the combined authority does not compete with a commercial service in the current deregulated market, has made the task more complex.

Despite this, officers will work diligently to put in place the contracted solution, with the aim that it serves the stops that the previous service did and then rapidly study the data and further solutions. This will also involve working with communities in Landbeach, Milton and Waterbeach.

5 Public and Member Questions

Six questions were received in advance of the meeting in accordance with the procedure rules in the Constitution. A copy of the questions and responses can be viewed here when available.

6 Forward Plan

It was resolved unanimously to:

A Approve the Forward Plan for March 2024

A query was raised about the entries on the Forward Plan relating to the interviews for senior officer positions and why the roles themselves were not stated for transparency. Officers responded that these were clearly specified in the agendas for the HR committees where the shortlisting and interviews were carried out.

7 Combined Authority Chief Executive Highlights Report

The Chief Executive introduced the report and highlighted key points to Board members.

During discussion, Board members raised the following queries:

 The ongoing planning for UKREiiF was commended, and Members queried whether officers are getting sufficient support from the constituent authorities. Officers confirmed that Economic Development officers are all working closely with the Combined Authority and as the prospectus is finalised, ideal attendees can be identified. A session will then be held with all those attending. Members acknowledged that attendees would need to be able to talk confidently about every part

- of the authority. Specific appreciation was voiced from the Business Board as a number of members will be in attendance to support or speak.
- Members discussed the recent Shared Ambition Workshop and how encouraging the breadth of
 participation was. Following a query about next steps, officers confirmed that feedback requests
 would be going out and an online engagement platform is to be launched to allow those not able
 to attend to engage.
- Disappointment was voiced in the lack of government update on Ely Junction, and a query was put to officers whether more could be done in conjunction with colleagues in Norfolk and the Midlands to raise this on the agenda. Officers confirmed there are regular discussions with the Department for Transport and that it will be picked up with neighbouring authorities.
- The £4.5 million arts and culture funding for Cambridge was queried with further information requested on where the money is from and what it is specifically to be used for. Officers agreed to share further information with Board members directly. It was highlighted that whilst this money will be spend on leisure and culture in Cambridge the enhanced asset and employment in the arts will benefit a large number of people across the whole region.
- An update was requested on progress with recruitment of an active travel champion. Officers
 confirmed that the job description is being developed by an active travel scrutiny group, with delays
 to the process due to Active Travel England requiring consistency across all Mayoral Authorities.
 The cost has been factored into the active travel programme going forwards but more detail will
 be provided to Members.
- Appreciation was voiced for the support at the NHS Health and Careers Fair
- The Net Zero Villages Programme had been discussed at the meeting of the Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee, with members keen to look at alternative ways to get the money out as soon as possible. Officers have been asked to look at wither commissioning one of the constituent authorities or passporting the money out.
- Great representation from the Combined Authority at the House of Commons and House of Lords
 recently was praised as it is good to see local civic leaders making a case for the region at
 government level. It was raised that following the Assistant Director Transport's attendance at the
 House of Lords for the Accessible Transport Charter it would be useful for the transport team to
 look at that in more detail if possible.

It was resolved to:

A Note the content of the report.

8 Budget Update Report – March 2024

The Assistant Director, Finance, introduced the report and brought the members' attention to a mistake in the published papers. A table on page 104 in the agenda pack had the total treasury investment average rate shown as 5.03 when it should read 5.42.

	29 Feb 2024 Actual Portfolio £m	Average Rate %
External borrowing:		
Public Works Loan Board	0	
Local authorities	0	
LOBO loans from banks	0	
Other loans	0	
Total external borrowing	0	
Total gross external debt	0	
Treasury investments:		
Banks & building societies (unsecured)	0.3	2.00
Government (incl. local authorities)	193.3	5.43
Money Market Funds	15.5	5.29
Total treasury investments	209.1	5.03 5.42
Net debt	(209.1)	

Before opening the item for discussions, the Mayor raised that the wording of recommendation C needed to be amended for accuracy. Recommendation C should read:

C Approve the allocation of £400k from additional treasury management income to fund the continuation of the improvement plan in 2024/25 as set out in section 6

The Mayor moved the amendment to the recommendation, which was seconded by Councillor Nethsingha. This was then voted on with the majority in favour [7 in favour, 2 abstentions].

During discussion, Board members raised the following queries:

- Concerns were raised regarding the lower-than-expected uptake in Skills Bootcamps and the
 possibility of fund clawback. It was noted that difficulties in engaging providers and learners,
 along with issues of accessibility, have contributed to this challenge. The programme duration
 for the new phases is longer and more flexible commissioning was discussed to address the
 issues. Emphasis was placed on learning lessons for the future to improve value for money. The
 need to prioritise areas with the greatest skills disparity and overcome challenges in engaging
 learners with low skills was highlighted.
- Efforts to reduce inequality through skills coldspots mapping and improving public transport were acknowledged. Positive feedback was received regarding broader education provision and the ability to deliver consistently on the budget.
- Concerns were raised about significant additional funds required due to the ongoing best value notice and incurred costs from complaints. Members hoped that the additional funding will aid in organisational focus on delivery and generate tangible benefits for taxpayers.
- Queried on the use of the £400k additional funding, officers confirmed that half of the money would be for implementation of the SAF and training, the rest directly into the improvement programme.

On being proposed by the Mayor, seconded by Councillor Anna Smith, it was resolved to: [6 for, 3 abstention]

- A Note the financial position of the Combined Authority
- B Approve the provisional carry-forwards from 2023/24 into 2024/25
- C Approve the allocation of £400k from additional treasury management income to fund the continued improvement workstream in 2024/25 as set out in section 6
- C Approve the allocation of £400k from additional treasury management income to fund the continuation of the improvement plan in 2024/25 as set out in section 6
- D Approve the financial strategies for 2024/25 following review by the Audit and Governance Committee as summarised in section 7.

9 Improvement Plan Update

The Interim Director, Transformation Programme, introduced the report and highlighted key points to members.

During the ensuing discussion, several points were raised by Board members:

- The importance of honesty and transparency within the organisation was emphasised, with concerns raised about issues potentially being hidden from both the board and the public. Clarifications were provided regarding the handling of confidential documents and the commitment to transparency within legal constraints.
- Concerns were expressed about the progress made under the best value notice, with a call for a greater focus on residents' needs over internal matters.
- The importance of the Board's performance in relation to the success of the Combined Authority was underscored, alongside the emphasis on celebrating positive achievements and progress.
- The significance of the strengthened officer team and the ongoing improvement work were acknowledged, with a call for clarity on the effectiveness of these efforts.
- The determination of the authority to improve and the importance of listening to professional advice from officers were highlighted.
- Gratitude was expressed for the team's work, alongside a call for collaboration to achieve regional success.

On being proposed by the Mayor, seconded by Councillor Anna Smith, it was resolved to: [unanimous]

- A Note the identified areas of ongoing concern set out in the Best Value Notice received in January 2024.
- B Note the closedown of activity in the current Improvement plan (phase 2).
- C Agree the phase 3 Improvement plan to reflect the ongoing concerns set out in the Best Value Notice received in January 2024.
- D Agree the revised terms of reference for the Independent Improvement Board going forward, to reflect the delivery of stated areas of improvement identified by the Best Value Notice received in January 2024.

10 Bus Reform and Network Delivery Update

---00o---John O'Brien left the meeting during this item

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The Executive Director, Place and Connectivity, introduced the report and highlighted key points to Board members

Discussing the first recommendation, the potential for franchising public transport services was acknowledged; members noted the funding uncertainties. Concerns were raised about Stagecoach's and the profit-driven approach that is central to the deregulated private sector led model. The need for accountability in any future model chosen was emphasised. The board was informed that a comprehensive business case comparing Enhanced Partnership (EP) and franchising models would be presented, considering various investment scenarios. The process in the legislation was highlighted. The importance of liaison with the Department for Transport (DfT) was expressed. The importance of informed decision-making and due diligence in improving the public transport network was recognised.

Discussing the third recommendation, members noted that the Combined Authority had not always been successful with their BSIP bids and queried whether the new plan could come back to LSM before submission. Officers confirmed that the information needed by 12 June is related to spending and that the Department for Transport understand that the timings will mean that political sign-off for that is unlikely so the version submitted will only be a draft. Work will continue with TIC and the BISP will then come to Board for final sign-off. There will be ongoing conversations with the different districts, but Members emphasised the collective discussion is important.

Moving on to recommendation D, Members shared personal experiences with buses and raised concerns about the effectiveness of current subsidies. Specific bus routes were questioned and proposed solutions for better integration and service frequency were made. A focus on increasing frequency was suggested in order to attract more passengers. The connections to rail services were queried and it was confirmed that regular contact was continuing with rail operators. The integration of buses, trains and other forms of transport is critical and being picked up as a key priority with mobility hubs being considered.

The discussion highlighted the importance of safety, lighting, and addressing service cuts in rural areas. Officers outlined ongoing work on timelines and resource allocation, including efforts to address infrastructure issues. Positive initiatives like the £1 youth were highlighted.

Officers agreed to send a slide pack to Members which shows the metrics more clearly than the report appendix.

On being proposed by Councillor Anna Smith, seconded by Councillor Lucy Nethsingha, it was resolved to:

[unanimous]

- A Note the progress with the franchising proposals including updates from the audit process of the Bus Reform Outline Business Case (OBC) including the intention to bring a decision to consult to a summer Board meeting. The CPCA Board will consider the revised Business Case and the full findings of the Auditor to inform any decision to move to public consultation.
- B Approve that officers commence to prepare for an Interim Enhanced Partnership being formed to act as a 'stepping stone' to further, wider reform.
- C Note that CPCA is required to produce an updated Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), in line with Department for Transport requirements, and approval is sought for delegated authority to the

- Executive Director Place & Connectivity, working with the Chair of the Transport and Infrastructure Committee, to update and finalise the BSIP to ensure submission by 12 June
- D Note the wider package of bus network delivery work, including the investment in bus services through the precept, bus stops infrastructure and £1 bus fare for Under 25s in the region that officers will continue work to implement

Note the vote was in favour by a two-thirds majority and included the Members appointed by Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council

---00o---Meeting adjourned from 13:40 to 14:00

John Peach left the meeting during the break.

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13b Delegations to Officers

The Interim Director, Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer, introduced the report and highlighted key points to members. Delegations required for officers between the start of the pre-election period and the Annual meeting to ensure there is continuity of service.

On being proposed by Councillor Edna Murphy, seconded by the Mayor, it was resolved to: [8 for, 1 abstention]

- A Delegate authority to the Assistant Director of Skills to accept CEC funding and to enter into and finalise all necessary contracts and Grant Funding Agreements in consultation with the CFO and MO.
- B Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Economy and Growth to:
 - approve (enhanced) business support arrangements via Growth Hub during 2024/25 FY
 - accept funding from DBT and approve the funding plan that will form schedule in DBT funding agreement
 - accept funding the BB/CAB approved to be used to enhance the CPCA's Growth Hub offer in 2024/25 FY
 - contract with service providers and contractors to deliver elements of the additional business support services included in Growth Hub plan for 2024/25 FY
- C Delegated authority to the Executive Director for Place and Connectivity in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and Chief Financial Officer for the retendering of any bus routes which an operator gives notice that it will cease to provide between 25 March and the next meeting of the Transport and Infrastructure Committee.
- D To delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Skills, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer to:
 - enter into grant funding agreements and/or service contracts with training providers to deliver Innovation Fund project activity. This can either be with new (following a procurement exercise) or existing providers
 - extend and /or vary contracts with existing providers where appropriate.

Note the vote for recommendation C above was in favour by a two-thirds majority and included the Members appointed by Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council

17 Recommendations from the Transport and Infrastructure Committee

The Board was advised that all recommendations had been supported by the Transport and Infrastructure Committee at its meeting on 13 March 2024.

On being proposed by Councillor Anna Smith, seconded by the Mayor, it was resolved to approve all the recommendations as set out below:

[8 in favour, 1 abstention]

E-Scooter Trial Update

A Approve the extension of the e-scooter trial to 31 May 2026

LTCP and Associated Strategies

- A Approve the reprofiling of the approved funding across the next three financial years as set out in 3.2
- B Delegate authority to the Executive Director in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer to enter into Grant Funding Agreements with Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council to develop the strategies for 2024/25.

Transforming Cities Fund

- A Delegate authority to the Executive Director for Place and Connectivity in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer to sign change requests with Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council concerning TCF projects
- B Delegate authority to the Executive Director for Place and Connectivity in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer to agree change of deeds to the Grant Funding Agreement with Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council concerning TCF projects.

15 Senior Appointments

The Chief Executive introduced the report.

On being proposed by the Mayor, seconded by Councillor Lucy Nethsingha, it was resolved to: [8 for, 1 abstention]

- A Note the contents of this report.
- B Note that a further report will be submitted to the board, prior to the meeting of 20 March, following the interviews being held on Wednesday 13 March 2024 and Thursday 14 March 2024. This subsequent report will note the recommendations from the HR Committee on the preferred candidates. The recommendations of this subsequent report will require board approval.
- C To approve the recommendation made by the Members of the HR Committee at the meeting on 13th March 2024 that the preferred candidate be appointed to the Statutory position of Executive Director Resources (section 73 Officer).
- D To approve the short term acting up appointment of the current Assistant Director of Finance to the statutory position of section 73 officer, if required, to take effect from 18th May 2024.
- E To approve the recommendation made by the members of the HR Committee at the meeting on 14th March 2024 that the preferred candidate be appointed to the statutory position of Director of Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer).
- F Delegate to the Chief Executive the function of agreeing with the successful candidates the terms and conditions of appointment, including associated start date and any other requirements and actions necessary to finalise arrangements.

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Councillor Mohammed Farooq left the meeting at this point.

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11 | Corporate Performance Report Q3 2023-24

The Head of Policy, Insight and Performance introduced the report and highlighted key points to members.

- Concerns were expressed about how to effectively measure inequalities especially as much of the data used is outdated, Any intent to improve the situation is undermined if we have no clear measurement of where we are now, where we want to be and how we are doing.
- The need to address climate change metrics, particularly around emissions, was highlighted.
- The inclusion of data regarding social housing was requested as the price of housing in some parts of the region are extremely high and the need for social housing is great.
- Improvements to the Combined Authority's website were raised, with officers confirming that there is funding included in the MTFP for website development and ongoing work to look at the scope. Time needs to be taken to get it right and a tested product is expected by the end of the next municipal year.
- The Net Zero Hub team's efforts were praised, and challenges in achieving goals in that area were discussed at length. Officers explained the various obstacles and complexities faced nationwide

with this work. Policy changes have allowed for a higher income threshold and opened up clean heat. A letter from the Lead Member and the Mayor (and Board if they want to be co-signatories) was suggested and officers were asked to feed into that with what that could include.

On being proposed by Councillor Edna Murphy, seconded by Mayor, it was resolved to: [8 for, 1 abstention]

- A Scrutinise and agree performance information relating to the Combined Authority's Corporate Key Performance Indicators
- B Scrutinise and agree performance information relating to the Combined Authority's Most complex programmes and Projects.
- C Scrutinise and agree performance information relating to the Combined Authority's Headline Priority Activities.
- D Note progress to evaluate the impact of the Devolution Deal Investment Fund in a Gateway Review.

12 Q3 Corporate Risk Report

The Project Manager PMO, introduced the report and highlighted key points to members.

A briefing note for Board members was requested with detail on the cyber security risk and measures in place.

It was resolved to:

- A To note the risk register, dashboard and heat map in Appendix 1-3
- B To note the update on progress of the Risk Software implementation
- C To note the plan for risk deep dives

13a Greater South East Net Zero Hub Delegations

The Regional Head, Greater South East Net Zero Hub, introduced the report and highlighted key points to members.

On being proposed by Councillor Bridget Smith, seconded by Councillor Lucy Nethsingha, it was resolved to:

[6 for, 1 abstention]

A Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Place and Connectivity and any replacement (or substitute) as set out in table 1, to make decisions on behalf of the Combined Authority when sitting on the Net Zero Hub Board(s).

14 Update on State of the Region 2024

The Head of Policy, Insight and Performance, introduced the report and highlighted key points to members.

Board members were in support of the work, the purpose starting with inequalities. They queried how the document will actually shape decision making and officers confirmed that this is an ongoing project, a broad partnership that will continue into the future. Pipeline strategy and policy work is being looked at in response to the State of the Region work.

The absence of the Oxford Cambridge Partnership on the list of partners was queried but officers reassured that there are great conversations and shared commissioning planned on future research as CPCA officers sit on the Oxford Cambridge steering group.

It was resolved to:

- A Note progress to develop the 2024 State of the Region review.
- B Note proposed further development in future years.

16a | Careers Hub Academic Year 2024-25

Councillor Lucy Nethsingha, Lead Member for Skills, introduced the report.

On being proposed by Councillor Lucy Nethsingha, seconded by Councillor Anna Smith, it was resolved to:

[6 for, 1 abstention]

- A Accept the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) core funding offer and allocate the match funding from UKSPF and Post SPF Skills Support.
- B Accept future grant funding that is awarded by the CEC in addition to core funding, up to the value of £150,000 for projects aligned to strategic priorities
- C Delegate authority to the Interim Assistant Director of Skills, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer to enter into grant funding agreements with CEC and contracts and grant funding agreements for the delivery of the Careers Hub.

16b Recommendations from the Skills and Employment Committee

The Board was advised that all recommendations had been supported by the Skills and Employment Committee at its meeting on 4 March 2024.

On being proposed by Councillor Lucy Nethsingha, seconded by Councillor Bridget Smith, it was resolved to approve all the recommendations as set out below: [6 for, 1 abstention]

Improving Efficiency and Effectiveness (Adult Education Budget)

- A To approve the in-year amendments for existing providers which include growth requests for high-performing providers and reprofiling of funding where providers have underperformed
- B To approve the establishment of a flexible Innovation Fund, allowing us to respond to regional activities that underpin the priorities identified within the Employment and Skills strategy.

18 Recommendations from the Business Board

The Board was advised that all recommendations had been supported by the Business Board at its meeting on 4 March 2024.

Officers confirmed that the UKSPF Dashboard is being developed ahead of sharing with the constituent council Leaders and Chief Executives so more detail will be available.

On being proposed by Al Kingsley, seconded by the Mayor, it was resolved unanimously to approve all the recommendations as set out below:

Business Board Terms of Reference and Governance

- A Approve the Terms of Reference (attached at Appendix A) for adoption within the CPCA Constitution.
- B Request CPCA to bring role profiles to the next meeting of the Business Board in line with the roles set out in 2.6 for consideration and approval.
- C Request CPCA Officers to undertake the necessary actions in order to deliver the cadence for meetings set out in 2.9 to 2.13
- D Endorse the responses set out in 2.14 and 2.15 to the CPCA Board requests for formal response to the CPCA Board.
- E Recommend the good practice identified in 2.17 to the CPCA Board for implementation by CPCA Officers.

Business Growth and Social Impact Investment Fund Update

A To note the updates contained within this report

UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund Update

A To note the updates contained within this report