



<b>Combined Authority Board</b>		Agenda Item
<b>20 September 2023</b>		<b>7</b>
Title:	Combined Authority Chief Executive Highlights Report	
Report of:	Rob Bridge, Chief Executive	
Lead Member:	Mayor Dr Nik Johnson	
Public Report:	Yes	
Key Decision:	No	
Voting Arrangements:	No vote required	

### Recommendations:

A	Note the content of this report
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### Strategic Objective(s):

The proposals within this report fit under the following strategic objective(s):

X	Achieving ambitious skills and employment opportunities
X	Achieving good growth
X	Increased connectivity
X	Enabling resilient communities

### 1. Purpose

1.1	This report provides a general update on the key activities of the Combined Authority and the Mayor since the last Board meeting, which are not covered in other reports to this Meeting. It also provides information on some key developments, risks and opportunities that have emerged.
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### 2. Funding Activity

3.1	<b>Funds allocated by the CPCA</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• £485k of surplus treasury management income to develop a cultural strategy, support the development and negotiation of a new devolution deal, and initiate the new Local Evaluation Framework.</li><li>• £250k to ensure the continued delivery of the improvement plan</li><li>• £150k drawn from the Programme Response Fund to deliver a State of the Region Review</li><li>• £170k drawn from the Programme Response Fund to deliver a Shared Vision</li><li>• Awarded £32m of highways capital maintenance grants to our Local Highways Authorities.</li></ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awarded £1.1m of AEB Local Innovation Funding across 10 key initiatives to build capacity, pilot new approaches and strengthen partnerships across the sector.</li> <li>• £1.1m to support the delivery and implementation of the Sector Strategies over the current and next two years.</li> <li>• £56k to continue the Love to Ride behavioural change programme for an additional year</li> </ul>
3.2	<p><b>Funds awarded to the CPCA</b></p> <p>There has been little new funding announced since the previous report, owing to Parliament being in Summer recess.</p> <p>Confirmation has been received of withdrawal of central government support (core funding) for Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) from April 2024 and the transfer of their functions – namely, business representation, strategic economic planning, and the delivery of government programmes will move to local and combined authorities. The Government also confirmed it will provide some revenue funding to local and combined authorities in 2024/25 to support them in delivering the functions currently delivered by LEPs. They will provide further detail of this support in due course. Funding beyond 2024/25 is subject to future Spending Review decisions. The CPCA has had the Business Board (LEP) fully integrated into the Combined Authority since 2019.</p>
3.3	<p>Since the start of the financial year, excluding the Net Zero Hub, the Combined Authority has reported the award of new capital funding of £61.0m and revenue of over £3.7m.</p> <p>Including the Hub these figures become up to £219m capital and £8.1m revenue.</p>

### 3. Public Affairs

4.1	<p><b>East of England All Party Parliamentary Group</b></p> <p>The Combined Authority continue to work closely with the East of England All Party Parliamentary Group. Deputy Mayor, Cllr Anna Smith has attended East of England APPG Meeting: Levelling up Education and Skills, where she spoke as a panellist at the Q&amp;A meeting with Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP, Minister for Skills, Apprenticeships and Higher Education in Westminster about levelling up skills in the region.</p> <p>She spoke about the Combined Authority's track record in this space; telling parliamentarians about ARU Peterborough which was established using Levelling Up funding. The University is allowing our local students from deprived areas to access quality further education courses, which are co-designed with local businesses. And when they receive their qualifications, students will have learned the desired skills that are in demand within our local industry.</p>
4.2	<p><b>Ely Area Capacity Enhancements</b></p> <p>Mayor, Dr Nik Johnson, and CEO, Rob Bridge, have sent a letter which outlines the imperative need to deliver Ely Area Capacity Enhancements to Secretary of State for Transport and The Chancellor of the Exchequer.</p> <p>A draft copy of the letter was hosted on the Combined Authority website, allowing parliamentarians, political, local and business leaders add their signature of support to the letter. The letter was signed by 54 other individuals from across the UK who pledged their support.</p>
4.3	<p><b>The Autumn Statement</b></p> <p>Ahead of the Autumn Statement, the Combined Authority is working to scope out our key lobbying requests to Government. This proactive work is being done in partnership with the Business Board and will result in a public affairs campaign in the lead up to the Chancellor's Announcement and strategic reaction following it.</p>
4.4	<p><b>Accessible Public Transport</b></p> <p>Following the Mayor's roundtable which enabled accessibility champions, with first-hand experience of using public transport and active travel routes, to help shape the Combined Authority's work on inclusive public transport. The Mayor spoke as a guest panellist at the launch of National Centre for Accessible Transport's Accessible Transport Policy Commission.</p> <p>The Commission is a cross-party Parliamentary forum of MPs and Peers who are committed to eliminating barriers to transport. Chaired by Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, the Commission will</p>

	<p>convene disabled people and transport professionals with policymakers to forge a new and more inclusive consensus about the future of the transport system.</p> <p>Mayor Johnson shared the firsthand feedback he had received from hosting an accessibility roundtable previously in the year.</p>
4.5	<p><b>Cambridge 2040</b></p> <p>Following the Government's announcement of its long-term plan for housing, including Cambridge 2040 to see Cambridge "super charged as Europe's science capital", Mayor Dr Nik Johnson has written to The Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. Within the letter the Mayor reiterates that Cambridge City is frequently listed within the least affordable places to live in the UK and requests a meeting to talk through the infrastructural barriers to greater development within the city. The Mayor also wrote to Peter Freeman, Chair of Homes England and Chair of the Cambridge 2040 Delivery Group, to seek an introductory meeting to set out how the two organisations can work together. In addition, the Mayor and Chief Executive have both met with Peter Freeman as part of the fact finding and development of the Cambridge 2040 work.</p>
4.6	<p><b>Devolution</b></p> <p>Officials from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing &amp; Communities (DLUHC) continue to work and develop a 'core offer' and framework for all mayoral combined authorities, as highlighted by the Secretary of State at the LGA conference in July. The framework hopes to align to the 'trailblazer deals' in Manchester and West Midlands and will be an opportunity for the Cambridgeshire &amp; Peterborough region to receive further devolved powers and funding to make a positive impact and difference to residents and businesses. Discussions with the Board will be arranged to look at this in more detail.</p>

## 4. Economy and Growth

5.1	<p><b>Al Kingsley appointed as Business Board Chair</b></p> <p>Al Kingsley has been appointed chair of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Business Board. Al has served as a Board member since January 2020, and was appointed following an extensive recruitment process.</p> <p>Al is the group CEO of NetSupport, an award-winning technology company which develops software for both the education and corporate markets. NetSupport has grown to support over 20 million users in 110 countries around the world and has won over 300 international awards.</p> <p>He is chair of Hampton Academies Trust in Peterborough as well as the independent chair of the region's SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) Board. Alongside authoring numerous books, Al writes and speaks internationally on the effective use of digital and educational technology, growth, governance and leadership. He is a Forbes Technology Council Member and was awarded the 2023 EduFuturist of the year. Al also mentors technology start-ups entering the education sector.</p>
5.2	<p><b>Citizen Hub opening</b></p> <p>Deputy Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, Cllr Anna Smith, opened a new Citizen Hub in St Neots which will provide advice about jobs and training support for residents to improve their skills in life and work. The Hub has been established as a result of the Combined Authority brokering a partnership between training provider Evolve Your Future and a community group, St Neots Initiative. Since opening on July 21st, the Hub has had over 100 visitors and 25 learners have enrolled in upskilling courses.</p>
5.3	<p><b>Skills Bootcamps</b></p> <p>Following an open tender procurement exercise, contracts have been awarded to Training Providers to further expand The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Skills Bootcamps offer to residents and businesses, as part of the £2.8mil Skills Bootcamp funding secured by The Combined Authority for the 2023-24 FY.</p> <p>We now offer 19 Skills Bootcamp courses ranging from Level 2 – Level 5, including for the first time this FY; Level 3 and Level 5 Leadership and Management, Level 3 in Care, Level 2 Insulation Installation, Level 4 Digital Accessibility Specialist and Level 4 Business Data Analytics.</p>

	Skills Bootcamps are flexible training courses and last up to 16 weeks. They give the skills wanted by employers for jobs in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. The courses help improve people’s careers and include an interview with an employer. These courses are free for learners who are self-employed, unemployed, or looking for a career change. Employers can get up to 90% off the cost of Skills Bootcamps to upskill their staff.
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## 5. Place and Connectivity

6.1	<p><b>Green Skills</b></p> <p>Local authorities and social housing providers in the South East region have been awarded over £290m in funding from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) and Home Upgrade Grant (HUG). This will allow the Greater South East Net Zero Hub (GSENZH), for which the Combined Authority are the accountable body, and the Retrofit Academy to support the training and development of the workforce required to retrofit 13.9 million households across the region’s 16 counties.</p>
6.2	<p><b>Local Nature Recovery Strategy</b></p> <p>The Combined Authority have received confirmation of DeFRA funding for the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. As our programme lead, Cambridgeshire County has gone out to market to contract the editorial support role required.</p>
6.3	<p><b>Fanshaw Road redevelopment</b></p> <p>The Combined Authority grant funded £1M of DLUHC funding to Cambridge City Council to assist with land assembly costs associated with redeveloping some 1950’s flats, adjacent houses, and garages at Fanshawe Rd, Cambridge. The project shall provide 93 new affordable and sustainable homes, enhanced provision of open space and improvements to a community pavilion.</p>
6.4	<p><b>Pathfinder Places</b></p> <p>Both Peterborough Council and the County Council have successfully completed Phase 1 of the Pathfinder Places programme funded by Innovate UK. These two multi-partner projects have taken an initial view of ‘non-technical’ barriers to achieving Net Zero 2050. Both authorities are submitting bids for Phase 2 of the programme. 31 partnerships are eligible to bid up to £5m, with a likely 5 or 6 being successful.</p>
6.5	<p><b>Future Fens Adaptation Taskforce</b></p> <p>The Future Fens Integrated Adaptation Taskforce met in July. It discussed progress to-date on the FFIA Manifesto. Activity underway or planned included Fens 2100+ Adaptation decision-making framework, an Integrated Water Management strategy for the Fens and Lincolnshire, a ‘fens-wide’ visualisation tool, and improved hydrological systems understanding of the Fens, The Taskforce also received a presentation on the proposed Fens Reservoir and the benefits of open channel transfer of water.</p>
6.6	<p><b>Infrastructure Delivery Framework</b></p> <p>Tender documents have been issued to seek consultants to lead the preparation of the Infrastructure Delivery Framework. This work, previously reported to the Committee, will work with partner organisations across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to identify the infrastructure blockages to achieving sustainable and inclusive growth, including energy, water, and transport, and to set out potential solutions for CPCA and other partners to progress. Consultants are expected to be in place by the end of September.</p>

## 6. Transport

7.1	<p><b>City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement</b></p> <p>As part of the early discussions on deeper devolution a proposal is being prepared to make the case for CPCA to benefit from a Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) from Government. Outside London, CPCA is the only MCA not to be given the opportunity of CRSTS which, for other MCAs, has provided a five-year funding settlement for investment in local transport networks. CRSTS consolidates the Highways Maintenance Block, Potholes Fund, and Integrated Transport Block. It would create the</p>
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	ability for Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council, as Highway Authorities, to work with CPCA and other partners to design and deliver ambitious investments in the local highway network. The case will be prepared and pursued as part of the 'levelling out' of MCA responsibilities through devolution discussions, and also form a key part of our submissions ahead of the Autumn Statement.
7.2	<p><b>Ticket Office Consultation</b></p> <p>It is the CPCA's mission is to make life better, healthier, and fairer for all by driving growth that is evenly spread and sustainable. This includes supporting and promoting fair and equal access to transport within our region for all of our communities and railway users. In regard to the consultations around train station ticket office closure, CPCA has expressed its deep concerns around the proposals to each of the train operating companies that have a presence in our region as well as to Transport Focus who are collating responses on behalf of the rail industry. Whilst recognising that rail usage and consumer expectations are constantly evolving, we hold a firm view that there should always be a minimum level of service that all passengers and other end-users should expect. We are concerned that the proposed plan, including the removal of ticket offices, will adversely affect some of our communities who deserve safety, security, and accessibility at all railway stations at all times. The CPCA would like to understand the rationale behind proposed changes at each station, informed by data which it is assumed is available. We would also like to see changes in numbers of staff at each station quantified, as it is difficult to assess whether the changes might be positive or negative for passengers without this.</p>
7.3	<p><b>Cambridge South Station</b></p> <p>The Network Rail development of the new Station infrastructure and non-station building works (platforms and ancillary works) are progressing on site. Following the successful Transport and Works Acts Order a detailed planning application for the station buildings has been submitted. Once approved, the construction of the station buildings may progress. There remain track works planned over the 2023 and 2024 Christmas periods to make the rail connections into the existing systems. The planned opening date remains 2025.</p>
7.4	<p><b>Bus Reform</b></p> <p>Our work to transform the bus network in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough continues at pace and we remain committed to working with the Mayor to realise his bold ambition for franchising or an enhanced partnership. That vision is clear and undiminished, we want to make bus services more convenient, more frequent, more reliable, and more affordable. The first step towards the delivery of this vision is the development of the required Outline Business Case that will assess franchising against an Enhanced Partnership approach. We will only deliver this work by working collaboratively with partner organisations and bus operators.</p> <p>Recent announcements from the Greater Cambridge Partnership highlight the need, and desire for better buses, as outlined in the Mayor's vision. Over 70% of responses were in favour of the future transport network to include more buses to more locations, cheaper fares and longer operating times. We have engaged with the Greater Cambridge Partnership and other partner organisations throughout on our network review and our ongoing franchising work and will maintain this vital two-way engagement in order to deliver the changes required.</p>

## 7. Appendices

8.1	None
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## 8. Implications

### Financial Implications

9.1	None
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### Legal Implications

9.2	None
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Public Health Implications	
9.3	None
Environmental & Climate Change Implications	
9.4	None
Other Significant Implications	
9.5	None
Background Papers	
9.6	None