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| <b>Combined Authority Board</b>     |  | Agenda Item |
| <b>31 May 2023 – Annual Meeting</b> |  | <b>5</b>    |
| Title:                              | Public Questions   |             |
| Report of:                          | Edwina Adefehinti, Interim Chief Officer Legal and Governance & Monitoring Officer |             |
| Lead Member:                        | Lead Member for Governance   |             |
| Public Report:                      | Yes  |             |

**Question 1 – from Catrina Duffy, local resident**

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| To | Mayor Dr Nik Johnson  |
|    | Why have you not put in place a sustainable bus service for the people of Huntingdon, Chatteris, Ramsey & Warboys? People cannot get where they need to be with service that only runs every 3 hours. How & when are you going to rectify this issue? |

**Question 2 – from Jean Jackson, local resident**

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| To | Mayor Dr Nik Johnson   |
|    | <p>Re: The lack of a regular bus service in Wittering.</p> <p>Wittering residents have the same needs and requirements as every other community in Peterborough who have a bus service.</p> <p>At the last meeting of the Transport Committee on the 15th March 2023 an undertaking was given for councillors to visit the villages of Wittering , Castor. Wansford and Ailsworth to see for themselves the location of the villages and why we need a bus service.</p> <p>Can we please have a definite arrangement as to when this will happen when Wittering Parish Council will gladly show you around the village ?</p> |

**Question 3 – from Susan Magill, local resident**

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| To | Mayor Dr Nik Johnson   |
|    | <p>I have asked most of this question at a meeting previously but I need to make all aware that since losing our bus service just before Covid in Castor and Ailsworth, the elderly, disabled, vulnerable, non car owners, and teenagers all have a huge lack of independence feeling socially isolated and forgotten about! Since the world woke up from Covid it is apparent that a daily bus service is missed and needed as a lifeline for many reasons</p> <p>Call Connect is proving unsuitable for most villagers, with extremely limited access to local hospitals, shops and teenagers with NO access to pboro college, limited access to Stamford college, no form of leisure or work outside of the village for all without a car, a £25 cost or more for return to Pboro or Stamford by taxi. The local care home can only employ car drivers from outside of the village. How do villagers with no transport or spare money manage. In my opinion this could lead to risk taking and mental health needs.</p> <p>Castor, Ailsworth, Wittering and Wansford are the only 4 villages surrounding Peterborough with no regular daily bus service or not in walking distance to a stop. The National Bus Strategy is explicit about</p> |

seeking to ensure that the needs of rural transport users are given equal consideration to those in urban environments. RAF Wittering whose service people put their lives on the line for all of us in the UK. What messages is that giving to them and their families! What about the covenant between PCC an the RAF? You want to build roads but let's get the public daily bus services sorted then perhaps with encouragement those roads in future may not be so hectic. I have here a letter here from the Wing Commendar at RAF Wittering and the family support worker stating the need for a service.

How can the CPCA Support us in reinstating our much needed regular rural bus service for the forgotten villagers along with heroic service people and their families who should never be forgotten!!!

**Question 4 – from Joanna Gault, local resident**

To Mayor Dr Nik Johnson

How does the lack of a regular bus service satisfy the Armed Forces Covenant, provide engagement for teenagers, the elderly & disabled to avoid anti-social behaviour, loneliness, and mental health problems.

**Question 5 – from Verity Cod, local resident**

To Mayor Dr Nik Johnson

I am a single parent my youngest is leaving school this Summer. I have lived in Castor from a young age and as I did my oldest two enjoyed a reliable daily bus service to encourage their independence which also helped me as a working parent. There has always been a Stamford to Peterborough bus service until just before the start of Covid, so it is a different story for my youngest.

A. It has affected her decision re college courses as there is a college bus to Stamford however should the course she wants be a part-time one, I as a working parent am unable to collect her on a daily basis. This means she will be at the college with no way home until late afternoon or in the morning until the afternoon course starts. Should her choice be Peterborough I feel it would be the same.

B my daughter wants her own independence as teenagers do in Peterborough city and surrounding areas

How can she do this? I work on a Saturday, but also should she not have her independence? This leaves her and other teenagers like her marooned in the village unable to go into Peterborough or Stamford for part-time work and not be able to learn the independence of socialising with friends at the activities or restaurants that Peterborough offers.

Connect call does not suit her needs. Please, she is not alone and is one of many in feeling like this. What will you do to provide a regular through the day bus service?

**Question 6 – from Sandra Snart, local resident**

To Mayor Dr Nik Johnson

I have lived in Castor & Ailsworth for 60 years, my husband was born here.  
 We have always had a daily scheduled bus service until just before covid.  
 I am speaking for myself, husband & family, and others in similar situations.  
 We feel totally isolated.  
 CONNECT CALL does not meet our needs.  
 Here is just one example from 1 journey:  
 It took 20 minutes for me to book the journey. I booked for 10.05. It arrived at 10.30 – times are often changed by quite a lot on the day.  
 At first, I couldn't book a return. 2 young men were told there was a return bus at 4pm  
 I had to spend hours in town, with nothing to do when my time was needed elsewhere.  
 There are many more issues I could mention from my experience & and those of my friends & neighbours

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|  | <p>– this is just one</p> <p>We have no shop. My husband has medical appointments – we have to rely on expensive taxis for these costing £25. I used to visit my sister a lot on the bus. I can't do that now.</p> <p>My daughter moved back to the village intending to use the bus to work as she works in town. Instead she has to run 2 cars so her &amp; her husband can both work.</p> <p>Will You help us have a Scheduled bus service?</p> |
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**Question 7 – from Dave Hughes, local resident**

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| To | Mayor Dr Nik Johnson  |
|    | <p>I am a recently retired Royal Air Force Warrant Officer, I was based at RAF Wittering after completing more than 36 years service and have settled with my family and live in Wittering village.</p> <p>A lot of RAF families really struggle living at the base without a reliable daily bus service. There is now no access for RAF families to the base Dr so without transport they have to walk 3 ½ miles along the A1 dual carriageway to Wansford.</p> <p>Teenagers also suffer greatly with no access to public transportation and feel that they are unable to develop their independence without relying on their parents. These teenagers walk 7 miles along the A1 to Stamford which again is extremely dangerous to meet with their friends from school.</p> <p>All families suffer through isolation and not able to get into Peterborough or Stamford for full work or part-time work, education, hospital, access to dentists etc. or leisure, if they are unable to drive. This is more of an issue when personnel are deployed, leaving the non driving family member at home without a means of transport.</p> <p>Equally, not all service personnel drive or want to drive when meeting socially. Taxis are very expensive and more than £20 a time or more if travelling to Peterborough, which is circa £28 to 30 return.</p> <p>Service Personnel don't always have a choice where they serve and when they do, they can find it unattractive to be assigned to RAF Wittering and may chose or request not to come because of inadequate public transport.</p> <p>My question to you, and I ask this in the context of the Armed Forces Covenant to which you have pledged to support, is what are you able to do to get the Peterborough to Stamford bus service for the service personnel and their families and the people of Wittering?</p> |

**Question 8 – from Julia Cunnington, local resident**

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| To | Mayor Dr Nik Johnson  |
|    | <p>Wittering Wansford Ailsworth and Castors residents request for the daily Stamford to Peterborough bus service to be reinstated.</p> <p>Wittering return taxi to Peterbough roughly £40</p> <p>Return to Stamford roughly £30</p> <p>Return to Wansford £30</p> <p>Wittering residents are walking 3 1/2 miles to Wansford and 7 miles into Stamford. Along the A1 duel carriageway.</p> <p>Only RAF serving personnel can register with the RAF doctor on camp, their families have to go to local GP's surgery.</p> <p>Teenagers isolated from gaining employment and meeting friends outside of the village.</p> <p>Social isolation, loneliness and Mental Health issues for all ages.</p> <p>1. Can The Combined Authority help the 4 villages get a bus reinstated?</p> |

## Question 9 – from Helen Daley, local resident

To Mayor Dr Nik Johnson

We have extensive direct evidence regarding the impact the poor bus service has had on people's lives. This evidence includes surveys, & personal stories. And secondary sources.

There are written responses from the larger employers in each village:

- RAF Wittering,
- Wansford Primary Care Hub,
- Castor Care Lodge,

The combined population is 5000 people. Plus populations on route in P'boro & Stamford. The villages sit close to A roads. There were mitigating Covid factors & significant design failures in a bus trial.

Call Connect is unsuitable for:

- Time critical journeys – eg work, vocational education courses, appointments, ppl with other responsibilities. Poor quality buses often have no space for folded buggies/walking aids – let alone a space for an adult wheelchair.
- On a commercial scale the model is inflexible & difficult – for a range of disabled and non-disabled ppl.

We ask 2 things:

1. will you review minimum standards for buses winning routes & ensure those are funded in a manner that companies can deliver – including the funding of those entitled to free bus passes, devoting opportunity costs to funding streams (beyond buildings) for eg Euro6 Low Carbon buses, a wheelchair space, space for folded buggies/aids, seat belts, heating & air conditioning, minimum seating size, on all new routes/services – Etc?
2. We Urgently need a Scheduled bus service we have been offered a creative proposal from a bus company. Will the Combined & Local Authority help us secure a good bus service, including financial support to ensure the route is successful?

## Question 10 – from Roxanne De Beaux, Camcycle

To Mayor Dr Nik Johnson

Page 21 of the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan says that the Combined Authority “will deliver a clear package of policies, investments, and interventions aimed at ensuring that government's commitments within Gear Change are achieved. This includes a target that by 2030 at least half of all journeys in our towns and cities are walked, wheeled, or cycled.”

Camcycle strongly welcomes this strategic goal and the recent appointment of an Active Travel Lead. We're here and ready to support this work and are keen to see the Active Travel scrutiny group and Active Travel Advocate added to the team.

However, our region urgently needs to move from a place where we deliver small improvements through piecemeal funding to one where the 'Dutch-quality' walking and cycling facilities promised on page 23 are combined with an environment where active travel is the natural choice for more trips. Figures from the pandemic mentioned on page 22 show that 'when the conditions are right' (which generally means less motor vehicle traffic) people will choose to walk, wheel and cycle more. In addition, reducing motor vehicle traffic in line with the 15% goal by 2030 is essential to meeting agreed climate targets.

- Does the Board acknowledge that often the fastest and most efficient way to deliver more active travel is to deliver a reduction in motor traffic?
- Given that the WSP modelling shows that carbon budgets will not be achievable without motor traffic reduction measures such as access and capacity constraints or a road user charge, how will the Board publicly support the Greater Cambridge Partnership's City Access programme including plans for a Sustainable Travel Zone for Cambridge?
- The chart on page 14 of the Feb 2023 Quantified Carbon Assessment says that 55% of the Combined Authority's Transport Portfolio is made up of highways schemes and yet these haven't been included or quantified. Why not? And isn't it time funding was planned in line with the new sustainable priorities of this authority, focusing on public transport and active travel?