



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
& PETERBOROUGH**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

Agenda Item No. 1.4

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority: Minutes

Date: Wednesday 31 August 2022

Time: 10.01am – 3.45pm

Venue: Red Kite Room, New Shire Hall, Alconbury Weald PE28 4YE

Present: Mayor Dr Nik Johnson

Councillor A Bailey – East Cambridgeshire District Council, Councillor C Boden – Fenland District Council, Councillor W Fitzgerald – Peterborough City Council, Councillor L Herbert (Statutory Deputy Mayor) – Cambridge City Council, Councillor L Nethsingha (Non-Statutory Deputy Mayor) – Cambridgeshire County Council, A Plant – Chair of the Business Board (to 11.37am), Councillor T Sanderson (to 3.28pm) and Councillor B Smith – South Cambridgeshire District Council

Co-opted Members: Councillor E Murphy – Fire Authority, D Preston – Police and Crime Commissioner and J Thomas – Integrated Care Partnership (to 11.37am)

Apologies: Councillor S Conboy (substituted by Councillor T Sanderson)

Part 1- Governance Items

246. Announcements, Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

The Mayor welcomed Alex Plant to his first Board meeting since his appointment as the Chair of the Business Board, and referenced the wealth of experience across both the public and private sectors which he brought. He also placed on record his thanks to Professor Andy Neely for discharging his duties as the Acting Chair of the Business Board so ably prior to Mr Plant's appointment. Professor Neely would remain the Vice Chair of the Business Board, and the Mayor welcomed the retention of his expertise and insight in this important role.

Mark Parkinson, Interim Director of Corporate Services, and Angela Probert, Interim Programme Director Transformation were welcomed to their first Board meeting as observers.

The Mayor stated that an additional report titled Multiply: The Approach to Programme Delivery had been added to the published agenda under the special urgency arrangements set out in the Constitution. This would be considered as the first substantive item of business.

Apologies for absence were reported as recorded above.

Councillor Boden declared an interest in Item 1.4: Public Questions, as a Cambridgeshire County Council appointed Trustee of FACT, which provided the No.68 bus route in Wisbech.

247. Minutes – 27 July 2022

The public minutes of the meeting on 27 July 2022 had been published with the meeting agenda. The full minutes of the meeting were exempt from publication under Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, in that it would not be in the public interest for this information to be disclosed - information relating to an individual; information which was likely to reveal the identity of an individual; and information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, including the authority holding that information. The public interest in maintaining the exemption was deemed to outweigh the public interest in publication.

Councillor Boden commented that he had raised a concern in relation to minute 226 in advance of the meeting with the Interim Chief Executive. In his view, the minutes were actively different from what was said at the meeting. He had reviewed the recording of the meeting and asked if a report could be brought back to this Board meeting. The Mayor had responded that he was happy for it to come back to the Committee at the end of next month. However, the minutes had been changed to say the Mayor agreed that a report could be taken to the next meeting of the Transport and Infrastructure Committee which was the following month, and the words 'if the service was to be terminated' had been put in. He had spoken to the Interim Chief Executive already, but wanted it on the record for the Interim Chief Executive to check how the minutes got changed so significantly from what was said. It was really important that the Board had confidence in the integrity of the minutes produced. It was also a shame as he had advised members of the public that the Route 68 campaign would be discussed this month based on what the Mayor said at the previous meeting, which was why a number of individuals were present. He was not suggesting that the Democratic Services Officer had been in any way responsible for this because it was not just an error and the minutes were not supposed to be a verbatim record.

The Interim Chief Executive stated that this was a fair question. He was happy to go back and look at the recording of the meeting and check the process for the production of the minutes. The Mayor stated that the minutes of 27 July 2022 would be reviewed against the recording of the meeting.

Councillor Bailey said that she wished to raise again her comment from the previous meeting in relation to the exempt minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of the Board on 20 May 2022. In her view this was a similar issue to the one suffered by Councillor

Boden, in that she had explicitly asked for something to be minuted and it had failed to be so. The Mayor stated that the Board would need to move into private session to discuss exempt minutes and that this would happen at the end of the meeting.

Councillor Herbert commented that in his view trying to link one issue to another was irrelevant, and that he felt it would have been more appropriate to raise this when the Board was able to talk about it.

Councillor Boden commented that if the Board was talking about the integrity of the minuting process, he did not believe it to be inappropriate for it to be mentioned and dealt with by the Interim Chief Executive.

Councillor Nethsingha commented that in her view the parallel which Councillor Bailey had drawn between her comment and the comment by Councillor Boden was incorrect because no recording existed for the meeting that was held in private session.

The Mayor stated that the meeting recording could always be reviewed if Members felt that they had not been fairly represented. He felt that the minutes were accurate most of the time. On this occasion, a Member had pointed out something they wanted changed and the accuracy the minute would be reviewed at their request.

The minutes of the meeting on 27 July 2022 were deferred to 21 September 2022 for approval.

The Action Log was noted.

248. Petitions

No petitions were received.

249. Public questions

Three public questions were received from Councillor S Hoy, Cambridgeshire County Councillor, Fenland District Councillor and Leader of Wisbech Town Council; Councillor B Hunt, East Cambridgeshire District Council; and G James, local resident. Copies of the questions from Councillors Hoy and Hunt had been published on the meeting webpage. Mr James' question had not reached the Deputy Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting, but the Mayor exercised his discretion as Chair to accept it and offered a written response.

A copy of the questions and the Mayor's response are attached at Appendix 1.

Part 2 – Combined Authority Decisions

250. Multiply – The Approach to Programme Delivery (KD2022/052)

This key decision report was added to the meeting agenda after publication in accordance with the special urgency arrangements set out in the Constitution. Notice of use of these arrangements was published on the Combined Authority website on 30 August 2022 and copies of the report and its appendices were circulated electronically to Board members and published the same day.

Reports on the Multiply programme had been brought before the Board in June 2022 and the Skills Committee in July 2022. The proposals contained in this latest report had been due to be considered by the Skills Committee on 5 September, with recommendations going forward to the Board later that month. However, the Department for Education had since given notice that the grant agreement must be completed and signed by the end of the current week if payment was to be made in September, and so the decision had been brought direct to the Board. Multiply was part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The proposed funding allocations were set out in Appendix 1 to the report and the formula used drew on the previous performance of providers.

Councillor Boden expressed concern that the proposed geographical allocation of funding seemed biased away from the areas of greatest need, although he commented that he did not have a detailed knowledge of the organisations concerned and there had been little time to look at the proposals in detail. He asked whether calculations could be done before the Skills Committee meeting to ensure that this money would be directed to the areas with greatest need.

Mr Plant asked that delivery should be matched as far as possible with issues in the labour market, and suggested involving employers in this. Officers stated that one point of focus would be in-work numeracy skills, and confirmed that there would be liaison with employers on this.

Councillor Herbert suggested that there was a need to evidence the impact of interventions. He spoke of the positive work already being done, and asked whether there was scope to reallocate funding or include other partners to those listed to make sure these were not missed. Officers confirmed that this was possible, and that there was an opportunity each year to reflect on programme delivery so far and the future programme.

Councillor Bailey asked whether there was any data behind why some areas had experienced a greater decrease in the number of learners and the reasons behind this. Officers offered a written response outside of the meeting.

On being proposed by the Mayor, seconded by Councillor Nethsingha, it was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Accept the Multiply grant funding of £3,999,186 from the Department for Education and approve the creation of a new budget line in the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) for 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 financial years as per Table A in Appendix 1 to this report, subject to receipt of the grant funding offer letter from the DfE.

- b) Delegate authority to the Interim Associate Director of Skills, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer, to commission, enter into and sign grant funding agreements and contracts for services to the providers listed in Tables D and E in Appendix 1 to this report for 'on-menu' delivery and further allocations for 'off-menu', subject to receipt of the grant funding agreement.
- c) Approve the funding allocations to Further Education colleges, local authority Institutes of Adult Learning and procured Independent Training Providers (ITPs), subject to receipt of grant funding from the DfE.
- d) Approve the approach to programme management of Multiply and note the analysis of numeracy levels in the sub-region.

251. Green Home Grant LAD2 (KD2022/039)

The Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery (LAD2) programme funding had been awarded in February 2021. There was now a need to reconcile the scheme for a final report to BEIS. The barriers to delivery which had been experienced were not unique and had been experienced elsewhere. The learning from LAD2 would bring benefits for future schemes and would also benefit the supply chain. Delivery would continue, but the upper end forecast of c£24m was considered unlikely. There was a need to maintain improvement to support future schemes.

Councillor Nethsingha commented that all Board members were saddened that the scheme had not achieved more than it had. She was grateful to officers for providing clarity around what could be achieved, and spoke of the responsibility to return the funds which could not be spent so that these could be re-used. The scheme's aims were important in the context of the cost of living and the need to improve energy efficiency, and it was disappointing that more had not been achieved.

Councillor Smith shared this disappointment. Looking ahead, she would want the CPCA to be having discussions about what could be done around the retrofit of housing stock outside of Government initiatives. The Mayor spoke of work with the Business Board and local businesses.

Councillor Boden agreed that the position in which the CPCA found itself was regrettable. He felt that other parts of the country did not seem to be experiencing these problems and that this impacted on the CPCA's reputation with Government, with the likelihood that even more money would be given back than was suggested. He referenced the vacancies within the organisation which he judged made it difficult for it to achieve its core functions, and felt that there was a disappointing lack of introspection and understanding of the CPCA's performance in comparison to other areas.

Mr Plant noted that the CPCA was administering the scheme on behalf of many local authorities across the south east, and asked how much of the returned monies applied to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area. The Mayor stated that the report referenced a reduction of less than £2m across Cambridgeshire and the local authorities that constituted the Combined Authority's area, but that this was still too much. He shared the frustrations and reservations which had been expressed and

commented that there were undoubtedly issues around capacity within the organisation at a senior level, but the CPCA now had the benefit of a world-class Interim Chief Executive in addition to the Interim Consultant at the Net Zero Hub, who was well respected by BEIS. The problem was slowly being turned around, and there was introspection and learning looking toward getting a pipeline of work and making sure people were being trained up in the local area. The CPCA may have been overly ambitious on this occasion and looking back it was a mistake, but there was introspection and learning to be taken from this.

Councillor Bailey noted that Lord Callanan's letter suggested that the Treasury might prefer removing delivery from the Greater South Eastern Net Zero Hub to a more centralised delivery model. Officers stated that nothing further had been received since that letter in relation to future funding or the routes for it, although the position might become clearer once the new Prime Minister took up office. No formal notification had been received yet around the bidding or delivery mechanisms for the next round of funding. Work was continuing to build the supply chain, to stay close to BEIS and to build trust and become established as a trusted delivery partner. It was understood that consortia bids might be allowed, either through direct funding or via a hub. There were now 32 installers appointed from the dynamic purchasing framework compared to 11 in June, showing an upturn in the supply chain.

Councillor Herbert spoke of the improvement plan which would be brought to the Board in September and looking at the issue of taking on these large projects. There was a lot to learn, but in his judgement when the Combined Authority spent money it was careful how it did it.

Councillor Smith commented that there was a climate change crisis. Baroness Brown had raised the issue of keeping homes cool as well as warm, and she judged there was a need to look at both of these factors in retrofitting housing stock.

On being proposed by the Mayor, seconded by Councillor Herbert, it was resolved by a majority to:

- a) Note the ongoing work with BEIS to manage the recovery plan for the Green Homes Grant (LAD2 programme) and the revised forecast covering the scheme extension by an additional three months to complete installations by 30 September 2022.
- b) Approve the return of additional underspend to BEIS of £33.35m that is detailed in an MOU variation attached as Appendix 1.
- c) Delegate authority to the Interim Chief Executive, the Monitoring Officer and the S73 Officer to return any remaining unspent capital funds at scheme end in line with the revised MOU and scheme conditions.

252. Sustainable Warmth Budget (KD2022/049)

Sustainable Warmth was a successor scheme to LAD2 and represented another phase of delivery. Funding had been granted in January 2022, with the delivery phase ending

in March 2023. A much smaller number of local authorities were involved in this scheme in comparison to the Green Home LAD2 scheme (minute 251 above refers), and none of the Combined Authority's constituent councils were involved in this scheme. Supply chain issues from LAD2 had led to delays to the start of the Sustainable Warmth scheme which had led to complaints. A mid-point review had been submitted to BEIS and some LAD2 referrals would migrate to this scheme, but the delivery phase had not yet really started. Work had been done to appoint more suppliers, but it would not be possible to spend all of the money available in the required timescale. The current forecast spend was between £25m - £55.8m, although currently due to the slow start it looked more likely to be at the lower end of that range. The governance arrangements were being reviewed with the CPCA. Officers advised that it was important to continue these schemes to build the delivery capacity of the Hub and to grow steadily, keep delivery going and build the relationship with BEIS to develop the trust of the supply industry.

Councillor Boden described the numbers referenced in this report and the one preceding it as desperate, and commented that these may not yet be the worst-case scenario. Of the c£200m originally allocated, it might be that more than 75% would need to be returned. It went without saying that lessons must be learned, but what was also important was how the CPCA maintained and improved its relationship with BEIS and with central Government with this level of failure to deliver. He was also concerned that what was happening with this scheme should not impact on the Business Board's credibility with Government. He asked what could be done proactively in relation to damage limitation, particularly in relation to future Business Board funding, and expressed the view that it was essential to do something to repair credibility with Government. Officers stated that reputation with Government was based mainly around evidence of delivery, and that this was improving. The other side was relationship-building. The previous two months had been spent rebuilding the relationship with senior officials and ministers at BEIS, and their perception was that they were being heard more clearly now than before. Significant to this was the fact that LAD2 was now starting to deliver and there was a growth trajectory which would carry on through the sustainable warmth programme.

Councillor Bailey asked whether it was possible to use third-party public sector delivery partners, if this had been done and the outcome. Officers stated that this was an option to all LAD2 delivery partners and was also an option in relation to Sustainable Warmth, but that only one local authority consortia in Surrey had pursued this option. In relation to Sustainable Warmth, the Hub was acting on behalf of those local authorities without capacity to bid themselves or self-deliver.

Mr Plant welcomed the work being done to build confidence with the Treasury, DLUHC and BEIS. He understood this was part of a much wider programme and that the quantum of return for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough was negligible. He questioned how the issues which had been identified in relation to supply chains would be avoided going forward and commented that there was an obvious interplay with the Business Board and that it would be good to have a wider conversation around procurement confidence at an appropriate point. Officers confirmed that there was zero impact on the CPCA constituent councils in relation to this funding, and no impact locally. Lessons would be learned around procurement, getting suppliers to commit to frameworks and demonstrating a process for them to bid. Suppliers were being

referred all the time and this was welcomed. A lot of work was being done around supply chain development. Businesses were looking for longer term schemes to support their growth and development and officers were working with the CPCA skills team in relation to this.

Councillor Nethsingha commented that the report referenced some of the other work the CPCA was doing in relation to addressing supply chain issues, working in conjunction with local further education providers to take a long-term approach to growing the skills needed. She was grateful that Fenland District Council and other constituent councils were using some of their LUF money to support these projects.

Councillor Smith sought clarification around governance arrangements and the mechanism around making expenditure decisions. Officers stated that the CPCA was a participant in LAD2. The grant funding agreement went through the CPCA, so there was a route for making decisions although it was not particularly quick. The added complexity now was that the CPCA had the funding for Sustainable Warmth but was not a participant in the scheme, so work was in hand to look at delegations to address this. With LAD2, governance had been delivered through updates to the Hub Board and decisions by the Combined Authority Board. With the Sustainable Warmth scheme, the more manageable numbers involved could be broken down to establish a different governance structure. The Mayor stated that the Board would come back to this.

On being proposed by the Mayor, seconded by Councillor Herbert, it was resolved by a majority to:

- a) Note the ongoing challenges and work to manage the recovery plan for the Sustainable Warmth project and the revised forecast covering the scheme to complete installations by 31 March 2023.
- b) Approve the return of underspend to BEIS of £62,619,025 that is detailed in an MOU variation attached as Appendix 1.
- c) Delegate authority to the Interim Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer to return any remaining unspent capital funds at scheme end in line with the original MOU and scheme conditions.
- d) Approve the establishment of a Sustainable Warmth (Retrofit) project board, based on the outline structure in this paper and delegate authority to the Interim Chief Executive, in consultation with the Lead Member for the Environment and Climate Change, Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer, to agree terms of reference.

253. Changing Futures

The Changing Futures programme would follow a number of principles to create an improved approach for adults experiencing multiple disadvantage. Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) would be the Accountable Body. All members of the

Cambridgeshire Public Service Board (CPSB) had been asked to provide a similar level of funding, and all except two had agreed.

Councillor Herbert spoke of the importance of this work. Leaders had met to discuss this a year ago and its relevance extended into the areas covered by the Police and Crime Commissioner and Health Service partners. Those experiencing multiple disadvantage had dropped through the net, but new solutions were emerging such as the housing pods in Wisbech and South Cambridgeshire. The organisation chart for the Changing Futures team included a lot of roles for part of an employee's time and he asked how robust this would be. Officers stated that the programme was being delivered by CCC, but they understood that the team would comprise a mixture of full and part-time roles with additional people brought in to support particular specialisms.

Ms Thomas voiced her support for the proposals, but emphasised the importance of measuring outcomes. She noted that some CPSB partners were offering financial support while others were offering other resources.

The Mayor spoke of the importance of working collaboratively with the Integrated Care Partnership, the police and other key partners on this issue. The relationship between digital exclusion and health inequalities was also being examined.

Councillor Bailey expressed her support for the proposal and welcomed the inclusion of skills as part of an holistic approach to supporting those experiencing multiple disadvantage.

Councillor Boden expressed his support for the proposals, and agreed that measuring outputs would be a key part of the process. However, on a wider point, he questioned whether it was appropriate for a fairly uncontentious decision involving a relatively small sum of money to be considered by the Board rather than an Executive Committee. In his judgement there was a need to focus the Board's time on projects needing greater input or of higher value.

On being proposed by the Mayor, seconded by Councillor Nethsingha, it was resolved unanimously to:

Approve the allocation of funds from the corporate response fund of £60,000 per annum for three years (2022-2025, total £180,000) in support of the collaborative Changing Futures project to Cambridgeshire County Council - the accountable body.

Part 3 - Governance Reports

254. Forward Plan

On being proposed by the Mayor, seconded by Councillor Herbert, it was resolved unanimously to:

- Approve the Forward Plan for August 2022.

Part 4 – Exempt Matters

255. Exclusion of the Public and Press

On being proposed by the Mayor, seconded by Councillor Smith it was resolved unanimously:

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the following reports contained exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and that it would not be in the public interest for this information to be disclosed. That was, information relating to an individual; information which was likely to reveal the identity of an individual; and information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). The public interest in maintaining the exemption was deemed to outweigh the public interest in its publication.

The meeting adjourned at 11.37am and resumed in private session at 11.50am.

256. Change to the order of business

257. EXEMPT Employment Matters

258. EXEMPT Employment Matters Part 1

On being proposed by the Statutory Deputy Mayor, seconded by Councillor Nethsingha, it was resolved:

1. In relation to Paul Raynes, Director of Delivery and Strategy:
 - a) Approve Recommendation 1a.
2. In relation to interim arrangements:
 - a) To note the proposals set out in this report regarding cover arrangements for Director Delivery & Strategy (6.1.2).

258. EXEMPT Employment Matters Part 2

On being proposed by the Statutory Deputy Mayor, seconded by Councillor Nethsingha, it was resolved:

1. In relation to Robert Parkin, Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer):

a) Approve recommendation 1a.

2. In relation to interim arrangements:

a) To note the proposals set out in this report regarding cover arrangements for Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) (6.1.2).

[Councillor Sanderson left the meeting at 3.28pm]

259. EXEMPT Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of the Combined Authority Board 20 May 2022

The minutes of the meeting on 20 May 2022 were deferred to the next meeting for approval.

(Mayor)

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Board
Wednesday 31 August 2022

Public questions

No.	Question from:	Question to:	Question:
1.	Councillor Sam Hoy Cambridgeshire County Councillor, Fenland District Councillor and Leader of Wisbech Town Council	Mayor Dr Nik Johnson	<p>It is not my intention to make a big political speech, I understand it is just a question. However, in Cambridge City they have some eight buses an hour, whereas in the Fens we are lucky to have eight buses a week in some areas. We all know the divide between the north and south of this county and it is shameful that the people that claim to help the poor and deprived never seem to when they have power. My question is: Why has it taken so long to reach a decision on the Number 68 bus run by FACT. Given that this is a vital service used by many vulnerable people will you commit to long term funding and if not why not.</p> <p>Supplementary comment:</p> <p>You talk about caring and it is one of your 3 Cs, but isn't it more caring to be honest with people and if you did not want to fund it to treat people as adults and be honest with them. If you want to cut me down that's fine. I don't need a reply because it is not worth hearing. Thank you.</p>
No.	Response from:	Response to:	Response:
1.	Mayor Dr Nik Johnson	Councillor Sam Hoy	The Wisbech Tesco bus route 68, which I have travelled on, will be discussed at the Combined Authority Board meeting on 21 September and will continue temporarily until at least 30 th September 2022.

			<p>Before this, the Transport and Infrastructure Committee on 14th September will be considering a paper on the future of all bus services across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, looking at the wider issues affecting the sector and the options going forward. Route 68 and other routes will be considered as part of this process.</p> <p>It is quite clear that this is an incredibly difficult time for bus services across the country, not just in our own county, with the rise in fuel costs and the recruitment and retention of drivers impacting on services nationally. However, we are acutely aware of the real impact on day-to-day opportunities that a loss of bus services could have on our communities. Buses are essential in ensuring members of our community can get to work, to hospital appointments, to supermarkets and more, and in a cost-of-living crisis can often be the most cost-effective – and in some cases the only - transport option available.</p> <p>The Combined Authority is committed to providing sustainable public transport services which are good value for money and successfully meet the needs of those who use them. I have spent time over the last year talking to residents and listening to their concerns, taking the time to ride on both Route 68 and the Ely Zipper to speak to passengers first hand. I know those problems you talk about. I have already written to Baroness Vere in central Government to highlight the issues local bus providers are facing, and will continue to make the case to Government, alongside Mayoral colleagues, for funding support to ensure we have bus services that meet the needs of you, the residents.</p> <p>The Route 68 service is operated by FACT community transport, a charity serving the Fenland, Huntingdonshire and East Cambridgeshire area. It runs on a circular route between Horsefair Bus Station and Tesco at Cromwell Road. There are also important stops at Aces Eye Clinic, Wisbech Retail Park, College of West Anglia, Queen Mary Centre and Rosmini Centre. The Combined</p>
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			Authority will assist Fenland District Council to enhance the marketing of the route and improve the customer experience.
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No.	Question from:	Question to:	Question:
2.	Councillor Bill Hunt East Cambridgeshire District Council	Mayor Dr Nik Johnson	<p>I hope what I say and your response will be accurately minuted and I hope we don't waste time bringing members of the public here to just have no record of the minutes. Given that the Mayor in his manifesto said he would concentrate on and improve bus services, can he confirm he will be doing this and will be supporting, at least to the same level, the bus services that currently exist in the Combined Authority area. In particular, I talk about the Ely Zipper as an example, but the Tesco 68 bus is another example and there will be genuine examples, but not everybody has the opportunity to come here. I would like a yes or no answer if possible or something that can be recorded for people to see. The people behind me have come to hear some action and not just waffle. If you have limited me to two minutes I hope your reply will be limited to two minutes.</p> <p>Supplementary question/ comment:</p> <p>I would like the Mayor to confirm that he will support the Ely Zipper and look to expand the service or will he allow the services to be cut in conflict with his manifesto commitments. I would also ask all Board members to make sure that this organisation behaves in an ethical and honest way, not just waffle and no action. I think it is beholden on all the members of the Board to hold the Mayor to account because it is clear what the people want. Thank you.</p> <p>I have tried to work with you, and so far it has produced little fruit. I'm here today with the people I'm with to try to get you to produce some action, not just waffle. So please can we have some action. We have spoken, and of course it is essential that I deal with the bus operators, and I will continue to do that because I am not going to wait for</p>

			everything to be funnelled through the Combined Authority which seems to take a particularly long time.
	Response from:	Response to:	Response:
2.	Mayor Dr Nik Johnson	Councillor Bill Hunt	<p>As outlined in the emerging Local Transport and Connectivity Plan, and as I have already said, the Combined Authority is committed to sustainable transport across the region. Buses form a fundamental component of our transport network, allowing people to access opportunities to improve their quality of life. As a result, the Combined Authority will be preparing a Bus Strategy as a daughter document to the LTCP, working with constituent councils, stakeholders, and public transport operators. It is important that a bus network is created and maintained that people want and are able to use, so that we see an increase in passenger journeys as we emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic. It is proposed that this is done by improving the quality and reliability of bus services, so that people can get to more destinations quickly, comfortably, safely, and affordably.</p> <p>However, in the short term, as you know, there remain a number of challenges that need to be addressed. As outlined in response to the previous question, the Transport and Infrastructure Committee on the 14th of September will be considering a paper on the future of bus services across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, and looking at the wider issues affecting the sector and options going forward. The Ely Zipper and other routes will be considered as part of that process.</p> <p>This is a very difficult time for bus services across the country, not just for the Combined Authority, with the rise in fuel costs and the scarcity of drivers impacting on services nationally. However, I am acutely aware of the real impact on day-to-day opportunities that losing a bus service means. The Combined Authority is fully committed to providing public transport services which are good value for money and successfully meet the needs of those who use them.</p>

			<p>Response to supplementary question/ comments:</p> <p>Councillor Hunt, you did write to me, and I have the email you sent to me. I do fully support the idea of the Ely Zipper, and ideally Ely Zipper 2. You also sent me an extra email where you have had conversations with operators. Liaison with operators is important, we need to understand those businesses. But we have to be very careful about using bus services as a political tool, or indeed using the language, 'I hope that gives a bit of ammunition to get at the Mayor'. There is a need to work together, and I have got correspondence and I have got officers who are determined to offer bus services for all, across the whole of the community. I don't like any prospect that people are going to get a reduction in bus services. Work with me, work with the Board. Please.</p>
No.	Question from:	Question to:	Question:
3.	Graham James Local resident	Mayor Dr Nik Johnson	<p>I am the former Chair of Little Thetford Parish Council (a village situated about 3 miles south of Ely off the A10) and run a community cafe that was set up with support from AgeUK. Over 50% of our residents are aged over 60 and many of them rely on the Zipper Bus Service to get to Ely and neighbouring villages. This reliance is due to not having their own vehicles and concerns over cost of living and climate change.</p> <p>As Mayor you have clearly stated on many occasions that your priority for bus market reform is to improve bus frequencies to ensure that all Cambridgeshire Residents 'can get to places quickly'. How does this equate with the proposed removal of support to the Ely Zipper and significant changes to service in neighbouring villages? If these proposals are carried forward they will have a significant negative impact on local residents for whom this is a lifeline and an essential service.</p>
No.	Response from:	Response to:	Response:

3.	Mayor Dr Nik Johnson	Graham James (written response)	<p>As outlined in the emerging Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP), the Combined Authority is committed to sustainable transport across the region. Buses form a fundamental component of our transport network, allowing people to access opportunities to improve their quality of life. As a result, the Combined Authority will be preparing a Bus Strategy as a daughter document to the LTCP, working with constituent councils, stakeholders, and public transport operators. As outlined in your question, it is important that a bus network is created and maintained that people want and are able to use, so that we see an increase in passenger journeys as we emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic. It is proposed that this is done by improving the quality and reliability of bus services, so that people can get to more destinations quickly, comfortably, safely, and affordably.</p> <p>However, in the short term there remain a number of challenges that need to be addressed. As outlined previously, the Transport and Infrastructure Committee will be considering a paper on the future of bus services across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and looking at the wider issues affecting the sector and options going forward. The Ely Zipper and other routes will be considered as part of that process.</p> <p>This is a difficult time for bus services across the country, not just for the Combined Authority, with the rise in fuel costs and the scarcity of drivers impacting on services nationally. However, we are acutely aware of the real impact on day-to-day opportunities that a loss of bus services can have on our communities. The Combined Authority is committed to providing public transport services which are good value for money and successfully meet the needs of those who use them.</p>
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