



## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

**Monday 27 November 2023**

|           |   |  |
|-----------|---|--|
| Venue:    | Civic Suite, Huntingdonshire District Council   |  |
| Time:     | 11.00 – 12:50pm   |  |
| Present:  | Cllr Wayne Fitzgerald<br>Cllr John Fox<br>Cllr David Brown<br>Cllr Charlotte Cane<br>Cllr Anne Hay<br>Cllr Tim Griffin<br>Cllr Martin Smart<br>Cllr Martin Hassall<br>Cllr Judith Rippeth<br>Cllr Aiden Van de Weyer<br>Cllr Michael Atkins<br>Cllr Mark Goldsack | Peterborough City Council<br>Peterborough City Council<br>East Cambs District Council<br>East Cambs District Council<br>Fenland District Council<br>Cambridge City Council<br>Cambridge City Council<br>Huntingdonshire District Council<br>South Cambs District Council<br>South Cambs District Council<br>Cambridgeshire County Council<br>Cambridgeshire County Council |
| Apologies | Cllr Jon Neish<br>Cllr Maureen Davis<br>Cllr Anna Bradnam   | Huntingdonshire District Council<br>Fenland District Council<br>Cambridgeshire County Council  |
|           |   |  |

### Minutes:

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Apologies for Absence</b>  |
| 1.1      | Apologies received from Cllr Jon Neish, Cllr Maureen Davis and Cllr Anna Bradnam substituted by Cllr Michael Atkins   |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Declarations of Interest</b>   |
| 2.1      | No declarations of interest received.   |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Public Questions</b>   |
| 3.1      | No public questions received.   |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Minutes of the Previous Meeting &amp; Action Log</b>   |
| 4.1      | The minutes from the meeting held on the 18 <sup>th</sup> September were approved as a correct record and the action log was noted.   |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Election of Vice Chair</b>   |
| 5.1      | Nominations were invited for the position of Vice-Chair of the Committee. It was proposed by Cllr Rippeth and seconded by Cllr Atkins that Cllr Fox be elected as Vice-Chair There were no other nominations and upon being put to the vote the motion was carried. |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Improvement Framework Report 27 November 2023</b>  |
| 6.1      | The Committee received the report which provided an update on the progress in October against the key concerns and observations identified by the External Auditor in June and October 2022, the Best   |

|     |   |
|-----|---|
|     | Value Notice received in January 2023 and DLUHC in February 2023. The report also provided the 'deep dive' into the Confidence, Culture and Capacity Workstream to be considered by the Committee.  |
| 6.2 | <p>The Chair read out the following statement in relation to the Code of Conduct:</p> <p>I would like to make a point about the code of conduct matter which is referred to within in this report. The code of conduct hearing was concluded on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and a decision notice has now been published. The decision has been made by the Audit and Governance Sub-committee. Audit &amp; Governance are a statutory committee and as set out in the CPCA Constitution, they are responsible for the standards committee hearings. The decision of this committee is final and there is no further right of appeal. The committee decision is simply for noting at the CA Board and there is no scope for scrutiny of this decision.</p> <p>I would like to remind you that the function of the overview and scrutiny committee is to scrutinise the decision making of the CA Board, the thematic committees and the officers of the authority. Overview &amp; Scrutiny can scrutinise executive decisions made by individual members but not the ethics, that will be for A &amp; G This committee has an influential role in shaping policy and decision-making that will benefit the overall CPCA region. As per the agreed scope of work for, the committee has 4 key roles:</p> <p>(i)Accountability – Ensuring decision-making is effective, aligned to strategic objectives and not taken in isolation</p> <p>(ii)Performance – review and oversight of performance against strategic targets and key indicators</p> <p>(iii)Policy – early involvement in decision-making and detailed review of performance can identify areas for policy development or existing policy gaps</p> <p>(iv) Cross-Cutting issues of significant concern - there will be issues which cut across a range of portfolios and across the CA and other organisation's' responsibilities as well as areas of significant regional public concern where scrutiny review is required.</p> <p>The decision has now been made and I would ask all members of this committee to refrain from discussing this matter.</p> |
| 6.3 | <p>The following points were raised during the discussion:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In response to a question about benchmarking the improvement work the Committee were advised that some areas of the improvement work of the CA were focused on the concerns raised by the External Auditor around governance and the Code of Conduct while other areas were focused on key elements identified by the Best Value Notice, and these were around relationships and the culture of the organisation and staffing vacancies. The Culture Capacity and Confidence workstream specifically focused on those areas.</li> <li>• The Committee were advised that an update from the Independent Improvement Board would be circulated later that week to members.</li> <li>• In response to a question about the staff surveys and the level of engagement received, the Committee were advised that the percentage of staff participating in the last two surveys was around 50%. Officers wanted to improve that number so would be changing the survey slightly and ensuring that it demonstrated that actions were being taken as a result of previous staff feedback.</li> <li>• At the latest staff conference there had been 80 members of staff in attendance and HR would be engaging with directors to encourage away days with a focus on the values and behaviours of the CA.</li> <li>• Officers advised that they were hopeful that they would see more positive comments at the next staff survey following the work that had been done such as the corporate inductions to help staff understand their roles and the corporate priorities of the organisation.</li> <li>• Officers agreed that the results of the next staff survey would be shared with the Committee.</li> </ul>  |

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
|           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Officers agreed to provide the breakdown on current staff numbers including how many posts were currently filled with interims.</li> <li>In response to a question on how officers would ensure that work being done to help improve the culture would continue once the Best Value Notice had been lifted the committee were advised that the Assistant Director for Human Resources role was there to create the appropriate culture in the long term; working with directorates, holding further staff conferences and constantly monitoring and reviewing which would be reported to the Corporate Management Team.</li> </ul>  |
| 6.3       | <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <p>a) Note the progress made over September and October against stated areas of improvement identified by the External Auditor in June 2022 and Best Value Notice received in January 2023 as reported to the CA Board on 31 May 2023; set out in paragraphs 2.2 to 2.9.</p> <p>b) Note the outcome of the recent Internal Review of the governance and decision making improvement programme set out in paragraph 2.10.</p> <p>c) Note the feedback from the staff conference on the progress made over the last 12 months set out in paragraph 2.11.</p> <p>d) Note the progress of the Confidence, Culture and Capacity improvement theme deep dive; supported by evidence attached as Appendix 2.</p>   |
| 6.4       | <p><b>ACTION</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Officers agreed that the results of the next staff survey would be shared with the Committee.</li> <li>Officers agreed to provide the breakdown on current staff numbers including how many posts were currently filled with interims.</li> <li>An update from the Independent Improvement Board would be circulated later that week to members.</li> </ol>  |
| <b>7</b>  | <b>Corporate Performance Report</b>  |
| 7.1       | The Committee received the report which requested that the committee scrutinise the performance, information relating to the Combined Authority's Corporate Key Performance Indicators, most Complex Programmes and Projects, and the Combined Authority's Headline Priority Activities.   |
| 7.2       | The Committee noted the report.  |
| <b>8.</b> | <b>Bus Strategy Update, including Bus Network Review</b>   |
| 8.1       | The Committee received the report which requested the Committee comment on the findings of the Bus Network Review  |
| 8.2       | <p>The following points were raised during the discussion:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In response to a question about the value for money of the Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) scheme the committee were advised that it was a complex matter with a mix of factors that had to be considered. The intent of the scheme was to fill gaps in service provision in areas where there was lower levels of demand compared to the rest of the network.</li> <li>Due to the role that DRT played it was not commercially viable and compared to normal scheduled services it would always have a low commercial viability; in part this was due to the software being used but this was not the whole reason.</li> <li>Members recognised that there were wider considerations such as social value to ensure connections to the most rural areas were made. It was a case of balancing cost effectiveness against the need for more connected communities.</li> </ul> |

|     |  |
|-----|--|
|     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members raised alternative options on how the DRT could be managed going forward and officers agreed to take the feedback from the Committee into consideration when looking at the different options for how to improve DRT and would provide a further update to the Committee.</li> <li>• The Committee were advised that there had been no assessment done on the impact on climate, but officers could check whether there was anything that had been captured as part of the work done for the LTCP.</li> <li>• The Committee were advised that the role of the software used for DRT was to aggregate journey's together and reduce the number of trips taken.</li> <li>• The Committee were advised that DRT in East Cambridgeshire had not been finalised and officers would feedback the comments from members, however the CA were aware of the economic impacts of rural isolation and through the CA MTFP process would be supporting the County Council in that area.</li> <li>• Members commented that it seemed that the starting point was a one size fits all and it was important to realise that different services would be needed for different areas while still encouraging people onto buses.</li> <li>• In response to a question regarding additional funding from government officers advised that there was some additional funding from government in the short term but conversations needed to continue around investment into buses through the BSIP process. The review was based on the budget that the CA was confident was available for the next year.</li> <li>• The impact of covid had meant that users had been slow to return to using buses especially for those over the age of 60. The CA wanted to ensure that services were reliable and would work with members and others within the relevant communities to help promote those services to ensure those services were used.</li> <li>• The future strategy would be focused on franchising and enhanced partnerships – the business case for these were in development and would be brought to the CA Board for consideration.</li> <li>• The LTCP was about addressing rural isolation; ensuring that there was access for people for health, education and work was the underpinning of the bus strategy – to create a service that was easy to use, affordable, safe and an attractive alternative to cars. The CA also had to work with what currently was in place to ensure that the network was addressing immediate issues as well as looking forward to what bus reform could do. Bus reform review would be brought back to Overview and Scrutiny in January before going to the CA Board.</li> <li>• The CA were working closely with Department for Transport to ensure that BSIP funding would be successful and the CA had received £4.6m of funding to support the current bus network.</li> <li>• In response to a question about whether other areas of transport than buses were being considered, officers advised that once the LTCP had been approved by Board the wider vision for transport for the area could be taken forward.</li> </ul> |
| 8.3 | <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <p>a) To note and comment on the findings of the Bus Network Review</p>   |
| 8.4 | <p><b>ACTION</b></p> <p>1) Officers would check whether there was anything that had been captured as part of the work done for the LTCP in relation to the impact on climate.</p> <p>2) Bus reform review, including DRT, would be brought back to Overview and Scrutiny in January before going to the CA Board.</p>  |

|            |   |
|------------|---|
|            |   |
| <b>9.</b>  | <b>CA Budget and Corporate Plan Refresh</b>   |
| 9.1        | The Committee received the report which provided the Committee with the opportunity to review the Combined Authority's draft plans and consider whether there were questions they wished to pose to the Board alongside the draft budget and MTFP.  |
| 9.2        | <p>The following points were raised during the discussion:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In response to a point around the 2% transport levy figure officers advised that this was not an assumed figure; the CA Board was provided with regular updates throughout the cycle around this and one of the key discussions for the draft budget was what the change in the transport levy could be.</li> <li>• In response to a point raised about the rate of inflation and that the budget being considered was more than a transport budget officers advised that the CA Board was anticipating being able to afford to deliver the services required for the next four years. However, the impact of the rate of inflation would hit the CA in the longer term and there was not currently a sustainable funding solution in place with government – this is something that all CA's are facing and future devolution deals would hopefully offer a more sustainable solution.</li> </ul> |
| 9.3        | <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>a) To note and provided the above comments on the Corporate plan and MTFP Update</p>   |
| <b>10.</b> | <b>CA Board Agenda</b>  |
| 10.1       | No questions were submitted to the CA Board   |
| <b>11.</b> | <b>Appointment of Skills Rapporteurs</b>  |
| 11.1       | The Committee received the report which requested the committee nominate and appoint a member to the Rapporteur role for the Skills and Employment Committee  |
| 11.2       | <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>a) To appoint a Cllr Tim Griffin to the vacant Rapporteur role for the Skills and Employment Committee</p>   |
| <b>12.</b> | <b>Combined Authority Forward Plan</b>  |
| 12.1       | No updates were provided from the rapporteurs for the thematic committees.  |
| 12.2       | The Committee noted the Forward Plan  |
| <b>13.</b> | <b>O&amp;S Committee Draft Work Programme</b>   |
| 13.1       | The Committee received the report which requested them to note the draft work programme for the municipal year 2023/24 as shown at Appendix 1 and discuss items for the work programme.   |
| 13.2       | The Committee agreed that the Chair should write to the CA Board to ask if there were any areas where scrutiny should focus its work programme for the next municipal year.   |
| 13.3       | <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>a) To note the work programme</p> <p>b) Chair to write to the CA Board for their view on the O&amp;S Committee work programme.</p>  |
| <b>14.</b> | <b>Date of Next Meeting</b>   |

|      |  |
|------|--|
| 14.1 | Informal meeting – 9 <sup>th</sup> January in person at HDC followed by a public meeting of the Committee to consider their budget consultation response.<br><br>Public Meeting – 29 <sup>th</sup> January at Huntingdonshire District Council |
|------|--|

Meeting Closed: 12:50pm.

Chair