



<b>Combined Authority Board</b>		Agenda Item
<b>31 January 2024</b>		<b>5</b>
Title:	Public Questions	
Public Report:	Yes	

<b>Question 1 – from Mark Whatley, Local Resident</b>		<b>Democratic Services to read</b>
To	CA Board	
	<p>Has the Mayor undertaken the training he was ordered to do by the subcommittee and as part of that he was told to also apologise to the Victims with a written apology, please can you tell me when both things will be done?</p> <p><i>The hearing panel as part of the sanctions resolved that:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. The Mayor is to provide a written apology for the Decision Notice and consult with the Monitoring Officer (MO) on the appropriateness of providing a written apology directly to one or more of the complainants.</i></li> <li><i>2. The mayor is to agree with the Chief Executive an appropriate development and training programme to take place over the next six months; this should include the appropriate HR best-practice when operating in a senior Member role.</i></li> </ol> <p><i>The mayor provided a written apology for the Decision Notice. This apology this was annexed as Annex 2 to the decision noticed published on 22nd November 2023.</i></p> <p><i>In addition, the mayor consulted with the MO on the appropriateness of providing a written apology to two complainants. The mayor provided written apologies to two complainants on 17th November 2023. This apology was sent to the MO, who then forwarded it to the complainants on the same day.</i></p> <p><i>Four training sessions have been arranged for the Mayor with the CEO, Monitoring Officer and other Statutory Officers as required. These sessions cover a range of issues as requested by the Hearing Panel. The first two of these sessions have taken place. The remaining two are scheduled to take place in February.</i></p>	

<b>Question 2 – from Julie Cansfield, Local Resident</b>		<b>Democratic Services to read</b>
To	CA Board	
	<p><b>Question regarding 26 Bus (Royston to Cambridge)</b></p> <p>The one bus, every two hours bus service, is flawed.</p> <p>As it is a single bus that goes up and down the A10 getting later and later as it gets stuck in city centre traffic and becoming increasingly unreliable, the simple question is from my 17 year old daughter who finds it all but useless travelling to Long Road Sixth Form College, from Harston, and has been challenging her mental health this past year as she struggles to make connections to her place of education, or home again after lessons.</p> <p>Why does the 26 bus need to go all the way to Royston and all the way into Cambridge city centre?</p> <p>Royston is served by a train as are Shepreth and Meldreth – the bus does not need to go that far, and the 26 only needs to go to Trumpington Park and Ride, where a different bus into town can be picked up to complete the journey. A bus shuttling between Trumpington Park and Ride and either Foxton Station (or through Melbourn Village as a turning point) could give back the one bus every hour service</p>	

<p>that it used to be – making it more useful to the young people of Harston who are being crippled by this virtually pointless service, yet don't have train access like the other villages on the A10 corridor. They cannot drive, they cannot afford to move out, they struggle get to work or college.</p> <p>Many thanks for considering her straightforward suggestion for improving the quality of this service.</p>
<p><i>The ideas proposed in the question are appreciated and officers will look further at punctuality and reliability issues on this service, particularly in Cambridge. Bus Service 26 has also been identified within the scope for better integration with other services on the network and work is commencing to achieve that aim.</i></p> <p><i>Bus service 26 provides an important link between the market town of Royston and the city of Cambridge, giving access to both for several villages near to the A10. The bus operator has recently amended the timetable to achieve greater reliability and has reported positive results since the change was made. Officers would appreciate further feedback and information if the timetable amendment has not improved the situation.</i></p>

**Question 3 – from Sarah Hughes, Cambridgeshire Sustainable Travel Alliance**

To	CA Board
	<p>Across England (outside London) bus services have suffered a sharp decline over the decades since deregulation. Services have reduced in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough by a staggering 59% since 2008 according to a recent study. Nearly 40% of bus users we surveyed last summer (excluding those using the Park&amp;Ride) said their bus services were too infrequent. We heard from people who had to rely upon lifts from colleagues to get to work, people who struggled to get their children to school due to inconvenient bus times and many who felt cut off from social events due to a lack of evening and Sunday services and those who needed to pay for taxis to get to medical appointments. You can't escape the conclusion that the bus network in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is currently inadequate for our region's needs.</p> <p>CPCA will be unable to reverse the sharp drop in bus service provision and put in place the network our region requires for the future without additional funding from a long-term source such as their council tax precept. We believe that the proposed increase in the Mayoral precept is the best first step towards reversing bus service cuts and starting to create the regional bus network we will all need for a sustainable future.</p> <p>An expanded bus network will bring many benefits, in particular improving independence and quality of life for younger and older people. We also support the proposed reduction in bus fares for U25s. Those aged 16-24 have the highest rate of bus use and lowest rates of car access of all age groups: indeed two out of three young people in this age group do not have access to a car.</p> <p>What steps will the Combined Authority Board take to put in place the new and improved bus routes proposed as part of Agenda item 9?</p>
	<p><i>Officers at the CPCA will be undertaking an assessment and implementation exercise to ensure new and improved bus routes are delivered. This will entail:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Undertaking an assessment of the routes linked to key metrics such as locations served (linked to population density), integration with other services and modes and further development of operational cost</i></li> <li>• <i>Assessment of procurement methods for new and improved services</i></li> <li>• <i>Development of timetables</i></li> <li>• <i>Engagement with the bus operator market on realistic mobilisation and the opportunities that will be advertised (subject to procurement advice)</i></li> <li>• <i>Assessment of existing infrastructure (bus stops/shelters) on the new and improved routes to ensure improvements in the waiting environment for passengers</i></li> </ul>

Question 4 – from Anna Williams, Camcycle		Democratic Services to read
To	CA Board	
	<p>In the recent Your Views Count survey, 61% of respondents wanted to see investment and promotion of active travel schemes (against a minority who wanted funding for new roads). It is also wonderful to see the results from the existing cargo bike scheme – with 65% of triallists going on to purchase their own - and the funding applications which have been made to expand the use of cargo bikes. Finally, Camcycle strongly welcomes that, in the budget, £6 million of capital investment has been allocated for a safe crossing at the BP roundabout near Ely.</p> <p>Given the huge untapped demand for active travel across the region, particularly in our market towns, and the impact this would have on health, inequality and climate change goals, why isn't a greater proportion of the budget being allocated to cycling, walking and wheeling?</p> <p><i>The proposed capital budget as set out in the MTFP reflects the overarching priorities of the CPCA and the transport priorities, pressures and opportunities across different parts of the region.</i></p> <p><i>Active travel investment is at the heart of the MTFP proposals, whether that is further funding for the active travel programme; to deliver specific active travel projects; or to ensure that active travel is embedded within the transport planning for new developments and infrastructure programmes.</i></p> <p><i>For example, a further £4.5m has been allocated to the Active Travel programme, that will make over £5m available over the MTFP period. In addition, as the question rightly points out, we have been able to allocate a further £3m for an NMU crossing at the BP roundabout at Ely, making £6m available in total for the scheme. After discussions with Peterborough City Council I am also pleased that we have been able to identify £6.5m to support the active travel measures at the Norwood scheme in the City, a footbridge investment that will not only enable much needed new housing to come forward but will enable local students to access the secondary school in a healthy and sustainable way.</i></p> <p><i>As well as these specific allocations you can be assured that active travel will be at the heart of other transport programmes, studies and business case development. For example, within the plans for Peterborough Station Quarter, our station investment programmes at Whittlesey and Alconbury, as well as part of on-going business case development for the A10 and A141 schemes.</i></p> <p><i>Active travel is at the heart of the MTFP proposals, and I am delighted that is the case.</i></p>	

Question 5 – from Mike Harford		Democratic Services to read
To	CA Board	
	<p>I introduce myself as a very concerned local Council Tax payer. I have read articles in the press about “the misbehaviour and subsequent apologies” from the Mayor for bullying as well as reports of extreme levels of senior staff turnover!</p> <p>As a past senior County Councillor, and an experienced businessman, what has been mentioned above would make any normal organisation totally unmanageable. This would also suggest extreme incompetence and worse by the person in charge, in this case the Mayor. This in turn would have huge implications on the whole organisation in decision making and causing major financial costs which the local community will have to pay for!</p> <p>Although the Mayor has apologised for his misbehaviour, all details has been kept from the public domain. This is clearly out of order! Local Council Tax payers must surely have a legal right to have details of such events and expect full transparency in any situation in a public organisation that may affect cost, performance, and even criminality?</p> <p>My question is simply why hasn't full details been revealed?</p> <p><i>The CPCA Audit and Governance subcommittee hearing panel met on 14th November 2023 to determine the code of conduct complaints. The panel made of cross-party members and an independent chair unanimously decided that the investigation report should not be published but that a detailed decision notice should be published. On 17 November 2023, a Decision Notice which contained all the complaints and findings against the mayor was published for transparency.</i></p>	

In a supplementary question, Mr Harford requested total transparency, particularly to do with finances. Knowing the proposed increase in the Mayoral precept, how much money was spent on the problems within the Mayor's office and would that have made a difference to what was needed for the precept?

*Responding to the additional query, the Monitoring Officer confirmed that with regards to transparency, the decision notice that was published makes it very clear what all the allegations and the findings of the investigation were. No complaint has been made against the mayor that has not been published in the public domain.*

*The Chief Finance Officer confirmed that any money raised through the precept would not be legally allowable to be used for any issues other than that it was raised for (i.e. new bus routes and more frequent services on existing routes).*