



<b>Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee</b>	Agenda Item
<b>13 November 2023</b>	<b>5</b>

Title:	Place & Connectivity Director's Monthly Highlight Report: November 2023
Report of:	Steve Cox, Interim Executive Director – Place & Connectivity
Lead Member:	Cllr Bridget Smith, Chair of Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee
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):	
	Achieving ambitious skills and employment opportunities
	Achieving good growth
	Increased connectivity
x	Enabling resilient communities
x	Achieving best value and high performance

**1. Purpose**

1.1	This report provides a general update on the key activities of the Place and Connectivity Directorate in relation to Environment and Sustainable Communities, 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. Combined Authority scheme updates**

2.1	<b>CPCA Climate Website</b> Following confirmation of Combined Authority funding, the website proposal was presented to and welcomed by members of the Climate Partnership Group and Climate Programme Board. Initial discussions have been held with the website developer to outline the full specification and requirements for the site. Next stages will include a user experience workshop to build the information architecture and ensure the site has strong search engine optimization (SEO) and search visibility, in addition to scoping the site's various menus and environment categories.
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2.2	<p><b>Housing site completions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Girton site completed in late September 2023. 15 units for the 55+.</li> <li>• Alconbury Weald Site Completion celebration on Friday 1 December 2023, at 2pm, will be attended by Mayor Dr Nik Johnson.</li> <li>• Anticipated completions of Heylo units on Keepmoat site, all 30 units will be sold through shared ownership, in Roman Fields, Paston, Peterborough.</li> <li>• MAN GPM site completed – 94 units, with a mixture of affordable rented and shared ownership homes in Alconbury Weald, Huntingdonshire.</li> <li>• Perkins site with CKH is now due to complete in the New Year. 96 units in Peterborough, on the old Frank Perkins site.</li> </ul>
2.3	<p><b>Performance Report</b></p> <p>The Combined Authority’s Constitution describes that the purpose of the ESC Committee includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Driving delivery of key strategic performance measures (as set out in the Corporate Plan and key supporting strategy)</li> <li>• Ensuring all programmes and projects comply with the Assurance Framework and are monitored and evaluated in line with the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework</li> </ul> <p>The Combined Authority’s Performance Management Framework (PMF) was approved in September. It states that “we will produce quarterly Thematic Performance Reports encompassing Dashboards of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and an exception report of Red rated KPIs. The quarterly Thematic Performance Reports will be scrutinised by our Corporate Management Team (CMT) and the relevant thematic committee. We will also explore other methods of rapidly escalating performance issues in-between committee cycles.”</p> <p>Five of the Corporate Key Performance Indicators, reported in the Q1 Corporate Performance Report to Board on 20 September, are related to the strategic objective: Enabling Resilient Committees. These are:</p> <p>Metric 10: Total annual net CO2 emissions in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough</p> <p>Metric 11: Total CO2 from transport</p> <p>Metric 12: Percentage of households in fuel poverty</p> <p>Metric 13: Proportion of land (hectares) that is classed as nature rich</p> <p>Metric 24: Cumulative number of homes retrofitted through schemes led by the Greater South East Net Zero Hub</p> <p>Progress is ongoing to develop a Thematic Performance Report for the Environment and Sustainable Communities Committee. Engagement has taken place with other Mayoral Combined Authorities, the Office for National Statistics, UK Power Networks and Cambridgeshire County Council. This will ensure that our approach is aligned with our constituent authorities and draws on best practice.</p> <p>Implementation of the PMF is dependent on increasing specialist staffing capacity. Reviews of PMO and Policy, Insight and Evaluation staffing are taking place. Once concluded, additional capacity will be recruited.</p> <p>The Performance Management Framework can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>The Q1 Corporate Performance KPIs Dashboard can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</p>
2.4	<p><b>Tender for Infrastructure Delivery Framework</b></p> <p>The Infrastructure Delivery Framework (IDF) work has been tendered through a procurement framework and bids have been evaluated. At the time of writing this report an offer letter has been sent. A verbal update will be provided at the meeting on the successful bid. The IDF will provide a narrative on the magnitude of interventions needed to overcome barriers to sustainable growth across the Combined Authority area. A Steering Group has been established as a sub-group of the Place Directors Advisory Group.</p> <p>An initial outcome will be drafted by end of January 2024, with the report finalised in March 2024.</p>

### 3. Strategic Partner scheme updates

3.1	<p><b>Oxford to Cambridge Partnership</b></p> <p>Nathan Vear, Environmental Programme Lead at the Oxford to Cambridge Partnership, joined the Climate Partnership Group meeting on 19 October 2023. Work at the Oxford to Cambridge Partnership is progressing.</p> <p>The Partnership has identified three different programme areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An Investment Atlas – linking large investable opportunities across the region, with the Department of Business and Trade. Government is particularly looking to pan-regional partnerships for promoting excellence and investable opportunities on an international stage.</li><li>• A Data Observatory – drawing together a huge amount of economic, social and environmental data.</li><li>• An environmental theme – to evolve the agreed environmental principles, including more on tackling climate impacts (Cllr Bridget Smith is chair of this workstream).</li></ul> <p>There are opportunities to leverage and use the power of the Partnership to support and amplify the great work that we are doing and build a strong case to government for regionally specific investment and funding, for climate change, tackling biodiversity, looking at subjects such as nature finance, and benefiting from economies of scale. The Investment Atlas will help attract international investment.</p>
3.2	<p><b>National Infrastructure Commission</b></p> <p>The National Infrastructure Commission issued its Second Assessment in October 2023. The National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) is an independent body. One of its main responsibilities is to make recommendations to government, once a Parliament, on what infrastructure the country will need over the next thirty years and how to ensure it is built where and when it is needed. Its remit covers energy, transport, water and wastewater, waste, flood management and digital.</p> <p>The Combined Authority arranged and hosted a visit of the NIC Chairman and his Board in November 2022 as part of their development of the second Assessment. After a roundtable discussion with key stakeholders the Authority arranged for the NIC to go on a factfinding tour of the area to see at first hand the infrastructure challenges and opportunities to support sustainable growth. In particular, we illustrated the water supply and flood resilience issues we already face, and how the Combined Authority is supporting new growth through public transport improvements such as the new Cambridge North rail station.</p> <p>We provided the NIC with a briefing document that set out our ‘ask’ for issues to be considered in their second Assessment. The NIC have substantially addressed our ask in their recommendations.</p> <p>The NIC advocate for increased expenditure on infrastructure and an accelerated move away from fossil fuels. However, it considers that this can be done with reduced household costs. They conclude that cheaper operating costs of a low carbon energy system more than offset the costs of paying for the new infrastructure, leading to lower household costs. This reduction in energy costs should also be much greater than the upward pressure on bills from increased investment required in the water sector to reduce both pollution and drought risk.</p> <p>The analysis and recommendations of the NIC will provide important evidence for our IDF work.</p>
3.3	<p><b>Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023</b></p> <p>The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill has officially become law. The Bill, which is now the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act, received Royal Assent on 26 October. The government describes the new laws as a way to “speed up the planning system, hold developers to account, cut bureaucracy, and encourage more councils to put in place plans to enable the building of new homes.” Implications of the Act for the work of the Committee will be brought to a future meeting.</p>

## 4. Appendices

4.1	None
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## 5. Implications

### Financial Implications

5.1	None
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### Legal Implications

6.1	None
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### Public Health Implications

7.1	None
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### Environmental & Climate Change Implications

8.1	Neutral
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### Other Significant Implications

9.1	None
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### Background Papers

10.1	None
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