



CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES

Date: 27 January 2020

Time: 11.00 am

Location: East Cambs District Council

Present:

Cllr D Dew	Huntingdonshire District Council
Cllr Humphrey (substitute for Cllr P Jordan)	Huntingdonshire District Council
Cllr L Dupre (Chair)	East Cambs District Council
Cllr A Sharp	East Cambs District Council
Cllr M Gehring	Cambridge City Council
Cllr A Coles	Peterborough City Council
Cllr E Murphy	Peterborough City Council
Cllr A Hay	Fenland District Council
Cllr J Scutt	Cambridgeshire County Council
Cllr D Connor	Cambridgeshire County Council

Officers:

Dermot Pearson	Interim Monitoring Officer, Combined Authority
Susan Hall (Minute taker)	Governance Assistant, Combined Authority
John Hill	Joint CEO, Combined Authority

1. APOLOGIES

- 1.1 Apologies were received from: Cllr G Chamberlain, Cllr P Heylings, Cllr P Jordan (substituted by Cllr Humphrey), Cllr A Miscandlon, Cllr K Price
- 1.2 It was felt that a quorum of 10 was onerous and a letter should be sent to Government asking for a review of the quorum requirement for Combined Authority Overview & Scrutiny Committees.

AGREED:

That John Hill be asked in writing by the Chair for a letter to be sent to the Government regarding changing quorate rules.

- 1.3 A discussion took place regarding the way substitutes were chosen and how many there could be from each constituent authority. It would be preferable to have

three or more substitutes per constituent authority rather than being restricted to one.

It was confirmed by the Monitoring Officer that the constituent councils nominate their members and substitutes subject to their own governance processes.

During the municipal year the Monitoring Officer can accept changes to membership. A councillor can only attend the Committee as a substitute if they have been nominated by their authority and the Monitoring Officer has accepted the nomination.

AGREED:

For the Chair to write to John Hill regarding changing the number of substitutes per authority.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

2.1 The following declarations of interest were noted:

Cllr Hay declared an interest as Vice Chair of the Planning Committee at Fenland DC and confirmed that she would not speak or vote in any discussion of the report on the Combined Authority agenda relating to a housing site in Fenland.

Cllr Connor declared an interest as Chair of the Planning Committee at Fenland DC and confirmed that he would not speak or vote in any discussion of the report on the Combined Authority agenda relating to a housing site in Fenland.

3. MINUTES

3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

Members noted on page 7 of the minutes, an assurance was given by the Director of Delivery and Strategy regarding the appointment of the Chair of the Climate Change Commission. It is not clear if an appointment has been made.

AGREED:

That the below question should be raised at the meeting of the Combined Authority Board:

What progress is being made regarding the appointment of the Chair and the Commission itself and will delays in recruiting a Chair have on the timescales for production of the report.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

4.1 There were no public questions received.

5. DRAFT BUDGET 2020-21 AND MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2020-2024

5.1 The Committee received the report from Jon Alsop, Head of Finance.

The following are the main points raised during the discussion:

5.2 There are proposals to replace the current European funding when the United Kingdom leaves the EU and the transitional arrangements end with other

government funding such as the Shared Prosperity Fund. The draft budget is based on the situation as it was in November.

AGREED:

That the Head of Finance would confirm at what stage the UK loses EU funding which has already been agreed.

- 5.3 Conversations are ongoing regarding the Combined Authority taking over the Transport budget with both Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council. There are a number of options which have gone to the Combined Authority Board in the past which were highlighted in those reports. When those conversations have taken place there will be a further report to the Board.
- 5.4 Status of bus passes – there was an issue raised regarding persons with a disability who hold a bus pass and who are in paid employment and the hours of operation. Assurances were sought that the issue would be considered when the CA takes over the transport budget.
- 5.5 It was noted that there had been a change of £10,000 to the Combined Authority conference budget and training budget and to the Mayor's conference budget. It was confirmed that this is a reallocation of funds. This budget is for the Mayor and his team's attendance at conferences, seminars and training. It shows separately any costs associated with the Mayor and his team. There is no change in overall cost. It is about being more transparent.
- 5.6 It was clarified that the housing development company and holding company were not reflected in the budget but would be reflected once the numbers had been established. A paper went to the board (in March 2019) which showed the expected expenditure breakdown of both companies. This position has not changed but will be updated when there is better information. When the Business Case develops we will be in a better position to be able to look at those costs.
- 5.7 It was noted that no other formal responses consultation of the budget other than the one from this Committee had been received. It was felt that the receipt of only one response raised concerns about the consultation. It was confirmed that there has been some analysis on the consultees to look at responses to the data put on social media and how many resulted in clicks to the consultation documents on the website. This can be used as a basis for targeting consultation going forward.
- 5.8 It was noted that the report states that at its meeting in November 2019 the Combined Authority Board approved a loan from the £40m recycling Housing loan fund bringing the total to £41.135m. It was confirmed that the £40m limit on that recycling fund has not been breached There are a number of Board approvals that total over £40m but the cash flow is forecast to never go over £40m. The assumption is that funds are used as a revolving fund.
- 5.9 It was noted that on page 15/16 of the report there were changes between consultation papers and the refreshed versions but no commentary on the change relating to the Enterprise Zone receipts which in the consultation papers were shown as approved expenditure of £408.2k and in the refreshed version is shown as £638.2k.

AGREED:

- a) That the Head of Finance would confirm the reason for the differences.

- b) That an explanation is needed if different versions of financial papers show significant differences between figures.

6. LEAD MEMBER ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

- 6.1 Councillor Coles attended the recent Skills Committee meeting in his capacity as Lead Member for the Skills Committee. Cllr Coles made the following comments on his experience:

The Chair of the Skills Committee was not aware of the role description so had expected that any questions went to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee for approval. There is a need to ensure that all Chairs are aware of the process.

Exempt appendices were not available in good time but this has been resolved.

Whatever is produced in the Lead Member role needs to be published for all to see. Could that be put on the Lead Member role description.

The following points were noted:

- 6.2 That officers will draft a note to go to committee Chairs and others explaining what the process is, why that process has been agreed and how it will operate.
- 6.3 That exempt appendices to Executive Committee reports should be sent to Lead Members of the O&S Committee.
- 6.4 That written questions and written answers to be published on the website. This should be included as part of the minuting and governance of the Committee.
- 6.5 That regarding liaison with officers – the role description says ‘in order to obtain specific advice on projects’ but the liaison needs to be wider than that. Wording should state ‘liaising with officers of the Combined Authority to enable the lead member to undertake his/her duties’.
- 6.6 That a standing item on the agenda be added to include the written answers and questions that have been submitted and received from lead members. A regular item to go on the workplan.

AGREED:

- a) That the Interim Monitoring Officer would arrange for the Skills Committee questions and answers to be published on the website.
- b) That a standing item be added to the agenda for lead members to include written questions and answers.
- c) That role description be amended to add ‘liaising with officers of the Combined Authority to enable the lead member to undertake his/her duties’.

7. REVIEW OF THE COMBINED AUTHORITY BOARD AGENDA

- 7.1 The Committee reviewed the Board agenda for 29 January 2020. The Committee agreed that the Chair would ask the following questions at the meeting of the Combined Authority Board:
- 7.2 Page 130 Business Plan Report Question to the Board - A note is needed in the report stating when a funding decision is expected to be made by government to enable members to keep a track of what is going on and when to expect the decisions.
- 7.3 £100K homes – whom these would attract other than those who already able to afford existing low cost options? What would attract individuals to the £100k homes scheme as opposed to other established types of affordable housing?
- 7.4 Page 548 current CAM network map. The feedback on the Local Transport Plan includes a recognition of the demand for a stop on the proposed CAM network in East Cambs. How will that issue be developed and where would the stop be located.?
- 7.5 Motion – a lengthy discussion took place as this Motion and it was noted that, if passed, it would prevent the Committee from meeting in Cambridge.
- 7.6 Question for the Board - The Committee notes that the proposed effects of the motion would affect where it could meet and is deeply disappointed that it does not mention public transport and may deny the committee the opportunity to meet at the location with the best public transport links for the actual number of people to attend and would ask what evidence has been considered about the impact of holding meetings elsewhere on air quality and about public transport.
- 7.7 The Committee were also concerned about the democratic deficit in not holding meetings at the offices of two of its constituent councils and that the proposal is not in accordance with the spirit of the Constitution. In those circumstances, how can the proposal be justified.
- 7.8 CAM Core Outline Business Case – Public Consultation –Question to the CA Board – Why were the papers on the CAM Metro consultation not provided to the CAM Task and Finish Group as promised?
- 7.9 Question to the CA Board - What progress has been made towards funding options for the CAM?
- 7.10 Question to the CA Board - Given the responses from the public about the importance of climate change in the context of the Local Transport Plan will the Combined Authority outline the changes of approach that it has made in the LTP as a result of that feedback?
- 7.11 A question was raised about progress on the University of Peterborough. Cllr Coles, as the Lead Member for the Skills Committee, updated the Board as follows: the University of Peterborough is going ahead, work is in progress, the first phase will be built by 2022 and the site has been chosen. A public exhibition is being held on 4-6 February in Peterborough Cathedral. Mace are leading in terms of delivering and there are two potential academic providers being considered. It

was noted that here is a recommendation from Skills Committee on the Outline Business Case report going to the Combined Authority Board.

AGREED:

- a) That the Interim Monitoring Officer would check whether the Motion is in accordance with the Constitution.
- b) That this item on University of Peterborough and the Outline Business Case be put on the Work Programme to discuss at a future O&S Committee meeting.

8 COMBINED AUTHORITY FORWARD PLAN

- 8.1 The Committee considered the Combined Authority Forward Plan. No comments were made.

9. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

- 9.1 The Committee received the report which outlined the work programme for the committee

There will be an Affordable Housing Programme presentation at the February meeting which will include the issue of accessible housing.

The Chair of the Climate Change Commission is to be invited to the March meeting. The timing of this may need to be reviewed.

There will be a presentation on the University of Peterborough – end of March.

10. Date of Next Meeting

- 10.1 The Committee agreed that the next meeting would be held 24 Feb at 11.00 am at Cambridge City Council.

The meeting closed at 12.24