



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
& PETERBOROUGH**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES

Date: 23rd September 2019

Time: 11am

Location: Cambridgeshire County Council

Present:

Cllr Andy Coles
Cllr Ed Murphy
Cllr Alex Miscandlon
Cllr Anne Hay
Cllr Peter Fane
Cllr Doug Dew
Cllr Lorna Dupre
Cllr Alan Sharp
Cllr David Connor
Cllr Daniel Summerbell
Cllr Kevin Price

Peterborough City Council
Peterborough City Council
Fenland District Council
Fenland District Council
South Cambs District Council
Huntingdonshire District Council
East Cambs District Council
East Cambs District Council
Cambridgeshire County Council
Cambridge City Council
Cambridge City Council

Officers:

Kim Sawyer
John Hill
Dermot Pearson
Emma Powley
Jon Alsop
Roberta Fulton

Chief Executive
Chief Executive
Interim Monitoring Officer
Interim Scrutiny Officer
S73 Officer/Head of Finance
Programme Manager

1. Apologies

Apologies received from:

Cllr Heylings, substituted by Cllr Fane
Cllr Gehring, substituted by Cllr Summerbell
Cllrs Chamberlain, Scutt and Morris.

The Chair informed the Committee that Cllr Morris had been appointed to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in replacement of Cllr Conboy (Huntingdonshire District Council)

2. Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interests made.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 29th July 2019 were agreed and signed by the Chair with the following amendments:

That Councillor Connor had submitted an apology for absence.

That Councillor Price be recorded as a member of Cambridge City Council, not South Cambs District Council.

4. Public Questions

The Chair confirmed that there had been no questions received from members of the public.

5. Mayor of the Combined Authority

The Chair informed the Committee that the Mayor had sent his apologies and was unable to attend due to a meeting convened with the Minister for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

The Committee requested that the Mayor attend the next scheduled meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 28th October 2019.

The Chair noted that the Chief Executive (Kim Sawyer) was due to attend the meeting with the MHCLG and asked the Committee for their agreement to take Item 8 – Governance Review Report before all other reports. The Committee agreed.

8. Governance Review Report

The Chief Executive submitted her report and elaborated thereon. It was explained that the Combined Authority had undertaken a fundamental review of the organisation and the new governance arrangements reflected the final re-design of the Authority. The proposed changes to the Constitution would see the Board delegate many of their decision-making powers to the three Executive Committees: Transport and Infrastructure Committee, Skills Committee and the Housing and Communities Committee. The proposal would allow the Board to retain strategic control of the Authority and would continue to decide the budget and strategies and set out the key priorities of the organisation.

It was further noted that a significant part of the proposed Governance (decision-making) Review would be the introduction of new rules on public questions. These would include;

- a) Members of the public [residents or people who work in the area] may ask questions of a Member of the Combined Authority at CA Board **or** at an Executive Committee.
- b) Members of constituent Councils who wish to ask questions about matters on the CA Board agenda should submit their questions to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
- c) Members of constituent Councils may ask questions of a Member of the Combined Authority at a meeting of the Combined Authority Board provided the question is not substantially the same as a question put by the Chair of Overview & Scrutiny.
- d) Members of constituent Councils may ask questions of Members of the Combined Authority at meetings of Executive Committees.

In response to questions asked by the Committee the Chief Executive explained that the Board would have the ability to call-in all decisions made by the Executive Committees, including both key and non-key decisions. It was reported that this would be done only in exceptional circumstances. It was noted that should the Board call-in a decision of a Committee, this would suspend the decision being made; only when a decision had been made would the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be able to also call-in the same decision.

Responding to further questions raised, the Chief Executive confirmed that the proposed changes would see an increase in the size of the Committees to include a representative from each constituent Council, each Committee being chaired by the Mayor or a Member of the Combined Authority Board nominated by the Mayor. It was reported that the Chairs of the three Executive Committees would act as lead Members but unlike a Cabinet system, they would not be granted any individual decision-making powers. The Mayor would retain the decision-making powers granted under the Order and officers would continue to have limited delegated decision-making powers as set out in the Constitution.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee made the following comments:

To increase the transparency of the decision-making and public involvement, can information be published on the authority's website signposting where and how questions can be raised.

Whilst Members will be able to continue to view all anticipated decisions to be taken by the Executive Committees and Board [through the Forward Plan] would the Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider the information adequate to scrutinise or participate in pre-decision scrutiny?

Would the Overview and Scrutiny Committee continue to scrutinise and shadow the decision-making of the Board and the Executive Committees with their limited resources or re-consider their approach?

The implications of the decision-making review were immense and further time and consideration would be necessary for the Committee to progress and proceed in the most effective manner.

AGREED: That the focus of the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 28th October 2019 be on the impact of the Governance (decision-making) Review and the approach the Committee wish to take to enhance and develop their future role.

6) Medium Term Financial Plan and Business Plan

The Head of Finance submitted a report which provided an update to the 2019/20 Budget and 2019-2023 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) to be considered by Board on 25th September 2019. It was noted that the report provided an update to the January 2019 Budget and MTFP report and members of the Committee were informed that the Authority continued to have a balanced budget. New sources of revenue had been identified, equivalent to £4.1million in 2019/20 and the staffing structure had been concluded and a 24% reduction reported in January 2019 compared to June 2018 position was highlighted.

AGREED:

- a) That the proposed mid-year update to the 2019/20 Budget and the 2019-2023 Medium Term Financial Plan be noted.

- b) That the mid-year update on the 2019-20 Business Plan be noted.

7. Project Register

The Programme Manager submitted a report and explained that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had requested to receive the list of projects on the Combined Authority's Single Project Register on a quarterly basis. It was noted that the 2019-20 Business Plan identified 12 key projects and as a result of the half year business plan mid-year update, the Board will be invited to add 6 projects to the key project list and to merge to key projects at the meeting to be held on the 25th September 2019.

Members raised concerns about the affordable homes trajectory and questioned what the implications to Peterborough and the jobs growth following the collapse of Thomas Cook, which would significantly impact the job market.

AGREED: That the full list of projects on the Combined Authority Single Project Register be noted.

9. Review of the Combined Authority Board Agenda

The Committee reviewed the agenda due to come to Board on Wednesday 25th September 2019.

The Committee agreed to raise the following questions to the Board:

1.8 Quarterly Performance Monitoring Report

Following the collapse of Thomas Cook, what impact will this have, specifically in Peterborough, on the job growth trajectory?

2.2 Business Plan 2019-20 Mid-Year update

The 2019-20 business plan identified 12 key projects. As a result of the half year Business Plan mid-year update, the September Board will be invited to add 6 projects to the key project list

Does the authority have the capacity to take on 6 more projects and where are the resources coming from for the new projects?

3.1 £100m Affordable Housing Programme Scheme Approvals - Whaddon Road, Meldreth, South Cambridgeshire (Settle)

Peterborough City Council is working on a new Housing Strategy and may reconstitute its Housing Revenue Account with a view to building affordable new homes.

What are the implications for the delivery of affordable homes and the Combined Authority's programme to deliver 2,000 affordable homes by March 2022?

3.3 Public Transport to Serve Alconbury

What assurances can be given to ensure that an interim public transport solution will be in place when Cambridgeshire County Council relocate their headquarters to Alconbury?

3.4 Bus Reform Taskforce - Budget Drawdown

Can we be given an update on bus franchising and what else can be done to drive the bus system forward?

10) Combined Authority Forward Plan

The Committee considered the Combined Authority Forward Plan; no questions or comments were raised.

11) Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

The Committee received the report which outlined the Work Programme for the Committee for the municipal year 2019/20.

The Committee noted that there would be further consideration given to the Governance (decision-making) Review and the Mayor to be invited to attend the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Consideration would also need to be given to MTFP Governance Cycle and changes to the Board dates.

12) Date and Location of the next Committee meeting:

The Committee agreed that the next meeting would be held on the 28th October 2019 at 11:00am, Council Chamber, Town Hall, Peterborough City Council.

The pre-meeting on the 28th October 2019 at 10:00am, Forli Room, Town Hall, Peterborough.

The meeting concluded at 12.48pm