

## Business Board: Minutes

Date: 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Time: 12:00pm – 1.20 pm

Present: Austen Adams (Chair), Andy Neely (Vice-Chair), Councillor Anna Bailey (substitute for Mayor James Palmer), Tina Barsby, Councillor John Holdich, Aamir Khalid, Al Kingsley, Jason Mellad, Nitin Patel, Rebecca Stephens and Kelly Swingler.

### 206. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies for absence were received from Mark Dorsett, Faye Holland, Nicki Mawby and Mayor James Palmer.

There were no declarations of interest received.

### 207. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Assurance Framework

Before presenting the report, the Deputy Monitoring Officer drew members' attention to the amendment to the recommendations. She presented the report, which detailed the necessary revisions made to the Assurance Framework with the aim to align it to the National Assurance Framework. Attention was drawn to the additional specific requirements on governance, accountability, and transparency arrangements and two distinct sections the revisions were categorised in; those relevant to the Combined Authority, and those relevant to the Business Board.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer updated the Committee with the revisions relevant to the Combined Authority, which included an improved guidance on the breakdown of multiple funding streams and an updated decision-making table. The Business Board Section 73 Officer drew attention to the new guidance on the Appraisal and Evaluation of Projects as part of the Green Book released in December 2020. The Draft Assurance Framework was updated to incorporate the new guidance, that the strategic fit was required to be considered before Benefit-Cost Ratio and this revision had been sent to the Department for Transport (DfT). Although in their response the DfT was supportive of the changes, they suggested to include further clarification on how the strategic fit would be evidenced within the framework. The Business Board Section 73 Officer advised that an additional paragraph was being drafted and on completion would be sent to the Department for Transport. As a result of the new guidance, changes were made to the Monitoring and Evaluation section of the Assurance Framework and to the legacy project of the Combined Authority.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer updated Members on the revisions relevant to the Business Board. It was highlighted that a decision was required on whether to invite a

Member from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to shadow the work of the Business Board in order to increase transparency.

Members queried whether it was necessary to introduce the new role of Overview and Scrutiny Lead Member; and expressed concerns over the proposal, arguing that it would have the potential to upset the political neutrality of the Business Board. Further questions were raised about the specific role of the Overview and Scrutiny Lead Member and whether they would report back to the Business Board or the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Deputy Monitoring Officer confirmed that in order to strictly follow the National Assurance Framework, the addition of the Overview and Scrutiny Lead Member's role would be beneficial. The Chair of the Business Board expressed support for the introduction of the new role and highlighted that it would bring new opportunities to consider improvements and would enhance transparency. It was explained that the Overview and Scrutiny Lead Member would only take part in the Business Board meetings as an observer, and that they would not have a right to vote and it would be expected that they correspond with both the Chair of the Business Board and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Members expressed concern that a proposed addition to 5.1 of the Assurance Framework required all business cases to demonstrate a strong fit with the Combined Authority's strategic objectives. The Business Board Section 73 Officer noted that the wording could be amended to clarify that Business Board decisions would not have to match the other elements of the Combined Authority's Strategic Framework, subject to approval. The Deputy Monitoring Officer confirmed that the delegation proposed in recommendation (c) would allow for such an amendment to be made. **Action required**

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Recommend the revised draft of the Assurance Framework to the Combined Authority Board, noting that the draft is subject to sign off by MHCLG;
- b) Note that the revised draft of the Assurance Framework will be presented to the Combined Authority Board by the Audit and Governance Committee;
- c) Note that a recommendation will be presented to the Audit and Governance Committee to delegate authority to the Combined Authority's Chief Legal Officer and Monitoring Officer to make further amendments to the revised draft following feedback from MHCLG;
- d) Agree to a 'Lead Member' from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, subject to the agreement of the Combined Authority Board;
- e) Agree the role description for the Lead Member shadowing the Business Board, subject to the agreement of the Combined Authority; and
- f) Subject to d, and e, above, note that Cllr Murphy will undertake this role.