



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
& PETERBOROUGH**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES

Date: Monday, 22 November 2021

Time: 11:00

Location: Sand Martin House, Bittern Way, Peterborough, PE2 8TY

Present:

Cllr S Corney	Huntingdonshire District Council
Cllr D Dew	Huntingdonshire District Council
Cllr L Dupre (Chair)	East Cambridgeshire District Council
Cllr A Sharp	East Cambridgeshire District Council
Cllr D Baigent	Cambridge City Council
Cllr S Smith	Cambridge City Council
Cllr M Atkins	Cambridgeshire County Council
Cllr M Goldsack	Cambridgeshire County Council
Cllr A Coles	Peterborough City Council
Cllr A Miscandlon	Fenland District Council
Cllr A Hay	Fenland District Council
Cllr J Rippeth	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Cllr A Van de Weyer	South Cambridgeshire District Council

Officers:

Robert Parkin	Monitoring Officer, Combined Authority
Jodie Townsend	Head of Democratic Services, Combined Authority
Robert Fox	Governance Officer, Combined Authority

1. Apologies for Absence

1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr M Davey, Cambridge City Council, substituted by Cllr S Smith.

2. Declarations of Interest

2.1 No additional declarations of interest were made.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 25 October 2021 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4. Mayor's Opening Statement

- 4.1 The Chair welcomed Mayor Dr Nik Johnson to the meeting and invited him to provide an opening statement in advance of questions from Members.
- 4.2 The Mayor stated he was delighted to be involved in the first Mayor's Question Time the Committee had held. He informed the Committee to he looked forward to working in a collaborative manner, moving forward, building a good community for working with Members, officers and residents.

5. Questions to the Mayor from Members of the Committee

- 5.1 The Chair referred the Committee to the pre-submitted questions for which the written responses had now been published on the website, which are available to view at [Mayor's Questions and Responses](#). The questions and responses are appended to these minutes.
- 5.2 The Chair invited Cllr Dew to ask his question. Cllr Dew asked What are the Mayor's priorities? In response the Mayor stated his priorities are to embed the 3c's message of Compassion, Co-operation and Community across the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area, as a way to tackle climate change, ensuring better public health outcomes, reducing wealth disparity and the provision of an integrated transport system to improve the quality of life of communities in the Combined Authority area.
- 5.3 The Mayor stated he was pleased that the Combined Authority Board had endorsed a proposed framework for action to help tackle the impact of Climate Change through the Combined Authority's own work following the publication of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate's final report. He also confirmed that the Climate Working Group which has recently been established will meet for the first time next month, and he stated he looks forward to working with them on implementing the Commission's initial recommendations.
- 5.4 The Mayor stated he was committed to a fairer more equitable spread of health outcomes. Also levelling-up housing, skills, digital connectivity and linking these with improved sustainable public transport to improve job opportunities to strengthen and reinvigorate communities so that postcodes do not dictate the outcomes of individuals. There will also be a greater focus on active travel schemes within the Combined Authority transport plans so the Authority is taking an active role in the fight against Climate Change.
- 5.5 The Chair invited Cllr Dew to ask a supplementary question. Cllr Dew asked the Mayor when, as a Scrutiny Committee, might it see some strategic priorities? The Mayor responded that measurement of the 3c's is often raised. To this end the Combined Authority needs to consider looking at different measures. For example, it needs to look at how close people are to green spaces; and how the region is doing in terms of health inequalities. Different metrics are needed to measure all these things the Mayor stated.
- 5.6 The Chair invited Cllr Van de Weyer to ask his question. Cllr Van de Weyer asked in the summer, in discussion with the Chair and Vice-Chair of this committee, you

said that your priorities are: climate change, public health, financial fairness and compassion. It would be of great assistance to this committee's work if you could expand on how you intend to define these priorities, how you will integrate these priorities into the work of the CPCA and how you plan to measure your success in these areas. The Mayor responded that acting with compassion leads to better co-operation across communities. The Mayor stated his priorities are in a refreshed ambition statement being received by the Combined Authority Board on 24 November 2021 and this will be subject to consultation alongside the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The Overview & Scrutiny Committee have been invited to attend a workshop session on it in December. The Mayor informed the Committee that the budget and business plan review will flow from the ambition statement. The Mayor state more inclusive definitions of good growth means measuring and reporting on a wide range of indicators, such health and wellbeing, state of environment and progress on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

- 5.7 The Chair invited Cllr Van de Weyer to ask a supplementary question. Cllr Van de Weyer asked the Mayor when the indicators might be produced; and whether the statement of intent being presented to the Combined Authority Board should have been presented separately from the budget? The Mayor responded that air quality indicators could be measured from this month forward. The improvement of health, and mental health and wellbeing will take longer to progress. The Combined Authority will be working with representatives of partner organisations and be collaborative across all public services. The Mayor informed the Committee that the dynamic demand transport system trial in west Huntingdonshire has been a huge success and that he wants to see improved bus services across the region. Increased active transport is a priority with the Combined Authority plans going forward.
- 5.8 The Chair asked the Mayor that two of his priorities are climate change and financial fairness. What challenges does he foresee in ensuring a just transition to net zero for all communities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, and how he will address them? The Mayor in response stated that nobody should be excluded or left behind as we adapt to more extreme climate events and a low-carbon future. The Mayor informed the Committee he wholeheartedly supports the recommendations from the Independent Commission on Climate Change and wishes to engage with communities on them. The Mayor stated he want to improve public transport options so people want to use it as their first option. Concerns over water management issues and avoiding future serious flooding issues is also a Mayoral priority.
- 5.9 As a supplementary question the Chair asked the Mayor how he sees his role and the role of the Combined Authority to influence climate-related areas such as flooding, reducing the volume of commercial and domestic waste, and insulation and low-carbon retrofitting of homes? The Mayor responding to the question stated that one of his influences as Mayor is the power of convening. The Combined Authority has sat alongside the Environment Agency and Anglian Water to consider water management and flooding issues and he is committed to being a champion to mitigate against flooding in the low-lying areas of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. In terms of commercial and domestic waste management the Mayor informed the Committee that the Combined Authority is working to ensure all fleets are electric vehicles through collaboration with constituent authorities. Additionally, through collaboration, the Authority will work to try and get the same systems for recycling throughout the region. Insulation and low-carbon retro-fitting needs to be done, the Mayor responded and the MTFP includes programmes to support care homes with this.

- 5.10 The Chair invited Cllr Atkins to ask his question. Cllr Atkins asked the Mayor following the publication of the CPCA Independent Commission on Climate Change report, would the Mayor recognise the risk that the Combined Authority becomes a well-meaning talking shop on climate issues, and how will he personally ensure that substantive actions follow this work? In response the Mayor stated that he did not recognise that risk. The Mayor stated at the October CA Board he was asked a question from the public on avoiding climate catastrophe and that he is committed to working with the Board and partners to safeguard the residents and businesses and the future of the environment. The Mayor stated that he did not realise how much he cared for the environment but that it has now become a passion for him. The Board has already agreed measures to address the Authority's own operations which will see changes to the procurement of goods and services, and new climate projects are being considered in the budget refresh.
- 5.11 The Chair invited Cllr Atkins to ask a supplementary question. Cllr Atkins asked the Mayor about polling suggesting there is a wide acknowledgement that climate change is linked to human behaviours. However, polling also suggests that changes to diet and other contributory behaviours might be resisted. Therefore, what can the Mayor do to influence changes in people's behaviours? Responding the Mayor stated he has championed the use of reliable zero-emission buses. The Mayor recognised there is still a reliance on cars but will work to improve active lifestyles to benefit communities. With regard to food the Mayor will be working with the agri-tech and life sciences sectors. The farming community across the region cares about the environment and by helping that community changes can be made.
- 5.12 The Chair invited Cllr Rippeth to ask her question. Cllr Rippeth asked the Mayor following the loss of a significant part of the housing funds, what continuing role, if any, does the Mayor see for the Combined Authority in housing and affordable housing now? The Mayor responded by stating he was frustrated to have to wait for the outcome from central government with regard to the provision of housing in the region. The Mayor acknowledged the work undertaken by the Lead Member for Housing and Communities, Cllr Lewis Herbert, and stated if the Authority receives more devolved monies from central government it will accelerate new social housing programmes. Engagement with Homes England is continuing.
- 5.13 The Chair invited Cllr Rippeth to ask a supplementary question. Cllr Rippeth asked the Mayor how many houses does he believe he can deliver and in what timeframe? The Mayor in response stated he could not make any promises on definitive numbers until it is known how much money will be forthcoming from central government. The Mayor stated that he will be working continuously with the Department for Levelling-up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) so they recognise the challenges of the availability and affordability of social housing in the region.
- 5.14 The Chair invited Cllr Sharp to ask his question. Cllr Sharp asked the Mayor what are the reasons that the Mayor cancelled the £100,000 homes scheme? The Mayor responded that he remains totally committed to social and affordable housing and is exploring new opportunities for more housing with sustainable principles and affordability at their heart. The Mayor stated he would be working with providers and the DLUHC to attempt to realise this.
- 5.15 The Chair invited Cllr Sharp to ask a supplementary question. Cllr Sharp asked the Mayor how he plans to work with the planning authorities on any future

developments? The Mayor stated he would request the Lead Member for Housing and Communities and the Director of Housing to provide Cllr Sharp with a more comprehensive answer.

6. Closing Comments from the Mayor and Chair

6.1 The Chair thanked the Mayor for the answers to the Committee's questions and invited him to make a closing statement. The Mayor stated the 3c's are not just Mayoral values but how individual Councillor's should operate. Compassion is a strength and he wishes to be held to account and will return to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee as much as he needs to.

6.2 The Chair responded that the Committee would rise to the Mayor's challenges. The Chair reminded the Committee that the first public Mayor's Question Time hosted by the Committee is on Monday, 28 March 2022 and will be publicised nearer the time.

6.3 The Chair asked the Committee if there was anything they would wish to raise as a question at the Combined Authority Board on 24 November 2021 following the Mayor's contribution to the meeting. There were no questions to be raised.

Following the Mayor's contribution the Chair opened discussion around areas that the Committee might wish for the work programme either in the short-, medium-, or longer-term or for future briefings. The following were raised as areas the Committee could consider moving forward:

- Domestic/commercial waste: delivering similar processes across all constituent authorities
- Growth Ambition Statement: when the indicators are revealed the Committee to consider these
- Affordable and Social Housing: the issue of developers not being accommodating to build such housing and developers not meeting their affordable housing targets; and the issue of funding from central government and the Mayor's ongoing discussions with the DLUHC
- Retro-fitting and insulation: the ability of the Mayor to push his authority downwards to constituent authorities to spend money on this; and support and advice for residents across all tenures
- Flooding and water management: what influence can the Mayor bring to these with constituent authorities?
- The Mayoral philosophy: reflecting on how the Committee understands the developing metrics and how these are applied to skills, transport, and housing

As Lead Member for Climate Change Cllr Atkins raised how can he get involved with the Climate Change Working Group? The Monitoring Officer responded he would ascertain how the Working Group will conduct its business and provide a response to the Chair and the Committee on engagement with scrutiny.

7. Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

7.1 The two scoping documents presented to the meeting were noted. Cllr Atkins stated he would be presenting a complementary timeline to the Committee on the Climate Change scoping document.

- 7.2 The Chair stated she would bring a report on the Devolution Deal to the next meeting of the Committee.
- 7.3 It was agreed that the budget and the growth strategy would both need due attention from the Committee following the responses to the Mayor's questions.
- 7.4 Cllr Goldsack as rapporteur for the work on the Combined Authority's Accommodation Strategy agreed to prepare an update for the Committee's next meeting.

8 Date and Time of Next Meeting

- 8.1 The Chair confirmed the next meeting of the Committee would be on Monday, 13 December 2021 at 11:00 at New Shire Hall, Alconbury.
- 8.2 There was some discussion over the use of New Shire Hall as a future venue for Committee meetings as concern was raised to its accessibility for those travelling by public transport or active travel. It was agreed that the December meeting would remain at the venue but the scheduled Committee meetings in February and April be moved to alternative venues.

The meeting closed at 12:29