



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
& PETERBOROUGH**  
COMBINED AUTHORITY

# **CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

## **DRAFT MINUTES**

**Date: Monday, 28 September 2020**

**Time: 11.00 a.m.**

**Location: Virtual Meeting via the Zoom Platform**

### **Present:**

Cllr S Corney	Huntingdonshire District Council
Cllr L Dupre (Chair)	East Cambridgeshire District Council
Cllr A Sharp	East Cambridgeshire District Council
Cllr M Gehring	Cambridge City Council
Cllr J Scutt	Cambridgeshire County Council
Cllr A Coles	Peterborough City Council
Cllr E Murphy	Peterborough City Council
Cllr D Mason	Fenland District Council
Cllr A Hay	Fenland District Council
Cllr P Fane	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Cllr H Williams	South Cambridgeshire District Council

### **Officers:**

Robert Parkin	Chief Legal and Monitoring Officer, Combined Authority
Susan Hall	Governance Assistant, Combined Authority
Adrian Cannard	Strategic Planning Manager, Combined Authority
Rowland Potter	Head of Transport, Combined Authority
Roberta Fulton	Programme Manager, Combined Authority
Anne Gardiner	Scrutiny Officer, Combined Authority
Robert Fox	Scrutiny Officer, Combined Authority (Minute taker)

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

- 1.1 Apologies were received from: Cllr G Chamberlain (substituted by Cllr H Williams); Cllr K Price (Cambridge City Council); and Cllr P Jordan (Huntingdonshire District Council).
- 1.2 The Chair welcomed Anne Gardiner, Scrutiny Officer on her return to the Combined Authority.
- 1.3 The Interim Scrutiny Officer conducted the roll-call of Committee attendees.

## **2. Declarations of Interest**

- 2.1 Cllr Ed Murphy declared an interest on item 6 (Wisbech Rail Project Update) due to work he has conducted on behalf of ASLEF in the rail sector.

## **3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

- 3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday, 29 July were agreed as an accurate record. Cllr Heather Williams abstained from the confirmation of accuracy as she had not been in attendance.

## **4. Public Questions**

- 4.1 There were no public questions.

## **5. The Chair of the Independent Commission on Climate Change**

- 5.1 The Rt. Hon. Baroness Brown of Cambridge was in attendance as Chair of the Commission and was joined by Adrian Cannard, Strategic Planning Manager. The Chair introduced Baroness Brown with a short biography.
- 5.2 Baroness Brown informed the Committee that the Commission has had three formal meetings and that the Commission membership is virtually complete. She highlighted the need for the Commission recommendations to be framed in terms of positive societal benefits through emission reduction and increased public resilience. The recommendations should have positive benefits for growth, jobs and skills. The Commission would be looking at enablers such as research and innovation finance, education, policy and nature itself. The Commission's aim is to produce an interim report in early February 2021 with a final report with recommendations sometime in early summer 2021.
- 5.3 The Commission planned to include sectoral chapters covering building, transport, industry and business, waste and agricultural land use and also look at particular risks to the region including drought and also consider areas of significance for the region, for example emissions from peat and water supply and opportunities from renewable energy.
- 5.4 Baroness Brown stated the intention to have a chapter in the Commission's final report on *What Can I Do?* This chapter will highlight best-practice and case-studies at a local level for citizens and organisations in the county.
- 5.5 Following a question Baroness Brown confirmed the management and technical groups for the Commission are now in place.
- 5.6 The Commission will shortly have an internet presence and a Commission logo, which reflects nature has been produced and agreed.
- 5.7 In relation to work already undertaken on climate change by other Local Authorities Baroness Brown stated that work is being undertaken to summarise all the initiatives throughout the region and that this work will be reflected on by the Commission.

- 5.8 In relation to the diversity of the Commission Baroness Brown informed the Committee that the website, once established, shall include short biographies of all Commissioners. Diversity is good in terms of the gender balance; however, in terms of ethnicity this has not been achieved. Geographical representation could be improved with stronger representation from the Fens. The Commission is still looking for a transport and a finance specialist.
- 5.9 Reflecting upon the interim report Baroness Brown informed the Committee that this will include case-studies. Depending upon time constraints the Commission would be happy to consult on thoughts and ideas and the management and technical teams will be asked to consider this.
- 5.10 Following a question on skills developing the green economy Baroness Brown confirmed that the Commission will be looking closely at this, particularly in terms of skills for carbon-testing and retro-fitting. Peterborough could be a particular focus for this.
- 5.11 A question related to Combined Authority infrastructure projects was raised in terms of their potential environmental impact. In response Baroness Brown stated the Commission is independent and will not be engaging much with the leaders of the Combined Authority. All Commissioners are internationally known in their areas and will not be compromised. The focus will be on being pragmatic on the things that can be done and that can happen locally and make a difference. The recommendations will focus on the local but national recommendations may also come out of the Commissions work.
- 5.12 A member observed the difficulties working with utility suppliers in terms of rainwater harvest systems and solar energy; in particular in terms of the ability of selling new developments. Baroness Brown hoped that zero-carbon homes and zero-carbon ready homes should make things more straightforward. People are encouraged to reduce their carbon footprints but there are other outside factors that contribute to carbon emissions in Cambridgeshire not just the environmental impacts of new homes or redevelopments.
- 5.13 Following a question on the contribution peat can make to reducing emissions in Cambridgeshire and the restoration of the Fens in relation to this Baroness Brown stated that peat had been identified as a key area by the Commission. There is work ongoing to scope some research on the affect it can have. The Commission also sees trees as an important element with nature being a key enabler to climate stabilisation. The Commission will look to support framers, landowners and land managers to contribute to the adaptation and resilience of nature.
- 5.14 A Committee member raised the concerns of residents in the city of Cambridge in terms of development and the effect it will have on water shortages. The member also raised the terminology of climate change and global warming and the concern that these terms have become anodyne and used as check-list items. Indeed, some areas of the USA now use the terms "climate fires, climate floods, global warming fires and global warming floods". To this end the member questioned whether the Commission has considered the resonance and importance of this terminology? In response Baroness Brown informed the Committee that a piece of research was due to be carried out working with the government Committee on Climate Change working on the Five Yearly Climate Change Risk Assessment with the hope that the research would draw out the specific risks for the region which would help frame the report by highlighting what the region could look like if

action is not taken. This will be a good piece of work, which is being undertaken by a post-Doctoral researcher, that would help frame the risks to the people in the region.

- 5.15 Chapter One of the report of the Commission will outline the climate change risk for the geographical county of Cambridgeshire and will include scenarios of what the area could look like, if no actions is taken, by 2050 and 2100. There is a real concern that large areas of the county will suffer consistently from water shortages. As a county there is a real need to reduce the per capita consumption of water.
- 5.16 A question was asked as to whether any of the meetings of the Commission would be held in public session? In response Baroness Brown stated that she was unsure as to the added benefits of having Commission meetings in public. There would, however, be public engagement sessions and she was confident this would have greater impact than public Commission meetings.
- 5.17 The Chair asked Baroness Brown some questions which a non-present member of the Committee had wished to be raised. These questions related to the planning approval of dwellings; ECO installation materials used on construction and renovation work; the use of heating, air conditioning and building materials which have high carbon footprints; the use of plastic materials and the disposal of these; and the loss and replacement of trees in real time? Baroness Brown responded that these points all need to be considered as possible recommendations to central government to allow local authorities greater powers to insist on higher housing standards around materials, although as many of these issues relate to national planning and building regulations they are outside the remit of the Commission. There is a sub-group working on the housing side and this would consider the use of green space, the importance of trees and shading in new developments.
- 5.18 In response to a question Baroness Brown stated transport is an area where recommendations are likely to be made by the Commission that can make an early impact.
- 5.19 Baroness Brown stated she would be happy to attend a future meeting of the Committee to update it on the work of the Commission and suggested a return in February 2021 in line with the publication of the interim report.
- 5.20 Baroness Brown was thanked by the Chair for her contribution to the meeting. The Chair stated the Committee would follow the work of the Commission closely and welcomed Baroness Brown's commitment to returning to the Committee in February 2021.

## **6. Wisbech Rail Project Update**

- 6.1 Rowland Potter introduced the report and provided an update on progress made on the project following approval of the Full Business Case (FBC) in November 2018. The Committee last having received an update in March 2020.
- 6.2 It was reported that Wisbech is one of the largest towns in the country without connectivity to the rail network having lost its passenger rail network shortly following the Beeching cuts.

- 6.3 The Transport and Infrastructure Executive Committee were presented with the key outcomes from the Business Case at its meeting on 8 July 2020.
- 6.4 The FBC concludes that the most commercially viable solution is a heavy rail service serving a station centrally located within Wisbech. It is recommended that a two trains per hour service should run between Wisbech and Cambridge to reach the highest benefit cost ratio.
- 6.5 Engagement with the Department for Transport (DfT) continues so that the Combined Authority can highlight the importance of both Wisbech Rail and Ely Area Capacity Enhancements for the County. Further engagement is expected between the Mayor and the DfT soon.
- 6.6 Following a question from a member, it was confirmed that there are further challenges around the capacity at the Ely North Junction as Wisbech Rail is interdependent upon the Ely Area Capacity Enhancements to achieve the two trains per hour and direct services to Cambridge. Officers continue to liaise with DfT and Network Rail to progress the scheme. It was suggested a link be sent to all Committee members to enable them to access the Network rail consultation that is currently live.
- 6.7 An additional question related to the consideration given to connectivity with a future Garden Town. The current work looks at the rail link between Wisbech and March with Wisbech as it currently is in terms of size, and the Garden Town proposal may need to look at connectivity via cycling, walking, shuttle buses and potentially a branch line from south of Wisbech up to an additional station in the Garden Town development, these will be developed within any future garden town proposal. Bus Reform currently being undertaken by the Combined Authority, will consider routes to the new station within the current Wisbech to March/Cambridge link at both Wisbech and March.
- 6.8 A segregated cycling and walking route will be provided as part of the project to link Wisbech and March.
- 6.9 A further update to the Committee will be available at some time between November 2020 and January 2021. The Chair thanked Rowland Potter for his report.

## **7. CAM Metro Task and Finish Group Update**

- 7.1 The Chair of the Task and Finish Group was not in attendance at the meeting. Therefore, other Task and Finish Group members updated the Committee. There had been good progress on the work in the spring; however, the Task and Finish Group has had difficulty in obtaining data related to consultations that have taken place.
- 7.2 There was an overall concern about transparency expressed and the publication of papers for the CA Board meeting on 30 September is the first time the Task and Finish Group has seen relevant documentation. It is hoped now documentation has been published the Task and Finish Group can make further progress and a meeting will be scheduled for early October with a report forthcoming to the next meeting of the Committee.

**AGREED:**

A further update following a meeting of the Task and Finish Group be presented to the next meeting of the Committee.

## 8. **Combined Authority Board Agenda and Questions for the Meeting on Wednesday, 30 September 2020**

8.1 The questions the Committee should ask the Combined Authority Board were agreed as:

- **Item 1.6 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Constitution**

What representations has the Combined Authority made to central government on the long-standing issue of the quoracy of Combined Authority Committees, and what has been the response?

In line with the seven Nolan Principles of Public Life, is there a commitment for the Business Board to be more transparent and to hold meetings in public session?

- **Item 3.1 Cambridgeshire Autonomous Metro Special Purpose Vehicle Shareholder Agreement**

The Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee would wish to place on record its concerns about the transparency of the CAM Special Purpose Vehicle, and about the lack of timely access to information regarding the CAM scheme in general. Will the Combined Authority give the Committee the assurance that members of the Committee will be provided with information and access to officers in a timely manner, and that the Special Purpose Vehicle will operate openly and transparently? This would include the provision of exempt information to members of the Committee on a 'need-to-know' basis.

- **Item 3.2 A10 Junctions and Dualling**

If the Department of Transport funding decision on dualling is negative will the whole £2m for the Outline Business Case still be required? And in that situation, would the Combined Authority proceed with a junctions-only option, and in what timescale?

- **Item 3.3 Market Towns Programme Investment Prospectus**

It appears that there is nothing in the proposals which affect Chatteris. Is this a timing issue and, if so, when is it envisaged that funding applications for Chatteris will be considered?

Have there been any project proposals that when independently appraised did not reach the pass mark, and, if so, what were these proposals?

Can the projects be economically justified in the current climate?

What is the process for developing these applications? Who is involved and how can residents and local organisations be involved and contribute to the development of proposals?

- **Item 4.3 Bus Reform**

As with our question for Item 3.1, will the Combined Authority Board give an assurance of transparency to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as

this programme continues? The Committee has a Task and Finish Group which provided a series of recommendations last year and is committed to reporting back to the Committee at the end of this municipal year.

- **Items 5.1 and 5.2**

How can it be ensured that there will be no duplication of work with that being undertaken by the Greater Cambridge Partnership on these measures?

With that in mind will the Board commit to ensuring the most productive use of collaboration between the Combined Authority, the GCP, Cambridgeshire County and Peterborough City Councils, and district councils?

Can the Combined Authority update the committee on the virement of resources to Covid-19 and its effectiveness?

8.2 It was confirmed that the Combined Authority Board responses to the questions will be included as an appendix to the minutes of this meeting.

## 9. **Combined Authority Project Register**

9.1 Roberta Fulton, Programme Manager was in attendance and presented the paper which provided the Committee with a full list of Combined Authority projects as at September 2020. This was a quarterly update identifying active projects as well as those completed or closed.

9.2 The Chair requested, and it was **agreed**, that future quarterly reports include additional columns to indicate:

- expected end date of project
- the future dates projects are going to Executive Committees or the CA Board
- RAG rating indicating that projects are proceeding as expected (or not)

9.3 It was confirmed the M11 junction 8 project is no longer proceeding as Essex County Council has put the project on hold. A paper referencing this was taken to the Combined Authority Board in July 2020. The Growth Funds have been re-allocated to other projects it was confirmed.

## 10. **Lead Member Questions to Executive Committees**

10.1 Cllr Andy Coles confirmed he was content with the answers to the questions he had provided to the last Skills Committee meeting. A plea was made that some extra time is allocated to allow for thorough consideration of reports prior to Committees.

10.2 It was **agreed** that a meeting of Lead Members, the Chair of the Committee and the Scrutiny Officer take place prior to the next round of Executive Committees in order to consider questions to those Committees. This meeting is proposed for 2 November at 10.00 a.m.

10.3 There were no questions to either the Housing and Communities or Transport and Infrastructure Executive Committees this round it was confirmed.

**11. Combined Authority Forward Plan**

11.1 The Combined Authority Forward Plan was noted.

11.2 It was noted the reserve Combined Authority Board date of 28 October 2020 is highly unlikely to be required.

**12. Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme**

12.1 The Work Programme was received and noted.

12.2 It was **agreed** that Baroness Brown be invited to the February 2021 meeting of the Committee as per her suggestion to report on the interim findings of the Independent Commission on Climate Change.

**13. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

13.1 The next meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee is Monday, 26 October 2020 at 11.00 a.m. This will be a virtual meeting via the Zoom platform.

13.2 The remaining meetings this municipal year, following the 26 October meeting, will be on:

Monday, 23 November 2020  
Monday, 14 December 2020  
Monday, 25 January 2021  
Monday, 22 February 2020 (fallow month)  
Monday, 29 March 2021  
Monday, 26 April 2021 (fallow month)

All meetings to commence at 11.00 a.m.

The meeting closed at 12.51 p.m.