

Narrative Report:

1. Introduction

The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom requires a Narrative Report to be published by local authorities in England, Northern Ireland and Wales with their financial statements. The purpose of the narrative report is to provide information on Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority, its main objectives and strategies, to provide a commentary on how the Combined Authority has used its resources to achieve its desired outcomes, and to demonstrate how it is equipped to deal with the challenges ahead.

This report provides the narrative to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022.

2. Organisational Overview and External Environment

The Combined Authority is made up of eight founding members across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Each of the following Constituent Authorities is represented by their nominated representative or substitute at Combined Authority meetings.

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

The Business Board also has representation on the Combined Authority Board. By virtue of their office, the Chair of the Business Board is the voting representative on the Combined Authority and the Deputy Chair is the substitute representative.

The following bodies have co-opted member status:

The Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority
Clinical Commissioning Group

The Business Board was constituted as a non-statutory body to be the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for the region. It is independent of the Combined Authority operating as a private-public sector partnership, focusing on the key business sectors to provide strategic leadership and drive growth in the area.

The Business Board builds upon the strengths of established LEP services to create a stronger new model and focuses on:

- Local Industrial Strategy – strategy development, implementation oversight, and monitoring of key objectives

- Place-based growth plans – including master plan development for our market towns, oversight of implementation, making investment recommendations, strategically managing business growth zones (including Enterprise Zones)
- Key sectors – determining our priority sectors, agreeing plans for their growth, overseeing the products and services that directly stimulate sector growth
- International trade and exports – import and export strategies, fostering key places in the world for trade accords, with particular focus on post-Brexit trade and export planning.
- Skills – strategy and delivery plans to achieve a pipeline of people with skills required by business.
- Major investment opportunities – maintaining an overview and management of the pipeline of the single most direct investment opportunities facing the area.
- Devolution – employment improvement and increased exporting impacting on GVA.

The Business Board gives commerce a stronger voice in developing the Combined Authority's plans and decision making and is committed to advising the Combined Authority on achieving its Sustainable Growth Ambition. It ensures that a clear business perspective is brought forward as the Combined Authority seeks to be at the frontier of accelerating delivery and securing new investment models, with and across Government, the private sector and the local area.

The Combined Authority Board decides the strategic direction of the Combined Authority but delegates many of its decision-making powers for operational matters to the three Executive Committees, the Transport & Infrastructure Committee, the Skills Committee and the Housing & Communities Committee.

The Combined Authority has six subsidiary companies which have been set up to deliver specific objectives of the Combined Authority. The six companies are as follows:

Angle Holdings limited,
 Angle Developments East limited,
 One CAM limited,
 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Business Growth Company limited,
 Peterborough HE Property Company ltd, and
 Peterborough R&D Property Company ltd

3. Governance

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Combined Authority also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Combined Authority is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions including arrangements for the management of risk.

The Business Board and Combined Authority Board work to a single Assurance Framework which has been approved by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). It provides a robust, singular framework that brings cohesion to the work of the single officer team, ensuring clarity, transparency and openness for Government, partners and members of the public around governance and compliance processes, and a singular approach to the recommendation and decision-making processes of both Boards.

In June 2022, our auditors, EY, highlighted a significant weakness in the Combined Authority's governance arrangements. These weaknesses and the authority's plans to address them are covered in the Annual Governance Statement.

4. Operational Model

The Devolution Deal for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough set out key ambitions for the Combined Authority to make our area a leading place in the world to live, learn and work. These include:

- Doubling the size of the local economy
- Accelerating house building rates to meet local and UK need
- Delivering outstanding and much needed connectivity in terms of transport and digital links
- Providing the UK's most technically skilled workforce
- Transforming public service delivery to be much more seamless and responsive to local need
- Growing international recognition for our knowledge-based economy
- Improving the quality of life by tackling areas suffering from deprivation

A significant element of the devolution deal was the award of a single pot of investment. This single pot for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority initially comprised of a devolved, multi-year transport settlement and an additional long-term investment fund grant, worth up to £600 million over 30 years.

5. Risks and Opportunities

COVID-19

On 25 March 2020, the Combined Authority set out its response to COVID-19 to support recovery and formulated an approach covering an immediate, short term and medium-term response.

The Combined Authority conducted a review of all priorities to focus on those which would support economic recovery following the impact of the pandemic.

The Combined Authority Board approved the budget for 2021/22 and MTFP for the four-year period to 2024/25 in January 2021. The MTFP set out assumed future funding streams and a full capital programme of investments for the period. The whole of the MTFP was reviewed to consider risks to delivery and to focus on priorities which will support economic recovery.

The MTFP confirmed that the programmes and projects which were contained within the Business plan were affordable within the expected funding envelope across the lifetime of the MTFP, whilst maintaining a £1m Contingency Reserve.

Compassion, Cooperation and Community.

At the Combined Authority we are committed to our values of leading with compassion, working cooperatively, and serving our community. We want to make sure that everything we do makes life better, healthier and fairer for all. If rising prosperity does not make life better, healthier or exhausts the resources our children will need for the future, our economic project is flawed. It is now recognised that we don't just need growth: we need good growth. Our aim is not simply to increase our income, but to increase our area's wealth, in a way that is driven by our values.

Sustainable Growth Ambition

The adoption by the Combined Authority of a Sustainable Growth Ambition statement shifts to a broader thinking, focussing not just on one measure but on a range of measures that taken together demonstrate that the area is growing sustainably towards its GVA target; these measures can be grouped around six keys of sustainable growth. These are

Climate and Nature: restoring the area's depleted natural capital and addressing the impact of climate change on our low-lying area's special vulnerabilities and encouraging businesses to come up with solutions.

People: building human capital - the health and skills of the population - to raise both productivity and the quality of life so that that people in our region are healthy and able to pursue the jobs and lives they want.

Innovation: building on our reputation for new thinking, new technology and new ideas in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to ensure this area can continue to be one of the most dynamic.

Reducing inequalities: investing in the community and building social capital to complement improved skills and connectivity as part of the effort to narrow the big gaps in life expectancy and people's income between places.

Infrastructure: from digital and public transport connectivity to water and energy, building out the networks needed to support a successful future.

Financial and systems: improving the institutional capital – the ways we work, organise, and fund ourselves - which supports decision-making and delivery.

6. Strategy and Resource allocation

Climate and Nature

The Combined Authority has established the Independent Commission on Climate to provide independent evidence and advice on climate issues. The Commission has made 58 recommendations for action toward a pathway to reach Net Zero by 2050 (or before). The Commission found that transport and the heating of buildings provided the most emissions and are priorities for action. Emissions from soils are also a particular issue for the area, as they add a third to overall emissions. We will take action on climate recommendations where we have direct influence and will convene and support organisations in addressing the other climate recommendations. For the natural environment the Combined Authority Board has endorsed the “Doubling Nature” ambition. This will seek to double the amount of rich wildlife and natural green space. Our transport strategy has also evolved and business cases will include increased emphasis on climate impact. Improving public transport connectivity is at the heart of our climate strategy to combat the high levels of transport emissions in the region with a high reliance on private car use. We have developed a vision for buses that has committed to encourage sustainable growth and protect and enhance our environment. We intend to build on our strong active travel credentials building on our success as we have the highest UK cycling rates in Cambridge.

Health and Skills

Our Employment and Skills Strategy sets out what our ambition means for each of the groups interacting with the skills system:

People experience fulfilment and good physical and mental health with productive, quality working lives. They drive their own learning and can access support and learning to meet their personal and work ambitions.

Employers are providing good quality jobs, have the skills they need in their staff and can recruit the right person for the right job.

Providers work collaboratively in an integrated education and skills system to deliver learning, qualifications, careers education and support to enable people to enter the labour market in the ways that suit individual's needs and ambitions.

Place leaders secure outcomes for the whole place, convening and supporting collaboration between employers and the integrated skills system

Innovation

Our Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) proposes that the area's economic growth is supported by harnessing innovation. A key priority in the LIS is to replicate and extend the infrastructure and networks that have enabled Cambridge to become a global leader in innovative growth, creating a business support and innovation ecosystem to promote inclusive growth to replicate the “Cambridge Phenomenon”. Research is fundamental to achieving this replication, as it produces the new ideas and technologies that enable entrepreneurs to start up, existing businesses to scale-up and for new tech-firms to spin-out of academic and research institutions. It

requires the generation of free-flowing exchange of ideas and insights that ensure research is informed by local business' needs. To achieve this, we will bring together leading entrepreneurs, innovators, mentors and coaches with growing firms to strengthen linkages across the area. We will also support businesses, universities and other partners to collaborate to maximise public and private investment, including Research & Development funding, and improving funding to support the growth of local businesses into global markets. Peterborough and Fenland require level 5, 6, 7 & 8 skills in advanced manufacturing and technologies that support the drive to net-zero. This will require the development of an innovation and business support eco-system to grow indigenous high-value firms and attract new ones to Peterborough and Fenland. The creation of new launchpads will be the focal points for this innovation cluster development, focusing on product development to support key growth sectors such as Agri-tech, artificial intelligence and advanced manufacturing innovation.

Reducing Inequalities

Levelling-Up is important to our region. Peterborough and Fenland are ranked as Priority One and Two retrospectively by the Government for levelling-up funding. Both have skills and quality of employment deficits that leads to deprivation, including:

Education deprivation – just 32.1% of the population gain a National Vocational Qualification 4 or above qualification compared to 43% nationally.

Social and health deprivation – healthy life expectancy is below retirement age in parts of Fenland.

Child poverty – 25% of people in Peterborough are living in poverty, compared to 17% nationally.

Poor social mobility – Peterborough is ranked 191st and Fenland as 319th out of 324 local authority districts putting it in the bottom 2% of places nationally

The major contributing factors are low aspirations, poor access to higher education and high-quality employment. Our Independent Economic Review (CPIER), which was designed to identify the economic performance and potential of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, identified a new higher education institution in Peterborough as the only viable solution to the Higher Education Cold-Spot. The Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) also identifies the northward expansion of the innovation clusters and networks from Cambridge, as the primary route to improving the knowledge intensity and quality of employment for Peterborough and the Fens. An inclusive growth strategy and improving absolute standards of living is vital for the long-term economic sustainability of our economy. Local political, education and business leaders are working together to achieve this, across place, sectors and political affiliations and we are keen to work with Ministers, to re-envision what Place Based innovation means and how it can be delivered to drive levelling-up. Improving transport connectivity will also aim to connect cut off communities, to create a far-reaching and affordable public transport network.

Infrastructure

Our infrastructure strategy is set out in the statutory Local Transport Plan and Digital Infrastructure Strategy. A new Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP) will be published in 2022. This document is a refresh to the first Local Transport Plan for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough published in 2020. The LTCP will describe how transport interventions can be used to address current and future challenges and opportunities for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. It will set out the policies and strategies needed to secure growth, address the climate crisis and ensure that transport enables opportunity for all, with people able to access key services that will improve their quality of life, in a sustainable way.

The LTCP has six objectives:

Productivity – Giving both employers and people the means to fulfil their potential, making them more efficient and more innovative to create more prosperity.

Connectivity – People and communities are brought closer together, giving more opportunities for work, education, leisure, and pleasure.

Climate – Successfully and fairly reducing emissions to Net Zero by 2050.

Environment – Protecting and improving our green spaces and improving nature with a well-planned and good quality transport network.

Health – Improved health and wellbeing enabled through better connectivity, greater access to healthier journeys and lifestyles and delivering stronger, fairer and more resilient communities.

Safety – To prevent all harm by reducing risk and enabling people to use the transport system with confidence

Finance and Systems

We commit to a continued review of the funding we receive to ensure we can meet the ambitions set out in our strategies. We will therefore continue to lobby for funding to invest in interventions that will provide sustainable and healthy places in which to live and work. In 2021 we have been successful on bids from central government totalling over £40m, and in 2022 amongst other things we will lobby for a lead role in Shared Prosperity Fund allocation and be looking at opportunities to bid for Transport Levelling Up funding. We will also continue to build public and private partnerships where to date we have leveraged over £150 million from the private sector through our Business Board alone. We will continue to look at innovative ways to invest in the region and our businesses, one of the ways we currently invest is through Recycled Growth Funds. Recycled Growth Funds are made up of repayments from previous Growth Fund investments, based on recommendations from the Business Board. As these investments repay the funds these can be reinvested in new projects delivering jobs and skills in the area. The interest payments on these investments give the Business Board revenue funds as well.

Our Key Achievements in 2021/22

In 2021 we have been successful on bids from Government totalling over £40m, this includes £20m of Levelling Up funding, £13.8m of Getting Building Funding, almost £4.3m for 30 Zebra buses, almost £3.4m of Community Renewal Funding and £2.9m of active travel funding. We have received funding confirmation that following the completion of a successful Cambridge South business case by the Combined Authority, Government have announced within the Budget that this project is funded, subject to planning to proceed for completion in 2025. Similarly in 2021 an important Combined Authority objective was achieved by securing agreement that the A47 project would be taken forward in partnership with National Highways. Construction began on Manea and March stations to provide better station and platform facilities as well as improved parking and bus connectivity points. Over the course of 2021 a set of Quick Win schemes in March have also been delivered with only two remaining, these include zebra crossings, signage, footways, and link roads to improve safety and connectivity. In 2021 we rolled out E-bikes and E-scooters into Cambridge and Peterborough. The scheme so far has tracked more than 224,000 trips in Cambridge alone that have travelled over 1million kilometres (equivalent to 25 times around the equator). The trial has been used by more than 36,000 active users. In the first 10 months of the Cambridge trial, it is estimated that 73,000 fewer car journeys have taken place which equates to a 66-tonne reduction in Carbon Dioxide emissions. For the Digital Connectivity programme in 2021 we hit our full fibre target of 20% a year early and we are now at 35%. The public access CambWifi network has been extended to market towns in Huntingdonshire and East Cambridgeshire and is live in Peterborough city centre, with planning underway for deployment in March and Whittlesey. In 2021 we rolled out a trial of Demand Responsive Transport in West Huntingdonshire named 'Ting', it is too early to make conclusions about its success, but the numbers are promising with an estimated 500 individual passenger trips a week prior to Christmas. In partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council, we have begun construction on King's Dyke which is a £32 million infrastructure project. The bridge is now in position over the railway line and the two new roundabouts are taking shape. The University of Peterborough Phase 1 begun construction and will open in September 2022 to 2,000 students, and funding has been approved to begin phase 2 and 3. We have also continued creating jobs through the Local Growth Funds with 4,863 created over the course of the fund, and have continued to create jobs, apprenticeships and attract inward investment through our innovative Business Growth Service. For housing, by the end of the programme we expect to have delivered 1,560 additional affordable houses.

Basis of Preparation and Presentation

This Statement of Accounts has been prepared in accordance with statutory requirements, detailed in the Local Government Act 2003, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 and The Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom 2020/21 (the Code).

The Statement of Accounts brings together the major financial statements for the Combined Authority for the financial year 2021/22. The financial statements, along with the notes that accompany them, aim to give a full and clear picture of the financial position of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority. The key contents of the various sections are as follows:

- Statement of Responsibilities – sets out the responsibilities of the Combined Authority and the Chief Finance Officer in respect of the Statement of Accounts.
- Comprehensive Income and Expenditure Statement – shows the accounting cost in the year of providing services in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices.
- Movement in Reserves Statement – this statement shows the movement in the year on the reserves held by the Combined Authority.
- Balance Sheet – shows the value of the assets and liabilities recognised by the Combined Authority as at 31 March 2022.
- Cash Flow Statement – summarises the inflows and outflows of cash, and cash equivalents, arising from transactions with third parties.
- Notes to the Financial Accounts - the various statements are supported by technical notes and by the Statement of Accounting Policies.
- Annual Governance Statement – sets out how the Combined Authority's governance arrangements comply with the principles of the Local Code of Governance.

Jon Alsop
Chief Finance Officer (S73)