



CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: Wednesday 9th September 2020

Time: 10.00am – 11.38am

Present: James Palmer (Mayor and Chairman), Councillors Ian Bates, Ryan Fuller, Peter Hiller, Nicky Massey, Chris Seaton, Joshua Schumann and Aidan Van de Weyer

Apologies: Councillor Jon Neish (Councillor Ryan Fuller substituting)

100. APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None received.

Members noted that Councillor Fuller would leave the meeting at 11.20am.

Councillor Schumann declared a non-pecuniary personal interest in agenda item 2.6 – Soham Railway Station Update as he was a trustee of a charity that was currently building a new theatre premises in Soham which was located close to the location of the new station.

101. MINUTES – 8TH JULY 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th July 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

With regard to the minutes, the following points were raised:

- A Member sought clarity for when the timetable for the alternative route would be available to the Committee. The Mayor informed the Committee that work had been ongoing and was now able to take up a position as a non-voting Member on the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) Executive Board. The Mayor would therefore propose at the next meeting of the GCP Executive Board that all parties work together. It was essential that the concerns of residents be listened to and the best solution be adopted. Officers further explained that discussions at an officer level were currently taking place with the GCP during which timescales were being addressed.
- Attention was drawn to the discussion that took place regarding the Jabobs review and how it had not taken account of all the amendments to the scheme and questioned when the updated version of the review would be made available to the GCP. In response, the Mayor emphasised the proactivity of the Combined Authority to find a solution through a combined working ethic at a political level with the GCP. In order for the transport system to work it had to join up through collaborative work. It was also essential not to repeat mistakes of the past where transport infrastructure

was rushed to meet the need of the Local Plan. Local Plans should be informed by the transport solutions. Cambridgeshire highways and transport had suffered due to the planning decisions being based on the need for housing rather than the need for transport. Have to be mindful not to rush through transport corridors to meet housing demand but to provide transport corridors that delivered sustainable housing growth.

102. COMBINED AUTHORITY FORWARD PLAN

It was resolved to note the Combined Authority's forward plan.

103. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

One public question was received. The question and response are published here: [T&I Public Questions and Reponses](#)

104. COVID-19 TRANSPORT RESTART

The Committee received a report updating the Committee on how the transport system would be re-started following the COVID-19 restrictions.

The presenting officer highlighted the role of the Restart Group detailed in the report which brought together multiple stakeholders and had met weekly since June 2020. Although home-to-school transport was not within the remit of the group, close work had been undertaken with education teams to assist with the return of children to school.

The Committee was informed of the impact of COVID-19 on traffic levels across the Combined Authority area. Traffic had now returned to pre-pandemic levels and for many areas now exceeded pre-pandemic levels. However, traffic appeared to be more evenly spread throughout the day and 'rat-running' appeared to be less of an issue with people remaining on major routes.

With regard to pupils returning to schools, officers reported that there had been no significant issues reported.

Members noted that the Restart Group had worked closely with education teams and communications teams to encourage active travel. The Combined Authority was awarded £2.9m for active travel and it would be received in 2 tranches, both of which had been forwarded in advance of receipt to Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council to avoid delay.

Members noted the comments of the Mayor who informed the Committee that he intended to write to the Secretary of State for Rail regarding cross-country routes due to issues regarding stops.

During discussion of the report Members:

- Expressed disappointment that the recent infrastructure upgrade did not mention the dualling of the A47 and drew attention to the serious incident that had occurred the day before resulting in the road being closed for approximately 8 hours. Officers informed the Committee they were equally disappointed that the A47 had not been included within the RIS 2 programme. Members noted the work that had been undertaken on the project to date. Dialogue with the Department for Transport would continue to develop the A47 outside of RIS 2. A report would be presented to the Committee and Combined Authority Board detailing the proposals in the future.
- Noted that Highways England had committed to undertake work on Guyhirn roundabout and requests had been made for an update regarding timescales. A contractor and designer had been appointed and survey work, both geographical and topographical had begun. When an update was received, officers undertook to inform Members of its content. **ACTION**
- Noted that schemes developed using the tranche 2 funding for active travel were due to be presented at Cambridgeshire County Council's Highways and Transport Committee on 15 September 2020 and illustrate how well all stakeholders had worked together.
- Expressed concern regarding the traffic data for major routes and sought greater clarity regarding the profile of journeys. Although congestion was not yet a significant issue, it would increase in the run up to Christmas and when people return to the office environment in large numbers. Officers informed the Committee that it was a standing item for the Restart Group where the data was discussed and interrogated at length. Data providers were being constantly challenged for how it could be better interrogated. Congestion was a key concern together with the prevention of traffic spilling into local routes. The continued infrastructure programme would address issues in the medium to long-term together with the measures set out in the report.

The Committee noted the Mayor's concern regarding the current usage of public transport and how essential it was for confidence to return. Following the success of the Government backed 'Eat Out to Help Out' scheme, the Mayor suggested whether a similar scheme could be brought forward by the Government for public transport.

It was resolved to:

Note the update and comment on priorities for further activity to restart the transport system.

105. BUS REFORM TASK FORCE

The Committee received a report that sought approval for modifications to the bus reform work programme to reflect the issues arising from the COVID-19 pandemic and also requested that a recommendation be made of the Combined Authority Board to approve the remaining £1.2m budget provision to fund short-term innovation trials to inform subsequent reform proposals. The presenting officer highlighted the current Government COVID-19 funding arrangements for buses that were due to expire in 8

weeks'. Such uncertainty resulted in it being very difficult to take a long-term view on bus reform.

During discussion of the report Members:

- Expressed concern regarding the level of engagement with Peterborough City Council. Officers reassured the Committee that the Combined Authority continued to work closely with Peterborough City Council and was liaising regularly with officers.
- Sought further information regarding the proposed modifications to the project plan mentioned at paragraph 2.13 of the officer report. Officers explained that the purpose of the Task Force was to bring forward ideas. One such idea was Demand Responsive Transport (DRT). There was constant engagement with the Government in order to receive all the assistance possible to re-energise the bus service.
- Emphasised the difficulties for bus companies operating during the pandemic and highlighted the community transport operators and the need to ensure that evaluation of alternative modes was carried out in a joined up way.
- Noted the comments of the Mayor regarding the need to encourage people out of their cars and onto alternative methods of transport. While people were still fearful of the COVID-19 virus it would be difficult and drew attention to the increased sales of second hand cars as evidence of the changed behaviour. There was also therefore a need alleviate congestion in order for buses to flow freely.

It was proposed by Councillor Bates and seconded by Councillor van de Weyer that the recommendation be moved.

It was unanimously resolved to:

- (a) Note the progress of the project to date;
- (b) Note that the COVID-19 emergency has reduced the predictability of the bus operating environment in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough;
- (c) Authorise the Director of Delivery and Strategy, in consultation with the Chair of the Transport and Infrastructure Committee, to amend the BRTF programme milestones to reflect the pace of recovery of the bus market; and
- (d) Recommend the Board to approve the remaining £1.2 million budget provision set out in the MTFP, to be used to fund short-term innovation trials to inform subsequent reform proposals, and to delegate the detailed allocation of the budget for trials to the Director of Delivery and Strategy in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, subject to reporting the detail back to future Committee meetings.

106. CAMBRIDGESHIRE AUTONOMOUS METRO – OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE NON-STATUTORY CONSULTATION SUMMARY REPORT

The Committee was presented a report regarding the Cambridgeshire Autonomous Metro (CAM) Outline Business Case non-statutory consultation and engagement activities undertaken between 21 February and 3 April 2020. The report provided a summary of the initial findings of the non-statutory consultation.

Commenting on the report, a Member highlighted the more positive responses to the consultation that were of interest. Commenting further, it was unclear the level of weight that could be placed on the support for the proposed locations and suggested further, more detailed, discussions regarding the timeline for the project.

It was proposed by Councillor Seaton and seconded by Councillor Schumann to move the recommendation.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- (a) Note the findings of the summary report; and
- (b) Approve its release to the CPCA Board.

107. TRANSFORMING CITIES FUND DELIVERY PLAN

Members received a report that informed the Committee of the Combined Authority's (CA) Transforming Cities Fund Delivery Plan 2019/20. The CA received devolved funding from the Department for Transport and formed part of the CA Investment Fund. Attached to the funding was a requirement for the submission of a report each year on the use of the funding.

Officers undertook to provide a table that illustrated how the projects matched the criteria. **ACTION**

It was unanimously resolved to:

Note the Transforming Cities delivery plan.

108. ENGLAND'S ECONOMIC HEARTLAND CONSULTATION

Members received a report that invited the Committee to advise the Combined Authority Board on the terms of a response to proposals made by England's Economic Heartland in recent consultation documents.

The presenting officer drew Members' attention to the revised recommendations that were published following the publication of the report, together with the five priorities of

the England's Economic Heartland Strategy contained at paragraph 2.6 that broadly aligned strategically with those of the Combined Authority.

During discussion of the report:

- A Member questioned the need for an additional tier of transport authority given the Government's desire to reduce layers of government. In response, the Mayor explained that there were areas that could deliver a transport solution that Cambridgeshire sat between. The Combined Authority had transport powers, and if there was potential to link the east of England with the economic heartland area there was opportunity to create something exceptional. The Mayor had encouraged Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex to join a single scheme and it was anticipated in time that there would be a single route across the central belt of the UK.
- A Member commented that the Government's ambition was for such bodies to be established in order they can undertake large scale strategic work with established organisations. There was a need to be as constructive as possible at this stage of the process as there were significant advantages to being a part of it. Furthermore, the economy of Cambridgeshire was already well integrated with the economic heartland area.

It was proposed by Councillor Bates and seconded by Councillor Schumann that the recommendation be moved. Councillor Fuller and Hiller left the meeting and did not take part in the vote.

It was resolved [5 votes in favour: 0 against: 1 abstention] to:

- (a) Advise the Combined Authority Board the terms of the public consultation response to the England Economic Heartland's (EEH) Transport Strategy and proposal for a sub- national transport body attached at Appendix 1; and

109. SOHAM RAILWAY STATION UPDATE

The Committee received a report that provided an update regarding the Soham Railway Station project. In presenting the report officers highlighted how the delivery of the station would support economic and housing growth for Soham. Work had also commenced on the rail works and completion of the scheme was planned for October 2021 in readiness for timetabling and the new station would be completed in December 2021.

Members noted the comments of Councillor Schumann, as the former County Councillor for Soham welcomed the progress that had been made and that the station would be delivered ahead of schedule. Councillor Schumann drew attention to the history of the station during World War 2 and its eventual demise following the Beeching Report, released in 1963. The station was vital for continued growth in the area and promoted sustainable travel.

The Mayor drew attention to the Combined Authority's ambition for Wisbech Rail, a station at Sawston and the overall commitment to rail transport. The Mayor concluded

by highlighting the role of Newmarket and although it was not within the Combined Authority's area, discussions were taking place to bring forward improvements.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- (a) Note that work has begun on site at Soham Railway Station; and
- (b) Note that Network Rail are indicating that the project can be completed 5 months earlier than originally planned.

110. PERFORMANCE AND FINANCE REPORT

The Committee received the Performance and Finance report. Members noted the current 'favourable' variance against the budget for the financial year of £112,000.

Officers undertook to provide a briefing regarding the project to regenerate Fenland Stations as it was marked 'red' in the performance report. **ACTION.**

It was resolved unanimously to:

- (a) Note the September budget and performance monitoring update; and
- (b) Note the current Medium Term Financial Plan and consider whether there are any recommendations members wish to make to the Combined Authority Board.

111. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was resolved to note the date of the next meeting of the Combined Authority Transport and Infrastructure Committee – Wednesday 4th November 2020

Chairman