

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Transport and Infrastructure Committee: Minutes

Date: 13 July 2022

Time: 10.00am – 12.16pm

Present: Nik Johnson (Mayor and Chairman), Councillors Bovingdon, Cereste, McDonald, Seaton, Shailer, Thornburrow and Wakeford.

Apologies: Councillor Wakeford, substituted by Councillor Davenport Ray.

34. Apologies and declarations of interest

Apologies were received from Councillor Wakeford, substituted by Councillor Davenport Ray.

Councillor Peter McDonald declared an interest as a member of Cambridgeshire County Council's Highways and Transport Committee.

Councillor Boden declared an interest in minute 38, Local Bus Service Assessment Framework as a trustee of FACT that received funds from the Combined Authority.

35. Minutes – 14 March 2022 and Action Log

The minutes of the meeting on 14 March 2022 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Mayor, subject to the addition of Councillor Bovingdon who was present at the meeting.

The action log was noted.

36. Combined Authority Forward Plan – 6 June 2022

The Combined Authority Forward Plan was noted.

37. Transforming Cities Fund

The Committee received a report that provided a summary of the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) programme and set out how the Combined Authority intended to manage it over the course of the financial year.

The Combined Authority had received a £95m share of an overall £1.08bn that had been allocated to six Mayoral Combined Authorities. A report had been previously

submitted to the Combined Authority Board that set out a programme. The Committee was informed that schemes within the programme were looking to be accelerated.

The presenting officer drew Members' attention to an amendment to recommendation c) to recommend to the Combined Authority Board.

During the course of discussion:

- Confirmation was sought by a Member that projects including Wisbech Access Strategy, March Junctions Project be progressed and consideration be given to the inclusion (if appropriate within TCF rules) to the Whittlesey Southern Relief Road Stage 1 report. It was confirmed that the Wisbech Access Strategy and the March Junctions Project were both included in the programme for accelerated delivery. Further work would be undertaken on the Whittlesey scheme to understand whether it qualified under the terms of the funding and whether it could be included in the list of prioritised schemes.
- The importance of connectivity was emphasised by a Member for areas such as Fenland and South Cambridgeshire.
- Attention was drawn by a Member to Cambridgeshire County Council and the interest it had as the Highway Authority. The work of officers was welcomed in developing the schemes and questioned whether if schemes that were unsuccessful could be retained for future consideration. The presenting officer confirmed that the work would not be forgotten, and the unsuccessful schemes would form a pipeline through which additional funding would be sought to take forward.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Note the current position in relation to the delivery of the TCF schemes programmed for 2022/23;
- b) Agree to the revision to the programme and the process for this outlined within the paper; and
- c) **Recommend the Combined Authority Board** delegate responsibility to the Interim Head of Transport and the Chair of Transport and Infrastructure Committee in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and the Monitoring Officer to finalise the potential replacement capital schemes (packages) for agreement by Leaders.

38. Local Bus Service Assessment Framework

The Committee received a report detailing the financial pressures on the bus network brought about by the reduction in support from central government and the potential impacts on the region's bus network. There was likely to be a funding request to

maintain services across the region following conversations with operators. The quantum of the potential cuts was being discussed and challenged with operators. Should the funding required exceed that available then it was likely cuts to services would need to be made and transparent criteria were being developed with partners, based on best practice, to facilitate decision making should the need arise.

During discussion, individual Members:

- Expressed disappointment that a bid for funding was unsuccessful due to it not being ambitious enough. It was appropriate that objective assessment criteria were being developed to assist the funding allocation. In the interests of fairness, it was requested that the cost per passenger journey per mile be assessed rather than simply cost per mile as otherwise rural bus services would be penalised significantly. It was also essential that the assessment took a broader view and included some subjectivity. The presenting officer explained that officers had sought clarity from the Government for why the bid for funding was unsuccessful and confirmed that subjective criteria such as mitigating social inclusion would be included in the assessment criteria. If the criteria were just based on numerical values, then the wrong results would be arrived at.
- Shared concerns regarding rural residents and the potential loss of services. The ability of rural residents to participate in active travel was much less than urban areas.
- Commented that removal of subsidy would cause huge disruption. The Greater Cambridge Partnership was continuing to work on supporting services but there would be a gap between when that funding would be available and questioned whether there was an ability to bridge it. The presenting officer confirmed that the GCP was included in discussions as were all constituent Councils on the assessment criteria.
- Questioned when funding would next be made available by government. Officers informed the Committee that meetings were due to take place with the Secretary of State at which financial support would be discussed.
- Highlighted rural isolation, and education transport. Cambridgeshire County Council spent large sums of money on education transport in areas where there was transport poverty in general and suggested that it be included within future work.
- Sought greater clarity regarding timescales. Members noted that an update would be presented to the July Combined Authority Board meeting. Criteria would then be discussed a Leaders' Strategy meeting on 10th August that would be presented to the August meeting of the Board. The timescales would allow for the 70 days' notice required of operators to deregister which marked the start of the process for discussions to take place and potential funding be put into place.
- Commented that the need for effective bus connectivity was now greater than ever given the pressures on the cost of living. A company in South Cambridgeshire was highlighted as an example of a company that was struggling due to delays with the

processing of licenses at the DVLA. Officers responded by agreeing to identify how the Combined Authority could play an active role in that area.

- Attention was drawn to the success of dial-a-ride minibuses within Cambridge City and the forecast increased use of the service. The Combined Authority had provided funding previously for zero-emission minibuses and questioned whether demand responsive transport could be extended into wider areas. Members noted that lessons were being learned from Demand Responsive Transport in west Huntingdonshire for how that could be rolled out more widely through the Bus Strategy.
- Noted that officers confirmed an update would be forthcoming on the trial of Demand Responsive Transport in Huntingdonshire and timescales would be confirmed. Regarding assessment criteria, it was essential that qualitative data be considered and developed.
- Commented that school transport being in some way integrated was sensible, however, expressed concern that Cambridgeshire County Council had taken the decision not to permit the payment of fares by individuals that did not qualify for transport when there were seats available forcing more children to travel to school by car.
- Requested that when submitting future bids and in future reports the provision of financial support for buses is separated from the type of fuel used.
- Highlighted the importance of rail transport and alternative fuels.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Provide feedback on the need for and purpose of Local Bus Service Assessment Framework; and
- b) Agree for officers to continue finalise an appropriate assessment framework for subsequent approval by the Combined Authority Board members.

39. East Anglian Alternative Fuels Strategy (EAAFS)

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the East Anglian Alternative Fuels Strategy (EAAFS).

During discussion of the report, Members:

- Cautioned that it was essential that realism be maintained as rural areas would not be able to transition as easily as urban areas.

- Expressed concern regarding the rush for electrification and the pressures that was placing on the national grid.
- Emphasised the importance of not pursuing electrification at the expense of other alternative technologies such as hydrogen power that was still under development.
- Commented that it was unclear as to whether peak consumption of oil had been reached and that there would be a need to use it in the future for longer than many would want.
- Noted the importance of engaging with the private sector to enable change in rural areas.
- Noted the work Cambridge City Council had undertaken with the private sector to deliver electric vehicle charging points in car parks. There was also a desire to provide community electric vehicles, but it was constrained by the availability of such vehicles.
- Noted that the Steering Group was currently an officer group, however, invites could be extended to Members.
- Drew attention to alternative, sustainable fuels that would be beneficial to people in rural communities.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Note the progress on the EAAFS; and
- b) Recommend that the Combined Authority Board approve a six-week public consultation on the EAAFS.

40. Active Travel – Cambridgeshire

The Committee considered a report that sought approval to recommend the Authority Board to drawdown funding for the completion of a programme of active travel measures in Cambridgeshire.

During the course of discussion, Members:

- Sought an update regarding the timings of tranches 3 and 4. Officers advised that tranche 3 was announced in late May 2022 and the CPCA was awarded £635k for projects in Peterborough and tranche 4 had just been announced.
- Noted that the first project board was due to take place on 14 September 2022 and the importance of the pipeline of projects from Cambridgeshire County Council.

- Noted that Cambridgeshire County Council had schemes that were ready for delivery and the ambition to create a centre for excellence in active travel and was recruiting to achieve that.
- Acknowledged and welcomed the work of CamCycle in developing schemes and Cambridge Living Streets. The importance of including active travel within emerging local plans was emphasised for site development and identification.

It was resolved unanimously/majority to:

- a) Recommend to the Combined Authority Board the drawdown of £753,000 of Active Travel Funding from the Medium -Term Financial Plan to complete a programme of active travel improvements in Cambridgeshire; and
- b) Recommend to the Combined Authority Board the delegation of authority to the Interim Head of Transport in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer, to conclude a Grant Funding Agreement with Cambridgeshire County Council to enable work to progress.

41. Transport Modelling for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

The Committee received a report detailing a variation to the proposed approach to develop a transport model for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area. Under the Department for Transport framework for taking forward transport schemes, a compliant transport model was mandatory to test options and demonstrate benefits. The Committee and Combined Authority Board were previously informed that the Combined Authority would take forward the development of a cloud based 'data layer' to store transport movement data. With data collection and transport modelling being commissioned at a later stage, however the timelines of the Combined Authority and other partner's schemes required a swifter approach.

During discussion, Members:

- Thanked the presenting officer for the work being undertaken. Commenting further, it was suggested that delaying slightly may be beneficial and shouldn't be constrained by the end of the financial year. It was explained that previous years' underspend was being utilised due to still emerging from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Discussions were taking place with the Department for Transport and although delaying would be considered, officers had to be mindful of the Transport Team. It was also possible to undertake a lower cost short-term data collection.
- Welcomed the expansion of the map because it was essential to consider the border areas of the county and welcomed taking rail and rail freight into consideration.

- Welcomed the funding to develop the baseline data in Cambridge.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Agree the change in delivery for a new transport model with Cambridgeshire County Council being commissioned to lead the delivery of the model on behalf of all partners;
- b) Recommend the Combined Authority Board agree the changes to the spending objectives for the initial transport model budget. Previously approved budget will now be committed to modelling activities of:
 - i. Collection of data to populate current and future transport models.
 - ii. Preparation of a full business case for the design and build of a new transport model; and
- c) Note the future arrangements for the review of the model, full business case, and sign-off of MTFP funds (subject to approval) at a future date.

42. Kings Dyke Levelling Crossing Closure

The Committee received a report that provided a progress update of the Kings Dyke lever crossing closure and sought approval for funding from the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

During discussion, individual Members:

- Cited former District and County Councillor, Ralph Butcher for his work on the Kings Dyke crossing.
- Sought clarity regarding the report recommendations and why the funding was being requested. Concern was expressed that Cambridgeshire County Council had requested additional funding but had not provided sufficient reason for the request which was unsatisfactory.
- Expressed concern that there had been previously no indication of overspend on the project.

Following discussion, it was proposed by the Chair, with the agreement of Members to defer the item to the next meeting of the Committee at which greater clarity would be provided on the financial details and any disputed matters that may need to be discussed in exempt session.

43. Peterborough Bus Depot Relocation

The Committee received a report detailing the summaries of the position in relation to development of the Peterborough Bus Depot Relocation. The Mayor informed the Committee of a procedural amendment to recommendation c) that should request the funding from the revenue budget.

During discussion Members:

- Expressed disappointment that there was not the capacity to have the work completed internally rather than externally. The presenting officer highlighted the staffing pressures within the team that made it not possible to complete the necessary work internally.
- Confirmed that the Finance Team that the funding had to come from the revenue budget.
- Need to recognise the value and lack of officer time in all they are being tasked to do.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Note the current position in relation to the Peterborough Bus Depot Relocation; and
- b) Support the proposal to investigate alternative options for the provision of a bus depot in Peterborough
- c) Recommend the Combined Authority Board agree **to release £40,000 of revenue funding** ~~drawdown from the Bus Reform budget~~ to progress this project in a timely manner.

44. A141 St Ives Improvements

The Committee considered a report that summarised the work on the A141 and St Ives Improvements scheme and sought approval of the budget to progress the Outline Business Case.

During discussion individual Members:

- Emphasised the importance of the scheme to Huntingdonshire and sought greater clarity regarding the timescales for the project. The Committee was informed that the Outline Business Case would likely take around 2 years before moving to a full business case.

- Expressed concern regarding the environmental implications contained in the report, commenting that they did not appear very robust as the proposals would have a significant carbon impact. Officers explained that policies changed during Strategic Outline Business Case process and revisions would be made based on the new policies, including a 'do nothing' option that would provide more data on the carbon impact.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Note the progress on the A141 St Ives Improvements scheme;
- b) Recommend the Combined Authority Board approve the release of £6m funding for the delivery of the Outline Business Case; and
- c) Recommend the Combined Authority Board delegate authority to the Interim Head of Transport and Chief Finance Officer to enter into Grant Funding Agreements with Cambridgeshire County Council.

45. Performance and Finance Report

The Committee received the September Performance and Finance report which presented the progress to date made against budgets set in January 2021. It included the summary of the year-to-date transport revenue budget; the RAG risk rating; statistics from the Five-Year Gateway Review results; and an expenditure timetable for the 2021-22 budget.

It was resolved to note the contents of the report.

44. Date of next meeting

It was resolved to note the date of the next Transport and Infrastructure Committee would be 14 September 2022.

Mayor