



CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY: MINUTES

Date: Wednesday, 25 October 2017

Time: 10.30am – 11.27am

Present: J Palmer (Mayor)

J Clark – Fenland District Council, S Count – Cambridgeshire County Council, L Herbert – Cambridge City Council, J Holdich – Peterborough City Council, R Howe – Huntingdonshire District Council, N Wright (substituting for P Topping) – South Cambridgeshire District Council and M Reeve (Greater Cambridgeshire Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership (GCGP LEP))

Observers: J Ablewhite (Police and Crime Commissioner), and Councillor J Peach (substituting for Councillor K Reynolds, Chairman, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fire Authority)

90. APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Apologies received from Councillor P Topping; Councillor K Reynolds and J Bawden, Observers.

The Mayor reported that he was aware that several members of the Board also sat on the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Board. He advised that they could speak and vote on the LEP funding report, unless they considered themselves pre-determined. Councillors Count, Holdich and Howe declared non-statutory disclosable interests under the Code of Conduct in relation to Agenda Item 3.2 (Minute 97), as members of the LEP Board. Councillor Holdich also declared a non-statutory disclosable interest under the Code of Conduct in relation to the same item, as a Director of Opportunity Peterborough appointed by Peterborough City Council.

91. MINUTES – 27 SEPTEMBER 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th September 2017 were agreed as a correct record.

92. PETITIONS

No petitions were received.

93. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

No public questions were received.

94. FORWARD PLAN

The Board noted the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions dated 23 October 2017, which had been circulated on that day. The Mayor stated that the Forward Plan was updated on a regular basis and was available online for public inspection (a copy of the current version was available at the following link

https://cmis.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/ccc_live/Documents/PublicDocuments.aspx)

He drew attention to the following changes:

- items 12, 13, and 14 had been moved from November to December; and
- two new items had been added to November – Adult Education Budget Devolution, and Transport Update.

It was resolved unanimously to approve the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions.

95. MARKET TOWN MASTERPLANS: ST NEOTS

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Strategy presented the first of ten market town masterplans. St Neots had been chosen by the Combined Authority as the starting point for a renewed focus on market towns and would be used as a reference point for subsequent plans. The Combined Authority had engaged Inner Circle to work with local partners, such as Huntingdonshire District Council, to develop the first iteration of a Masterplan for St Neots, which would act as a catalyst for change. The first phase of the Masterplan had highlighted the fact that St Neots had contributed significantly to the county's recent growth. This included 20% of Huntingdonshire's total Gross Value Added (GVA) from engineering and manufacturing. However, it was in decline despite its wide catchment.

The analysis summarised that current planned growth for St Neots would deliver 4,000 new homes, 3,500 new jobs and would result in an increase in GVA of £185m. The Masterplan identified the need for a co-ordinated set of investments and interventions that were required in the following strategic areas: Town Centre Regeneration; Transportation; Industry; and Housing. The first stage of work had identified a package of £5.8m which was necessary to support the planned growth of St Neots within existing plans.

In addition to these recommendations for actions, the Masterplan for St Neots had concluded that within existing planned growth, the GVA uplift in the market town would only hit 40%, falling 60% or £285m short of doubling. Further GVA generation might be possible within St Neots by focussing partnership activity around reducing the amount of net outward commuting from the town. A second phase Masterplan would need to address education and skills provisions, the introduction of enterprise zones and tax incentives, the opportunities presented by vastly improved connectivity, the better utilisation of the public estate, and the East – West corridor.

In conclusion, the Portfolio Holder commended the first stage of the St Neots Master Plan, which had been welcomed unreservedly by the Local County, District and Town Councillors following consultation. He acknowledged that there were omissions which would be addressed in the next phase of the plan.

In considering the report, the Board made the following comments:

- welcomed a very good piece of work in particular the identification of new homes, the creation of 3,500 jobs, the fact 1000 people lived in St Neots and work outside of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, and supporting the local economy. However, one Member identified the fact that the report was missing emphasis on connectivity between the Town and Cambridge as it grew and in particular the pinch point of the A428.
- welcomed the report and its ambition but expressed disappointment that South Cambridgeshire District Council had not been consulted. Speaking as the Local Member for a Ward which bordered St Neots, the representative for South Cambridgeshire District Council confirmed that he had not been consulted. He drew attention to the fact that the report focused on several themes including the new route of the A428, as yet there was no certainty regarding a northern route. It was also not clear whether the Oxford to Cambridge Railway would pass along that corridor, which might or might not help St Neots develop its own businesses.
- welcomed the opportunity to see a future picture of St Neots under an East/West transport infrastructure. The Masterplan provided a good pattern for other Market Towns, and informed the Spatial Strategy in relation to which parts of Cambridgeshire made a bigger contribution. The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning drew attention to the immediate issues which included the assessment of future jobs and housing. As the lead on spatial planning, it would provide him with some important learning which would also inform other Market Town Masterplans.
- welcomed the fact that the return was likely to be four times the investment. It was acknowledged that the Masterplan would evolve, and although it provided a good blue print, it was important to remember that other areas were different.
- highlighted the importance of linking small business to bigger business and housing to jobs, as the Combined Authority was not building dormitory towns but towns people wanted to live and work in.
- acknowledged that the Masterplan provided an excellent starting point in identifying the gaps. It was important to retain skills and talent locally as this would result in an improvement in the life cycle of local people. The core part of Phase 2 in driving up GVA by increasing the number of businesses and productively would also drive up the lifestyles of local people who lived in St Neots. The Mayor and Combined Authority were changing strategic thinking by adding value. One Member requested a list of stakeholders involved in the consultation to enable the Board to check whether it had been sufficient. He added that he could see the advantage of the template when it was used in Fenland.

The Mayor commented that he was a great believer in master planning and welcomed the investment in the Market Towns. The Government would be undertaking improvements to the A428. He felt that the East/West rail link was unlikely to happen but there was likely to be light rail from Haverhill.

In conclusion, the Portfolio Holder reported that St Neots was in a strategic economic corridor. It was the largest Market Town in Cambridgeshire and a reference point for all Market Towns. He acknowledged that the consultation had not been perfect with Local County Councillors not being consulted initially. The Economic Commission when established would include a representative from the County Council, District Council, Town Council, Business, Health and Transport. It was noted that St Neots exported 25% of its GVA to other parts of the world but if this could be repatriated it would release a great vision for the Town.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) welcome the analysis and findings of the first phase of the Masterplan for St Neots;
- b) endorse the development of the next phase of the Masterplan through the creation of a “St Neots Masterplan Partnership”;
- c) note that a total investment programme of up to £5.8m was needed to unlock the growth potential of St Neots within existing plans;
- d) request that officers work with the St Neots Masterplan Partnership to develop a business case for collective investment in the proposed programme, and bring forward investment proposals to this Board as part of that approach;
- e) establish that any proposals for Combined Authority investment that were brought forward were in line with the Authority’s Investment Strategy as set out in paragraph 3.8;
- f) note the intention to promote the development of masterplans for market towns in Cambridgeshire, as part of the Combined Authority’s wider economic strategy.

96. PRIORITY TRANSPORT SCHEMES

The Mayor reported that he had been advised by the Department for Transport that two highways funding bids for the National Productivity Investment Fund had been successful. These related to two schemes in Peterborough. The Combined Authority was to receive £2.8M for the A605 at Oundle Road and £3.85M for J18 on the A15. The Mayor congratulated the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Infrastructure who had led the bids on behalf of the Combined Authority on a successful outcome.

The Portfolio Holder for Transport and Infrastructure drew attention to a report setting out the longer term pipeline of work to ensure that there was a steady flow of transport interventions that were effectively planned and well considered over the current and future Mayoral cycles. He reminded the Board that the two successful schemes funded from the National Productivity Infrastructure Fund had taken a long time to come to fruition, and had both been ‘shovel ready’. Unfortunately, two other bids for March and Wisbech had not been successful and would be considered as part of priority transport schemes at future Board meetings. He introduced Keith McWilliams, Transport and Infrastructure Director.

The Director reported that the priority schemes detailed in the report supported the wider Combined Authority objectives. There were in addition to the strategic transport and infrastructure schemes approved previously by the Board. It excluded those projects currently being promoted, funded and/or developed independent of the Authority by other partners. Attention was drawn to the rationale for the development of the pipeline, which would deliver a number of benefits. The Authority had worked closely with partnering organisations to develop an extended list of schemes for potential investment. Members were advised of the evaluation criteria and the governance around the shortlisting process. Attention was drawn to the shortlisted schemes which required £3.53m funding for 17/18. There was £1.0m funding for 18/19 to complete the Feasibility and Business Case development of Cambridge South Station.

As well as the shortlisted schemes in 17/18, there were also a small number of key projects, whilst not requiring investment during 17/18, would still be actively pursued by the Authority during the current financial year. Such projects included the A10 Foxton Level Crossing and the A505 Corridor Study. The Director advised the Board of the outcomes and return on investment including more than 50,000 new jobs and over 50,000 new homes. Attention was drawn to the financial implications of this committed investment of £4.53m. It was noted that schemes proposed in the report from a variety of sources would contribute to the development of the Local Transport Plan.

The Peterborough City Council representative welcomed the successful schemes in his area. He highlighted the need to change Stanground Access to Pondersbridge Turn. He also commented that the City Council had 'shovel ready' schemes such as the A47 Junction 18 Improvements that needed funding from the Combined Authority in order to start construction.

The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning welcomed the report as it linked directly with spatial planning. He also welcomed the rebalancing of growth in Cambridgeshire with additional homes and jobs. He drew attention to the broader footprint in relation to greater Cambridge and the progress of the Cambridge South Station. The Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) would be providing £0.75m funding for the project. Therefore the combined weight of the GCP and the Combined Authority would help deliver the project.

One Member highlighted the change in Government infrastructure funding and the importance of getting schemes 'shovel ready'. He reminded the Authority of the work undertaken by the County Council to prepare schemes, which had not been progressed due to a lack of gap funding. He welcomed the creation of the Combined Authority which would be able to add revenue funding. He suggested that there needed to be a different list of schemes working alongside the main list to reflect the movement of a problem along a route. It was possible that these issues could be addressed via smaller interventions. He welcomed any progress on the A10 Foxton Level Crossing and the A505 Corridor Study.

One Member commented that seventeen schemes would demand third party resource to fulfil. He acknowledged that the consultants would need to prepare a time plan, he suggested that it would be helpful to share this plan with the Board and involve it in the consultation. The Director reported that there were a number of Highways Contracts,

and twenty consultants drawn from a wide pool. He informed the Board that he would be working up a procurement brief. One Member suggested that the Huntingdon Strategic River Crossing should be connected and synchronised with the A141 capacity enhancements around Huntingdon.

The Mayor, in conclusion, commented that the projects detailed in the report would help deliver the growth agenda particularly housing and business. In particular, they would provide the infrastructure to deliver much needed housing in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Agree a total budget allocation of £4.53m, comprising £3.53m in 17/18 and £1.0m in 18/19 for the rolling programme of priority transport and infrastructure schemes
- b) Note the intention to deliver this 4 year programme of priority transport and infrastructure schemes, and the indicative level of future investment.
- c) Note the governance and budget management arrangements, and the intention to bring the pipeline back to the Board on an annual basis. In the future it is intended to maintain and develop this programme beyond the current 4 year.

97. FUNDING REQUESTS IN PLACE OF GREATER CAMBRIDGESHIRE GREATER PETERBOROUGH LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP

The Mayor drew attention to an amended report which had been published on 24 October 2017. Paper copies were circulated at the meeting. Attention was drawn to the removal of recommendation three from the report, as the Mayor had been informed by the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) on 24 October 2017 that funding had now been agreed for the Ely Improvement Area.

The Chief Executive, in introducing the report, welcomed the news regarding Ely. He informed the Board that it was not being asked to make a decision, as he had delegated authority to approve the urgent funding requests being made.

He drew attention to the creation of an independent Economic Commission with strategic aims, which would provide confidence to proceed without Government intervention and stability to carry out important work relating to economic growth, investment and prosperity. The Board was reminded that it had agreed in June to support a percentage of the cost of the Commission for the current financial year with a percentage cost to be requested of the GCGP LEP. Following an urgent request from the body providing administrative and financial support to the Commission, the Chief Executive had exercised his delegated authority to provide a further allocation of funds to the Commission. The Authority would be making an application to the GCGP LEP Board for a refund of the amount once its funding had been restored.

He also drew attention to the work of Opportunity Peterborough which brought businesses into schools and colleges. It was an important initiative and the Authority would be guaranteeing funding until the LEP's funding was restored by Government.

The Mayor reported that the Chief Executive, as would be expected, had discussed all the proposals with him before exercising his delegated authority. In response to a request from the Board, the GCGP LEP representative confirmed the position relating to the Ely Area Improvement Task Group, the Independent Economic Commission and Opportunity Peterborough.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- (a) Note the urgent funding requests made by
 - i. The Independent Economic Commission
 - ii. Opportunity Peterborough
- (b) Note the funding approvals already given in relation to the Independent Economic Commission and Opportunity Peterborough to ensure important priority objectives could be met.
- (c) Note that upon restoration of funding to the Greater Cambridgeshire Greater Peterborough Local Enterprise Partnership (GCGP LEP) the Combined Authority would make applications to the GCGP LEP Board to restore the funding position of the Combined Authority.

98. BUDGET PREPARATION AND CONSULTATION PROPOSALS

The Portfolio Holder for Fiscal Strategy presented a report setting out the proposed budget setting process for the approval of the Combined Authority's 2018/19 budget. He drew attention to the proposed timetable and the consultees to be involved in the consultation of the budget. He also asked the Board to note the emerging strategic themes for the budget. He advised the Board that it was not proposed to set a precept or levy for costs relating to mayoral functions. The Mayor added that he could see no need for a precept at this time.

The Portfolio Holder for Economic Strategy reported that there had been considerable discussion at Overview and Scrutiny regarding this item. He highlighted the need for flexibility in a rapidly changing world particularly in relation to the cost proposals, as there could be unforeseen increases in expenditure. The Portfolio Holder for Fiscal Strategy acknowledged the importance of flexibility. The Government had given the Authority a sizeable amount of funding and expected it to work at speed. It was important that this funding was used to get projects underway rather than left in the bank. Therefore the Authority might require funding for day to day operations in order to acquire new skills.

It was resolved unanimously to:

1. approve the proposed timetable and the consultees to be involved in the consultation of the Combined Authority's budget 2018/19.
2. Note the emerging strategic themes for the 2018/19 budget.

99. BUDGET UPDATE

The Portfolio Holder for Fiscal Strategy presented an update to the 'Budget Report 2017/18 to 2018/19' as presented to the Board on 26 July 2017 and the revised Operational budget as presented to the Board at the Extraordinary meeting on 4 September 2017. He drew attention to a request for £30.6k funding as the Authority's contribution to phase 1 of the development of a National Evaluation Framework, which would enable the Government to ensure funding was being spent wisely.

It was resolved unanimously to:

1. Note the budget updates as requested for approval in other Board reports on this meeting's agenda.
2. Approve the use of interest receivable balances to cover committed additional support costs as set out in paragraph 3.6.
3. Note the budget updates as requested for approval as set out for approval in paragraph 3.5.
4. Approve funding of £30.6k for the contribution to phase 1 of the development of a National Evaluation Framework.
5. Note the updated budget and indicative resources for 2017/18 and 2018/19 to 2020/21 as set out in Appendices A and B

100. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was resolved to note the date of the next meeting – Wednesday 29 November 2017 at 10.30am at South Cambridgeshire District Council, South Cambridgeshire Hall, Cambourne Business Park, Cambourne, Cambridge CB23 6EA

Mayor