

County Council – Minutes

Please note a video recording of the meeting can be viewed on the Council's [YouTube channel](#):

Date: 22 October 2024

Time: 10:30 a.m. – 2.54 p.m.

Present:

Councillors:

Sebastian Kindersley
(Chair)

Douglas Dew (Vice-Chair)

David Ambrose Smith

Michael Atkins

Henry Batchelor

Alex Beckett

Mike Black

Chris Boden

Anna Bradnam

Alex Bulat

Simon Bywater

Steve Corney

Adela Costello

Steve Count

Piers Coutts

Steve Criswell

Claire Daunton

Lorna Dupré
Stephen Ferguson

Ryan Fuller

Ian Gardener

Nick Gay

Mark Goldsack

Bryony Goodliffe

Neil Gough

John Gowing

Ros Hathorn

Anne Hay

Richard Howitt

Bill Hunt

Jonas King

Maria King

Elisa Meschini

Brian Milnes

Edna Murphy

Lucy Nethsingha

Keith Prentice

Catherine Rae

Kevin Reynolds

Tom Sanderson

Josh Schumann

Geoffrey Seeff

Neil Shailer

Philippa Slatter

Mandy Smith

Simone Taylor

Firouz Thompson

Steve Tierney

Alison Whelan

Graham Wilson

Andrew Wood

Apologies for Absence:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Billington, Bird, Connor, French, Hoy, Howell, S King, McDonald, Sharp and van de Ven.

234. Minutes – 16 July 2024 and Motions Log

The minutes of the meeting held on the 16 July 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

While noting the motions log, Members raised the following points:

- Motion 232 a) from Councillor Sharp: Mill Lane flooding. A Member queried why the action was scheduled on the Highways and Transport Committee agenda plan for November 2025.
- Motion 87 e) from Councillor Beckett: Pavement parking. A Member highlighted that it had taken two years for the motion to be passed to the Greater Cambridge Partnership for implementation.
- Motion 172 d) from Councillor Hunt: Reclassification of the A1421. It was noted that the report presented at Highways and Transport Committee in relation to the motion stated,

'potential physical traffic calming measures could include raised features, such as speed cushions or raised tables, build outs or pinch points however any proposal would be subject to further discussion with local stakeholders, wider consultation, and detailed design work.' Therefore, the Member believed that this motion had not been completed.

235. Chair's Announcements

The Chair made a number of announcements, as set out in Appendix A.

236. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

237. Public Question Time

The Chair informed Council that he had exercised his discretion to accept any eligible public questions submitted before the deadline. It was noted that ten public questions had been received from members of the public, as set out in Appendix B.

238. Petitions

The Chair reported that one petition had been received from a member of the public, as set out in Appendix C.

239. Better Public Transport: Cambridge South-East Transport Scheme

It was moved by the Deputy Leader of the Council and the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Meschini, and seconded by the Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, Councillor Beckett, that the recommendations as set out in the report on the Council agenda, be approved.

Councillor Count moved an amendment, seconded by Councillor Goldsack, as set out in Appendix D.

Following discussion, the amendment on being put to the vote was lost.

[Voting pattern: Conservatives and Non-aligned Independents in favour; Liberal Democrats, Labour and Independents against]

Following further discussion, the motion on being put to a vote was carried:

It was resolved to:

- a) Note the report, and the likely timescales for the formal consent process; and
- b) Agree to the:
 - i. Making of an application under the provisions of section 6 of the Transport and Works Act 1992 for an Order authorising the construction and operation of a guided transport system from the A11 to the Cambridge Biomedical Campus; and
 - ii. Seeking of a direction from the Secretary of State under Section 90(2A) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 that planning permission

be deemed to be granted for the development provided for in the proposed Order for the CSET2 Scheme.

- iii. Delegation of Authority to the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board:
 - a. To progress negotiations with any owners of interests in the affected land and other persons affected by the CSET2 Scheme and to make necessary arrangements to acquire land or rights within the proposed CSET2 Order limits whether by agreement or through the exercise of powers contained in the CSET2 Order;
 - b. To progress negotiations with any affected parties or objectors to the CSET2 Order with the aim of avoiding, or securing the withdrawal of, any objections to the CSET2 Order; and
 - c. To promote the CSET2 Order through, and participation in, any public local inquiry or other processes and procedures arising or resulting from the submission of the application for the CSET2 Order.
- iv. Delegation of authority to the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board to:
 - a. Prepare the necessary documents and any other evidence deemed appropriate to support the Transport and Works Act application;
 - b. Undertake further design development work on the CSET2 Scheme and progress the ongoing statutory process, including further refinements to the CSET2 Order prior to submitting the Transport and Works Act order application and application for deemed planning permission; and
 - c. Deliver the CSET2 Scheme to practical completion subject to:
 - i. the CSET2 Order being made and deemed planning permission granted; and
 - ii. the approval of a Full Business Case in line with existing agreements and in accordance with internal governance requirements and procurement best practice and in consultation with the Council's Section 151 Officer where appropriate.
- v. Delegation of Authority to the Council's Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Service Director for Legal and Governance, to negotiate, agree, enter into, execute and serve (where appropriate) all relevant legal agreements, notices and other documentation necessary to facilitate and underpin the CSET2 Order including (i) provisions to protect the apparatus of statutory authorities which may lead to ongoing liabilities (ii) to amend the CSET2 Order to reduce the extent of Order Land to reflect the extent of acquisition and rights required, (iii) to settle

all compensation claims either by agreement or as determined by the Lands Chamber, (iv) to authorise the diversion or interference of public rights of way and means of access to the highway and (v) to give due regard to the criminal sanctions, powers to create byelaws and to the public sector equality duty and human rights provisions outline in this Report, and

- vi. Authorise the submission of the CSET2 Order application, and the application that a direction be given that planning permission be deemed to be granted together with all supporting documents, and to prepare such further documents as may be required to support those applications.

[Voting pattern: Liberal Democrats, Labour and Independents in favour; Conservatives and Non-aligned Independents against]

240. Constitution and Ethic Committee recommendations – Proposed changes to the Constitution

It was moved by the Chair elected for the meeting of the Constitution and Ethics Committee on 26th September 2024, Councillor Dupré, and seconded by Councillor Bulat, that the recommendations from the Constitution and Ethics Committee, as set out in the report on the Council agenda, be approved.

It was resolved unanimously by affirmation to:

- a) agree the establishment of a Shareholder Sub-Committee of the Assets and Procurement Committee, to oversee Council-owned companies and with terms of reference as set out in Appendix 1 of this report; and
- b) authorise the Monitoring Officer to take all steps necessary or incidental to implement the changes to the Constitution detailed in this report.

241. Committees – Allocation of seats and substitutes to political groups in accordance with the political balance rules

It was moved by the Chair of Council, Councillor Kindersley, and seconded by the Vice-Chair of Council, Councillor Dew, and resolved unanimously by affirmation that the allocation of seats and substitutes on committees to political groups in accordance with the political balance rules, as set out in the report on the Council agenda, be approved.

242. Appointment of the Vice-Chair of Children and Young People Committee

It was moved by the Chair of Council, Councillor Kindersley, and seconded by the Vice-Chair of Council, Councillor Dew, that the appointment of Councillor Firouz Thompson as Vice-Chair of Children and Young People Committee, as set out in the report on the Council agenda, be approved.

Following further discussion, the motion on being put to a vote was carried.

[Voting pattern: Liberal Democrats, Labour, six Conservatives, one Independent and Non-aligned Independents in favour; six Conservatives and two Independents abstained]

243. Motions submitted under Council Procedure Rule 10

Five motions had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 10.

a) Motion from Councillor Alex Bulat

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Bulat and seconded by Councillor Slatter. The motion included alterations from the version included on the agenda, which were proposed by Councillor Count, accepted by Councillor Bulat, and agreed by the meeting without discussion (additions in bold and deletions shown in strikethrough)

The Council notes that:

- Everyone across Cambridgeshire deserves access to a properly funded police force and a well-coordinated local approach to tackling anti-social behaviour and Domestic Abuse, ensuring our residents feel safe in their communities.
- Cambridgeshire County Council has a number of statutory duties linked to community safety, including those contained within the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022.
- In Cambridgeshire our five District and City Councils lead the work of the multi-agency Community Safety Partnerships, including local Domestic Homicide Reviews, with officers from the County Council representing the organisation as key statutory partners.
- The Council provides services that support victims of domestic abuse through a team of Independent Domestic Violence Advisors and since 2018 the Council has held the nationally recognised White Ribbon accreditation, demonstrating the Council's commitment to preventing harassment, abuse and violence against women and girls. The Council's White Ribbon accreditation is now due for renewal.

The Council welcomes that:

- During recent national disorder events all partners across Cambridgeshire communicated regularly, working closely to mitigate local risks in order to keep communities safe. This included close contact with the Home Office.
- All our five district-led Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) are working hard to serve our communities and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.
- The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Police and Crime Plan 2021-2024 prioritised ensuring that partners and the police are listening to the public and pledged to tackle the causes of crime and anti-social behaviour through partnership working.
- The new Government made community safety one of its five missions, pledging to crack down on anti-social behaviour and recruit 13,000 new neighbourhood police officers with crucial local knowledge to prevent and tackle crime.
- The Council is committed to supporting victims of Domestic Abuse and renewing its White Ribbon accreditation.

The Council expresses concern that:

- Cambridgeshire remains the fourth lowest funded police force in the country, which means we have significantly less spend per person compared to similar areas, while we experience one of the highest population increases. Meanwhile, local taxpayers fund around half of the police's budget in Cambridgeshire.
- Domestic abuse and sexual violence continue to be widespread problems in our country, with the national Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimating that as low as 1 in 6 crimes of this nature are reported. Applying national prevalence figures from the CSEW, local estimates are that there were 36,000 victims of domestic abuse in 2021/22 in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. This was calculated as part of the local Violence Against Women and Girls Needs Assessment in 2023.
- There is more to be done to raise the profile of the Council's White Ribbon status and the support available from across the organisation to support all victims of domestic abuse.

The Council is recommended to commit to:

- Ask the Chief Executive to write to the Home Secretary to ask for Cambridgeshire to have its fair share of the new neighbourhood police officers **and that they are fully funded by the central policing core grant**, including opportunities for local residents to train and fill those new roles.
- Ask the Chief Executive to write to all constituency MPs in Cambridgeshire asking them to lobby for a fairer funding deal for our county, through changes to the government's police grant allocation that better reflects current population data and local factors.
- ~~To~~Ask officers from the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Service with:
 - Recruiting additional White Ribbon ambassadors from across the Council, ensuring there is representation from all council directorates and from elected members.
 - Developing a cross-council action plan to support the White Ribbon reaccreditation process.
 - Communicating the help and support available across Cambridgeshire to victims of domestic abuse through partner forums, Council communications (including social media channels) and through local publications such as Cambridgeshire Matters and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils newsletter.

Following discussion, the motion was carried unanimously by general consensus.

b) Motion from Councillor Ros Hathorn

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Hathorn and seconded by Councillor Bradnam.

The Council notes:

- The government is committed to ambitious growth targets.
- To deliver this level of growth it is really important that people have confidence in the planning system.

The Council further notes that:

- As a region already delivering high growth it is dealing with issues thrown up by the planning system such as Section 278 agreements used for minor and major developer works on the highway secured through the planning process.
- It has a legal duty to implement the Section 278 process in accordance with the relevant planning decision.
- The Franklin Gardens' junction on the B1049 sits within the Greater Cambridge Partnership's (GCP's) Histon Road scheme, part of a major arterial route into the city. The junction has been designed, paid for and delivered by a housing developer as a planning obligation, implemented through a section 278 agreement, which was not part of the GCP's Histon Road scheme.
- The junction build began in 2023 and was completed in 2024. Although typically developers have to implement decisions within three years, here planning permission was agreed on the design 16 years ago, with public input into designs happening at that planning stage.
- Although compliant in planning terms, the final design feels out of date; the two-direction shared use cycle path/ footway on the east side is far narrower than modern design standards support and there are other issues. The design issues impact how cyclists behave in the space making their behaviour unpredictable which is a problem for drivers and creates unnecessary conflict.
- Between the planning decision and build out the GCP came into existence and delivered the Histon Road scheme which it would have made a lot of sense to have included the Franklin Gardens junction within.

The Council acknowledges that:

- National planning legislation has created this situation where once a design or decision is given planning consent local authorities have limited powers to negotiate significant changes however much the local area or national design standards change.
- It is learning lessons about how to manage large sites that will have long buildouts such as new towns.
- There is a need to streamline the Transport and Works Act Order process so that the same decision is not coming back repeatedly to the same people causing delays and risk.
- Government tendency to use out of date population data when making decisions in our region makes it even harder to manage growth.

The Council is therefore recommended to:

- Provide Members with comprehensive and bespoke training and engagement to understand the parameters of the planning system, how county decisions feed into the process, what the county is doing to manage the challenge of delivering new towns and major developments.

- Provide a guidance document available on its website detailing the planning parameters, what the county council does to secure the best possible outcomes, and how residents can best engage.
- Recognise the importance of keeping the time between planning decisions and buildout as short as possible ideally within three years and that at the point of delivery, designs should aspire to meet both national standards and design guidance.
- Ask the Chief Executive to write to the relevant Secretaries of State to highlight Cambridgeshire's experiences of growth to inform future updates to legislation as follows:
 - a) Local government needs the power to make developers collaborate with local partners to ensure alignment of projects.
 - b) There must be a mechanism so that designs and decisions can be updated alongside future guidance or best practice, particularly if schemes are not delivered within three years.
 - c) The importance of keeping population data current so that funding formulae keeps up to date with the actual number of people living in that place.
 - d) Excessive bureaucratic oversight on infrastructure projects creates unnecessary delays and risks to major projects.

Following discussion, the motion was carried unanimously by general consensus.

c) Motion from Councillor Lorna Dupré

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Dupré and seconded by Councillor Murphy.

The council notes:

- Lithium-ion batteries are increasingly used to power a broad range of electrical items. They have become essential for many household items, power tools, laptops, smartphones, electric bikes, scooters, and electric vehicles.
- These batteries are designed to operate within a specific temperature range. When batteries overheat, they become unstable which can lead to thermal runaway where a battery undergoes rapid and uncontrolled chemical reactions. Thermal runaway cannot be stopped when it occurs, the result often being an explosion and fire. This process can be triggered by several factors such as overcharging, physical damage to the battery (crush, drop, impact, shock, vibration), exposure to extreme temperatures, and manufacturing faults. If a lithium battery is dropped, it remains unstable for up to 72-hours afterwards and should not be charged.
- The consequences of thermal runaway can be devastating. The fire in the early hours of the 30 June 2023 in Cambridge took the lives of a mother and two children. The father survived but spent many weeks in hospital. The fire took rapid hold in the house. It was started by a replacement e-bike battery purchased online after the original was stolen.
- The London Fire Brigade have stated that on average there was a fire from a lithium battery in an e-bike or e-scooter every two days in 2023 in London. The National Fire

Chiefs Council have reported that over 1,200 battery fires in bin lorries and waste sites across the UK occurred in 2023. Since January 2023 Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service have attended ten fires involving batteries in refuse lorries and thirty-three fires have involved batteries.

- The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership (RECAP) have advised that battery fires are also a growing threat to their waste collection crews. Communication initiatives including using the latest graphics and assets from the organisation Material Focus in respect of recycling electricals and using livery on collection vehicles are being used to get key safety messages across to the public.
- The council in conjunction with Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service have worked on some joint statements focusing on how residents can dispose of batteries safely at the council's nine Household Recycling Centres.

The council recognises and welcomes the work undertaken by Lord Foster and Electrical Safety First regarding the introduction of new legislative provisions to improve the safety of lithium-ion batteries. The focus of their proposal is three clauses requiring:

- third party independent approval-testing for e-bikes, e-scooters, and their batteries before entering the UK market.
- Government to establish regulations for the safe disposal of used lithium-ion batteries.
- controls to address specific fire concerns ensuring safer access, charging, and storage of lithium-ion batteries.

The Council is therefore recommended to:

- endorse the proposal by Lord Foster and Electrical Safety First in respect of lithium-ion batteries.
- ask the Chief Executive to write to the Minister of State for Policing, Fire and Crime Prevention to encourage the Government to support new legislative provisions to achieve the proposal's objectives.
- ask the Chief Executive to write to Cambridgeshire Fire Authority and to RECAP and its constituent authorities to advise them of the contents of this motion and urge them to make their own representations to the Minister.

Following discussion, the motion was carried unanimously by general consensus.

d) Motion from Councillor Edna Murphy

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Murphy and seconded by Councillor Sanderson.

The council notes that:

- The A14 Huntingdon to Cambridge project, a £1.5bn project delivered by National Highways (formerly Highways England) was in construction between November 2016 and May 2020. As a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project it received a Development Consent Order from the Secretary of State in June 2016 through the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) process.

- The work involved was complex. Besides the Huntingdon southern bypass, the project included an upgrade to the A14 between Swavesey and Milton, and a new road for local communities, the A1307, which runs parallel to it between Cambridge and Godmanchester. There were intended to be 24 miles of new routes for cyclists, walkers and horse riders included in the scheme and the planting of 860,000 trees.
- It was declared a success by National Highways, delivering an apparently complete new system to budget and even opening early, as the pandemic had enabled work to progress faster than anticipated.

The council expresses concern that:

- Despite this apparent success, the project directly caused damage and created problems which persist today, affecting residents in their daily lives, and many things promised were not delivered. It is obvious that neither the original budget nor the timescale for completion were sufficient to fully alleviate the local impacts of the project. Budgets on major projects are generally set too early, so the consented scheme has missed opportunities to meet local needs that would naturally be identified through the pre-application process.
- National Highways needs to be more responsive to local residents and coordinate more closely with the Council on local issues. Residents have struggled to obtain even basic information from them about work they are doing that affects their communities. For example, even though it was obvious there were serious problems with the number of trees dying along the A14, National Highways did not engage and only responded when there was local media coverage involved. They now need to provide a full update on what effect their revised tree planting strategy is having on the 860,000 trees.
- The project has left behind many defectively constructed structures requiring ongoing repair or redesign work. For example the roundabout junction at Histon which is unacceptable for non-motorised transport and Bar Hill where the whole structure is sinking and a permanent solution to the problem has not yet been fully defined.
- It has also produced abandoned landlocked buildings in Bar Hill which continue to be a blight to the local community with no sign of change or progress. National Highways refused to engage with local residents either about their concerns or about their interests in how the space could be used.
- The project was supposed to deliver improved biodiversity and reduced pollution, but there is no evidence to ensure these things have happened, and no transparency about measurements post construction or the basis on which the project was 'signed off' by ministers.
- Many village communities were promised new Non-Motorised User (NMU) routes with National Highways funding but after an initial funding for some in January 2021 National Highways reneged on further funding leaving many remaining villages such as Dry Drayton without NMU routes, which they greatly need and had been led to expect.

The council resolves to:

- Request that Council officers identify the outstanding issues from the A14 project on local communities and bring them together in a single report to the Highways and Transport Committee so that all issues can be clear and documented, to ensure the pervasive effects are not forgotten or normalised, and how the whole experience of the

A14 project might be captured and used to ensure success in relation to other major Consents.

- Also request that the Chief Executive make the case to new MPs, and the new Minister for Transport, and National Highways to be more responsive to local communities and in particular to raise the problems our communities are still experiencing from the A14 project to see how they can be addressed. This should include a formal request for National Highways to remediate the landlocked buildings at Bar Hill, to restore the cut in funding for the NMU routes intended to be part of the scheme, and to make public the information about the impact on biodiversity.

Following discussion, the motion was carried unanimously by general consensus.

e) Motion from Councillor Steve Count

Councillor Count withdrew the motion set out on the Council agenda.

244. Questions

- (a) Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Council Procedure Rule 9.1)

Four questions were submitted under Council Procedure 9.1 of the Council's Constitution, as set out in Appendix E.

- (b) Questions on Fire Authority Issues

No questions were submitted.

- (c) Written Questions (Council Procedure Rule 9.2)

No questions were submitted under Council Procedure Rule 9.2.

Chair

County Council – 22 October 2024

Chair's Announcements

Southport Attack

The Chair of Cambridgeshire County Council, on behalf of all Members, has expressed his sympathy and support for the people of Southport. The horrific events have left the nation shocked and saddened. The Council shares that sense of shock in Cambridgeshire. It has been deeply moved by the dignity shown by the families of the children who lost their lives – Elsie Dot Stancombe, Alice Dasliva Aguiar and Bebe King, and of those injured – their strength is an example to us all. The Council's thoughts and prayers are with all those affected.

People

Sally Cartwright, Director of Public Health

Sally Cartwright has been appointed as Cambridgeshire County Council's new Director of Public Health to drive improvements in the health and wellbeing of the residents of Cambridgeshire. She joins Cambridgeshire from a similar role at Luton Borough Council, where she has provided strong strategic leadership to develop the delivery of priorities post-covid. Sally will take up the Director of Public Health role in January 2025.

Tim Spiers, Service Director: Customer and Digital Services

Tim Spiers has been appointed as Cambridgeshire County Council's new Service Director: Customer and Digital Services. His most recent role was Director of Digital at Oxfordshire County Council, and he has previously worked in District authorities and also has extensive private sector experience. He started in Cambridgeshire on 20th August.

Awards

National Link Officer Award

Sarah Gawne, Business Partner for Children's Workforce Learning and Development, Joanna Cook, Learning Advisor, and Sarah Smith, Senior Learning Advisor, all Link Officers with Research in Practice for colleagues across Children, Education and Families, received a Highly Commended Award in the Newcomers category at the Research in Practice Link Officers' Annual Meeting on 26 September 2024.

Local Government Chronicle (LGC) national workforce awards for 2024

The Council has been shortlisted for two LGC national workforce awards for 2024. The 'Best next generation employer' award seeks to recognise councils or groups of councils working to address through initiatives to recruit and retain people under 30, either across the organisation or in one specific service area. The 'Best wellbeing innovation' award is aimed at a council that has demonstrated a commitment to the mental and physical wellbeing of its staff, and that really stands out from the crowd with its offer. In recognition of the diversity of council workforces it could be an initiative aimed across the whole workforce or targeted at one specific service area. The final awards will take place on 5 November 2024.

Social Worker of the Year Awards 2024

Cambridgeshire County Council is a shortlisted finalist for the Social Worker of the Year Awards 2024. The Council is shortlisted in the category of Supportive Social Work Employer, with a focus particularly upon its Adults Social Workers and the work of its Learning and Development Team to support them. It is also shortlisted for a member of the Learning and Development Team in Human Resources, for the Award of Practice Educator of the Year, so both individual and collective recognition opportunities, which demonstrates the strong partnership between Adults, Health and Commissioning and the Human Resources Service in respect of delivering the Council's People Strategy and its Adults Workforce Development Framework. The winner of these awards will also be announced in November.

Messages

Historic County Flag at New Shire Hall

The Chair raised the Historic Counties Flag and said a few words at New Shire Hall alongside Deputy Lieutenant Mr John Bridge OBE MStJ, Dr Stephen Moir and the Mayor and Mayoress of Ely. The aim of Historic County Flags Day is to have as many county flags flying across Great Britain as possible on the same day, to mark the nation's historic counties.

Change of Command at RAF Alconbury

The Chair attended the Change of Command at RAF Alconbury where Group Commander, Colonel Valarie Long handed over Command to Colonel Michael Fleming.

Open Day at Grafham Water Centre

The Chair attended the Open Day at Grafham Water Centre for County Council staff and families, where the Chair said a few words of welcome before taking a tour of the site.

Merchant Navy Day Flag at New Shire Hall

The Chair raised the Merchant Navy Day Flag alongside Dr Stephen Moir and other Cambridgeshire County Council Members and Colleagues. Merchant Navy Day takes place annually on 3rd September, and the campaign to fly the Red Ensign to mark the occasion started in 2015 by the Seafarers charity to address 'sea blindness' and the widespread lack of knowledge about the UK's ongoing dependence on merchant seafarers who are responsible for more than 95% of the UK's trade.

RAF Wyton Annual Reception

The Chair attended the RAF Wyton Annual Reception alongside Deputy Lieutenant Lord Grimthorpe and other dignitaries.

St Ives Civic Parade and Service

Alongside Deputy Lieutenant Mrs Sue Freestone OBE and other dignitaries the Chair paraded through St Ives before attending the Mayor of St Ives' Civic Service at All Saints' Parish Church, St Ives

Emergency Services Day Flag at New Shire Hall

Alongside Deputy Lieutenant, Dame Polly Courtice DBE LVO and Councillor Alex Bulat, the Chair raised the Emergency Services Day Flag at New Shire Hall to show support for all those working in the NHS and emergency services who work tirelessly to save lives.

Shakespeare at the George, New Location launch event

The Chair attended the Shakespeare at the George, New Location launch event where it was announced that Shakespeare at the George will now take place at Buckden Towers.

Everyspace launch event at March library

The Chair welcomed everyone to the EverySpace launch event at March library. EverySpace is an innovative and inclusive space and will enable the people of March to connect, share, create and discover through a variety of digital resources, modern technology, and flexible layouts. EverySpace supports the County Council's initiative of bringing services closer to the community, in line with our vision of creating a greener, fairer and more caring Cambridgeshire.

Visit by His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester to Nestle Purina in Wisbech

The Chair was part of the dignitary line up to welcome His Royal Highness, The Duke of Gloucester who visited the Nestle Purina Factory in Wisbech.

Cambridge United Foundation's Gala Dinner

The Chair attended Cambridge United Foundation's Gala Dinner at Childerley Long Barn.

Chevin Service/Harvest Festival in Cambridge

The Chair attended the Mayor of Cambridge's Chevin Service/Harvest Festival at Great St Mary's, Cambridge.

Huntingdon Police Memorial Day Service

The Chair attended the Huntingdon Police Memorial Day Service at All Saint's Church, following the service he laid a wreath at the Thinking Soldier War Memorial in memory of all those that have lost their lives in the line of duty.

Opening of a Permissive Path

The Chair cut the ribbon at the opening of a permissive path in Isleham.

British Empire Medal (BEM) Investitures

The Chair attended the BEM Investitures at Great St Mary's Church, Cambridge where three Cambridgeshire Citizens were awarded their British Empire Medal after being recognised in the King's birthday honours.

High Sheriff's Justice Service in Cambridge

The Chair was welcomed by High Sheriff, Mr David Way for his Justice Service at Great St Mary's in Cambridge.

Opening of the 'Paris 1924: Sport, Art and the Body' Exhibition

The Vice-Chair attended the opening of the new exhibition of 'Paris 1924: Sport, Art and the Body' at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge.

Mayor of Godmanchester's Civic Service

The Vice-Chair attended the Mayor of Godmanchester's Civic Service at St Mary's Church in Godmanchester.

Ramsey Town Council's Civic Service

The Vice-Chair attended the Mayor of Ramsey's Civic Service at St Thomas A Becket Church in Ramsey.

Re-opening of the Sunken Garden Memorial

The Vice-Chair attended the re-opening of the Sunken Garden Memorial in Peterborough, which included the unveiling of the Nuclear Test Veterans Memorial.

Mayor of Rushden's Civic Service

Councillor Stephen Ferguson attended the Mayor of Rushden's Civic Service at St Mary's Church in Rushden

Citizenship Ceremonies

The Chair attended Citizenship Ceremonies at New Shire Hall on 22nd & 29th July, 5th, 12th & 19th August, 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd & 30th September and 7th & 14th October, welcoming over 500 new British Citizens.

Ellie James Fundraising

The Chair reports that Ellie James completed her charity sail, sailing the equivalent of the English Channel, at Grafham Water for Papyrus Prevention of Young Suicide and has raised £1,865, although all donations will still be gratefully received –

[Ellie James is fundraising for PAPYRUS Prevention of Young Suicide \(justgiving.com\).](https://justgiving.com/elliejames)

Public Question Time

1. Question from Mr Howard Kettel, Vice-Chair Stapleford Parish Council, to the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

In 2017 you, the County Council, proposed a scheme to connect the campuses along the A1307 with all the existing public services directly serving the campus, including the Haverhill service, which incidentally can't run on the proposed bus road as they are double deckers. The proposed bus lane would transform travel and eliminate hold ups. However, Mayor James Palmer introduced his Cambridge Autonomous Metro scheme and because bus lanes along the A1307 didn't meet his criteria, the GCP had to opt for the bus road through the green belt and they achieved this at the public consultation by proposing three routes, two along the A1307 and one off road route, of which 60% of the votes were for the two on road routes and 40% for the off road route. So, by cleverly splitting the vote, the GCP appeared to achieve public consensus. But in 2021, the new mayor dropped his scheme. The GCP, having spent years and significant public money progressing the scheme, ploughed on. A new justification served the villages was found, but the route passes more than one mile from the centres of Babraham, Sawston, Stapleford and Shelford, which both the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation and Transport for London consider far too far to walk. There is significant local support for the alternative, which is almost all of the benefits of the off road scheme but a cost saving of more than £100 million and doesn't release land for development that this road would unleash in the greenbelt. Furthermore, this doesn't require transport and Works Act Order and the cost and delay of a public inquiry, so work could begin immediately and in two years time would be complete and each stage would bring its own immediate benefits. Everything. [Chair: Mr Kettel I'm sorry to interrupt you, but you've had your two minutes, so if you want to very briefly put your question. That would be helpful.] Everything has changed, but this choice hasn't. Will councillors consider the alternative that achieves similar benefits, more directly connects the campuses with the existing bus services, can be achieved years quicker. Does not threaten the loss of five miles of greenbelt and costs under a million pounds less.

Response from the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Thank you very much, Chair and thank you, Howard for coming and I would like to thank you for the continued engagement. On behalf of Shelford as well, I know we have had many conversations on this issue. As you are aware, the current option being progressed was selected after extensive engagement and consultation, and indeed there have been five public consultations as part of the scheme's development. I know it doesn't make for pleasant reading for those opposed to the scheme, but the current alignment was supported by a majority at every stage of those consultations. Following the cancellation of Cam, which was cancelled because nobody can afford it, the three options mentioned were reassessed with the current off-road option still considered to be the most appropriate solution because we have got many different needs that we have to consider. It was not possible for the busway stops to be situated perfectly central to the villages along the route, but the busway is still accessible for the residents of these villages and the technical work clearly shows significant bus use from these locations. In the case of Sawston, the busway will directly serve new development situated to the east of the village, in addition to existing residences, and will contribute to reducing additional private vehicle movements, which is one of the many key ideas behind the scheme. Routes using the busway will continue on to Linton and Haverhill, and will therefore provide services from these villages as well into the CBC and into the heart of Cambridge. And

it also helps to anyone looking to utilise Cambridge South to travel out to the village or other campuses from Cambridge South. Now, finally, I am afraid that the suggestion that the alternatives would be completed very quickly and would be significantly less expensive is not correct. If we scrap the proposals that we have worked up to now to deliver, we will have to start a new process from scratch, new consultations and further decisions by many local authorities and stakeholders, and this would take many, many years. One of the themes [Chair: Thank you for that.]

Supplementary question from Mr Howard Kettel:

I agree, there been five consultations; almost all of them were for detailed changes, slight alignment changes example with the Countryside Park dissecting the Countryside Park from the retirement village in Stapleford. The fact is that the LLF, for which I was a member, wasn't democratically functioning. It was overweighed by people the papers that were produced as result weren't sufficiently analysed and published by the GCP, and in terms of Haverhill, double deckers run to Haverhill. They can't run on the busway because of the low bridge at Long Road. And in terms of spent money, well that money has gone through. There's no argument for arguing to spend more money just because money has been spent.

Response from the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Thank you very much. I don't think in a minute I can answer all of them, however [Chair: you have two minutes]. There you go, fine, I will answer all of them, no. I think the point is in terms of double deckers, I mean the point is that you're going to get those buses into the travel hub and then the single deckers will move on. That's one of the points and the other point, of course, is that you can't, essentially, you're not going to be able to run direct services from everywhere. That's the point behind the travel hubs. For how the LLF process was managed, and the notes that the GCP made etcetera, I mean, we've got every record of that on our website. I will make sure the officer sends you everything we've got, which I think you've probably seen already. And if you've got questions as to the accuracy of anything behind that, I will be very happy to personally take that up. I think that's probably enough. Thank you, Chair.

2. Question from Mr John Latham, Chairman Hobson's Conduit Trust, to the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Thank you, Chair. Good morning. For four centuries Hobson's Conduit has brought clear, clean spring water from Nine Wells to the centre of Cambridge. This was Cambridge's principal public water supply for 250 years and still supplies the listed Botanic Garden and College Gardens. For two centuries Nine Wells has been jointly owned by the City and the University and is managed as a local nature reserve by the City. It's a vital area of habitat, the treasured community asset providing a unique area of tranquillity and beauty for residents and for those who work at Addenbrooke's and on the biomedical campus. Trustees are very concerned about the severe detrimental impact of GCP CSET scheme on Nine Wells on the brook and to their settings. The mitigation for the scheme currently being offered by GCP is inadequate. It will be highly visually intrusive enclosing Nine Wells, placing a huge concrete bridge over the brook and creating a 15-metre square sterile concrete cavern. We've asked for more subtle crash barriers, cladding wood as the high embankment around Nine Wells will be topped with metal motorway style crash barriers. This massive scheme is completely unnecessary when the alternative is a relatively short stretches of bus lane on the A1307, some of which already exist.

No bridges or elevated sections would be required. The A1307 alternative is what the Trustees of Hobson's Conduit much prefer, as it completely avoids Nine Wells whilst better serving destinations. We would like to know why GCP persists in pushing for this unpopular, extravagant, unfunded and environmentally damaging scheme.

Response from the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Thank you very much, Chair and thank you John for coming and the project team really do understand and are acutely aware of the potential local impact on Nine Wells and if the decision today is to formalise a submission to the Secretary of State, we are committed to continuing on the engagement on the project with the local community as part of and beyond the national planning inquiry, that is to follow. As we are required the environmental statement has assessed the impact of CSET on Nine Wells both during constructions and on once the busway is operational. The environmental statement acknowledges that Nine Wells is a sensitive area. During construction, there will be an adverse effect on views due to the construction compound, this is temporary. Once the busway is operational, the bridge over Hobson's Brook will be a new feature but it will be integrated in landscape terms with the existing rail bridge and the landscape planting will soften the appearance of both of these drains, swales and SuDS measures will minimise the impact on the surface water course. No adverse effects at all are predicted to the water quality. The busway will have light usage, so the absolute maximum of buses that will ever run on the busway is 24 an hour, and in the fullness and in the fullness of time, these are all expected to be electric. There's a significantly less than a road and therefore the potential impact from run off is also negligible. The ecological and landscape impacts from the on-road alternative are much more challenging. It is far from clear that the proposed bus lanes can be accommodated within the highway boundary in fact, I know for a fact in many places they can't. And it could be extremely challenging if you require removal of the hedgerows and landscaping, landscaped areas adjacent to the A1307 by Wandlebury park and over the Gog Magogs themselves. The CSET proposals will offer a significant amount of net biodiversity gain, which we are committed to procure above and beyond the legal requirement. Thank you, Chair.

Supplementary question from Mr John Latham:

Thank you, Chair. I regret that at the moment the mitigation being offered is quite inadequate. There was an offer of more land being available around Nine Wells to act as a barrier that was removed. The reason is that are not necessarily directly the responsibility of GCP. However, what's currently on offer will be extremely damaging to Nine Wells. As I said before, Nine Wells is a vital area. There's a growing local population, there's a lot of wildlife at stake. It's all they say, an area that requires nurturing, and until we see some real steps forward, which I'm gratified from Councillor Meschini's reply, that the GCP is willing to continue to work on the view of the trust, is that what's on offer is wholly inadequate and is completely contrasting with the alternative. Thank you.

Response from the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

I will very, very quickly say that not just in terms of materials, if there's any more materials consideration that we want to make in terms of what the barriers are made of and where they are, I will definitely commit the organisation to look at that again, including anything else, in terms of if we can additional land but also additional planting, anything at all that we can do will carry on the consultation on that. The fact remains that the alternatives on offer are worse and that unfortunately we can't escape it. Thank you.

3. Question from Mr Nick Kirby to the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Thank you, so I'm the Managing Director for CBC Limited, which is a non-profit collaboration between the organisations that work on the Cambridge Biomedical Campus to realise shared ambitions in health, education and life sciences. Collectively, our organisations employ over 22,000 people with over 700 apprentices and contribute an estimated £4.2 billion each year. GVA to the UK economy. We are advocates for improved public transport to the campus and across the wider city region, and indeed have supported the CSET proposals. My question is please can we have a summary of how the costs and benefits of the recommended route compared to other options that are being put forward, including an estimate of the cost of further delay to the implementation. Thank you.

Response from the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Thank you very, very much for coming. It's great to see you, even virtually, and thank you for emphasising the importance of the CBC, the Biomedical campus and the activities that go on there to the general economy of the region and indeed the national economy, the hospital activities and life science development undertaken by the campus are incredibly important. They are incredibly important force for good and we should help them. The business case and associated documents laid before Council today outline the requirements of the vitally important campus, which have been very carefully assessed over an extensive evaluation period, and the campus needs, as it has been made clear to us over consultation, a segregated public transport and active travel solution, delivering high frequency reliable services akin to our existing guided bus way. We have as part of the process that we followed until now assessed alternative solutions, including on road solutions, which are slightly cheaper, a lot less cheaper than is being portrayed but they get caught in the same congestion that is endemic and growing in our region along the corridor, and that is a real disincentive to staff, patients and all users to use in public transport. We hear time and again that people want and will use transport when it is reliable, direct and avoids grid lock, the campus have told me very clearly that they need this now and undoing all the process undertaken until now and starting again with an alternative would severely impact the lifesaving research being undertaken at the CBC upon which we would all like to continue to rely.

Supplementary question from Mr Nick Kirby:

Just if there is any estimate of the impact on cost from further delay, I'd be grateful for that, Councillor Meschini, but understand if that's not available.

Response from the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Thank you very much, Nick. It is certainly available. It is not in my head in terms of figures, but we have at the moment, the most striking figure and this will be mentioned further on in the debate. We have received a grant from government of £7.2 million to progress the CSET scheme. Should we scrap this today this would be lost and losing government grants is not something that usually goes down well with government, or indeed anybody. And there are further costs associated with the consultations that we have run all of those. The numbers I don't remember, but they are in the public domain. And all of those would also be lost and duplicated if we had to run the same kind of consultation again. And to me, what matters more than anything other than obviously public money is very, very important. But let's consider all

the lifesaving work that will not be possible to be carried out on the campus if people continue to not be able to get there. There's quite a lot of money that is worth an extra cancer patient getting treatment, and that's what I want people to take away. Thank you.

4. Question from Mr Dan Thorp, Cambridge Ahead, to the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Good morning, Council and apologies I can't be with you in person. I'm Dan Thorp from Cambridge Ahead, we are an employer membership organisation dedicated to sustainable and inclusive growth, and there is strong support within our membership for the proposed CSET scheme. I would like to ask, there are clear and evidence links between public transport provision and quality of life, especially for those on lower incomes. The evidence is also clear that segregated public transport is more viable for the user and more viable for the operator. These issues are felt acutely in Cambridgeshire. Furthermore, connecting hubs of innovation and healthcare fosters collaboration and accelerates the delivery of new science that directly benefits the health of local people. There is, therefore, a quality of life imperative as well as a sustainability one, for delivering viable and reliable public transport options. How would the same long-term benefits be pragmatically and financially possible without this proposed scheme. Thank you.

Response from the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Thank you very much. By the way, I don't mind other people answering these questions if they want [Chair: I don't think there's going to be many takers for that] Dan, thank you so much for coming. It's lovely to see you, even if it's just on Zoom. Dan is a neighbour of mine in King's Hedges and thank you very much for organising to be here today and for emphasising the real benefits of this scheme. This isn't a scheme, this is people. This is about getting people from place A to place B, which is where they want to go and at the moment they're not getting there. There are nurses, lab technicians, doctors, scientists, there's cleaners, caterers and all the other users of the site and as patients, they need to be able to access the place of work or of treatment. They need good public transport alternatives to be able to do that, and they need to be able to avoid the growing queues on the roads currently accessing the campus. And those able to use active travel should have real walking and cycling infrastructure that they can use. People do and will use public transport when it is fast and reliable. The evidence of the existing Huntingdon Busway is overwhelming. Millions and millions of users, and if we don't build on what is shown to be a successful platform, we won't be able to meet the challenges of the future. I am very grateful for your work at Cambridge Ahead. We have used your data many times and it clearly demonstrates that segregated bus ways offer the best service for users and the more viable option for the operators as well, which we should not forget. And I agree that these issues are felt more acutely in Cambridgeshire, which is also something your work has highlighted. We need to do good by the patients who are suffering and the nurses who look after them. The research is developing the treatment of the future and all those whose work makes their endeavours possible. So, to answer your question, the solution is CEST. Thank you.

Supplementary question from Mr Dan Thorp:

Thank you very much. Councillor Meschini. I'd like to comment on your work actually, because I was reading the County Council's 2024 Resident Survey, the Quality of Life survey, where residents, when asked what action could the County Council take to improve quality of life said better bus services and provision of public transport frequently. Where user satisfaction with the park and ride and guided bus way ranked highly amongst residents and also where overall the cost of living was cited as a major concern for Cambridgeshire's residents, and of course there are direct links between cost of transport and cost of living pressures. So thank you for citing our work. I'd like to cite yours and ask whether this is evidence of the County Council will be taking into account in terms of this decision today.

Response from the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

The easy answer to that is yes, there is obviously monetary cost to people in running vehicles when they shouldn't. Monetary costs in wasting time when they shouldn't, and there is environmental cost in burning fuel when it shouldn't be burnt. And all of these things will be an integral part of our assessment. Also going forward and going into the national inquiry that will be to follow if we vote for this today. All of those things will matter. And thank you for continuing to engage. We will keep doing our (*word unintelligible*) work.

5. Question from Mrs Miranda Harper to the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

If you approve the CSET off road busway, it will carve a 14-metre-wide swathe through the Greenbelt at a cost of more than £160 million of public funds. Even using the GCP's highly well, dubious calculations, to justify the business case. The benefit to cost ratio is significantly less than one. Which means that you get less than a pounds economic value for every pound spent. OK, this is a guaranteed loss. You cannot justify supporting that to people like me, a local resident. The calculations used by the GCP include the added value to the local land and housing stock of having a busway next door. Well, honestly, many houses will not be worth more, they'll be worth a lot less. Sorry, can you hear me? OK. In contrast, if the GCP's old scheme, well, the former scheme along the A1307 corridor was built at a cost of £60 million, the BCR increases to about 1.5. I realised this isn't a great return on investment, but it does at least mean that the public are getting some value for their taxes. The GCP scheme doesn't include the cost of carbon or biodiversity net gain requirements that are now law for all private developments. The GCP has admitted that as a result of over engineering and inflation, it doesn't have the funds to pursue this extraordinarily expensive scheme. So why not explore a lower cost option that has the benefit of public support and that doesn't wreck. That's important, that doesn't wreck the countryside, which this will do. The Cambridge Biomedical Campus is continuing to expand along the A1307 and the alternative in road bus lane would include a new spur road that emergency vehicles could use to access A&E more quickly, potentially saving lives. CBC already has a new transport access for travellers coming from the south on the west side of the site, with Cambridge South station. So why build CSET that enters in the same location? As pointed out previously, it provides minimal benefit to the local villages, actually, I think no benefit to the local villages. None. Accessing the eastern end of the site via the bus road provides a different alternative for anyone travelling from the southeast, such as Linton and Haverhill. Where housing is less expensive and many of CBCs key employees live. Please don't approve the scheme as proposed by the GCP. Demand that they reconsider the lower cost option, that's better value and which provides a better solution for anyone travelling to CBC from the southeast. I just like to say as well Señora Meschini, my

parents were Italian they came from a village in the mountains overlooking Monte Casino, the monastery. They brought us up six kids, they were Catholic. They brought us up with three issues, main I don't know what you would call them. [Chair: Mrs. Harper, I'm going to interrupt your reminiscences, because the question that you submitted has now been asked.] Work hard, save hard and waste nothing.

Response from the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Thank you for coming and I can almost give this answer in Italian, but I won't. But thank you for being one of the very few people who know how to pronounce my surname. There is going to be, I propose that if you're happy to stay here and wait until the end of this debate, there is going to be extensive discussion of the alternative and whether or not it's value for money. So, I propose that I defer that part of the answer to the actual debate. In terms of the benefit to cost ratio figures, so we determine those things not off our own head, but we determine them using guidelines the government gives us. The refresh of the business case appraisal, which is in front of Council today, does give a BCR of 1.53, which is characterised as medium. I should emphasise that these things are always debatable. There is land that you may or may not want to develop. There are factors that you may or may not want to include, but you can only include things that government allows. So those calculations are, as the Italians would say, they sometimes leave the time that they take. [Mrs Harper: Sorry they what?] They sometimes leave the time that they take, it just means that they are what they are based on how you do them. I will write that to you, and you get it translated into Italian and it will make sense. The value for money assessment noted the transport user benefits will arise from people in those villages. I'm afraid we disagree. People in those villages will get benefits. They will use the busway. They will use the busway because it touches the village and there is also a detailed assessment in the environmental statement about the kind of consequences that there will be on the environment and the increasing biodiversity that results from the planting. All of these will be, and you will have plenty of opportunity to make those representations to the Secretary of State under planning inspector. This will be decided independently, including the benefits to other people that are coming from the Haverhill direction as well, which will be able to take buses.

Supplementary question from Mrs Miranda Harper:

I would like clarification of the benefits that you say will be available to the people of Stapleford and Shelford. They won't. This busway goes round and behind those two villages over the only bit of undulating countryside we've got there. It doesn't touch the villages. How will it benefit them?

Response from the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Of course, the answer is that the busway does not go through the heart of the villages, but it touches them on the edge and the edge is close enough for people to actually be able to achieve it. And it's the compromise that we have to make. But the original alignment was going nowhere near it we brought it significantly closer. I can promise you that the people in those villages will take that busway. It will be a much better solution than going on the road, which at the moment is disastrously congested.

6. Question from Dr Mike More, Chair of Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, to the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Thank you very much, Council. Thank you for having me. So Addenbrooke's Hospital employs over 13,000 staff and has more than a million patient visitors every year. Many of those people rely on public transport to get to our hospitals. Over a third of our staff travel from travel to work from the eastern side of Cambridgeshire or from West Suffolk or North Essex. And transport and housing issues are perpetual and common issues in all staff surveys and in all exit interviews when people choose to leave the hospital. The hospital therefore has a strong interest in the effective and timely delivery of improved public transport, which also supports access to more affordable housing, and that is why we do support the proposed CSET scheme. So my question, given the substantial and growing need to improve transport connections from the South and East into the biomedical campus, can officers estimate the improved journey times that will result from the CSET development and the wider health benefits from reducing road traffic?

Response from the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Thank you so much. And Mike, thank you so much for coming, I know you how busy your diary is and taking the time out to come all the way here to speak to us today, it's much, much appreciated. And can I also please put on record my thanks to you and your team for all the work that you do in the hospitals every day to give residents the care that they need. Dr. More forwarded to me a letter from his hospital trust earlier today, which I will make sure is forwarded to all Members later today, in support of the scheme, so thank you very much for that. In answer to your question, the business case outlines the tangible journey time improvements of implementing the scheme. In free-flowing traffic, this being the keywords, the journey times improved by a third from 18 to 12 minutes, but we all know, of course that free flowing in traffic is very much not the norm. Along the route, the route at peak times when most people want to use the route, congestion is absolutely endemic, and the planned growth along the corridor will make that congestion increase to be substantially worse. I have spoken to so many of your team and they have told me that the journeys to and from work are awful, delays being both frequent and unpredictable. This is not the way we want your team to work. This is not the way we want our hospitals to function, and we don't want that to be the subject of any exit interviews of people we are desperately keen to retain. The scheme will also have other benefits if more people are encouraged to move away from fuel burning modes of transport, air quality will improve, along with noise reduction, fewer greenhouse gas emissions and overall better health. This is in keeping with this Council's net zero carbon strategy and health in all policies approach. So, thank you again for coming.

Supplementary question from Dr Mike More:

Thank you, Chair. If I may ask just one supplementary, as we respond to rising healthcare demands, as some questions have already alluded to, the potential growth of the campus but two essential elements of the growth of campus are the new Children's Hospital and Cancer Hospital that we are very hopeful that being developed in the next few years. How are those future developmental plans encountered in the planning for CSET?

Response from the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Thank you so much Chair and thank you, Mike, for outlining, for mentioning that. I will mention the hospitals in my opening speech when the paper comes before us shortly from now. Sorry, apologies that doesn't quite mean anything. The hospitals will struggle to be viable if we don't do this. They absolutely will, because at the moment I don't need to tell you how many vacancies you're running and all the problems that you are encountering. These hospitals are a key part of the establishment of the narrative around the need for this scheme, and we have all, all political colours in this Chamber, have campaigned for those hospitals to happen and happen quicker, so they will be a very, very big reason why, eventually, if this is approved, so thank you.

7. Question from Ms Araminta Ledger, Managing Director Cambridge University Health Partners, to the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Thank you very much, Chair and apologies for not being with you in person today. The members of Cambridge University Health Partners are Anglia Ruskin University, the University of Cambridge, Cambridge University Hospitals, Royal Papworth Hospital and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust. Our organisation works to maintain Cambridge as a place where breakthrough scientific discoveries are made. Rapidly demonstrated in real world populations and where excellent care is delivered alongside economic growth in order to improve health. We know from our work that safe, reliable, fast public transport options such as that proposed by the CSET scheme, those that link places of employment to homes are crucial to our ability to attract and retain talent. Please can officers provide assurance that the process for consulting the public on route options has been compliant with mandated process and reflects best practice. That County Council Members have been part of decision making on behalf of the County Council during the preparation of this proposal by the GCP and how the proposals align with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's Strategic Transport Plan. Thank you.

Response from the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Thank you very much, Chair and thank you Araminta for making the time. It is wonderful to see you even on Zoom and thank you so much again to your team for all the work that you do. We are here to try to help you today. I can of course assure you that the major transport scheme development such as this one, is a process prescribed by the Department for Transport and we have followed all guidance in that regard. The County Council, the GCP and the Combined Authority teams, together they have led, contributed to and supported the development of the scheme over many, many years. Most of those years before my time. CPCA colleagues have ensured that the scheme is a key component of the LTCP and county colleagues have led the learning from the existing guided bus way. The scheme has been subject to five consultations, all undertaken in accordance with that practice and the scheme has changed as a result of those consultations, and I would like to thank everyone in this Chamber and outside, mostly outside, who contributed to those consultation. And finally, it is important to reflect that this has been a very long journey. Cambridgeshire County Council established the City Deal Partnership in 2014, we worked with the City and District Council partners that we have the university and the business sectors and they all asked the City Deal to develop the schemes needed for the greater Cambridge area and empower them to deliver them. Politics as we know is changeable. The City Deal as it was, was established by

Conservatives. The current route was decided on by Conservatives and the decision on the current alignment was also made by Conservatives. We, the Joint Administration, have taken this forward at this point to make sure that we present it as a full package to the Secretary of State and this is what we intend to do today, so thank you.

Supplementary question from Ms Araminta Ledger:

I will ask whether the councillor could expand somewhat on how these proposals for CSET align and further the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's Strategic Transport Plan for the region.

Response from the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Thank you very much. I have to say when I've got 2 minutes to go and I hear, can you expand on something quite as big as that, I shiver it. But I will expand that very, very much length if you would like me to in writing. The LTCP obviously covers the entire Combined Authority region, it's a very, very big place. Cambridgeshire and Greater Cambridge are key to some of those destinations being achievable by more mass transport. If we are expecting private vehicle trips to be the main route into the biomedical campus, the entire Combined Authority strategy will fall, so that is why CSET, and other routes and Cambridge South were all absolutely part of the LTCP. There is very, very detailed description of all of that in the documents that the Combined Authority considers routinely, and I will be very, very happy to expand upon that separately from this meeting. It is important to note also that not only do you have these considerations to make in terms of policy, in terms of whether they fit with the overall schemes, etc, you also have to consider your costs in terms of money, but also on time. We cannot afford for the biomedical campus to not be a viable destination for much longer, if those workplaces fail, the entire economy of the Combined Authority region will fail with it which is why we have to proceed to the next steps today. Thank you.

8. Question from Mr Orestis Tzortzoglou to the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and apologies as well from my part on not being able to make it in person there today. My name is Orestis Tzortzoglou and I'm the Vice President for Development with BioMed Realty, and here today representing Granta Park. Granta Park is a major employment hub in this southern Cambridgeshire cluster. The park employs in excess of 3,500 people and has a consented development for substantially more to come forward in years ahead, so that number could increase quite substantially. We are very supportive of any mode of transport that is providing reliable and sustainable modes. We operate a number of buses today on the campus that connect us to the city centre that are fairly well used. In fact, it is the second most popular transport mode, but as others have already mentioned in relation to alternative routes, this will not help in alleviating the traffic pressures that we are experiencing, even if there is an alternative or an additional lane on existing congested route, it won't provide much help. I think a segregated, bespoke solution will certainly help in that direction. With respect to the question when what Mott MacDonald undertook the original study in consultation we discussed as one of the options, but some of the buses arriving at the A11 have, could continue on to Granta Park provided an alternative solution could be accommodated to ensure better connectivity for the last part of the journey. Especially for those travelling for work during peak hours. One can appreciate that during winter months and bad weather, having to walk or cycle crossing the A11 bridge, which can be a challenge, may not help optimise the mode of through the usage of this mode. It's also relevant to DDA requirements, so therefore, could officers confirm with the services could run on from the travel hub to Granta Park?

Response from the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Thank you, Orestis. Thank you so much for coming and from one member of the happy surname club to another I think today everyone feels our pain for a change. And thank you so much for allowing me to highlight something we haven't talked about yet today. We haven't talked much about Granta Park today and we should do so, thank you very much for coming. It is extremely important for businesses on Granta Park to have reliable connections to Cambridge South. It is absolutely one with key objectives of the scheme. And it's not just about the scheme itself, of course, it's not just about the route that it will follow, but it's about the much-needed network improvements along the corridor and beyond, and branching from the corridor. The travel hub and active travel route will connect with the Linton Greenway, Sawston Greenway and existing guided busways active travel route, offering direct connections and connectivity across a much wider area and crucially, between Granta Park and Cambridge South. But services from beyond the travel hub, including Haverhill and East Cambridgeshire, will be able to use the route, so once they join it they will be able to bypass the jams and offer real journey time benefits to users coming from all corners of the county. This includes Granta Park, and I fully expect services to operate to your site shortly after opening. At the other end of the route buses from the existing guided busway will seamlessly be able to use the new facility, offering through services to Cambridge City Centre and beyond.

Supplementary question from Mr Orestis Tzortzoglou:

Thank you, Chair. Thank you and thank you councillor for the very comprehensive response and indeed just to highlight as well as you mentioned the Cambridge South railway station, which of course is under construction, so that is a committed project, you know, that will certainly help a lot in providing these connections further afield. You know alleviating pressure on housing and enabling employees that use these sustainable transport modes to reach Granta Park in a much faster, reliable mode. So, thank you very much for confirming that.

Response from the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Orestis, thank you very much. That is all.

9. Question from Mr Richard Stephen Partridge-Hicks to the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Thank you, Chair. I'm a resident of Sawston. I ask this question on behalf of Better Ways for Busways, it's a nonpolitical organisation that supports public transport in South Cambridgeshire. We're backed by the parish councils of Babraham, Stapleford and Great Shelford, Cambridge Past, Present and Future, Hobson's Conduit Trust, you've heard from some of them already, Magog Trust, the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, Rail Future and others. We believe the real problem that CSET should be trying to solve is provide long term transport solution from the southeast to CBC via Granta Park, you just heard from Orestis, from Linton and Haverhill, where many of CBCs key workers live. We agree with the Orestis that a connection to Granta Park is required. CSET does not do that. However, the modelling makes it clear that buses don't have a capacity required to provide transport on the scale required, to return to the entire corridor out to Haverhill. Rail Futures recent consultant's report a big role for the Haverhill railway showed how strong this demand is, with the railway able to attract over 2000 people from Haverhill. Buses don't have this capacity, and they

wouldn't achieve modal shift because they require you to drive to the park and ride in the first place. The only solution with the capacity is a rail link which preserves the hub and spokes nature of Cambridge and the outer villages and there is a route available, the old Cambridge to Haverhill railway line. It exists and can be reinstated with only a small number of changes. However, if you approve and build CSET, it will make re opening the railway much more difficult as off-road route proposed by GCP uses some of the same route and it also undermined the economics. If you must build a busway, build it quickly, at much less cost along the A1307 without pointless bridges criss-crossing the River Granta and don't block off reopening the railway at some point in the future. [Chair: Mr Partridge Hicks, your question if you would like to put it now, please.] OK I can do that. So, here's the question, will you please send the poorly conceived CSET scheme to the dustbin of history where it surely belongs, as our elected representatives, will you?

Response from the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Mr. Chairman, thank you and thank you, Stephen, for coming and thank you so much for the continued engagement that we have had together. Stephen and his colleague James came to see me when I acceded to the Chair of the Greater Cambridge Partnership, three years ago. We had many meetings about this very busway, and you know, it has been a bit of a long road. There is obviously an ongoing discussion in the public domain about the Haverhill rail line, but there are quite a few misconceptions about it as well, which I have already addressed at the Executive Board, and I will do so again more briefly today. It costs too much money. Large sections of it have been built over. It's not just a few changes, it's a completely new alignment that would be required. So, I'm afraid including the fact ever since they discontinued it, they built the A11, so you need a new elevated rail bridge. Those bad boys are crazy expensive. The rail industry has had much more many rounds of proposals of grants for reviving old rail lines. Haverhill has never been taken forward. It is not of interest to the rail industry. We might wish it otherwise, but it is not. We do know that at least a quarter of Cambridge University Hospital staff travel from the Haverhill direction, we know that. The County Council has previously reviewed the Haverhill line option and discounted it on cost grounds in 2015, the projected cost was £650 million, that is where the figures I quoted at the Executive Board actually came from. Businesses and hospitals have told us they want certainty, and they want it now. They want a solution in the short term. If we scrap this now and wait for the rail to reopen, we will deliver nothing for them. It is not true, as you suggest, the patronage will be low and congestion on the A1307 will not be affected. The existing Huntingdon Busway stands as living testimony of just how many people are going to use it. The technical work suggests CSET would have at the beginning, initially 1.75 million of passengers per annum, and this could rise. [Chair: Thank you, councillor]

Supplementary question from Mr Richard Stephen Partridge-Hicks:

I'll make it very short. The key point surely is the difference in modal shift. If you build a Park and Ride, you need to drive down the A1307 or the A11 to get to the park and ride. You don't achieve modal shift. You have to start in your car. It doesn't work for a modal shift perspective at all. So how can you possibly justify the busway compared to a train solution where you can walk from the villages to the train station, including to Granta Park as discussed earlier? Thank you.

Response from the Council's representative on the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board, Councillor Elisa Meschini:

Thank you, Stephen, for making this very easy for me. Yes, you do. So, you have the Sawston Greenway, as I've explained. The Linton Greenway. You got buses from Linton. You got buses from Haverhill. All these buses with the triple deckers will come into the travel hub and compact themselves so that they can carry on towards Cambridge. That is modal shift. Some people will come on an orbital service from Cambridge South because the Mayor's got plan for those. Some people will drive, that's the nature of it. Some people will have to drive to the travel hub. But the point is it will provide modal shift for those who don't have to anymore.

10. Question from Ms Annabel Sykes to the Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, Councillor Alex Beckett:

Good morning, councillors. So my question relates to another contentious public transport project, namely East West Rail, which the new government hasn't yet decided whether it's going to go ahead. Despite this East West Rail's land agents Ardent are pressuring landowners who may be impacted by the scheme to agree to intrusive surveys. And when the landowners are reluctant to do so, they're threatened with statutory powers of entry under section 172 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016. That section says, a person authorised in writing by an acquiring authority may enter and survey or value land in connection with a proposal to acquire an interest in or right over land. Now, let's assume that East West Rail is potentially in acquiring authority, at this stage in the process, there doesn't seem to be a proposal. East West Rail has said the maps it released under Freedom of Information requests are out of date, but it hasn't yet launched a statutory consultation with up-to-date maps. If it's given the go ahead in the budget, it's indicated that its next consultation will be non-statutory, so it's most unclear when there'll be a proposal for section 172 purposes, something EWR Co. seems to be taking advantage of. It's also understood to be the case that their land agents are reluctant to provide information on potential land take to landowners in advance of meetings. What can the County Council itself an affected landowner do to assist other affected landowners? Can I just add that I'm asking this question because it's important to farmers, for example, to maintain a good relationship with Ardent, so it's pretty difficult for them to put their heads above the parapet.

Response from the Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, Councillor Alex Beckett:

Thank you and I hope you can hear me at the back, Miss Sykes, thank you very much for your question. And I'm sorry I couldn't accept this one at H&T so it's good that you brought it here. Thank you very much for that. Also thank you for your e-mail the other day, where you pointed out the need to be a critical friend to EWR and that is very much the bounds where I see us being, a friend but also a critical friend. On your point regarding the land agents and the pressure that has been put on landowners, officers have raised this with East West Rail on multiple occasions and it does concern me where those land agents have been, perhaps putting too much pressure. It is something that we will be raising with them again. I think all of us are slightly frustrated by the length of time that is taking East West Rail to get its preferred route out there. I do hope that following the budget, they will be able to say more on the route alignment and that it will enable us to be able to support residents and make sure that we are able to we can to represent them. As far as I'm aware that will, as you have said, be coming after the budget. It is important to us as a Council to try and make life better for all of our residents, and we were doing everything that we can to be able to support residents through

this as I know it can be a very difficult time. Thank you.

Supplementary question from Ms Annabel Sykes:

Thank you, so question, have you written to East West Rail? Have you asked them whether there's a code of conduct? Have you commented on any code of conduct they might have? So, I've got a little bit of time, so I'm going to make one other comment, which is not just to do with East West Rail, but also with any major transport project. I attended an excellent lecture last night given by Professor Partha Dasgupta at a public seminar. One of the notable things he said was traditional economics is totally bogus because it doesn't have natural capital in it. And he asked why we are overdrawing our account with nature and mentioned the chipping away nature of things like busways. I would just like to leave that thought with county councillors, that we're over drawing our account with nature.

Response from the Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee, Councillor Alex Beckett:

Thank you and thank you, Miss Sykes. I know you've been reading the minutes of our meetings and did notice that I have been raising some of the questions with East West Rail. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to make the last East West Rail meeting last Thursday due to a clash but I will make sure that all of those points are fed in through officers and that we will be taking a look at this going forwards. But thank you very much for your question is greatly appreciated.

Petition

Petition relating to the Cambridge South-East Transport Scheme

Statement from Mr James Littlewood, Chief Executive of Cambridge Past, Present and Future

Good morning, everyone. I think it's clear that everyone's in favour of improving public transport in the 1307 corridor, but there are two competing schemes. Both will get workers to the science campuses in Cambridge more quickly and help the local economy. Both schemes start and end in the same place and bus journey times for both are very similar. Versions of both schemes were proposed by the GCP in 2018.

The recommendation before you will result in building five miles of road through open countryside, including two large bridges over the River Granta and putting a chalk stream in a culvert. It would cut across the lower slopes of the Gog Magog Hills and through a new Country Park. It will leave parcels of countryside exposed to future development. I'm presenting a petition signed by over 6900 people, asking you to listen to public opinion, save the countryside, protect the Gog Magog Hills and choose a better scheme. And just to say the reason for the smaller local numbers is due to a quirk on Change.org and IP addresses rather than actually whether people are in Cambridgeshire or not.

The alternative scheme involves building one mile of bus road and 1.2 miles of bus lane, combined with the existing dual carriageway, this would create 2.3 miles of continuous traffic free bus route, an outbound bus lane is not needed as there's no traffic congestion on that stretch of road. In theory, bus roads offer an advantage over bus lanes where there are junctions. However, in this instance there's only one roundabout on that three mile stretch of road and bus filter lights can be installed at the roundabout. So, in practice a bus road has no great advantage for this scheme. There are some other benefits to, firstly, it would directly serve the planned expansion of the Cambridge Biomedical Campus, and also both the eastern and western parts of the campus, including the new Children's Hospital. Whereas the scheme you are being asked to approve and does not and would require people to travel a mile to get to the campus extension.

Another advantage is it would not need to be guided, so it could be used by a wider range of public transport vehicles and emergency services. The alternative scheme doesn't go close to the villages, but the recommended scheme is on the edge of these villages and will only be convenient for a very small number of people. The Sawston Greenway and Linton Greenway will provide active travel routes serving the villages. Therefore, the benefits to the villages to the recommended scheme do not justify spending an extra £100 million and destroying the countryside.

The former CSET project manager Andrew Monroe told me the main reason the road through the countryside was chosen because the Mayor of Cambridgeshire, James Palmer, insisted the scheme become part of his metro scheme, which became policy under his transport plan. Because the A1307 road option did not meet the mayor's criteria the GCP had no choice but to choose the route across the countryside. However, when the new mayor was elected in 2021, he dropped the transport plans. For several years we've been asking the GCP to carry out a formal review of the two schemes to take into account the change circumstances. Today nearly 7000 people are asking you to see that review before you make your decision. Thank you.

Amendment proposed by Councillor Count and seconded by Councillor Goldsack

Agenda Item 6 – Better Public Transport: Cambridge South-East Transport Scheme

Additions in bold and deletions shown in strikethrough

The Full Council is recommended to:

- (a) Note the report, and the likely timescales for the formal consent process; ~~and~~
- (b) **Ask the GCP to commission an independent review of the benefits and disbenefits of an alternative route proposal along the A1307 corridor, as set out in the plan circulated with the amendment proposed, in direct comparison to its own proposal outlined in the Transport and Works Act Order; and**
- (c) **Delay agreeing recommendations (i) to (vi) until the outcome of the review set out in Recommendation (b) is considered by a meeting of full Council** ~~Agree to the:~~
 - (i) Making of an application under the provisions of section 6 of the Transport and Works Act 1992 for an Order authorising the construction and operation of a guided transport system from the A11 to the Cambridge Biomedical Campus; and
 - (ii) Seeking of a direction from the Secretary of State under Section 90(2A) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 that planning permission be deemed to be granted for the development provided for in the proposed Order for the CSET2 Scheme.
 - (iii) Delegation of Authority to the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board:
 - (a) To progress negotiations with any owners of interests in the affected land and other persons affected by the CSET2 Scheme and to make necessary arrangements to acquire land or rights within the proposed CSET2 Order limits whether by agreement or through the exercise of powers contained in the CSET2 Order;
 - (b) To progress negotiations with any affected parties or objectors to the CSET2 Order with the aim of avoiding, or securing the withdrawal of, any objections to the CSET2 Order; and
 - (c) To promote the CSET2 Order through, and participation in, any public local inquiry or other

processes and procedures arising or resulting from the submission of the application for the CSET2 Order.

- (iv) Delegation of authority to the Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board to:
 - (a) Prepare the necessary documents and any other evidence deemed appropriate to support the Transport and Works Act application;
 - (b) Undertake further design development work on the CSET2 Scheme and progress the ongoing statutory process, including further refinements to the CSET2 Order prior to submitting the Transport and Works Act order application and application for deemed planning permission; and
 - (c) Deliver the CSET2 Scheme to practical completion subject to:
 - (i) the CSET2 Order being made and deemed planning permission granted; and
 - (ii) the approval of a Full Business Case in line with existing agreements and in accordance with internal governance requirements and procurement best practice and in consultation with the Council's Section 151 Officer where appropriate.
- (v) Delegation of Authority to the Council's Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Service Director for Legal and Governance, to negotiate, agree, enter into, execute and serve (where appropriate) all relevant legal agreements, notices and other documentation necessary to facilitate and underpin the CSET2 Order including (i) provisions to protect the apparatus of statutory authorities which may lead to ongoing liabilities (ii) to amend the CSET2 Order to reduce the extent of Order Land to reflect the extent of acquisition and rights required, (iii) to settle all compensation claims either by agreement or as determined by the Lands Chamber, (iv) to authorise the diversion or interference of public rights of way and means of access to the highway and (v) to give due regard to the criminal sanctions, powers to create byelaws and to the public sector equality duty and human rights provisions outline in this Report, and
- (vi) Authorise the submission of the CSET2 Order application, and the application that a direction be given that planning permission be deemed to be granted together with all supporting documents, and to prepare such further documents as may be required to support those applications.

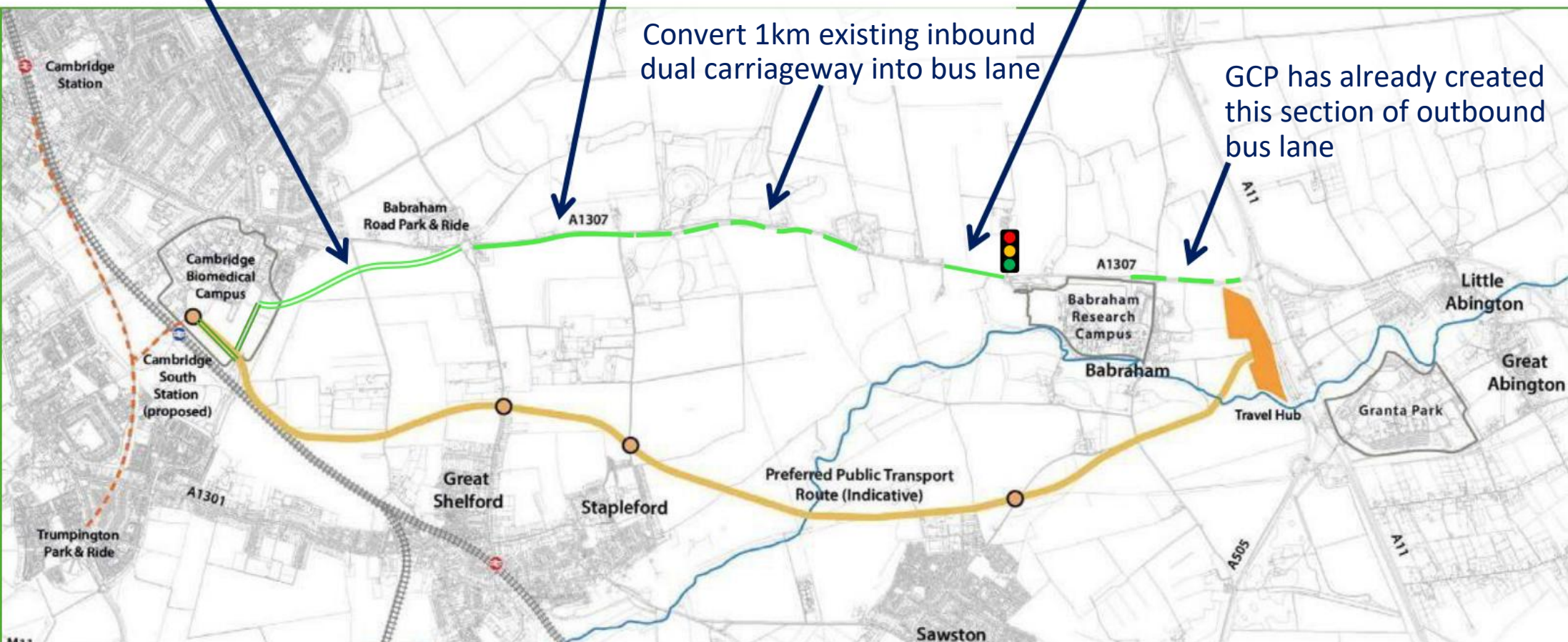
1.65km of new 2-way busway between CBC and A1307

1.1km of new inbound bus lane (build when needed)

Outbound bus lane and part-time traffic signals for buses to bypass queues at roundabout

Convert 1km existing inbound dual carriageway into bus lane

GCP has already created this section of outbound bus lane



Yellow line = GCP preferred route **Green line** = Proposed alternative **Orange** = new Park & Ride

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Council Procedure Rule 9.1)

Questions to the Council's Appointee on the Combined Authority Board – Councillor Nethsingha

Question from Councillor Goodliffe:

Thank you, Chair. I was delighted with the Mayor's release of the Tiger bus passes for under 25s earlier this year. Please could you tell us how many Tiger bus passes have been issued? How many journeys they've been used for and the average savings per journey? Thank you.

Response from Councillor Nethsingha:

Yes, I am, and I am also very grateful to Councillor Goodliffe for letting me know that she was planning to ask about this so I was able to get the figures that she asked for, which I have to say, I would not otherwise have in my head. So, 29,543 passes have been issued, 199,323 journeys have been made and the average saving for under 16s is 71p and the average savings for over 16s is £1. So that's a pretty impressive set of cheaper journeys for families of young people and young people themselves, and just remembering that the families of young people who were travelling a lot by buses, some of those people will be people for whom every pound makes a difference. So, I think that that's been a very successful introduction. I know it's caused some issues in some places which may come up in some of the other questions, but I think it is really a good news story in terms of demonstrating that actually if you make it easy for people to use buses and cheap for people to use buses, my goodness, they will. Thank you.

Question from Councillor Shailer:

Thank you very much, Chair. Under 13 Bus Network Update, does Councillor Nethsingha agree that the Combined Authority's work on bus reform has profound implications for rebuilding our passenger transport network, not least coordination between buses and trains across the county and the entire CA region. Thank you.

Response from Councillor Nethsingha:

I do and the I think the consultation is still open. So, if anybody hasn't taken part in their bus consultation that is currently underway at the Combined Authority, I would encourage them to do so. I think it's very clear that improving our bus service makes a huge difference to many people across the county, and the more we can do of it, the better. We will be much more effective in doing that, whichever form of change comes in, it will be better afterwards. Thank you.

Question from Councillor Bulat:

Thank you, Chair. So, I welcome the recent decision by the Combined Authority to extend the free all day travel for concessionary bus passes from May and on a related note, I also welcome the Transport Secretary confirming earlier this month that there are no plans to remove the concessionary bus passes, unlike speculated previously. There will be a positive impact, of course, on residents will be able to travel before 9:30 a.m. in the morning on weekdays using their free pass, which is really important, especially for those relying on buses and on public transport for health appointments in particular, but also other peak time commitments. So, I'd like to ask if

the CPCA is planning any awareness campaigns so the residents know that their bus passes will work before 9:30 a.m. on weekdays from May when this decision will be implemented. Secondly, how will the CPCA monitor morning bus use after the change to ensure this service frequency is actually appropriate? Because especially after the introduction of the Tiger pass, which I really welcome as well, there is seen as an increase usage, especially around the busway, from St Ives into Cambridge, but also other services so I do think we should monitor this and try to have more frequent services if needed, especially on those highly used routes. Thank you.

Response from Councillor Nethsingha:

Thank you. Yes, so it is clear that the new opening up of the concessionary bus passes is going to mean that there needs to be quite a lot of monitoring about what happens with bus services, some of which are already extremely busy at that time of day, and I think that the officers at the Combined Authority are aware of that. They are in the process of talking to the bus operators about how the changes to the concessionary fares scheme will come into force and once they've had those conversations with the operators, there will be an awareness campaign. But I think it's important that they make sure that they talked to the officers thoroughly first before they do that awareness campaign. And the Combined Authority officers have also been very clear that, sort of, as more and more of these changes to the bus services come in, that's going to need to be a constant discussion with bus operators about where there are pressures in the system and how changes to the system are impacting, on what and what else needs to be done so that that it kind of needs to be a dynamic process. I hope that's helpful.

Supplementary question from Councillor Bulat:

Just to say thank you for the answer and I think once this monitoring is completed, I think it'll be interesting for councillors, especially for routes affecting our divisions, to get that data and to know which services perhaps need a few more services put in place. Thank you.

Question from Councillor Thompson:

My question is really about the ongoing busway crisis, which is a significant concern for my residents and many across greater Cambridgeshire, St Ives and onwards who are dependent on the service. I fully support the success of the Tiger bus pass, which is a crucial initiative to help the cost of living for families. However, since the 5th September, there is growing concern that pupils and residents cannot get on buses, is not a good one to be in, to be honest. My question really is, how can we find an effective resolution to the ongoing busway crisis while developing a sustainable service model that accommodates Northstowe and its growth, expands bus services to Longstanton Park and Ride as a hub i.e. the plan service from Sutton east Cambs and supports the cost-of-living initiative like the Tiger bus pass. Thank you.

Response from Councillor Nethsingha:

Thank you, Councillor Thompson. First of all I want to say a big thank you to Councillor Thompson for the extraordinary amount of work and time and effort she has put into trying to cope with the crisis that there has been on the busway over the last couple of months. She has been tireless in raising this issue and making sure that it got the attention that it needed. Her efforts have been very effective in persuading Stagecoach to take notice, and I think, I hope put on some new services in the relatively near future; so thank you Firouz for that. But I absolutely recognise that that is part of the problem that may be better in the future but that the bigger issue of capacity on the busway remains and needs a much more strategic solution. I think that the assumption from the Combined Authority officers is that the new tendered service, which will run directly from Huntingdon into Cambridge without stopping, will mean that there is more capacity on the buses

that do stop to pick up people at the stops on the way. So, some of that may be helped by the new tendered services but as in my answer to Councillor Bulat, I think the officers are very aware that there needs to be a really close attention to places where changes to new services are putting a lot of pressure on other services and therefore there is a need for more capacity. I do want to really emphasise though, and I know that everybody who has spoken has already kind of recognised this, that the issues of having too many people on the buses, while they cause their own problems and are massively frustrating for people who find that they're waiting at the bus stop and the bus goes past and it's full, in some ways that is the problem going in the right direction if that makes sense. As so many other parts of the country people are cutting bus services and losing bus services and becoming more and more dependent on [Chair: Thank you]

Supplementary question from Councillor Thompson:

Would you like to expand on that Councillor Nethsingha?

Response Councillor Nethsingha:

It is a problem that there are not enough buses on the busway. It is a demonstration that if you provide the infrastructure people will use it and that is very important lesson, thank you.