



GREATER CAMBRIDGE CITY DEAL JOINT ASSEMBLY

Minutes of the Greater Cambridge City Deal Joint Assembly held on
Monday, 12 January 2015 at 3.30 p.m.

PRESENT:

Members of the Greater Cambridge City Deal Joint Assembly:

Councillor Tim Bick	Cambridge City Council
Councillor Kevin Price	Cambridge City Council
Councillor Martin Smart	Cambridge City Council
Councillor Roger Hickford	Cambridgeshire County Council
Councillor Maurice Leeke	Cambridgeshire County Council
Councillor Noel Kavanagh	Cambridgeshire County Council
Councillor Francis Burkitt	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Councillor Bridget Smith	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Councillor Tim Wotherspoon	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Sir Michael Marshall	Marshall Group
Andy Williams	AstraZeneca
Anne Constantine	Cambridge Regional College
Jane Ramsey	Cambridge University Hospitals
Helen Valentine	Anglia Ruskin University

Members and substitutes of the Greater Cambridge City Deal Executive Board:

Councillor Lewis Herbert	Cambridge City Council
Councillor Ian Bates	Cambridgeshire County Council
Councillor Simon Edwards	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Councillor Ray Manning	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Neil Darwin	GCGP Enterprise Partnership
Professor Jeremy Sanders	University of Cambridge

Officers/advisors:

Andrew Limb	Cambridge City Council
Aaron Blowers	Cambridgeshire County Council
Graham Hughes	Cambridgeshire County Council
Dearbhla Lawson	Cambridgeshire County Council
Chris Malyon	Cambridgeshire County Council
Jeremy Smith	Cambridgeshire County Council
Alex Colyer	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Jean Hunter	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Graham Watts	South Cambridgeshire District Council

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor Tim Bick was **APPOINTED** as Chairman of the Greater Cambridge City Deal Joint Assembly.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Councillor Tim Wotherspoon was **APPOINTED** as Vice-Chairman of the Greater Cambridge City Deal Joint Assembly.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Claire Ruskin (Cambridge Network).

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made at this stage of proceedings.

5. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Questions were asked and answered as follows:

Question by Jim Chisholm

Mr Chisholm set out the health benefits of walking and cycling and stated that they had not been included as part of the report or appendices published with the agenda for this meeting in respect of the prioritised infrastructure investment programme. He therefore asked:

“Why were these benefits from such active travel not included in the assessment?”

Graham Hughes, Cambridgeshire County Council’s Executive Director of Economy, Transport and Environment, agreed that the health benefits of activities such as walking and cycling were well recognised and important. He explained, however, that the purpose of the appraisal for the prioritised infrastructure investment programme was to focus on the economic dimension of the schemes as the City Deal was primarily about growing the local economy. He emphasised that this approach in no way took away from those schemes any of the health benefits Mr Chisholm had referred to.

Question by Jim Chisholm

Mr Chisholm referred to the Chisholm Trail appearing high on the list of prioritised schemes. Reflecting on the original Chisholm Trail, which took cattle to slaughter in Chicago, he understood that it was proposed for a different name to be used when submitting applications for funding. Mr Chisholm therefore asked:

“Is there an agreement of the proposed formal name to be used, even if it fails to roll off the tongue in the same way as ‘Chisholm Trail’?”

Mr Hughes answered the question and recognised that there was a need to think of a more strategic sounding name for the scheme, especially since it involved bidding for money from the Government. The revised name would need to reflect the characteristics of the scheme as well as making it clear what the scheme was seeking to deliver.

Question by Julian Huppert MP

Julian Huppert, Member of Parliament for Cambridge, welcomed the City Deal as a huge opportunity but was particularly interested to know how the Joint Assembly and Executive Board would make sure it protected the character of Cambridge as well as support the sense of community that made Cambridge what it was.

He made specific reference to a scheme at Milton Road that had been included in the prioritised infrastructure investment programme and highlighted some sensitivities regarding historical proposals to cut down trees for the introduction of a dual-carriageway. Julian Huppert MP asked what assurances could be given for any proposals put forward to ensure that the tree-lined boulevard aspect of Milton Road would be kept in place. He was also keen to ensure that any proposals did not sever communities, acknowledging how important it was to retain community interaction.

Mr Hughes responded by saying that the character of the area would be recognised and taken into account in the development of any proposals relating to the prioritised infrastructure schemes. No proposals had currently been developed, but it was the intention, subject to the views of the Assembly and Executive Board, to take forward a process in relation to developing proposals for schemes that would be very consultative. This would provide elected members and local communities with opportunities to engage with the development of proposals as they emerged.

6. PETITIONS

No petitions had been received.

7. 2015-20 PRIORITISED INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a report which provided the Joint Assembly with an opportunity to consider proposals for the transport infrastructure investment programme for delivery from 2015/16 to 2019/20 as part of the Greater Cambridge City Deal.

Graham Hughes, Cambridgeshire County Council's Executive Director of Economy, Transport and Environment, firstly delivered a presentation on the concept of the Greater Cambridge City Deal and the infrastructure investment programme. He highlighted that the Greater Cambridge area was a truly internationally competitive city and region, that it had unique characteristics known commonly as the 'Cambridge Phenomenon' and that it had a global scale concentration of high-tech industries but that future growth was threatened by congestion and housing.

The vision of the City Deal was noted as being to realise the economic potential of the area, to unleash the next wave of the 'Cambridge Phenomenon', to improve connectivity and enhance reliability of journeys.

The infrastructure investment programme had been drawn from Local Plans and the Transport Strategy and City Deal funding would be delivered in three tranches over 15 to 20 years. In terms of the first five years of investment, the focus would be on maximising network benefits, maximising economic benefits and deliverability. Key principles of the investment were noted as being:

- a major axis of movement, north to south in the city;
- a major axis for early housing growth, particularly along the A428 corridor;
- smaller schemes to deliver wider benefits.

Members of the Assembly were invited to make any general comments at this stage of proceedings prior to consideration of individual schemes within the infrastructure investment programme. The following points were noted:

- flexibility and regular reviewing had to be built into this process so that individual projects not delivering as anticipated could be changed or stopped altogether if necessary and replaced with new projects;
- the city centre was in danger of being overwhelmed, with it being very difficult to get into the city by any means whether that be via private car or public transport;
- the city and its surrounding areas needed to be looked at in conjunction with the schemes in the infrastructure investment programme to ensure that people could move around the city, but that as much traffic as possible was kept out of the city centre itself;
- there needed to be assurances that the development of schemes did not move problems or create problems elsewhere;
- in terms of the Bio-Medical Campus, 10,500 additional jobs were about to be created that had not been included in the weighting set out in the report. It was vital that these additional jobs in that area were reflected;
- the triggers for the next wave of funding were yet to be agreed with Government, yet the Assembly and Board were being asked to consider priority schemes at this moment in time.

Mr Hughes agreed that flexibility was crucial, however, there was a need to commence with delivering schemes. He expected there to be a number of instances where schemes would be re-considered and reviewed by the Joint Assembly and Executive Board, but made it clear that if a particular scheme was deemed as being unacceptable or was not delivering then it could be dropped or amended. Any decision to this effect would be in the gift of the Executive Board. Similarly, new schemes could also be added to the programme.

Mr Hughes explained that some schemes would take a few years to develop and that it was important to get some of those schemes under development quickly so that the City Deal had a rolling programme. The City Deal programme comprised of a range of schemes, with some deliverable in the short term and some deliverable in the longer term in excess of the first five years of the Deal. Triggers had to be met in order for further funding to be released from the Government as part of subsequent tranches. Details of the criteria for the triggers were still being finalised through negotiations with the Government but it was noted that the first set of triggers would be about delivery on time, delivery on budget and realisation of benefits identified in the individual scheme business cases.

There was a clear expectation from the Government for the first tranche of funding to be spent and for schemes to be delivered on the ground by 2020. The list of prioritised schemes set out in table 1 of the report sought to ensure that this expectation was met, as well as plan for the development of some longer term schemes.

The Chairman invited Mr Hughes to present the prioritised City Deal transport infrastructure programme.

Mr Hughes referred Members of the Assembly to table 1 of the report, which set out the prioritised programme, and highlighted that the total cost of the schemes purposefully exceeded the amount of funding that was available as part of the first tranche of the City Deal. This provided flexibility, acknowledging that some schemes may drop out of the programme or change throughout the process. The programme was also made up of schemes where other sources of funding would contribute to their delivery, such as through the Local Enterprise Partnership growth deal or developer contributions for example. The programme also sought to plan for the subsequent programme for years six to ten so that a series of schemes were ready to be delivered.

The second half of table 1 in the report set out schemes that had been identified as reserve schemes following the economic benefit and deliverability prioritisation work. It was noted that feasibility work and scheme options would be developed for all of the schemes in table 1, including those identified as reserve schemes which could still be delivered in the first five year programme or carried over for delivery as part of the programme for years six to ten.

Presentations were made and debate ensued on groups of individual schemes included in the prioritised City Deal transport infrastructure programme as follows:

Milton Road / Histon Road

The Milton Road scheme was proposed as a bus priority from the Busway to Mitcham's Corner, and onto the city centre. Histon Road was also a bus priority scheme between Kings Hedges Road and Castle Street, and onto the city centre. The main existing problems for these two roads were journeys that were slow and unreliable in peak periods, the Busway being prevented from fulfilling its potential and limited connectivity to key sites. Outputs and outcomes sought from schemes on these roads included:

- improved connectivity;
- faster, more reliable bus journeys;
- increased bus patronage and new services;
- reduced costs for users.

The following points from Assembly Members were noted:

- improvement of the busway should be implicit in these schemes, as well as top quality cycle provision along both of the roads;
- the main problem was one of congestion caused by traffic, which would only worsen with the introduction of more houses, so the focus should be on reducing congestion;
- a proposition that took people out of their cars to use public transport as their preferred way to travel would need a quantum shift in terms of faster journey times and reliability;
- reliability was a huge factor, which was why the guided busway was so popular;
- it was disappointing that cycling was not explicitly mentioned in the schemes for these two roads and that they only referred to buses.

Mr Hughes responded by saying that these schemes were not narrowly defined and provided opportunities to ensure that all user needs were acknowledged and reflected in the redesign of the respective roads. The routes had at this stage been defined as being problematic from the perspective of buses but other issues would be picked up and included as part of developing the schemes.

In terms of traffic congestion, Mr Hughes was of the opinion that serious thought needed to be given to restricting the movement of traffic in the city and actively discouraging people from driving their cars in the city centre in particular. He emphasised that this would be a very sensitive issue and that it could feature as part of the city centre capacity scheme.

Chisholm Trail

The Chisholm Trail was a north-south cycle / pedestrian route between Cambridge Station and Cambridge Science Park. It included a new bridge over the River Cam in Chesterton and an underpass of the railway at Mill Road. The main existing problems with this link were a disjointed and patchy network between the north and south of the city that created barriers to people wishing to undertake journeys on foot or by bicycle. Outputs and outcomes sought from this scheme included:

- a safe, largely off-road cycle and pedestrian route;
- increased pedestrian and cycle usage;
- new capacity for trips to the Science and Business parks;
- shortened journey times north-east of the city to the new station.

It was noted, as referred to earlier at this meeting in answer to a question by a member of the public, that the title of this scheme was in the process of being reviewed.

The following points from Assembly Members were noted:

- the route and the bridge had historically been looked at as two separate projects for this trail and both would be required in order for it to work. A question was asked as to whether the two would be delivered together as part of this scheme;
- secure cycle parking for people working and living at either end of the trail would be required as part of the scheme.

Mr Hughes agreed with the point in respect of provision for secure cycle parking. In terms of development of the route and bridge it was noted that this would need to be undertaken in stages, but Mr Hughes was of the view that this could be delivered relatively quickly. Some funding had already been secured so, ideally, both aspects could be delivered as part of this single scheme to ensure full connectivity as soon as possible.

A428 corridor public transport

This group of schemes reflected a high-quality, segregated bus-based public transport corridor between Cambourne and Bourn Airfield and Cambridge city centre, including Park and Ride provision. The main existing problems consisted of unreliability, with the A1303 in particular that could add half an hour or more onto a journey for which buses mainly suffered, and the Madingley Road Park and Ride site after two miles of the most congested section of the A1303. Outputs and outcomes sought from these schemes included:

- faster, more reliable bus journeys;
- increased bus patronage;
- new route options on the corridor;
- reduced costs for residents, businesses and workers.

It was noted that South Cambridgeshire District Council's Local Plan, which was currently going through its inspection process, outlined significant proposals for development along this corridor.

The following points from Assembly Members were noted:

- the total cost of these schemes was nearly £100 million on their own, so a question was raised regarding delivery and phasing;

- individual proposals relating to these schemes should give careful and sensitive consideration to the fact that Madingley Rise was an exceptionally beautiful area which also included the American Cemetery;
- a question was asked as to whether a segregated bus link on the A428 was necessary at this stage in view of the fact that, for the majority of the day, the road was working and relatively free-flowing;
- Madingley Road was impossible to travel on at either end of the working day and these schemes did not seek to address the congestion problems;
- the introduction of more bus lanes could add to congestion problems.

Mr Hughes responded by acknowledging that this was a very large package of schemes and the analysis work would be extremely important, enabling options to be properly drawn up for consideration. In answer to a question he added that all of these schemes would not necessarily be delivered at the same time, but the analysis work would provide some indication as to which parts of specific schemes could go forward.

With regard to Madingley Rise and the American Cemetery, Mr Hughes agreed with the sensitivities in this respect and stated that working closely with the Assembly on this issue, as well as with other interested parties as part of the consultation process, would be very important.

Rural cycle route corridors

Saffron Walden and Haverhill corridor cycle and pedestrian routes would provide cycle links between Saffron Walden, Haverhill, business parks, villages and railway stations on the A1301 and A1307 corridors and Cambridge.

The Cambridge to Royston cycle link would provide links between Royston, business parks, villages and railway stations on the A10 corridor and Cambridge.

The Bourn Airfield and Cambourne cycle and pedestrian routes would provide cycle links between Cambourne and Bourn Airfield and the ring of surrounding villages.

Existing problems with the routes included poor or absent pedestrian and cycle facilities in the areas and insufficient connectivity for short or medium length journeys between housing and research parks. These issues forced greater car use. Outputs and outcomes sought from the schemes included:

- more people walking or cycling to access employment or services;
- improved access to rail and bus interchanges;
- reduced congestion on the corridors.

The following points from Assembly Members were noted:

- it was unclear how many of the 19,000 daily users of the A1307 would use the walking or cycle routes instead of their cars as a result of these schemes being delivered;
- these schemes acknowledged that not all journeys in the Greater Cambridge area involved getting in and out of the city and that people wanted to travel between villages;
- the schemes addressed proper transport networks and segregated cycleways and also went some way to preserve the quality of life for residents in South Cambridgeshire;

- these schemes should be welcomed. In opening the cycle route at Babraham it was immediately clear that people wanted to use their bicycles as a preferred mode of transport;
- there was a need for secure cycle parking provision at stations, something which there had historically been disagreement over in terms of who responsible for providing such a facility. Clear accountability should be included as part of these schemes;
- according to the latest statistical information, Cambridge was the top city in the country in terms of the percentage of people that used a bicycle. This statistic should be acknowledged as part of any decision-making regarding these priority schemes.

Mr Hughes agreed that cycling was embedded as part of the culture of Cambridge in particular, but also the wider county. He reflected on the busway cycle path and reported that over 1,000 people per day used the route when it was introduced and that there had been a huge increase in cycling in Cambridge as a result.

The provision of secure cycle parking at stations was usually the responsibility of the Train Operating Company, but it was noted that they could potentially be included as part of negotiations through the City Deal.

Mr Hughes reflected on the relatively low priority score of these schemes, based on economic benefit, in comparison to other schemes. He explained, however, that they were still considered as priority schemes due to their deliverability, relatively low resource and the fact that they were in areas with significant villages where employment already existed, meaning that lots of people along the corridor would benefit.

Foxton level crossing

Foxton level crossing was a scheme that was proposed to be fully funded by Network Rail, incurring no City Deal funding. It sought to improve passenger facilities, safety and congestion.

Assembly Members made no comments on this scheme.

City centre capacity

The city centre capacity scheme would improve sustainable transport capacity, traffic management measures and support public realm improvements. The main existing problems were limited capacity and too many cars, with growth likely to exacerbate this problem unless action was taken, and a disjointed and patchy cycle network. Outputs and outcomes sought from the scheme included:

- effective management of travel demand within the city;
- better flows of pedestrians, cyclists and buses;
- viable choice of modes other than the private car;
- improved streetscape and urban realm.

The following points from Assembly Members were noted:

- reflecting on the proposal to deliver this scheme as two separate phases, a question was raised as to whether that was due to the grid-lock that could be caused as a result of delivery in one phase or due to the cascading of funding;

- the reality of the situation was that if Cambridge wanted to work as a city in five years time, something needed to be done differently;
- the importance of what could be achieved as a result of this scheme should not be underestimated.
- consideration had to also be given to tourism and the 4.5 million visitors that the city of Cambridge attracted each year, which in itself was an important economic driver. Tourists also needed to get in and out of Cambridge efficiently.

Mr Hughes outlined that the scheme would be delivered in two phases, not solely because of the potential grid-lock that could occur as a result of delivering it in one phase, but because the overarching scheme would be made up of a series of carefully planned projects. The scheme itself, or individual projects as part of the scheme, could be shaped to be as radical as the Joint Assembly and Executive Board wished in order to achieve the outcomes as set out above. However, it was noted that the implications of any proposals would need to be carefully considered.

In response to the Chairman, Mr Hughes agreed that a future agenda item could be envisaged to establish the Assembly's guidance on the direction and parameters for the working up of schemes to address city centre capacity.

Reserve schemes

The following schemes had been included in the prioritised City Deal transport infrastructure programme as reserve schemes:

- Bourn Airfield and Cambourne cycle and pedestrian routes (phase 2) – continuation of rolling programme;
- city centre capacity improvements (phase 2) – continuation of rolling programme;
- Airport Way Park and Ride – early delivery of scheme ahead of the remainder of the Newmarket Road bus priority;
- Western orbital – orbital bus route around the west of the city;
- A1307 bus priority and A1307 additional Park and Ride;
- Project Cambridge (Hills Road) – bus, cycle pedestrian and streetscape scheme.

The following points from Assembly Members were noted:

- in wanting to be radical and looking at the future, in terms of the A1307 and the south-east of Cambridge, the A1307 scheme currently within the reserve list should be included as a priority scheme;
- looking at the western orbital scheme, currently within the reserve list, the A428 scheme was a very important link;
- it was important to note that a considerable number of interim construction workers would be in operation at the new Papworth hospital, which would also be the case for new developments when work commenced. This could cause significant movement in the area in terms of people and activity and would only add to congestion problems if not carefully managed.

The Assembly was reminded that feasibility work and scheme options would be developed for all of the reserve schemes, alongside the other priority schemes set out in table 1 of the report, as they may still be delivered in the first five year programme or be carried over for delivery as part of the programme for years six to ten.

In terms of additional construction workers expected to be on site, Mr Hughes agreed that this was an important point and he indicated that he would be discussing this with colleagues to potentially make further use of Park and Ride facilities and consider any other ways of managing the issue.

The Chairman invited Mr Hughes to briefly outline the respective processes for scheme development, the remaining schemes, further programme development and next steps, further to which the following points were noted:

- schemes would be developed via an iterative process with significant consultation which would include a baseline survey, data gathering and options development, an options report and outline business case, a decision on the preferred option to develop, full business case development, a decision to deliver a scheme, statutory processes as applicable and construction;
- a shorter process for smaller schemes was likely to be followed;
- remaining schemes not included in the priority list fell into four broad packages as follows:
 - Hauxton Park and Ride and Hauxton to Trumpington Busway;
 - Newmarket Road bus priority;
 - Eastern Orbital bus priority between Cambridge Biomedical Campus and Cambridge Science Park;
 - a package of improvements for the proposed new town at Waterbeach.
- early scheme development could take place in years one to five of the programme;
- the programme could be modified over time but changes would require an Executive Board decision, informed by the Joint Assembly;
- the Joint Assembly and Executive Board would receive reports and updates on scheme development throughout the programme;
- next steps would consist of an Executive Board decision on 28 January 2015 followed by development of individual schemes, with more developed schemes to be brought back to the Joint Assembly and Executive Board over time.

The Chairman invited the Joint Assembly to consider any recommendations to the Executive Board in relation to the prioritised City Deal transport infrastructure programme.

A suggestion was made to remove the Bourn Airfield and Cambourne busway scheme from the prioritised list of schemes due to the fact that this would not need to be delivered in the first five years of the City Deal programme. Mr Hughes explained that it would still be advantageous to undertake technical evaluation work along the full corridor. It was therefore proposed that the Executive Board be recommended to remove this scheme from the tranche one list with no capital expenditure for delivery occurring in the first five years of the programme, but that the technical evaluation work along the corridor continued to be undertaken as originally planned. The Chairman took this to the vote and with the votes tied at 6 votes in favour and 6 votes against he used his casting vote and supported the proposal, which was therefore carried.

Discussion ensued on reserve schemes and whether it was necessary to include schemes in the programme under this title, since all schemes within the prioritised City Deal transport infrastructure programme would have the same feasibility study work carried out on them regardless of whether they were priority schemes or reserve schemes. The Joint Assembly unanimously agreed that the heading 'reserve schemes' should be removed so that none of the schemes were referred to as reserve schemes.

The Joint Assembly unanimously agreed that the capital cost of the Foxton level crossing and interchange scheme should be reflected as £0 rather than £14 million in the programme since this would be funded by an external source and not from City Deal funding.

A suggestion was put forward to change the name of the A1307 scheme from “A1307 priority / A1307 additional Park & Ride” to “A1307 corridor to include bus priority / A1307 additional Park & Ride”. The Assembly unanimously supported this proposal.

A proposal was put forward to remove the Western orbital scheme from the programme, along the same principles as the removal of the Bourn Airfield and Cambourne Busway scheme. Mr Hughes accepted that the two schemes were similar in character but explained that the Western orbital was an important scheme that was different with regard to its need and wider ramifications for other schemes going forward. With 1 vote in favour and 10 votes against, the proposal was lost.

Voting on the substantive motion and final recommendations to the Executive Board, the Joint Assembly unanimously **RECOMMENDED** the prioritised infrastructure investment programme, as set out in table 1 and explained in paragraphs 50-52 of the report, subject to the following amendments:

- (a) The removal of the Bourn Airfield / Cambourne busway scheme from the tranche one priority programme as a priority scheme, assuming that capital expenditure for delivery of this scheme does not occur in the first five years of the City Deal programme but that the technical evaluation work can still be undertaken on the full corridor.
- (b) The removal of the heading ‘reserve schemes’ so that the table includes all schemes and does not refer to any as reserve schemes.
- (c) The estimated cost of the Foxton level crossing and interchange scheme being amended from £14 million to £0, to reflect that this will be funded by an external source and not from City Deal funding.
- (d) The amendment of the title of the A1307 bus priority / A1307 additional Park & Ride scheme to read “A1307 corridor to include bus priority / A1307 additional Park & Ride”.

8. FUNDING OF CITY DEAL NON-PROJECT COSTS

The Joint Assembly considered a report which sought agreement, in principle, to the pooling of local authority resources in order to provide the necessary resources to support the delivery of the programme that could not be capitalised through individual projects.

Chris Malyon, Cambridgeshire County Council’s Chief Finance Officer, presented the report and referred Assembly Members to the table in the report which set out the current projections of receipts that would derive from New Homes Bonus funding from the three partner Councils and could be made available for pooling purposes. It was emphasised that the allocation of these sums would be subject to the ratification of the respective Councils during their forthcoming budget deliberations and approvals.

At this stage, the following costs had been identified as non-project relating activity that would require funding to ensure the successful delivery of the City Deal programme:

- central coordination;
- strategic communications;
- economic assessments/triggers.

It was reported that the detailed resource requirements for the above functions had not been fully evaluated, but a detailed set of budget proposals would be developed and set out in a future report to the Joint Assembly and Executive Board. An initial budget would be available for reporting to the next meeting of the Assembly.

Other non-project costs that were already being, and would continue to be, absorbed by the three partner Councils were noted as follows:

- democratic governance;
- legal and audit services;
- financial services;
- programme leadership.

The Joint Assembly unanimously agreed that there should be a limit or cap on any essential non-project relating expenditure incurred, and recommended a cap of £150,000.

The Joint Assembly **RECOMMENDED** to the Executive Board that:

- (a) The pooled resources of the three local authorities be used to fund those specific items set out in section 6 of the report for 2015/16.
- (b) A more detailed budget for 2015/16 be considered by the Joint Assembly at its next meeting.
- (c) The three local authorities be requested to make initial budgetary provisions within their respective medium term financial strategies in line with the contents of the report.
- (d) The Chief Finance Officer of the County Council be given delegated responsibility to incur any essential expenditure pending the agreement of a detailed budget appertaining to the functions contained within the report, subject to a cap of £150,000.
- (e) The Executive Board is asked to consider additional opportunities for the use of pooled resources at a future meeting.

9. AFFORDABLE HOUSING DELIVERY

Alex Colyer, South Cambridgeshire District Council's Executive Director (Corporate Services), provided the Joint Assembly with a presentation on affordable housing delivery.

It was noted that access to housing, especially affordable housing, was a barrier to economic growth and there was an implicit target to deliver up to 13,000 extra homes in the period to 2031. Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council were also planning to provide up to 4,000 new council houses by 2045. Both Councils were keen to deliver more, however, it was not possible for the Councils to raise new borrowing to finance this. As part of City Deal negotiations the Government was asked to remove the debt cap, however, the Government had a clear priority to reduce national debt and since all local authority borrowing counted as national debt, the cap had remained in place.

In terms of the offer within the City Deal, partners had committed to provide an additional 1,000 affordable units on rural exception sites which were in addition to the numbers included in the Local Plans. These would be built on windfall sites, predominantly or wholly within South Cambridgeshire.

The following new vehicles for local solutions to housing delivery were noted:

- Property management, consisting of:
 - a limited company structure;
 - investment in and management of stock directly;
 - acquisition of sites for development;
 - the provision of loan and equity finance from partners;
 - the transferring of land holdings in exchange for equity by partners;
 - the charging of rent to cover operational and financing costs.

- A strategic housing delivery vehicle, which would:
 - identify specific sites;
 - appraise schemes;
 - consult with local communities and residents;
 - undertaken design and planning;
 - commission building works;
 - be paid for from a charge per unit.

It was reported that 27 new homes had been delivered to the end of 2013/14, including 20 new apartments for older people, with 69 new homes due to be complete by the end of March 2014/15 on a mix of garage and small in-fill sites including the redevelopment of existing poorest standard housing. In addition, 83 further homes were due to be completed by the end of 2015.

Sites where housing had already been delivered or was planned for delivery included Linton, Swavesey, Bourn and Foxton. Assembly Members also noted that the development at Northstowe would include investment in a Joint Venture with the Homes and Community Agency to develop a proportion of affordable housing on-site.

South Cambridgeshire District Council's housing company, called Ermine Street Housing, had been established and was now operating in the private rental market. The University had also committed £30 million to in-principle investment in the City Deal Housing Joint Venture. Exception sites were already being identified by the partner Councils, with the first site confirmed as coming forward at Littlington.

The Chairman thanked Mr Colyer for the presentation and in view of the lengthy duration of the meeting it was **AGREED** that debate on this item would be referred to the next meeting of the Joint Assembly.

10. JOINT ASSEMBLY WORK PROGRAMME AND SCHEDULE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was **AGREED** that items on affordable housing delivery and skills would be included on the agenda for the next meeting of the Joint Assembly.

The Meeting ended at 7.35 p.m.
