

## **PLACE-BASED PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

**Report to:** Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board

11<sup>th</sup> October 2018

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### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 Greater Cambridge is experiencing significant growth and the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) is bringing forward a package of investment to support this. It will support the creation of 44,000 new jobs, 33,500 new homes and hundreds of training opportunities over the coming years. These changes will bring lasting benefits to the city region, Cambridgeshire and the wider UK.
- 1.2 Public engagement is a vital part of ensuring that this work is understood, supported and is ultimately successful.
- 1.3 This paper updates on proposals to refresh GCP's Communications and Engagement strategy building upon experience to date, external reviews including by The Consultation Institute, stakeholder feedback and in analysing the geography of multiple additional transport schemes. It proposes that in 2018-19 GCP transitions to a place-based engagement model.

### **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Executive Board is recommended to:
  - (a) Endorse the proposed adoption of a place based engagement strategy as outlined in the report.
  - (b) Approve the standard terms of reference for the Local Liaison Forums (LLFs) (clause 4.3 applies to any new LLFs only).

### **3.0 Officer Comments on Joint Assembly Feedback**

- 3.1 The Joint Assembly was supportive of the proposals, but stressed the need to exercise some caution to ensure the positive aspects of current practice were not lost. Members valued the input from LLF Chairs and others and hoped this would continue. This has been taken into account in the following proposals.

### **4.0 Key Issues and Considerations**

- 4.1 External quality assurance reviews of the GCP's approach to community engagement and consultation, and its use of LLFs, were undertaken in 2017. The Consultation Institute, the primary UK body implementing best practice in this area, suggested ways for improving and enhancing community involvement with a view to securing greater support and legitimacy for the GCP

programme. The reports provided a series of recommendations (**Appendix 1: GCP Communication Reviews Action Plan**).

- 4.2 As a result of changes already made, the GCP has continued to develop a proactive, accessible and broad approach to engagement. It is now regularly engaging with more people and new audiences. (**Appendix 2: GCP Quarter 1 Engagement Update**).
- 4.3 In 2018-19, the GCP enters its busiest engagement period to date with multiple planned public consultations and engagement exercises, running both simultaneously and consecutively, to support development of planning and transport infrastructure schemes.
- 4.4 In addition, looking forward, we can see new schemes entering into the public realm. More projects have the potential to increase levels of confusion and/or consultation fatigue resulting in disengagement.
- 4.5 Earlier engagement approaches frequently led to dialogue between GCP and the same people about the same issues. Whilst it is important to engage with those who want to speak to us, it can lead to limited resources being depleted with not enough left to engage with those not currently aware or engaged – the ‘silent majority’. This leads to a huge swathe of the Greater Cambridge population not engaged with the vital work of GCP and with particular demographics frequently under-represented, for example younger residents, commuters and particular social-economic grades.
- 4.6 Informal dialogue with local stakeholders shows support for engagement that meets the following objectives:
- Presents the ‘big picture’ for economic growth in Greater Cambridge and the long-term benefits of GCP investment, placing scheme-specific information in context and as part of an integrated strategy
  - Is accessible and inclusive, encouraging the sharing of a range of different views
  - Achieves efficiencies in time and resource and avoids duplicated effort
  - Retains the benefits of local knowledge as demonstrated in the LLF model
  - That elected members as the democratically accountable community representatives continue to play a central role.
- 4.7 It is proposed that existing local authority meeting structures are utilised as far as possible, for example Cambridge City Council’s Area Committees. Where these do not exist, GCP will work with local members and Parish Councils to arrange something similar.
- 4.8 Recognising that interest in the GCP programme extends beyond the geographical footprint of Greater Cambridge, every effort will be made to ensure GCP remains accessible to stakeholders from all areas.

## 5.0 Options and Emerging Recommendations

### *Place-Based Engagement*

- 5.1 A place-based approach puts the stakeholder at the heart of GCP's communications and engagement. By communicating the long-term benefits which GCP investment will bring to a particular area, we can shift the narrative away from viewing each project in isolation.
- 5.2 Regular geographically-based engagement will ensure the GCP can provide relevant and tailored updates on the broader programme, all relevant schemes for that area and respond to any specific concerns or issues in that area.
- 5.3 A calendar of place-based engagement events, with the involvement of key partner agencies as far as possible, has the potential to provide a helpful 'one-stop-shop' for local members and residents to be kept informed, engaged and involved.
- 5.4 Face-to-face engagement can take a number of different forms including formal public meetings, deliberative events or workshops, pop-up exhibitions or one-to-one surgeries, or a combination of these. This should be supplemented by segmented and focused messaging using a range of channels, including e-mail, digital and social, to build broader awareness and confidence in the GCP programme.
- 5.5 To ensure the GCP remains accessible to all, this approach should continue to be complemented by other means of stakeholder engagement including with the business community and the trial Community Sounding Group.
- 5.6 Analysing the distribution of existing and proposed GCP schemes, we recommend a North, South, East, West, Central approach. While some projects traverse the geography, most fit within geographic segments as follows:  
  
**Greater Cambridge North** – Milton Road, Histon Road, Chisholm Trail, Greenways, public transport route north (A10 towards Waterbeach).  
  
**Greater Cambridge East** – Greenways, public transport route east (towards Newmarket)  
  
**Greater Cambridge South** – Cambridge South East Transport Study, Greenways, M11 Junction 11 Park and Ride, Cambridge South Station, CBC study.  
  
**Greater Cambridge West** – Cambourne to Cambridge, Greenways, A10 Royston to Cambridge foot and cycleway.  
  
**Cambridge Central** – City Access, cycling various
- 5.7 It is proposed that meetings are held in these areas at least twice per year and at alternate venues in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, with scheme-specific engagement incorporated as appropriate.
- 5.8 The transition should be monitored and evaluated with a review of the approach after 12 months.
- 5.9 A suggested calendar of place-based events can be found at **Appendix 3: GCP engagement calendar 2018-19** and **Appendix 4** a summary of GCP's proposed communication and engagement strategy 2018-19.

### ***Local Liaison Forums***

- 5.10 The review of LLFs undertaken by The Consultation Institute in 2017 recommended that any existing LLFs should not be abandoned but reviewed at the final design stage at which point GCP should review and revise its approach for future scheme engagement.
- 5.11 A subsequent workshop with LLF Chairs and Vice Chairs identified a small number of issues which, if addressed, could significantly improve people's experience of engagement with GCP in this way. It was agreed that revising and standardising the Terms of Reference for existing LLFs would be beneficial. A revised and standardised LLF ToR for consideration can be found at **Appendix 5**.
- 5.12 One specific recommendation is that community feedback (typified currently by LLF reports) is submitted as part of decision-making reports to the Executive Board, alongside Joint Assembly feedback. This has the dual benefit of negating the requirement for multiple community meetings within a very short time period (post paper publication but prior to the Joint Assembly meeting), plus giving residents and other stakeholders longer to consider and articulate their views. It is proposed that feedback follows the Joint Assembly approach of summarising the discussion, key issues and fairly reflecting both majority and minority views and be presented to the Executive Board by the LLF Chair or nominated representative. This should not preclude, however, LLFs/community representatives providing emerging feedback to the Joint Assembly.
- 5.13 It is proposed that the role of existing LLFs, as separate entities, are reviewed at the end of the detailed design period and before the start of any construction works, with the option of maintaining separate forums or subsuming existing forums into the wider Community Forum model. Currently, this has implications for the Chisholm Trail LLF.
- 5.14 It is proposed that no new LLFs are developed at this time but to offer scheme-specific engagement as required, and at appropriate times, as part of the place-based model and for community feedback arising, as suggested, recorded for inclusion in relevant Board papers.

### **6.0 Next Steps and Milestones**

- 6.1 Further engagement with local members and existing LLF chairs/vice chairs and development of a full place-based community engagement calendar for 2018/19 from October 2018.