



FEEDBACK FROM THE JOINT ASSEMBLY MEETING
27TH FEBRUARY 2019

Report to: Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board

20th March 2019

Report From: Councillor Tim Wotherspoon, Chair, Greater Cambridge Partnership Joint Assembly

1. Overview

- 1.1. This report is to inform the Executive Board of the discussions at the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) Joint Assembly held on Wednesday 27th February 2019, which the Board may wish to take into account in its decision making.
- 1.2. Seven public questions were received. Two questions related to item seven on the agenda, the Future Investment Strategy and five questions related to item eleven, Milton Road Bus Cycling and Walking Improvements.
- 1.3. Seven reports were considered and a summary of the Joint Assembly discussion is set out below.

2. Budget Setting and Quarterly Progress Report

- 2.1 The Joint Assembly had a wide ranging discussion on this item and supported the proposed variations to the previously agreed budget. Members also endorsed plans to explore the feasibility of investing in a rolling fund to support the development of a new electricity substation. However, this was on the understanding that it was clear it would be a revolving fund and the money would ultimately be recovered from developers. It was considered essential to be clear about the principles underlying the proposal and manage expectations accordingly. The Joint Assembly was reminded that it was in GCP's interest to address local grid constraints as one of the key factors that would drive increased demand was the electrification of transport.
- 2.2 In discussing this report members asked about progress with city cycling solutions; raised a number of points of detail about the digital wayfinding devices; and urged officers to urgently look for ways to progress discussions about integrated ticketing. Members also discussed the planned closure of Mill Road Bridge and intimated this presented a golden opportunity for officers to gauge the impact of the closure of this main route into the City and secure valuable data. It was suggested that officers should carefully plan ways of measuring the impact, not just using sensors to measure traffic flows, but also look at other factors such as park and ride patronage. A further suggestion was that steps should be taken to measure the impact on local businesses.

- 2.3 It was noted that in 2019/20 the constituent councils planned to reduce the percentage of New Homes Bonus allocated to GCP projects from 40% to 30%. Discussions about this and other match funding were planned.
- 2.4 The Joint Assembly asked for a report on the planning system to be presented to a future meeting and it was suggested this could form part of the Quarterly Progress Report. Officers were asked to provide an explanation of the process for considering GCP projects and outline what steps were taken to ensure there was proper joined up thinking. One member suggested that planning conditions had the ability to either enhance or frustrate the delivery of strategic projects and stressed it was of critical importance that guidance given to the planning and highway authorities reflected, as far as possible, the strategic thinking behind GCP projects.

3. GCP Future Investment Strategy

- 3.1 The Joint Assembly welcomed the Future Investment Strategy, with one member suggesting it was good to have a report that looked forward to the end of the of the City Deal and brought into the picture the second Gateway Review in 2024.
- 3.2 The Joint Assembly spoke at length about the suggested criteria for prioritising new schemes. A number of comments and additional suggestions were raised, details of which are summarised below:
- The cost of public transport should be reflected in the proposed criteria. The aim should not only be to improve public transport but also make sure it was affordable for everyone.
 - One of the proposed criteria was how a scheme interacted with other schemes (both GCP and non-GCP), with specific reference made to alignment with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority schemes. It was suggested that other strategic schemes should be listed, such as the CaMkOx Arc and East West Rail.
 - The criteria would benefit by including reference to timescales, ideally some measure of achievability of timescales against the impact suggested.
 - It would also be helpful to incorporate risks associated with match and Section 106 funding; what the impact would be if funding were not forthcoming; what the alternatives might be; and what were the potential impacts on other services. It was considered important to be clear where assumptions were being made that might impact on other services.
 - With reference to the 'scheme deliverable' criteria, it was suggested that this covered two very different factors. The first was affordability; 'do we have enough money'. The second was practicality/risk analysis. There was a case for these being kept separate; acknowledging there may be a project that was really low risk in technical terms but where GCP simply don't have the money. That was very different to a project which was technically extremely risky.
 - When setting high level strategic priorities it was useful to be able to identify the things you were unlikely to do; clarifying the logical inverse of the strategic priority.
 - A further addition to the criteria was 'enabling housing'. It was important to remember that the aim of the City Deal wasn't to pay for transport for transport's sake. It was about transport as an enabler, particularly in relation to housing.
 - Another important factor was utilising resources to secure future funding for the generation of revenue that enabled the recycling of funds for other GCP purposes;

something that enabled the GCP to afford more out of the money it had. An example of such a scheme was the energy substation proposal.

- While not necessarily a criteria, it was suggested that it was important to keep in mind skilled people would be required to complete projects.

4. A10 Foxton Level Crossing Bypass and Parking at Foxton Rail Station

- 4.1 The views of the Joint Assembly on this matter were mixed and in many cases, mutually incompatible.
- 4.2 Some members supported the removal of Foxton Level Crossing, recognising the benefits of removing the problems caused by the down time of the rail barrier and the likelihood that this would increase given the predicted increase in traffic volumes, additional planned trains and the potential for East-West Rail. It was suggested that the proposed bridge could enhance the experience of those who were willing to get on a bike and cycle to and from work and cycle for leisure. Another factor raised by those in favour of the proposal was the risks associated with delaying emergency vehicles transporting critically ill patients to Addenbrookes or the relocated Royal Papworth Hospital. Others were of the opinion that as the proposal would reduce journey time it would result in more cars heading into the City Centre, which was at odds with the GCP's aim to reduce journeys into Cambridge. It was also pointed out that by encouraging more cars to come into Cambridge we would increase pressure on park and ride facilities closer to the City Centre. There was also concern that removing the level crossing in isolation would have limited impact on the local traffic situation for little gain across the wider network.
- 4.3 The Joint Assembly recognised the case for developing a Park and Rail Transport Hub at Foxton, but it was clear this would have a significant impact on Foxton given the large number of spaces required. The need for engagement with the local community to gauge potential support for the proposal was therefore critical. It was suggested that the proposals as outlined placed too much emphasis on car parking. It should include more detail on other potential features such as information on provision for cycling and improved bus services.
- 4.4 There was also a difference in opinion about the interdependence of the two projects. Some members did not support the suggestion that neither scheme was reliant on the other being delivered and could be progressed independently.

5. Cambridge Biomedical Campus Transport Needs Review

- 5.1 The Joint Assembly strongly welcomed the report, commenting that it was really useful to bring together relevant information to highlight the severity of problems in one part of the City, which was happening now, not in 5 or 10 years' time. The predicted growth in highway trips was a matter for serious concern. A member had analysed the figures and drew the Joint Assembly's attention to an informative comparative analysis of traffic volumes at the Biomedical Campus with Stansted Airport. It was suggested there was a scale and reality about the potential problem which made it clear urgent action was needed. The report represented a welcome first step.
- 5.2 Members broadly welcomed the proposed interventions and emerging recommendations, however, it was suggested that they should be prioritised. It was also suggested that it would be useful to see the calculated impacts of these interventions, individually and

collectively. Otherwise there was a danger that decision makers would make subjective decisions. It was important to have data on journeys, which was considered critical as the impact of some of the interventions would be dependent on journey origin and purpose. It was suggested that the report underplayed the importance of cycling and did not refer to the potential impact of upgrading cycle routes. It was pointed out that many people visiting the site had appointments and reliability was key. For many public transport choices were limited or non-existent which meant a car journey was the only option.

- 5.3 It was considered important to acknowledge the links between the recently launched Choices for Better Journeys and the extent to which the planned intervention might contribute towards plans to reduce car journeys in the city by 25%. It was also pointed out that the only demand management tool incorporated into the modelling here was parking control and of course there were other potential demand management options currently under discussion.
- 5.4 It was suggested that there was a need for clearer accountabilities, setting out what the Biomedical Campus itself should be doing/was responsible for; albeit with support from others. If the Biomedical Campus was not clear on what it was being asked to deliver and/or fund there was a danger things would not get done and be seen as someone else's problem. On a related matter it was suggested that similar clarity was needed on governance and accountability for the delivery of Cambridge South Station.
- 5.5 There was a debate about the extent to which the Biomedical Campus and University Hospitals Trust needed to invest more in this. Many small scale interventions could be quickly implemented. It was suggested there was a need for more basic measures such as cycle friendly roads on and to the campus and better signage on and around the site. The drop off zone at the hospital was at the moment a "nightmare" and in need of improvement. There was also a need for better links with park and ride, especially given limited staff parking. More should be done to encourage patients and visitors to travel to the campus by public transport, although there was some opposition to plans to change hospital visiting times to avoid peak times as this negatively impacted patients. It was noted that information on the Addenbrookes website did not encourage the use of public transport.
- 5.6 Speaking as a future occupier of premises on the campus, Assembly member Dr Andy Williams confirmed that the Review had been developed with key stakeholders and the level of engagement had been extremely positive. He confirmed the partners took this issue very seriously and were investing where they could. He pointed out that most of the people on campus were from the hospital and any financial contribution from them diverted funds from the NHS. He acknowledged that although there was effective engagement with partners and an excellent travel plan was in place, the short term problems were huge and there was a need for more engagement with local residents. The report demonstrated the GCP and Biomedical Campus partners were already working together. If they were able to engage with residents in a similar way this would be an advantage, particularly for the short term initiatives.

6.0 The Chisholm Trail

- 6.1 The Joint Assembly welcomed the report; noted progress to date on Phase One; and emerging proposals for Phase Two.
- 6.2 Members asked and received responses to detailed questions about progress. This included reference to the Newmarket Road section of the route where there had been a delay arising from the redesign of the underpass at Barnwell Lakes. The original plan to move the underpass into place using self-propelled transporters was no longer possible as less space was available due to lizards being found on site.

7.0 Milton Road: Bus, Cycling and Walking Improvements – Final Design

- 7.1 The Joint Assembly noted that there had been a meeting of the Local Liaison Forum (LLF) on 18th February 2019 and received a presentation from the LLF Chair, Councillor Jocelyne Scutt, summarising the outcome of the meeting. It was noted that the following resolutions had been approved:
- (i) The LLF request that a biodiversity strategy for Milton Road be put to the Assembly/Board.
 - (ii) The LLF seeks assurances that any substantial changes to the scheme will be presented to the LLF to review and scrutinise prior to presentation to the GCP Assembly.
- 7.2 The Joint Assembly welcomed the report and endorsed the proposed recommendations. In addition members welcomed the effective liaison with the LLF, which had resulted in an excellent scheme and acknowledged the change in tone of feedback on the project, which hadn't always been as harmonious as it now was. While it was acknowledged that it was not quite the end of the design process, it was considered appropriate to thank resident's groups and others for their input and congratulate the officers who had worked hard to find a scheme that worked to everyone's benefit.
- 7.3 The Joint Assembly noted an issue with the possible retention of trees in the middle of roundabouts. It was suggested that this was potentially dangerous as it impacted on visibility. One member asked when finalising landscaping trees on roundabouts were kept very low if not taken away; and suggested there was an inconsistent approach to this across the city. In response it was noted that in many cases trees were maintained as a safety measure as poor visibility kept speed down.
- 7.4 With reference to the incorporation of public art into the scheme, the Joint Assembly was supportive of this in principle and it was noted that officers would continue to hold discussions with local residents about this. In response to a question from the LLF Chair, officers confirmed they would be happy to facilitate local Member discussions on residents' parking across both Milton Road and Histon Road.

8.0 Rural Travel Hubs

- 8.1 The Joint Assembly received a written statement from Oakington and Westwick Parish Council expressing support for a Rural Travel Hub without parking. A further statement from County Councillor Peter Hudson was also received supporting the statement from Oakington and Westwick.

- 8.2 There were a range of views expressed about this item; with little support expressed for the development of the Oakington and Sawston Rural Travel Hubs, while there was general support for the planned consultation on the Whittlesford Parkway Station Masterplan.
- 8.3 Concern was expressed that the outcome of the Rural Travel Hubs consultation had been to set village against village. It was unfortunate that this had happened as it was never the intention.
- 8.4 Some members questioned how Rural Travel Hubs could be a priority suggesting that GCP should be focussing on projects where it could make a step change. It was pointed out that places that were crying out for travel hubs, like Cambourne, should be seen as a much higher priority. The time to look at Rural Travel Hubs was once an extended bus network was in place and settled. To do this earlier risked ending up with hubs being in the wrong place.