

Chairman's report of the Greater Cambridge City Deal Joint Assembly meeting held on 7 October 2015

1. General Report

1(a) Questions from members of the public

We heard the following questions from members of the public (others are reported under the relevant agenda item):

HEIKE SOWA asked for the City Deal to fund a feasibility study to establish the prospects for rail in the A1307 corridor between Cambridge and Haverhill. She felt that the re-instatement of the railway could provide a long-term and high quality permanent solution for commuting from an expanding Haverhill population and employment centres in the city as well as Science Parks to its SE. Graham Hughes said that the work requested was in hand and would be part of his report on the A1307 corridor scheduled for next year. The evaluation would examine the catchment potential of railway provision, but officers currently considered that it may not immediately make for a viable scheme.

EDWARD LEIGH suggested that the City Deal transport programme should be postponed to enable a change of strategy including extended public consultation, alternative governance, enhanced capacity and data, and more research and trials. His concern was that the current consultations in parallel would not make for a holistic solution to congestion. Graham Hughes did not accept that parallel exercises were inconsistent with a holistic solution. He said that there was strong evidence supporting the need for traffic management measures and infrastructure improvements. The City Deal programme encompassed both; doing only one of them without the other would simply not solve the problems in Cambridge. The programme included a large amount of consultation and remained joined up. He did not feel that there was reason to doubt the capacity to deliver the first tranche of the City Deal funded programme. The Assembly did not agree to request a postponement.

Further comment or discussion from the Board is invited as desired.

1(b) Assembly future programme of work

The Assembly endorsed the proposal from the Board to co-own the investigation of the leading models of traffic management to address congestion in the city, which the Assembly had resolved to conduct at its previous meeting.

2. Recommendations on reports to the Board

2(a) Histon Road bus priority walking and cycling measures: approval to consult

2(b) Milton Road bus priority, walking and cycling measures: approval to consult

We heard the following questions relating to these items from members of the public:

MATTHEW DANISH asked what further steps could be taken to prevent illegal parking in the cycle lane planned for Histon Road, which was dangerous for cyclists. Graham Hughes said that enforcement did take place but could not be continuous everywhere that there were restrictions although efforts could be focused on areas of repeated occurrence. Double or

single yellow lines could be placed in cycle lanes to make restrictions clear and these were successful with most people.

ROXANNE DE BEAUX on behalf of the Cambridge Cycling Campaign argued for ways of reducing through-traffic along Histon Road and Milton Road such that bus lanes would not be required, but cycling, walking and bus objectives could still be met. She called for the Assembly to push back the plans to ensure a more comprehensive proposal, failing which to encourage the 'do maximum option' to ensure cycling facilities were not compromised. She asked if the Campaign could meet with the consultants to discuss a number of ways the proposal could be improved. Graham Hughes replied that a 'call for evidence' was planned to evaluate means of reducing congestion in Cambridge; however officers were clear that these were not alternatives to the improvement of radial routes and that a two-pronged approach was needed. He said that options were being presented which sought to balance the needs of all users; although improvement in cycling provision was one of the objectives, they also needed to address the needs of travellers for whom cycling was not a feasible choice. He described the options for Milton Road and Histon Road as indicative at this early stage. They had been defined after a series of stakeholder meetings in which the Cycling Campaign had been involved and further comments, hybrid suggestions and other options were welcome through the consultation.

Through our own discussion on these schemes the following were covered:

- An amendment was agreed to recommendation (b) of both schemes to capture the commitment that ideas other than those offered in the consultation would be properly considered and this is incorporated in the wording below.
- From a discussion on the impact of loss of trees and vegetation, we resolved to invite to a future Assembly meeting an expert or consultant on landscaping in urban transport infrastructure schemes to orientate and inform members of what was possible in situations such as the potential changes to Milton Road and Histon Road by way of greening.
- Officers agreed that further clarity needed to be provided in the consultation documentation, including the meaning of dotted lines on maps relating to potential bus routes, definitions of 'advisory', 'mandatory' and 'segregated' cycleways, and that the focus of the projects was cycling as well as bus use.

Subject to the above, we agreed that the options defined were appropriate to release for consultation. The Joint Assembly's recommendations for each item are set out below:

Histon Road:

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

- (a) Notes the findings from the initial assessment and technical study.
- (b) Approves public consultation on the illustrative measures as set out in the report and as shown on the accompanying plans, *and encourages all other ideas to be properly considered.*
- (c) Agrees to receive a report on consultation in late spring of 2016 on a preferred set of measures.

Milton Road:

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

- (a) Notes the findings from the initial assessment and technical study.
- (b) Approves public consultation on the illustrative measures as set out in the report and as shown on the accompanying plans, including consideration of further walking and cycling improvements at Mitcham's Corner, *and encourages all other ideas to be properly considered.*
- (c) Supports the consideration of changes to the Science Park-Cowley Road junction following the completion of a wider A10 corridor transport study.
- (d) Agrees to receive a report on consultation in mid-2016 on a preferred set of measures.

2(c) Smarter Cambridgeshire update and investment proposal

We welcomed this report. In discussion of it, members requested that such reports in future would specify what the requested funding would actually be spent on, noting that in this case it was for the procurement of necessary hardware and software.

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

- (a) Notes the progress of the Smarter Cambridgeshire workstream to date.
- (b) Agrees, in principle, to support the investment of up to £280,000 to implement a Smart Technology Platform subject to a more detailed investment proposal in early 2016.

2(d) 2015/16 Quarter 2 financial monitoring report

A request was made for future reporting to include the additional, locally-sourced capital funding (such as developer contributions) that had been committed in principle to supplement the government City Deal grant; both what had been received and what could be forecast. Chris Malyon said that this information would be included in the comprehensive financial report in the New Year as part of the 2016/17 budget.

The Joint Assembly **RECOMMENDED** that the Executive Board notes the report.

2(e) Six-monthly report on housing

We noted with concern the changed environment for local authority social housing provision, together with the revised, more cautious approach to the establishment of the Housing Development Agency, which was still proceeding. Our discussion highlighted a need for more information in future such reports, which was agreed by officers.

The Joint Assembly **RECOMMENDED** that the Executive Board notes the report.

2(f) Greater Cambridge City Deal Forward Plan

Members requested that future editions of the plan highlighted changes from the previous.

The Joint Assembly **NOTED** the City Deal forward plan and its schedule of meetings.