

Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board

Minutes of the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) Executive Board
Thursday 7 March 2024
4:00 p.m. – 6:05 p.m.

Present:

Members of the GCP Executive Board:

Cllr Elisa Meschini (Chairperson)	Cambridgeshire County Council
Cllr Brian Milnes (Vice-Chairperson)	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Cllr Mike Davey	Cambridge City Council
Andy Williams	Business Representative

Members of the GCP Joint Assembly in attendance:

Cllr Tim Bick (Chairperson)	Cambridge City Council
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Attending at the discretion of the Chairperson

Mayor Dr Nik Johnson	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
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Officers:

Peter Blake	Transport Director (GCP)
Daniel Clarke	Head of Innovation and Technology (GCP)
Thomas Fitzpatrick	Programme Manager (GCP)
Tom Kelly	Service Director of Finance and Procurement (CCC)
Niamh Matthews	Assistant Director of Strategy and Programme (GCP)
Nick Mills	Democratic Services Officer (CCC)
Lynne Miles	Director of City Access (GCP)
Rachel Stopard	Chief Executive (GCP)
Isobel Wade	Assistant Director of Inclusive and Sustainable Growth (GCP)
Wilma Wilkie	Governance and Relationship Manager (GCP)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Diarmuid O'Brien.

2. Declarations of Interest

Andy Williams declared a general non-statutory disclosable interest, as a consultant to businesses on the Cambridge Biomedical Campus.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the previous Executive Board meeting, held on 4 January 2024, were agreed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairperson.

4. Membership

The Executive Board received a report from the Chief Executive which contained a nomination from the University of Cambridge for Executive Board membership.

The Executive Board resolved unanimously to:

Confirm the appointment of Diarmuid O'Brien as a member of the GCP Executive Board, representing the University of Cambridge.

5. Public Questions

The Chairperson informed the Executive Board that four public questions had been accepted and that the questions would be taken at the start of the relevant agenda item, with details of the questions and a summary of the responses provided in Appendix A of the minutes.

It was noted that one question related to agenda Item 8 (Capturing Wider Benefits of the City Deal), and three questions related to agenda item 9 (City Access Programme Update).

6. Feedback from the Joint Assembly

The Executive Board received a report from the Chairperson of the GCP Joint Assembly, Councillor Tim Bick, which summarised the discussions from the Joint Assembly meeting held on 15 February 2024.

7. Quarterly Progress Report and Budget Setting

The Assistant Director of Strategy and Programme presented a report to the Executive Board which provided an update on progress across the GCP's whole programme, and which set out the GCP's budget strategy and allocations for 2024/25, including a request to align the budget timings with those of the accountable body. The report also clarified the delegated authority for approving Traffic Regulation Orders where objections had been received and provided an update on the Autonomous Vehicle project.

Noting that the Joint Assembly had not objected to any of the proposals in the report, the Chairperson of the Joint Assembly drew attention to concerns that had been expressed about the general financial situation and the ability of the GCP to commit to further spending commitments in the future. The Joint Assembly had also emphasised the importance of ensuring a permanent legacy to the success of the GCP's skills programme.

While discussing the report, the Executive Board:

- Emphasised the importance of clarifying the current financial situation of the GCP, arguing that it had been exacerbated by the City Deal funding not being linked to inflation. Members were informed that over the coming months, scenarios would be analysed to identify any potential additional funding and its impacts or risks on the GCP's programme. It was clarified that the County Council, as the accountable body, would only seek additional temporary borrowing to provide a cashflow in a timelier manner than Section 106 funding would be received, rather than additional prudential borrowing. Further clarity would be sought with partners on the levels of Section 106 funding contributions that were expected to be received.
- Confirmed that the budget was based on the Future Investment Strategy of September 2024, rather than 2023 as stated in Section 6.1 of the report, and suggested that the prioritisation of the projects in the GCP's programme had been prudently and effectively carried out.
- Highlighted the importance of ensuring continuity of funding for Form the Future from alternative sources once its contract with the GCP came to an end, and it was agreed that a report would be presented to the next Executive Board meeting detailing the responsibilities and roles of other bodies, including the Combined Authority, in the skills sector.
- Expressed concern about the robustness of the autonomous vehicle (AV) supply chain, which had led to a reduction in the scope of the GCP's AV project, although Members paid tribute to officers for redesigning the project at a lower cost.
- Welcomed the additional funding that had been provided as part of the government's spring budget, which would allow the GCP to restart and progress the Cambridge South East Transport Scheme, alongside further development of the Cambridge Biomedical Campus. Members paid tribute to the effectiveness of talks that had been held with representatives of the government but emphasised

the importance of continued collaboration between local authorities and other bodies, including the GCP, to obtain further funding and support.

- Acknowledged the government's plans for growth in the Greater Cambridge region, as set out in The Case for Cambridge, but expressed concern that they did not include sufficient investment for infrastructure to support the wider economic and housing development that was proposed. Members also drew attention to the proposal to establish a Cambridge Delivery Group and highlighted the importance of developing an effective working relationship and ensuring both transparency and public involvement with the group.
- Welcomed the joint statement from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Environment Agency, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council on measures to address water scarcity issues in the area, noting that it would enable progress with the Cambourne to Cambridge project.

The Executive Board resolved unanimously to:

- (a) Agree the multi-year budget strategy as outlined in Section 14, including the detailed GCP budgets for 2024/25 and the request to align the GCP's budget timings with those of the Accountable Body (Cambridgeshire County Council). The budget strategy will continue to be updated annually;
- (b) Note the delegation of authority to sign off Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) where objections have been received to the Director of Transport in consultation with the local County Councillor; and
- (c) Note the change to the delivery of the Autonomous Vehicle project and agree to proceed with the necessary procurements needed to support project delivery.

8. Capturing Wider Benefits of the City Deal

One public question was received from David Stoughton (on behalf of Living Streets Cambridge). The question and a summary of the response are provided at Appendix A of the minutes.

The Assistant Director of Inclusive and Sustainable Growth presented a report to the Executive Board on progress to date in achieving the City Deal's objectives, which set out its potential wider benefits and identified opportunities to augment or enhance these through a framework of institutional, human, natural, physical and social capitals.

Welcoming additional comments that had been included in the report about addressing inequalities, the Chairperson of the Joint Assembly highlighted issues that had been raised related to the connectivity of Greenways to railway stations, and paid tribute to the institutional benefits of the GCP, including stronger inter-authority relationships and a wider understanding of associated issues.

While discussing the report, the Executive Board:

- Highlighted the importance of highways, cycleways and footways having high quality surfaces, arguing that active travellers would otherwise be less likely to use them. Members also drew attention to the need for improved connections and wayfinding when the Greenways routes reached the city of Cambridge.
- Paid tribute to the improved working relationship between the GCP and the Combined Authority, and it was clarified that SQW would carry out interviews with the Combined Authority about the relationship as part of the Gateway Review process.
- Emphasised the complicated and complex nature of the GCP's work and suggested that there would be a significant amount of learning to be taken from the organisation's experiences.

The Executive Board resolved unanimously to:

- (a) Note progress to date in supporting the achievement of the City Deal's objectives;
- (b) Note the work undertaken to understand the potential wider benefits of the City Deal and identify opportunities to augment or enhance these; and
- (c) Consider the proposal to explore further the areas outlined at paragraphs 6.10-6.18, focusing on securing additional benefits from the current GCP programme.

9. City Access Programme Update

Three public questions were received from Sarah Hughes (on behalf of Cambridgeshire Sustainable Travel Alliance), Mary Wheeler (on behalf of Windsor Road Residents' Association Committee), and Josh Grantham (on behalf of Camcycle). The questions and a summary of the responses are provided at Appendix A of the minutes.

The Director of City Access presented a report to the Executive Board which provided an update on the City Access programme and the wider transport strategy from the County Council and the Combined Authority, including bus reform and the ongoing development of a Greater Cambridge Transport Strategy. The report also included an update on the Road Network Hierarchy Review, proposed a set of refreshed City Access objectives, and identified opportunities for further quick wins and demonstrator projects. Members were also informed that since the report had been published, an indicative timetable had been published for the development of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

Noting that the Joint Assembly had supported the updates to the City Access objectives, the Chairperson of the Joint Assembly expressed concern about the proposed role of the GCP in supporting the County Council's development of the new

Greater Cambridge Transport Strategy, arguing that the GCP was more inclusive of other local authorities and stakeholders. Noting that the County Council also had a wider remit than the Greater Cambridge region, he suggested that suggest that GCP funding or resources only be used on terms agreed by the Executive Board.

While discussing the report, the Executive Board:

- Drew attention to how responsibilities had changed since the last Greater Cambridge Transport Strategy was published in 2013, with the Combined Authority now acting as the transport authority instead of the County Council, as referenced in the government's Case for Cambridge. Members were informed that the Combined Authority would commission the County Council to develop the new strategy, although it was observed that the County Council did not have business or university representatives, unlike the GCP and the Combined Authority.
- Emphasised the importance of the different tiers of local authorities, including the GCP and the Combined Authority, working together, along with the government to ensure the emerging Local Plan, the Combined Authority's Local Transport and Connectivity Plan, and the new Greater Cambridge Transport Strategy were aligned with one another.
- Suggested it would be beneficial to have greater clarity on the various roles and responsibilities of local authorities in Greater Cambridge regarding highways, transport and infrastructure, arguing that the GCP should avoid relinquishing any responsibilities, although it was acknowledged that this was scheduled to occur when the City Deal came to an end in 2030. It was clarified that any decisions related to spending City Deal resources would continue to be made by the Executive Board until this point.

The following amendment was proposed by Andy Willams and agreed unanimously (additions in bold):

- (c) Note the response to the consultation on the revised road network hierarchy and agree that proposals require further consideration, including ensuring that bus journey times and reliability are protected. Any revised proposals would be developed through the Greater Cambridge Transport Strategy led by the Cambridgeshire County Council in partnership with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, the GCP, the City of Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, **and central Government**;

The following amendment was proposed by Councillor Davey and agreed unanimously (additions in bold):

- (c) Note the response to the consultation on the revised road network hierarchy and agree that proposals require further consideration, including ensuring that bus journey times and reliability are protected. Any revised proposals would be developed through the Greater Cambridge Transport Strategy led by the Cambridgeshire County Council in partnership with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, the GCP, the City of Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, and central Government, **subject to a detailed project plan**

for the development of the Greater Cambridge Transport Strategy coming to the June meeting;

The Executive Board resolved unanimously to:

- (a) Note the updates on bus reform and wider transport strategy from the County Council and the Combined Authority;
- (b) Note the update on the City Access programme;
- (c) Note the response to the consultation on the revised road network hierarchy and agree that proposals require further consideration, including ensuring that bus journey times and reliability are protected. Any revised proposals would be developed through the Greater Cambridge Transport Strategy led by the Cambridgeshire County Council in partnership with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, the GCP, the City of Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, and central Government, subject to a detailed project plan for the development of the Greater Cambridge Transport Strategy coming to the June meeting;
- (d) Agree the updated objectives for the City Access programme set out in paragraph 11.6; and
- (e) Agree that officers should bring forward proposals for further quick win or demonstrator projects in the city that will help increase the reliability of bus journey times, demonstrate the benefits of people-focused spaces, support economic vibrancy, and maximise the impact of the wider GCP investment programme.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The Executive Board noted that the next scheduled meeting was due be held on Thursday 27 June 2024.

It was also noted that the meetings scheduled for 26 September 2024 and 12 December 2024 would be replaced by one meeting, with a tentative date announced for 7 November 2024.

Chairperson
27 June 2024

Greater Cambridge Partnership Executive Board – 7 March 2024
Appendix A – Public Questions Listed by Agenda Item

From	Question	Response
<p style="text-align: center;">David Stoughton Chair Living Streets Cambridge</p>	<p>Agenda Item 8 - Capturing Wider Benefits of the City Deal</p> <p>Living Streets notes the evidence of the GCP's focus on 'themes and opportunities', such as 'behaviour change' (item 7, 10.24) and improving walking and cycling, air quality, natural capital and partnerships (item 8, 6.11).</p> <p>The GCP Board is asked to approve a City Access revised focus on making it 'safe and attractive to walk and cycle for everyday journeys' (item 9, 11.6), with quick wins that include 'safety improvements', 'micro-interventions' and 'working with communities on demonstrator projects' (12.4, p102).</p> <p>We welcome the greater status given to everyday walking - a hitherto neglected mode of local transport - and remind GCP of the positive economic, health and climate impact of the large numbers of people walking daily to work, to shops, to educational institutions. Almost all of us walk or wheel, most of us outside the city centre, so we need safe local streets and journeys.</p> <p>Living Streets has documented in surveys and through our website (camstreets4people.org) some of challenges everyday walkers and wheelers face: footway obstructions, cracked pavements, flooding, unsafe crossing points. What we need now is action by GCP to invest in tackling some of these difficult issues. In some cases it could</p>	<p>Thank you for the feedback on the papers.</p> <p>The paper suggests exploring what more could be done to encourage walking and wheeling, for all of the positive reasons set out in the question.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to do more to support walking, particularly on key routes, through quick wins as well as broader interventions. We look forward to working with Living Streets and other community groups to identify suitable projects. These would then be taken through the usual approvals processes with the aim of starting to deliver changes within the next 18 months.</p>

	<p>provide funding so the county council can act, as is currently being proposed with the ETROs for pavement parking in the city.</p> <p>So in moving forward we need advice and guidance to enable community groups to propose well-founded initiatives, secure in the knowledge that they will meet established criteria. Otherwise work and time will be wasted, communities will be alienated and the commitment to promote walking will fail. Remember, walkers and wheelers will remain thin on the ground if footways remain too unsafe to use. Will the GCP commit to action and investment to make these much-needed changes?</p>	
<p>Sarah Hughes on behalf of Cambs Sustainable Travel Alliance Campaign Officer</p>	<p>Agenda Item 9 - City Access Programme Update</p> <p>The papers for this meeting state that work on any revised proposals for the road network hierarchy review would be led by the Cambridgeshire County Council, rather than the GCP. This is despite the Joint Assembly wanting “to remain actively involved in this work and be given the opportunity to input to the same extent it would have if the work was being progressed by the GCP” (Agenda item 6, Feedback from the 15 February Joint Assembly Meeting) and the GCP having a vastly larger budget for such projects than the County Council.</p> <p>In order to deliver for their residents on their stated objectives, we believe that Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council should retain their voices on transport, including the network hierarchy review.</p> <p>Cambridge City’s Corporate Plan states its number one priority is to lead Cambridge’s response to the climate</p>	<p>Thank you for your question and feedback.</p> <p>In December, the County Council’s Highways and Transport Committee agreed to develop a Greater Cambridge Transport Strategy. This will update and supersede the adopted Transport Strategy for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, supporting and in step with the emerging Local Plan. The road network hierarchy review rightly forms part of that work but we work closely with all partners across our local governance environment.</p> <p>It was always the case that road hierarchy proposals developed by GCP would ultimately be fed through to the County Council as Highways Authority to take the final decision – we said as much in the consultation material in 2022 – so it is right that the project is taken forward alongside that wider strategic work.</p>

	<p>change and biodiversity emergencies; its second is to tackle poverty and inequality and help people in the greatest need. We do not see how it will achieve these objectives without taking action on transport poverty and emissions.</p> <p>South Cambridgeshire District Council's business plan states it will 'put the heart in South Cambridgeshire' by 'being green to its core' and 'growing local businesses'. We cannot discern how it can meet these aims without addressing transport issues.</p> <p>At February's Joint Assembly meeting, Cllr Thornburrow asked where people using the Greenways will go once they've reached the city; Cllr Shailer asked about making space for buses – two issues that make cheaper, greener transport less attractive or impossible to embrace. These are specific examples of problems you can address through a network hierarchy review.</p> <p>Will the GCP vote to retain the road network hierarchy project so its constituent Councils are better equipped to translate their commendable policies into effective action?</p>	
<p>Mary Wheater on behalf of Windsor Road Residents' Association Committee</p>	<p>Agenda Item 9 - City Access Programme Update - (c), objectives of the review of the Road Network Hierarchy</p> <p>A public consultation was held between 23rd May and 18th July 2022 by the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership on a proposed new road hierarchy. The subsequent decision not to proceed with congestion charging necessitates review of this road network hierarchy. The consultation of July 2022, of which some details are given in paras 7.17-7.19, will therefore be inapplicable. (As a passing comment, a link to the published report would be appreciated.)</p>	<p>Thank you for your question and feedback.</p> <p>The City Access update paper sets out reasons why further work is required on proposals for the road network hierarchy, which includes some of the points you raise.</p> <p>In December, the County Council's Highways and Transport Committee agreed to develop a Greater Cambridge Transport</p>

	<p>In many cases, several possible positions and/or methods of implementation would be equally effective in ensuring that the traffic is appropriate for the position of a road or street in the hierarchy, but the local view may favour a particular one.</p> <p>What plans has the GCP for further consultation of residents, whatever the position of their home in the hierarchy? This should include views on the revised hierarchy itself, and also give weight to local views on the details of siting and design wherever physical measures supporting road changes are proposed.</p>	<p>Strategy. This will update and supersede the adopted Transport Strategy for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire, supporting and in step with the emerging Local Plan. The road network hierarchy review rightly forms part of that work. The timescale and next steps for that work are not yet defined but will align to Local Plan delivery.</p> <p>Both consultation documents and the consultation report are on the GCP's website here: https://www.greatercambridge.org.uk/sustainable-transport-programme/city-access-programme/road-network-hierarchy/road-network-hierarchy-consultation - I will arrange for this link to be shared with you after the meeting.</p>
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