

# County Council – Minutes

Please note the meeting can be viewed on YouTube at the following link:  
[Cambridgeshire County Council, Full Council Meeting - 13 December 2022](#)

Date: 13 December 2022

Time: 10:30 a.m. – 15:20 p.m.

Councillors present:

S Ferguson (Chair)

S Kindersley (Vice-Chair)

D Ambrose Smith

M Atkins

H Batchelor

A Beckett

C Boden

A Bradnam

A Bulat

S Bywater

D Connor

S Corney

A Costello

S Count

P Coutts

H Cox Condon

S Criswell

C Dauntton

L Dupré

J French

I Gardener

N Gay

B Goodliffe

N Gough

J Gowing

R Hathorn

A Hay

M Howell

R Howitt

S Hoy

J King

M King

P McDonald

M McGuire

E Meschini

B Milnes

E Murphy

L Nethsingha

C Rae

T Sanderson

D Schumann

J Schumann

N Shailer

A Sharp

P Slatter

M Smith

S Taylor

F Thompson

S Tierney

S van de Ven

A Whelan

G Wilson

## Apologies for Absence:

Apologies were received from Councillors G Bird, K Billington, D Dew, R Fuller, M Goldsack, S King, K Prentice and K Reynolds.

## 99. Minutes – 18th October 2022 and Motions Log

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

The motions log was noted.

## 100. Chair's Announcements

The Chair made a number of announcements, as set out in Appendix A.

Group Leaders and members expressed their sorrow at the passing of Councillor Derek Giles.

## 101. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reported that the Interim Monitoring Officer had exercised her discretion to grant a dispensation to all elected members of Cambridgeshire County Council taking part in the debate on Minute 104: Independent Remuneration Panel – Review of Members' Allowances.

Councillor Bulat also had an interest in Minute 108 c) as a consultant for Migration Work – Consultancy for communities which worked across the spectrum of migration: with refugees or other migrants, with a focus on human rights. The Chair also reported that the Interim Monitoring Officer had exercised her discretion to grant a dispensation to Councillor Bulat, allowing her to take part in the debate on.

## 102. Public Question Time

The Chair reported that one question had been received from a member of the public, as set out at Appendix B.

## 103. Petitions

The Chair reported that no petitions had been received from members of the public.

## 104. Independent Remuneration Panel – Review of Members' Allowances

It was moved by the Chair of Council, Councillor Ferguson, seconded by the Vice-Chair of Council, Councillor Kindersley, and agreed unanimously by show of hands to formally receive the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel on Members' Allowances.

The recommendations as set out in the covering report were moved by the Chair of Council, Councillor Ferguson and seconded by the Vice-Chair of Council, Councillor Kindersley.

Following discussion, on being put to the vote, it was resolved by a majority to:

- (a) accept the Independent Remuneration Panel's recommendations as they stand.
- (b) confirm the date of the 1 April 2022 on which the recommendations would come into effect.
- (c) authorise the Interim Monitoring Officer to revise the existing scheme to reflect the outcome of the Council's deliberations and to take any consequential action arising therefrom.

*[Voting Pattern: 31 Liberal Democrats, Labour and Independents in favour; and 20 Conservatives against.]*

#### 105. Audit and Accounts Committee Annual Report 2021-22

The Chair of the Audit and Accounts Committee, Councillor Wilson, moved receipt of the Audit and Accounts Committee Annual Report 2021-22.

The Council reviewed and commented upon the report.

#### 106. Pension Fund Committee Annual Report 2021-22

The Chair of the Pension Fund Committee, Councillor Whelan, moved receipt of the Pension Fund Committee Annual Report 2021-22.

The Council noted the content of the report.

#### 107. Local Pension Fund Board Annual Report 2021-22

The Chair of Council moved receipt of the Local Pension Fund Board Annual Report 2021-22.

The Council noted the content of the report.

#### 108. Motions Submitted Under Council Procedure 10

Five motions had been submitted under Council Procedure Rule 10.

##### a) Motion from Councillor Simon King

In Councillor King's absence, the Chair withdrew the motion with the consent of the meeting.

##### b) Motion from Councillor Alison Whelan

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Whelan and seconded by Councillor Rae:

Cambridgeshire County Council Divestment Motion

Cambridgeshire County Council notes:

- that the climate crisis is one of the greatest threats at the current time.
- that the Cambridgeshire Local Government Pension Fund (CLGPS) has a duty to ensure that it acts in the best interests of its members, pensioners, employers and local council tax-payers to deliver pensions at an affordable cost.
- that Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) has a duty to ensure it acts in the best interest of residents, employees and local council tax-payers.

- CLGPS has around £87m invested in predominantly fossil fuel companies almost entirely in passive funds[1].
- the United Nations Paris 2015 Agreement commits our governments to keep the global temperature increase to under 2 degrees and aim for 1.5 degrees. Carbon budgets produced by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, United Nations and the International Energy Agency show that preventing two further degrees of warming relies on not burning 60-80% of all proven fossil fuels. [58% for oil, 59% for gas and 89% for coal [4]].
- that the demand for oil and gas will continue at a greatly reduced level up to and beyond 2050 to ensure to meet demand from such areas as:
  - Plastic and chemical production where use as feedstock has a greatly reduced carbon footprint as it does not involve combustion, and even significant improvements in recycling will not meet demand.
  - Aviation fuel, as there is no realistic alternative for the foreseeable future.
  - To manufacture steel and concrete as alternatives are developed.
- that the oil price, and hence the profitability of fossil fuel companies, is dominated by demand. We have seen the impact of the significant fall in demand causing oil wholesale prices to crash to negative values in April 2020 followed by increases to far higher prices in 2021 as demand surges.
- that the majority of fossil fuels are not produced by corporate entities in which the Pension Fund can invest, but by state owned companies not subject to the same regulations and calls for divestment.
- former Bank of England Governor Mark Carney warned in December 2019 that fossil fuel investments risk becoming “stranded assets” (i.e., worthless) as investors exit the sector. “A question for every company, every financial institution, every asset manager, pension fund or insurer – what’s your plan?”
- that fossil fuel investments have been out-performed by renewables.[2]
- that, in just over a decade, the Danish energy company Ørsted has shifted from a predominantly coal-based energy business to being a world leader in renewables particularly offshore wind, demonstrating a kind of just transition model for other such companies.
- that Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) criteria are important in considering all investment opportunities and that these are interlinked reflecting a company’s relationship with its employees, suppliers, shareholders and the communities in which the company operates.
- the Pension fund has recently reviewed its Investment Strategy in conjunction with a survey of members and contributing employers and included “A commitment is stated for the Fund’s investments to have net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 (or earlier). Over the next 12 months (by December 2022) the Fund will develop a credible plan with milestone dates to achieve this, in conjunction with the existing

work scheduled by Mercer to draft the Fund's first report that meets the requirements of the Task-Force on Carbon-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD)"

This Council commits to:

- call upon the Cambridgeshire Local Government Pension Scheme to Divest from fossil fuels in a holistic manner in accordance with current understanding of the need for this.
- call on the CLGPS to produce a timeline for the reduction in carbon emissions and produce annual progress updates with an aim of reaching net-carbon zero earlier than the Paris Accord.
- calling on the CLGPS and CCC to act in an environmentally positive manner by developing investment policies which:
  - a) Support individuals and communities through strong ESG principles.
  - b) Engage with companies and funds to ensure that they are actively pursuing environmentally positive policies including, but not limited to, eliminating carbon emissions.
  - c) Where such engagement is ineffective to fully divest from such investments as rapidly as possible.
  - d) Set out an approach to quantify and address climate change and environmental risks adversely affecting the Pension Fund investments.
  - e) Actively seek to invest in companies that will act in an environmentally positive manner and minimise climate risk and where possible, and in local climate solutions that will benefit fund members, their families and the wider community.

#### Footnotes

[1] 2021 figures taken from the report Divesting to protect our pensions and the planet – An analysis of local government investments in coal, oil and gas. Available [here](#)

[2] Energy Investing: Exploring Risk and Return in the Capital Markets, Joint Report by the International Energy Agency and the Centre for Climate Finance & Investment, Paris. Available [here](#)

[3] As determined by the most recent Carbon Underground 200 list.

[4] Unextractable fossil fuels in a 1.5 °C world, Dan Welsby, James Price, Steve Pye & Paul Ekins, Nature, vol. 597, p, 230, September 2021 available [here](#)

Following discussion under Part 4 Rules of Procedure, Part 4.1 – Council Procedure Rules, paragraph 15.5 of the Constitution, more than fourteen members requested a recorded vote on this matter.

After further discussion, on being put to the vote, the motion was carried by a majority, as set out in the recorded vote at Appendix C.

### c) Motion from Councillor Alex Bulat

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Bulat and seconded by Councillor Sanderson:

Motion on local-level support for asylum seekers and migrants.

The Council notes that:

- people move and have always moved. As long as conflict, persecution and economic hardship exists in the world, there will always be people who will seek compassion and a new life in a country other than the one they happened to be born in. Migrants have made a huge economic, cultural and social contribution to the communities they join in the UK.
- councils across the UK play a key role in supporting asylum seekers, including Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC), as well as migrant residents more broadly - from providing direct services to signposting to specialist organisations and agencies.
- there are significant pressures on local authority budgets. The cross-party Local Government Association's (LGA) Asylum, Refugee and Migration Task Group has consistently raised with central Government the ongoing pressures, limited or lack of sustainable funding to support migrants and asylum seekers, and the need for better and more efficient engagement with local government, recognising the unequal local-level funding distribution.

The Council welcomes that Cambridgeshire County Council:

- promotes the principles of dignity and respect for all migrants and asylum seekers.
- has had a compassionate and welcoming response to asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, including our Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) in care.

The Council expresses concern that:

- there is worrying hostility towards migrants and asylum seekers, recently fuelled by the Rwanda plans and the further erosion of migrants' rights through the Nationality and Borders Act 2022.
- the UK Home Office "Hostile Environment" policy implemented through the Immigration Act 2014, which has been strengthened by subsequent Acts, most recently the Nationality and Borders Act 2022, has blurred the lines between service provision and immigration enforcement. This can lead to asylum seekers, refugees and migrants avoiding accessing the services they are entitled to or asking for support, due to mistrust in or fear of institutions.
- the No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) which some non-UK residents are subject to, makes it difficult or impossible for local authorities to prevent destitution. This is particularly concerning in current cost of living crisis.

- the Home Office processing of asylum (and immigration applications more broadly) is inefficient and lengthy. The longer it takes until, for instance, a refugee is granted the right to work (which they do not have while in the process of claiming asylum), the more pressures local authorities will feel. The right to work is essential to independence, integration and community cohesion.

The Council is recommended to:

- commit to the development of a local, county-wide 'Place of Safety' pledge, which supports the right of all to seek services, advice, support and representation without fear of adverse consequences.
- refer the development of the pledge to the Communities, Social Mobility and Inclusion Committee, asking it to ensure the pledge is succinct, legal, and available in a form (or forms) that are suitable for both councillors, local MPs and partner organisations.
- encourage the Council's partners not to participate in maintaining a 'hostile environment' by providing data to the Home Office that may be used for detention and deportation purposes, (except where this is a legal obligation).
- join (and encourage our partners to join), the NRPF network (<https://www.nrpfnetwork.org.uk/>), a national network of local councils and experts safeguarding the welfare of destitute families,
- work collaboratively with partners to ensure that all residents, irrespective of their immigration status, can access appropriate voluntary and/or statutory support to meet their basic needs for healthcare, housing, and support during the cost-of-living crisis.
- work collaboratively with the ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) Local Planning Partnerships recently established by the Combined Authority. Both North and South Partnerships are chaired by Cambridgeshire County Councillors, and the Partnerships bring together providers and experts with significant expertise on supporting asylum seekers with English language learning.
- work closely with the LGA to share best practice on asylum seeker resettlement support, increase coordination in the East of England and put pressure on central Government to allocate resources especially in the most disadvantaged areas.
- join the City of Sanctuary Local Authority Network - Building a culture of hospitality for people seeking sanctuary.
- request officers explore the development of a 'City of Sanctuary' type charter for use at countywide level, providing a short assessment to a future meeting of the Communities, Social Mobility and Inclusion Committee
- establish a member-role of 'Migrant Champion'. This symbolically important role would be the public face and embodiment of the County Council's approach to and campaigning on migrant, asylum seeker and refugee issues rather than a contact point for these groups in the community or a link to any particular council service.

The Council is asking the Chief Executive to:

- write to the Home Secretary to highlight the challenges faced by asylum seekers and refugees in our county and call for safe and legal routes for asylum (rather than the inefficient and expensive Rwanda plan) as well as adequate funding for local authorities to be able to support resettled communities in Cambridgeshire.

In response to a query from a member regarding the lack of recourse to public funds from the County Council for non-UK residents to prevent destitution, the Chair confirmed that a briefing note would be circulated to all members.

Following discussion under Part 4 Rules of Procedure, Part 4.1 – Council Procedure Rules, paragraph 15.5 of the Constitution, more than fourteen members requested a recorded vote on this matter.

After further discussion, on being put to the vote, the motion was carried by a majority, as set out in the recorded vote at Appendix D.

#### d) Motion from Councillor Steve Count

The following motion was proposed by Councillor Count and seconded by Councillor J King:

Core purpose. To independently scrutinise the fairness of the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) sustainable travel zone consultation for its appropriate use in any County Council debate.

This Council notes that:

- the GCP was instructed by its board, containing three voting members, one Liberal Democrat and two Labour, to undertake a consultation on its package of public transport improvement plans including a congestion charging regime.
- the GCP plan to use the outcome to consider presenting a business case for road use charging to the County Council.
- the County Council is the only body legally allowed to make that decision.
- during the consultation period, members of the public have raised concerns regarding the appropriateness of the consultation. These have included but are not limited to:
  - the consultation is biased in its wording.
  - the concentration is primarily in the GCP area, equal effort and promotion has not taken place countywide.
- the public purse was used to produce promotional material, concentrating on improvements, with little to no coverage of costs.
- whilst the Liberal Democrat and Labour controlled GCP may well have performed a consultation it is satisfied with, this does not automatically mean it is broad and balanced enough for County Council purposes.



This Council therefore asks the Chief Executive to engage an appropriate external qualified independent body to test against all good established consulting requirements. Also including but not limited to:

- examining the consultation material and fair ability to respond.
- taking a view on the appropriateness of a geographically varied approach to a consultation, which requires a countywide decision.
- analysing the content, cost and location of any GCP produced material, both physical and on social media.

This Council recognises the value of this proposal, to either add validity and confidence to progress towards a decision on congestion charging or to inform County Councillors of areas that need consideration or risk making decisions with the potential to be legally challenged.

Following discussion, on being put to the vote the motion was lost.

*[Voting pattern: 21 Conservatives in favour; 30 Liberal Democrats, Labour and Independents against.]*

#### e) Motion from Councillor Mark Goldsack

In the absence of Councillor Goldsack, the following motion was proposed by Councillor Sharp and seconded by Councillor Count.

Core purpose. To provide a visual and data comparison of impacts on road space available and other contributory issues for car users, comparing pre covid and consultation periods.

The Council notes that:

- the Liberal Democrat and Labour controlled Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) has launched a congestion charge consultation.
- the GCP also has delegated powers as the highways authority.
- during the consultation residents have raised concerns about the sheer quantum of roadworks, pop up cycleways, increased pedestrianisation, removal of official scooter zones and temporary redirection of the guided bus way and closure of cycle lanes.
- there has also been a catastrophic failure of bus services, for various reasons during that period.
- concerns have been raised that these unusual occurrences will have artificially raised the appearance and occurrence of congestion during the consultation period. This Council therefore recommends in order to give County Councillors confidence in the consultation or provide evidence that congestion may have been unusually high during that period, thereby affecting consultation responses to:

- ask the Chief Executive to ask officers to compare the consultation period with the same period, pre covid to allay or confirm those suspicions.
- draw up maps with:
  - associated data of space available for private car use.
  - locations of roadworks.
  - temporary and permanent road, cycle lane and bus lane closures.
- confirm any decision to restrict zones for scooter usage during the consultation.
- provide information on all reductions and non-delivery of scheduled bus services, during the consultation period.
- ask officers to analyse data generated and determine what impact there was, if any, on congestion during the consultation period.

[The Monitoring Officer advises that the motion relates to a matter for the Council to determine and that the motion is therefore in order as drafted]

Following discussion, on being put to the vote the motion was lost.

*[Voting pattern: 19 Conservatives in favour; 28 Liberal Democrats, Labour and Independents against.]*

## 109. Questions

### (a) Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Council Procedure Rule 9.1)

Six questions were submitted under Council Procedure Rule 9.1 of the Council's Constitution, as attached at Appendix E.

### (b) Written Questions (Council Procedure Rule 9.2)

No questions were submitted under Council Procedure Rule 9.2 of the Council's Constitution.

## 110. Exclusion of Press and Public

It was moved by the Chair, seconded by the Vice-Chair and resolved unanimously that the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the agenda contained exempt information under Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and that it would not be in the public interest for this information to be disclosed (information relating to any individual.)

# 111. Report of the Staffing and Appeals Committee - Appointment of Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer

It was moved by the Vice-Chair of the Staffing and Appeals Committee, Councillor Shailer, and seconded by the Chair of the Staffing and Appeals Committee, Councillor Murphy, that the recommendation from the Staffing and Appeals Committee, as set out in the confidential report circulated separately, be approved.

It was resolved unanimously to:

Approve the appointment of Emma Duncan as the Monitoring Officer and Michael, Hundson as the Section 151 Officer, as recommended by Staffing and Appeals Committee.

Chair

7<sup>th</sup> February 2022

# County Council – 13th December 2022

## Chair's Announcements

### People

#### County Councillor Derek Giles

It is with regret that the Chair reports the recent death of County Councillor Derek Giles.

Councillor Giles served on the County Council since 2013, representing the St Neots Eaton Socon & Eynesbury Division, and from 2017 St Neots The Eatons Division, as an Independent Councillor. Councillor Giles was elected Chair of Cambridgeshire County Council in May 2021 but regrettably had to resign from the role due to ill health. The Chair of the Council, together with many colleagues, attended his funeral service, which took place at St Mary's Church, Eaton Socon on 5 December.

The Chair was personally very sad to hear the news of the passing of his friend, Councillor Derek Giles, who was his predecessor as the Chair of the County Council, a role he might never have been elevated to if not for the awful illness that ultimately claimed his life. Derek served the people of Eaton Socon with distinction as Town, District and County Councillor for decades. The people of St Neots and Huntingdonshire are forever indebted to his service.

The Council's thoughts are with his family, friends and colleagues at this very sad time.

#### Charlotte Black, Executive Director of People's Services

Charlotte Black has announced plans to leave both her current interim role as Executive Director of People Services and substantive role of Director of Adults and Safeguarding across both Councils in mid-January.

She is currently leading on work to develop options for both Councils to consider for the future leadership arrangements for Adults, Children, Education and Commissioning, which will be ready for consultation by mid-January.

#### Interim Executive Director of Children's Services

Elaine Redding has been engaged as interim Executive Director of Children's Services across both Cambridgeshire County and Peterborough City Councils, to take forward the strategic leadership of Children's Social Care and Education.

Elaine brings extensive national experience, across a range of senior roles in organisations such as the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, as well as a background of leadership and improvement roles in children's services in a number of local authorities, including county councils, unitary and London boroughs. She is also a specialist in Alternative Delivery Models having co-authored the recently published Department for Education independent research report involving the development of capacity and diversity of children's social care services.

Charlotte Black will take the lead on developing new options for the leadership of People Services across both Cambridgeshire and Peterborough councils - after feedback on the recruitment process for shared senior roles had determined Members in both councils to reconsider the way ahead. Charlotte also continues to have oversight of both Commissioning and Adults Services.

## Assistant Director of IT and Digital Services

The Council's Assistant Director of IT and Digital Services, Sam Smith, addressed the annual conference for the Linked Organisation of Local Authorities (LOLA) in Christchurch, New Zealand in late November, in her role as a joint assistant director for two local authorities and as the immediate past president of SOCITM – the national society for information technology managers. Sam has also been announced by Computer Weekly as one of the top 50 most influential women in the UK Tech Industry.

## Awards

### National Voice Award for Participation

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Young Inspectors group, made up of young people with a Social Care involvement, have been recognised for their exceptional supervised contact centres project with the National Voice Award for Participation from Coram Voice!

Young Inspectors said it was 'amazing' to have won the award, and they are 'elated'.

### National Health and Safety Award

The Council's National Citizens Service Team has received a national Health and Safety Award from the National Citizen Service Trust and Pharos Response.

Cambridgeshire County Council are the first winners of this prestigious award and it is in recognition of the National Citizens Service Team's outstanding health & safety practice throughout 2022. In particular the team was noted for its culture, standards and commitment to health and safety practice.

The team are part of the Youth in Communities Service and encourages young people to be active citizens and make a meaningful contribution to their communities.

## Messages

### Citizenship Ceremonies

The Chair is delighted to announce that the Council is now holding the Citizenship Ceremonies here at New Shire Hall. The Ceremonies take place on a Monday afternoon, and together with his Vice Chair, he had the great pleasure of welcoming new British Citizens into the wonderful County of Cambridgeshire.

### Veterans Day Ceremony at Madingley American Cemetery

The Chair was honoured to attend the Veterans Day Ceremony at Madingley Cemetery on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council. He laid a wreath to honour the memory of the service men and woman who fought and gave their life for our freedom.

## First Remembrance Service at New Shire Hall led by Councillor Kindersley

The Vice-Chair, Councillor Sebastian Kindersley led the Remembrance Service at New Shire Hall on 11th November. It was the first service the Council had been able to hold at its headquarters. Councillor Kindersley was joined by Deputy Lieutenant, Mr Daryl Brown MBE DL, Lord Lieutenant Cadet, Cdt Corporal Paris Bufton, Cdt RSM Sophie Moule and the wonderful children of Alconbury Church of England Primary School. Councillor Kindersley was also joined by ex-service men and woman, the public and fellow colleagues of Cambridgeshire County Council.

## White Ribbon Flag raising at New Shire Hall

The Chair was honoured to be asked to raise the White Ribbon Flag at New Shire Hall on 25th November. He was joined by fellow White Ribbon Ambassadors. White Ribbon Day is an opportunity to bring people together – in person or online - to raise awareness to prevent men's violence against women

## St Andrew's Day flag raising at New Shire Hall

On 30th November, the Chair was privileged to be asked to raise the St Andrew's Day flag at New Shire Hall. The raising of the flag at New Shire Hall recognises the employees and members with Scottish heritage and lineage.

## King's College Carol Service

It was the Chair's pleasure to be invited to read a lesson at the annual King's College Carol Service. He was also invited to be a part of the procession prior to the Carol Service. It was a fantastic event, enjoyed by many.

## Cambridgeshire Lieutenancy Carol Service

It was a privilege for the Chair to attend the Community Carol Service held at St John's the Baptist Church in Peterborough on Friday 9th December hosted by Mrs Julie Spence OBE QPM, HM Lord-Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire. This was a satellite event of HRH Princess of Wales Together at Christmas Carol Service being held at Westminster Abbey later this month and was a fantastic way to thank the local volunteer community for all they have done in Cambridgeshire.

## Public Question Time

### Question to the Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee – Councillor Becket from Ms Kelly Whitley

My twin teenagers are in further education in Cambridge, but our village bus in Bassingbourn doesn't get them to the train station - it doesn't get them there early enough so that they can actually get to college, and they both work at McDonalds as well, but again the buses are just terrible, so they can't get there through any bus. And the road from Bassingbourn to get to the train station is incredibly dangerous, I don't have a car, I had to get them a bike each to get them to the train station which are just breaking constantly, I've had to rely on strangers from the village who've been coming to help fix them, and I've been having to get them taxis for them all the time which is something I can't afford. I tried all through the summer holidays, contacting the MPs, contacting all the colleges, different bus services, and I've just got nowhere. There's no way for them to actually get to their further education. One of their friends has actually already dropped out of college because of this, and I just don't know what further I can do with affording taxis and things, and they'll just have to miss lots of days.

### Response from Councillor Becket:

Thank you, Kelly. And firstly, thank you so much for taking the time to submit your question, and for asking it today to all of us at the County Council.

I really sympathise with the issues your children face on a daily basis. So many of our young rely on public transport and active travel, and the Joint Administration are committed to improving both.

We can't simply afford for people to buy cars to make up for failing public transport or active travel. Driving isn't an option for everyone, as you've so rightly pointed out. At the same time, we know that safe cycle routes are needed in so many places. Bassingbourn to Royston features in the Cambridgeshire Active Travel Strategy, and in that context will be in the next iteration of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (the LCWIP). The challenge here isn't that we wouldn't like to do something, as ever it's achieving the funding for it. Another complicating factor is that the A505 sits just over the border in Hertfordshire. It is encouraging to note that there is so much collaboration happening across that border for improvements to local travel, and the examples of your children's daily commute to get to post-16 education in Cambridge underlines why that is so important.

Turning to the important matter of bus services for your children, I agree that Bassingbourn is not very well served, various efforts are now under way to try and improve that. The Combined Authority has recently approved its draft Bus Strategy to be consulted upon over the next six weeks, and providing a basis for funding bids to government, for the Combined Authority's business planning. The strategy consists of a new way of running services, in the first place, including franchising, in order to give more control over routes and schedules. The Greater Cambridge Partnership is currently out to consultation on sustainable travel zones, which would see an additional £50M invested in buses, the biggest shake up of buses outside London since services were deregulated in 1985.

It goes without saying that better buses will benefit everyone, providing access to education, training and employment, as well as the ability to reach all the things that people need in their daily lives. Despite the importance of bus travel, services have been in decline for years, and it's vital

this is addressed if we are to achieve our ambitions for social equality, accessibility, climate change and public health. I hope that you will add your voice to these consultations, and I'm sure that your local councillor, sitting next to me, will try to help you further, in your issues. Thank you.

### Supplementary question from Ms Kelly Whitley:

On a Wednesday there's a bus that do the same route, all day long, so I don't know why they can't take that bus away and then with that money do an extra hour early in the morning, each day of the week. I don't understand why there's that bus that they run on a Wednesday, when it does the same route as the other one, so there's two buses on a Wednesday. Why can't they get rid of that bus and use that day's wage to pay somebody to do an hour extra in the morning? That will be like five hours extra, not a whole day. I don't understand. And you know I did try contacting Transport, and I have to say the response I got was fairly rude, and was told what do I think adults do? But they're not adults, they're in further education. My boys are fairly well driven, so it's ok, but I know a lot of children who are not, school isn't easy for them. One of their friends has already dropped out, I can see a lot of children aren't going to be doing further education. Like it's an absolute nightmare for them to get there, even though I got them bikes, they're absolutely useless, they're just breaking all the time. I was told £200 is not a lot for a bike, I got them from Halfords, they're just absolutely rubbish. I had to get a loan to get both of them. It's just terrible and it's such an added pressure on everyday life, in feeling you know, that I can't get my kids to school properly.

### Response from Councillor Beckett:

Kelly, personally I'm so sorry to hear all of that, I think all of us can empathise with those issues, and know what it can be like to try and get children to school when you don't have the money to be able to afford the things you need. Bikes going wrong, it's so painful to hear that, and the issues that you face. What I will say is that we are out to consultation, and the Combined Authority is consulting on bus routes at the moment so please, please, please help us by filling out as many of those consultations as possible. I know your local councillor is very much willing to help you work on filling those out, if you need to. We need to hear all of those issues from across the county so that we can design a bus network that does work for all of us.

It is vital that all of our students, all of our parents, everyone that isn't able to afford a car still has the means to getting around, and that's something that we're committed to as the administration. So thank you, and thank you for coming again and asking these questions.



## Voting Record for Item 10(b) (Minute 108.b))

COUNCILLOR	Party	For	Against	Abstain	Absent / No Vote	COUNCILLOR	Party	For	Against	Abstain	Absent / No Vote
AMBROSE-SMITH D	Con		X			HAY A	Con			X	
ATKINS M	Lib Dem	X				HOWELL M	Con			X	
BATCHELOR H	Lib Dem	X				HOWITT R	Lab	X			
BECKETT A	Lib Dem	X				HOY S	Con		X		
BILLINGTON K	Con				X	KINDERSLEY S	Lib Dem	X			
BIRD G	Lab				X	KING JONAS	Con			X	
BODEN C	Con		X			KING MARIA	Lib Dem	X			
BRADNAM A	Lib Dem	X				KING SIMON	Con				X
BULAT A	Lab	X				MCDONALD P	Lib Dem	X			
BYWATER S	Con			X		MCGUIRE M	Con			X	
CONNOR D	Con		X			MESCHINI E	Lab	X			
CORNEY S	Con			X		MILNES B	Lib Dem	X			
COSTELLO A	Con			X		MURPHY E	Lib Dem	X			
COUNT S	Con		X			NETHSINGHA L	Lib Dem	X			
COUTTS P	Lib Dem	X				PRENTICE K	Con				X
COX CONDON H	Lab	X				RAE C	Lab	X			
CRISWELL S J	Con		X			REYNOLDS K	Con				X
DAUNTON C	Lib Dem	X				SANDERSON T	Ind	X			
DEW D	Con				X	SCHUMANN DAN	Con			X	
DUPRE L	Lib Dem	X				SCHUMANN JOSH	Con				X
FERGUSON S	Ind	X				SHAILER N	Lab	X			
FRENCH J	Con		X			SHARP A	Con		X		
FULLER R	Con				X	SLATTER P	Lib Dem	X			
GARDENER I	Con		X			SMITH M	Con			X	
GAY N	Lab	X				TAYLOR S	Ind	X			
						THOMPSON F	Lib Dem	X			
GOLDSACK M	Con				X	TIERNEY S	Con		X		
GOODLIFFE B	Lab	X				VAN DE VEN S	Lib Dem	X			
GOUGH N	Lib Dem	X				WHELAN A	Lib Dem	X			
GOWING J	Con		X			WILSON G	Lib Dem	X			
HATHORN R	Lib Dem	X				Total		17	3	6	4
Total		14	8	3	5	Complete Total		31	11	9	9

## Voting Record for Item 10(c) (Minute 108.c))

COUNCILLOR	Party	For	Against	Abstain	Absent / No Vote	COUNCILLOR	Party	For	Against	Abstain	Absent / No Vote
AMBROSE-SMITH D	Con		X			HAY A	Con		X		
ATKINS M	Lib Dem	X				HOWELL M	Con			X	
BATCHELOR H	Lib Dem	X				HOWITT R	Lab	X			
BECKETT A	Lib Dem	X				HOY S	Con		X		
BILLINGTON K	Con				X	KINDERSLEY S	Lib Dem	X			
BIRD G	Lab				X	KING JONAS	Con		X		
BODEN C	Con		X			KING MARIA	Lib Dem	X			
BRADNAM A	Lib Dem	X				KING SIMON	Con				X
BULAT A	Lab	X				MCDONALD P	Lib Dem	X			
BYWATER S	Con		X			MCGUIRE M	Con		X		
CONNOR D	Con		X			MESCHINI E	Lab	X			
CORNEY S	Con		X			MILNES B	Lib Dem	X			
COSTELLO A	Con		X			MURPHY E	Lib Dem	X			
COUNT S	Con		X			NETHSINGHA L	Lib Dem	X			
COUTTS P	Lib Dem	X				PRENTICE K	Con				X
COX CONDON H	Lab	X				RAE C	Lab	X			
CRISWELL S J	Con		X			REYNOLDS K	Con				X
DAUNTON C	Lib Dem	X				SANDERSON T	Ind	X			
DEW D	Con				X	SCHUMANN DAN	Con		X		
DUPRE L	Lib Dem	X				SCHUMANN JOSH	Con		X		
FERGUSON S	Ind	X				SHAILER N	Lab	X			
FRENCH J	Con		X			SHARP A	Con		X		
FULLER R	Con				X	SLATTER P	Lib Dem	X			
GARDENER I	Con		X			SMITH M	Con		X		
GAY N	Lab	X				TAYLOR S	Ind	X			
						THOMPSON F	Lib Dem	X			
GOLDSACK M	Con				X	TIERNEY S	Con		X		
GOODLIFFE B	Lab	X				VAN DE VEN S	Lib Dem	X			
GOUGH N	Lib Dem	X				WHELAN A	Lib Dem	X			
GOWING J	Con		X			WILSON G	Lib Dem	X			
HATHORN R	Lib Dem	X				Total		17	9	1	3
Total		14	11	0	5	Complete Total		31	20	1	8

## Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Questions under Council Procedure Rule 9.1

### Questions to the Council's Appointee on the Combined Authority Board – Councillor Nethsingha

#### Question from Councillor Hay:

I would like to ask Councillor Nethsingha as our representative on the CPCA Board some questions about the bus review, which has been ongoing since 2018. On the CPCA O&S we were led to believe this would take 6-12 months. We're now four years on. When can we expect completion and what are the expected outcomes?

We are also now in a situation where over the last two years we've lost out on available funding from the Department for Transport, whereas other authorities have been successful in their bids. How can I be confident that future bids by the authority will not result in failure yet again?

I would like to refer to some comments made by Councillor Nethsingha, in an earlier discussion, regarding congestion charge, she said we are listening to people in the consultation, and nor is it a foregone conclusion. How come then that a transport officer from the Combined Authority told me that the next bid to go in to central government would be predicated on the congestion charge coming into force?

I'm sorry I'm going to have to cut this down because it's going to take longer than two minutes.

We all know that Stagecoach withdrew nine routes, and I'm thankful that the Combined Authority has replaced the majority of them. However, it is not like for like, some of the start and finish times do not tie up with school start and finish times, and this has led the county councillor responsible for eligible pupils to provide transport to have to lay on extra taxis and mini buses. What is the Combined Authority doing to address this? This also effects many more school children who are not on Free School Meals who now find they are regularly late for school. There is also the issue of costs. I have been made aware of a seventeen year old who catches the bus daily for the sixth form college in Ely-

#### Response from Councillor Nethsingha:

Thank you. Having not had notice of this question, and not wanting to give inaccurate information: in relation to the Bus Review and when it's likely to be complete, I'm actually going to see if we can get a briefing note written from the CA to all members on that, rather than me just answer off the top of my head, which I don't think would be helpful, because I do think it's important for all members of this council to know what the processes and timetables are for consultation on bus improvements at the Combined Authority.

I'm also not going to comment on comments that might have been made by a transport officer about what might or might not be predicated on a congestion charge, I don't think it would be appropriate for me to comment on that here.

I will however say that I am extremely well aware of the issues that have resulted from the changes to the bus routes as a result of Stagecoach withdrawing various routes. I think that I was

relieved that the Combined Authority were able to step in, and relieved and grateful, and I think it's important to emphasise this, that many of the other bus companies in our area were willing to step up, and I'm particularly grateful that one bus company in particular were willing to take on new staff, in order to be able to extend the route, and actually many of them have been trying to take on new staff in order to provide the extra routes that they have taken on as a result of Stagecoach withdrawal. But I am also very aware that those routes have left some gaps, and it's particularly difficult for children who had previously relied on particular timetables to get to school, and those timetables are not available, or the buses are unreliable. I think probably everyone of us in this room is probably deeply frustrated by the situation with the unreliability of-

#### Supplementary question from Councillor Hay:

There is an issue of cost, I've been made aware of seventeen year old who catches the bus daily for sixth form college in Ely under Stagecoach. The cost was £39 per month, with a student discount, on multi-trip card, that also allowed her to travel to Newmarket for a part-time job. This month the same trip costs £113, 200% more, a cost the mother simply cannot afford. Again, what if anything, is the Combined Authority doing to address such issues?

#### Response from Councillor Nethsingha:

So yes, I also understand and am aware of the concerns that there are, because the issue for a number of people is that because the new routes are provided by different providers, the Stagecoach discount that you can get cheap tickets that cover large numbers of routes, those are no longer available, because we don't have cross-ticketing, and I think that is something many of us are again very aware of, and something the Combined Authority would love to be able to do more about. We've heard time and again at this meeting about the frustrations with the current deregulation of bus services and how difficult it is for Councils and indeed the Combined Authority to step in and fix all these problems. I really hope that sometime in the coming year we will be able to find some solutions to fix the cross ticketing and particularly to support young people in the 16-25 age range who desperately need to be able to get to work and education, and for whom there are not the same, there is no provision for that because they are not entitled to free transport in the same way that children are to school. So, these are all issues we are aware of. If Councillor Hay has any easy solutions, I'd be really keen to hear them. Thank you.

#### Question from Councillor Sharp:

I apologise for not giving Councillor Nethsingha notice. It was really around- I've got in my division, I have 15 students who are out of catchment and catch a public bus, and they're late every day at the moment, obviously since the changeover.

And I notice the Bus Strategy is going out for public consultation, obvious that's long term, great, hopefully we can get that going, but I'm just thinking about what we can do short term to avoid those students being late for college every day. I apologise for not giving you notice of that.

#### Response from Councillor Nethsingha:

That's quite alright, you don't need to give me notice about that one, because I know about that issue, and I have exactly the same issue in my own division, there are large numbers of students in my division who also travel out of Cambridge in order to go to school out of catchment, and who are in exactly the same position with bus services with slightly different times, and particularly unreliability because the new provider could not immediately provide additional drivers in order to be able to make the service run. I think we are all very aware of the concerns around this and just

how important reliable bus services are, so we are doing everything we possibly can. If members were willing and able to put pressure on their Members of Parliament to try and improve the way in which we can interact with our bus operators, that would be really helpful. Thank you.

#### Question from Councillor Criswell:

I also have a question on behalf of a resident. I understand that as part of the Bus Review, a mapping exercise has been completed showing the way forward, and on that map are areas marked with what I can only describe as blue blobs, mainly in rural areas. We are told that it is envisaged that these areas, that have a service such as the Ting Dial A Ride service, which is currently operating in the Huntingdonshire area, will run, but my problem is we are told there will be twelve buses, but on this map each blue area which will have this service shows a bus within the blue blob, but where there does not appear to be a bus shown, in the Chatteris blue blob, what are the people of Chatteris supposed to do to get in to or out of the town for jobs, medical appointments, etc? I'd also like to know how much these Dial A Ride routes will cost the CPCA, as the Huntingdonshire model currently has a gross net annual cost of £479,500, so we're not sure where this money is going to come from, Chairman?

#### Response from Councillor Nethsingha:

I think I will try and get those covered by the CPCA accurately, rather than me answer them off the top of my head. So, I'll try and make sure answers to that are covered by the briefing note.

#### Question from Councillor Count:

I hope that because my question is one of opinion, that you may be able to answer this one Councillor Nethsingha. As you know, you discussed the Bus Strategy quite recently at the CPCA. And whilst I welcome this sort of review of how we're going to operate buses, I want to focus on when a bus requires subsidy and value for money. I can't actually find anything in there, and maybe I'm missing the section, but at what point do you say "actually we can't afford that", at what sort of figure, is it £1 a journey, £2 a journey, is it the price of a taxi maybe, it would be cheaper to get a taxi? So, I was just wondering if there had been any discussions at the CPCA about at what level subsidy starts, and at what level subsidy becomes too expensive to move forward with.

#### Response from Councillor Nethsingha:

I'm nearly always quite happy to give an opinion, I think on the question – so there has been a certain amount of discussion at the Combined Authority on subsidy, and I have a sneaking suspicion I may guess on which particular service the supplementary question may come. I think it's very important when we're talking about bus subsidies and subsidies to different kinds of transport to be clear about exactly what we are subsidising. So, if you're talking about a routine bus route there might be a level of subsidy which was appropriate or inappropriate, and again sometimes that might depend on the area, and I would say probably the level of subsidy you might be expecting to give in order to provide at least some kind of public transport service to a very rural village, might be quite different from the subsidy that you would expect to give in a slightly less rural area. But I think there are other things for which we might also consider subsidy, a higher level of subsidy to be more appropriate. Certainly, one of the areas, where over time, where the Combined Authority has been quite generous in its subsidy, has been in trialling new types of transport. So, the Combined Authority has handed out a significant amount of money, for example, in trialling driverless transport in collaboration with other organisations. It's not really being used

for passengers at the moment, but certainly there has been a trial running. We have also been trialling e-scooters, and there is the Ting transport service, which is being trialled in an area of Huntingdonshire. The subsidy for that service is not just based on passenger numbers, it's also because working out how to manage demand responsive transport is something that's been trialled by a number of different-

#### Supplementary question from Councillor Count:

It was an opinion I was looking for, and I agree with you, if you're going to Mr Giles' farmhouse, and picking up one person, and he lives twenty miles from anywhere, it's going to be too expensive, probably, to deal with that, whereas a hamlet or village or a town... I'm just trying to get an opinion from you at what level do you think bus subsidies have to provide value for money, but if you can't give me an exact figure, and I don't expect you to, but would you agree certain things like if it's cheaper to get a chauffeur drive limousine or helicopter, then that would be excessive... give us some idea of where you are on this, because that is your contribution to the discussions at the CPCA, please?

#### Response from Councillor Nethsingha:

So I'm not going to give you a figure, you're won't be at all surprised about that, but I'm going to say that sometimes when we are funding transport, we are not just funding per person passenger journey transport, sometimes we are funding other things beyond that, such as trialling new concepts and trialling different mechanisms for which people can get around, and I think that it's very important to be very clear about what the funding is for. The funding for the Ting bus service in Huntingdonshire is innovation funding, it is not just subsidy.

#### Question from Councillor Hoy:

At the last Council meeting, when we were here, I asked you if there was any truth to the rumour there was going to be a mayoral precept introduced, and you said that you had no idea about it, you hadn't heard about it, and it was kind of just a rumour. And it now seems it's been talked about in a number of meetings, and there seems to be a number of people talking about it. Can I just ask why you weren't aware of it?

#### Response from Councillor Nethsingha:

If that was at the last meeting, I imagine it was something that was indeed at that point a rumour, if I have become aware of it since, that's fine.

#### Supplementary question from Councillor Hoy:

On the bus subsidy report that has gone out, there was some talk about congestion charging being extended to all districts? Can you please give me your opinion on whether or not you would you support this as Deputy Mayor to introduce this in other districts?

### Response from Councillor Nethsingha:

I am absolutely not aware of any suggestion that the Combined Authority might be introducing congestion charging in other districts. I am, however, aware of the Conservative government are looking at road charging across the whole country, so perhaps it's referring to that?

### Questions to the Council's Appointee on the Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Councillor Atkins

#### Question from Councillor Tierney:

Perhaps you can just enlighten me, because I've had a kind of second-hand report of what was said at Overview & Scrutiny, I'd just like it clarified. So, I am told that someone asked how a mayoral precept could come about. And they were told that the standing mayor would propose the precept but that, if Nick Johnson had been available, he would not have been able to do so. I don't understand that, and hopefully you can explain it to me.

#### Response from Councillor Atkins:

Thank you, councillor. I'm afraid I don't believe I was present at the meeting at which those remarks were said, as I don't recognise them, so I don't believe that I can answer your question, but it may be that a further clarification can be provided, if you can give me the text for your question, I can take that away and can see what we can find.

#### Response from Councillor Count:

If it helps, my understanding is that Councillor Atkins wasn't there, but Councillor Coutts was, and therefore Councillor Coutts as his substitute could answer the question?

#### Response from Councillor Coutts:

That's true, I was his substitute, I'm afraid I'm not going to be any use to you, as I can't recall what the detail was and the circumstance of that meeting. I will endeavour to find out and communicate it to you.