

**GREATER CAMBRIDGE GREATER PETERBOROUGH
SHADOW LOCAL TRANSPORT BODY BOARD MEETING**

Date: Monday 15th December 2014

Time: 2.30pm – 3.35pm

Place: Kreis Viersen Room, Cambridge

Present: Peterborough City Councillors
N North

Cambridgeshire County Councillors
I Bates (Vice Chairman), E Cearns and R Hickford

Rutland County Council
M Pocock

Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership (GCGPEP)
Neil Darwin and Adrian Cannard

Cambridgeshire Chambers of Commerce
John Bridge OBE

Officers: Peterborough City Council – Lewis Banks
Rutland County Council – Dave Brown
Cambridgeshire County Council – Dawn Cave, Jack Eagle and Dearbhla
Lawson

Others: David Abbott (Highways Agency)
Steven Bishop (Steer Davies Gleave)
David Boddy (Skanska)

Apologies: Cllr P Hiller (Chairman); Graham Hughes, Simon Amor

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Vice-Chairman welcomed Members and officers. He advised that the Chairman, Councillor Hiller, had regrettably had to send apologies at short notice, due to family reasons.

2. MINUTES AND ACTIONS OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th October 2014 were agreed as a correct record.

3. UPDATE ON GROWTH DEAL ROUND 2 BIDS AND FUNDING

The Board received an update on progress with the second round of Growth Deal funding. Considerable work had been undertaken by officers from authorities and the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership (GCGPEP) to identify schemes

that may be suitable for early delivery, specifically focused on transport, skills and economic development.

The Autumn Statement had been disappointing in respect of additional funding. An extra £1bn was available nationally in the financial years 2016/17 through to 2020/21, with nothing identified for 2015/16. For 2016/17, £164M would be available nationally, but all 39 LEPs would be competing for this funding. The GCGP Board were well positioned in that they had identified projects. The process was still being worked on by government, but was likely to focus on two elements:

- i. Assessing the overall strength of the LEP's offer;
- ii. Technical assessment of individual projects.

In terms of (i) the whole pitch had been strengthened e.g. why investment in the GCGP area was good for the economy. The LEP continued to work to engage local MPs to ensure a promotion of infrastructure schemes at a national level. The major challenge facing the GCGP Board was that the funding available fell far short of the £60M+ required for the projects prioritised for Growth Deal Round Two. Schemes may need to be reassessed and spread out over a longer delivery period, but of course this would increase costs, due to the inflation in construction costs. Other avenues of government funding needed to be explored, and a stronger approach to infrastructure planning was required i.e. a coherent story across the GCGP area, and not individual authorities. The established 'Senior Sponsors' group would be developing a prioritised, evidence-based approach on the major strategic issues facing the area. It was noted that this group was led by Nigel McCurdy of Huntingdonshire District Council, and included other senior officers e.g. Directors of local authorities.

John Bridge commented that the business community was concerned that their priorities were not being taken into consideration, i.e. their identified blockages and barriers were not being addressed, and businesses were concerned that the approach being taken was from a political rather than an economic perspective. In addition, MPs and authorities were pursuing their own schemes and ideas, and a more coherent strategic approach needed to be taken.

Neil Darwin advised that partners working with GCGPEP were very much focused on a single plan to attract any available funding, especially as other LEPs had secured funding through alternative (i.e. not Growth Deal) funding – there was very much a focus on a single list approach. A number of Members challenged the assertion that the emphasis was on political rather than economic issues, stressing that from a local authority perspective, this was not the case, and authorities took all opportunities to work with partners and coordinate work for the good of communities. Officers echoed this view and pointed to a good example of this being where the Authorities had worked together across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to develop Long Term Transport Strategies which had been adopted to identify key transport requirements to support growth and that these long term strategies formed the basis for bidding for funding for projects, resulting in numerous 'shovel ready' projects being available. In addition, this work had been enhanced by a high level technical assessment (from SDG) to review capital projects and how they fit with criteria for bidding and the assurance framework, and ensured that a proper prioritised approach was taken.

John Bridge agreed that independent technical assessments were key to identifying blocks. He added that infrastructure and transport planning should come before land use planning, and many of the current congestion problems in Cambridge were attributable to this approach, and the business community did not see any priority being given to dealing with that issue.

Noting that only £164M would be available across LEPs nationally in 2016/17, it was observed that the criteria for allocation were likely to be weighted on the basis of population, with a bias in favour of Northern authorities clearly evident in the Autumn Statement. Engaging MPs' support to promote infrastructure schemes in the GCGP area was therefore crucial. Progress made to date in this area was noted, included a recent meeting with MPs which had been positive, although attendance had been disappointing.

The Shadow Board noted that the £16M required for the Ely Southern Bypass would form a sizable chunk of the 2017/18 ask for allocation, and concerns were raised as to whether that the full amount would be secured through Growth Deal Round Two. Robust discussions would be needed with government departments, to express concern about the way the Growth Deal funding profile would limit growth and cause a backlog of infrastructure issues, and that other possible funding opportunities would need to be fully explored.

Members asked about those authorities which were in two LEP areas. Neil reassured the Shadow Board that they worked closely with neighbouring LEPs so that those authorities in overlapping areas were engaged with both LEPs but were not at an advantage compared to other authorities.

The Shadow Board noted the report, and agreed that officers prepare a reprofiled schedule that incorporated the LTB pre-allocated schemes and Round One and proposed Round Two schemes, updated to reflect current delivery milestones and likely funding envelope.

4. UPDATE ON TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT AND PRIORITISATION FOR ROUND TWO BID

The Board received a technical report from Steven Bishop of Steer Davies Gleave (SDG). The report outlined the process followed by SDG, the GCGPEP's independent technical advisors, on their initial assessment of schemes for which Local Growth Fund allocations were being sought under Round Two of the Growth Deal. The Board was reminded that this independent assessment was a requirement of the Local Transport Body's Assurance Framework. The results of the technical assessment would enable an up to date prioritised list of schemes to be produced, identifying those schemes where more detail was required.

The Shadow Board noted that the basis of the framework used for the assessment of schemes was the Department for Transport's Early Assessment and Sifting Tool (EAST). This framework was based on the Treasury's Green Book Guidance as well as the DfT's own web-based transport analysis guidance. It ranked potential schemes against the 'five cases' of a Green Book compliant business cases, the five cases being (i) strategic, (ii) economic, (iii) commercial, (iv) delivery and (v) financial. There were certain schemes in the long list of priority schemes which did not fit as well with the approach, therefore the objectives of those schemes were reviewed to ensure fit.

A Member asked how the impact on the community was considered under this framework. Steven Bishop explained that the economic case was not just about e.g. houses and jobs, but also on issues such as accessibility, safety, quality of life and public health.

It was stressed that the assessment was made on the basis of *information available at the time*. Clearly for some schemes e.g. Ely Southern Bypass, considerable work had been

undertaken, so detailed information was available to enable full responses to be given on the five cases, whereas schemes at earlier stages and smaller schemes did not necessarily have this detailed information to support them.

In response to a question on the adequacy of the information available, and how robust the corresponding results were, it was explained that in some cases the information available was indeed inadequate, but this was part of the reason for the assessment – to identify where further work was required, and in such cases the LEP would be requiring more detailed information to demonstrate benefits and deliverability if money was to be secured..

Referring to the map appended to the previous report, it was noted that this did not include many of the major sites where major housing or employment initiatives were being planned or delivered in and around the GCGP area e.g. Saffron Walden housing, Babraham Institute expansion, and it was suggested reflecting that information would highlight the area's strategic importance and infrastructure deficit. This point was acknowledged and it was noted that much of this work was being picked up in the City Deal work.

The Shadow Board noted the report

5. WISBECH ACCESS STRATEGY BRIEF FOR REVIEW

The Shadow Board considered an update on the two transport studies for the Wisbech area, namely:

- A47 Thorney to Wisbech Walton Highway initial options assessment. Skanska had recently been appointed to carry out this piece of work which would investigate potential high level options for improvements to the A47 between Thorney and Wisbech, and the economic benefits such a scheme would bring.
- March to Wisbech rail business case and GRIP2 study: Mott MacDonald had been appointed to look at (i) the strategic Outline Business Case, (ii) GRIP2 study; (iii) concluding the OBC. This scheme was expected to continue to be developed through the Network Rail GRIP process, subject to the outcomes of the study and funding availability.

The Wisbech Access Study was another proposal, to develop more detail around the major schemes of the Cambridgeshire Long term Transport Strategy (LTTS) and the Wisbech Transport Study to relieve congestion in Wisbech and facilitate growth and regeneration. The brief for the Study had been developed in partnership with Fenland District Council. The Study aimed to identify an acceptable and deliverable package of transport measures to help secure the £10.5M earmarked for the Wisbech area to 2020. In response to a Member question, it was confirmed that partners in Kings Lynn were engaged in the process.

The Shadow Board resolved to:

1. note the work being carried out in the Wisbech area;
2. note the proposed aims, outcomes and timescales for procuring the Wisbech Access Study;
3. endorse the procurement of the Study.

6. TRANSITION FROM LTB TO LEP TRANSPORT PANEL – DISCUSSION ON FUTURE ROLE AND REMIT

At previous meetings, the Shadow Board had discussed how it would transform into a formal panel of the GCGPEP, fitting in with the government's accountability framework. These discussions had included consideration of draft Terms of Reference. It had previously been agreed that the new panel would have a Chair from the private sector.

The government had recently provided more information on the LEP Assurance Framework, setting out how they expected these bodies to work, providing clarity and transparency on decision making processes, and finances in particular.

The GCGP Board would consider future governance arrangements at its meeting in January, and those discussions would include which decisions the GCGP Board would retain, and which decisions would be delegated to the Transport Panel. Consideration would also be given to the processes that would need to be put in place as part of the assurance framework.

In discussion, it was noted that there was no formal relationship between the Shadow Board/ Transport Panel and the City Deal, but there would be some common membership and therefore linkages in future. Members also noted the role of Cambridgeshire County Council as the accountable body for the Shadow Board/Transport Panel, and that consideration would be needed regarding that role. This being whether this would be as banker to the body, or providing more of a monitoring role and ensuring adherence to the assurance framework role, e.g. independent scrutiny and assessing schemes Value for Money. There were clearly resource implications associated if the County Council would be undertaking this role, and authority would be required from the LEP to undertake such a role.

The Shadow Board noted progress on the transition from Local Transport Body Board to LEP Transport Panel.

UPDATE FROM HIGHWAYS AGENCY

Information was circulated on the DfT's Road Investment Strategy.

David Abbott of the Highways Agency updated Member on various schemes in the region, for which £1.5bn of new investment had been allocated, including:

- A14 major upgrade (Ellington to Milton);
- A47 Guyhirn junction;
- A47 dualling from Wansford to Sutton;
- A428 dualling from Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet;
- M11 technology improvements from Junctions 8 to 14 (Stansted to Girton);
- A1(M) upgrade from Junctions 6 (Welwyn north) to 8 (Hitchin).

The investment strategy in the east of England also included two further feasibility studies:

- A1 east of England feasibility study: feasibility of major options between Baldock and Alconbury, at least to expressway standard, if not motorway – this would be a major exercise, similar to that undertaken of the A14;

- Oxford to Cambridge expressway study: it was suggested that the focus would be on the section west of the M1, as the A428/421 (if brought up to expressway standard) would fulfil the eastern half of the route.

The government was also transforming the Highways Agency into a government-owned strategic highways company, meaning that funding could be allocated on a longer term basis. In terms of process, if progressed this was likely to obtain Royal Assent on 26/03/15.