

CONSTITUTION AND ETHICS COMMITTEE MEETING – 22ND APRIL 2020

AGENDA ITEM 3: COMMITTEE STRUCTURES

WRITTEN STATEMENTS

No.	Question from:	Question
1.	Councillor Colin McGerty (Cambridge City Council)	Can the Constitution and Ethics Committee please explain how the vital function played by parish councils in providing residents with transparency and direct access to local democracy and until now, catered for in Cambridge, where we do not have parish councils, by the Cambridge Joint Area Committee, will in future be replicated within Cambridge?
2.	Mr Michael Page (Hurst Park Estate Residents' Association)	<p>Regarding abolition of the Cambridge Joint Area Committee (CJAC). This proposal has come as a surprise to residents in Cambridge and we are very concerned that it should be coming forward for decision so soon during the Covid lockdown.</p> <p>We are also concerned that this proposal will strip away an important element of local democracy which currently enables residents, through their local city councillors and CJAC, to engage in important decisions affecting their lives. We fear that decisions will have to be taken by councillors elsewhere in the county who will not have the benefit of local knowledge and the evidence and pre-scrutiny currently provided by the CJAC process. Transparent and accountable decision making is at the heart of the county's constitution regarding Joint Area Committees.</p> <p>I urge this committee to take note of these real concerns and ask that this proposal is put on hold to allow for more public scrutiny and debate before it goes forward to the full council.</p>
3.	Camcycle – Cambridge Cycling Campaign	<p>We urge councillors to delay decisions about the Joint Area Committee and Cambridge Fringes until proper scrutiny can be applied.</p> <p>Camcycle is strongly of the view that decisions about transport and development in Cambridge should be a democratic process including city residents and councillors. It is for this reason that we object wholeheartedly to these proposals that will silence the voices of those whose views are most needed, the residents and</p>

		<p>workers of Cambridge.</p> <p>We further believe that the timing of this proposed change is in very poor judgement. Now more than ever we need responsive local transport policies that will facilitate the safe movement of key workers and allow socially distanced essential journeys. Scrapping a key transport committee is an irresponsible diversion at a time when we simply cannot afford it.</p> <p>Our position on this matter remains the same as in 2012, when a similar situation arose. Whilst it is entirely appropriate that the rural councillors who run the County Council have oversight of budget and some say in transport matters in Cambridge – they may well travel here – that is very different to withdrawal of any guarantee that there will be a majority of people from Cambridge deciding these questions.</p> <p>These proposals would mean that no councillor, or indeed, resident would have any meaningful say in any transport plan or project suggested or mooted for the city. This is as unacceptable as any rural district in Cambridgeshire being denied a voice were the situation reversed.</p> <p>Cambridge is a different place to rural towns and villages. It is a dense city, with high levels of employment and housing, and is struggling with the effects of the councils’ growth agenda. It also has by far the highest levels of cycling. As a result, allocation of road space is very highly contested, unlike other areas.</p> <p>The area committee over the past 20 years has regularly seen strong debates about balancing the needs of residents, commuters, those driving, those cycling, and so on. It is right that those debates should continue. Proper consideration of difficult issues like this will not be properly resolved by relegating them to an official deciding in private or by having them decided in Alconbury by councillors who have far less experience of Cambridge’s cycling culture or who rarely travel here.</p>
4.	Charles Nisbet	<p>As Chairman of the Milton Road Residents' Association I am most concerned at the proposal in Item 3 on the agenda to abolish the Cambridge Joint Area Committee (CJAC). This committee allows the residents of Cambridge to express their wishes and concerns to County Councillors about issues which are otherwise in the sole control of the County Council but which impact entirely on the population of the City. For example, those who live outside the City may see it as somewhere whose function is to provide them with employment and shopping opportunities, plus free parking in its many streets: those who live within the City may feel otherwise and need the opportunity to say so; the CJAC provides such an opportunity.</p> <p>In itself such an abolition is highly undesirable, but to effect it without real public scrutiny at the first on-line</p>

		<p>meeting of the Constitution and Ethics Committee smacks of the sort of underhand procedural methods resorted to by dictators across the world to eliminate public opposition to their wishes.</p> <p>Would the Constitution and Ethics Committee please acknowledge that this is not a proper, not an ethical way to use the mechanisms of local government and either reject this proposal or at least defer a decision on it until it can be more fully debated?</p>
5.	Accordia Community and Residents Association	<p>We object very strongly to this proposal.</p> <p>The residents of the Accordia estate saw the Joint Committee in action when it considered the plans for a residents parking scheme for the estate. These discussions demonstrated the importance of local understanding in reaching decisions on traffic management issues affecting the City, and also showed that the Councillors involved worked very well together in a rational atmosphere. On this evidence, the Committee certainly meets the criterion of ... improv[ing] service delivery in the context of best value and more efficient, transparent and accountable decision making. No evidence is offered that the alternative approach outlined in paragraph 3.5 would work better.</p> <p>The justification offered in paragraph 3.4 of the proposal is extremely thin. Simply to assert without evidence that “it is not considered reasonable or appropriate that one area in the county should receive a different service than (sic) others” is meaningless. It is perfectly logical for one area to be covered by a different framework if it has distinct characteristics that require a high level of local understanding. (Cambridge for example is the UK City with the highest level of cycle commuting, and the 11th highest number of days with excess air pollution). By whom are the present arrangements not considered “reasonable or appropriate?” – apparently not by the other districts in Cambridgeshire, which as the proposal itself spells out, chose not to seek distinct committees to apply to them. Similarly, no evidence is offered to support the assertion that withdrawal from the Committee will provide “equity of service across Cambridgeshire and will allow officer time to be used more effectively on schemes across the county.” If the Council is acknowledging that at present it provides the rest of the County with a lower level of service, this is a very serious claim which must be supported by evidence.</p>
6.	Histon Road Area Residents' Association	<p>Histon Road Area Residents' Association HRARA is strongly of the view that decisions about transport and development in Cambridge should be a democratic process including city residents and councillors. It is for this reason that we object wholeheartedly to the County Council's proposed scrapping of Cambridge's Transport Committee and the transfer of powers to a county body – it will silence the voices of those whose views are most needed, the residents and workers of Cambridge.</p>

		<p>If the proposal to scrap the Cambridge-specific CJAC committee, and I quote Cambridge News,</p> <p><i>“which primarily deals with transport issues, follows a spate of political disagreements between the county council and South Cambs District and Cambridge City Councils, including over changes to residents parking schemes, road charging, and the role of the Greater Cambridge Partnership”</i></p> <p>we further believe that the timing of this proposed change is in very poor judgement. Now more than ever we need responsive local transport policies that will facilitate the safe movement of key workers and allow socially distanced essential journeys.</p> <p>Abolishing a key transport committee is an irresponsible diversion at a time when we simply cannot afford it, so the Histon Road Area Residents’ Association (HRARA) urges the County Council's Constitution and Ethics Committee to reject this proposal to abolish the Cambridge Joint Area Committee (CJAC).</p>
7.	Nicki Marrian	<p>I am writing to object to the proposed abolition of the Cambridge Joint Area Committee (CJAC).</p> <p>The abolition of this committee would make it very much more difficult for residents to make their views heard at the County Council, particularly when the Council’s main activities move to Alconbury next year.</p> <p>Discussion of this proposal next Tuesday at a virtual meeting, with no members of the public present to comment and ask questions, will severely inhibit the opportunity for Cambridge residents to scrutinise the proposals and make their views on the abolition of this committee known.</p> <p>I request that you reconsider this proposal and delay making a decision until the implications can be debated more widely.</p>
8.	Alan Ackroyd	<p>Friends of mine have drawn my attention to a move of the Cambridge County Council to abolish the Cambridge Joint Area Committee and the Joint Development Control Committee for Cambridge Fringes.</p> <p>I am writing to you to express my strong objection to this move. Cambridge is an historic, unique and distinctive city and with its two universities, teaching hospital, biotech campus and technological industry hubs. It is both a service centre and a financial power-house for the county and East Anglia.</p> <p>Cambridge universities and businesses attract personnel from all over the world and must be able to offer a modern and environmentally responsible lifestyle to attract the best staff. Removing the voice of Cambridge residents and their representatives from the development of the city and its fringes can only jeopardise the</p>

		<p>continued development of this city in such a direction and bring difficulties for the future of the city.</p> <p>I write to ask you to oppose this move, or at least to postpone a decision until proper democratic consideration may be given to it. To rush this decision through in a closed-doors meeting would be shameful.</p>
9.	Sam Davies	<p>Having read the papers relating to the proposed abolition of CJAC, I wish to object in the strongest possible terms to this curtailing of democratic processes within Cambridge.</p> <p>Taken in conjunction with the County Council's relocation to Alconbury, this will make it extremely difficult for Cambridge residents to have their views represented on issues directly concerning their city. It is even more concerning that you would attempt to drive this proposal through at a virtual meeting, with no members of the public present to ask questions or scrutinise the discussion.</p> <p>I have seen no explanation of any urgent reasons which would require this decision to be taken at this time, and therefore request that you delay making a decision until residents are better able to engage with the arguments for and against.</p>
10.	Deborah Latham (Garden Walk Residents Association)	<p>I am writing to express concern at the proposed termination of the CJAC Committee.</p> <p>This concern arises because there really must be local scrutiny and influence over issues affecting residents in Cambridge – including residents' parking and traffic calming, to ensure these issues retain a high profile, given their major health and safety, and environmental impacts.</p> <p>The important injection of real local issues, solutions and inclusion of local people's experience of living in their localities and the insight this gives, must be present in meetings so that Councillors are in touch with the real world experience of local areas. It would therefore be a major concern if this opportunity is lost in the termination of CJAC, given that the membership of the County Highways Committee is predominately County Councillors from outside Cambridge – County Councillors who are not and cannot be in touch with real and challenging Cambridge issues, and arguably who are highly unlikely to have the interests of local Cambridge people in mind as such.</p>
11.	Councillor Dave Baigent (Cambridge City	<p>I am a Cambridge City Councillor in Romsey and I am writing to ask Cambridge County Council to maintain CJAC and JDC.</p> <p>First can I say I served on CJAC for three years and currently serve on JDC.</p>

	Council)	<p>Both these committees are splendid examples of democracy in action as they bring together three elected councils to make joint decisions on matters of importance to residents in those areas. I outline briefly my main concerns:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Most importantly they ensure an accord between our three councils. In outcome it reduces conflict and disagreement between councils and has the knock on effect of making constituents part of the process of decision making in areas that sometimes have confused responsibility. 2. These committees bring together councillors from the area who operate at different levels and this widens the democratic mandate of decision making and in particular its combined knowledge must improve outcomes. 3. Things that happen in Cambridge City have a considerable effect on the residents of the surrounding areas, as it is an employment, arts and shopping hub. It is therefore right that all three councils are involved in decisions where responsibility blurs and will effect residents of all three councils. 4. One further point that is an unintended consequence, is that by meeting together networks are improved and a wider understanding of the work of the three councils is achieved.
12.	Lori Passmore	<p>I am writing regarding the proposal to abolish the Cambridge Joint Area Committee. I am disappointed that this is being proposed and I object to this proposal for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Cambridge Joint Area Committee provides a voice to local residents. It works well. For example, last year, residents attended the meeting to discuss changes to the residents’ parking scheme on Blinco Grove. The final outcome appears to be an excellent compromise and satisfactory to all parties. Similarly, many local residents attended the meeting to implement the resident’s parking scheme in the area including Blinco Grove. Thus, this committee in particular is an effective voice for the community. – Abolishing the Cambridge Joint Area Committee will make it much more difficult for residents to make their views heard, especially if meetings will not take place in Cambridge and will move to Alconbury.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The decision to abolish the Cambridge Joint Area Committee will be taken at a virtual meeting without consultation with the public and with no ability for the public to ask questions. This is not a fair process. - I therefore request that this decision be delayed until Cambridge residents can have a proper opportunity to scrutinise the proposals and make their views on the abolition of this committee known.
13.	Liz Kan	<p>I agree strongly, that we must keep these issue linked to local groups that show a good interest for we live, work and play here, therefore really understand what is needed now.</p> <p>I understand that it's easier to centralise, but that is when ventures fail for the future use of an area. Please this is very important.</p>
14.	The Federation of Cambridge Residents' Associations	<p>We are writing to express concern about the decision to abolish the Cambridge Joint Area Committee. The abolition of this committee will make it much more difficult for city residents to make their views on transport issues heard at the County Council, particularly when the County Council's main activities move to Alconbury.</p> <p>This is a significant change that is being made during the Covid lock-down. We believe the decision should be postponed to allow time for consultation, scrutiny and a proper democratic process.</p>
15.	Katie Maynard	<p>As Chair of a city centre Residents' Association I write in opposition to the proposal by Cambridgeshire County Council to close the Cambridge Joint Area Committee. It is vital that decisions - especially those involving transport should be considered at a local level to bring local understanding to any decision.</p> <p>Cambridge residents have their own particular needs and it is important that transport decisions such as parking or cycling issues can be considered by those affected by any changes. Living in an area with many schools, narrow roads and the concerns of residents regarding safety and pollution with increasing rat run traffic it has been vital - especially over the last few years - for local representation to discuss issues such as parking and cycling.</p> <p>I would like to see the evidence of how this proposed change would be helpful. It would be helpful to review evidence to show what benefit there would be to local residents in Cambridge and how the change would help the Cambridge environment and local council, now and in the longer term.</p>

16.	Windsor Road Residents' Association	<p>We object to the recommendation, under Item 3 of the meeting of the Constitution and Ethics Committee on 22 April, to close down Cambridge Joint Area Committee (CJAC) and transfer its powers to the County Highways Committee by the end of July 2020.</p> <p>We feel that there should be an opportunity for public engagement and that residents should be consulted.</p> <p>Removal of an important layer of local democracy should not happen by the back door in a period of distraction, but should be delayed until it can receive proper consultation and consideration.</p>
17.	Richard Folley	<p>I have recently read of your proposal to abolish the Cambridge Joint Area Committee. Quite frankly, I am appalled - as a Cambridge City resident I consider this forum to be very important for the discussion of our very different (from the more rural) County issues.</p> <p>It is just a pity that Cambridge City continues to be a part of the County administration!</p>
18.	Roger Crabtree	<p>I am writing to strongly object to the proposal to dispense with the CJAC.</p> <p>As the former chair of the Rustat Neighbourhood Association, I have both attended and spoken at CJAC meetings over many years.</p> <p>I believe that the Committee fulfils a very useful purpose, as it combines City and County Councillors so that issues relating to an important range of topics can be properly debated in a balanced way.</p> <p>To pass its powers and responsibilities to the Transport Committee, as proposed, will deny that joint approach and thus fails to allow proper debate of issues relating to Cambridge City transport and traffic.</p> <p>As our area expands - and it is planned that it will massively do so in the coming years - proper debate on transport and traffic matters in our already congested city is crucial and in my view it is vital for not only the city but also the surrounding commuter belt that decisions are made jointly.</p> <p>I therefore urge you to abort the proposed abolition of this committee. If anything we should be strengthening its powers.</p>

19.	Finlay Knops-McKim	<p>I have recently been made aware of the proposed scrapping of the Cambridge Joint Area Committee, and am emailing to express my concerns. The JAC has provided a valuable forum for discussion and planning related to Cambridge-specific transport and development issues over many years. It allows engagement with a variety of civic groups, and robust debate that leads to policies suitable for a unique city such as Cambridge.</p> <p>I strongly feel that delegating policy decisions to county officers, and committees that explicitly exclude the City Council is not acceptable. It will actively prevent the development of innovative transport solutions so needed by the UK's tech and cycling capital, and lead to a democratic deficit. I appreciate that the county and city councils have their political differences, but this change will not just be a point scored against an opposition party – It will have long lasting and negative impacts on the residents of Cambridge and the surrounding area.</p> <p>The timing of this move is also extremely poor. We are in the middle of a global pandemic, the impact on our society of which will be felt for many months and years. Effective transport policy is vital in this time – keeping our key workers moving, and keeping others making vital journeys socially distanced to reduce the strain on our NHS. The temporary interventions required to do this in Cambridge City are only possible if the City Council is empowered to make such decisions, especially with regards to TROs. Pre-occupying the council with these sorts of political changes both reduces its ability to rapidly respond as required, and then eliminates the rapid response ability once those powers are gone.</p> <p>A change such as this should also be put out to consultation at the very least. Civic engagement is difficult at the best of times, but when the only way to engage is via email or difficult-to-attend virtual meetings, it becomes impossible for many. If this scrapping is pursued, it should be after a full public consultation that is not carried out hidden under the shroud of quarantine. Hiding unpopular political decisions behind an international pandemic is simply not on.</p> <p>I hope these points are of some contribution to the debate, and I would ask that you consider recommending the decision on scrapping the committee be delayed to a later, more appropriate date – after the public have been allowed to fully scrutinise the proposals.</p>

20.	Arbury Road East Residents' Association Committee	<p>We are very concerned that the proposal to abolish the Cambridge Joint Area Committee will have a negative effect on the residents of Arbury Road.</p> <p>Without CJAC our interests will not be represented by local councillors on transport matters related to Arbury Road, including safe cycling, traffic flow and pollution.</p> <p>We believe that the disbandment of CJAC would have a profoundly negative effect on the involvement of all Cambridge's residents in important local matters.</p> <p>We therefore ask that any discussion/decision about CJAC's future be deferred, to allow full consideration and consultation by Cambridge residents before any future discussion.</p> <p>And we would add that the timing of this constitutional proposal during a national crisis and our lock down we consider an affront to both ethics and democracy.</p>
21.	Edward Leigh	<p>I have attached a petition prepared by Smarter Cambridge Transport calling for the proposal to abolish CJAC to be suspended until more extensive consultation can be carried out. It will go live on the County Council website as an e-petition to be presented to Full Council on 19 May – unless the Constitution and Ethics Committee withholds its recommendation for the proposed change go to Full Council.</p> <p>Smarter Cambridge Transport believes that CJAC fulfils an important and valuable role in deciding local transport matters, a role that elsewhere in the county is performed by town and parish councils.</p> <p>We also believe that the county's involvement in JDCC for Cambridge Fringes is critically important to ensure that spatial and transport planning decisions are made in a co-ordinated way. This is especially true given the huge challenges ahead to build more homes and support more jobs much more sustainably than now. Getting transport infrastructure and services right is essential to achieving that.</p>
22.	Councillor Martin Smart (Cambridge City Council)	<p>I am writing with regard to proposals to abolish Cambridge City Joint Area (Transport) Committee, and to withdraw from Joint Development Control - Cambridge Fringes planning committee.</p> <p>As Chair of both Planning and Planning and Transport committees in Cambridge I regularly sit with other committee members and listen to representations from residents, the business community and indeed, from other councillors. All are welcome to come to the table and contribute to the debate, to both inform by extending the evidence base, and indeed, by the power of their rhetorical argument. It does not matter if they</p>

		<p>are a college Lord or the daughter of a bed-ridden mother. All are equal at the table and it is the content of what they say rather than how they say it that might or might not hold sway with their elected representatives. Such is the nature of the administrative detail of a fair and just society, of a place where the democratic right of the citizen to have their say is placed in high regard. The people of Cambridge quite rightly demand to have their say on a whole range of matters, sometimes contrary to the intention of any given ruling administration, but that is completely right and proper.</p> <p>As a member of both the above mentioned committees I have never ceased to be amazed at the selfless sheer hard work and determined resourcefulness exhibited by speakers attending to add to the debate, and also of the intimate degree of local knowledge exhibited, all of which contribute so usefully toward the quality of decision making by committee members. Furthermore, the quality and power of decision making by those councillors of different authorities and political persuasions, when, faced with what might on the face of it be a perfectly reasonable item, begin pulling it apart in debate, and against the odds, rejecting said item, and sending it back from whence it came.</p> <p>You, the political leadership of Cambridgeshire County Council would appear to have come to a decision. However, I would urge you all to listen, and listen hard, to the debate from the Leaders of both Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire and indeed, from many others, and then think again. At the very least, a constructive approach would be a joint review of both Committees with council partners, including Cambridge City Council. There will always be room for improvement and we must always strive to do better for our residents. However, there is absolutely no argument that I can see for damaging both committees in this way, and for breaking the long established council to council partnerships that have grown up over so many years.</p>
23.	<p>Claire Ruskin (Cambridge Network)</p>	<p>From a business and resident point of view I am concerned that you are proposing radical changes to decision-making structures at the moment.</p> <p>The changes you are proposing should surely be discussed transparently, with the logic for changes set out openly. If you consider current structures such as JDCC and CJAC to be ineffective or inappropriate then the case should be set out in a way that those involved can understand and agree with. People like me, with no party political angle, should be able to understand the logic and appreciate the transparency.</p> <p>This is not a time to be making changes of significant impact to the region without a very strong case, which I can't see that the County Council has. To be open to scrutiny is even more vital in an economy that is stressed, and the County Council seems to be announcing major changes without having consulted partners at the City Council or South Cambridgeshire Council or indeed any residents or businesses. In my extensive interactions with business people and residents around the wider region I am always hearing that they want</p>

		<p>joined up thinking and integrated actions, not being split into different local authority silos that they don't feel any need to hear about. The proposals seem to take us back not forward.</p> <p>Getting transport and planning decisions for Greater Cambridge right is in the interests of the whole county and the UK.</p> <p>My request is that you withdraw this proposal until the parties can have proper consideration and scrutiny, which may not be until we are through recovery from COVID-19.</p>
24.	Professor Phil Allmendinger	<p>It's very worrying for a major employer with significant development plans, research activity and at a time of uncertainty and national need to have to contend with premature and unsettling changes with no real justification. I would urge you to rethink this.</p>
25.	Paula Downes (Coldhams Lane Residents' Association)	<p>I write as the Chair of the Romsey Residents Association, a body of some 105 local residents in Cambridge, to register the Association's firm objection to the planned decommissioning of the Cambridge Joint Area Committee (item 3.3, meeting 22.4.2020). We believe this proposal has not been thought through. We urge the C&E Committee to think again and to reject it.</p> <p>The Cambridge Joint Area Committee (CJAC) serves the needs of the City of Cambridge. It is a uniquely complex transport environment, balancing the needs of business, municipal function, local residents, the two universities and green policy. The City is quite unlike other areas of the County, and it has different needs, so we do not accept the argument that an equitable policy is simply 'the same for all'. On the contrary, our members believe an equitable policy means that responsibility for local transport related issues—the function of the Joint Area Committee—remain with local representatives and residents, i.e. the City Council and CJAC.</p> <p>The need for resident parking permits, control of one-way streets, the opening up of new cycle lanes etc. are all matters that require local knowledge and direct experience of the developing City and its changing environment. As such, it should be handled by CJAC, as a subset of the City Council, who live and work in the environment in question, and who answer directly to local voters. It makes little sense, in our view, for decisions pertaining to the transport environment to be taken away from those Officers with primary knowledge of and direct interest in the area being affected.</p> <p>We do not accept the relevance of an argument that since a working process is in place elsewhere in the County, it can reasonably subsume the City of Cambridge. If anything, this is precisely wrongheaded: local needs are best governed by local people. Transport in the City of Cambridge is best governed by CJAC.</p>

		<p>A recent example is the installation of double yellow lines at the intersection of Cromwell Rd with Coldhams Lane, where excessive parking created a dangerous environment for vehicles turning into Cromwell Rd., hindered crossing to the Nuffield Health, and impinged on a pedestrian crossing. It is indicative of the good functioning of the current arrangements that members of CJAC were able to act efficiently to resolve this. The area is much the better for it.</p> <p>Finally, as members will know, it is often impractical or impossible for local people to make their views known at public meetings. Time windows for meetings are narrow, and opportunities to attend are often lost, particularly for disabled residents, those pinned to medical appointments, professional and childcare responsibilities. If CJAC is dissolved, it would make it harder for the members of our Residents' Association, the local people of Romsey in Cambridge, to give input into policy that affects them, and to voice concern when disputes arise.</p> <p>For all these reasons, the Members of the Residents Association urge the Committee members to reject the proposal and to retain the existence of Cambridge's Joint Area Committee.</p>
26.	Peter Studdert	<p>My attention has been drawn to Agenda Item 3 of the meeting of the Constitution and Ethics Committee to be held on 22nd April, at which your Committee is being recommended to endorse a proposal to withdraw County representation from the Joint Development Control Committee for the Cambridge Fringes and to abolish the Cambridge Joint Area Transport Committee. As a former Director of Joint Planning for Cambridge's Growth Areas from 2007-2011 I should be very grateful if you would give consideration to the following comments:</p> <p>The move by the County Council to withdraw from the JDDC is deeply puzzling. Implementation of Cambridge's ambitious growth agenda is a shared responsibility between all three authorities, and the Fringes JDCC is one of the most successful illustrations of shared planning and transport delivery across the UK.</p> <p>The unilateral withdrawal by one party from the JDCC would give out a very poor message to central Government, as well as to local communities. The County Council has a key role in ensuring that the public realm and highways are well integrated into the vision for the new neighbourhoods. Although the County functions could be discharged independently from the other authorities, the value of a joint approach is that all three authorities are seen to be engaging in a co-operative spirit on the complex challenges that these new</p>

		<p>neighbourhoods represent.</p> <p>The County Council is a key partner in ensuring a joined-up approach to making a success of the new neighbourhoods, and it's essential that community infrastructure such as transport routes, schools and libraries are properly considered and integrated into the overall development both at the outline application/S106 Agreement stage and at the detailed design stage.</p> <p>The Director of Governance and Legal Services puts forward two reasons for withdrawing from the JDDC in the report to Committee, neither of which stand up to scrutiny. Para 4.7 states that the JDDC has different administrative processes from the County's own Planning Committee, such as giving local residents an opportunity to express their views through a Development Control Forum (DCF). It's difficult to see why this should be a problem as the DCFs enhance local democracy - perhaps the County ought to change its Planning Committee procedures to make them more open and transparent?</p> <p>Secondly para 4.8 states that no other part of the County has a similar Joint Committee, so it should withdraw from this one out of fairness to the rest of the County. However the growth sites on the Cambridge City/South Cambs fringes are unique in their complexity because they straddle administrative boundaries, and this context is also unique in the County and so benefits from these special arrangements.</p> <p>I'm dismayed too to see that the County Council is also proposing to abolish the Cambridge Joint Area Transport Committee. This would be a hugely retrograde step and I'm sure that there will be a lot of objections from local residents and businesses in Cambridge who want to see both of the local authorities co-operating in a consensual manner on traffic and transport issues, rather than having in the near future to travel to Alconbury to make their case to a totally separate County Council committee, and to officers working there.</p> <p>I very much hope that your Committee will oppose the recommendation and maintains the County Council's commitment to these two crucially important Joint Committees.</p>
27.	Claire Cameron	<p>As current Chair of the Rustat Neighbourhood Association I am writing to add my objections to the proposal to disband the area committee. There are many ongoing developments in the City which require proper scrutiny to ensure they have the support of the residents and workforce nearby. The Committee is an extremely valuable opportunity to practice democratic debate and should be retained.</p>

28.	Harriet Gillett	<p>I read with dismay in the Cambridge Cycle Campaign communication about the proposal to be discussed tomorrow 22 May by the Constitution and Ethics Committee, to close the Cambridge Joint Area Committee. Apparently its powers would be transferred to the County Highways Committee. This would mean issues such as residents parking and traffic calming would be decided by predominantly county councillors from outside of Cambridge who would not understand the severity of the traffic issues in Cambridge, and hence unlikely to support actions that CJAC supports.</p> <p>I believe these discussions should be postponed to a later date to allow for proper public engagement and that residents should be properly consulted.</p>
29.	Storey's Way Residents Association	<p>The Committee Members of the Storey's Way Residents Association (SWRA) only received a note yesterday about the proposal to close down the Cambridge Joint Area Committee (CJAC) and transfer its powers to the County Highways Committee.</p> <p>CJAC is very well attended by local residents and is an important local forum. We therefore would like to express our concerns about the possible closure of CJAC.</p> <p>The SWRA Committee is of the view that the proposal and decision should be deferred until a later date, at least until proper public attendance may be possible at the Constitution and Ethics Committee. Moreover, we believe that there should be a public consultation and review of this decision.</p>
30.	Councillor Richard Robertson (Cambridge City Council)	<p>I am writing to you as the chair of the Cambridge Joint Area Committee (CJAC) with regard to the proposal to abolish the Committee. I have served on CJAC for the last six years and with that experience it is clear to me that the proposal would lead to a poorer service to the community and far more work for the Highways and Transport Committee if full transparency and accountability in decision making is to be maintained.</p> <p>Local residents quite rightly take a close interest in changes proposed to the street outside their home, particularly if it involves parking, as many of our city residents do not have their own off-street parking. Virtually all the proposals we handle are contentious and draw support and objection from near neighbours. We always have residents, often large numbers of them, attend our meetings to question proposals in detail.</p> <p>It is stated that contentious issues would be referred back to the Highways and Transport Committee where "Local Members and the public will be able to.... make their views known." That is going to lead to a lot of extra work for that committee. I have looked back at the agendas of the existing Highways committee for the past six years and there have been no items requiring assessment and adjudication on the sort of local highway improvement schemes CJAC deals with at almost every meeting. Our meetings often take two or</p>

		<p>three hours to deal with representations from the public and decide on these issues. It seems clear that CJAC should continue to be delegated this work rather than burden the Highways and Transport Committee who will have more strategic issues to deal with.</p> <p>The report states that in 2013 all district councils in the county were offered the opportunity to set up a Joint Area Committee for their district but only Cambridge accepted as the others all felt they would be of limited value. This conclusion is not surprising because Cambridge is intrinsically very different from the other districts. The city has a 140,000 residents in a much more densely populated area. Every day we host large numbers of people from elsewhere in the county when they travel in to work, shop, use services and be taught at places of further and higher education. And of course Cambridge is also a magnet for huge numbers of tourists every year.</p> <p>It's not that Cambridge has an unfair advantage in having CJAC to deal with highway improvement and parking issues, it's that the pressures of heavy traffic congestion and related parking pressures make it essential that adequate time is made available to listen to the concerns of local residents whose lives would be affected by proposals, and to assess and adjudicate on them. It is also of note that unlike the other districts we do not have any parish or town councils to assess proposals and take into account representations from local residents. CJAC fulfils that role.</p> <p>The report states that the County Council's constitution "allows the Council to appoint Area Joint Committees as it sees fit, if it is satisfied that to do so will improve service delivery in the context of best value and more efficient, transparent and accountable decision making." In my experience it is essential that CJAC is not abolished as to do so would have completely the opposite effect. And it would add considerably to the work of the Highways and Transport Committee if full and proper consideration is to continue to be given to the detail of highway improvements and parking proposals which affect the lives of Cambridge residents.</p> <p>I hope you will see that this proposal has not been thought through and should be rejected.</p>
31.	Tim Burford	<p>I am very alarmed by what I'm reading about the county council trying to abolish the Cambridge Joint Area Committee and make decisions that directly impact the lives of a quarter of the county's population far away in Alconbury. Consultation will be greatly impeded, and I hope you will admit that consultation is not a delaying mechanism but something that will usually lead to major improvements to plans.</p> <p>In addition, to rush this through while democracy is undermined by not being able to have real physical</p>

		meetings looks particularly bad. I do hope you will reconsider and delay this until proper scrutiny and democratic process can resume.
32.	Daniel Zeichner MP	I am finding near universal concern across Cambridge about the proposals on the Joint Development Control Committee. Given the current crisis I would urge you to defer and allow a more extended discussion.
33.	Trumpington Residents' Association	<p>The Trumpington Residents' Association is most concerned that a report to this Wednesday's meeting asks the Committee to recommend to the Council abolition of the Cambridge Joint Area Committee and withdrawal from the Joint Development Control Committee. We value both of these committees and ask that residents in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire are consulted before the County Council makes such fundamental decisions, so that the Council is fully informed by the views of the people they would most affect.</p> <p>It is our reasonable expectation that the three councils whose decisions on these matters affect us should work together and be seen by the public to do so. These decisions, if made, would seem to conflict with this important principle. We do not agree, as the report argues, that the current arrangements unduly favour Cambridge and disadvantage other areas in Cambridgeshire. They respond appropriately to the different circumstances of Cambridge and help to ensure equity in our local governance with all parts of Cambridgeshire.</p> <p>It is in light of this and the importance we attach to the functions served by both committees that the association makes this urgent request.</p>
34.	Councillor McPherson (Cambridge City Council)	I am most concerned that should the proposed abolition go ahead it will deprive the residents of the Cambridge of their opportunity to both directly influence decisions taken in their own city and also deprive them of the opportunity to have their democratically elected Councillors represent them at a properly convened and recorded meeting where issues can be properly debated and informed decisions made and the process of those decisions can be scrutinised and challenged by both elected councillors and residents alike. I therefore strongly believe that the democratic process will be seriously compromised by such a decision and it should on these grounds, and those of Cllr Robertson be completely discounted and the CJAC be allowed to continue in its present form.

35.	Terry Horsnell	Since this will have a potentially large impact on the means of City residents to make their views known to the County Council, I would ask you to defer this abolition proposal until such time as Cambridge residents have had a chance to have their say.
36.	Tom Parker	I would like to register my objection to the scrapping of the Cambridge Transport Committee. It is important that decisions regarding transport developments in Cambridge involve representatives from the city council as well as the county council, so that the people taking the decisions are more directly involved in the city whose future they will be affecting. I note that other parts of the county could also have taken up the opportunity to have similar Committees but declined to do so - that should not be a reason to abolish the one that does exist, especially when it affects the major city and employment hub in the county council area.
37.	Jane Paterson-Todd (Cambridge Ahead)	I understand the County Council is considering withdrawing from the Joint Development Control Committee, from August. As you know Cambridge Ahead continues to support the joint working of the local authorities to help realise and accelerate plans for the region and we would be keen to understand more the County Council's thinking behind this consideration.
38.	Chris Rand	I would like to add my name to those objecting to the proposal to abolish the Cambridge Joint Area Committee without more extensive consultation being carried out.
39.	Councillor Mike Sargeant (Cambridge City Council)	<p>It was recognised, in 2007 by Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council along with the Department of Communities for Local Government, the need for 'very substantial strengthening of the delivery arrangements for sustainable growth in and around Cambridge.' This included the setting up of the Joint Development Control Committee – Fringes.</p> <p>More recently, the Combined Authority Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Review (CPIER) said:</p> <p>KEY RECOMMENDATION #13 New collaborative ways of working need to be developed, which provide for tailored solutions to the needs of each of the three distinct economies.....' (Greater Cambridge, Greater Peterborough and the Fens)</p> <p>In addition, it said: KEY RECOMMENDATION #3:</p>

The UK Government should adopt a 'Cambridge or overseas' mentality towards knowledge-intensive (KI) business in this area, recognising that in an era of international connectivity and footloose labour, many high-value companies will need to relocate abroad if this area no longer meets their needs. Ensuring that Cambridge continues to deliver for KI businesses should be considered a nationally strategic priority.

The proposal from the County Council to withdraw from the Joint Development Control Committee – Fringes is removing an existing '**tailored solution**' of the sort that the CPIER was recommending and putting nothing in its place. The County Council are recommending uniformity across the County without any reference to the needs of each of the '**three distinct economies**'.

The Fringe sites contain some of the most important technological businesses in the country. It will also provide many of the sites that will provide much of the new jobs that are vital to the Mayor's objective to double GVA while providing homes close to jobs and minimising the need for people travelling long distances to work. These are all issues that I would suggest Cambridgeshire County Council should be involved in at the planning stage.

It is vital that local authorities work together as has been illustrated so much by the current pandemic. I urge the Cambridgeshire County Council Constitution and Ethics Committee not to take a hasty decision on this matter which could have a long term negative impact on the vital part that Greater Cambridge will play in recovering from the impact of the pandemic and the future prosperity both locally and for UK PLC.