

Notes of a remote meeting of the East Cambs Bus, Cycle, Walk Working Party held on Wednesday 6th July 2022 at 6.01pm.

PRESENT

Cllr Charlotte Cane
Cllr Lorna Dupré
Cllr Mark Goldsack (Acting Chairman)
Cllr Simon Harries

OFFICERS

Sally Bonnett – Director Communities
Caroline Evans – Democratic Services Officer

Prior to the start of the meeting, and in accordance with the Working Party's Terms of Reference, Cllr Mark Goldsack assumed the role of Chairman as the only Conservative Member present.

91. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Lis Every and Cllr Alan Sharp.

92. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

93. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Notes of the meeting held on 24th May 2022 were agreed as an accurate record.

94. FEEDBACK FROM SUSTRANS SEMINAR

The Director Communities informed Members that all documents from the seminar had now been added to the Council's website. Sustrans would undertake prioritisation work to suggest short-, medium- and long-term measures. The results were expected within a few weeks. In response to a Member's question she explained that the Littleport route was awaiting ecology information before the Sustrans report would be available; it would be circulated once received.

A Member thanked the Director Communities for organising the very interesting seminar and enabling local representatives to engage with the process. They stated that experience with the Wildlife Trust suggested that a favoured route

should not be ruled out if the sole barrier was related to ecology; solutions had been found elsewhere when all parties worked together to address the issues.

95. DRAFT RESPONSE TO THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY DRAFT LOCAL TRANSPORT AND CONNECTIVITY PLAN CONSULTATION – JUNE 2022

The Director Communities explained that the Working Group would inform the Council's response to the CPCA's draft Local Transport and Connectivity Plan consultation. A draft response had been provided and feedback was sought before circulation to all Councillors.

Comments and discussion from Members included:

- The inclusion of reference to maintenance issues (page 2) was less strategic than expected for this document.
 - The Director Communities explained that it was included in Active Travel at the County level.
- The Ely Zipper bus service (page 2) was just one of many bus services that were at risk and should not be singled out when a wider issue existed.
 - The Director Communities agreed to broaden the description.
- The rural vs urban divide was unnecessary (page 3); subsidising rural routes should be a priority rather than the priority.
- The suggestion that a student travel task and finish group should be formed and start delivering before the start of the 2022/23 school year (page 3) was unrealistic.
 - The Director Communities explained that the intention had been to emphasise the urgency, but agreed to re-phrase.
- Support for the A10 dualling (page 4) contained no analysis of the environmental impact, induced demand, or consideration of whether it would cause gridlock at the A10 / A14 Milton interchange. It seemed unlikely that improving the A10 would encourage public transport use, as was suggested in the final paragraph.
- Questioning why reclassification of the A1123 was assumed to provide benefits (page 5), given that the B1102 and the B1381 both suffered from issues such as congestion and heavy vehicles despite being B-roads.
 - The Director Communities explained that a Motion supporting the reclassification had been approved by Full Council in 2021.
- More detail was requested regarding housing growth being limited by the A142 (page 6).
- Regarding alternative fuels (page 6), electric vehicles addressed the issue of pollution but not congestion, and were also heavier than equivalent petrol/diesel vehicles.
- Ely would benefit from a full traffic study (page 6).
- "Given recent performance" was unnecessary in the final paragraph (page 7) and any similar political comments should be removed in order to build consensus.

The Director Communities reminded Members that the remit of the Working Group was solely active travel and public transport. A Member countered that roads were fundamental to the success of both active travel and public transport, and therefore were within scope.

It was agreed that the Director Communities would refresh the draft response, circulate it to all Working Party Members with a 48h turnaround for further comment, and then it would be sent to all Council Members for comment prior to submission.

96. WORK PROGRAMME – JULY 2022

Members received and noted the Work Programme to October 2022, which was unchanged from that seen at the previous meeting.

97. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held once the prioritisation information had been received from Sustrans. The Director Communities highlighted that a report would need to be presented to the Finance & Assets Committee if further funds were required. Questions were raised as to whether funding could be released without the need for such a report since other projects received funding without approval from a Committee meeting, and whether delegated funds could be given to the Working Party in order to avoid delays and increase efficiency. The Director Communities agreed to investigate.

The meeting closed at 6:52pm.