

Minutes of a meeting of the East Cambs Bus Services Review Working Party held in Committee Room 2, The Grange, Ely on Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at 6.05pm.

**PRESENT**

Cllr David Ambrose Smith  
Cllr Lorna Dupré  
Cllr Lis Every  
Cllr Simon Harries  
Cllr Alan Sharp

**OFFICERS**

Sally Bonnett – Infrastructure & Strategy Manager  
Janis Murfet – Democratic Services Officer

**IN ATTENDANCE**

John Gregson – Programme Manager, Bus Reform Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority  
Peter Hardy – ITP  
Oliver Howarth – Bus Strategy Manager, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Cllr Alan Sharp was duly proposed and seconded. There being no other nominations,

It was resolved:

That Cllr Sharp be elected as Chairman of the East Cambs Bus Services Review Working Party for the remainder of the municipal year.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Charlotte Cane.

It was noted that Cllr Harries had been delayed in traffic and would arrive shortly.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made.

4. **TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE EAST CAMBS BUS SERVICES REVIEW WORKING PARTY**

Members reviewed the Terms of Reference, which had been agreed at the meeting of the Finance & Assets Committee on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

A Member asked whether the Working Party could have substitute Members and the Democratic Services Officer advised that this was not usual practice, as the Working Party did not have any decision making powers. However, she would raise the matter with the Democratic Services Manager and advise Members accordingly.

The Working Party discussed the remit of the review and it was agreed that as well as looking at routes, ticketing, interchanges and sustainability should also be considered as key issues.

It was resolved:

That the Terms of Reference and the comments made thereon, be noted.

5. **CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY STRATEGIC BUS REVIEW: PRESENTATION BY PETER HARDY, ITP**

Mr Hardy, gave a presentation entitled 'Bus Delivery Options: Review and Business Case'.

It was noted that the purpose of the review was to define the future vision for bus travel across Cambridgeshire & Peterborough; to consider the different options for delivering this vision ( and implications) and to assess the costs and benefits of the different approaches, undertaking an outline business case.

The presentation (a copy of which is appended to these notes) covered the following topics:

- Review stages;
- Options to be considered;
- Output and activities;
- Outline business case;
- Logic mapping: vision-led;

- Current review activities;
- Transforming bus services:
  - Local Transport Plan aspirations;
  - What sort of improvements should we be considering?
  - Practical considerations.

*(Cllr Harries joined the meeting at 6.25pm)*

During the course of discussion, the following points were noted:

- The Combined Authority has a whole team working on the review, including market research and people will be brought in for the economic element;
- The Combined Authority will firm up on where the focus groups are to be held in the next week. The intention is to draw on the experiences of people who either do or don't use buses in order to gain a wider picture;
- It needs to be recognised that a lot of effort will go into the review and East Cambridgeshire will contribute a substantial of work towards it;
- ITP will take into consideration timescales, but these will be moulded by the Mayor;
- The outcome of the Local Transport Plan is awaited and the review will take account of local research. This to include critical mass regarding the frequency of services. There is evidence that commercial operators are successful in running inter-urban services;
- The term 'improvement' needs to be defined. The language should be about transformational change;
- The practical considerations go beyond bus services. At some point the costs of funding must be considered along with the wider implications of the models. Taxi and bus regulations should also be taken into account;

- Community transport is somewhat of a 'grey area'. Legislation cannot be influenced, but thought can be given to community lift schemes;
- Bus passes are a national scheme, but they are of no use if there no buses to use them on;
- ITP's work is to determine the best vehicle to deliver the vision. The vision needs to be created first. It is recognised that it will be different in rural areas compared to urban and it must be affordable;
- It is intended to try and limit the number of questions on the questionnaire to 15, as it is felt that to make it any longer could be problematic. People will be asked if they are prepared to participate in a focus group;
- A report will be produced on the findings of the questionnaire, and the results for East Cambridgeshire could be isolated, to inform the work of the Working Party;
- In terms of definitions, an urban centre could be likened to a hub, and a rural area to a network.

It was resolved:

That the contents of the presentation be noted.

## **6. REVIEW OF MAPPING OF EXISTING BUS ROUTES**

The Infrastructure & Strategy Manager presented an information report which contained a list of current bus services and two maps indicating specific services in the north and south of the District.

Mr Howarth informed the Working Party that he had very wide experience of working in both the private and public sectors. His remit was to discuss what was possible and the cost implications and it was agreed that it would be useful for him to collaborate with the Infrastructure & Strategy Manager to achieve this.

Members made the point that Ward and Parish Councillors' knowledge of their own areas could be put to good use to inform the review and it was also suggested that Neighbourhood Plans should be considered as a source of information.

A Member thought this to be a strategic issue and said that links were needed to where money and energy was going without people having to get into their cars.

It was resolved:

That the contents of the report and the comments made thereon, be noted.

## **7. ECDC BUS REVIEW WORK PROGRAMME**

Members considered a draft work programme, which set out the tasks and key dates for the Working Party.

- The draft consultation proposals were due to be agreed in December 2019;
- The final draft consultation proposals would be taken to Finance & Assets Committee in January to be signed off;
- The initial results of the CPCA business case would be emerging by April/May 2020, although the options might look different to what had been discussed today;
- It was agreed that results would be shared with the Combined Authority as they came forward subject to any Purdah restrictions (PCC elections);
- A further meeting of the Working Party to be arranged for December 2019, followed by another in February 2020.

It was resolved:

That the draft work programme be noted and further meetings be arranged as necessary.

## 8. **EAST CAMBRIDGSHIRE BUS SERVICES REVIEW CONSULTATION PROPOSALS**

The Infrastructure & Strategy Manager presented a report regarding the development of the consultation proposals for the Bus Services Review. Appended to the report was a draft questionnaire.

It was noted that a consultation exercise was to be carried out to identify key bus routes for local residents that met one of the following journey purposes:

- Access to work;
- Access to learning;
- Access to healthcare and wellbeing support;
- Access to food shopping; and
- Access to leisure.

The consultation period would run for 6 weeks in February/March 2020, with the start date to be agreed. Paragraph 4.4 of the report set out the proposed consultation activities, and paragraph 4.5, the stakeholders identified to date. Members noted that the final consultation proposals would go to the meeting of the Finance & Assets Committee on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

The preliminary results would be shared with the Combined Authority, and would be probably available in late May.

During the course of discussion, the following points were put forward:

- The section on the purpose of the journey should include 'Access to democracy and public services'
- There should be a question about connections to other services, choice and ease of connection;
- Access to healthcare and wellbeing should include family;
- Question 1 would be amended to ask for the full postcode;
- There was no question about whether people used the bus through choice or compulsion. This could include asking them to state whether they used a bus pass, and if so, what sort of pass and at what times.

The Infrastructure & Strategy Manager said that questionnaires would be available at key venues such as GP surgeries and libraries. Ward Members would know the best venues.

Members noted that the questionnaire would be revised in the light of the comments made at this evening's meeting and then circulated to the Working Party.

A Member asked the CPCA if there was any sense of the level of participation that could be expected from their survey and was told that it would probably be only one response per household. Mr Gregson said that the survey would be aimed at both bus users and non-users.

It was resolved:

That the Working Party approves the proposed consultation activities and the draft consultation questionnaire, subject to the proposed amendments as discussed at the meeting.

**9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that next meeting of the Working Party would be arranged for Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019 at 6.00pm.

The meeting closed at 7.57pm.