

Burwell Parish Council
Asset and Environment Group
Meeting of 27.08.24 7.30 pm at The Gardiner Memorial Hall
Minutes

Present: Lea Dodds, Gus Jones, Richard Jenkins, Clive Leach, Jim Perry, Liz Swift, Michael Swift, Geraldine Tate, Paul Webb, Geraldine Tate

A&E/270824/01 Apologies for absences and Declarations of Interests

Apologies were received from Ian Woodroffe and Linda Kitching

A&E/270824/02 Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 25th June 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 25th June 2024 were approved and signed as a true record of the meeting. Liz Swift proposed, Mike Swift seconded and all were in favour.

A&E/270824/03 Non-Agenda updates from the previous meeting:

The Clerk reported that an email had been received to complain that there was loose gravel laid in the accessible entrance which was impossible for wheelchairs and mobility scooters. The council confirmed that this was road plainings and they had sought advice from the County Council when it was constructed. **The Parish Clerk will seek advice again from Mark Peck at Cambridgeshire County Council. It was also confirmed that a wacker plate could be hired to help with the surface**

A&E/270824/04 Consideration of Action Sheet items

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Project | |
| GMH refurbishment Phase Two | Progress in September – Parish Clerk to arrange a meeting with Jeremy Lander and the Parish Council. |
| GMH Exit | We have agreed to make a pre-application planning submission to find out whether it is feasible to widen the current entrance, making it a combined entrance and exit. The current exit would be narrowed so that only pedestrians could use it. |

A&E/270824/05 Gardiner Memorial Hall Maintenance

1. Lights: There is a timer there already.
Barnwell Electrical would not quote without charging a fee.
Drakes proposed replacing with a simpler mechanical timer £219.94 + VAT.
Cartwrights reset the timer and will give us a quote for a new one if needed.
Action: Keyholders to feedback if working. Richard Jenkins to look at the timer as he is a qualified electrician.
2. Potholes: We need 2 tonnes of Road Plainings at c £45 per ton + delivery.
Action: Parish Clerk to get 3 quotes for full council
3. Kitchen floor screed has blown. We would need to take Lino up but we do not have jointing tool for Lino so may need to go back to company who fitted.
Action: Parish Clerk to look at original fitters, check warranty and what options are.
4. Stage floor boards needed sanding and some small tack nails, wood glue resin to repair which the maintenance officer has completed.

5. The sinks are loose because hirers keep using sinks to lift themselves from toilet, plaster boards loose, but to refit sinks you would need to remove tiled splash back or the alternative is to try and fit small L shape brackets under the sinks to strengthen. Brackets would probably cost circa £100 for all toilets.
Action: Maintenance officer to fit one bracket to the loose sink in the end toilet. Other sinks don't appear to be loose. Signs to be put up to ask people to avoid leaning on sinks.
6. Maintenance Officer has refitted and tightened hand rail

A&E/270824/06 Recreation Ground Bin Store

Maintenance Officer has removed the doors and loose boards. Stated it isn't being used yet he has fixed numerous times.

Burwell FC have confirmed they are not using it.

Agreed that as the store is no longer used, the doors would not be refitted.

A&E/270824/07 Park signage

There are a number of signs that need replacing identified on the annual playground inspection report and by the Parish Council Team. Westhorpe Park also needs some signage. Suggest a project to look at all together and quotations. Some funding could come from earmarked reserves for Westhorpe Park.

Need dogs on lead sign on the middle gate of the recreation ground leading to the childrens play area.

Action: Parish Clerk to identify signs required and obtain quotations.

A&E/270824/08 Jubilee Green Play Area Steps

These need repair which the maintenance officer can do but materials would cost £400-£500. **Action: Propose to full council to authorise spend of up to £500 on repairs to the steps to the slide in Jubilee Green Play area. Maintenance Officer to get more accurate costs of materials.**

A&E/270824/09 Tree work Jubilee Green quotations

Paul Webb proposed that SR Landscape Services be awarded the work. Liz Swift seconded. All were in favour.

Action: Propose this work to full council and instruct contractor once approved. Parish Clerk to check relevant insurances in place.

A&E/270824/10 Grass Cutting Spring Close

Message from Zion Landscapes: "I have spoken to the team about the nettles at Spring Close. Unfortunately, this was a complete misunderstanding. Ben spoke to the team and asked them what they thought the best way to cut it would be. They mistook this for an instruction. We are so very sorry about this. It was a genuine mistake."

The quote they sent us was £550 + VAT. The Parish Council need to take a decision on whether to pay and how much.

Paul Webb proposed that we pay 50% of the invoice, Liz Swift seconded this. All in favour except 1 abstention. It was noted that they had done a good job but that we had been very clear about the approval process and the likelihood is that this level of spend would not have been approved and an alternative found.

Action: Propose 50% payment of Zion Landscapes invoice for Nettle Cut (£275 + VAT) to Full Council.

A&E/270824/11 9 Poplars Close Soakaway

From Archie Roe: We have discussed with our builder who has been out to assess the damage and we are quite confident there is no soakaway. In order to create a soakaway, we would be carrying out works manually (hand dug instead of using heavy machinery) to make sure that the impact on the area is kept to a minimum. We have been advised that the soakaway required would need to be dug 1m sq and can be either constructed in a traditional form using hardcore brick rubble or if you would prefer, we can use soakaway crates (wrapped with a geo textile membrane wrap). We will keep it away from the Leys pedestrian path and proper safety barriers will be in place whilst we carry out the work to reduce risk to the general public. Works would be completed within one working day. All turfs will be reinstated and we will continue to water it to ensure it is restored back to its previous condition. We will ensure we keep the appropriate distance from existing trees planted on the land.

Lea Dodds contacted the builder who confirmed:

- They would use membrane-wrapped crates to maximise drainage
- Building Control would need to approve the work
- Digging by hand will enable them to avoid damage to the nearby trees (which are still small at present).

It is proposed that we write to Archie Roe to confirm that we don't have any objections to what they propose but that the Parish Council is unable to confirm ownership of the land so this must be completed at their own risk with no financial or other liability for Burwell Parish Council. Paul Webb proposed and Clive Leach seconded. All voted in favour. This will proposal will go to Full Council for final resolution.

A&E/270824/12 Weed Control

In the Spring the Parish Council agreed that we would take on the weed control from County Council because of local concerns about chemicals that they were using. It was noted that the Parish Council should have checked more about the implications. The Chair stated that there is approximately 25 miles of road edge in Burwell although we don't know if Highways were treating all of that. They would treat then send out a roadsweeper which also removes soil and debris. The original advice was that highways would provide budget and advice about alternatives, this has not been received. A trial in Kent was highlighted that looked at alternatives to chemical treatment, all had problems and would not be viable in Burwell. It was acknowledged that the next treatment programme would be in October.

Paul Webb proposed that as we had no engagement regarding alternatives from Highways that we opt back into the treatment programme with the County Council. Liz Swift seconded this and all were in favour. **Action: Raise at Full Council. Parish Clerk to check we can opt back in.**

A&E/270824/13 Jubilee Reading Room Door service contract renewal

This is a normal annual cost which has been approved since the door was installed, this provides maintenance, service centre, reduced labour rates, compliance and safety. Due for renewal at the end of September. Cost £232 plus VAT

Paul Webb proposed that we recommend approval to Full Council, Jim Perry seconded and all were in favour.

A&E/270824/14 Margaret Field Planning Permission

It was agreed that this would be deferred to the next meeting

A&E/270824/15 Mandeville Hall Soakaway

Having had a quotation in the region of £2500.00 plus VAT to construct a new soakaway, It had been agreed that further fibreoptic Inspection should be arranged to find out why the existing drain is blocking. The Parish Clerk spoke to Dynorod. For a commercial building the first 60 minutes would be £175 + VAT, any additional time would be charged at 30mins for £60+VAT. It was decided not to go ahead as from previous inspection it is unlikely that we would be able to get any further with investigations. It was decided that we would revert to a previous quote of £675 from Winkworth to repair underground storm drainage if possible.

Action: Parish Clerk to contact Winkworth for update

A&E/270824/16 Any other urgent matters

Could we ask the maintenance officer to change the timer light on skateboard park – reduce operating time to 30 minutes and curfew to 9:30pm. All were in favour.

A&E/270824/17 Date of the next meeting: 29 October 2024

Cllr Lorna Dupré

MONTHLY REPORT AUGUST 2024

Apologies for the absence of a report for July. I was extremely busy with the General Election campaign, and many meetings were cancelled reducing the amount of business to report on.

ASSETS & PROCUREMENT

Old Shire Hall

The County Council's Assets & Procurement Committee has agreed to enter into an exclusivity arrangement with a preferred bidder for a freehold sale of the old Shire Hall building in Cambridge. The move comes after the previous preferred bidder pulled out of a proposal for a leasehold arrangement, and a new marketing exercise was undertaken. The Committee also agreed to make arrangements in the event that contracts are not exchanged by 9 October.

Council-owned companies

The Committee has also agreed to establish arrangements for strengthened oversight of companies in which the council has an interest as owner, and to recommend the council's Constitution & Ethics Committee to establish a shareholder sub-committee to consider how this should be done.

COMMUNITIES, SOCIAL MOBILITY & INCLUSION (COSMIC)

Household Support Fund

The Household Support Fund in Cambridgeshire closed to new applications on 26 July as the national scheme finishes at the end of September. The July closure is to ensure demand is managed and the fund does not overspend.

In April 2024, Cambridgeshire County Council was awarded over £3,580,000 to support households in need and help with the rising cost of living. The scheme has experienced significant demand, with large numbers of applications being submitted every day both directly and through partners.

The council's Household Advice and Support Team will continue to process applications, with the current processing time being approximately three weeks. If funds remain after all outstanding applications have been processed, the scheme will briefly reopen for new applications.

Although the scheme is being discontinued, advice is still available to those struggling with the cost of living. Help with utility bills, housing support, emergencies and benefits, and the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme from Cambridgeshire County Council can be found on the council's website.

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/council/communities/support-with-the-cost-of-living

The Government offers help and advice with living costs, childcare and maternity costs, managing money and debt and guidance for those over 60 or those who have a disability or health condition.

www.gov.uk/cost-of-living

The closure of the Household Support Fund does not affect the holiday supermarket voucher scheme for families in receipt of free school meals.

ENVIRONMENT & GREEN INVESTMENT

Wisbech incinerator

Fenland District Council's application requesting judicial review of the Government's decision to grant planning permission was unsuccessful.

Sunnica

The outgoing Government delayed four times making a decision on the Sunnica solar farm application. The incoming Government approved the application in its first few days, despite the recommendation of the Examining Authority that it should be refused. The objector group and the 'host authorities' (Suffolk and Cambridgeshire counties, West Suffolk and East Cambridgeshire districts) have been considering their responses.

HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT

Weed treatment

The County Council's chemical weed treatment programme is under way, within built-up areas in villages and towns with a 40MPH limit or below. Treatment will take place twice a year as a minimum.

Chemical weed treatment is applied directly to any weeds in the gullies of roads and at the back of footways abutting a building, wall, or fence line. A period of about three to five weeks is typically required for the weed treatment to take effect. After this, road sweepers are deployed to remove dead weeds. A second programme of treatment will take place in October. This will help to get the weeds under control before the next growing season.

Seven areas of the county have confirmed that they do not wish to be part of the chemical weed treatment programme, so they have been excluded. The County Council is working with these areas—Cambridge, Caxton, Duxford, Lolworth, Morborne, Burwell, and Girton—to appropriately support their alternative treatment regimes.

Ely Road and The Brook Sutton

The County Council has been replacing drain covers and ironworks along the main route through Sutton with more durable covers. The Council has also been carrying out crack sealing of the road surface, to stop water pooling and freezing in the cracks in winter and further splitting the road to create more potholes.

20MPH schemes

The Highways & Transport Committee has agreed to proceed with a 20MPH scheme for parts of Huntingdon, and to review the impacts of the 20MPH schemes in twenty-four months.

Maintenance work on old A14

Important maintenance work is beginning on the A1307, known locally as the old A14, between Swavesey and Huntingdon.

Since the County Council took over responsibility for the road from National Highways in February, there has been a temporary 40MPH speed limit in place between Fenstanton and St Ives due to safety concerns. The road has been inspected and drainage works are needed here. From 29 July one lane will be closed in each direction for these works. They are expected to take four weeks and the lane closures will be in place 24/7 on both the eastbound and westbound carriageway. Once this is complete at the end of August, if the work has been successful, the 40MPH speed limit on this section will be removed.

Meanwhile the Godmanchester to Huntingdon section is currently restricted to a temporary 40MPH speed limit due to safety concerns with the barriers. The council expects to start work on the barriers on Sunday 15 September. This will also involve lane closures in both directions and the work is expected to take three months to complete. In the meantime, the 40MPH speed limit will remain in place for safety reasons.

Road resurfacing works will also be taking place overnight along the A1307 from 27 August onwards, for a period of three weeks, weather permitting, in a variety of locations. Road closures will be necessary, and signed diversion routes will be in place. All this work is being co-ordinated, and will be done together wherever possible to minimise disruption.

PLANNING

Pymoor enforcement update

Following an extensive investigation, on 16 November 2023 an Enforcement Notice was served on the owners of the land behind Corkers Crisps in relation to the importation, depositing, processing and exporting of inert waste materials and the raising of the land with waste without planning permission.

An appeal was then lodged, and on 14 February 2024 the Planning Inspectorate confirmed the start date of the appeal. County Council officers have submitted all relevant information required and await further information on the appointment of an Inspector and the next steps.

Since then, a number of local residents have raised with me the daily convoys of FDS lorries from the site along Black Bank and out towards Welney. The County Council's enforcement team is aware of these movements.

Meanwhile on the Combined Authority

The Combined Authority Board has decided to proceed with proposals for a bus franchising scheme, in the hope of improving bus services in Cambridgeshire.

The Combined Authority has been advised that more further education provision is needed in the present FE 'cold spot' of East Cambridgeshire especially in sectors including health and care. Current activity should be scaled up and existing facilities expanded.

MEET YOUR COUNCILLORS

- **Sutton:** Cllr Mark Inskip and I will be in the school Community Room on Monday 5 August and Monday 2 September 6:30-7:30PM.

Please note that these dates may be subject to change.

I will try to attend some of the various coffee mornings in Sutton, Witchford, and Coveney, and the Book Café in Little Downham, but this will be subject to summer holiday plans as they develop.

I can also be contacted

- by email at lorna@lornadupre.org.uk
- on Facebook
- by phone on 07930 337596

Best wishes to all residents of the Sutton division for the remainder of the summer.

Cllr Lorna Dupré

County Councillor for the Sutton division

Cllr Lorna Dupré

MONTHLY REPORT SEPTEMBER 2024

ADULTS & HEALTH

Priors Field Sutton

For the last eighteen months Malling Health has held a caretaker contract to provide primary care services from Priors Field Surgery. They will continue to do so until 31 March 2025.

The NHS has now launched an open procurement process to seek a provider to deliver services from the site under a ten-year contract, with the potential for a five-year extension. The NHS hopes to identify the most suitable provider before the end of 2024, with the new contract taking effect on 1 April 2025.

The NHS has worked with Priors Field PPG to identify patient representatives to serve on the procurement panel, so that the views of local residents are taken into account as part of the process.

Meanwhile work to enable the NHS to purchase the Priors Field Surgery building continues to move forwards, with more news expected in the coming months.

Covid vaccination programme

The government has accepted advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation for an autumn COVID-19 vaccination programme this year. All those aged 65 or over, all those in care homes for older people, and those aged six months or over who are in a clinical risk group, will be eligible for vaccination this autumn.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

'My Smile' accreditation for Children & Family Centres

All of the County Council's Child & Family Centres and Family Hubs are now 'My Smile' accredited.

The 'My Smile' programme is aimed at reducing oral health inequalities for the most deprived and disadvantaged children in early years. The programme offers training to Child & Family Centre and Family Hub staff by the Oral Health team from Dental Health Care, part of Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust.

There are four steps to the programme, consisting of

- Training in good oral health
- How to share information to families around toothbrushing

- Tooth friendly diets
- Dental visits.

Acquiring a 'My Smile' accreditation shows that the staff at these centres have received the most the up-to-date, evidence-based oral health training. It also shows that their centres promote a 'tooth friendly' environment for children and can confidently promote and advise visiting families on how to support good oral health at home.

New Director of Education

Sarah Callaghan has joined Cambridgeshire County Council's as its new Service Director for Education. She has come from a similar position in Islington and started in Cambridgeshire on 5 August.

ENVIRONMENT & GREEN INVESTMENT

Sunnica

After the decision by the Government to permit the development of the Sunnica solar farm between Burwell and Red Lodge, the four 'host authorities' (Suffolk and Cambridgeshire counties, West Suffolk and East Cambridgeshire districts) submitted a 'pre-action protocol letter'.

This asked the Government to correct an error in the permission, which loaded considerable costs onto the councils for all the work they will need to do on the detail of the permission. The councils expected the Government to correct this, but the response from Government was that this was not an error, and the councils were indeed expected to shoulder the financial burden.

This was the only ground on which the four councils were seeking to challenge the decision, and would not have affected whether the development itself went ahead or not.

Two of the councils—West Suffolk and Cambridgeshire—decided not to proceed any further with the challenge, based on their judgement of the legal advice all four councils had seen, their view that the likelihood of success was low, and the consequent financial risk to local taxpayers.

The remaining two councils—East Cambridgeshire and Suffolk—are claiming that they would have proceeded to apply for judicial review if it had not been for West Suffolk and Cambridgeshire's decision. As all four councils had seen the same legal advice this appears to smack of political opportunism. And of course there is nothing to stop East Cambridgeshire and Suffolk going ahead with a judicial review application on their own.

The Say No To Sunnica action group, who had opened a crowdfunding webpage for their own judicial review, are now saying they are reviewing the situation and taking stock.

Community energy consultation

The County Council is currently consulting on its proposed Action Plan to support community energy. The draft Action Plan and survey seeking your views on the proposals have been published, and the survey will remain open until Monday 16 September.

<https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/community-energy-project>

Waste partnership awards new recycling contract

Local council waste partnership RECAP has awarded its contract for mixed dry recyclables (blue bin waste) to Biffa and Re-Gen after a procurement exercise. The contract was previously held by Thalia who run the waste facility at Waterbeach. The handover will take place on 1 September.

HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT

Ely Road and The Brook Sutton

I have received comments from a few residents who were not satisfied with the recent works on Ely Road and The Brook. The contractor and the Local Highways Officer have both assessed the works and found that they complied with the council's agreed standards. The works were carried out at night to prevent traffic backing up on to the A142, and to enable buses to run during the day.

Chain Causeway

Work on Chain Causeway, originally planned for the autumn, will now take place in January and February next year. This will consist of deep excavations of the road on the bends between South Fen Farm and the point where the road starts to follow the straight line which extends beside the Hundred Foot to Earith Bridge. The road will be closed at this point for the whole duration of the works, which are expected to last around ten weeks.

Active travel hierarchy consultation

A consultation on the development of an 'Active Travel Hierarchy' was launched on 22 July. This seeks feedback on which routes and public rights of way are considered most important to users, as well as asking residents about their preferences for prioritised maintenance activities.

Some of the feedback, including from me, was that the consultation was difficult to use and understand. In response, the council has revised the online material to make it easier and extended the consultation to 30 September.

<https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/active-travel-hierarchy>

Mill Road (Cambridge) bus gate new consultation

Cambridgeshire County Council has agreed with the claimant to end legal proceedings in relation to the Mill Road Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) challenge. The Council will no longer be defending the case through the courts, and the judge has agreed to quash the decision that was made to approve the traffic regulation order for the scheme.

A new statutory consultation on a proposed Traffic Regulation Order started on Friday 9 August. The Order would close Mill Road bridge to all vehicles, with some exemptions. The consultation runs until midnight on Friday 13 September.

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/transport-projects/cycling-pedestrian-improvements/mill-road-bridge-tro>

Vision Zero and iRAP (International Road Assessment Programme)

An update on the Vision Zero Partnership will be presented to the County Council's Highways & Transport Committee in December. At the same meeting, a report setting out the analysis of the Council's A roads using the iRAP methodology will be considered.

Vision Zero is a road safety partnership including local councils, police, fire, NHS and other relevant organisations. It is committed to preventing all road deaths across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, and to significantly reducing the severity of injuries, costs and social impacts resulting from road traffic collisions.

iRAP is a registered charity working with governments, highways authorities, and others to provide the tools and training to make roads safer.

Government review of transport priorities

The new government is undertaking an internal review of the Department for Transport's capital spend portfolio and will be making recommendations about current and future schemes.

This could have implications for schemes in or around Cambridgeshire, including the A10 from Ely to Cambridge, East West Rail, and the Ely Area Capacity Enhancements around Ely railway junction.

Highways projects overview

The council wants to use its website more to enable residents to see more up to date information on highways projects. This is very much a work in progress, but some of the larger projects can be seen at

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/highway-projects/our-projects-and-programmes>

Local Highways Improvement schemes

Local Highways Improvement applications are being scored and will be presented to the Highways & Transport Committee in October for approval.

36 of the 77 schemes added to the programme last year have been delivered, with a further ten ordered. Of the remainder, fourteen are with the contractor for pricing, fifteen are in design and consultation stage.

Five schemes prior to 2023/24 have not yet been completed.

20MPH schemes

Scoring of the new and updated applications took place in May and June in preparation for presentation to the Highways & Transport Committee in October. These remain popular, with 65 applications received this year, many of which were re-submissions from the previous year.

Some of the 2023/2024 have been delayed as applicants undertake further informal consultation following feedback from residents, or due to changes to guidance from the Department for Transport, and the amount of time the formal consultation phase is taking to conclude.

Weeds

The first round of weed treatment, for those communities wishing to have this, is now coming to an end, and the second round will begin in October.

Winter gritting

Preparations are under way for the 2024 winter, which starts on Friday 1 November, with salt barns being replenished and servicing of gritting vehicles.

Meanwhile on the Combined Authority

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority is consulting on bus franchising. The consultation will run until 20 November. The consultation outlines two options—franchising, and an Enhanced Partnership.

Bus franchising would put routes, timetables and fares in the hands of the local transport authority. An enhanced partnership with bus companies would give local authorities less influence over buses than franchising, but would still allow for multi-operator ticketing and targeted fare discounts.

More details, and residents' chance to have their say, can be found at <https://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/news/bus-franchising-consultation-in-cambridgeshire-and-peterborough-goes-live/>

MEET YOUR COUNCILLORS

- **Sutton:** Cllr Mark Inskip and I will be in the school Community Room on Monday 2 September and Monday 7 October at 6:30-7:30PM.

I hope to attend

- **Witchford** coffee morning Wednesday 4 September 10:30
- **Sutton** Timebank coffee morning (MAGPAS) Tuesday 10 September 10:00
- **Coveney** coffee morning Wednesday 18 September 10:30
- **Little Downham** book café Friday 27 September 10:00
- **Sutton** Nellie's Macmillan coffee morning Friday 27 September 10:00

Please note that these dates may be subject to change.

I can also be contacted

- by email at lorna@lornadupre.org.uk
- on Facebook
- by phone on 07930 337596

Cllr Lorna Dupré

County Councillor for the Sutton division

Katherine Hyett

From: Edward Colman <edward.colman@cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk>
Sent: 14 August 2024 16:44
To: Katherine Hyett
Subject: Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority Bus Franchising Consultation Stakeholder Email

Good afternoon,

Welcome to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) bus franchising consultation.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) is holding a formal consultation which will inform a decision by the Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough on how to reform buses across the area.

The franchising consultation is taking place over 14 weeks between Wednesday 14 August and Wednesday 20 November 2024 and as one of our statutory consultees, I would like to invite you to take part.

How to take part – please use the below options to participate:

Option 1:

We are holding six stakeholder events and would welcome your attendance at one of the events so that you can share your views. Please use this link to find out more information about the six events and to book your place at one of them <https://forms.office.com/e/tUW5vmegdu>. Due to limited space, invitations are restricted to one person per organisation.

Please note that your organisation will be receiving a paper copy of this letter in the post over the next couple of days. This will give you the opportunity to RSVP via email but please use this online form if you are able to.

If you are unable to attend any of the events, a member of the Combined Authority's team would be happy to meet with you to discuss the Assessment and associated documents.

Please contact jackie.cockrill@cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk who will coordinate a meeting with an Officer from the Combined Authority. Please also get in touch with Jackie if you require any accessibility support to attend or take part in your chosen event.

Option 2:

You can participate online by visiting: <https://cpc-a-yourvoice.co.uk/bus-franchising-consultation/>

On the website you will find the relevant consultation documents, together with two questionnaires. A long questionnaire comprising 31 questions and a short one which comprises 11 questions. You can save your answers and return to your questionnaire if you would like more time to complete it.

Option 3:

If you would prefer a paper copy of the consultation documents or large print versions, please contact: consultations@cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk or call us on: 01480 277180. You can also request a copy in the following languages: Polish, Lithuanian, Portuguese and Urdu.

Background to the bus franchising consultation

In March 2023, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority launched 'The Road to Better Buses' strategy, which sets out five key ambitions for buses in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough:

- Add more buses to the network
- Provide bus users with better information

- More reliability across the network
- Nicer, better-quality buses
- Better value for money for users

A year on, the Combined Authority's board has committed more than £13.5million and agreed to three major initiatives to progress our journey on the Road to Better Buses including:

- The introduction of 30 new routes across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
- The introduction of a £1 fare for young people under the age of 25
- To consult on how buses are run across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Our vision for Better Buses

The majority of buses across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are currently run on a purely commercial basis. We believe our ambitions will only be realised if we change this to have greater influence and control over how buses are run. 81% of respondents to our last survey agreed.

We commissioned independent transport consultants, ITP, to undertake a detailed assessment of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's transport needs and to provide an outline business case assessment for bus reform. Two approaches have been outlined in the assessment: a Franchising solution and an Enhanced Partnership (EP).

Under a franchised network, the Combined Authority would contract bus operators to run services on its behalf but have control over the routes, frequency, fares and overall standards of the region's buses. An alternative Enhanced Partnership solution, while producing benefits over the current bus service provides less control over the routes, frequency and overall delivery of the services. This means, as a result, while both an Enhanced Partnership and Franchising can provide enhanced networks, franchising offers the region more control to specify the desired network, levels of service and integrated fares and ticketing, ensuring a more unified and accessible network.

Franchising also allows CPCA to deliver its strategic objectives; to have full influence over outcomes and the efficient delivery of bus service improvements to passengers and bus network changes. The EP is less likely to deliver the strategic outcomes as it leaves key decisions around the network in the hands of bus operators (as per the status quo) with any outcomes subject to negotiations with operators.

Before a final decision is made (due to be on Wednesday 22nd January 2025), we are required by law to seek views from statutory consultees. We are now consulting and would welcome your feedback.

If you would like to help the Combined Authority to promote this consultation, we are very happy to send you a package of leaflets and posters. If this is of interest to your organisation please email consultations@cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk to request the promotional materials.

Yours sincerely

Judith Barker

Executive Director of Place and Connectivity

Edward Colman
Head of Communications, Engagement and Public Affairs
edward.colman@cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk
Tel: 07593 452257

The Combined Authority supports agile working, so please don't feel you need to respond to this email outside your working hours.