



EAST  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

## AGENDA ITEM 4(b)

# Minutes of an Extraordinary (Special) Meeting of East Cambridgeshire District Council held at The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, CB7 4EE on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2022 at 5.40pm

## PRESENT

Councillor Christine Ambrose Smith	Councillor Bill Hunt
Councillor David Ambrose Smith	Councillor Mark Inskip
Councillor Anna Bailey	Councillor Alec Jones
Councillor Ian Bovingdon	Councillor Daniel Schumann
Councillor David Brown	Councillor Joshua Schumann
Councillor Charlotte Cane	Councillor Alan Sharp (Chairman)
Councillor Lorna Dupré (to 6:15pm)	Councillor Amy Starkey
Councillor Lavinia Edwards	Councillor John Trapp
Councillor Lis Every	Councillor Jo Webber
Councillor Mark Goldsack	Councillor Alison Whelan (to 6:15pm)
Councillor Simon Harries	Councillor Christine Whelan
Councillor Julia Huffer (to 7:01pm)	Councillor Gareth Wilson

Four members of the public were in attendance.

### 45. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Ten questions or statements were asked by members of the public, which the Chairman invited the Leader of the Council to respond to.

#### **a) Question from Rosie Amos, an Ely resident:**

*(Read aloud on their behalf by the Democratic Services Manager.)*

“Please could you consider the following questions at your discussions today. As an Ely resident I am concerned about public transport provision in the area for myself and my children.

What is the Council’s long-term plan to support young people’s transport to education?

Does the council agree that the congestion travelling to Cambridge for Ely residents is a serious issue?

Many thanks for considering my questions.”

#### **Summary of the response from the Leader of the Council, Cllr Anna Bailey:**

Cllr Bailey shared the concerns regarding public transport for young people and all those residents who needed to travel to access education. Although

transport was not within the remit of the Council, ECDC nonetheless worked hard to lobby in areas such as infrastructure. The Combined Authority was the Transport Authority for the area and, *via* its seat on the Board, the Council represented the needs of East Cambridgeshire's residents in that forum.

**b) Question from Ghislaine Dunn, a Bottisham resident:**

*(Read aloud on their behalf by the Democratic Services Manager.)*

"Thank you for your hard work in trying to sort out transport in East Cambridgeshire.

I have been a city resident for 15 years but moved out to Bottisham last year partly due to the air pollution and poor safety for children in the city. When a city resident I have always been in support of a congestion charge; I still mostly support this development. I think that the tone needs addressing and shouldn't be enforced for city residents or electric vehicles.

I also believe that transport in and out of the city needs drastic improvement before any congestion charge can be implemented. Can the Council answer how they plan to improve public transport from the villages especially East Cambridgeshire villages such as Bottisham, Swaffham Bulbeck, Swaffham Prior and Burwell? Bus services have recently been cut leaving elderly residents isolated and students unable to attend further education."

**Summary of the response from the Leader of the Council, Cllr Anna Bailey:**

Cllr Bailey reiterated that the Combined Authority was responsible for transport in the area and that ECDC was a small authority without the remit, powers or funding to deliver transport functions. The Combined Authority had funded the old Stagecoach routes until March 2023 and was working on solutions from April 2023 onwards; as the ECDC's representative on the Combined Authority Board she was working hard for the needs of East Cambs residents. Regarding the suggestion that a congestion charge should not apply to Cambridge City residents, the Leader stated that she understood from the GCP that approximately 60% of vehicle movements in the area were due to City residents, and therefore economically it would not be viable to exempt the residents.

**c) Question from Andrew Poulton, an Ely resident:**

"Given the growth plans for Greater Cambridge and East Cambs, and given the level of out-commuting we know occurs, does the Council accept the need to substantially reduce private vehicle use? If so, how?"

**Summary of the response from the Leader of the Council, Cllr Anna Bailey:**

Cllr Bailey agreed that there was a significant amount of out-commuting in East Cambs with many residents requiring regular, if not daily, access to Cambridge. The Combined Authority had committed to reducing vehicle usage by 15% but, due to East Cambs being a growth area, the true reduction required would be greater than 15%. The Council was working

hard lobbying for improvements such as additional infrastructure to enable Soham station to be fully utilised. The Council had surveyed all households in 2020 regarding bus routes and had subsequently prepared bus proposals having paid close attention to the routes that were most needed. The bus strategy and the cycle / walk strategy were two examples of excellent cross-party work that would help to secure funding for improvements, and a recent Growth & Infrastructure Fund allocation would help to deliver the Soham to Wicken Cycleway. Overall, ECDC had already done more than most but also recognised the need to do more.

**d) Statement from Sarah Parish, a Little Thetford resident:**

*(Read aloud on their behalf by the Democratic Services Manager.)*

"I use the bus regularly to get into Cambridge. I support the congestion charge because of the need for more reliable, frequent, extended, and cheaper bus services in this District, and the congestion charge will fund this."

**e) Question from Josh Grantham, on behalf of the Cambridgeshire Sustainable Travel Alliance:**

"The Combined Authority and its constituent Councils, including East Cambridgeshire, signed up to the recommendations outlined in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate's report, which included a commitment to reduce car mileage by 15%, using a 2019 baseline across the region.

Yet without policy intervention, the number of vehicular journeys in the region is projected to increase by around 20% by 2031, which will increase car mileage and emissions.

East Cambridgeshire District Council acknowledges in its draft response the need for credible alternatives to the car in the form of both a better public transport system and active travel options. The District Council also states that it understands that it will require both capital and sustainable revenue funding to achieve this.

However, at the same time it does not support the introduction of road charging, which would provide the sustainable revenue mentioned above.

The response does suggest the GCP develops the Bus Service Improvement Plan to attract government funding. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority's first submission for bus service improvement plan funding was unsuccessful. An update given to the CPCA by Cllr Anne Hay in September 2022 identified insufficient commitment to road charging, active travel, and bus priority schemes as a key reason for this. It will be difficult to deliver more bus priority schemes and active travel infrastructure in Cambridge without reducing congestion, due to the lack of space on the city's roads.

Therefore, our question is: what solutions does East Cambridgeshire propose that would ensure the District meets its climate targets and the agreed regional commitment to reduce the number of car miles driven by 15% while funding the

much-needed improvements to active travel and public transport in this District?”

**Summary of the response from the Leader of the Council, Cllr Anna Bailey:**

Cllr Bailey expressed disappointment that the Combined Authority had recently missed out on substantial funding for bus service improvement but stated that the reported statement about the Combined Authority having missed out due to insufficient commitment to charging did not have a clear source, and she had requested further information about that. Congestion charging had not been a part of other successful bids for bus services improvement money. There were a number of possible solutions, some of which would be short-term and quicker to resolve, such as further rounds of bus improvement funding, and there were other more ambitious longer-term solutions that were more forward-thinking than those in the GCP proposals.

**f) Statement from Rebecca Denness:**

“Climate Change is here. We’ve seen instances of fire and flood around the world, but also in this country with houses burning down, what 70 miles away from this room? My sons and nephews along with young relatives of everyone here will face food and water shortages within their lifetimes. East Cambs Council knows the urgency and depth of the crisis and has responded by declaring a climate emergency.

The Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership proposals are a step in the right direction to address rising vehicle emissions. These were highlighted in the report Metro Mayor Palmer commissioned from the Independent Commission on Climate Change for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough where it’s stated that 500 thousand cars must be removed from Cambridgeshire to meet emissions targets.

Now, you may say that conventional cars are being replaced by electric vehicles or EVs: one million on the country’s roads at the moment. That’s great except availability of lithium for the manufacture of batteries for cars is problematic. EVs are expensive and fossil fuelled cars will remain, polluting locally and globally.

Frankly, even if EV production was sustainable into the medium term, say 10 years hence, government revenue from fuels is likely to be replaced by charging for the use of roads in other words, the congestion charge element of the Sustainable Travel Zone. It is the future.

I finish with this:

In your discussions, I would urge you to consider what constructive suggestions you can make to improve the proposals so that the decision makers can vote in favour of them.”

**g) Question from Sarah Whitebread, an Ely resident:**

*(Read aloud on their behalf by the Democratic Services Manager.)*

“Would the Council support bus franchising in order to break Stagecoach’s monopoly and if so, how do they plan to fund it?”

**Summary of the response from the Leader of the Council, Cllr Anna Bailey:**

Cllr Bailey again reiterated that the Combined Authority was the Transport Authority and that ECDC sought to influence its decisions *via* a seat on the Board. The Council supported enhanced bus partnerships or franchising, whichever would be better for the District, and it would be important for the Combined Authority to examine the pros and cons of both models. Key requirements would be integrated timetables and ticketing, and a good network across the District with the geography being carefully considered.

**h) Question from Judith Salmon:**

*(Read aloud on their behalf by the Democratic Services Manager.)*

“I am very supportive of the Sustainable Travel Zone as we need to ease congestion in our City and lower carbon emissions. Can you tell me if you will be adopting a franchise model to provide an active travel bus network in and around Cambridge, as at present buses in the surrounding villages are very poor? If you are going with the franchise concept for funding better buses, can you explain how you will fund and oversee this?”

**Summary of the response from the Leader of the Council, Cllr Anna Bailey:**

Cllr Bailey explained that the Combined Authority, as the Transport Authority for the area, had neither discussed the GCP proposals nor adopted a position on them. They were currently working on a bus strategy which, together with the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan, would form parent documents for travel across Cambridgeshire. There was general agreement on the public transport need but disagreement on funding.

**i) Question from Martin Wheatley, a Swaffham Bulbeck resident:**

*(Read aloud on their behalf by the Democratic Services Manager.)*

“In correspondence with me about the current Making Connections consultation, the Council Leader said that ‘There are many things than can be done to improve the situation and which I believe should be pursued first before the imposition of road charging.’ Could she list those things?”

**Summary of the response from the Leader of the Council, Cllr Anna Bailey:**

Cllr Bailey stated that this would be addressed in the later discussions.

**j) Statement from Jethro Gould, on behalf of the East Cambridgeshire Climate Action Network:**

*(Read aloud on their behalf by the Democratic Services Manager.)*

“Dear Councillors,

Our group, East Cambridgeshire Climate Action Network, is disappointed with the District Council’s draft response to the GCP plans. While there are some aspects we agree with such as the call for improved rail services, overall the response indicates that ECDC want to derail the consultation process rather than contribute to a constructive county-wide discussion about how we make the transport system in the county fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

As a group we are broadly supportive of the GCP’s plans and have submitted a consultation response accordingly. Councillors will be aware that there have been decades of political gridlock over transport in Cambridgeshire, the GCP proposals provide a possible pathway forward. We ask that Councillors put aside party politics, which derailed previous transport proposals, and instead of bluntly opposing the GCP plan, consider what steps ECDC can take to help complement the proposed changes to the bus, active travel and park and ride networks. In light of the draft response, and the Council’s own commitments after declaring a climate emergency in 2019, we have some questions for Councillors ahead of any vote to approve this draft response:

- Transport is Cambridgeshire’s single largest source of greenhouse gas emissions. In the draft response it states that no impact assessment has been undertaken by ECDC to assess the effect of rejecting the GCP proposals on the NetZero target and 15% traffic reduction target which the Council have signed up to. What is the justification for this?
- Does the Council recognise that overall, the proposals are going to be of benefit to residents of East Cambs through reduced traffic on major routes like the A10, reduced costs for buses and the park and ride? For example, the plans indicate that park and ride costs will be reduced to £1 with buses into Cambridge every ten minutes for 20 hours of the day which represents a significant cost and convenience improvement for East Cambs commuters compared to parking in the city.
- Does the Council recognise that improvements to the bus network and cycle infrastructure will be of benefit to people who cannot afford a car and for people with mobility issues who will benefit from greater accessibility on buses and from improved cycle infrastructure, which is also of benefit to users of wheelchairs, mobility scooters and adapted eBikes?
- The lessons from other cities and countries are that to encourage a modal shift from cars to more sustainable and healthier forms of transport a “carrot” and “stick” approach is required. In this case the “stick” element is an STZ to discourage unnecessary car journeys in Cambridge. What evidence do ECDC have that congestion and related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions generated by car journeys into and out of Cambridge can be effectively reduced without some kind of congestion and/or ULEZ (ultra-low emission zone) charging scheme?

- The draft response repeatedly states concern about the impact of congestion charging on different user groups without providing evidence to show what these impacts would actually be. The STZ proposals include an extensive exemptions list of users including, among others, delivery businesses, blue badge holders and outpatients of Addenbrookes hospital. Given that the funding for the GCP plan is contingent on some element of congestion charging, would it not be more constructive for ECDC to suggest further additions to the exemptions list or modifications to the exact boundary of the STZ rather than derailing the entire plan?
- The draft response repeatedly asserts that the proposals are too ambitious or not realistic. What evidence does ECDC have to support these assertions and does this signal that ECDC does not have real ambition to help cut transport emissions and congestion in Cambridgeshire?
- Transport is clearly a contentious issue locally. Would the District Council be willing to help organise a citizens assembly involving East Cambs residents and transport experts to provide a constructive platform for guiding future transport proposals in light of the urgent need to tackle congestion, air pollution and climate change while ensuring a fair and just transition to Net Zero? Our group would be happy to work with ECDC, alongside other local community groups, to help promote such an event. There is a local precedent for this as a citizens assembly helped formulate the initial proposals put forward by the GCP: <https://involve.org.uk/our-work/our-projects/practice/how-can-congestion-be-reduced-greater-cambridge>
- We would also like to invite Councillors to attend our next Earth Café event in January which will focus on active travel. Likely to be on the Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> of January, details to be confirmed.

Many thanks in advance for your time.”

The Chairman thanked all members of the public for their contributions and asked Members to consider all points raised in the later debate.

#### **46. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllrs Sue Austen, Matthew Downey, Lisa Stubbs and Paola Trimarco.

#### **47. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllrs Dupré and A Whelan stated that, as Members of Cambridgeshire County Council, they had taken legal advice regarding participation at the meeting since the County Council might in the future be required to make a decision on the proposals that were currently in the statutory consultation phase. As a consequence of the advice received they would not participate further or remain at the meeting.

*At 6:15pm Cllrs Dupré and A Whelan left the meeting and did not return.*

**48. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman informed Members that a traffic light tower system would be used to assist Members in timing their contributions to the 5 minutes allowed for speeches within Council Procedure Rules.

**49. COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE GREATER CAMBRIDGE PARTNERSHIP'S "MAKING CONNECTIONS" 2022 CONSULTATION**

Council considered a report (X128, previously circulated) containing a draft submission to the Greater Cambridge Partnership's (GCP's) "Making Connections" 2022 consultation. The Director Community summarised the report's contents and reminded Members that additional information from the GCP had been circulated prior to the meeting. She stated that whilst the Council supported the principles of improving bus services and walking and cycling infrastructure, it had concerns regarding the delivery of the proposed Future Bus Network and its long-term sustainability, in particular the proposals and resources allocated for the Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) in rural areas.

Cllr Bailey, seconded by Cllr J Schumann, proposed that the submission to the GCP attached as Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

Cllr Bailey urged all Members to speak as one voice in responding to the consultation on behalf of East Cambs residents. Whilst overall the principles of improving public and sustainable transport were supported, it was important to recognise that not all local residents could use public transport or active travel solutions. She considered that the frequency of rural routes in the proposals was inadequate and, in terms of the Demand Responsive Transport (DRT), the suggested 12 buses across 9 zones with a 30-minute performance standard would be unachievable. In addition, it would not be a door to door service and therefore those in remote locations would be unlikely to benefit. Rural residents would be particularly penalised and it was noticeable that very little was offered for Fenland; an area requiring 'levelling-up'. The proposed congestion charges would be high for tradespeople and HGV drivers, would impact the personal freedoms of those living within the charging zone, and she considered that it would be immoral to include the hospitals. Consultation within East Cambridgeshire had been inadequate, with just one small event in Ely and no leaflet drop to all households. A solution providing cheap attractive and very regular travel was needed, and had been possible with the CAM metro scheme that had been deliverable and could perhaps be re-examined, or a similar light rail scheme devised. She considered the GCP to be remote and expensive to run, with limited outcomes for its 8.5 years of work. She urged them to address smaller issues of significant benefit, such as improving the cycling infrastructure within and beyond Cambridge, and working with bus providers for an enhanced bus partnership delivering an integrated network with minimal need to change buses and with a focus on rural areas for public subsidy. She stated that it was clear that the proposals did not have public support and there was no political



mandate for it; the cost would be too great for the benefits and the GCP and Combined Authority should develop and deliver better proposals.

The Chairman reminded Members that a letter from the GCP addressing the Officer's report and the proposed submission had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Cllr Cane then proposed the following amendment, seconded by Cllr Inskip, and all Members were provided with a hardcopy of the text.

"Members are requested to agree ~~instruct~~ **instruct officers to amend the draft submission to the GCP attached as Appendix 1 to this report to reflect:**

1. **That this Council has declared a Climate Emergency and that in the year to March 2022, carbon emissions from transport in Cambridgeshire were 1,597.5 million tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e—23 per cent of the total carbon emissions in the county, and cars and taxis contribute over half of the greenhouse gas emissions from domestic transport**
2. **The need to provide car drivers with attractive public transport alternatives**
3. **That many residents cannot drive and need public transport to access employment, services and leisure activities**
4. **The significant congestion within Cambridge and on the routes into Cambridge, including the A10 and B1102/A1303**
5. **The urgent need for significant improvements to buses, given their continual decline since 1986 and the recent sudden acceleration of the decline**
6. **Support for well-resourced demand responsive transport from door to a scheduled bus or train service and back, and increasing the hours needed to meet the scheduled buses**
7. **Support for extended hours and increased frequency for public transport provision**
8. **Support for the extra routes from Park & Ride sites, eg direct buses to Addenbrookes and railway stations**
9. **The need for rail improvements and fare reductions and integration of various modes of public transport**
10. **Provision of 'PlusBus' tickets – allowing travellers to pay a small supplement on their train fare to cover buses from home to train and from train to Cambridgeshire destination and back**
11. **Provision of travel hubs along rural bus routes and key bus corridors**
12. **Provision for 'school student tickets' ensuring that rural school students pay no more than Cambridge school students for travel to school or sixth form college**  
**The funding challenges, given that there are indications that some combined authority board members oppose funding through a Mayoral precept and the Government refused the combined authority's recent bus improvement funding bid on grounds of lack**

**of commitment to road pricing, active travel and bus priority schemes and Cambridgeshire's high overall growth.”**

Cllr Cane emphasised the struggles that many East Cambs residents faced in travelling for work, leisure, or to access required services, and the pollution, noise and danger experienced by those living on major roads in the District. The increase in housing would inevitably bring increased traffic which was neither sustainable nor compatible with the climate emergency. The “Making Connections” proposal aimed to improve the bus network but residents had indicated that it did not go far enough, therefore the amendment sought to add to it. Increased bus frequencies, together with DRT for those residents not on main routes, was welcomed. However, more consideration was requested regarding the size of the proposed congestion zone, and in particular the inclusion of Cambridge North station and the hospitals. Overall, the proposal required improvement and sustainable funding needed to be identified, but it represented significant progress, and the amendment therefore welcomed the proposal whilst also requesting further improvements.

Several Members expressed their support for elements of the amendment, whilst criticising the timing of its delivery that had prevented its careful consideration by all Members in advance of the meeting. They also stated that without more background detail or explanation for some of the suggestions, they could not support it. A Member suggested that the proposer should present the list of suggestions direct to the GCP.

Other Members fully supported the amendment and clarified that its purpose was not to suggest that all twelve suggestions were the policies of ECDC, but rather that the GCP should carefully consider them as part of the review. They considered the amendment to be positive, constructive and ambitious in helping to improve public transport in the region. One Member questioned why the draft consultation response had stated that the proposed operating hours would not represent a good use of public funds, when extended hours would enable East Cambs residents to return home late and would therefore make the service more attractive to use, which in turn could result in sufficient fare revenue to fund the service. Congestion charging was not proposed to be introduced until the fifth year but there would be at least two local elections and one general election in that timeframe, meaning that much might have changed prior to the planned implementation of the charging scheme.

As the seconder of the amendment, Cllr Inskip suggested that the meeting could be adjourned to provide Members with the time that they had requested to consider all of the suggestions in the amendment. He quoted aspects of the Council's 2019 declaration of a climate emergency and stated that a strong transport focus would be required in order to achieve net zero. Attractive public transport alternatives were needed, especially in such a rural District with many commuters, and the GCP proposals included a considerable improvement to the bus services in East Cambridgeshire. In his own Ward, hourly buses would be restored, with the route continuing to Ely station, and with longer hours and a Sunday service. However, the draft response did not welcome the proposal

and therefore did not encourage investment in East Cambs. He emphasised the importance of rail infrastructure improvements in the area and encouraged all Members to support efforts to improve bus services in the meantime, while the complexities of funding were addressed.

Responding as proposer of the original motion, Cllr Bailey expressed disappointment that the amendment had not been submitted in advance of the meeting since it appeared that the two groups' positions were not too far apart and, with sufficient time, it might have been possible to draft a response incorporating many of the points raised. However, it was unclear how the suggestions could now be absorbed into the written response or what would need to be removed from it. For example, the Conservative Group's position was to oppose congestion charging in the context of the GCP's proposal but it was unclear whether or not the amendment would seek to remove that opposition from the consultation response. The GCP would undoubtedly watch the livestream of the meeting and therefore all of the comments made would be on record.

Two Members highlighted that the Council's April 2022 vote regarding congestion charging – referenced within the draft response – had been on a matter of principle, whereas the Leader's comments suggested that the opposition to charging was now in the context of the GCP proposals. They therefore asked whether this was a change of position that could be reflected in the text of the submission. The Leader responded that it was for the proposer of the amendment to consider any revisions to the amendment.

At the request of Cllr Hunt, a recorded vote was taken on the amendment:

FOR: (7) – Cllrs Cane, Harries, Inskip, Jones, Trapp, C Whelan, Wilson.

AGAINST: (15) – Cllrs C Ambrose Smith, D Ambrose Smith, Bailey, Bovington, Brown, Edwards, Every, Goldsack, Huffer, Hunt, D Schumann, J Schumann, Sharp, Starkey, Webber.

ABSTENTIONS: (0)

The amendment was declared to be lost.

*At 7:01pm Cllr Huffer left the meeting and did not return.*

During subsequent debate on the original motion, a Member criticised the reduction of a complex local transport debate to the single issue of congestion charging. Another Member added that congestion charging should not be opposed on principle but should instead be considered as a tool to be used as needed and appropriate, therefore the response should be amended to clarify opposition to congestion charging in the proposed form for the particular plans.

One Member highlighted inequalities and social exclusion in rural areas, and stated that a lack of access to public transport could exacerbate these. They considered that the introduction of congestion charging would further increase inequalities for those that needed to drive due to a lack of appropriate public transport in terms of locations, timings, security fears, or mobility issues: cars were the only realistic option for some residents. A Member questioned how the congestion charge would affect volunteer drivers such as those who transported local residents to hospital appointments. One Member raised concerns about hospital access for the infirm who could not transfer from a car to a Park & Ride bus, and highlighted the impact of the proposed charge on construction workers and similar professions who would inevitably pass the charge on to their clients. Other Members mentioned travelling to Cambridge for education. However, several Members referred to exemptions in the consultation which would mean that some of these individuals/groups would not be charged.

The paragraph stating that the proposed bus operating hours did not represent a good use of public funds was criticised by several Members who considered that addressing the ability of residents to move around the District by day and night would be a correct use of such funds. One Member suggested that more buses running to a more frequent and longer timetable would help address the earlier concerns regarding social exclusion.

In response to an earlier comment regarding consultation, a Member commented that all Parish Councils had been invited to a meeting with the GCP and cited that as evidence of consultation within the District. Another Member commented that none of the Parish Councils that they dealt with had been aware of the consultation.

Two Members questioned why the Bus, Cycle, Walk Working Party or a Committee had not been involved in the drafting of the response, since it had become evident that formulating/revising it at a meeting of the Full Council was not practicable. Another Member considered that a debate at Full Council enabled the whole Council's views to be presented and understood.

Several Members commented that the draft response stated that the GCP's proposals were inadequate, but it did not include suggestions as to what would be better or what East Cambridgeshire would want. Therefore, it was not sufficiently robust, positive or ambitious. One Member commented that the nature of the motion did not allow for support of some elements of the response and not others. They encouraged everyone to study the online documents relating to the consultation and to complete the questionnaire, if they had not already done so.

Speaking as the seconder of the motion, Cllr J Schumann emphasised all that this Council had done in recent years to relieve congestion, including support for the Ely bypass and Soham station as well as the bus proposals and cycle / walk strategies that had been devised. He questioned the work of the GCP, County Council and Combined Authority at the current time and could not

support the latest proposal for the introduction of a congestion charge. Referring to criticisms of the negative tone of the draft response, he considered that it was necessary to send a clear message to the GCP.

Responding to various points raised during the debate, the proposer of the motion, Cllr Bailey, stated that the charge would be for congestion rather than pollution. Residents further out of Cambridge would face long and indirect bus journeys that would negatively impacted their productivity and quality of life. She maintained that the proposed services did not represent the best use of public funds and that a more nuanced approach was required. Similarly, the DRT proposals would be unrealistic given the geography of the area. Although there was general agreement that improved bus services were required, the congestion charge formed a fundamental part of the proposals and therefore could not be separated from the proposals themselves.

At the request of Cllr Hunt, a recorded vote was taken on the motion:

FOR: (14) – Cllrs C Ambrose Smith, D Ambrose Smith, Bailey, Bovingdon, Brown, Edwards, Every, Goldsack, Hunt, D Schumann, J Schumann, Sharp, Starkey, Webber.

AGAINST: (0)

ABSTENTIONS: (7) – Cllrs Cane, Harries, Inskip, Jones, Trapp, C Whelan, Wilson.

The motion was declared to be carried.

It was resolved:

That the submission to the Greater Cambridge Partnership, attached as Appendix 1 to the Officer's report, be approved.

The meeting concluded at 7:53pm.

Chairman.....

Date.....