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**GREATER  
CAMBRIDGE  
PARTNERSHIP**

Growing and sharing prosperity

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**By email**

## **Re: Special Council Meeting 15.12.2022 17.30: Agenda Item 5**

Dear Tracey

I am the Director of the GCP's City Access programme which includes the current 'Making Connections' proposals out to consultation.

I have looked at the paper and draft response published online for discussion under Agenda Item 5 at the special council meeting scheduled for 15 December 2022.

There are one or two points about the proposals as represented in the paper and draft response appended which I would like to clarify. I should be grateful if you could put this submission to your elected members in advance of the meeting. I could also arrange for me or one of our officials to attend the special meeting on Thursday night if members would find it helpful to address any further questions to us directly whilst they consider their response.

The points are as follows. Where I have made reference to specific technical documents I have provided links directly to the relevant files, but all of them can alternatively be accessed via the consultation webpage, <https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/making-connections-2022>, where they are available for public scrutiny.

**Park & Ride:** There is no mention of Park and Ride as an option. For East Cambridgeshire residents, the STZ proposal primarily affects those who own a car and drive into Cambridge although we hope to also bring benefits to those without a car to the extent possible. I would want to underline that for all those from E Cambs who currently travel in by car, many will be served by new or improved bus routes, existing rail routes or new DRT provision. For those that are not, there will be option to drive to a P&R site to access a service that will in future be faster, more frequent, operate for longer hours and be cheaper than is currently the case. This is an important part of the offer. Note that new 10,000 new P&R spaces are proposed around the travel to work area, including potential relocated & additional P&R to the east of Cambridge and at Waterbeach. As the paper points out, there is also the opportunity to build on the East Cambs Cycling and Walking Routes Strategy to help to support people to

connect by walking or cycling into the higher frequency bus network, the rail network or park and ride sites as an addition to DRT.

**Demand Responsive Transit:** On DRT, the appendix states that it will be necessary to change from DRT to a rural route to a key route to complete a journey into Cambridge. In fact, the proposal is that DRT would give access to key routes at key points on the network such as Ely and could give access to secondary rural services, such as ZIP. It points to reduced DRT hours compared to scheduled bus hours. This is the case, but the proposed operating hours are still 0600-2200 Mon-Sat and 0800-2000 on Sundays – longer than most current scheduled rural bus services. It might be worth underlining the scale of transformation proposed with DRT – many settlements in East Cambridgeshire currently have 1 bus a week and some no bus service at all. Many rural bus routes that currently operate are at risk due to marginal commercial viability so if no new revenue stream is identified the existing offer may further decline.

**Alternative suggestions for the bus network offer:** The draft response provides feedback on the proposed bus network for East Cambridgeshire which is most welcome, and we will pass to our Board to consider in its decision making as with all of our consultation responses. It would be helpful if the draft could elaborate on what service levels and priorities would be preferred by the Council so that we can take that under consideration.

**Franchising, BSIP and LTCP:** The draft response expresses concern about the sequencing of this set of proposals with the CPCA's LTCP and BSIP, but expresses support for exploring franchising. We are working hand in glove with partners in CPCA on the Local Transport and Connectivity Plan and the Bus Strategy and subsequent bus policy. Those policy developments take account of GCP proposals and vice versa. The bus services network set out in the Making Connections consultation is based on analysis commissioned by the CPCA in 2020 ('Future Bus Network Concept') – this GCP proposal is in essence a vehicle for delivering that CPCA vision. The revenue stream generated by a road user charge would be an important consideration to support the Mayor in assessing whether he should franchise buses. More detail on this point is contained in the commercial case section of the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) for the proposals (section 4.5 in particular).

SOC: <https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/18150/widgets/56016/documents/32501>

**Rail & active travel:** The draft response makes no mention of the fact that parts of East Cambridgeshire benefits from rail services in addition to the proposed future bus network where other parts of the travel to work area do not. If franchising were taken forward it would allow much closer timetabling of bus services with rail timetables. The draft also states GCP should work with the CPCA to deliver further investment in active travel, rail and e-mobility, both within Greater Cambridge and across Cambridgeshire. Our Eastern Access study which is underway has set out a series of near term and longer term improvements including exploring the feasibility of upgrading the Cambridge to Newmarket line. We are keen to explore the specific schemes the draft response mentions as part of this work, but it is dependent on decisions taken by Network Rail, which in turn depends on progress of East West Rail, and, as such, can only be advanced over a longer timescale. The Making Connections programme would provide the area with some autonomy over its decisions on transport investment and could begin to deliver tangible improvements from as early as the end of next year. Funding would be required for any future rail upgrades which is often the sticking point with rail based schemes, but having a dedicated revenue stream for transport

into the future, as would be offered by an STZ could make such funding and financing easier to secure. As well as the proposed future bus network the consultation also sets out a series of active travel improvements proposed and your comments on these as part of your response would be welcomed. The GCP is separately bringing forward plans for 12 greenways: high quality segregated cycling and walking routes to allow people to travel into Cambridge from the surrounding towns and villages including proposed Swaffham and Bottisham greenways to the east of Cambridge.

**People unable to use Public Transport:** The paper mentions that not all are able to use public transport without mentioning or commenting on the Council's opinions on the proposed suite of exemptions, discounts and reimbursements which aim to take account of that. Those include provision for those who are disabled or with a clinical need to use car to access healthcare frequently. This approach is detailed in a Technical note on the consultation webpage as well as in the consultation brochure. It was developed based on conclusions from the draft Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) and draft Social and Distributional Impact Assessment (SDIA) but feedback on the proposed approach gathered through this consultation will be an important source of evidence in finalising those draft assessments. We would therefore welcome comments on this aspect of the proposed approach.

Technical note on discounts, exemptions and reimbursements:

<https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/18150/widgets/56016/documents/32510>

Draft EqIA:

<https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/18150/widgets/56016/documents/32511>

Draft SDIA:

<https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/18150/widgets/56016/documents/32506>

**Alternative options for achieving the objectives:** The paper concludes by saying that other interventions should be considered to deliver the public and active travel objectives rather than the STZ. It would be helpful to outline specifically what the Council's preferred option for that would be. Our technical work has not so far indicated other more feasible ways of delivering the same outcomes, but the purpose of this consultation is for stakeholders and the public to comment on the work done to date if they believe it to have drawn the wrong conclusions. For more detail on option sifting and why the work arrives at the recommended option, see the options appraisal sifting work, summarised in sections 1.12-1.15 of the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) and detailed in its Appendix A – Options Assessment Report published online on the consultation webpage:

SOC: <https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/18150/widgets/56016/documents/32501>

OAR: <https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/18150/widgets/56016/documents/32502>

**Business impacts:** The draft response says that the council is concerned that no business impact work appears to have been undertaken. This is covered in the SOC and in particular Appendix D which does consider business impacts in line with HMT and DfT best practice guidance for a scheme at this level of detail.

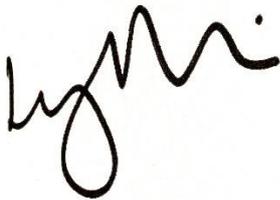
SOC Appendix D: Appraisal Tables:

<https://consultcambs.uk.engagementhq.com/18150/widgets/56016/documents/32508>

**Achieving net zero targets:** Neither the covering report nor the draft response refers to the contribution that traffic reduction would make to achieving East Cambridgeshire's legally binding carbon reduction targets. Across Greater Cambridge surface transport accounts for 35% of carbon emissions. Decarbonising transport will be pivotal to achieving net zero. The ECDC Environment Plan 2022 asserts that: *“Saying ‘no’ to growth is not an option. There is a pressing need for new homes and infrastructure, but we recognise the need for sustainable growth such as minimising the need to travel, providing sustainable transport options”*. The proposals set out in Making Connections could substantially contribute to achieving those targets.

Once again, I would be very happy to field an officer for the meeting to discuss these or other points if councillors would find that helpful.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lynne Miles', with a stylized, cursive script.

Lynne Miles  
Director of City Access, Greater Cambridge Partnership