

# HAVERHILL TOWN COUNCIL

## HAVERHILL AREA FORUM

8<sup>th</sup> February 2021



**Present:** Mayor James Palmer  
Charlie Hamilton (CAM Strategic Director)  
Ludovica Orlando, Stakeholder Engagement Lead  
Luke Page, Communications  
Kim Sawyer, CEO of Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority

Paul Hollinghurst, Railfuture  
Peter Wakefield, Railfuture East Anglia, Cambridge

### **Cambridgeshire:**

Councillor Geoff Harvey, South Cambridgeshire District Council, Balsham Ward  
Councillor Duncan Ogilvy, Chair, Bartlow Parish Council  
Councillor Tony Orgee, Vice Chair, Great Abington Parish Council and Chair of the GCP South East Cambs Local Liaison Forum)  
Councillor John Howard, Horseheath Parish Council  
Councillor Enid Bald, Linton Parish Council  
Councillor John Bald, Linton Parish Council  
Councillor Allen Hazlehurst, West Wickham Parish Council

### **Essex:**

Councillor Claire Greenwell, Chair, Helions Bumpstead Parish Council  
Councillor Christ Brown, Helions Bumpstead Parish Council  
Councillor Keith Choat, Sturmer Parish Councillor

### **Haverhill Town Council:**

Mayor John Burns  
Councillor Tony Brown  
Councillor Bruce Davidson  
Councillor Paula Fox  
Councillor Pat Hanlon  
Councillor Aaron Luccarini  
Councillor David Roach  
Councillor David Smith  
Councillor Alan Stinchcombe

### **Suffolk:**

Councillor Neil Curtis, Great Wratting Parish Council  
Councillor Quillon Fox, (Cangle Division) Suffolk County Council  
Councillor Peter Stevens (Withersfield Ward) West Suffolk District Council  
Councillor Ian Kinloch, Withersfield Parish Council

### **Apologies:**

#### **Cambridgeshire:**

District Councillor John Batchelor, Linton Ward  
Andrew Webb, Clerk, Shudy Camps Parish Council

**Essex:**

District Councillor Diana Garrod, Bumpstead Ward  
Lisa Courtney, Clerk, Saffron Walden Town Council

**Suffolk:**

Councillor Mary Evans, Suffolk County Council and West Suffolk District Council  
Judith Dignum, Clerk, Stoke by Clare Parish Council

**Haverhill Town Council:**

Councillor Margaret Marks  
Councillor Elaine McManus

**In attendance:** Colin Poole, Clerk, Haverhill Town Council  
Vicky Phillips, Assistant Town Clerk, Haverhill Town Council

**Welcome**

Mayor John Burns welcomed everyone to the meeting. It was agreed the meeting could be recorded.

**MINUTES**

		Action
<b>HAF /041</b>	<b><u>Apologies for Absence</u></b> The above apologies were noted.	
<b>HAF /042</b>	<p>Mayor James Palmer</p> <p>Thanked everyone for having him along and for the wider invite to parish across the border.</p> <p>Mayor Palmer reminded everyone of his vision for the CAM, elected in 2017, he spoke in his manifesto of delivering an underground system and metro system for Cambridgeshire. This particular scheme was to fulfil the ambitions of the Combined Area Authority in promoting a sustainable transport system for the Greater Cambridge area. Mayor Palmer is aware of the traffic problems on A1307, but the plan is not just for transport but for a platform for positive growth and sustainability for the whole of Cambridgeshire area.</p> <p>Mayor Palmer spoke of the strength of the Cambridge economy which has a knock-on effect. Haverhill has taken a significant amount of residential growth and the transport network has not been upgraded to help out those that have moved to Haverhill for the more affordable housing. The problems that Haverhill have are as a result of the burgeoning economy of Cambridgeshire and he also has to look at how the economy is fed. This is almost unique in the UK, Cambridge and Peterborough (and Bristol) are the only areas outside London and the South East that pays in positive to the treasury, paying in around £5 billion net to the Government which is why the Government put forward a Combined Authority and a Mayor for Cambridgeshire because it is such an important part of the national economy and national prospects. The pressure on housing in Cambridge, transport and the ability to deliver</p>	

growth in the economy post 2030 are all linked heavily to improving the transport network of the city, of the county itself and spreading the wealth of South Cambridgeshire to a wider area.

Mayor Palmer commented that there is a lot of talk of Silicon Fen and he believes there is no such thing. The Cambridge growth has been concentrated on a very small area mainly due to the appalling transport network. Getting around Cambridge, even from Science Park to Science Park, can be difficult so the idea of the Metro is to go under the historic city, linking in the University not only to its wider parts but also to those Science Parks that ring the city and allow people to travel quickly and very cleanly on a metro system that you would expect only in major cities worldwide.

The latest technology is being embraced and the team are excited to deliver a world-leading public transport system, that can also be sold to other cities around the UK and the world. It will be a great leap forward in the very notion of public transport and will be looking to prove through this system that you can deliver world class public transport in a system that you would expect in a major city in a rural county.

It was always the vision that this system would reach out beyond the county boundary of Cambridgeshire. Mayor Palmer recognises the contribution that Haverhill gives to the economy of Cambridge, but also the sees the potential of going up to Mildenhall, over to St Neots and possibly going West of St Neots giving the opportunity of moving this system beyond Haverhill and into West Suffolk itself and linking into other towns. There is every possibility that this could happen because the system being planned is easy to deliver in rural areas and will not cost anywhere near what a railway or dual carriageway would cost. The system would cost around £4 billion, but to put this into context it is 140 miles (so far planned) of dedicated public transport route. 90 miles of upgraded A14 between Huntingdon and Cambridge cost £1.4 Billion, so the value of money and against other transport schemes and its ability to move many people very cleanly with the latest technology is significant.

What is being created is not just a public transport but also a platform for growth not just of housing but of the economy of Cambridgeshire. Cambridge attracts the very best of the biggest names in the world, but what Cambridge doesn't have at the moment is the ability to compete on a level playing field with places like Boston, San Francisco Shanghai etc because of the poor public transport but also the cost of living in the Cambridge area, something that AstraZeneca found when they moved 3,500 people to the Cambridge region. As the house prices have increased in Cambridge and the South Cambridgeshire area, normal working people have moved further East or North in the County and they have found that when they have moved there that the public transport is not strong enough to allow them to move as freely as that want.

This is a system that is designed to blend into the local economy and the local area, it is designed to protect areas of significant beauty and allow sensible development of housing and what has been seen through housing growth not just in South Cambridgeshire but across the country

is when housing is not planned well around transport you land up with next-field development or infill.

Charlie Hamilton then presented a PowerPoint of the more high-level technical details (copy to be circulated)

Questions were then taken from attendees:

**Councillor Roach:**

He is concerned that the project is moving at a glacial pace and queries why didn't buy in?

**Mayor Palmer:** The reality is that the scheme can only move at a pace that the Government's Green Book allows, there is a process which the scheme needs to go through. There are a few reasons why light rail wasn't used; overcapacity is one, we would be paying for a system that was far over capacity than was needed. Also, how ELR works is a fully segregated system which is not the most cost effective. There are some autonomous transport (in China) that could be used here, but while we are doing work to deliver this it is important to build our own system and sell internationally, innovate and deliver a brand new technology from Cambridgeshire. In the mean time there are some bus ways going in, Addenbrookes to a park and ride on the A11 and potentially Cambridge to Cambourne will be delivered shortly. There is work going on with buses, but what they are trying to deliver is a much more advanced system.

**Councillor Tony Brown;**

How much support and effort do Suffolk County Council and West Suffolk DC put into this scheme? Are they putting in any 'heavy lifting'?

**Mayor Palmer:** There is no need for 'heavy lifting' at the moment from SCC. The current discussions are with WSC and that the planning around Haverhill doesn't hinder the prospect of a depot at Haverhill. Discussions with SCC / WSC have been positive.

**Councillor Peter Stevens, Withersfield:**

Represents Withersfield and the Wrattings. These villages suffer from daily rat runs to North East Cambridge and other areas and they are having difficulty controlling it. Delivery of housing is happening now. Is there a delivery date / timescale for the scheme?

**Mayor Palmer:** Delivery is 2023-2029, it takes time to deliver such a major scheme of this size. Parts of this scheme, such as the park and ride between A11 and Addenbrookes will be delivered in advanced.

**Councillor Enid Bald:**

Since Cambridge are pushing for housing in North Stow, Waterbeach and Cambourne, would those areas be providing housing for the Cambridge expansion? Why are you pushing for more housing in Haverhill?

**Mayor Palmer:** There will be a link between Cambourne, North Stow and Waterbeach into this network as well and the metro is designed to feed those developments and is will also be designed to take pressure of the A1307. The idea of going to Haverhill is not to build more housing but to feed a transport network into where there has been growth already and to

allow for sustainable growth throughout the County. There has also been put forward discussions with land-owners across Huntingdonshire, East Cambridgeshire and South Cambridgeshire for new town developments. The metro allows sustainable new towns to be built without the negative impact of infill or next field development which can affect the character of surrounding towns and villages.

**Charlie Hamilton:** This system will also open up opportunities for the people of Haverhill and surrounding villages to come to the employment clusters. It will open up the job scope, so where people have been limited by public transport, it is usually how long they are spending on transport, through the CAM it is envisaged that a 20-minute journey can get you to the four major employment clusters.

**Councillor J Bald:**

The Mayor has mentioned that he did not like the idea of light railway because it would need an autonomous route, what sort of mix of autonomous routes and shared routes would be possible under this scheme and what it might look like?

**Mayor Palmer:** Agreed that he has always been critical of the guided bus system that goes out to the North West of Cambridge to St Ives, in that if you get on it, although it moves people across the countryside, when you get to Cambridge you are still on a bus and in traffic. Where the guided bus is successful is the interactions within the current road network, it is very easily safely controlled through traffic lights. If you bring in a light rail system every time you interact with a road you would need a level crossing meaning the cost and safety aspect are significant. This system would take the successful elements of the guided bus system.

**Councillor Roach:**

Cambridge has spent a large amount of money on the A1307, putting in bus lanes which ultimately takes out capacity, however, what we haven't seen are buses in going in the bus lanes. By decreasing capacity, traffic is being forced to use back routes through the villages.

**Mayor Palmer:** Has not been involved in the decision making on the bus lane on A1307, but he can explain what is being done with the bus network in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. They are working very closely with the Government and franchising, which will deliver a much more comprehensive network across the county including the route out to A1307.

**Councillor Roach:** Can someone do an evaluation?

**Mayor Palmer:** Will look into it.

**Councillor Burns:** this is a GCP project.

**Councillor Burns:** GCP, call their project CAM as well, are putting a park and ride from Addenbrookes to Babraham. How will this extend to Haverhill?

**Mayor Palmer:** Is a non-voting member of the GCP board. The GCP have a bus way park and ride system, the idea is what is built can be extended or transferred into the CAM. What is being built at Babraham is solely a park and ride and are working together to ensure that the bus route goes to Babraham and Granta Park, which can then be extended out.

**Peter Wakefield:**

As you know, RailFuture are putting in a Haverhill BID. He would like to reassure that in no way would be competing against and are fully behind and feels that can run alongside and complementary to CAM. They are bidding for money, up to £50k for a consultant to see if there is a business and feasibility case. Greater Anglia have agreed, subject to business and feasibility, to run a railway. This could be a case for an extension to East West rail.

**Mayor Palmer:** Agrees on a lot of the work being done for upgrading and re-instating rail, but this particular route he feels that the metro would be a more sustainable, cheaper and quicker option and link into the rail network.

**Councillor Kinloch:**

As a councillor in Withersfield Parish have noticed the village being increasingly over run with cars and can't see anything in the immediate term to deal with this, the A1307 has got worse rather than better. The growth in Haverhill will contribute to this.

**Mayor Palmer:** Would like to be able to make the scheme happen quicker, he has looked at the A1307 and listened to parishes and concluded that the best scheme is to put in CAM metro, dualling would not be any quicker. The transport problems have been looked at and a comprehensive solution has been put together for the future within the timeframes set by the Government.

**Charlie Hamilton:** One of the big drivers on considerations is around modal shift, taking people out of their cars and onto public transport which is not only a net positive for the environment but will help with congestion.

**Councillor Geoff Harvey:**

How would people get from their house to the Haverhill station?

**Charlie Hamilton:** This is part of the integrated system, it is not a complete solution but will create the demand for the smaller vehicle, the shuttle services and active travel, cycling, e-bikes, e-scooters. It will not be one solution fixes all, the right solution for the right people.

**Mayor Palmer:** Franchised bus system linked in with CAM would feed the metro stations.

**Councillor Tony Brown:**

Concerns that if plans for Metro do not come to fruition what will happen, as there is huge development in Haverhill?

**Mayor Palmer:** As long as he is elected this will happen.

**Councillor John Burns:**

Will local members be involved in discussions with SCC and WSC decisions?

**Mayor Palmer:** will work closely with SCC when the time comes, the route will be decided by consultation and will continue to engage.

**John Howard:**

Thanks for support from Haverhill for 50mph. There is a plan for average speed cameras along the route. Parishes along A1307 have been talking to GCP for potential ideas as to what can be done now in advance of CAM, one of which will be to move the bus stop at Horsheath Green along to the next layby, which may reduce hazard for cars and

	<p>pedestrians and how to better incentivise bus use in the villages by providing better storage for bikes and other non motorised transport. Perhaps also designating some of the back roads through the villages, Linton as a minor rural hub.</p> <p><b>Mayor Palmer:</b> Is happy to engage and support.</p> <p><b>Councillor Duncan Ogilvy:</b> Is a new town on the A1307 critical to the funding of CAM?</p> <p><b>Mayor Palmer:</b> New towns are a significant way to raise funding for CAM, when the vision of CAM was thought up, there were two areas of funding that could be delivered from Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, one tax incremental funding which effectively means you ring fence growth in business pots and use the rates from that growth to pay for borrowing against your transport scheme; the other is landowner. He has spoken to 7 landowners in Cambridgeshire that have potential sites, although there wouldn't need 7 sites, maybe 2 or 3 maximum would be necessary. Where they are is not important to the route between Cambridge and Haverhill, but can deliver high quality new towns that protect the villages that we currently have.</p> <p>Nothing would be done without full consultation with the local people.</p> <p><b>Councillor John Burns:</b> Thanked James Palmer, Charlie and everyone else that came along tonight and was surprised that this was far more advanced than he was aware.</p>	
<p>HAV /043</p>	<p><b><u>Date of next meeting</u></b> TBC</p>	

**Closure**

The meeting closed at 8.33pm