

## **Minutes of the A to B Meeting for Parish Councils**

**Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2023**

### **Those Present**

Councillors, residents and clerks from the following villages:

Fordham, Burwell, Reach, Swaffham Prior, Swaffham Bulbeck, Bottisham, Lode, Gt. Wilbraham, and Stow Cum Quy.

There were also County Councillors, and ECDC councillors as well as members of the A to B group. The meeting was chaired by Jonathan Cook and the presentation was done by Emma Fletcher

JC introduced the meeting with the following comments:

The Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership and Cambridge City politicians have made clear their determination to reduce congestion in the City. To achieve this, a significant change needs to take place in the public's attitude towards public transport, a change that will only come about if the services provided are fast, more reliable, efficient and enjoyable. The current provision from our area is none of these. He had tried to contact Stephensons (providers of the No 11 and No 12 bus services) to find out how their services are performing, but they were unwilling to talk until they hear whether they will continue receive subsidies to run the services after the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

The B1102 is a rat-run for people accessing the Cambridge area from Ely, Mildenhall and beyond which significantly increases the volumes of traffic recorded along the B1102.

If public transport is to facilitate this change rather than people being forced out of their cars in the event that congestion charging is implemented, we need a fast, new bus service to get the people who currently use their cars into and out of Cambridge, whether to get to work, school, colleges, to the hospital or train stations.

The current levels of subsidy for bus services are not guaranteed. There was a general consensus that the buses are being used more now.

The GCP plans currently under consultation (Eastern Access 2<sup>nd</sup> Consultation), if implemented, will reduce the road space to allow for more active travel in



Cambridge. That will move the traffic congestion further back towards Quy and the B1102 unless a shift is achieved from private car to bus.

The A to B Group have therefore developed a Fast Bus Service concept, which if implemented could deliver the fast, reliable, efficient and enjoyable service required.

As part of this, the A to B Group propose that the Park and Ride be moved to the North side of the A14 at Quy so that congestion is alleviated before the A14 roundabout and in doing so, a new travel hub is created at Quy enabling buses to travel on to different locations within and to the North and East of the city.

Infrastructure in the villages will be required for buses, bikes and safe, well lit shelters to encourage people to use the buses rather than their cars.

Emma Fletcher who led the development of the concept then did her presentation which can be seen at [\[insert URL\]](#)

And then the floor was **open** to all the parish representatives to have their say:

**Fordham** the hub is out of Fordham on the A142 B1102 junction, but they agreed that was the best position. There is concern over Isleham and Freckenham, which are integrated with Fordham, so need a mini bus service to transport people to the hub. There is also no bus to Wicken.

**Burwell** A mini bus will be needed in addition to the Express Service to connect different areas of the village and get people to the surgery and shops. It was suggested a 3<sup>rd</sup> stop be added for Burwell, at Toyes Lane, as it is a very long village. There was discussion over where land could be used for a hub. There is concern over parents buying cars for their children to get to the colleges. To get a high level of uptake, the hubs need to be car based. It was suggested that one stop needs to be on the route of the road to Reach. In practice, there is really only one viable route from Reach to the wider area and that is direct to Burwell, because the bridge over the disused railway line at Swaffham Prior is a difficult pinch point.

ECDC have commissioned Sustrans to look at cycle routes from Reach, Fordham to Quy, so that they can cycle to a hub and leave their bikes there.

**Swaffham Prior** Maybe have a hub here, although a fast bus service would be very welcome to reduce the traffic passing through the village



**Swaffham Bulbeck** Lots of people need to get to Bottisham, to go to the shops and the surgery. There needs to be a small hopper (minibus) bus to be able to do this and that service could connect through to Burwell via the Swaffhams.

**Bottisham** More students are coming to the Village college from Newmarket and Cambridge, and need transport. However there is going to be a new secondary school built in Cherry Hinton, so fewer pupils might come in the future. Also there needs to be contact between Bottisham and Great Wilbraham which has just one bus a day at 7am.

**Wilbraham** EF's suggestion of a route from Lode, Bottisham, Wilbraham, Fulbourn and then to the Babraham P and R. There is no cycle path or bus. There needs to be a cycle path between Wilbraham and Bottisham, so children can get to school by bike.

At the moment there are 40,000 people working at the Biomedical campus and 300 cars a day go through Wilbraham between 7 and 9am. The Parish Council wants to reduce this volume of car travel.

**Lode** generally supportive of hubs, but it needs to be evidence based. Also we need to involve the National Trust, in particular Anglesey Abbey which has 400K visitors annually. Unclear what is happening to the Greenways, and a possible connection from Waterbeach across the Fen.

**GCP** we all need to respond to their consultation. Also to push for the Newmarket P and R to be moved to Quy, not just within Cambridge. It is not a done deal but we will have to be pushy.

There is a redundant farm South west of the church in Quy that backs onto the A14. Perhaps this where a new P and Ride could be. It would also be useful when the Honey Hill sewage construction starts.

## Conclusions

JC (Chairman): Clear from feedback from the Parish Councils that there is support for such a scheme. Such a scheme will require a significant amount of money and a business case will have to be developed based on data demonstrating the travel needs of our communities. Travel hubs need to be safe and well lit. Bus stops need to be upgraded which is the job of each parish Council. We need to get our MP's on board as well as the GCP.



## **Next Actions**

1. To share the concept with our MPs, the GCP and Cambridge & Peterborough Combined Authority and Stephensons
2. To publish the minutes from this meeting along with the presentation to enable our communities to comment
3. To develop a high level project plan for the next phase of the project which will be data collection to understand our communities' travel needs
4. The project will require funding to pay for consultants / employees to move to this stage so the project plan needs to include an outline business case / vision
5. Parish Councils will be asked to explore options for Travel Hubs location sites as part of a feasibility study which will follow the data collection phase.