

# James Palmer Newsletter



Mayor of  
Cambridgeshire  
and  
Peterborough



## Summer Newsletter

### Dear all,

I hope you are enjoying the summer months and finding time to spend time with friends and family.

In the last few months since my previous newsletter, I have been working hard to move forward our plans in our key areas of transport, housing and skills. It is my aim to prove that a Conservative Mayor can be at the forefront of realising the potential of devolution for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. We are delivering for those who work and live in this area, whilst also building a better future for the generations to come.

In this newsletter you will find updates and announcements about our key projects across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

### SKILLS

**A BIG STEP FORWARD FOR A NEW UNIVERSITY FOR PETERBOROUGH** has been taken with the appointment of a world-leading project management consultancy to support the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority in its delivery.



Picture: Mayor Palmer with Deputy Mayor Cllr John Holdich and Mace Consultants.

Globally-renowned consultants Mace have been selected to deliver on the Combined Authority's Action Plan for the new university. Their work will begin this summer, continuing through to the project build phase and the opening of the new facility. We are very much on track for welcoming 2,000 students to the new University on the Embankment site by September 2022.

**DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF PETERBOROUGH** continue. Employers in the area have been surveyed on what sorts of courses they think will harness and produce the necessary skills needed in the local economy. Local businesses will truly shape the University's curriculum, helping us best tackle the skills shortages that many local employers are facing.

There was a fantastic response with 79 local businesses replying to the survey, giving their views. Many businesses stressed that forms of work-based learning were important. 83% of respondents suggested they would use a research arm within the university, either immediately or in the longer term. Manufacturing, advanced manufacturing and materials companies were the most enthusiastic about the possibility of a research arm.

The findings will be included in the brief for the selection of the Higher Education partner for the University.

**THE ADULT EDUCATION BUDGET (AEB)** has been devolved to the Combined Authority and the new era launched officially this summer.



Picture: Mayor Palmer meeting with the Adult Education providers.

The aim is to give lower paid, lower skilled people the qualifications they need to secure better jobs. Adult education has traditionally had a strong, demand-led focus on community and 'leisure and pleasure' courses, such as in arts and crafts and other hobby activities. While such courses will remain a part of the mix of adult education, the Combined Authority is working with further education colleges, training providers and the business community

to target specific skills gaps in the local economy and jobs market. This will offer courses helping people into better paid, more secure jobs, including targeting areas with higher levels of low skills like Peterborough and Fenland.

We welcomed the 17 Providers who will be delivering the AEB Programme starting on the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020 with the Combined Authority investing £11m into Adult Education. We are aiming to support over 17,000 learners during 2019/20, with a focus on progression and employment.

By linking our adult education programme with our local industrial strategy, we hope to provide tangible opportunity for local people and generate real results on the skills levels in our region.

## TRANSPORT

### A10:

This summer we will be submitting a bid to Government to dual the A10 between Ely and Cambridge. The Combined Authority will put a bid into the Government's Large Local Majors roads fund. This is part of the £28.8 billion budget for roads and investment known as the National Roads Fund, covering the period 2020 – 2025. Lucy Frazer, MP for South East Cambridgeshire also joined us in supporting this bid.

Discussing the A10, Lucy Frazer MP said: *"This project would be a huge boost for residents and commuters. Improved transportation infrastructure is vital to Cambridgeshire's future economic growth and prosperity and our daily lives. I will be continuing to support this project and the bid for funding."*

The anticipated growth in the A10 Cambridge to Ely corridor area has been estimated to generate up to 17,000 new homes and 14,000 new jobs and this is why we are dedicated to seeing the proposed road dualling happen.



Picture: Mayor Palmer with Lucy Frazer MP QC.

## A47:

The Combined Authority has submitted technical work to Government for dualling the A47 between the A16 junction and Walton Highway, east of Wisbech. The A47 is a Highway's England-managed road, and so I am working closely with them to accelerate the delivery of this important upgrade. We have put the case for dualling the A47 as strongly as possible, to stand the best possible chance of a positive funding announcement in the next roads funding round, called RIS 2.

To further promote the dualling of the A47 I joined campaign group the A47 Alliance in lobbying government this summer on this issue.

We took a delegation direct to Westminster, with the Roads Minister present to hear our case. This kind of showpiece event really does make a difference when the Government is deciding which road schemes to back. The Roads Minister was genuinely impressed with the show of unity across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, Norfolk and Suffolk.



Picture: (from left to right) Sir Henry Bellingham MP for North West Norfolk, Brandon Lewis MP, Cllr Martin Wilby (Chairman of the A47 Alliance), Michael Ellis (former Transport Minister) and Mayor James Palmer.

## CAM Metro:

**PLANS FOR THE CAM METRO** are progressing with the new creation of the CAM Partnership Board. I have always said that partnership working will be key to delivering something on the scale of CAM metro, which is set to be the largest transport infrastructure project attempted by local government in the UK. Therefore, the new CAM Partnership Board includes representatives from local businesses, councils, other stakeholders and the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP). Members of the Partnership Board such as Marshall Group, Cambridge Ahead and Cambridge Biomedical campus will help guide the development of

the CAM as the scheme moves through the current Outline Business Case phase, completing summer 2020.

### **Local Transport Plan:**

**ON THE 17TH OF JUNE 2019 WE PUBLISHED THE DRAFT CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN.** Adjoining this launch, a three-month consultation period began enabling members of the public and other stakeholders the opportunity to have their say on the future of the area's transport network to 2050. The consultation will continue until the 27<sup>th</sup> of September 2019. During this time, a series of public engagement events have been organised around Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

As a Combined Authority, we will be working closely together with groups such as Highways England, the Greater Cambridge Partnership as well as our local City, County and District councils. This is the first ever Local Transport Plan for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and gives us the opportunity to plan infrastructure to underpin the ambitions we have to double the size of our economy, unlock new housing, and spread prosperity to more people through better transport connections. Our series of transport schemes, including the Metro, bus services review and many road and rail upgrades will all feed into this key document.



Picture: Mayor Palmer at the Local Transport Plan Consultation in St Neots.

You can find out more via: [tinyurl.com/CPCALTP](http://tinyurl.com/CPCALTP)

### **Eight-car trains:**

**PROGRESS WAS MADE AT THE END OF JULY WITH NETWORK RAIL ANNOUNCING WORK WILL START THIS AUTUMN TO ALLOW EIGHT-CAR TRAINS TO RUN BETWEEN KING'S LYNN AND CAMBRIDGE.** As many commuters will know, the current four-carriage services are overcrowded, particularly at peak times. With works starting, commuters can look forward to dramatically improved

journeys from King's Lynn and into London. The route includes stops at Littleport, Ely and Waterbeach.

In early February, I met with Rail Minister Andrew Jones MP as well as the Chief Executive of Network Rail, Andrew Haines, to stress the importance of increased capacity between Cambridge and King's Lynn. I conveyed how important it was that Network Rail's plans were approved. Shortly after that meeting the Department for Transport announced it would fund the works.



Picture: Mayor Palmer with Andrew Jones MP (former Rail Minister)

To allow for the eight-car trains, platforms will be extended at Waterbeach and one platform will be extended at Littleport, alongside some sidings work at King's Lynn. Works are expected to complete in Summer 2020, with the eight-car services set to be operational at the first available opportunity, which will be the new timetable of December 2020. Network Rail will be managing the works.

This was a welcome win, but it is vital the Government continues to support progress on this scheme and it will certainly be something I will be seeking regular updates on.

## **HOUSING**

**WE ARE MAKING GOOD PROGRESS IN OUR AFFORDABLE HOUSING TARGETS**, with many projects for building affordable houses are underway. We are nearly at 1,000 homes funded of our 2,000 target for new affordable home starts by March 2022, which is fantastic. Additionally, progress with the campaigning efforts of the Community Land Trust National network has

seen the Government announce that it will exempt all community led housing development, including CLTs, from the forthcoming ban on leasehold houses and ground rents.

**THREE SUBSTANTIAL GRANTS TO HELP MORE PEOPLE INTO AFFORDABLE HOMES IN PETERBOROUGH** were approved by the Board of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority at its July 31 meeting. The money, agreed subject to conditions, will support the development of 88 homes at a brownfield site in Werrington, 33 homes in Drake Avenue, and 25 homes on land at Crowland Road, Eye Green (Peterborough). All the homes will be offered for affordable rent, capped at Peterborough City Council's Local Housing Level.



Picture: Mayor Palmer at the housing site on Crowland Road, Eye Green.

**I WAS PLEASED TO SEE FIRST-HAND AN EXAMPLE OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING FUNDING COME TO FRUITION EARLIER THIS SUMMER.** I visited Melbourn, South Cambridgeshire, to see eight affordable homes which have been built at Victoria Heights. They will give local people a chance to get on the housing ladder through shared ownership, allowing them to continue to live in an area which has experienced significant house price increases over recent years.



Picture: Mayor Palmer with Nigel Howlett of CHS Group in Melbourn.

## DEVOLUTION

In Early July, I attended the launch of Lord Heseltine's latest report on devolution called, 'Empowering English Cities'. I fully support the broad thrust of the report and many of the





recommendations about the benefits of greater local decision making.

Through the creation of the Mayoral Combined Authority in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, we have been able to bring forward schemes previously thought out of reach. The examples above demonstrate the progress we have made in the areas of skills, transport and housing. But Lord Heseltine's report identifies the additional powers we need to fully realise the potential of what devolution and elected Mayor's can give to an area and I'm hope that our new Prime Minister will take on board the key issues highlighted in the document.

Lord Heseltine and Mayor Palmer at the launch of the report

As you can see, a lot has been taking place in these last few months on some of our key projects, which has been hugely exciting and encouraging. But there is still a huge amount to do and we cannot afford to take our foot off the gas in delivering for people in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

**James Palmer**  
**Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough**

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