



<b>Combined Authority Board</b>		Agenda Item
<b>29 November 2023</b>		<b>5</b>
Title:	Public Questions	
Public Report:	Yes	

**Question 1 – from Paul Hollinghurst, Secretary of Rail Future, East Anglia**

To	CA Board
	<p><b>Question:</b></p> <p>In response to an earlier public question at the CPCA Transport and Infrastructure Committee about reopening the railway to Haverhill it was stated that "we are concerned about transport to and from Haverhill and if there are ways that we can assist and input into the work the GCP's doing then we will".</p> <p>Subsequently the GCP's plans to build a bus road along the A1307 corridor have been paused at their executive board meeting on 28th September 2023 so there is no longer an active plan for public transport in this area. Regarding the railway their Transport Director stated that "at the moment the rail industry has no plans to invest and no plans to reintroduce that rail line" indicating the GCP believes the reopening proposals should be left to the rail industry. In practice rail reopenings are driven forward by enlightened local authorities.</p> <p>We therefore suggest that the GCP needs urgent help from the CPCA, so the CPCA can apply their experience and contacts from the Wisbech reopening to the work for Haverhill. Can the CPCA pledge to proactively work with the GCP on exploring the possibility of reopening the railway to Haverhill, and initially organise a meeting bringing together all the interested parties including GCP, DfT's Restoring Your Railway Team, Network Rail, and local MPs to explore a way forward.</p>

**Question 2 – from Simon Martin**

To	CA Board
	<p><b>Question:</b></p> <p>On 15th of November 2023, during the agenda item on Bus Review, a member of the Transport and Infrastructure Committee said: "We really need to communicate with people of Hampton that it's a case of use it or lose it" in relation to the "29" service.</p> <p>The catchy "use it or lose it" was also picked up by the local press.</p> <p>I feel it's a shame that the councillor didn't simply stop at "We really need to communicate with people", because as a member of the public I feel this is what is needed more than people facing the uncertainty and fear of "losing it" when it comes to any bus service. Further more, "losing" a bus service</p>

	<p>would be a backwards step taking the Combined Authority in the wrong direction, against the desire for modal change and the CA's strategic objectives.</p> <p>I'd like to remind members of the Board that one of those routes has a cost per passenger of £124.83, and one of the routes in the Review is said to have carried only 312 passengers in 2022/23 at a cost of £59.41 per passenger - yet has no route map in the Review document, seemingly no route map available online, and doesn't appear to be on any of the online journey planners either.</p> <p>If this Combined Authority wants to "take back control of buses" in future Bus Reform, then I urge the Combined Authority to show it's possible to turn around these existing 19 Tendered routes. I believe the Combined Authority must do more to make people aware of the routes which it funds, to make them successful, and to ensure those routes provide the high quality service people need.</p> <p>Therefore my question to all members of the Board, is:</p> <p>Will the Board commit to the Combined Authority "communicating with the people" in the local catchment areas covered by these 19 routes (not just on the CPCA website or social media that may only be seen by few people that happen to regularly follow CPCA accounts), with an aim of increasing passenger numbers, in part due to increased awareness that these routes exist, and as an outcome of such increase in ridership on each and every one of the 19 targeted routes, reducing the cost per passenger journey?</p>
--	--

**Question 3 – from John Stannage, Campaign Group Member for WWCA and Wansford Resident**

To	CA Board
	<p><b>Question:</b></p> <p>The Wittering, Wansford, Castor and Ailsworth (WWCA)Bus Campaign Group thank the CPCA for it's support given to our request for a regular, reliable bus service for our villages and respectfully ask that support continues. Once the bus service is agreed, would the CPCA ensure a marketing plan follows and the WWCA Campaign Group be involved with that marketing plan? Thank-you".</p>