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LOCAL PLAN LEADERSHIP GROUP held at ZOOM - [HTTPS://ZOOM.US/](https://zoom.us/), on TUESDAY, 23 MARCH 2021 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor G Bagnall (Chair)
Councillors M Caton, R Freeman, P Lees, M Lemon, B Light,
S Merifield, R Pavitt (Vice-Chair), M Sutton and M Tayler

Officers in attendance: G Glenday (Assistant Director - Planning), B Kennedy (Principal Transportation and Infrastructure Planner), S Miles (Local Plans and New Communities Manager) and C Shanley-Grozavu (Democratic Services Officer)

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no apologies for absence.

Apologies for lateness were received by Councillor Lees.

There were no declarations of interest.

2 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The following minutes of the previous meetings were approved:

- 22nd February 2021
- 3rd March 2021

3 **FEEDBACK CONSULTATION ON THEME 4 - TRANSPORT**

The Principal Transportation and Infrastructure Planner presented a report on the comments received on the fourth consultation theme.

The fourth theme was on the topic of "Transport" and was discussed by the Community Stakeholder Forum on 13 January 2021. Following the Forum, the theme was open for public consultation and in the first four weeks, 20 responses had been received.

Members discussed the findings of the ongoing consultation and the following was noted:

- Members recognised the need for a total review of transport infrastructure and to consider how this provides connectivity both within the district and to key facilities outside the district, such as major hospitals and job centres.
- When considering sustainable transport options, members encouraged officers to look at alternative modes of transport and raising the standard beyond traditional public transport solutions such as creating another bus route.
- Members identified the current gaps in the district's transport infrastructure, such as an unsuitable bus service and a lack of safe cycle

routes to connect settlements, and shared their suggestions for suitable improvements. Ideas included creating a fixed track busway, linking the Genome by cycleway to Cambridge, creating cycleways away or parallel to the road system and a county wide speed limit reduction to encourage cyclists in rural areas.

- Officers confirmed that they were engaging with other authorities on improvements to the district's transport infrastructure. This included discussions with East Herts District Council for improved access into Bishop Stortford and with the Greater Cambridgeshire partnership regarding an extension to the guided busway.
- Members queried the lack of information in the transport strategy about a minibus on demand service. Officers clarified that there is a role for an on demand service, however Essex County Council have had some funding issues and will look at the proposal as part of their county-wide review of the bus network, following the publication of the new government's bus strategy.
- Members raised concerns regarding the lack of responsiveness from the County in the past. It was discussed that the lack of an up to date Local Plan had made it difficult for the Council to have conversations with partners about upcoming developments and the infrastructure to support this.
- The Local Plan was a good opportunity to examine the connectivity between homes and employment opportunities.
- It was important to review other infrastructure, such as 5g, and ensuring that connectivity is provided into residential and commercial premises, rather than just to an area.

Members discussed the possibility of the Council funding their own transport infrastructure projects. Officers clarified that this would be possible, for example by using CIL or s106 funding, but this could only be achieved with an up-to-date Local Plan which would set out such a policy.

Following discussion on the consultation, the Local Plan and Communities Manager informed the group that officers were now taking the next steps in the Local Plan process to develop the guiding principles which will inform the new Local Plan and a paper will come to the group in due course.

The group also fed back their thoughts on the frequency of meetings and whether discussions of each theme was the best use of everyone's time.