

## Making Connections update

From: Greater Cambridge Partnership <greatercambridge@public.govdelivery.com>

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## The GCP Joint Assembly has its say

Yesterday members of the Joint Assembly carefully scrutinised a 216-page report which outlined the public's feedback on the Making Connections proposals.

These set out to transform the bus network alongside better walking and cycling infrastructure that would be funded by the phased introduction of a road-user charge.

The assembly – made up of elected councillors and representatives from businesses and academia – overall concluded that it:

- was encouraged by the reach of the public consultation and the high level of engagement following a record number of responses, and agreed it was a fair process.
- felt the findings showed public support for an initiative making for better buses and enhanced walking and cycling links, only possible with less congestion and more funding.
- believed buses have an important impact on access to education, work, health and in preventing social isolation especially amongst the youngest and those who can't afford cars.

- acknowledged the concerns of the public and businesses around the Sustainable Travel Zone and agreed the proposals must change from those put forward in the consultation.
- noted the importance of bus franchising - the public should have maximum possible control over the network it hopes to increasingly fund.
- carefully considered a number of topics including exemptions, trip chaining, the proposed zone boundary, operating hours and daily charge for travelling in and around the STZ.

Following a four-hour debate in which the findings to the report were carefully debated, the joint assembly:

- outlined the need for the region's transport network to be improved, given the new homes and jobs being created across the region
- members requested detailed information and the potential implications of any potential changes to the scheme after discussing both the merits and concerns they had with some of the proposals
- options should be tested against the policy objectives, equalities and the consultation response and brought back to the Joint Assembly and the Executive Board for a special meeting on 26 June.

The report into the Greater Cambridge Partnership's Making Connections public consultation was published in May. The key findings and the wide-ranging views – both in favour and against the proposals were:

- Over 70% of people were in favour of the future transport network – with more buses to more locations, cheaper fares and longer operating times supported by better walking and cycling infrastructure to give people faster, cheaper and more reliable travel alternatives to the car.
- 58% of respondents opposed the proposed Sustainable Travel Zone (STZ) as the means for delivering the transport vision. Opposition increased with age from 35 to 64 with 55–64-year-olds the most likely to oppose. Those who lived outside of Cambridge were also more likely to oppose.
- 34% of people support the STZ as proposed. Support was highest among the youngest and the oldest respondents, who are more likely to find it most difficult to access education and healthcare due to the limitations of the existing bus network. Support was highest in the city centre and west of the city.
- Around half of those who oppose the STZ did support the vision for better buses.

For more information about the GCP's transport projects visit: [www.greatercambridge.org.uk](http://www.greatercambridge.org.uk).

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