

GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE COMBINED
COUNTY AUTHORITY - GREATER
LINCOLNSHIRE TRANSPORT BOARD
16 JULY 2025

DECISIONS TAKEN WITHIN MINUTES 1-6 ARE SUBJECT TO CALL-IN. THE DEADLINE FOR CALLING-IN DECISIONS TAKEN AT THIS MEETING IS 4PM ON FRIDAY 25 JULY 2025 OTHERWISE THEY WILL BECOME EFFECTIVE FROM 12PM ON MONDAY 28 JULY 2025.

PRESENT:

Deputy Mayor Ingrid Sheard

Constituent Members: Councillors T Catton (Lincolnshire County Council), S Matthews (Lincolnshire County Council*), N Poole (North Lincolnshire Council), S Shreeve (North East Lincolnshire Council), S Swinburn (North East Lincolnshire Council) and R Waltham MBE (North Lincolnshire Council*)

**Lead Member*

Non-Constituent Members: R A Wright (North Kesteven District Council)

Others: A member of the public and a member of the press attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:- Ruth Carver (Interim Deputy Director, Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority), Nicola Calver (Member Services Manager, Lincolnshire County Council), Andy Gutherson (Interim Designated Lead Officer for Transport, Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority), Lana Meddings (Transport and Growth Manager, Lincolnshire County Council), Kate Robinson (Head of Economy, North Lincolnshire Council), Lee Sirdifield (Interim Chief Operating Officer, Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority), Vanessa Strange (Head of Infrastructure Investment, Lincolnshire County Council), Lisa Tremble (Interim Monitoring Officer, Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority) and Andrew Warnes (Democratic Services Officer, Lincolnshire County Council)

1 **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Mayor Dame Andrea Jenkyns (Greater Lincolnshire County Combined Authority) gave her apologies and was substituted by Deputy Mayor Ingrid Sheard.

Councillor Ingrid Sheard (Lincolnshire County Council) therefore was substituted by Councillor Tom Catton.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Philip Jackson (North East Lincolnshire) and was replaced for this meeting only by Councillor Stewart Swinburn.

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Further apologies for absences included Councillors Craig Leyland (East Lindsey District Council) and Ashley Baxter (South Kesteven District Council), and Associate Member Professor Neil Juster.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made at this point in proceedings.

3 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Board then moved to the Public Question Time. The Chairman highlighted the salient rules within the Constitution, noting that the total time set aside for questions and answers was limited to 30 minutes.

The first question asked from a member of the public, Mr Edward Fleet, was to the Mayor, with the Deputy Mayor Ingrid Sheard answering on behalf of the Mayor. The question read out by the Interim Monitoring Officer was:

“The Mayor has made a welcome promise to improve bus services, many regional mayors have committed to bringing buses back under public control through franchising, will the Greater Lincolnshire mayor consider the option of bus franchising? If not, then how will things be improved?”

In reply, the Deputy Mayor, on behalf of the Mayor, answered with the following:

“I’m absolutely committed to improving the bus service offer in Lincolnshire. I have committed to forming TfGL [Transport for Greater Lincolnshire] and I will be chairing a national Rural transport Group all focussed on improving rural transport options.

The only current example of franchising in the country is the “Bee Network” in Manchester, with some other urban areas moving towards implementation. The Bus Services Bill is still going through the legislative process and reassurances are being sought from ministers to ensure that franchising will work in rural areas, with the government committing to some pilot work.

It is vital that mechanisms used to improve public transport in the county – whether in the form of an Enhanced Partnership or Bus Franchising – are properly considered through a rural lens. The national Rural Transport Group that I will be chairing will be considering this work alongside other combined authorities including York and North Yorkshire, who will be one of the early pilot areas.

This is a clear example of why we need to put the spotlight on rural transport and ensure that rural areas are fully considered in all policy and funding considerations.”

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The Monitoring Officer then progressed to the second submitted question, from Mr Tim Grigg, to the Mayor, with the Deputy Mayor answering on her behalf. The question read out by the Interim Monitoring Officer was:

“There was a recent announcement that 12 of England's mayors have pledged to work together to create an Active Travel network across the country. I understand The Mayor of Lincolnshire is not part of this coalition. Could I ask the Mayor why you took the decision not to sign up to this agreement and could you assure me that Active Travel will play a major part in the transport strategy for the county.”

In reply, the Deputy Mayor, on behalf of the Mayor, answered with the following:

“Active Travel England have been meeting Mayors across England to discuss a joint programme of work on active travel focused on schools. This set out three commitments, which included the creation of a country-wide national walking, wheeling and cycling network, to give residents safe routes in their communities, a commitment to transform the school run by delivering high-quality safe routes in neighbourhoods nationwide, and to deliver region-wide integrated transport networks by giving people easy walking, wheeling and cycling access to buses, trams and trains.

Active Travel England recognised that due to the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority being newly formed, the engagement that many of the other Mayors have had has not been able to take place for Greater Lincolnshire.

We have committed to working with Active Travel England to explore the programme of work in more detail. We expect to meet with them in September or October. Being a largely rural area, Greater Lincolnshire comes to the challenge set by Active Travel England from a different vantage point. We're keen to work with them to ensure that this is fully considered in any future plans.

I also recognise the work already underway through the 3 constituent authorities to improve cycling and walking infrastructure across GL and I will support the appropriate investment in this in the future. As you will see from the agenda today, Greater Lincolnshire is formulating its transport plans and priorities. It is a large, predominantly rural area, with many challenges for rural communities. This includes a range of improvements which will benefit our communities, including helping our school children to get to school safely.”

The Monitoring Officer then progressed to the third and final submitted question, from Ms Jane Bateman, to the Mayor, with the Deputy Mayor answering on her behalf. The question read out by the Interim Monitoring Officer was:

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“I understand the Mayor will be producing a Local Transport Plan – I would like to know the timescale for developing this plan, and in particular how and when the public will be consulted on developing it?”

In reply, the Deputy Mayor, on behalf of the Mayor, answered with the following:

“You will see that the impetus for taking this work forward is reflected in the first agenda item on today’s inaugural transport board is about this very topic. The timescales for working on the development of the Local Transport Plan will be led by this Transport Board. Future updates will detail opportunities for the public to get involved in the development of plans.

A full Transport Plan programme would usually take around 18 months to develop. During this time there will be many opportunities for stakeholder and public engagement to ensure the LTP establishes the correct policy platform to deliver the transport system that communities need. This is an upmost priority for the combined authority and I, and we will drive this agenda forward as quickly as possible.”

Members were further advised that those who had submitted questions would receive a written response.

4 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman stated he had no announcements to make at this point in the meeting.

5 GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

The Board considered a report from Andy Gutherson, Interim Designated Lead Officer for Transport, Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA), which detailed the Greater Lincolnshire Local Transport Plan (LTP). In introducing the report, the following matters were highlighted by officers:

- Officers explained that one of the key powers now held by the County Combined Authority was the responsibility to act as the Transport Authority for Greater Lincolnshire. Prior to this, the three constituent councils each acted as their own transport and highway authorities, and each currently maintained its own local transport plan.
- During the negotiation of the Devolution Deal, collaborative work had already been commissioned across the three constituent councils to review the synergies and relationships between their existing ambitions.
- The report detailed the current timescales for which the local transport plans remained in effect. It was highlighted that North Lincolnshire Council’s local transport plan was due to expire at the end of 2025. Therefore, it was considered important to demonstrate a clear commitment and direction of travel to the Department for Transport (DfT),

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ensuring that the authority maintained as up to date a position as possible on local transport policy matters.

- Although this would result in one of the constituent authorities being without a fully up-to-date transport plan at that point in time, it was noted that this situation was not unique nationally. A number of Transport Authorities across the country were in similar positions. Nonetheless, it remained important to establish a clear policy direction and a defined timescale for future work. Officers advised that the absence of a fully up-to-date transport plan would not cause immediate issues for North Lincolnshire Council.
- The report presented an initial assessment, undertaken by the three constituent authorities, of what could form a vision and the key themes for the development of a GLCCA LTP. This would reflect the work carried out prior to the establishment of the authority.
- The matter was now for the Transport Board to consider, specifically whether the proposed broad direction of travel was appropriate. Subject to the Board's steer, officers would then be able to return with a revised scope and a more detailed programme of work to progress the development of a transport plan.
- As the Deputy Mayor had indicated in the Public Question Time, Officers expected that the development of the transport plan would take approximately 18 months from commencement to completion. This timeframe would be subject to the level of engagement and any matters arising that the authority might need to consider, but it represented the best current estimate.
- The recommendations in the report were presented as a position statement at a particular point in time. This was identified as one of the first policy areas that the GLCCA needed to address. The meeting provided the first opportunity for the Board to offer a steer on whether the current direction of travel was appropriate. Based on the feedback from this meeting, and further dialogue with the constituent authorities, officers would commit to bringing back a detailed scope and work programme to the next meeting of the Board.

Consideration of the report was given, several points were raised by Members of the Board, along with responses, explanations and assurances being provided by Officers:

- Members welcomed the Local Transport Plan (LTP) as a key opportunity to develop a comprehensive strategy for Lincolnshire, stressing the need to prioritise infrastructure before expansion and to include all transport modes, especially active travel. There was strong support for promoting cycling and walking, with hopes the LTP would reflect this commitment. Members acknowledged the groundwork done ahead of the Mayoral Combined Authority and emphasised the importance of local authority input. Concerns were raised about infrastructure gaps affecting safety and growth, with calls for the LTP to support government funding bids and developer contributions, particularly for underfunded routes like the A15, A16, and A17.
- Officers confirmed that the LTP would aim to deliver strategy and policy at multiple levels. The four key themes identified in the plan would enable the authority to address both economic growth and localised needs. The economic growth theme, in particular,

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would support ambitions for major infrastructure improvements and align with national policy objectives. Officers further acknowledged the importance of key routes to the regional economy and referenced previous work with Midlands Connect on the A46 corridor.

- Officers confirmed that the LTP would also support place-based solutions for active travel, recognising the geographical diversity of Greater Lincolnshire. Each of the three constituent authorities already had active travel initiatives in place, such as walking and cycling plans for market towns. The Combined Authority's approach would not replace these efforts but would build upon them. The report included examples of potential interventions, which would be refreshed in line with the Combined County Authority's ambitions.
- Regarding delivery, it was noted that the capacity to progress the LTP remained with the constituent authorities, and continued partnership working would be essential. Officers emphasised the need for all parties to contribute resources through their respective teams to ensure the plan reflected the ambitions of the entire area.
- A Member of the Board enquired how the Combined Authority intended to consult with employers and businesses during the development of the plan. Officers confirmed that a formal consultation process would be undertaken and that the LTP would be aligned with the Business and Infrastructure Board and the GLCCA's Growth Plan. The LTP would be brought to relevant boards for input as required.
- A Member suggested Lincolnshire was not a single urban centre and that transport systems needed to be consistent, accessible, and affordable across all areas, asking that urban areas not be ignored. Officers responded that the GLCCA had the opportunity to prioritise key areas, including rural connectivity. The Devolution Deal included a commitment to establish a Rural Transport Group, chaired by the Mayor. Existing initiatives such as demand-responsive transport systems would be reviewed, and the LTP would set policy parameters that could prioritise rural needs where appropriate. The plan would need to balance rural and urban priorities and reflect ambitions at different scales.
- On the needs of mobility scooter users and people with disabilities included in the plan, Officers noted that active travel was intended to encompass all transport users. One of the key themes of the LTP would be to ensure effective travel choices for all, with appropriate access and reliable services.
- Members noted the LTP described as an exciting chance to develop a holistic transport plan for the whole of Lincolnshire. The Chairman of the Board emphasised the importance of including all modes of transport, including active travel and infrastructure development. It was noted that infrastructure must precede expansion, and the plan should reflect the current structure and ambitions of the newly formed authority. The Chairman expressed confidence that the authority would deliver a successful and forward-looking transport plan.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor R Waltham MBE and seconded by Councillor S Shreeve, and upon being put to the vote, the recommendations were carried unanimously.

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For: 7

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

RESOLVED

1. That the Board recognises the previous policy commitments of the 3 constituent authorities, notes the latest position for the Greater Lincolnshire Local Transport Plan and supports the proposal for next steps,
2. That the Board endorses the development of a GLCCA Local Transport Plan by the constituent authorities until such time that the work is resourced within the Authority,
3. That the Board provided direction on how it would like to see activity evolving and how it would like to monitor progress made, and
4. That Board requests a report back to the next meeting of a scope for the ambition for and work programme to produce a new GLCCA Local Transport Plan.

6 THE RURAL TRANSPORT GROUP

The Board considered a report from Andy Gutherson, Interim Designated Lead Officer for Transport, Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA), which detailed The Rural Transport Group (RTG) report. In introducing the report, the following matters were highlighted by officers:

- Officers confirmed that, during the Devolution Deal negotiations, the Department for Transport (DfT) had offered the opportunity for the Greater Lincolnshire deal to include the establishment of a Rural Transport Group. Furthermore, the DfT had proposed that the Mayor of the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA) would chair this group.
- Discussions had taken place with other rural authorities, existing combined authorities, and local transport authorities. There had been no objection in principle to the proposal, provided that the group would be inclusive and representative of the many large authorities facing significant rural transport, accessibility, and connectivity challenges. There was a general professional and political consensus across these organisations that such a group was long overdue. It was seen as an opportunity to redress the historical imbalance caused by the Government's and DfT's traditional focus on urban transport solutions.
- Officers emphasised that it was now within the GLCCA's gift to shape and lead this agenda. The report set out several core principles that were proposed to form part of the group's terms of reference.

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- A soft launch event had taken place at the UK's Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum (REiIF) event in May 2025, which had been attended by several transport authorities, sub-national transport bodies, and operators from both the rail and bus sectors. The consensus from that event was that the establishment of such a group was necessary to achieve parity with the long-established Urban Transport Group. While the new group might not follow the exact model of the Urban Transport Group, it was within the collective influence of the Combined Authority and its partners to shape its form and function.
- The DfT had now committed to providing representation at Deputy Director level on the group. Additionally, the opportunity to hold a Westminster-based launch event was expected to lend political weight and visibility to the initiative, particularly in terms of the calibre of attendees who could be invited.
- Ahead of the launch, it would be necessary to finalise the group's terms of reference and confirm its membership. Officers stressed the importance of maintaining a manageable group size. For example, it was proposed that representatives from the bus and train operating sectors be included, rather than every individual operator. Similarly, it was suggested that a single representative from the sub-national transport bodies be appointed, likely from Transport East, given their national remit and existing work in rural areas. This approach would also ensure that linkages with other large rural authorities within their boundaries were maintained.
- Officers noted the initiative as a "feather in the cap" of the Greater Lincolnshire Devolution Deal, positioning the GLCCA at the centre of the rural transport agenda.

Consideration of the report was given, several points were raised by Members of the Board, along with responses, explanations and assurances being provided by Officers:

- Members expressed appreciation for the governance arrangements already in place, particularly that the RTG would operate as a subgroup of the Board, in addition to receiving the Chair of the Group.
- Members suggested the inclusion of representatives from the three constituent councils, and similar authorities in the RTG.
- A Member of the Board suggested that the Urban Transport Group should be represented on the RTG to ensure that the needs of urban communities were not overlooked. In response, Officers noted the importance of ensuring that all community groups were considered. Operational mechanisms would be put in place to ensure linkages and synergies between the Rural and Urban Transport Groups. This was suggested to include cross-representation between the groups to ensure alignment and inclusivity. Officers explained the Rural Transport Group would focus on addressing underlying issues of connectivity and accessibility.
- Members stressed the importance of gaining specific recognition from Government for rural transport challenges and noted that urban areas often received disproportionate attention due to their density and infrastructure simplicity.
- Members emphasised that effective representation within the group would be critical and cautioned against the risk of over-representation by certain bodies. It was suggested

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that the terms of reference should clearly define expected membership to ensure a balanced and effective group.

- On the effectiveness of regional bodies such as Transport for the North, Members acknowledged that regional bodies had benefited from ministerial sponsorship, which had helped advance their recommendations. The member proposed that the Rural Transport Group should similarly seek ministerial sponsorship to ensure policy alignment and funding support. In response, Officers confirmed that while the RTG had secured professional engagement at deputy director level within the DfT, efforts would be made to secure ministerial involvement ahead of the group's formal launch. A launch event without ministerial attendance would be less impactful and confirmed that this would be a priority. Officers also explained that, during the devolution negotiations, a transport-themed group had been established with representatives from the three constituent councils. This group continued to meet regularly and was scheduled to meet again on the upcoming Friday. Each council was invited to feed in suggestions for additional participants via their representatives on that group, so that the membership of the Rural Transport Group could be refined accordingly.
- In terms of operations, Officers explained that the three constituent councils would likely provide the secretariat and technical support for the group. This would allow the group to shape its agenda and produce the necessary documentation and evidence to support its work. He confirmed that the structure could be further refined over time as the group developed.
- Members acknowledged the challenge of securing Government funding but emphasised that the GLCCA had been tasked with leading this work, with it expected that funding would follow.
- The Chairman noted the opportunity to host a Westminster launch in the autumn, and expressed hope that ministerial involvement could be secured, noting that such engagement would be vital for the success of the launch and the group's long-term impact.
- During the debate, the Chairman of the Board offered to write to the Secretary of State for Transport, to formally invite ministerial participation and asking for ministerial sponsorship with the newly established RTG in overseeing its implementation and adoption within Government processes. This suggestion was proposed and seconded to be included in the recommendations as a noted course of action.

The amended recommendations were proposed by Councillor R Waltham MBE and seconded by Councillor S Shreeve, and upon being put to the vote, the recommendations were carried unanimously.

For: 7

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

RESOLVED

1. That the Board endorses the development of the Rural Transport Group with Terms of Reference to be established,
2. That the Board confirms the proposed functions of the Rural Transport Group as set out at paragraphs 7 to 11 of the report and provide direction on any activities or themes that should be prioritised,
3. That the Board confirms the ambition to establish a Westminster Launch event in the autumn of 2025,
4. That the Board delegates to the Interim Chief Operating Officer to approve the named point of contact at the Department of Transport and co-opt them on to the Transport Board, and
5. That the Board requests the Chairman of the Transport Board writes to the Secretary of State for Transport, requesting ministerial sponsorship of the Rural Transport Group in overseeing its implementation and adoption within Government processes.

The meeting closed at 2.45 pm