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2030 Vision project sparks debate about future of Cambridge sub-region **Free report and findings of two-year initiative advocate closer cross-sector collaboration**

Cambridge and the surrounding sub-region make a significant contribution to the national economy, but different groups from unconnected sectors must work more closely together to ensure that the area's full potential is realised and that growth doesn't compromise local quality of life.

That call to action is one of a number of findings published in '2030 Vision for the Cambridge sub-region' – a free, new report from an independent group that spent two years debating the challenges and opportunities posed by the continued expansion of the city, and the market towns and villages around it.

Over a 24-month period more than 600 people came together to consider a range of different 'local' topics. The purpose of each event was to create connections across Cambridge and spark new ideas. Through 2030 Vision, people that don't normally interact were given a unique opportunity to discuss and ultimately take action to influence the future shape of the sub-region – which is growing fast and is regarded as beacon for national economic recovery. Participants included businessmen and women, academics, councillors, local residents associations, key workers and sixth form students.

Central to 2030 Vision was the rationale that decisions about the future can only be made by undertaking a comprehensive strategic view of the entire area and focusing on a range of inter-related issues. Headline findings from 2030 Vision include:

- **Leadership:** Without effective visioning and leadership, change will be impossible. Local leadership should be simplified and a coherent vision developed for the sub-region. The Cambridge 'brand' needs international marketing. The reach of the Cambridge effect should be extended for the benefit of the surrounding market towns and villages, to share wealth and opportunity – and relieve pressure on the city.
- **Environment:** Our environment contributes to our quality of life and enables business to attract highly qualified staff in the face of global competition. The sub-region's distinctive quality of place should be conserved. The attractiveness of the market towns should be enhanced. Agricultural production must be increased: good agricultural land needs to be protected and the area's considerable agricultural science expertise harnessed for global benefit.
- **Housing location:** Cambridge is in danger of being overloaded by new housing areas – at the cost of space for employment. New housing should be located beyond the green belt, linked to good public transport such as the Guided Busway. The capacity, amenities and connectiveness of the market towns should also be improved.
- **Communities:** Without a real effort at community building, social cohesion will be under ever-greater pressure. There should be an emphasis on community building and providing meeting places in areas of expansion or of high population turnover.
- **Education and skills:** The area's schools and businesses must work closely together to ensure that students learn skills to get them jobs. Valuable initiatives to bring schools and business together, such as Business Class and Peterborough Skills Vision, should be extended across the sub-region, and information flow between schools and business must be greatly improved.

To make the findings – and the topic of planning and development – accessible for everyone, the 2030 Vision team has produced a 16-page report that summarises the main conclusions of the twenty workshops held locally from 2011 to 2012. A short video is also available to watch online. The hope is that content will prove interesting for anyone who lives and works in the Cambridge area, and who wants to know more about how the sub-region is evolving, the pace of change, and the long-term implications this will have on people, society, enterprise and the local landscape. The report is available to download from: www.2030vision.org where a link can also be found to the video. Copies of the document have also been circulated to local councillors in the district, city and county, plus in market towns within the sub region but outside of Cambridgeshire e.g. Newmarket, Royston, Haverhill and Saffron Walden.

Peter Carolin from the 2030 Vision executive committee said: “The aim of 2030 Vision was to bring disparate groups together and reach a series of conclusions that could be used to inform policy, enhance quality of life in the sub-region, and ultimately, help increase the area’s overall contribution to the national economy. We feel that we’ve done just that – delivering a series of recommendations that can complement the planning activities of local authorities. In addition, as a direct result of 2030 Vision, different groups are now actively collaborating, cutting across sectors, widening the debate and proactively helping to plan for a better future.

Continuing, Peter Landshoff, also from the 2030 Vision executive committee, said: “The conclusions we’ve drawn won’t necessarily be to everyone’s liking. Some might seem obvious. Others will be controversial. What’s important is that they originate from local people, who are passionate about the city and its surroundings – and that they spark further debate and action moving forward. Most people think it’s difficult to influence planning and that they can’t make a difference but now – more than ever – it’s important that local people have their say. The sub-region faces decades of change and it’s important that growth is managed collectively by everyone with a stake in its future to ensure we don’t throttle the goose that lays the golden eggs. By publishing this report we hope more individuals and organisations will come forward to work together. Thanks to everyone that joined in the debate.”

High profile individuals who took part in 2030 Vision and who welcomed the initiative included Jeremy Newsum, Executive Trustee of Grosvenor Estate. He said: “2030 Vision identified the need for a clearer voice from the business community when the future of Cambridge is being considered. Arising directly from the 2030 Vision programme, Cambridge Ahead is being established by the business community to generate ideas, options and solutions addressing the longer-term future of the city and surrounding area. This was a fascinating initiative that will bring about real change in the city.”

Alex Plant, Executive Director at Cambridgeshire County Council and Strategy Director at the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership, said: “2030 Vision was hugely valuable in bringing together professionals and wider stakeholders from across the private, public and third sectors to address the challenges facing one of the UK’s fastest growing city regions. It has helped crystallise the key issues to focus on as we plan for the future.”

And Andrew Poulton, Economic Strategy and Partnerships Officer at Cambridgeshire County Council, said: “2030 Vision gave real impetus to the call for the education sector to respond to the needs of the area’s business communities. It highlighted the need for establishments to think more carefully about how they prepare students for the world of work. It also helped schools develop more contacts and foster relationships with local businesses. All this has helped enormously at the County Council in the creation of new plans addressing apprenticeships, child poverty and RPA (raising the participation age) legislation.”

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Notes to editors:

Please note that the conclusions of 2030 Vision for the Cambridge sub-region do not necessarily reflect the views of organisations that supported the initiative – including Cambridge Past, Present & Future, which is kindly hosting the report, video and associated documentation as a sub-page of its website. If you have an idea to discuss with a member of the 2030 Vision team, please email: info@2030vision.org.

Media enquiries:

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