

FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

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Fenland station improvements gain momentum as inaugural project boards formed

Significant improvements to Manea, March and Whittlesea railway stations have moved a step closer with the creation of three new supervisory boards to drive projects forward.

Funded by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, Fenland District Council is leading a £9 million Railway Station Masterplans scheme to provide key infrastructure improvements at each of the district's railway stations.

Work on delivering the improvements has already begun, but now three dedicated Project Boards have been launched to formally consider each station's individual schemes from design stage through to completion.

Chaired by Cllr Chris Seaton, Fenland District Council's Cabinet Member for Transport, the boards are made up of representatives from Fenland District Council, the Combined Authority, Network Rail and Greater Anglia, along with district and town/parish councillors for the area in which each station is located.

In summary, the Railway Station Masterplans include the following improvements schemes:

- Manea: New waiting shelter, platform extensions and a new car park
- March: New community use facility, improved station facilities and a new car park
- Whittlesea: New waiting shelters, platform extensions, a pedestrian footbridge and a new car park

The inaugural board meetings were held last month, when each individual improvement scheme was discussed with a high level project plan outlining risks and key issues.

Cllr Seaton said that by working closely with its partners and key stakeholders, Fenland District Council can ensure the improvements are delivered on time and on budget and maintain the high standards passengers expect.

He said: "We've set out a clear vision of how we want our local stations to improve and a lot of work has already taken place to secure funding from the Combined Authority and get to a point where we can start to put these exciting proposals into reality.

"The project boards will oversee the implementation of the schemes in each station masterplan and help us deliver improvements that will make a real difference to the growing number of passengers in our area."

Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, James Palmer, said: "We are powering forward with our programme of improvements to Fenland stations that are all about making rail a more attractive, user-friendly travel option. Bigger, better car parks, improved waiting facilities and shelters, as well as a new footpath and ticket machine, are all part of a multimillion package of measures upgrade those stations.

“And while this pipeline will help redress many years of underinvestment, clearly what is also needed is better services to those stations. So the other key part of my work is to hammer on the door of Government, Network Rail and train operators to secure these expanded services. That includes pressing for a regular shuttle service to run between 6am and midnight between Peterborough and Cambridge, with stops at Fenland stations. Manea to Cambridge, for example, is just 27 minutes and easily commutable, but we don’t have the services. It is simply not good enough for the people of Fenland.

“These upgrades strengthen our case for better services, and I look forward to seeing improvements coming forward over the next few months.”

Mike Barry, Greater Anglia’s Area Customer Service Manager, said there had been an increase in the number of passengers travelling from Whittlesea, Manea and March stations over the past year.

He added: “We want everyone to have a good journey when they travel with us and the project boards will help deliver great improvements at three of our stations. We will continue to work with relevant parties to support these proposals and help make them a reality.”

To keep up to date with development and progress, residents can track the latest news on the Council’s website at: <https://www.fenland.gov.uk/article/13365/Railway-Station-Masterplans>

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