

Leader in major infrastructure delivery appointed to help drive forward Cambridgeshire Autonomous Metro

August 27, 2020



Simon Wright OBE, a civil engineer and senior executive with more than 40 years' experience delivering multi-billion pound infrastructure programmes, has been appointed to support the development of the Cambridgeshire Autonomous Metro (CAM).

Working on a part-time consultancy basis, Mr Wright joins the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority at an important phase. He will provide strategic input to the development of a 'One CAM' strategy which is bringing the programme's component projects together in an integrated scheme.

Mr Wright's considerable experience delivering multi-billion pound infrastructure programmes includes being Programme Director for Crossrail Ltd between July 2014 and March 2018 and Director of Infrastructure and Utilities at the Olympic Delivery Authority for six years leading into the London 2012 Games. Between 2013 and 2014 Mr Wright was Network Rail Project Development Director responsible for the £3 billion redevelopment of Euston railway station.

Mr Wright is currently a non-executive director of the Restoration and Renewal Delivery Authority Ltd, a special purpose company set up to deliver the restoration of the Houses of Parliament and he is also a non-executive Board Member of the Sponsor Board for the project.

Simon Wright OBE said: “This is a highly innovative, bespoke transport concept for the region and there are few other systems in the world quite like it. But the method of delivery, through an special purpose vehicle (SPV), is very familiar and my job will be to challenge how the CAM develops in a positive way. That means asking the right, and sometimes difficult, questions to ensure that the assumptions that the scheme are based on are always sound and that the innovative thinking required also leads to cost effective and efficient delivery of a reliable system.

“I have been very impressed by the ambition for the CAM to spearhead a new wave of economic growth and innovation in the region and I’m excited to get started.”

Mayor of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, James Palmer, said: “I’m pleased to welcome Simon, who brings a wealth of invaluable and highly relevant experience gained from the delivery of major infrastructure programmes.

“CAM is one of the biggest infrastructure projects in the UK and a world-first. We need leading people who can combine the bold new thinking necessary with a clear-eyed focus on practical delivery. Simon’s role will be to challenge and improve how CAM is developed.

“Harnessing and deploying the right expertise and talent at the right time will be critical to building the CAM. We are now working to recruit an outstanding Chair and Board for our new SPV and we expect to attract more leading minds locally, nationally and globally because of the innovative nature of this scheme.”

Mr Wright has worked at director-level within SPVs, including at both Crossrail Ltd and the Olympic Delivery Authority. Also relevant to CAM is his experience managing public sector delivery with a background in private sector engineering design. He brings a blend of technical, commercial and project delivery skills in tunnelling, integrated rail systems and below ground stations, coupled with governance, integrated project assurance and procurement expertise.

Photo credit: Cambridgeshire Autonomous Metro

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