

The Chesham & Chiltern Villages Local Area Forum

Title:	Supplementary report on Local Area Priorities Process
Date:	5 July 2010
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Electoral divisions affected:	Chesham North West Chesham East Chess Valley Chiltern Ridges

Summary

This report details the further work requested by LAF members to identify the top priority issues for Chesham & Chiltern Villages area following Local Area Priorities workshop in March 2010.

It seeks LAF agreement of the top 26 issues that will drive work in the area and LAF agendas over the next few years. It further suggests that funding from the LAF delegated budgets in 2010/11 concentrate on four wider themes which would touch on many of the top priorities:-

- **Support for older people eg**
Good Neighbour schemes
More support to enable older people to live in their own homes
More information about available services
- **Community and rural transport eg**
Increase number and range of community/voluntary transport schemes including transport to hospitals
Work may also be taken forward on other public transport issues



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



- **Young people eg**
Facilities, activities and groups for young people aged 11+
- to include those specifically targeting anti-social behaviour
- **Supporting the joint priorities of Chesham Action Groups/LAF**
Speeding on roads throughout the area
Anti-social behaviour including alcohol related offences

Recommendation

The Chesham & Chiltern Villages Local Area Forum is recommended **to note** the output of the Local Area Prioritisation workshop on 17 March 2010. The Forum is further asked **to agree** the suggested top 20 priorities and the 4 themes on which it is suggested LAF delegated budgets be concentrated during 2010/11.

This does not mean that work will not take place on the other priorities and funding can still be allocated – but a focused approach on the chosen themes will enable funds and resources to be targeted to achieve real outcomes.

Supporting information

As Forum members will know, one of the roles of LAFs is to oversee the development and delivery of area based Local Area Plans. These will set out the local priorities for the area and will inform and reflect the priorities of the county and district sustainable community strategies.

The purpose of the Local Area Plan is to establish:

- a shared understanding of local issues and priorities for improving the quality of life of the area.
- A realistic and achievable plan of action with short and medium term objectives

The Plan will be based on robust evidence and be informed by community aspirations.

Structuring the Plan

The priorities from each workshop are specific to the community, but the 19 community plans adhere to a common format and timescale, in order to ensure that they can be integrated into planning at a county and district level and are therefore effective in bringing change at the local level.

Plans have therefore been organised around the themes of the Sustainable Community Strategies, these being:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Sustainable Environment
- Safe Communities
- Cohesive Communities
- Thriving Economy

Priorities from the workshop

Appendix 1 shows the issues as prioritised at the March workshop. The priority given to issues is based upon the group consensus achieved at the workshop and also takes into account the individual votes that each issue attracted.

The top issues under each theme are as follows and it is suggested that the LAF prioritises these for action or referral to appropriate agencies.

Amongst the issues below are some on which the LAF itself may only be able to make a limited impact, since will require interventions over a much longer time frame, policy changes, significant investment of resources etc. These have however been included since they have been identified as of importance to the community.

There are also issues to which a lower priority was given, on which it is expected that some progress can be made in partnership with statutory and voluntary partners.

Health and Wellbeing

1. Chesham Town has educational attainment and income levels below the County average therefore support for families is needed from the pre-natal stage onwards (eg more support from health visitors) **(overall priority 1)**
2. More support is needed for older people to live in their own homes and generally for older people and people with disabilities **(overall priority 2)**
3. Access to health services is poor for those who do not have their own transport. Particular concerns about access to services that are now provided from High Wycombe and Stoke Mandeville hospitals. Improvements are needed. **(overall priority 9)**
4. Elderly people in the rural communities are socially isolated and there is a lack of clear relevant signposting to relevant service provision and information **(overall priority 16)**

Cohesive Communities

1. Elderly and infirm are isolated in the villages. More needs to be done to encourage members of the community to support older residents and ensure they have the opportunities to participate in village life, thus helping combat rural isolation. **(overall priority 3)**
2. There are weak links with the Asian communities in the area **(overall priority 13)**
3. There are few places that young people can gather without being accused of anti social behaviour. Waterside and other youth projects need support **(overall priority 14)**
4. Youth provision in rural parishes is patchy and young people have difficulties accessing facilities outside their own parish **(overall priority 5)**

Safer Communities

1. Current condition of roads due to poor level of road and gulley maintenance means roads are unsafe for users **(overall priority 6)**
2. Need to do more to raise awareness of under-age drinking eg via publicity in main shops **(overall priority 7)**
3. Vehicle crime, vandalism and ASB in Waterside **(overall priority 15)**
4. Speeding - urban and rural roads **(overall priority 19)**

Sustainable Communities

1. Traffic congestion in Chesham – Chesham already a bottleneck. Road infrastructure could not cope with traffic generated by more development (overall priority 4)
2. Need for improved public transport particularly for smaller communities. It is virtually non-existent for villages and in the evenings – demand responsive transport could be a better solution than the rare timetabled buses (overall priority 5)
3. Sustainable approach to water use, urban drainages and flood prevention needs to be developed (overall priority 8)

Thriving Economy

1. There is a lack of affordable, decent housing in the villages, particularly for young families. Also a lack of communication about the development of affordable housing schemes (overall priority 10)
2. There is a need for a visitor/tourist strategy for Chesham Town. Any such strategy needs to link to the AONB strategy for tourism e.g. cycle routes from town to countryside and work is needed to coordinate a tourism strategy with local accommodation providers (overall priority 11)
3. There is a need for investment in the revitalisation of the Town Centre. More effort needs to be put into attracting shops to the Town Centre and businesses to the area. Need to ensure the right kind of accommodation is available. (overall priority 12)

There are issues which appear under several themes and these can be given a higher priority to reflect this fact.

The Area Plans need to be realistic, with actionable first steps, in order to build momentum. Therefore the Area Coordinator and Lead Area Officer will also identify some 'quick wins', which may be lower priorities but could be done quickly and with minimal resources.

Proposed Next Steps

A copy of Local Area Planning process attached.

The next step in the process (step 3) is for the Lead Area Officer and Area Co-ordinator (Locality Services) to work with Buckinghamshire County Council Heads of Service, District Officers and other organisations to identify which actions can be taken forward and by what means.

Resource implications

The Local Priorities budget delegated by Buckinghamshire County Council to the Local Area Forum, and where appropriate, other budgets delegated to the Forum, will be used to commission projects that aim to have a positive impact on the priorities identified via Local Priorities Workshops and agreed by the Local Area Forum.

Local Area planning process:

- 1) Collect issues from existing sources eg. Parish Plans/appraisals, Service Excellence events, Market Town Health Checks etc so as not to reinvent the wheel.
- 2) Bring stakeholders together to prioritise the issues and get a sense of what is happening already

LAF members to discuss and agree top priorities and quick wins

- 3) Check out the reality of getting the priorities addressed with service providers ie
 - on the agenda already and so will definitely happen,
 - could take priority over existing things,
 - could take priority over existing things but needs the LAFs/LCPs active involvement to work up,
 - needs escalating to strategic LSP level,
 - community do it for themselves,
 - will not happen.
- 4) Determine actions to address the priorities
- 5) Get a "delivery agreement" signed off by service providers and partners as a commitment to actions
- 6) Monitor progress of planned actions
- 7) Refresh in the light of new intelligence *

* BCA will be working with Bucks CC to carry out parish appraisals in those areas that have not currently got them.