



Buckinghamshire Council

Denham, Gerrards Cross & Chalfonts Community Board

Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Denham, Gerrards Cross & Chalfonts Community Board held on Thursday 11 February 2021 in Via MS Teams, commencing at 6.30 pm and concluding at 8.00 pm

Members present

D Bray, T Butcher, S Chhokar, I Darby, M Harrold, G Hollis, C Jackson, M Lewis, D Martin, R Reed, J Rush, D Smith, L Smith BEM, J Wertheim
D Alder, P Batting, M Bicknell, S Bicknell, D Brackin, C Brown, J Chamberlain, W Chellar, E O Connor, D Evans, D Hulme, , H Griffiths, D Holden, J Ingram, K Martin, S Moffat, Hellen Orme, Teresa Scott, T Shinner, J Simmons, M Thomas, P Vahey, Cllr J Walsh, S Weston and A Wood

Others in attendance

S Garwood, C Gray, A Sultan

Agenda Item

1 Welcome

Members were welcomed to the meeting by the Chairman.

2 Apologies for absence

M Bradford, B Gibbs, B Harding and S Patel

3 Declarations of interest

There were declarations of interest from:

Anthony Shinner – Chalfont St Peter Parish Councillor and Chairman of the Neighbourhood Action Group

Linda Smith declared an interest in the Chalfont St Peter Community Centre as a Director and Trustee.

Isobel Darby declared an interest as a Member of Chalfont St Peter Parish Council.

Chris Brown declared a personal interest in the CCTV item

Jonathan Rush declared an interest as Director of CSP Community Centre and Member of CSP Parish Council.

4 Minutes

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 November 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

5 Neighbourhood Matters

Questions were asked on the following:-

Public Question Time

This was advertised through the newsletter, through distribution lists and also communications had issued a press release. Suggestions were welcomed on further promotion.

Police update

Members noted the police update and that further clarification would be sought on information regarding the South Bucks area. Cllr Reed expressed concern about police statistics and data and commented that he had raised this issue before. The police had offered to provide this when they attended a previous Community Board. However information was only supplied for the Chalfonts.

Action: Ani Sultan

6 Discussion of Community Board-wide projects

Cllr Brown asked whether it was possible to combine projects on CCTV in order to co-ordinate through Buckinghamshire Council. The Chairman responded that this was a good idea to share experiences and also may help when negotiating with suppliers. A protocol could be drafted. Chris Brown asked whether an officer from Buckinghamshire Council could attend the next meeting to discuss how town and parish councils could co-ordinate more effectively with the unitary council. The Chairman responded that this could be undertaken through the Board or through the Community Safety Working Group in the first instance who could come up with some recommendations. Cllr Shinner reported that discussions had already taken place on better co-ordination. He referred to the CCTV project in Gerrards Cross which had hit a stumbling block with Buckinghamshire Council on a number of issues that needed to be resolved before they could go ahead including the cost of monitoring, making sure the street lights are strong enough to hold cameras and undertaking surveys. Chalfont St Peter wanted 10 cameras and hit the same issues. There did need to be a discussion with Buckinghamshire Council to simplify the process otherwise it would put off Parish Councils taking this forward. Cllr Brackin commented that Fulmer Parish Council would also welcome working together with other Parish Councils and also referred to ANPR monitoring. He also added that security was an issue everywhere and crime spread across borders. Cllr Thomas reported that she would be interested in this project for Seer Green Pavilion where anti-social behaviour was taking place and their cameras needed updating. Cllr Smith reported that it was difficult to implement CCTV and referred to the miniature cameras (battery powered, infra-red with motion sensors) used for flytipping which may be particularly suited for more rural areas. He suggested that it may be worth contacting the waste department to check where they purchased these cameras as they provided good evidence for prosecuting. Other technological solutions were available.

Action: Ani Sultan

Cllr Darby referred to wider community group projects and emphasised the fact that communities varied considerably within the Board from the different towns and also the rural areas and this was important to recognise. The Community Board Co-ordinator commented that it would be helpful if a few Parish Councils could combine for one project or if the whole Board could combine depending on the synergies of the proposal. Cllr Darby agreed but also said it was important to celebrate the differences and also with regard to procurement to take advantage of economies of scale across all the Boards.

Cllr Brackin suggested that convenors of the Sub-Groups should contact all the Parishes in the Community Board area asking them what the issues were for each individual area and what Parish Councils were trying to achieve. The Chairman commented that this was a good idea and also referred to the Parish Council Chairmen's meetings which were taking place, his quarterly meeting with Parish Councils and the Co-ordinator linking up with the Parish Clerks.

Cllr Bray expressed concern about flooding in Chalfont St Giles and Chalfont St Peter and asked whether any local businesses could apply for flood protection equipment as this could make a difference to their business being flooded. This would be taken up by the Sub-Group to look at possible recommendations. Mandy Thomas referred to Seer Green where there was also an issue with flooding with farmers draining their fields directly onto the highway and blocking the drains. An Enforcement Order was served on two landowners but they continued to drain water onto the highway. Cllr Hollis commented that private ditches were the responsibility of the landowner, some of whom did not clear them which resulted in flooding on the highway. Lorries also exacerbated this problem particularly with churning up verges. Ditches needed clearing at least once a year. Some ditches were used for fly tipping e.g. tyres. Cllr Wertheim reported that flooding in Chalfont St Peter was due to overflowing sewage and the River Misbourne. He saw a representative from Thames Water undertaking a survey. He commented that there were a number of overflowing sewers and if they put another pipe in at the A413 and widen it the flow would be much less so the solids would stick to the pipe and there will be flooding because of blockages. Over the years there have been a number of reasons why they cannot increase the size of the sewage pipe to alleviate the flooding problems. Until the sewer in North London was built there would not be any funding left for local areas which was worrying. Cllr Wertheim suggested lobbying central government for additional funding to undertake remedial works. The Chairman suggested writing to the local MP. Cllr Brown asked whether CIL funding could be used as they had the same situation in Gerrards Cross with an inadequate sewage system caused by new housing developments.

Action: Ani Sultan

Cllr Smith referred to the lack of traffic wardens and the need to enforce double yellow lines. She asked whether it would be possible as a Community Board to look at employing a traffic warden for this area. This could be looked at by the Sub-Group. Cllr Hollis reported that Buckinghamshire Council had just been assessing their parking assets and during that time parking enforcement had been suspended so it would be helpful to check whether this had been resumed. Denham was out on a limb and should be included. Cllr Shinner reported that Chalfont St Peter were due to have some additional yellow lines added to their area next week which would cause additional problems. They were given a copy of attendances from all parking control wardens from November 2020 and according to the schedule they were present every day which should be borne in mind before contributing to any further costs. This was available via their website and he could provide the Board with the link.

Action: Ani Sultan

Cllr Walsh expressed concern about capital projects and that Buckinghamshire Council were pushing these down to Parish Councils to deliver and further information on this was welcomed.

Action: Ani Sultan

The Chairman reported that he would discuss with the Community Co-ordinator the best approach in terms of tackling wider community projects and provide an update at the next meeting.

Action: Ani Sultan

7 Updates from Parish Councils (written)

The written updates from Parish Councils were welcomed. Cllr Bray referred to mapping used by TfB which did not show all the gullies in the area and were not cleaning them on their 3 yearly basis. They have now used a GPS system to map them all and they have cleared the majority of them. The Parish Council were pushing for an upgrade on how often the gullies were cleared. Cllr Darby commented that Buckinghamshire Council were reviewing the way gullies were being cleared to do them more often but also analyse which gullies needed more clearing than others depending on the geography. Local information was useful to send to TfB. Cllr Brackin reported that there had been issues in Fulmer where volunteers had helped to clear ditches and the Local Area Technician had been able to assist where further help was required.

8 Budget Update

The Chairman reported on the process :-

- Once the funding application had been submitted it would be processed by the Community Board Co-ordinator, Chairman and convenor of Sub Group
- The application would be considered by the Sub Group and make recommendations to the Board. The Sub Groups were open to everyone.
- The Board would consider the funding application and agree by consensus.
- If there was an urgent application a decision would be taken via email. Any covid related funding would be processed within 48 hours (Sub Group chaired by Cllr Hollis).
- This would be put in writing for the Board and added to the website.
- All Boards work in a similar fashion but adaptations would be made to meet local requirements.
- The Board has spent £47,000 and has £133,000 remaining. The Board should seek out good projects and encourage funding applications.
- In terms of transport projects these had to be considered by TfB who then produced a Project Initiation Document. They would then scope the project with a budget estimate and this would be considered at the next Board meeting.

During discussion the following points were made:-

- In terms of consensus this meant getting a feel from the meeting that the majority of people were in favour. Concern was expressed regarding a Sub-Group where the majority were in favour but were overruled by a smaller number of Members who expressed strong concerns against the proposal. The Chairman reported that this should not be allowed to happen and that each proposal should be looked at on merit, whether it met local needs and whether it was good value for money. Decision making should be consistent.
- Cllr Darby asked for clarification on the figures – for example the Community Area Priority Fund did not include the wildflower project. There were also 3 Health and Wellbeing Projects not included. The Chalfont St Peter bollards had not appeared in any list. The Community Board Co-ordinator reported that the list was up to date when the agenda was published and only included what funding had been awarded and had been confirmed by letter. The bollards scheme had been approved at Sub-Group level but still needed to be confirmed by TfB. The Community Board Co-ordinator reported that this had been originally put forward as an environment project to stop cars going on the verges which should help reduce flooding. TfB needed to check whether this scheme would impact on other services such as electricity cables. Information on the PIDs should be available in March and the Parish Council had been updated. The Community Board Co-ordinator would check the Health and Wellbeing Projects. A Member commented that it would be helpful to have more detail on what else was in the pipeline to show

how much funding had already been committed.

Action: Ani Sultan

- Cllr Rush commented that there was a reasonable amount of funding left for Local Infrastructure projects and encouraged funding applications to be put forward. This related to projected growth.
- Cllr Brackin commented that the Community Board priorities were not clear and therefore it was difficult to know which funding applications should be put forward. In addition that the dates of the Sub Groups were not published which made it difficult to attend. The Community Board Co-ordinator reported that this year's priorities had been set but the Board would need to consider next year's priorities in the coming months. The dates for Sub-Groups were being sent out including a calendar for the whole year.
- Cllr Reed expressed concern that more information should be provided including a business case for higher figures. He also asked for assurance that with the Dial A Ride funding application that no other Community Boards were supporting the same project. He also asked for a list of the operating Sub-Groups and their membership. Members noted that the website has information on the Sub-Groups with the convener's details.
- Ms Griffiths asked when the funding would be received for the community fridge project. The Community Board Co-ordinator reported that they were waiting for information on terms and conditions and she would contact Louise Chamberlain.
- In terms of funding this could be rolled over to the following year.
- A Member asked for further information on projects that were pending.

9 Working Groups

The Sub Group reports were noted.

10 Community Board Funding Applications for approval

Higher Denham ANPR

This application was supported by the Sub-Group. The Project aimed to site high quality, number plate recognition CCTV cameras at each of the (only) three vehicle entrances/exits to/from Higher Denham together with the associated transmission and recording equipment. The objective of the Project was to reduce the number of burglaries that take place in Higher Denham, which Thames Valley Police say was above the average for the area. It would achieve this by:

1. advertising the presence of the cameras which should deter criminal activity
2. by making recordings, collected at the time of any burglary that does occur, available to the police. Unexpected vehicles can be identified and checked to help identify perpetrators and then obtain convictions. The quality of the system was such that it was acceptable in courts as evidence.

The Community Board agreed the funding application.

CCTV – Urgent replacement of cameras stolen or vandalised - £600

This application was supported by the Sub-Group. The Community Centre had already received the funding. By improving the security of the community centre in a very visible way, people will be reassured that they take their security seriously and will feel safer. This will encourage them to want to use the facilities provided by the community centre and it will give the trustees of the community centre the confidence to keep the community centre open, since they are ultimately responsible for the safety of their clients.

The Community Board agreed the funding application.

Chalfont St Giles Wildflowers

This application was supported by the Sub-Group. Planting up the roadside verges with colourful wildflowers, increasing flowers in the village centre, providing colourful flowers in the cemetery borders and creating spaces for native wildflowers within the parks and open spaces. In 2018 the Parish Council planted up some wildflowers on the A413 at Pheasant Hill. This was very well received and the areas planted were increased in 2019. The positive feedback from the flowered areas meant that the Parish Council anticipated planting more areas in 2020, however this did not happen because of the Pandemic. The Pandemic has seen far more people taking exercise outdoors and enjoying the open spaces within the Parish so the Parish Council has agreed to increase the flowers around the villages of Chalfont St Giles and Jordans.

The Community Board agreed the funding application.

Becoming Your Own Boss

This was an initiative by Bucks Business First aimed at supporting people who were seriously considering self-employment or starting their own business. Buckinghamshire Council made people aware of the scheme on 22 January 2021 and five other Community Boards were supporting the project. The three day programme advises people in the right direction; enterprise support, one on one and two day training course. The Programme was to fund 12 people. Bucks Business First would do a follow up after the course. Eight people recommended this to the Community Board. Cllr Chamberlain commented that the BYOB course sounded excellent but was concerned that applicants would be accepted on a first come first serve basis rather than a geographical basis across the Board. The applicants should be reflective of the Board. Steve Weston agreed with this and would take this up with Bucks Business First. Cllr Darby commented that this project was time limited so it was important to ensure that there were 12 applicants coming forward and if time allowed that it should be geographically spread.

The Community Board agreed the funding application.

11 Calendar of Meetings

Members noted that the calendar for Sub-Groups would be included on the website.

Community Board meetings would be held on the following dates:-

16 June
22 September
8 December
9 March 2022

12 AOB

Cllr Reed asked for the following:-

- A copy of the spreadsheet showing pending projects.
- Information on legacy Local Area Forum funding. Previously there was LAF funding agreed for parking measures in Gerrards Cross.
- Iver and Wexham Community Board invite their MP and it would be good to do this for this Community Board.
- He asked for clarification on whether all Community Boards would start at 6.30pm. The Community Board Co-ordinator confirmed this.

There was a discussion about using zoom rather than Teams. The Community Board Co-ordinator suggested trialling a zoom meeting for the next meeting. Cllr Smith commented that zoom worked better for smaller groups and teams was better for the size of the Community

Board. There could be hardware or broadband issues. Buckinghamshire Council supported Microsoft Teams; if zoom did not work there would not be any corporate support. The Chairman said that the next meeting would be on zoom.

Teresa Scott referred to the youth group which was new and she commented that they would like to see better representation and youth provision in the local parishes. She asked Members to promote this information. They were very proactive and had some great ideas and would to hear about what other people were doing in their area.