



# Denham, Gerrards Cross & Chalfonts Community Board minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Denham, Gerrards Cross & Chalfonts Community Board held on Thursday 8 July 2021 in Via MS Teams, commencing at 6.30 pm and concluding at 8.03 pm.

## Members present

S Chhokar, J Chamberlain (Chalfont St Giles Parish Councillor), M Bracken, D Bray (Chalfont St Giles Parish Councillor), T Broom, I Darby, G Hollis, E Hungin (Seer Green Parish Councillor) C Jackson, G Kirkby (Chalfont St Giles Parish Councillor), S Kumar (Chalfont St Peter Parish Councillor), J Rush, T Shinner (Chalfont St Peter Parish Chairman), L Smith BEM, A Vldar (Chalfont St Peter Parish Councillor), J Walsh (Denham Parish Chairman), S Williams (Denham Parish Councillor) and A Wood

## Others in attendance

S Garwood (Localism Manager), J Brar (Denham Parish Clerk), C Gray (Democratic Services), D Evans (Chalfont St Peter Parish Clerk), S Moffat (Gerrards Cross Town Clerk), J Simmons (Gold Hill Baptist Church), P Vahey (Fulmer Parish Clerk), H Griffiths (Chalfont St Giles Parish Clerk), K Martin, D Holden, D Hulme (Community Co-ordinator, FIS), S Weston (Chairman of Economic Regeneration Sub-Group) , M Everitt (Assistant Service Director), J Arnold (Chairman of PACCAR Scout Camp) and A Sultan (Community Board Co-ordinator)

## Apologies

P Bass, D Brackin, T Butcher and Eleanor O Connor

## Agenda Item

### 1 Welcome

Members were welcomed to the meeting by the Chairman. The Chairman commented that last year the focus of the Board was on the pandemic. This year the focus would shift with four specific priorities:-

- Economic Regeneration (to also encompass last year's Business Forum)
- Improving the Environment (to continue the work of last year's Climate change and Environment Action Group)
- Highways and Transport (to carry on the work of last year's Highways and Infrastructure Group)

- Wellbeing and Safety (which would encompass last year's Community Safety action group, along with parts of the youth action group and the Wellbeing portion of the Covid Reset, Recovery and Wellbeing group)

Action groups relating to each priority would be set up. A Member asked about the Youth Group which had been set up and the Chairman reported that this would be accommodated within the Wellbeing and Safety priority as referred to above. Julia Walsh commented that their youth initiative involving the scout hut was still running and they hoped to carry out a survey and renovate the building. This issue was discussed further under the LAF reserve update.

The Chairman welcomed participation from all members of the Board and local residents.

## **2 Apologies for Absence**

There were apologies for absence from Cllr Paul Bass, Cllr Tim Butcher, Cllr David Brackin and Ellie O'Connor.

## **3 Declarations of interest**

The following declarations of interest were declared:-

Item 7 - Presentation from Denham Parish Council on the Former Tilehouse Day Opportunity Centre. There were some Members of the Area Planning Committee present who would be considering the planning application linked to this Former site and therefore they would not express a view on this item so as to not have pre-determined the application. These were Cllrs Bracken, Broom, Hollis and Chhokar.

Cllrs Darby, Rush and Vladar declared an interest as Members of Chalfont St Peter Parish Council (Item 5 – Petitions). Cllr Vladar was also a Member of the Neighbourhood Action Group.

## **4 Minutes of the last meeting**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 February 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

Cllr Shinner referred to an item which had not been included in the minutes regarding a request for all the funding bids being included in one single document and the progress on each application. The minutes would be updated to include this.

The Community Board Co-ordinator reported that there was a full funding report in the agenda papers which would provide the template for future funding information.

## **5 Petition - A413 Speed Reduction**

The Vice Chairman reported that a petition requesting a speed limit reduction on the A413 Amersham Road between the Greyhound Roundabout and Kingsway Roundabout had been received by Buckinghamshire Council from Chalfont St Peter

residents.

The report stated that this section of A413 was originally considered for speed limit reduction as part of the County wide speed limit review in 2008, coming under Area 10. At the time it was decided the national speed limit should be retained as there was a good safety record on this section of road, and the current speed limit was appropriate. Following this comprehensive review, the Council was unable to justify funding any further speed limit changes. Since the speed limit review, there has been little change in terms of collisions, and in the past five years there have been no recorded collisions along this section of dual carriageway away from the roundabouts at either end. The collisions that have occurred were recorded at the two roundabouts, including a fatality late last year.

The report presented to the Board concluded that if there was overwhelming support for the speed limit assessment the Board and the Parish Council should be approached for funding. This petition would be referred to the Highways Action Group for further consideration.

Cllr Shinner reported that they had previously met with the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner about this issue and he had commented that the police would not be able to comment on this until a traffic survey had been produced. They had been informed that the survey would cost about £700 but the actual cost was £1150. The new funding application form only went online on 30 June 2021 but information on the traffic survey could only come from the Highways Department.

Cllr Bracken reported that it would be useful to look at other areas that had similar speeding issues and to look at the order of magnitude. He was invited to attend the Action Group to discuss this. Cllr Hollis commented that he had received detailed information on installing 20mph speed limits and would forward this to the Action Group for information.

Cllr Walsh also informed that Martin Baker had put in application for a relief road on the A413 between Denham and Chalfont St Peter and as part of that Buckinghamshire Council had asked for a roundabout with the back entrance going into Tatling End and would connect with the new relief road in Chalfont St Peter. This was part of an application 15 years ago. The Council had asked for a roundabout as they were concerned about the lack of speed limit. This could help extend the speed limit down to Chalfont St Peter. There had been one fatality on this road.

## **6 Priorities**

Donna Wilkinson, Principal Economic Development Officer gave a presentation on economic recovery and development which was a corporate priority. During the presentation the following points were made:-

- Covid had a large impact on the economy. Many of the high streets were experiencing change before then with the change in retail delivery. Some businesses had closed and unemployment had increased (and may still

increase once the furlough scheme ended).

- Changes in markets – some market retailers had not returned, there has been an increase on online retailers and an increase in vacant premises.
- Covid has meant an increase in support for the local economy and supporting the community. Some new businesses have used the vacant premises available.
- The main priorities for the Team were supporting town centres and local businesses to innovate and thrive; reviewing existing local regeneration strategies, delivering the regeneration programme, leading the inward investment and large enterprise engagement programmes and developing the Future Skills Strategy and Tourism Programme and Markets Strategy
- Reference was made to the Welcome Back Fund which was European funding allocated to local authorities who had to claim the money back but were given an indicative allocation. It followed on from the High Street Fund which was a restrictive fund, however the Welcome Back Fund had a wider remit and focussed on making local towns more vibrant e.g. events, cleaning and greening, trails and place information and seating, bins and lighting. It was important not to be prescriptive about how the funding was used as each local area was very different.
- It was important to look at what was happening on the ground and what covid had created and accelerated. It was important to map the current local economy and understand what direction future business would want to take and what they need. There were 25 factors which made places vital and viable.
- There had been a meeting of Community Board Chairmen where local projects had been discussed and the need to undertake surveys to understand shoppers and businesses needs and wants.
- The Team would work closely with the Action Group as this was an ongoing project to identify opportunities to support the local economy.

During discussion a Member asked about when the welcome back flags in the High Street would be taken down as some of them were looking worn. Donna Wilkinson said that she would check this with the Communications Team. Another Member asked whether this funding could be used for CCTV and Donna Wilkinson said she would come back on this as well. Cllr Walsh asked how this could be promoted to Parish Councils and residents and was informed that the best way to engage on this area was currently being looked at. Donna Wilkinson could attend any Action Groups that were set up or could liaise individually with Town and Parish Councils. A copy of the slides would be circulated.

## **7 Tilehouse Day Centre Recommissioning Presentation**

A presentation was given by Cllr Walsh, Denham Parish Council on the proposal for Tilehouse Day Centre which could be a model to help cash strapped Councils to serve local vulnerable residents better. The Former Day Centre had been previously used by residents from Iver, Denham and Gerrards Cross. During the presentation the following points were noted:-

- The Parish Council would like to acquire the Tilehouse Day Centre, sited in a Level 5 area of deprivation and to refurbish it as a not for profit day care centre with specialist facilities to support dementia and learning difficulties.
- The development plan includes refurbishment of the current caretaker bungalow, possible office accommodation and rooms for community use.
- There was a significant need in Denham for a day care centre to support those with dementia and learning disabilities to access services. By 2040 in Buckinghamshire the ONS estimate a 58% increase in dementia. Within a 5 mile radius of Denham there were 505 patients recorded with dementia in 2018. The nearest local day care centre was over 11 miles away in Burnham and did not have the capacity to meet future need.
- Whilst Learning Disabilities was funded through direct payments, dementia was not funded in this way.
- There had been good support from Denham Medical Centre and the Commissioning Managers at Buckinghamshire Council who have provided the data.
- Feedback from residents had been captured through a survey. 99% of those returning the card were in favour of the project.
- The buildings had been abandoned in 2015 and was formerly a day centre run by the Red Cross. Extensive repair and refurbishment was required and the proposal was to acquire freehold or a long lease from the Council. The Centre could be used as a separate adult learning and dementia centre with a kitchen and dining facility. There was also an opportunity for a self-contained office space and separate detached bungalows. Any refurbishments would be 'green' and energy efficient.
- The aim was for the Parish Council to provide the building and another day centre could help provide the operational expertise. They were working in partnership with an award winning quality day care centre for dementia and learning difficulties. The Centre would be run as a charitable entity.
- Funding – Capital budget would require a Public Works Loan taken out over 2-3 years with a 50 year payback period, with an interest rate of 2.3%.
- A planning application was being considered at the South Bucks District Council on 13 July from the council to build some houses including affordable homes on the site.

The report was noted.

## **8 New Funding Process**

Simon Garwood, Localism Manager provided an update on the new funding process. The budget for this year was £347,377 which included an underspend of £124,675 and had taken into account population, deprivation and new homes. There would be one fund for each Board to spend on the priorities, minimum of 15% to be spent on projects to do with the environment, minimum of 15% on projects to aid Economic Regeneration and a maximum cap of 25% of this year's budget only (not to include last year's underspend) on transport projects.

- Improving the Environment – minimum £52,107 to be spent

- Supporting Economic Recovery – minimum £52,107 to be spent
- Highways and Transport – maximum of £55,676 to be spent

Building on the experiences last year the funding process has now been improved as follows:-

- Initial idea – via Action Group, application form or via discussion with Chairman or Co-ordinator
- Application & assessment – looked at by Co-ordinator and Localism Managers (complex applications could be referred to the Monthly Funding Panel)
- Community Board discussion and recommendation – Summaries of applications would be sent by email and a further email would be sent to confirm.
- Monthly Funding Approvals and Reporting Panel – signed off by the Service Director and Cabinet Member to meet governance requirements
- Implementation, Review and Monitoring – award letter would be sent and monitored with updates to the Board.

For Highway applications there would be a deadline of 30 September 2021 so that the application could be assessed before the Community Board decided whether or not to fund the application.

During discussion the following points were made:-

- A suggestion was made that the Chairman of the Action Groups should work together and liaise with Town and Parish Councils to find out what their problems were and to prioritise projects to deal with these issues.
- In terms of rolling forward funding for future years it was thought that this would be unlikely to happen next year. A decision was made to roll forward for 2021/22 due to the impact of the pandemic and also because the Boards start later in the year due to the new unitary council coming into fruition. Funding could still be used if a project was to be started in February or March but would not be completed for a number of months as funding could be reserved for this. However, unallocated money would not be rolled over.
- The Local Infrastructure Fund and community priorities had been combined into one fund this year. There was no specific Health and Wellbeing fund this year – last year this was a separate pot of money that was provided by Public Health.
- The percentage splits were strong recommendations in terms of where funding should be directed. However, if there was a need to have one project that strongly fitted into the priorities and would skew the percentages, then this should be discussed with the Chairman and the Co-ordinator in order to see if it would be feasible.
- A Member asked about the total funding and the percentage split and how much of that budget was funding from last year and whether the split still applied to that part of the budget. The Member also raised concern about

the monthly process and whether the Board should step back and look at the whole picture to be able to make better decisions for their local community. In response the Localism Manager reported that there was just one fund this year. There were a number of ways to distribute funding e.g the Board could have a small grants fund to help provide support for smaller organisations. The remaining funding could be used for two or three big projects. The Board needed to discuss how they wished to allocate the funding.

- A Member commented that it would be helpful to have a report on how the funding was spent last year. The Localism Manager would check whether any funding had been left over from the Health and Wellbeing Fund and whether this still could be spent on public health initiatives.

## **9 Budget Update**

The Board noted the budget update and that regular updates would be provided to the Board. A Member commented that it would also be helpful to have an update on the progress of projects.

## **10 LAF Reserve Update**

Simon Garwood reported on legacy funding for past Local Area Forum projects. There were four projects; a good neighbours scheme (£7,000); scout hut scheme for Denham Parish Council (the reason this has not been progressed was that it was a devolution project and the property needed to be devolved therefore funding was reserved but was awaiting release); Denham Benches (£345); Mobile Vehicle Activated Signs in Denham (£1,600 each) and Fulmer. There were 19 Schemes across the County. The LAF reserve would finish at the end of this financial year and had been extended due to the pandemic. At the last meeting a query had been raised regarding a parking scheme in the Gerrards Cross area, this was not a reserve but a scheme which had been carried out.

A question was asked about the funding process and whether the Board would be updated on a monthly basis with the decision taken by the Monthly Funding Panels. Simon Garwood reported that the Co-ordinator would update the Board on a monthly basis with decisions from the Panel and an updated budget report. A Parish Councillor commented that she hoped having the monthly panel meetings would mean that the decision making on funding applications would be quicker. Simon Garwood reported that this should make the process quicker with a decision being made between 4-6 weeks.

A further question was asked regarding holding back funding for larger projects so that all funding was not being spent at the beginning of the year. Simon Garwood responded that the Board could submit bi-monthly applications if it wished, or could hold back a project and wait to see if any more worthwhile projects came later in the year.

## **11 Action Groups**

The Chairman gave an update on Action Groups to help support the work of the Board:-

- Economic Regeneration (Chairman – Steve Weston, and Vice Chairman Jane Chamberlain)
- Improving the Environment (Chairman – Simon Rouse and Vice Chairman Norman Barnett )
- Highways and Transport (Chairman – Jonathan Rush and Vice-Chairman Michael Bracken)
- Wellbeing and Safety (Chairman – Tony Shinner and Vice-Chairman Guy Hollis)

Participation in any of the Action Groups was welcomed, and anyone interested should contact the Chairman of each Group or the Community Board Co-ordinator. The Action Group meetings would be held virtually.

## 12 Corporate Messages

Matt Everitt introduced himself as the Assistant Director for Service Improvement and also a champion of this Community Board. His Service area carried out the following:-

- Service Improvement (leading the Better Buckinghamshire programme)
- Project and Programme support for key areas (including covid such as setting up vaccination centres)
- Business Intelligence and Insight Team (leading the corporate performance framework) and consultation and research analysis and data integration modelling.

Matt Everitt provided two updates :-

Home to school transport:-

The Council contracts bus operators to provide school buses for eligible children and contracts were being renewed to ensure best value for money. As many Council run bus services carry very few eligible children it was important to focus resources on those that were eligible. Therefore those routes that carry few or no eligible children were being taken over by bus companies as commercial school bus routes from September 2021 and bus companies would sell tickets directly to parents. Remaining Council school bus services would have changed routes and pick up points to focus on travel for eligible children. Individual journey times may change because of the realignment of routes. Timetables for September would be available on the website by 15 August. Available spare seats would still be given to paying parents. Online applications were currently open and applicants would hear by the end of July. All children who could no longer have a Council spare seat would be able to buy a seat on commercial services.

<https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools-index/school-transport/>

Update on covid

As of 8 July the key messages were to up to groups of 30 outside or rule of six

indoors with two households. All adults over 18 were now able to get vaccinated and there was a drive to get younger people vaccinated ahead of the restrictions lifting on 18 July. There were numerous places to have a vaccination including GP surgery, pharmacies and the larger vaccination centres. These could be booked online or over the phone. There were several drop in clinics which allow eligible people without an appointment to turn up and Health on the Move vans were focussing on areas where there was a low take up of the vaccine.

The Chairman reported that it would be helpful to have support from the Champion on cross-border issues eg fly tipping and flooding.

### **13 Updates from Parish Councils (written)**

The reports received from Chalfont St Giles, Denham, Gerrards Cross, Seer Green and Fulmer Parish and Town Councils were noted.

### **14 Neighbourhood Community Matters**

Simon Garwood, the Localism Manager reported on how Community Boards were supporting Thames Valley Police with setting priorities for the area which was through the Chiltern and South Bucks Policing Issues Forum.

The Forum's aims were to:-

- to support the process for identifying and setting areas of focus for the Chiltern & South Bucks LPA Neighbourhood Police teams.
- to provide a platform for meaningful engagement between residents and Neighbourhood Police teams – helps latter fulfil statutory obligation.
- to promote community engagement, and encourage involvement by individuals, businesses and other stakeholders within the area.
- to make the Chiltern & South Bucks community more resilient, and for Chiltern and South Bucks to be a better, safer place to live and work.

Since 2018, quarterly surveys have informed the setting of focus areas for Neighbourhood Policing across Chiltern & South Bucks Local Policing Area (LPA). The meetings facilitate open discussions between public and senior police officers, give an opportunity to examine specific issues, introduce guests eg Thames Valley Police & Crime Commissioner, facilitate surveys and meetings to help TVP meet statutory duty to consult with local people about crime and disorder in their neighbourhood.

From 2021, a panel of Community Board chairs would be setting TVP Chiltern & South Bucks Neighbourhood Policing focus areas. Three surveys would be sent out a year so that priorities could be revisited every four months. Survey responses would be made available to individual Community Boards to inform on local concerns. Surveys would be hosted and analysed by Buckinghamshire Council Communities/ Business Intelligence teams.

E-mail: [contact@csb-forum.org](mailto:contact@csb-forum.org) Web: <https://www.csb-forum.org>

Twitter: @CSBForum Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/csbforum>

The Chairman also referred to Be Your Own Boss and suggested that if anyone was

interested in the Scheme that they should contact the Community Board Co-ordinator.

**15 Topics for future consideration**

Members were asked to let the Community Board Co-ordinator of any topics for future discussion and also asked to promote the work of Community Boards. They were also asked to send through any useful information that could be shared on social media or in the monthly newsletter. The Chairman reported that the Community Board Co-ordinator co-ordinates a meeting with the Parish Clerks on a monthly basis and he had also met with the Parish Chairmen and hoped to set up another meeting and attend one Parish Council meeting for each of the areas this year.

A Member asked if the Community Board Co-ordinator could check when the handbook would be available. Another Member asked if Linked in could be looked at as well as facebook.

**16 Date of Next Meeting**

21 October 2021 at 6.30pm