



Buckinghamshire Council Buckingham & Villages Community Board

Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Buckingham & Villages Community Board held on Wednesday 5 October 2022 in , commencing at 6.30 pm and concluding at 8.30 pm

Members present

H Mordue, P Fealey A Macpherson, F Mahon, M Rand, A Osibogun, R Stuchbury and C Cornell

Others in attendance

L Donoghue, A Lane, J Riches, P Wright, R Sloan, J Taylor, T Guest, J Harvey, I Haest, M Taylor, M White C Martin, A Decent and P Hardcastle, D Child and L Burt.

Officers Present

A Williams, S Turnbull, A Jenner, C Martin, I Malik

1 Chairman's Welcome

On behalf of the Vice Chairman (Cllr Fealey) and himself, the Chairman welcomed all those present to the meeting of the Board, highlighting that the next one would take place in person

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from: Ms Scott, Mr Edwards, Mr Jenkins, Ms Wilkinson and Mr Whyte.

3 Minutes/Actions from Previous Meeting

It was reported that the previous minutes had requested it would be advisable to sign up to the Leader's Newsletter. It was confirmed that the link for this had now been sent and circulated.

The Board had also wished to establish the status regards TFB. Members were informed that the query had been raised but that the Board Manager was still awaiting clarification on the matter. The Board would be kept informed.

At the previous meeting, members had wished to establish the status of the new Skate Park. This question was as yet still unresolved. Mr Harvey agreed to share a link from the Environment Agency explaining why the situation had not progressed a great deal further.

RESOLVED: That

- (i) Board Manager to circulate the link to Board Members which outlined the reasons as to why work was ongoing but slow;
- (ii) TFB update be provided when received;
- (iii) The minutes of the previous meeting held on 6 July be confirmed as a true record.

4 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

5 Pop Up Repair Café

A presentation was conducted which provided information regarding Pop Up Repair Cafes. These were community events which helped repair broken items thereby saving money and reducing the impact of waste disposal, further building skills and confidence.

It was proposed that a one off event could be run in Buckingham serving as a catalyst for a regular cafe run by the community. The first event would be coordinated by the Waste Prevention Team who would provide organisational support and work with a team of local volunteers.

A number of questions and suggestions followed the presentations mainly with regards to appropriate venues for the project. It was agreed that the information would be reported back to A Jenkins, Waste Prevention Team Leader.

RESOLVED: That

- (i) the information be noted,
- (ii) The Community Board Manager would liaise with Mr Jenkins to organise/arrange an expressions of interest meeting for Board Members.

6 Corporate Update

S Turnbull, Service Director for Transport presented the corporate update and highlighted the following:

Cost of living Crisis

Members were informed that the council was undertaking a range of actions to help residents with the cost of living including the provision of support that would continue to develop over the coming months. It was emphasised that the community boards had a critical role to play in helping to identify areas of need and supporting the provision of help. An emphasis was placed on the

role of the Helping Hands team and the new Welcoming Spaces initiative designed to provide assistance both financially and in terms of specialist advice and support.

Highways

Reference was made to Buckinghamshire Council commencing with the new highways contracts April 2023 which would have an impact on community board projects currently in the pipeline. It was also an opportunity to build in a delivery model with community boards in mind.

Ukraine

It was reported that arrivals from Ukraine were still ongoing with 700 hosts now offering accommodation to over 1,200 Ukrainian guests. The Council continued to work hard to ensure that families could access schooling, work, finance, practical items, English language lessons and emotional support through the Helping Hand for Ukraine. Reference was also made to a recent Home Office decision to house Asylum Seekers within a local hotel in Buckingham. Ongoing discussions around the practical arrangements surrounding this were taking place with the Corporate Management Team. Local churches also had a contribution to make in this regard in terms of donations of clothing and footwear. It was also reported that the Council was not in receipt of any financial support in providing the extra assistance to the refugees totalling 140 people.

Members emphasised that it was imperative that all issues in regards to health and social care, child protection accessibility to services etc were adequately supported. Moreover, it was imperative that a coordinated response was provided by all agencies involved and the community be made aware of developments, which in turn would provide the opportunity to be more welcoming of the changes.

RESOLVED: That

- (i) All efforts be coordinated regards initiatives and developments in light of the decision of the Home Office in the past 7 days.
- (ii) A briefing note be prepared and distributed to the Board providing an update on the situation regarding asylum seekers being housed in the Best Western Hotel, Bucks.

7 Community Board Updates

Action Plan

The action plan circulated with the agenda laid out how the Board would work with the community to address community priorities and take action on local issues.

RESOLVED: That the action plan be noted.

Funding Report

A Williams, Community Board Manager reported that the total budget for the Board for 2022/23 was £117,026 leaving a remaining budget as of 5 October at £69,922. Members of the board were encouraged to come forward with any ideas and suggestions of suitable projects.

RESOLVED: Board Members liaise directly with Board Manager with regards to the allocation of the remaining budget.

8 Community Matters

Board Priorities

Economic Recovery

It was reported that a permanent location for the banking hub was being explored with the results of the survey indicating that a hub was required. Results of the survey established that indeed needed. It was also reported that careers fair would be developed and delivered in collaboration with Buckingham University. A meeting with the University was scheduled to take place in order to establish the full project scope.

Road Safety

The first meeting had taken place and had proved to be positive with solutions and measures for implementation currently under consideration.

Youth

A youth Café was to be established in Buckinghamshire. Cllr Fealey stated that a survey was scheduled to be conducted following the results of which the work could progress through the creation of a project scoping document.

It was emphasised strongly by a Member that when re-evaluation of priorities took place should be in the light of the cost of living crisis. It was crucial to have in place agile funding accessed in order to support the most vulnerable people in the community. She raised the question as to whether this could/would be put into place.

It was confirmed by the Board Manager that discussions to develop a streamlined approach to support the cost of living crisis was indeed in progress, and that this would be implemented shortly. This would ensure that measures were in place to support those most in need.

9 Date of Future Meetings/Community Board Events

RESOLVED: That the next meeting of the Buckinghamshire & Villages Community Board be held on 2 February 2023 at Bucks New University preceded by a Community Engagement Event.

The Bucks Christmas Parade was to take place on the 10 December.

Pop-up Repair Cafe

Waste Prevention Initiative

Andrew Jenkins, Waste Prevention Team Leader

Repair Cafes

- Repair Cafes are community events that help people repair their broken items which:
 - Saves them money,
 - Reduces the impact of disposal and making a new product on the environment
 - Builds skills and confidence to encourage more repair
- Lots of ways of running the events, the main things you need are:
 - Venue
 - Volunteers (with some repair skills not necessarily experts)
 - Tea & enthusiasm
 - Some kind of organisational support

Buckinghamshire Repair Cafes

- 9/10 regular Repair Cafes across the County
- Very different approaches at each one, run by charities, community groups and other organisations.
- Waste Prevention Team offers support in terms of finance, resources promotion & advice
- Our contractors (FCC) who run the Household Recycling Centres have a dedicated education officer who has led Pop-up Repair cafes. With staff volunteering and FCC funding room hire & equipment.

Buckingham Pop-up Repair Cafe

- We want to run a Pop-up Repair Café in Buckingham to try and be the catalyst for a regular event run by the community.
- Proposal is for FCC to coordinate the event, with support from Buckinghamshire Council and the local Community Board.
- It would be a chance for local volunteers to get involved without planning the whole event.
- It would also introduce the concept to the local area and indicate what appetite there would be for a regular event.

How we can work together

- We would love to involve the Community Board at the beginning.
- It would help recruit volunteers, promote the event and increase the chances that a regular event could be held.
- Next Steps
 - Understand the support from the CB and meet with interested members
 - Set a date for an event
 - Work with FCC to plan for the event
 - Review the first event and look at future plans with or without Council/FCC support.

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An update for Community Boards from Buckinghamshire Council Late Summer (September 2022)

Help in these difficult times

As we move into autumn there's one issue above all others that stands out and that, of course, is the current cost of living pressures, especially where energy and food bills are concerned.

This is impacting everyone; businesses, residents and particularly those who are already struggling. For some households the prospect of what winter will bring is extremely worrying. Many people are in need now and want to know what extra support is coming in the winter months.

The council is taking a range of actions to help residents with the cost of living and it's a package of support that will continue to develop over the coming months.

The community boards have a critical role to play in this, both in helping to identify areas of need and supporting the provision of help. Work is already underhand looking at how best boards where it is appropriate can help with this work.

Support available to those who need it:

Helping Hand

The council's Helping Hand team offers advice, help and information to people who need it, including financial help to cover the food and energy costs to households in crisis, as well as helping with paying for other essentials like sanitary items and nappies. The team is available to help individuals or families in need, those on low incomes and those who are experiencing a financial emergency or crisis.

Our Helping Hand programme provides support to local individuals and families who are experiencing financial hardship. They can call the team on 01296 531 151 or use the [online contact form](#). You can read more about the help available on the [dedicated section of our website](#).

The Helping Hand team is issuing Post Office vouchers to some 8,000 pensioners in Buckinghamshire who are in receipt of Council Tax reduction or who have previously been supported by Helping Hand; this will ensure there is support available to those who need it most.

‘Welcoming Spaces’

We will be joining forces with other organisations across Buckinghamshire to create a network of welcoming spaces this winter, to assist when the weather turns colder.

Starting with council libraries, these locations will provide a warm, welcoming and supportive space for anyone who needs it. Anyone who comes in from the cold will be welcomed and will be guaranteed respect, dignity and warmth; the aim is to offer a friendly ear and, overall, to create places that help people save on their heating bills and that also offer advice and support.

This is an example of an area where community boards can play a key role in working within their communities to identify potential welcoming spaces and help set them up.

Information and advice

Our fantastic network of volunteer groups and charity organisations plays a vital role in providing community support and specialist advice and information. We have created a [‘Cost of Living’ section on our website](#) to make it easier to find advice and information. You can also search our [Family Information Service website](#) for more information on the wider support and advice available to any households that need it.

There are a number of great community projects that offer help in different ways. For example, take a look at the [‘Grow It, Cook It, Eat It’ project](#) that the council supports and we have already seen being developed through community boards. This includes a range of initiatives that help with the cost of food, ensure food isn’t wasted and has a number of health and environmental benefits. Local initiatives like this play a vital part in the overall general support available to residents who need a helping hand.

There is also the support on offer from central government this winter. This is the current package:

- Eligible residents in receipt of disability benefits will receive a £150 cost of living payment from 20 September.
- All households in Great Britain will receive a £400 discount on their electricity bills this winter, applied in six monthly instalments, automatically coming off bills, starting in October.
- In addition to this, households on means tested benefits including Universal Credit, Pension Credit and Tax Credits will receive a Cost of Living payment of £650 this year.

You can find out more about these payments on the government’s website [here](#) and access wider information about the overall support available to households via [their website](#) – this contains information on transport and childcare costs too.

In addition, the websites of the main energy providers contain valuable tips about how to save energy in the home.

Highways – a new contract and what it means for community boards

Maintaining and improving the roads in the county is one of the issues that matter most to residents and is a top priority for Buckinghamshire Council.

As you will be aware, Buckinghamshire Council will be starting new highways contracts in April next year and this will have an impact on community board projects currently in the pipeline. It is also an opportunity to build in a delivery model with community boards in mind.

The current situation

Across all the community boards there are currently about 58 projects which have been agreed and funding committed but are yet to be completed by the outgoing contractor (Transport for Bucks, TfB). The status of these approved projects is as follows:

- 22 projects are rated Green and are scheduled to be completed by the end of March next year
- 10 projects have been rated as Amber and delivered to a gateway stage ready for the new contractor to take forward eg. design, feasibility
- 26 projects are rated as Red and are under review but may not be started at all because of their complexity or the time to implement overlaps with the change in Highway's service provider.

All Amber and Red projects continue to be reviewed with TFB to determine if any can be delivered under the current contract by March 2023. Updates will be provided if the situation changes. Furthermore, the Highways service will work closely with our new service provider to determine if they are able to deliver any amber and red projects prior to the contract start date in April 2023.

There are also about 55 projects that have been proposed with PIDs drafted for which no decision to proceed has yet been taken. These projects will not be taken forward until the new contract has started to ensure that they are priced correctly by the new service provider and firm timescales can be agreed for implementation.

Boards can still reserve funding for these schemes from the current 2022/23 budget, but the final prices will need to be confirmed with our new service provider. You can also continue to discuss highways priorities and solutions.

Balfour Beatty Living Places has already been awarded the new highways maintenance contract and the new consultancy contractor will be announced in late September. The council will be working with the new contractors and outgoing contractors Ringway Jacobs to ensure a smooth transition to the new arrangements under the name Buckinghamshire Highways.

Community Board Chairmen have been invited to a Highways Stakeholder Conference on 13th October.

Looking Forward

As advised already, given the changes to the highway service, Boards should not accept any additional applications highway schemes in 2022/23 and no further projects should be submitted for consideration for 2023/24. Community Boards will be consulted on the development of a new protocol and process for Highway schemes during the transition to the new contract ready for April 23, please therefore keep any new schemes on hold pending the new process for taking these forward.

The new highways working arrangement will include a community-based design delivery model for small schemes specifically for Community Boards to develop their local highway schemes. We will also provide greater clarification on which highway schemes are appropriate for Community Board to bring forward.

Additionally, and to further help support Community Boards, a 'menu of options' will be developed for small highways schemes that show the indicative prices and implementation timescales for a range of suitable small local highways schemes to better inform the Boards in decision making.

Any partners currently with a live scheme on the RAG list will continue to receive communication from the TfB/project technician and their Community Board Manager, and community boards, Highways and TfB will continue to work closely during the transition.

While we appreciate the delay to delivering schemes will be disappointing, the new approach being adopted does highlight the commitment to the work of the Boards in delivering local highway improvements in the new contract.

Support for Ukrainian guests continues across the county – further help is still needed

Arrivals from Ukraine are still coming into our county with 700 hosts now offering accommodation to over 1,200 Ukrainian guests.

We continue to work hard to make sure the families can access schooling, work, finance, practical items, English language lessons and emotional support through our Helping Hand for Ukraine scheme – further details at [A Helping Hand for Ukraine | Buckinghamshire Council](#).

We recognised the significance of Ukraine Independence Day (24 August) as everyone reflected on their personal journey and loss. The summer break also brought the challenge of keeping our younger guests occupied and this year we offered free holiday activities and food on the HAF scheme and Boredom buster bags from our partners LEAP.

We also continue to work with our voluntary sector colleagues and local community groups, now with an eye on the new challenges coming up. We also have over 150 staff in sponsor liaison roles, in addition to their day jobs, who keep regular one-to-one contact with sponsor households.

We recognise that Ukraine families living in Buckinghamshire will be concerned about what happens when their current sponsorship arrangements come to an end. This is especially a concern for those families that have settled into communities and schools. In some locations, it will be challenging to find alternative accommodation locally due to a lack of availability and high housing costs. We want to help our guests from the Ukraine as much as we can and are looking at solutions which will require all tiers of government, the private and voluntary sector to work together. Options being considered include:

1. Extend with sponsor – If both parties are happy to stay together then once agreed the guests can continue living in the same area and keep their local support network.
2. Rematch with a new sponsor – The Council will help the guests rematch with a new sponsor home or the guests can find their own rematch, although this could mean they would need to move to a different area which would impact on their support networks including schools/employment.
3. Private rental – Guests can look at renting privately if they can afford this. High rents across the south east make finding affordable housing difficult for many. Some guests may be eligible for a Local Housing Allowance to help meet rental costs and we will help them find out if this support is available to them. The Council may also be able to help with a deposit guarantee and one month's rent upfront. Again this could mean guests having to move to a different area if there is no affordable private rental accommodation locally.
4. Social housing – All guests are eligible to apply to join the Council's housing register. However, there is a very high demand for social housing in Buckinghamshire, so depending on the type and size of property they are looking for, there is likely to be a long wait for a property.

On top of the housing issue, there is the cost of living crisis hitting us all – the impact on both hosts and guests is already evident so we are working with central Government to make sure Bucks' residents' voices are heard; tangible, long-term solutions are found; and we can continue to support both our residents and our guests.

Community boards success at county show

The county show was a fantastic success for the community boards, it was a great opportunity to reach a huge number of residents and also other organisations that we could network with in the future.

The main themes coming through were lack of activities for young people, better bus services including community buses, speeding and litter issues. In addition, we managed to sign up more residents to receive our newsletters.

In summary, it was a great event for us to attend.

Town and Parish Charter

Buckinghamshire Council's Town & Parish Charter was agreed and published on our website in July. This charter is founded on our respect for all councils in Buckinghamshire as independent, democratically accountable bodies and has one simple aim – to articulate and demonstrate our commitment to working together to serve the people of Buckinghamshire.

Community boards have a great record of working with our local councils and this charter is essential reading – you can view it at [Town and Parish Charter | Buckinghamshire Council](#)

Better enforcement for moving traffic offences

Buckinghamshire Council is one of a handful of local authorities in England outside of London to have successfully applied for powers to enforce moving traffic offences (MTOs) that were previously only enforceable by the police. These offences are where drivers ignore restrictions in place at a location – for example driving through a no entry sign, making banned turns, entering a yellow box junction without a clear exit or driving on bus or taxi routes.

The new enforcement powers will make use of automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) technology at 14 locations across Bucks. The locations were listed as part of a consultation about support for the council's plan to apply for the powers from February to April 2022; they are places where restrictions have been in place already for some time for road safety reasons or to prevent traffic congestion.

The locations where cameras will start to be installed from December will be highlighted through council communications. Signage will be erected well in advance at the camera locations to give drivers plenty of notice of the enforcement powers.

The cabinet decision can be seen at

<https://buckinghamshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?MIId=17388&x=1>

Local Heritage Listings

Buckinghamshire Council is one of 22 local authorities to receive funding to develop a Local Heritage List as part of a national initiative to improve the provision and standard of locally held Lists of Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NDHA). The list seeks to identify locally significant assets and celebrate their contribution to local identity and character.

Developing this list provides a rare opportunity for Buckinghamshire residents to nominate important assets around the county that are not currently listed but that have significant

heritage interest. By adding these heritage assets to a Local Heritage List we can ensure their local importance is recognised and taken into account in the planning process.

Once on the list, these assets become known as Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NDHAs). They differ from those sites that have statutory protection and national designations, such as Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Registered Parks and Gardens.

Working with a team of volunteers, we are currently assessing over 2,000 nominations ranging from mileposts, street art and open spaces to historic buildings, water mills and chapels. We intend to adopt a phase one local list this winter, with a phase two in 2023. For more information visit [Home - Buckinghamshire's Local Heritage List \(local-heritage-list.org.uk\)](http://Home - Buckinghamshire's Local Heritage List (local-heritage-list.org.uk)) or email localheritagelist@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan – next steps

Public consultation is under way (running until 26 October) on three Supplementary Planning Documents that give detailed guidance to aid decision making on planning applications in the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan area. Each document provides in-depth information on a particular policy area of the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan, which was adopted by Buckinghamshire Council in September 2021.

- Aylesbury Garden Town AGT1 - South Aylesbury Masterplan

Guidance for the development of the South Aylesbury area of the Aylesbury Garden Town, situated within Stoke Mandeville civil parish.

- Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document

Guidance on how affordable housing policy should be applied to proposals for residential development in the Aylesbury Vale area.

- Design Supplementary Planning Document

Guidance to ensure that new development across Aylesbury Vale is of the highest quality, is in context with its location, and is inclusive and sustainable.

Find out more about these planning documents and take part in our consultation via our web page www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/spd

Current and upcoming consultations

Share your community safety concerns to help us keep Buckinghamshire safe

The [Safer Buckinghamshire Board](#) is a local Community Safety Partnership that brings together experts from the police, fire service, probation, health and social care services. The board develops an annual action plan to reduce crime in Buckinghamshire and help keep it a safe place to live and work.

To develop this plan, the Safer Buckinghamshire Board is conducting an annual Community Safety survey to hear resident views on:

- The impact of crime, anti-social behaviour, drug and alcohol issues where you live or work
- Your experience of reporting crimes
- How safe or unsafe you feel in Buckinghamshire

The survey is open to anyone living or working in Buckinghamshire and is **running until Sunday 16 October**. Have your say and complete the survey below for a chance to win a £100 supermarket voucher*: <https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/communities/safety-2022>

The results of the survey will be combined with an analysis of all crimes that happen in the county to help Safer Bucks set priorities for the year.

*Terms and Conditions apply

Buckinghamshire Council consultations

Current consultations and surveys from Buckinghamshire Council are available to view on our website <https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/>

Where appropriate, we also list NHS consultations and surveys as well.