



Buckinghamshire Council Buckingham & Villages Community Board

Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Buckingham & Villages Community Board held on Tuesday 26 April 2022 Via MS Teams, commencing at 6.30 pm and concluding at 8.12 pm

BC Councillors present

H Mordue (Chairman), P Fealey (Vice-Chairman), C Cornell, A Macpherson, F Mahon, H Mordue, A Osibogun, M Rand and R Stuchbury

Town/Parish Councils and other organisations present

T Cavendar (Buckingham Canal Society), K Croxton (Buckingham Food Bank), M Green (Transitions UK), P Hardcastle (Maids Moreton Parish Council), J Harvey (AVALC), G Johnston (Radclive cum Chackmore Parish Council), H Mee (The Clare Foundation), L O'Donoghue (Buckingham Town Council), R Scott (Foscote), J Riches (Middle Claydon Parish Council), Jo Taylor (Leckhampstead Parish Council), and S Tribe (Thornborough Parish Council)

Others in attendance

L Ashton, E Barlow, L Dale, A Jenner, A Lane, C Martin, L Martin, S Turnbull and G White

Apologies

W Whyte and J Chilver

Agenda Item

1 Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance. The Chairman advised that with the Board's budget having been reduced for the 2022/23 financial year, there was an increased emphasis on making the funds available go as far as possible. It was reported that there would no longer be formal sub groups of the Community Board, although project groups would be held for projects of particular interest to Members of the Board. One area to be explored would be for the Board to have emergency funding available to support villages in emergencies, such as what happened with the flooding last year. There was also an intention to bring forward professional bid writing support for parishes to access funds for various projects. The Chairman also spoke of larger projects, which took time to develop and suggested project groups be put in place to move these forward, such as the economic group in Buckingham.

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors J Chilver and W Whyte (Buckinghamshire Council).

3 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor A Macpherson declared a personal interest in item 10, Community Matters, specifically on the Transitions UK discussion, as she was a Board Member of Fairhive Homes (formerly VAHT).

4 **Minutes/Actions from Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 February were agreed.

5 **Service Director Update**

An update was provided by Sara Turnbull, Service Director for Transport Services on the following:

Support for Ukraine

A team of Council officers had been formed to help welcome and integrate residents arriving from Ukraine, and multi-lingual welcome packs had been prepared. There was close partnership working with partners such as health, police and within the Council, particularly housing and education colleagues. The Council was responsible for the undertaking of DBS checks of hosts/sponsors and was providing practical support. Further information could be found on the Council's website - <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/community-and-safety/helping-hand-for-ukraine/>

Queen's Jubilee celebrations

The Council continued to work with community groups on activities to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee, activity packs had been provided to schools and fees had been waived for street party closures. The Board was encouraged to get their street closure applications in should they wish to hold a street party.

Council tax rebate

The national Council Tax rebate of £150 for properties in tax bands A-D would be paid in the coming weeks. Residents with direct debits set up would receive their rebate automatically, whilst those without a direct debit would be contacted in writing to provide their bank details.

A member raised the Leader's newsletter as a good source of information along with the Parish Council update issued by the Cabinet Member for Communities. Links to sign up to these would be circulated. **Action: Leone Dale**

A member asked for reassurance that residents welcoming Ukrainian people in to their home privately were adequately checked for safeguarding issues. This would be checked and reported back to the Board. **Action: Sara Turnbull/Leone Dale**

6 **Proud of Bucks Awards**

The Chairman reported that he was honoured to present the Proud of Bucks awards in Buckingham which recognised and applauded the outstanding community contribution of residents and groups across Buckingham. The winners were:

Best Community Group contribution – Buckingham Food Bank

Best Adult Contribution – Phil Gaskin

Best Young Person Contribution – Buckingham Primary School

The Board heard stories of each of the winners and paid tribute to each, acknowledging the positive impact they had on their communities.

7 The Clare Foundation Update

Helen Mee, Head of Charity Operations, presented an update on the Clare Foundation's recent activity and informed members on future events and projects. During discussion, the following key points were highlighted:

- The Clare Foundation had three key areas of focus, these were charities; businesses; and individuals. The foundation worked with charities by offering loans and grants, free advice and support in areas such as governance, business planning, getting registered and recruiting staff and volunteers. For businesses, free training and education was available along with one to one mentoring programmes, typically aimed at CEOs and the Chair of Trustees. The Foundation also supported people by helping Bucks residents engage in community projects and representing individuals and community groups through various countywide groups.
- The Foundation held regular meetings with Community Board Co-ordinators to scope potential collaborations, and help support finding matched funding where possible.
- Projects within the Buckingham and Villages area where the Clare Foundation had provided supported were highlighted. These included supporting governance and recruiting volunteers at the Buckingham old jail and museum, and looking to help other projects such as the Jedediah food cupboard in Buckingham and other church projects.
- A member noted that many parishes do not hold the skills to put in professional bids for funding and advised that support would be welcomed. Helen advised that there is an online bid writing course upcoming in June, along with a financial analysis costing workshop which would also help organisations cost out projects that may bring in overhead costs. The foundation was not experts in parish council funding, although bid writing skills were universal and the bid writer had no issue with parish councils joining the training, with the caveat that they were not parish council experts. The Clare Foundation would welcome liaising with groups such as MKBALC to help bring good ideas forward.
- The Clare Foundation was now able to award grants, although the overall pot was relatively small, however the foundation was well networked to suggest other providers who were well placed to support particular causes.
- A Member suggested looking at the Community Board recommendations being presented to Buckinghamshire Council's Communities and Localism Select Committee on 10 May which may inform future ways of working for Community Boards. [Select Committee report on Community Boards](#)

Helen's email address: Helen.Mee@theclarefoundation.org

Website: www.theclarefoundation.org

Events could be viewed here: www.theclarefoundation.org/events/

8 Bernwood Jubilee Way

Edward Barlow, Head of Climate Change and Environment, gave a presentation on how communities could get involved in celebrating and restoring the historic Bernwood Jubilee Way. During discussion, the following key points were highlighted:

- As it would be 20 years since the Bernwood Jubilee Way had been established, the Board was asked for comments and suggestions as to how to revive the benefits of the route

and how the Council could assist in targeting support to certain projects and understanding communities' aspirations for the route. The route covered 61 miles of rights of way.

- One task identified was to digitize routes, particularly those rights of way that came off the main route. There was a hard copy leaflet, although it was noted many people would now be more likely to using something digital.
- Volunteers from the Rights of Way team had been and would continue to walk the route to review areas which required bringing up to standard.
- The community cohesion aspect of projects was highlighted to bring people together to work on supporting the environment and improving the route. There may be some grants that only the local authority could apply for, so dependent on projects identified the Council would look to progress funding opportunities.
- A Member suggested that as part of digitization it would be interesting for historic detail to be included on some parts of the route such as where it goes through the royal hunting forest and Chetwode Wood and by including this information, it may encourage more people to walk the routes.
- A Member suggested that Ed could attend a future meeting of Buckingham Town Council to receive their input.
- A Member encouraged the Council to approach HS2 and East West Rail to see if any funding could be obtained through those, given much of the countryside would be lost to the large infrastructure projects.
- It was raised that the deer and grey squirrel population was high and this caused damage to woodland area, however the Board was advised that there were not any national or local projects looking at managing population at this time.
- It was suggested that seating along the route would be beneficial to those residents who would struggle undertaking long walking routes without a break.

The Chairman thanked Ed for his attendance.

9 Formal Community Board Updates

Leone Dale, Community Board Coordinator, provided an update on recent Community Board activity including:

- A summary of board funding activity for 2021/22, which noted that £226,072 of £228,200 allocated had been spent to fund over 30 projects. Additional matched funding was secured to take the total scheme value to £338,189. Leone broke the spend down by category and slides showing the breakdown would be circulated. **Action: Leone Dale**
- The Board was advised of the reduced budget for 2022/23 of £117,026 and that the criteria for funding had slightly changed. The latest information was available on the Council's website and members were welcomed to contact Leone with any questions and if they required support with any step of the funding process.
- Leone encouraged Members of the Board to contact her with any ideas for new projects which met board priorities and addressed a local community need and highlighted the importance of partners such as town and parish council's and VCS groups working together.
- It was hoped that the move away from action groups to project groups would assist in focusing on specific projects and seeing them through to delivery stage and completion.
- Examples of projects being looked at were provided, these included the flood mobile; youth café; LGBT space; repair café; transport projects and Buckingham Town Centre improvements. Any Member interested in supporting any of the project work were asked to get in touch with Leone.
- The Board discussed the importance of maximising funding and exploring matched funding opportunities using the knowledge of the Clare Foundation and other known

funding routes.

- A Member raised the importance of being equitable and flexible in terms of funding applications that came forward for many of the smaller villages in the large community board area so that it was not largely centred on Buckingham Town. It was noted that some applications for projects could seed fund and be helpful initiatives that spread across the board area. The importance of seed funding was noted by the Board.
- One opportunity raised to explore was for parishes to raise part of the funding for a bid writer which could then potentially open up matched funding and other funding opportunities to make Community Board funding go further. Using the shared knowledge of the Board was also discussed, as networking with one another may help develop projects and funding possibilities.
- It was advised that the Buckingham Town Centre refurbishment project was a significant project that required further discussion. This would be progressed outside of the meeting.
- A Member asked for an update on TFB bids which would be looked in to and fed back.

Action: Leone Dale

10 Community Matters

No questions were received from members of the public.

Updates given included:

Elmer's Charity

Pat Hardcastle, Maids Moreton Parish Council spoke about Elmer's Charity. It was set up by William Elmer in 1653 for the benefit of people living in 5 Buckinghamshire parishes: Beachampton; Calverton; Maids Moreton; Nash; and Whaddon. The charity had assets made up of capital and land and the income from these is available to provide grants.

There were two funds. The first fund was for individuals living in one of the parishes who were in need but this was also interpreted as covering purposes that were of wider benefit to the community as a whole. The second, smaller, fund was for education, particularly those in the upper segment of school or in tertiary education or training for a trade or profession.

Most individual grants were small, normally no more than £200, but can be somewhat larger. There had been a lack of people coming forward to apply for grants this year so Pat welcomed ideas and suggestions from the Board and welcomed people to contact him at phardcastle@maids-moreton.co.uk.

Further information is available on the Charity Commission website:

<https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search/-/charity-details/233663/charity-overview>

Transitions UK

Michael Green from Transitions UK, introduced himself and spoke of the work of Transitions UK. The charity works with vulnerable young people, including those at risk of criminal exploitation, in care or with mental health issues. The work of the charity had now expanded in to Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire and a project was underway with Fairhive (formerly VAHT) and Buckingham Town Council. Mentors were being looked for to support young people for up to two years and prevent them getting involved in crime and supporting them to enter training or employment. Michael advised that he would appreciate help from Board members with

identifying people within villages who may be interested. Michael could be contacted at Michael.Green@TransitionsUK.org

Lisa O'Donoghue, Buckingham Town Council, reported that the Town Council had provided £2k funding to Transitions UK and she suggested that Michael could attend the London Road youth club at some point for a discussion.

11 Topics for future consideration

Topics suggested for future consideration included:

- Child Poverty (including rural poverty) – Buckingham Town Council were looking at arranging a day to bring people together and assist making connections to help mitigate the significant issue. It was recognised that this was a national issue and the Citizens Advice Bureau rural issues group was also highlighted as an organisation to talk to.
- Climate Crisis – Buckingham Town Council had held an event and suggested sharing information with them on what came out of that event. Young people had brilliant ideas and it was a strong opportunity to engage with them.
- Funding opportunities - The Community Board could potentially explore an alternative delivery vehicle to obtain funding by partnering with others to deliver access to funding that statutory bodies such as town and parish councils could not access.

12 Date of Next Meeting

6 July 2022