



South West Chilterns Community Board minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the South West Chilterns Community Board held on Tuesday 24 November 2020 in Via MS Teams, commencing at 6.30 pm and concluding at 8.29 pm.

Members present

Councillor D Barnes, Councillor D Watson, Councillor J Adey, Councillor M Appleyard, Councillor S Brown, Councillor A Collingwood, Fawley Meeting, Hambleden Parish Council, Councillor M Harris, Councillor D Johncock, Lane End Parish Council, Councillor J Langley, Councillor T Lee, Little Marlow Parish Council, Marlow Town Council, Councillor N Marshall, Medmenham Parish Council and Councillor R Scott

Others in attendance

Sgt R Hughes, T Evans, L Sokolowksi, J Ryans, S Taylor, M Devlin and L Jeffries and S Taylor

Agenda Item

1 Apologies for Absence

[The apologies were not read out at the start of the meeting; however, apologies had been received from Councillor Chris Whitehead, Wooburn and Bourne End Parish Council, Councillor Roger Wilson, Councillor Ian McEnnis and Councillor Richard Scott (Ibstone Parish Council)].

2 Welcome/Introduction

The Chairman, Councillor Dominic Barnes, introduced himself and welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that the aim of the Community Board (CB) was to work in partnership with the community to make a difference using funding to support community projects and initiatives. The action plan, included in the agenda pack, was a fluid document and the majority of the 'business' was carried out by the working groups. Everyone, including members of the public, was welcome to ask questions during the meeting. The Chairman stated he was looking forward to the CB membership growing as promotion continued across the area and he welcomed Mr Lloyd Jeffries, the Service Director Champion of the South West Chilterns CB.

3 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Notes of the last meeting

Councillor Tony Lee proposed that the minutes of the last meeting were an accurate record; Councillor David Johncock seconded the proposal.

RESOLVED: The minutes of the meeting held on 14 September 2020 were AGREED as an accurate record.

5 Speaker - Service Director Champion for South West Chilterns Community Board

Lloyd Jeffries, Service Director, Business Operations, Buckinghamshire Council (BC), stated that there were 405 full time equivalent staff in Business Operations who provided a number of services across BC. The Customer Service Centres and Council Access Points (CAPs) were the front door to the Council for residents and Lloyd emphasised that he was always keen to receive feedback on how services could be improved. From the end of November the Council would supplement the national test and trace scheme; when the national service was unable to contact someone their details would be passed to the Local Contract Tracing Service who would operate seven days a week for as long as was needed.

During the October half term the Customer Service Centre provided a 'helping hand' and stepped in to support families whose children usually received free school meals and were struggling to feed them. In total, 27 families were supported and it was a great example of cross team working involving customer services, local emergency support, the localities team and libraries and a testament to how solutions could be put in place extremely quickly.

The Council was supporting the clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) residents over the winter period; there were approximately 20,000 CEV people living in Buckinghamshire and the Contact Centre staff would be involved in making contact to find out their needs.

The following points were raised in discussion:

- In response to a query on whether the refurbished Marlow Library would be a CAP; Lloyd confirmed that it would be a CAP but it would be run by the Library Service. Lloyd was responsible for the following CAPs:
 - Amersham King George V (CAP+)
 - Aylesbury The Gateway (CAP+)
 - Aylesbury Walton Street (CAP+)
 - Denham Oxford Rd, Capswood (CAP+) - currently closed.
 - Wycombe, Queen Victoria Road (CAP+)
- A CB member commented that there were a number of community libraries and asked if the volunteers would receive training. Lloyd explained that if the community library was a dedicated CAP they would have had training pre-vesting day. Training could be provided virtually if the software was in place. [A slide deck was provided after the meeting, which included a list of all the CAPs, and had been appended to the minutes].
- In response to being asked whether it was hoped that Parish Councils (PCs) would help advertise the services available; Lloyd agreed it would be helpful

and that it would be beneficial to obtain information from the PCs to ensure services were tailored to the residents' needs and to improve services in the future.

- A councillor asked what the main issues were in the area. Lloyd explained that on 1 April 2020 five councils had joined to form Buckinghamshire Council. The existing service centres were in place with a multitude of systems and telephone numbers which were being combined to provide a consistent level of service across the county to form a better service for residents. It had been challenging but the services had been managing well during the two lockdowns.

In response to being asked when BC would be able to provide enhanced support for businesses and local councillors; Lloyd advised that there was a Member Reference Group which focussed on building the future strategy and that he would provide an update at future CB meetings if it would be useful.

6 Covid-19 Update

The Chairman referred to the slides, appended to the minutes, and stated it was not possible to provide analysis on the SW Chilterns CB area; however, the data, as of 18 November, on the number of cases was broken down by the legacy district council areas. There were local testing sites at The Gateway in Aylesbury and Bucks New University in High Wycombe. There were also a number of mobile testing units which could be booked online.

7 Thames Valley Police - Neighbourhood Policing

Sgt Robin Hughes, Thames Valley Police (TVP), provided a presentation, appended to the minutes. Sgt Hughes advised he had been in the police force for over 20 years; he had spent 12 years in the Criminal Investigation Department in High Wycombe but was now the Engagement Neighbourhood Sergeant for the area. There were four departments; engagement, problem solving, safeguarding and stronghold (the proactive arm). The Engagement Department was the only operation based in Marlow; the others were based in High Wycombe. Sgt Hughes stated he had a small, but effective team, which covered from 8 am to 10 pm, seven days a week. There were some gaps in the cover due to the size of the team; however, Sgt Hughes hoped to increase the number of staff during 2021. The team were involved in a range of work and events in the community; including covid engagement in the form of explanation and enforcement. Contact details were provided for Sgt Hughes, TVP and/or the neighbourhood team.

The following points were raised in discussion:

- In response to being asked why the team was under-resourced; Sgt Hughes explained that three months training school time had been lost due to the pandemic. There was also more officers retiring or moving to new jobs than the 20,000 newly recruited officers. However, Sgt Hughes hoped that there would be more recruits in 2021.
- Sgt Hughes confirmed that the amount of police officers assigned to an area was worked out through a complicated algorithm which contained the

population number so he expected an increase in the number of officers due to the new housing being built. Two Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) were due to start soon and he was due one more police officer.

- In response to being asked which crime was currently the most time consuming; Sgt Hughes stated that low level drug use was time consuming and there had been an increase in domestic violence and neighbour issues, due to residents spending long periods of time at home.

The Chairman thanked Sgt Hughes for attending the meeting. He also thanked TVP and Sgt Hughes on behalf of the CB for their hard work in recent months.

8 The British Red Cross - Across Our Area

The Chairman welcomed Lorna Sokolowski, Emergency Response Officer, Thames Valley and Juliette Ryans from the Community Education Team. Lorna and Juliette provided a presentation which had been appended to the minutes and advised that there were a number of services which operated regionally and met the Red Cross Strategy to support the most vulnerable. Lorna highlighted that one of the national services was the Covid Response Service which provided a national support line and a hardship fund. The British Red Cross also co-chaired the national Voluntary and Community Sector Emergency Partnership which linked from grassroots to the government to provide support and identify gaps.

Within Buckinghamshire, over 3,080 people had been supported since January 2020 in business as usual activities such as asylum support, taking to appointments, legal help etc. Lorna highlighted the work of a few of the teams/services in the area:

- The Independent Living Team at Wexham Park and Stoke Mandeville Hospitals had adapted and reached out to its most vulnerable users during the pandemic and often led to befriending calls. The service had reduced their in-home support but was still offering telephone support and connecting people to local organisations and community groups.
- The Mobility Aid Service provided low cost mobility aids; all income was re-invested into the service enabling aid to be provided free to those who were unable to pay.
- The Refugee Support and Family Links Team covered a range of activities; the cases in the Thames Valley were often complex and the service partnered with other agencies to provide holistic support.
- Business as usual for the Crisis Response Team was to provide rest centres and mutual aid after a largescale event such as flooding or fire. However, during the pandemic the team had provided direct provision for food, medication delivery etc. following contact through the national support line which linked into the local teams.
- The Red Cross had a hardship fund which targeted those who had not found support from other sources. Contact details could be provided to establish the CB as a partner to make referrals.

Juliette Ryans, Product Manager, Youth Community Education, advised that she

managed all the Red Cross products for the under 18s. Covid-19 had affected everyone and increased loneliness for a large number of people and was likely to worsen over the winter. The Red Cross was supporting people to reduce loneliness and build connections and personal and community resilience through a suite of digital resources. All the resources had been created in collaboration with people who had experienced loneliness. Juliette highlighted some of the products available:

- A podcast entitled 'The Kind Place' where strangers had discussed their shared uplifting messages.
- Two online wellbeing packs; one for adults and one for young people which provided education on topics such as coping, connecting, wellbeing, kindness and first aid.
- Resources on dealing with conflict, disasters, emergencies, first aid, migration etc.
- Calendars, for December and January, online and in hard copy; one for adults and one for children which promoted acts of kindness and wellbeing during the winter and the importance of having connections and friends.
- A digital classroom which ran sessions of approximately 60-90 minutes, delivered online, and aimed to enable people to feel comfortable talking about feeling lonely and isolated and to recognise when someone needed support.

Juliette stressed that the Red Cross was keen that resources reached those in need as loneliness was impacting many people.

The following points were raised in discussion:

- In response to being asked whether the Red Cross had contact with social care as they were also running programmes to tackle loneliness; Juliette stated that the concept was to partner with grassroots organisations to maximise the good work. Lorna emphasised that the Red Cross had close links with organisations locally and the person involved would be supported by the most appropriate organisation according to need.
- A Member asked how it was possible to approach, and make a difference, with people who did not understand kindness. Juliette explained that the winter calendar encouraged small acts of kindness which would help; most people were fundamentally kind and it could just be by speaking to someone on the telephone and acknowledging that kindness stretched to looking after a person's own wellbeing too.

The Chairman thanked Lorna and Juliette on behalf of the CB and added that loneliness would clearly be an issue as a result of Covid.

9 Budget Overview

The Chairman presented a slide on the budget overview which had been appended to the minutes. Councillor Barnes explained that a process had to be followed and the budget was broken down into two streams; the Community Area Priorities Fund

(£89,130.00 plus £8,000 that was taken for the Councillor Discretionary Fund (CDF)) and the Health and Wellbeing Fund (£24,003 plus £8,000 that was taken for the CDF). As voted on at the last meeting, the £16,000 taken for the CDF needed to be deployed by 31 December 2020 and had to comply with the rules laid down by BC; if it was not used it would be returned to the pot. The Chairman advised that other organisations, as well as the PCs, could be approached to provide match funding for projects. Funding had been provided to a wide range of organisations/projects in the area; however, the Chairman emphasised that the funding was to be spent on projects that would not normally be carried out by the Council. The CB had deployed funds from the Health and Wellbeing Fund to a number of organisations during the pandemic.

The following points were raised during discussion:

- It was noted that process guidance on the CDF had previously been circulated but Makyla agreed to re-send the information to the members.
ACTION: Makyla Devlin
- In response to a query on how the funding requests (£8,000 for Seed 1) were managed; the Chairman advised that the requests had been processed by the sub-group. Councillor Collingwood added that information was received on the number of fresh fruit and vegetable boxes required; 90-95 each week for vulnerable children.

Councillor David Johncock highlighted that the parking proposals listed in the paper covered Wooburn Green as well as Bourne End. Two proposals for projects in Lane End would be discussed at the sub-group meeting and raised at a future CB meeting.

10 Working Group - Covid-19 Recovery Group

Councillor Suzanne Brown highlighted that Seed 1 had received funding during the first wave and had received a further £4,000 in the second wave to last until Christmas. 95 fruit and vegetable boxes were delivered per week to primary and secondary schools for distribution, in line with the General Data Protection Regulations, to the children in receipt of free school meal vouchers.

Lane End Players – Councillor Brown advised that the detailed cost breakdown had been received to hold an outdoor nativity play to increase community spirit. £1350 had been requested; it was proposed that the CB would fund half the cost with the view that Lane End Parish Council would match fund. Councillor Neil Marshall declared a family interest in the Lane End Players.

Lane End Football Club had requested funding of £930.34 for a men's football team to support mental health and isolation.

Councillor Tim Nolan, Lane End PC, advised that the PC was supportive of both applications but had not yet agreed to the match funding as the PC had also received other requests for funding.

The working group was happy with both proposals and requested ratification from

the CB. This was seconded by Councillor David Johncock.

Jam Theatre (Councillor Alex Collingwood declared an interest) – the proposal had been withdrawn due to the uncertainty over the covid tier situation. However, it might be possible to fund livestreaming an event into care homes from the Councillor Crisis Fund.

RESOLVED: The Community Board AGREED to fund the proposal from The Lane End Players and Lane End Football Club subject to match funding from Lane End PC or another source.

11 Working Group - Transport, Infrastructure, Reopening of High Streets and Regeneration

Transport

Councillor Alex Collingwood stated that the Transport, Infrastructure, Reopening of High Streets and Regeneration (TIRR) working group been looking at active travel; more people were walking and cycling due to covid-19 and Government funds were available towards temporary schemes such as the proposed scheme in Trinity Road, Marlow. Councillor Collingwood explained that if the CB approved the request for the temporary closure of Trinity Road; a public consultation would be carried out between 24 November and 24 December 2020. It would be a temporary scheme, from 1 January to 30 June 2021 to enable walking and cycling on Trinity Road; residents would not be affected as their access would remain. A 'road closed' sign would be erected and planters would be placed in the road. There would be no cost to the CB as it would be funded by the Government's Active Travel Scheme. The consultation would be promoted via the press, social media and communicated to local schools.

Councillor Collingwood also highlighted the Marlow to Marlow Bottom to High Wycombe and Marlow to Bourne End cycle routes but these would take much longer to implement. Following a comment from a member that any cycle path would have to be separate to the road; Councillor Collingwood clarified that the Government funding would only be granted if the cycle path was clearly segregated from the road and would be the choice of route for residents. Councillor Collingwood also confirmed that the aim of the cycle paths was to improve health and wellbeing; the proposed route had been suggested to avoid use of the C100 road and Handy Cross roundabout as the TIFP was investigating the options of a proposed Cycle path which may require a feasibility study.

RESOLVED: The Community Board AGREED that the consultation be carried out on the temporary road closure of Trinity Road, Marlow.

Councillor Collingwood provided the following updates:

- The funding for the bike racks in Marlow had been approved; confirmation of the exact cost was awaited before discussion with Marlow Town Council to agree the match funding. Costs and locations were also being prepared for

bike racks in Wooburn Green and Bourne End.

- Match funding had been received for the bollards in Pound Lane, Marlow; timescales to be confirmed.
- Additional requests for Traffic Regulations Orders (TRO) had been received and assessed by the officers and would be put forward to the CB in January 2021.
- Other, new, applications/requirements would be processed and were likely to take until June 2021 due to the length of the process and purdah; it was key to receive the transport applications by the deadline in order to obtain officers' approval for allocation of the funding as the process was lengthy.

The following points were raised in discussion:

- Following a question on whether all council/councillor's requests for a TRO had to be approved by the CB; Councillor Collingwood confirmed that better use was made of financial resources if a number of TRO schemes were combined; all requests would be considered/processed by the working group and put forward to the relevant officers. Any required match funding would need to be sourced by the CB. The Chairman emphasised that the PC or a local councillor could bring a proposal to the CB if the working group had disagreed/refused an application. It was agreed that Makyla Devlin would clarify the process in writing.

ACTION: Makyla Devlin

- Councillor Collingwood confirmed that the TIRR working group would consider an application for electrical charging points.

Infrastructure

- New signage on Marlow Bridge would be erected in January 2021; the bollards would be installed during half term in February 2021 and work was progressing on the ANPR instruments.
- The work on the Westhorpe junction of the A404 would start in January 2021.
- Swish Fibre – work was being carried out on the footways in Marlow to lay a new superfast cable; the defects in the paving slabs in Spittal Street would be repaired.
- The British Gas issue on the A4155 had not been resolved.

Rural Broadband

Councillor Mark Turner reported that the working group would focus on finding out where rural connectivity was poor e.g. Bockmer End and monitor whether suppliers could improve the connection. Local knowledge would be beneficial to determine which rural areas had poor broadband speed and Councillor Turner offered to attend the Lane End parish council meeting to discuss the issue. The Chairman advised that the rural broadband problem had been identified during lockdown and agreed it was essential that improvements were made.

Regeneration

- Councillor Collingwood stated that support would be provided from the

Councillor Crisis Fund to residents who had been made redundant.

- Electric charging points were key for a green economy and would need to be installed en masse.

Reopening of high streets

Outdoor events would be required for the next 6-9 months due to the ongoing pandemic. It was suggested that the CB purchase a number of gazebos, possibly CB branded with the website and email address, and provide them free of charge to villages to hold outdoor events; costings would be provided at the meeting in February 2021.

12 SW Chilterns Community Board Action Plan

The South West Chilterns Community Board action plan was included for information.

13 Any Other Business

'Meals from Marlow' had been awarded a Pride of Bucks certificate.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions and asked everyone to spread the word about the work of the Community Board; any suggestions or requests to join a sub-group should be emailed to Makyla Devlin (Makyla.Devlin@buckinghamshire.gov.uk).

14 Dates of the next meetings

Tuesday 23 February 2021
Wednesday 23 June 2021
Wednesday 22 September 2021
Wednesday 24 November 2021

All starting at 6.30 p.m.