



Creating community conversations

Introducing Community Boards



Community boards will bring the council and community together to find creative ways of improving their local area

TACKLING LOCAL ISSUES TOGETHER



Building strong connections with communities



Responding to local needs



Improving outcomes for residents

Creating community conversations

- ❖ This is an exciting new initiative backed by £3.9 million to make a real difference to local communities
- ❖ 16 Community Boards will:
 - ❖ Enable local conversations about local priorities
 - ❖ Identify needs within local communities and work to produce creative solutions
 - ❖ Represent the voices of local people
 - ❖ Be creative in how thoughts, ideas and suggestions are captured
 - ❖ Take a collaborative approach
 - ❖ Explore areas of interest
 - ❖ Influence decision making and delivery of public services
 - ❖ Support Covid-19 local recovery

KEY BENEFITS



Stronger connections between Buckinghamshire Council councillors and communities.



Better and more responsive public services that meet the different needs of communities.



Greater resident and community involvement in decisions about how services are run locally.

How will Community Boards work

- ❖ We want them to be vibrant, creative and take action locally
- ❖ Mixture of core meetings and working groups
- ❖ Focused working groups will explore and deliver projects on specific issues
- ❖ Engage with the community in lots of different ways to collect ideas and focus on what matters to them the most
- ❖ Involve a wide membership that provides valuable intelligence, helping to understand and respond to local need
- ❖ Using technology and getting creative to be inclusive
- ❖ A tailored approach for each board
- ❖ Good links back into the council



Who is involved

Anyone can support their community by getting involved with a Community Board



Public engagement is key



- ❖ We are creating a space and facility for community conversations on local issues
- ❖ Engaging with the public will be a key element of this
- ❖ The boards and the issues they are working on will be open and accessible to all
- ❖ They will bring people together to work on specific projects, initiatives or look into local issues together
- ❖ Involving people across the whole community, making use of their skills and knowledge to make real change
- ❖ Using innovative and audience specific tools to engage on different topics, priorities and projects, for example:

Focus groups Petitions OnLine forums Social media Polls

Working with our partners

- ❖ No one organisation can solve complex problems
- ❖ We have a wide range of partners in Buckinghamshire and we're excited about this new way of working
- ❖ Local partners will be key to making the boards effective
- ❖ Have seen an impressive community spirit in Buckinghamshire
- ❖ We will build on the great connections made already
- ❖ Sharing data, insight and resources to make a real difference
- ❖ Local recovery plans focused on understanding local need
- ❖ We will be making connections and reaching out over the coming weeks to talk about and co-design how to get involved



Martin Gallagher
Chief Executive Officer

'Over recent weeks we have worked hard to strengthen partnership working, building capacity and coalescence around common issues. Right from the start of lockdown we've helped those who need it and just get things done.

Its critically important that we continue to foster, nurture and develop partnerships - there's no doubt the Community Boards will support this way of working.

The Chairman and Coordinators will be mindful of the expertise, knowledge and leverage that the voluntary sector has. I see the Clare Foundation working closely with the Coordinators, helping with issues, coalescing and hosting other key partners and organisations to make things happen

Relationship building is all about leadership and creativity in addressing issues and setting clearly achievable objectives. In our case I'd like the Clare Foundation to be talking to the boards, finding out local needs, building capacity and creating roundtable type workshops with the appropriate VCS organisations, charities and any other organisation that is fit for purpose.'



Buckinghamshire
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE
we save lives



David Norris
Head of Prevention,
Response & Resilience

'The Community Boards bring a new opportunity to work together more effectively to address directly local issues, and for us as a service to identify any new or emerging risks enabling a more effective and timely response to concerns raised. Additionally we would be keen to work with communities to equip them with the capability for increased local resilience.'

These boards will provide a forum for strengthening the working between multiple partners and enable us to refresh how the partnership engages, which will provide the best benefit for the public.

Our service would like improve our integration with communities, and to work in partnership to address local matters at source. Our Community Safety staff will be available to support the set-up of the community boards and share our understanding of how best we can help communities.'

Community Board Budgets

- ❖ Overall budget for community boards is £3.9m:
 - £1.5m Community Area Priorities Fund
 - £500K Health & Wellbeing Fund
 - £1.9m Local Infrastructure Fund
- ❖ Budgets based on population, levels of deprivation and proposed housing growth
- ❖ Coronavirus Councillor Crisis Fund £250k and an additional £50k from Rothschild Foundation has been allocated to support local initiatives across the county
- ❖ Budgets will be allocated to projects that directly address agreed local priorities and represent good value for money
- ❖ Local organisations will be able to apply online for funds for projects that address the agreed local priorities

New Highways conversations

- ❖ Highways and network improvement conversations will take place outside of the formal meetings in new focused sub groups
- ❖ 2 meetings a year in each of the north, central and south areas with senior highways officers providing a more strategic approach to maintenance concerns like pot holes, gullies, grass cutting, weeding and trees
- ❖ Smaller sub groups will address local network improvement issues in the community board area like road safety, traffic calming, parking (waiting) restrictions
- ❖ This will give residents, community groups and local organisations the opportunity to discuss in detail with the right people
- ❖ Other elements of transport such as growth, strategy, sustainable transport and passenger services would still continue to interact with community boards

The benefits of a more focused approach

- ❖ Opportunities for Town and Parish Councils and residents to report and track issues via fix my street
- ❖ Opportunities for Town and Parish Councils and Buckinghamshire councillors to meet 3 times a year (including the TfB conference) with senior highways officers to discuss issues more strategically
- ❖ Prevents community boards becoming too dominated by highways issues
- ❖ More efficient use of LATs and Senior Managers time and ensures expertise in focused sessions
- ❖ The opportunity to invite a highways officer to a formal Community Board to address a specific issue is still available

How you can work with community boards

- We want to have a two way conversation with services about issues that come up through community boards, share the key priority areas and projects that boards identify and involve you in those where relevant and necessary
- We're asking that you also keep us involved in and aware of consultations and local engagement plans and proposals

Where are we so far

- Chairmen and coordinators in place
- Initial introduction meetings in July
 - Start of the conversation
 - Looking at a local area and health profiles
 - Identifying key areas of focus
- Coordinators engaging with local community, setting up action groups to explore areas of focus
- Wider public engagement and official launch to take place throughout September
- September meetings to be more inclusive and recorded

Key themes

- Each boards will have a series of priorities based on their area and local needs. They will build an action plan to explore and address these with their community.
- Boards have identified interim areas of focus and are engaging with people and organisations in their community.

These include:

- Covid 19 recovery
- Transport and Road safety
- Improving the environment
- Health and wellbeing
- Supporting older and vulnerable people
- Young People

Community board coordinators

Will:

- ❖ Be dedicated to championing the local area
- ❖ Be the driving force for a new style of collaborative working which stretches far beyond traditional meetings
- ❖ Be creative at collating local voices and supporting informal discussions
- ❖ Develop a board action plan that helps tackle issues
- ❖ Support local devolution conversations
- ❖ Be the connector to engage local partners, groups and organisations
- ❖ Energise the boards and harness ideas
- ❖ Work closely with the Chairman

For more information on the 16 Community Board areas, chairmen and coordinators visit <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/community-and-safety/improving-your-local-community/>