



Chesham & Villages Community Board minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Chesham & Villages Community Board held on Thursday 21 October 2021 in Via Video Conference, commencing at 6.30 pm and concluding at 8.25 pm.

Members present

P Birchley, J Baum, E Culverhouse, M Fayyaz, J MacBean, N Southworth and G Williams

Others in attendance

Parish Cllr Chris Brown
Sgt. Roy Evans (Thames Valley Police)
Parish Cllr Ruth Fowler
Andy Garnett (Rotary Club/Garnett Foundation)
Robert Gibson
Councillor Mimi Harker
Pei-Ling Harper (Bucks & Surrey Trading Standards)
Councillor Arif Hussain (Deputy Cabinet Member – Community Safety)
Parish Cllr Mike Johnstone
Parish Cllr Joan Lherbier
Cllr Rachael Matthews
Michelle Parker
Alan Polding (Chiltern Foodbank)
Mark Rosales (Big Community Take Away)
Jean Slater (The Chesham Society)
Gideon Springer (Service Director for Community Safety)
Inspector Richard Vine (Thames Valley Police)

Officers in attendance

L Hornby and C Green

Apologies

M Stannard

Agenda Item

- 1 Welcome and Introduction by the Chairman**
The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 2 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from:

Parish Cllr Anne Birkett
Mike Stannard
David Martin
Reverend Chris Haywood
Barbara Poole of Voices and Choices

3 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

4 Notes from the last meeting

The notes from the meeting held on 20 July 2021 were agreed as a true record.

5 Thames Valley Police Update

The Board received a presentation from Roy Evans and Richard Vine of the Thames Valley Police and noted the current policing figures and the Chesham policing team members. The also noted the following:

- The Buckinghamshire Council organised the online voting process for Neighbourhood Priorities which were then captured within local Patrol Plans; directing Neighbourhood officers to what their daily business should include. Each day on-duty, officers recorded their contribution and often provided a real-time update to communities through TVP social media accounts.
- Quarterly Updates were produced by each Neighbourhood team drawing from the data collected in the monthly Patrol Plans. Much like a shareholder's report they sought to inform communities (and their Community Boards) of local offending behaviour and progress relevant to the Neighbourhood Priorities.
- Community Board Chairs and Coordinators could contact their respective Neighbourhood Sergeants to discuss specific concerns raised by residents, this included securing police attendance at a Community Board meeting to discuss the issue.
- The Policing Issues Panel was held every 4 months and was independently chaired. It comprised of representatives from all Community Boards; providing an interface with Neighbourhood Inspectors and a platform to discuss strategic policing topics. The panel agreed the 3 issues the neighbourhood teams would focus on when able to over the following 4 months
- Community Boards supported policing objectives through Community Resilience; forming groups such as Community Speed Watch, Neighbourhood Watch, Shop Watch, Pub Watch, and Rural Spotters. Alternatively, they organised special events which sought to inform and protect those who were vulnerable to particular crimes such as Cyber-crime, Hate Crime or Domestic Abuse. With the allocation of Local Authority funds, Community Boards might also consider development of public facilities such as improved street lighting, CCTV or ANPR.
- Greater diversity within Community Board membership could not only provide

a better understanding of local issues but also offered prospective members for the Independent Advisory Group serving as consultants for the local Area Commander on real-time policing incidents, which might impact the communities.

In response to a question about whether there was much crime associated with the London Underground tube line with trains going in and out of London Richard Vine responded that it was a difficult one to answer due to the Underground being under the jurisdiction of the British Transport Police (BTP). It was also reported that Thames Valley Police (TVP) had, in the past, undertaken joint operations with the BTP specifically in relation to drug supply and knife crime.

In response to a question about police historically being first responders or last resort when it comes to cases of mental health issues it was confirmed that these were still ongoing issues, although affected the Emergency Response Officers more than others and it was noted that the Ambulance Service were short of people. All calls go through a triage system and if someone was having a heart attack, they would be prioritised over someone having a mental health issue. Therefore, the next services to be called were the police, particularly if that person was violent or aggressive.

Members were encouraged to report direct to the police if they believed drug dealing was taking place in a particular area. The more intelligence that was received the more it could be acted on.

It was noted that there were to be some changes within the LPA and that there was a move to amalgamate with the Wycombe LPA. It was also explained that Emma Burrows was one of the LPA Commanders and is knowledgeable about the way LPA's work. Reassurance was given to the Board that business would continue as usual although a physical move might happen from the police station to the library but will remain in Chesham.

The next Policing Issues Panel as part of the South Bucks Community Forum was meeting on the 11 November although slightly different format.

The Chairman thanked Roy, Richard and Jack for attending and their informative presentation.

6 Community Safety Presentation

The Board received and noted a presentation on Community Safety by Councillor Arif Hussain, Deputy Cabinet Member for Communities with special responsibility for Community Safety and Gideon Springer, Community Safety Head of Service.

It was agreed that the presentation would be attached to the minutes for information.

The following comments and questions were raised after the presentation:

- Councillor MacBean commented that due to anti-social behaviour in Chesham, both she and Councillor Southworth were watching the CCTV

review very closely due to, during the Chiltern District Council days, trying to implement major improvement but which never took place. It was noted however, that there were plans in place to carry out some of the revisions which were previously agreed. It was not just a case of replacing cameras but putting new ones up. That said, criminals tended to know where the cameras were and would therefore avoid that particular area.

- It was noted that mobile cameras were to be purchased as they would be able to target different areas compared to the static ones which covered the main areas of criminal activity such as the town centre. However, these mobile cameras would be for the whole of the Bucks area.
- In response to a query about rural crime, it was noted that, historically crime took place in populated areas which tend to show as ‘hotspots’ when the police carry out heatmaps to show crime hotspots. However, it was obvious that the rural areas also needed cover and support. The Community Safety team work with TVP to identify different ways to give that support and it was believed that the mobile CCTV units would help in this regard as well as reliance on rural residents providing intelligence to the police so they could build up a picture of where and what sort of crimes are taking place.
- Cross border crime was a challenge particularly at Christmas time particularly with the theft of Christmas trees. Obviously it would be a case of priorities, so Christmas tree thefts would not take precedence over burglaries or vehicles being stolen although a balance needed to be struck. It all depends on what resources were available at the time.
- Concern was raised in relation to door-to-door salesman more commonly known as ‘Nottingham Knockers’ or ‘Azure sellers’ and despite sympathy expressed by some, no communication was available to help people understand that saying “no” at the door was important. Concern was also raised that perhaps these sellers were actually ‘scouts’ getting an opportunity to look through front doors to then pass information back to criminals. While this was true to some extent quite often this activity was not illegal although it was a bit of a grey area. Community Safety did carry out campaigns to raise awareness of these people as well as those who knock on doors asking to take away rubbish and assuring the householder they had a licence, but in reality they did not and would fly-tip the rubbish.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Hussain and Gideon Springer for their informative presentation.

7 Trading Standards Presentation

The Board received and noted a presentation on Scam Awareness from Pei-Ling Harper of Bucks and Surrey Trading Standards.

The following questions and comments arose:

- Continuing on from the ‘Nottingham Knockers’ discussion, it was noted that the team was safeguarding seven people in Buckinghamshire two of which were in the Chesham area who had been victims of scam doorstep traders and one person who had received regular threats from someone who purported to be a gardener and had subsequently had three other visits from

this trader who threatened her and she was now too afraid to open her front door.

- Concern was raised from a recent possible scam from Hermes claiming to have a parcel for delivery which needed credit card details to ensure delivery. Pei-Ling Harper stated she had not heard of that particular scam but would investigate further.
- Board members noted that there had been a rise in use of doorbells with cameras as a way to deter scammers.
- Sticker packs to alert people to not steal, deal with doorstep traders and to give any more individual advice to anyone were available and Pei-Ling Harper requested people to email her if they wanted a pack.
- Pei-Ling Harper also stated she would visit communities to deliver advice or talks in relation to scams.
- The more people who reported scams, the better informed the Trading Standards team would be so investigate further.
- Concern about adults with learning disabilities was raised as they could be subject to scams and would not have the ability to filter out the true from false. An example was given by a Board member who had a neighbour who had been scammed three times now, once by someone claiming she had a three year insurance policy and that she had paid for one year and therefore payment would need to be taken for the second year. It was noted that True Call was a small device that attached to a landline and would be programmed with trusted numbers and any non-trusted numbers would need to go through a process or get blocked. There were various settings on True Call which could be set at high or low depending on the severity of calls being received. Pei-Ling Harper asked the Board member to email her in relation to her neighbour. Peiling.harper@surreycc.gov.uk
- Councillor MacBean agreed, in liaison with Pei-Ling Harper, to put some information in relation to the scam calls in the Chesham community newsletter, particularly in the run-up to Christmas.
- It was noted, however, that many people who have read information on these scams believe it would not happen to them. Pei-Ling Harper commented that nearly everyone she spoke to said the same thing, that they did not think they would ever fall for it.

The Chairman thanked Pei-Ling Harper for her very informative presentation.

8 Community Board Updates Funding Summary Report

Caroline Green, Chesham and Villages Community Board Co-ordinator updated members on Funding Summary who noted that despite a late start, due to the elections in May, £16,580 had already been allocated, leaving a balance of £268,008.

Caroline Green stated that, potentially, £60,00 had been set aside for the four Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) sites which were awaiting feasibility studies to take place. Following that allocation, there was still a decent pot of funding remaining with some applications in the pipeline, including the Chesham app.

Councillor MacBean explained that the Chesham app had been developed by a local resident and was in a good state and had been populated by many local volunteer groups and businesses. The resident who had designed the app had offered to gift it to the town council to make it a public community project. He had also offered to remain as a consultant to give support while it was launched. The app was already live and had lots of information in it.

Jean Slater of the Chesham Society explained they were not aware of the app until recently and agreed that it was a good facility for Chesham and suggested that Chesham should have its own dedicated website for visitors, promoting the AONB, the fact that Chesham was on the London Underground tube line and promote the satellite villages around Chesham. It was agreed that Councillor MacBean and Jean Slater should meet with the app.'s author and Michael Rowan to discuss this further.

Caroline Green reported that the Health and Wellbeing Action Group had not yet been set up, the reason being that Public Health profile had yet to return their profile. However, that had now been received and the public health profile, which will inform decisions on what the priorities for Chesham and the villages were. Therefore, the Health and Wellbeing Action Group could now be set up.

Caroline Green suggested that it would make sense for Councillor MacBean to Chair the Health and Wellbeing group. Councillor Birchley, Chairman of Chesham and Villages Community Board agreed. Councillor MacBean reported that she along with Caroline Green, had met with Dan Flecknoe, the Public Health Lead for the Chesham area.

Councillor Baum was invited to report on the Jobs and Apprenticeships Fair application which the Board had supported. It was noted that Cllr Baum had met with officers from the Buckinghamshire Council's Comms team where it was agreed a public engagement exercise with employers who had expressed an interest. The fair itself was to be held on Saturday 5 March 2022 where companies such as Waitrose, Audi and Silverstone would attend. Businesses with vacancies would be invited to take a stand at the Fair for no cost and the Fair would be marketed at young people living in Buckinghamshire.

The Fair would also, crucially, be for the 24 to 49 age group who were currently suffering due being laid off work as a result of the pandemic.

Action Plan

Board members noted the Action Plan report.

9 Community Matters

Chiltern Foodbank – Update

The Board received and noted a presentation by Alan Polding of the Chiltern Foodbank and noted that the presentation was attached to the agenda.

Alan Polding explained that he was appealing to the Board as the Foodbank needed

to find new premises as the current premises were no longer fit for purpose. Having handed out in the region of three thousand parcels in 2020 although figures were expected to be lower this year but volume was still quite high.

The ideal premises would be where informal meetings could take place as well as confidential meetings with clients. Perhaps an old office or industrial building, preferably with parking and in Chesham. It was noted that the Foodbank was registered with estate agents but there was nothing suitable on their books currently.

The size of property would, ideally, be in the region of 2000 square metres, roughly the size of half a tennis court.

If any Board member were aware of a property that might meet their needs, Alan Polding's email address was alan@chiltern.foodbank.org.uk and to please contact him.

Councillor MacBean reported that she had emailed earlier that day with details of a couple of properties that may be suitable and that she had contacted the head of Property Services at Bucks Council in case they were aware of anything suitable.

Chesham Rotary

Andy Garnett explained he was also part of the CIC in Chesham and stated there was a real need for organisations such as Foodbank, Community Takeaway and others for suitable properties which Chesham did not have unless specific homes were built for them which involves a lot more money. Work was taking place behind the scenes to make an announcement shortly, but needed commitments from major stakeholders before doing so.

Councillor MacBean explained that several units were being built at the end of Ashridge Road and if there were two similar organisations who could potentially share a space it could ease the burden in terms of bills, overheads etc.

Community Takeaway

Mark Rosales reported that Community Takeaway were looking to premises in Chesham and had looked for suitable properties with the right size of commercial kitchens in order to facilitate their requirements.

Mark Rosales reported that Community Takeaway had been in touch with the Oasis Partnership although, following a visit, it was found not to be suitable. The suggestion was made that Mark Rosales liaised with Councillor MacBean and Alan Polding for further discussions and to collaborate in finding and securing suitable premises.

Petitions

Board members noted the Petition report in the agenda pack.

10 **Date of Next Meeting**
Thursday 24 February 2022 at 6.30pm.