



## Amersham & Villages Community Board minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Amersham & Villages Community Board held on Thursday 28 July 2022 in MS Teams, commencing at 6.30 pm and concluding at 8.00 pm.

### **BC Councillors present**

M Dormer (Chairman), M Flys, G Harris, R Matthews and J Waters, S Bowles, M Harker, C Jackson

### **Town/Parish Councils and other organisations present**

A Vyas, B Hudson, C Simons, Cllr R Dineley, Di, Cllr D Pinkney, G Allison, G Whitehead, Cllr J Barnes, J Kenny, Cllr L Winrow, Cllr L Daly, N Magrath, O O'Neill, Cllr M Roberts, R Newall, P Carroll, P Matza, R Funk, R Owen, Cllr P Milliner

### **Others in attendance**

L Wright and K Farooqi

### **Agenda Item**

#### **1 Chair's Welcome including Appointment of Vice-Chair**

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting.

The Chair confirmed Cllr Mark Flys had been appointed as Vice-Chair of the Community Board.

Lizzie Wright was the Community Board Manager.

It was highlighted that community board meetings were not recorded.

#### **2 Apologies/Declarations of Interest**

Apologies were received from Patrick Clarke (Friends of Amersham Health Centre), Diane Rutter (Chiltern Foodbank), Alan Polding (Chiltern Foodbank), David Atkinson (DCGS), Ted Cooper (Local Resident), Peter Lawson (Local Resident), Cllr Caroline Jones (Buckinghamshire Council) and Cllr Martin Tett (Buckinghamshire Council).

There were no declarations of interest.

The minutes of the meeting held 26 April 2022 were agreed as an accurate record.

#### **3 Community Matters**

Lizzie Wright, Community Board Manager highlighted the focus to increase access to local sports facilities for young people. Discussions were ongoing with interested parties and Everyone Active to secure regular sports sessions at a reduced cost. The Community Board Manager was liaising with James Sexton, General Manager for Everyone Active and members were encouraged to get in touch if they were interested in assisting.

A member advised the outside areas of Chilterns Lifestyle Centre were not being maintained. It was noted rubbish had accumulated, vegetation was not watered and weeding was required. It was confirmed the outside area was weeded the day before and the general maintenance had been raised with John O'Connor the contractor. They would attend weekly for weeding and a couple of times a week to water shrubs and newly planted trees. The cabinet member for leisure Cllr Clive Harriss would be notified.

The Community Board Manager highlighted a local theatre company were in need of a premise at least 11,000 square feet in Amersham. The group were well established and provided activities for young people. Members were asked to contact the Community Board Manager for any venue suggestions. It was commented St John's Church in Amersham could be suitable.

It was highlighted the WhizzFizzFest events were held at libraries across the county. The event at Amersham library was held on 29<sup>th</sup> July and featured activities included a spy show, craft workshop and a trail around the town.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding issues with parking at Sycamore Road, Amersham. The payment machines were unable to accept cash and the RingGo cashless system was either not working or defaulting to charging extra fees to receive confirmation of parking texts. It was noted not all residents have access to smartphones and there were instances of residents not being able to pay to park thus risking a fine. The issues had been raised with the parking services team at Buckinghamshire Council and the Leader of the Council. It was highlighted the machines would be updated to include all payment options including contactless, cash and RingGo. Engineers had been booked to fix the current machines across Amersham and Chesham.

The Chair provided an update on community matters the presentation was appended to these minutes. There was a successful event for Ukrainian families held at the Beech House at the end of June. 28 families attended and received advice from family services and Citizens' Advice Bureau. A WhatsApp group had been set up for residents. There was a request for help with English language and Bucks Adult Learning were in the process of assisting with tutoring and a language café would be set up. Amersham Youth Club had hoped to host an event on 18<sup>th</sup> July however, due to lack of interest this would be rescheduled for a later date. Restore Hope Latimer held events on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> August for families to take part in activities.

The Community Board Manager reiterated the four priorities of the Board including

health wellbeing, supporting our young people, improving our environment and enabling a safe and thriving community. Following the success of last year's projects, the board were tracking progress and attending local events to raise awareness about how projects were delivered and developed.

#### **4 Project updates**

The Chair advised there would be a dementia café set up in Amersham. The Community Board provided funding for the Little Chalfont dementia café which had proved very successful.

- There had been several venues suggested for the café and it was hoped the model for the Little Chalfont café would be replicated.
- There was an appeal for volunteers to assist with various roles for the Amersham cafe including help with games, local choirs, presentations and providing refreshments. Members were requested to spread the word about the café to all in the community including carers.
- Roger Funk from the Little Chalfont café highlighted the process had started to create a charity which would cover any dementia café set up across the Board area.
- Members were advised to contact Lizzie Wright with any venue suggestions or offers of help. It was anticipated the café would be launched in September 2022.

The Community Board Manager provided an update on the Grow to Give project. The following points were highlighted:

- The task and finish group had met with Linda, the main lead and were in the process of contacting allotment sites to recruit champion growers who would co-ordinate the collection of produce from allotment holders.
- Hannah Tomlin was the Community Support Lead Food Co-ordinator from Buckinghamshire Council who was researching premises to act as produce collection and distribution centres. Members were asked to get in contact if they wanted to volunteer or if they could recommend any sites suitable.
- A Member highlighted the importance of setting up a distribution hub as traditional food banks tended not to accept fresh produce.
- The Chair highlighted the challenges local families faced due to the cost of living crisis. Once the produce distribution centre had been set up it would act as a blueprint for other Community Boards to replicate the model. The aim was to reach as many families as possible and have regular produce collections from growers.

The Chair advised the Queen's jubilee commemorative benches had been ordered and should be installed by mid-September. A metal bench would be installed at Amersham Hill by October, the delays were due to supply issues. The initial idea came from a little girl who requested more benches to sit on when walking with her grandmother.

A Member suggested fresh produce would be useful for the community cookery classes. It was highlighted any produce not distributed at the end of the day could go

to the cookery project.

Oli O'Neill from Treehouse Project Amersham provided an update on defibrillators. The following points were highlighted:

- Funding from the Community Board would be used to install defibrillators in the area. Sessions would be run to educate young people from local schools and the community on how to use them.
- The project was in the first stages of identifying locations for the equipment. Locations already earmarked included Amersham Free Church, Amersham Common and Village Hall and Westwood Park in Little Chalfont. An area in Coleshill was yet to be identified, members were requested to feedback suggestions of locations.
- The second phase of the project would be to inform residents of the locations of the defibrillators and add details to the British Heart Foundation database. The equipment would need to be available at all hours of the day.
- The third phase would include training residents to use the equipment. School pupils would develop lifesaving skills including cpr and mental health first aid training. It was hoped all final year primary school children would be trained so they can attend secondary school with these key skills.
- A Member queried if there was a plan for maintenance of the defibrillators. It was advised as part of the responsibility agreement with organisations they would fund the upkeep of the equipment. There would be first year servicing available, quarterly testing and batteries would be changed after five years.

Catherine Simons from Cue34 Theatre Company gave a presentation on the not for profit theatre company for Bucks residents.

- The current project was In-tune a tragic comedic play which was written during lockdown about navigating loneliness after grief. A previously successful project was the Beatrix Potter Tea Party which debuted at Amersham Festival of Arts in 2018.
- The group were seeking additional funding from the Board to host a Tea and Tales event aimed at over 60s in the community. The event would be a safe space for interaction consisting of community workshop crafts, musical performances and refreshments. The Chiltern Lifestyles Centre was highlighted as a potential venue and after further networking the event would be advertised in the upcoming weeks.
- The play In-tune would be developed at workshops with audiences providing feedback. It was hoped the play would be toured alongside local groups and in care homes. A local giving grant had been applied for. A condensed version of the Beatrix Potter Tea Party play was on at the Chiltern Open Air Museum with all proceeds going to the In-tune project.
- There was a request for a venue with ample space and a lighting rig to research and develop the project. The Chiltern Lifestyles Centre was unavailable.

There was a presentation from Briony Hudson, Museum Director at Amersham Museum. The slides were appended to these minutes.

- Briony introduced herself as the new Museum Director and provided details of a recent project run by the museum called Amersham before Plastic. The project worked in conjunction with Sustainable Amersham and researched how people shopped before plastic.
- The project involved discussing memories with older residents, exploring the museum collections, taking visual records of shopping now, exhibitions in the museum and mobile museum, issuing challenge packs for residents, developing and delivering outreach programmes for primary school children and measuring the museums carbon footprint with a view to create more sustainable practices.
- The pandemic meant certain activities had to be called back however, a substantial amount of research was undertaken. Interviews with older people about shopping taken at Sycamore Road were available to watch on YouTube. Donations of old shopping items were taken at the museum and 620 photos of local shops today were taken to be archived. There were 280 people contacted for views and 73 people provided interviews at the mobile exhibition in Amersham. Change and pledge cards were issued to inspire local residents to reduce their carbon footprint. Over 300 school children from four local schools were educated about plastics.
- The museum was reviewing their practices in order to become more sustainable. The mobile museum was an ongoing project and funding was available for one more school session with a view to integrate this into primary schools permanently. The partnership with Sustainable Amersham had proved invaluable and had allowed the museum to assess its own sustainability.

The Chair provided the following update on highways projects.

- The Coleshill speed assessment was completed by Transport for Bucks. The limit was not reduced to 30mph as hoped by residents however, research was underway to see if further signage could be erected.
- St George's Primary School in Amersham was in consultation with Transport for Bucks to implement bollards outside the school to deter parking.
- Dr Challoners had submitted a funding application to the Board to improve road safety. This was on hold whilst the application to HS2 for a road safety grant was processed.

Road safety on Roughwood Lane was being investigated by this Board and Denham, Gerrards Cross and The Chalfonts Community Board in conjunction with the relevant Parish Councils.

## **5 Funding applications**

The Vice-Chair Cllr Mark Flys provided an update on funding applications made to the Board. The following points were highlighted:

- Funding of £1160 had been approved by the Board.
- Funding for WhizzFizzFest the literary and arts festival was approved by the Board.
- Funding for Scannappeal was approved, funds would be used to purchase hand held devices for the nursing team to monitor and detect chronic

diseases. Scannappeal had 26 volunteers local to Amersham.

- Applications to the value of £3071.50 had been received and were currently being review by the Board. This included Stoney Dean School inspiration programme a pilot scheme for new students joining in September. The Amersham hospital were seeking to update a second garden for patients and colleagues to use. St Michael's Church community engagement event for older people on 4<sup>th</sup> October.
- Over the 2021-2022 period 34 projects were supported by the Board, including Amersham youth day, sports centres, Coleshill wildlife project, various school projects including St Mary's pond refurbishment.

The Chair advised the process for funding applications under £1000 had been streamlined and were expedited within a few days. The aim for this year was for the Board to deliver 50 projects and it was highlighted projects costing a few hundred pounds could help a number of residents.

## **6 Petitions**

The Community Board Manager referred to the report attached to the agenda regarding parking on the High Street/Whielden Street, Old Amersham. The report included a petition received by parking services at Buckinghamshire Council. The Board was requested to note the report and to consider whether they supported the petition. There was a lengthy discussion with residents advising difficulties parking near homes and there were concerned cars were parked for the purpose of selling. It was highlighted there was a need to protect the High Street by encouraging shoppers whilst ensuring residents had adequate spaces to park. The Board noted the response from Parking Services and would make further contact to discuss solutions drawing on their experience of parking issues around the county. An update would be provided at the next Board meeting.

A member of the Board highlighted there was a lack of signage to advise of the car park at the end of the High Street. The Chair advised the Board would ask the parking services team at the Council to determine solutions to the parking issues and the Cabinet Member for Transport Steve Broadbent would be notified.

Another petition included in the agenda pack was to tarmac Hyrons Close in Amersham. This was raised by residents and would be considered at Council later on in the year. The area had been inspected by Councillors and the local area technician who would review the roads scheduled for resurfacing in September. It was anticipated this road would be completed in the next few years.

## **7 Other matters**

Lizzie Wright, Community Board Manager provided an update on Buckinghamshire Council matters, the slides were appended to these minutes. Members were reminded that current consultations and surveys from Buckinghamshire Council were available to view on the webpage: <https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/>

The task and finish groups were focusing on projects including give to grow and the

dementia café. Members were encouraged to contact Lizzie Wright for involvement or ideas for projects.

**8 Date of the next meeting**

Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October 6:30pm via MS Teams