



Denham, Gerrards Cross & Chalfonts Community Board minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Denham, Gerrards Cross & Chalfonts Community Board held on Wednesday 8 June 2022 in Via Ms Teams, commencing at 6.30 pm and concluding at 7.50 pm.

Members present

S Chhokar (Chairman), M Bracken, T Broom, T Butcher, I Darby, J Rush, A Wood, D Brackin, T Shinner D Bray, H Griffiths, T Patrick Smith, L Hungin, C Stuart-Lee, D Brackin, J Chamberlain, T Greenfield, R Gill, B Holborn, S Kumar Jha, J Walsh, K Dickson, C Jackson, R Massey, J O'Keefe

Others in attendance

D Evans, M Dias, C Gray, S Jefferys, M Bergh, S Weston, M Locke

Agenda Item

1 Chairman's Welcome including Appointment of Vice-Chairman

Members were welcomed to the meeting by the Chairman.

The Chairman confirmed Cllr Jonathan Rush had been appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Community Board.

Marco Dias was acting Community Board Manager alongside Leonie Dale. A permanent appointment would be made in due course.

2 Apologies for Absence

There were apologies for absence from Cllr Vlader, Cllr Bass, Cllr Hollis, Cllr Rouse, Matt Everitt and Cllr Smith.

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2022

The minutes of the meeting held 27 January 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

5 Community Matters

The Chairman welcomed updates from Board Members on community activities and projects.

Cllr Tony Shinner provided an update on community matters in Chalfont St Peter.

- The Big Biodiversity Battle which received funding from the Community Board was well underway and had enabled valuable improvements to open spaces. There had been a lot of interest from volunteers such as schools, churches, businesses and local groups.
- The recently opened Memorial Gardens have proved very popular with local residents.
- The Council has received a planning application for a new motorway service station next to the Colne Valley Regional Park which was geographically within Chalfont St Peter.
- There was a request for the Community Board and Highways Team at Buckinghamshire Council to assess Bull Lane in Gerrards Cross and Chalfont St Peter after a potentially fatal road accident involving a young child.
- Over 1500 residents turned out for the lighting of the Queen's Jubilee beacon in the village last Thursday.
- There were several Ukrainian families resettled in the village who have settled into the area well.
- The traffic survey on the A413 conducted by Buckinghamshire Council had been received. The Community Board had assisted with the funding for the survey. There would be an estimated cost of £28,000 to replace speed signage highlighting a reduction from 70mph to 50mph. Further details had been requested.

Cllr David Brackin highlighted the top community priorities for Fulmer Parish Council.

- A top priority was road safety as there had been a number of collisions. Pinewood Studios would assist with funding and whilst the work has been negotiated with Buckinghamshire Council there were concerns about pricing and the quality of the work. Assistance with speed assessments would be appreciated and the parish council were in the process of setting up SpeedWatch and MVAS.
- Another priority was further development of the King George field community hub which provided a positive wellbeing space during the covid19 pandemic. Development of the studio was a priority and further funding would be needed. The Board helped with funding for parking on the verges last year and bike racks had been mounted which were well used.
- There had been a number of complaints received regarding missed waste collections in the area which were due to operational issues. It was requested this issue was escalated at Buckinghamshire Council, although this was currently being addressed by the Cabinet Member.
- Other priorities included improved communications on broadband and attention to developments at Pinewood Studios as a new planning application for further development had been submitted. The full list of priorities was appended to these minutes.

A Member highlighted the parish could obtain devolved responsibility for highway changes, it was agreed further discussion would take place outside of the Board

meeting.

Cllr Michael Bracken advised there had been a large number of very successful events across the Community Board area for the Queens Jubilee and requested a meeting to feedback knowledge and experiences. The Chairman highlighted there was a quarterly meeting for Community Board Chairmen and Parish Councils which would be useful in sharing experiences of events. It was requested the Community Board Manager added this as an item on those meetings in the future.

Cllr Des Bray requested assistance in finding a location for a new community orchard project in Chalfont St Giles. This would be an area for residents to relax and learn about cultivation of fruit trees with the possibility of involving local school children. An application for funding would be submitted to the Board in the near future.

Cllr Isobel Darby highlighted the two upcoming events Chalfont St Giles Show and Feast Day were not led by the Parish Councils. These were very successful and large scale events put on by community organisations therefore, it would be useful to have their feedback as well as Councils. The Community Board would have a pitch and information display at the Chalfont St Giles feast day on 25th June.

Cllr Julia Walsh gave an update on the Denham area, there were 17 Jubilee events across Denham including well attended street parties and the lighting up of the church tower to coincide with the lighting of the Queens Jubilee beacons. It was reported the Denham Scout Hut had been badly burnt by vandals which was a great concern and disappointment to residents and the Parish Council. The fire could have been attributed to gas bottles which had been left on the premise for a considerable amount of time. The Parish Council were liaising with Buckinghamshire Council to discuss options for the site and there was potential for the Community Board to assist with funding an alternative community building.

Jane Chamberlain advised the Board on updates from Chalfont St Giles.

- The HS2 tunnels had been constructed under the village with construction moving towards Amersham next. The Parish Council were liaising with HS2 for funding to refurbish the village pond and playgrounds.
- There had been a focus on traffic calming measures in the village which included raising zebra crossings and making safer walking routes to schools and recreational grounds.
- It had been a busy weekend for the Queens Jubilee celebrations for the events team who arranged a street party in the centre of the village with over 3000 attendees. The Church, Community Orchard and the Parish Council hosted an event on the Saturday which included a brass band and fancy dress.
- The next event upcoming was the Chalfont St Giles Show on 3rd September 2022.

Cllr Andrew Wood gave an update on projects in Gerrards Cross.

- Community safety was a big priority and the installation of CCTV in the area.

Discussions were ongoing with Buckinghamshire Council with the Council seeking further electrical testing. The budget for the project was £35,000 however £70,000 had already been spent. There had been frustrations at the lengthy process and the Parish were liaising with the Highways Manager.

- Cllr Wood advised he attended the task and finish group which was looking at the contract tendering for Transport for Bucks including process improvements. It was noted all options were being explored including more devolved powers for Town and Parishes relating to highways.
- It was advised the Parish raised £11,000 for the Queens Jubilee event on Saturday as sponsorship from local businesses. Parishes were encouraged to seek local business support for future events as £26,000 had already been raised this way for the Christmas lights.

6 Buckinghamshire Council Update

Marco Dias, Localism Manager Buckinghamshire Council provided an update on Buckinghamshire Council.

Thousands of Ukrainian refugees have been welcomed into Bucks and the Council was working alongside strategic partners to help people settle in. The Council has produced welcome packs for sponsors and their guests to ensure they were able to access the right support. There was an internal team at the Council offering localised support, Clare Brown was a sponsor lead who could assist. There was further information online

[A Helping Hand for Ukraine | Buckinghamshire Council](#) or email Ukrainesupport@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Buckinghamshire Council had a designated team to assist residents struggling with the cost of living crisis to help with food and bills.

<https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/housing-and-benefits/support-with-food-bills-and-finances/>

A dedicated website for carers had been set up with information and support [Support for carers | Care Advice Buckinghamshire](#)

The Buckinghamshire Local Plan survey closed on 11th February with over 3000 responses received. It was anticipated the findings would be published in summer which would be circulated to community groups. There were 330 submissions outlining brownfield sites which could be suitable for housing developments. The online form was available at [Brownfield sites in Buckinghamshire | Buckinghamshire Council](#) to submit further options for brownfield site.

Members were advised to check the [Your Voice Bucks - Citizen Space](#) as all Buckinghamshire Council and NHS consultations were published there.

The Localism Manager advised he would raise all the topics highlighted by Board Members to the relevant Service Director.

7 Updates from the previous year

Marco Dias, Localism Manager, Buckinghamshire Council provided an update on the Board's previous years funding and projects, the presentation was appended to these minutes.

- The budget for last year was £222,000, the funds were allocated 25% highways, 15% economic recovery, 15% environmental projects and the remaining for general funding.
- There was £8,000 unallocated funding which was a similar amount to other Community Boards.
- Community Board funding allocated enabled £78,000 of funding from other organisations including town and parish councils to be leveraged. By working in partnership over £290,000 was invested into the local community.
- Environmental projects and highways accounted for £60,000 of the budget respectively. The main beneficiaries of funding included Town and Parish Councils, voluntary and community sectors and other smaller organisations.
- There were a large variety of projects funded including Big Biodiversity Battle in Chalfont St Peter which had a positive impact on the community and the Community Fridge in Chalfont which every month prevented over 1tonne of food from wastage.

A Member requested copies of the slides and information to present at the Chalfont St Peter Feast Day.

8 Forward Planning

Marco Dias, Localism Manager Buckinghamshire Councils provided an update on future priorities and areas of focus for the Board.

- Based on 27 survey responses from March 2022, the key priorities were identified as the environment, health and wellbeing, highways, economic regeneration, opportunities for young people, older people and culture.
- Four action groups had been created with the aim of holistically and proactively setting up projects across Parish and Community Board boundaries. Task and finish groups would aim to deliver the projects or events.
- The funding for Community Boards was half of last year's budget, due to the budget being amalgamated for two years due to covid19. The normal level of funding per year was £114,000 with maximum limit of £20,000 to be spent on highways projects.
- £5,000 was allocated to small grants and Community Board funding applications would seek to be agreed within a maximum of four weeks compared to four to six weeks previously.
- The funding criteria was similar to the previous year however the maximum allocation for a project would be £15,000. Contributory funding was mandatory for projects over £1,000. The funding application was on the Buckinghamshire Council website and any ideas could be discussed with the Community Board Manager.
- The funding applications would be considered in three funding windows and applications received by the end of June would be agreed in July. The budget

would be allocated at three points during the financial year. The leads for current applications being considered would be contacted imminently by the Community Board Manager.

- The calendar of meetings for the year has been mapped out with some dates yet to be decided. The dates for Community Board meetings would be circulated in the newsletter and invites sent for MS Teams. Any persons wishing to join the meetings were asked to get in touch.

A Member queried that previous approved funding applications for Gerrards Cross which were to be carried forward into the new financial year were not showing on the list in the presentation. It was confirmed these should be included on the list and it would be amended.

A query was raised relating to matching the contributory funding from the Community Board by organisations and if this would need to be monetary or the equivalent support work. It was advised in the majority of cases the equivalent monetary value would be matched however there was flexibility. For instance, if the Board provided the funding for equipment the organisation could provide annual maintenance. The applications would be reviewed on a case by case basis.

There would be a new simpler form for applications for funding under £1,000, this would be live on the website by the end of the month.

There was a discussion relating to the allocation of funding for highways and how to get the best value of money from the budget. Seer Green Parish Council had received a quote of £9,000 for 100 yards of yellow lines. It was noted that this budget could deliver a number of highways projects and the costs quoted were quite high.

The Chairman advised action groups and task and finish groups would provide a hybrid approach to bring people together to discuss any initiative or community issues to develop projects. The Community Boards would be able to make decisions advised by the action groups but the Board would still have the final decision on funding.

There was concern from Members the funding for the Community Board was relatively small to enact large changes to the community. Furthermore, concern was raised around the large number of task and finish group meetings for the size of the fund and if these were value for money. The Chairman reiterated the Boards were not just there to provide funds for projects but also to identify community issues and influence new initiatives whilst bringing organisations together.

A Member from Seer Green Parish Council advised their annual precept was less than other local parishes. There was a need to upgrade CCTV in the area and yellow lines to deter parking on certain roads however, the Parish was awaiting feedback from Buckinghamshire Council. It was noted the quote for partial yellow lines on a road was £9,000 which was one fifth of the Parishes annual precept.

There was a request for the Officer from the Community Safety team responsible for CCTV to attend a Board meeting to advise the Parish Councils how to progress these projects.

There had been confusion regarding the application for funding process and if a representative from the Town and Parish Council needed to attend the meeting to put their application forward in person. It was confirmed once an application for funding had been submitted the Community Board Manager would be in contact to discuss the requirements however, it wasn't a necessity for applicants to be present at meetings.

It was highlighted if Town and Parish Councils were seeking double yellow lines on roads they could contact Buckinghamshire Council to arrange a public consultation. Further information on the CCTV camera review was requested. The Community Board Manager confirmed they would look into the status of the CCTV review and endeavour to have the Community Safety Officer responsible attend the next Community Safety and Transport group meeting.

A Member highlighted they were able to have CCTV installed in the local area however there wasn't the capacity for Town and Parishes to monitor the CCTV round the clock.

In response to discussion about the Community Board budget and remit a Member highlighted it was important to be realistic about funding as tackling large scale community issues would cost millions. The Community Boards had been discussed by Members at the Standards and General Purpose Committee and Terms of Reference for Community Boards would be produced and any feedback from Members would be valued.

A Member highlighted the Economic Regeneration action group would meet next week, the first meeting of the financial year. There was a request for Board Members to put forward ideas for projects which could be discussed at the meeting. The Chairman advised the action group may have a name change to incorporate the word business to highlight this as a greater focus of the group.

A Member highlighted the CCTV in their area was saved onto a hard drive and was not monitored live. The CCTV footage and ANPR cameras had proved useful in assisting police target crime.

It was suggested that the Board could identify problems and issues in the local areas first and then set up various action groups to address these community matters. It would be important to use the budget carefully and decide the remit and outcomes of action groups.

9 Town and Parish Council updates

This item was covered in Item 5 Community Matters.

10 Action Group Minutes

The Chairman highlighted the Action Group Minutes had been circulated in the agenda pack for this meeting for Board Members to review.

11 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be in the form of a Community Board Event taking place 13 July 2022 6:30pm at Colston Hall, Gerrards Cross.

There would be presentations from projects funded by the Board and local groups would be invited. The Chairman requested Board Members spread the word about the event in particular to smaller local groups.

It was advised interviews were underway for the vacant Denham, Gerrards Cross & The Chalfonts Community Board Manager post. An appointment would be made in the next week with the successful candidate in post in the next few months.