



Buckinghamshire Council

High Wycombe Community Board

Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the High Wycombe Community Board held on Wednesday 13 September 2023 in Wrights Meadow Centre, Wrights Meadow Road, High Wycombe, HP11 1SQ, commencing at 6.30pm

Members present

L Clarke OBE, M Hussain JP, A Hussain, A Alam, M Ayub, K Bates, A Baughan, T Green, S Guy, D Hayday, O Hayday, I Hussain, Majid Hussain, M Knight, S Raja, N Rana, M Smith, N Thomas, P Turner, J Wassell and K Wood

Others in attendance

Fay Ewing – Community Board Manager – High Wycombe
Makyla Devlin – Senior Community Board Manager
Lizzie Wright- Community Board Manager (note taker)
Kate Walker – Localism Manager (Service Development and Engagement) Buckinghamshire Council
Matt Everett – Service Director - Business Intelligence & Community Support – Buckinghamshire Council
Nick Graham – Service Director – Legal & Democratic Services
Penelope Tollitt – Marlow Film Studios, Planning Consultant
Jules Robinson – Marlow Film Studios
Simon Barrowcliff – Marlow Film Studios
Jenny Craig – Principal and CEO, Buckinghamshire College Group
Neil O’Leary – Network Safety Team Leader – Buckinghamshire Highways
Rose Simkins – CEO, Stop Hate Crime
Heather Morley – Vice Chair, HWCB Recovery & Regeneration Action Group
Peter Cartwright - Resident
Colin Hingston - High Wycombe Society
Martyn Dey – Resident of West End Road
Ian Whyte - Resident of West End Road
James Kent - Resident of West End Road
Florence Pritchard - Resident of West End Road, Lead Petitioner
John Shaw – Chiltern Rangers
Brian Lewis – Wycombe Multi Cultural Organisation

1 CHAIRMAN’S WELCOME

Cllr Lesley Clarke

Welcome to everyone to High Wycombe Community Boards face to face meeting at Wrights Meadow Centre.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- Cllr Paul Turner
- Cllr Nathan Thomas
- Cllr Katrina Wood
- Cllr Matt Knight
- Steve Baker MP
- Sue Hynard Parliamentary Office of Steve Baker MP
- Louise Hurst, Buckinghamshire Council
- Layla Ravey, Buckinghamshire Council
- James Boulton, Wycombe Homeless Connection
- Acting Inspector Daniel Crook, Thames Valley Police
- Nick Braisby, Buckinghamshire New University
- Charmaine Fyffe, Khepera
- Helen Mee, The Clare Foundation
- Simon Kearey, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board
- Jacque Roberts, SV2G
- Adam Cheyo, Buckinghamshire Council
- Joanne Fowler, Buckinghamshire Council
- Jo Belshaw, One Can Trust

3 MINUTES

All agreed the notes from the meeting held 25 April were a true record

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A number of members on the planning committee were advised to declare their interest in regard to item 6 Marlow Film Studios.

Councillor Arman Alam

Councillor Mohammed Ayub

Councillor Andrea Baughan

Councillor Steve Guy

Councillor Imran Hussain

Councillor Sarfaraz Khan Raja

5 COMMUNITY MATTERS

Summary A petition regarding West End Road was presented by Florence Pritchard, lead petitioner, on behalf of a number of residents present at the meeting, she thanked members for their support so far. The residents were looking to address safety concerns through unclear road markings, the structure of the road, poor visibility, parking issues, and speeding (exacerbated by the steep decline of the hill). Concerned by the data provided by Network Safety team, residents had created a report of their own knowledge of accidents in the past 9 months (which they identified on a map for members in the room), and were looking for the board to intervene and introduce preventative measures, such as improved signage, speed measures and road closure at the junction of West End Street onto Desborough Road. The residents requested an investigation these and into other possible measures; they explained that the diversion for drivers would not cause inconvenience due to suitable alternative routes available.

Members agreed the change could improve the flow of traffic in the area; some were keen to address the behaviour of road users as well as or instead of engineered solutions. Others wanted to see the scheme coupled with an improvement to the Desborough Avenue roundabout/junction and some noted that the road closure could potentially lead to increased anti-social behaviour.

Neil O'Leary provided background from the network safety team and explained that data sets were provided by DfT and could be delayed and only include reports where injury occurred rather than damage to property. The proposal did not meet criteria for action within the network safety team but if available, alternative funding or resources could be used to support a scheme (e.g. Opportunity Bucks, Parking, enforcement cameras.)

Members were keen to see increased enforcement presence and immediate action of repainting the yellow lines to improve their visibility.

Actions To consider potential options and schedule further discussion with relevant parties

6 MARLOW FILM STUDIOS - JOBS AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Summary A presentation was given about the background and vision for Marlow Film Studios. The main aims were to provide a local creative hub and house other creative industries. They engaged with the public early before applying for planning and bought the land to demonstrate their commitment. Ecology was a key consideration, as was working with high profile partners in the design and architecture. Transport routes had been considered, including an active travel cycleway and offroad links as well as a 20% biodiversity net gain through additional land purchased for that sole purpose. Solar panels would power 105% of the business's needs.

The ambition was to create opportunities for employment in the creative screen industry which was seen as a top 'dream' industry to work in for young people and there were many various job roles which would sit within this. Streaming had increased demand for content which the UK industry needed to meet, including more space for production. A full plan was being considered for skills and development with various cohorts (schools, HE/FE, re-skilling, transferrable skills, and community involvement). A taskforce was setup with key partners involved, looking to offer open days to the public and local schools, providing links with apprenticeships, training programmes, bursaries, working with businesses, skills hubs, youth councils and encouraging a very inclusive and accessible opportunity for all.

The proposal was fully supported by the Bucks College Group who estimated approx. 400 students per year were leaving with skills related to the film industry. The proposal would provide a way of offering employment within Buckinghamshire and keeping young people in county after completing qualifications.

The studios were expected to be up and running in 2027.

7 STOP HATE CRIME - 24 HOUR PHONE LINE

Summary Rose introduced the charity Stop Hate UK, the vision, mission and patron Baroness Doreen Lawrence and defined hate crime for the members, explaining the law around it and the impact of it. The project objectives included raising awareness, reducing barriers to reporting, providing access to support, recruiting and training ambassadors, establishing a network of signposting centres, and focusing on crime prevention.

Further information was provided in packs for attendees to take away and more could be provided for promotion via digital resources and online.

The charity were able to work with schools separately to raise awareness and provide resources.

Under 18s could access support via a separate helpline.

Members were asked to support the promotion of the charity and could be given resources to do so. National Hate Crime awareness week was due to take place between 14th - 21st October

Actions All to share resources and promote the service

8 PLAY STREETS

Louise Hurst was unable to attend and sent a video which could be watched outside of the meeting.

All to access the video provided by Public Health

9 COMMUNITY BOARD UPDATES

Summary Mahboob, chair of the Recovery and Regeneration Action Group provided an update. The group had been discussing issues around antisocial behaviour in public toilets, speeding in the town centre, and infrastructure such as shop fronts. They were looking to make the town safer for everyone.

Julia, chair of the Health & Wellbeing Action Group provided an updated. The group had made contact with, supported and funded many local charities and had met many of their agreed targets. They had been attending and holding events to increase engagement with the board. They had been focusing on projects around Gypsies, Romanies and Travellers, LGBTQ+, and Stop Hate Crime and advised the date of the next meeting on 14 September where they would be discussing a new topic: Housing and Health. Julia thanked Fay Ewing, Board Manager, and Louise Hurst in Public Health, and vice-chair Jackie Roberts for their support.

Tony, chair of the Transport Action Group provided an updated. They were awaiting feedback from council services about specific schemes in order to progress. They had raised concerns about lack of awareness about local consultation activity.

Sarfaraz, chair of the Environment Action Group provided an update. They had been looking at introducing air quality monitors in the town, an idling campaign and encouraging more walking and cycling, work on chalk streams, litter picking, bee squared seed packets, Electric Vehicle points, the warm in Wycombe draft excluders project, and working with the environment centre. Sarfaraz made tribute to the late Steve Morton who had sadly passed away.

Fay provided an update on funding. More information was available in the agenda pack including the allocations and pipeline projects for the 23/24 financial year, current allocations were at around £14,000. Projects (both funded and non-funded) included the recent BOPAG event, Public Health's Smoke Free Parks delivered with Millbrook School, and soon also The Rye, plus working with Neighbourhood Watch groups to encourage more work in the area. The board were calling for volunteers to get involved and put forward ideas and highlighted the bid writing course available through the Clare Foundation.

Community Engagement events throughout the summer, with thanks to local partners for their facilitation, had enabled conversations with around 130 different residents and partners to discuss priorities.

Finally, Fay thanked all those who had supported the Proud of Bucks Awards and a final well done to all nominees and winners/highly commended. With thanks Wycombe Arts Centre for hosting, and all the community groups who attended with stalls on the day.

Upcoming events noted were:

Jobs Fair at the Elgiva in Chesham on 23 September.

Wycombe Christmas light switch on 18 November– with a call for volunteers to get involved.

The Chairman thanked officers for their support with the meeting.

Actions To come forward with project ideas and to volunteer to help at upcoming events

10 CORPORATE UPDATE

Summary Nick Graham provided an update from the standards committee on the High Wycombe Community Governance Review, looking at the unparished area and establishing a town and / or parish councils in various areas within the Community Board boundary, which had been deferred by Wycombe District Council to the Unitary Council, and also paused during the county's boundary review.

The committee had not agreed to take the original proposal forward due to various reasons but would commission a new review. A working group had been formed to look at the options, consultation plan, and timings.

Matt Everitt provided the corporate update on behalf of Buckinghamshire Council, highlighting the budget consultation which was currently live for submitting views, and cost of living welcoming spaces, whereby the council were looking to encourage these to take place again during the winter.

Kate Walker provided an update on Opportunity Bucks. The team were making good progress across 6 wards, including community days, engagement, community clean-ups. Another event was taking place the following week and leaflets were provided to promote this. The Abbey Ward visit was due to take place soon. Projects were starting to take place around traffic calming measures in Castlefield, public art in West Wycombe, family support in Abbey, health checks in Cressex/Booker, a Mindfulness trail in Totteridge, mental health café in Millbrook, Portland house site visit, and conversations with housing associations.

Public questions – Peter raised the issues with bus services in Wycombe, advising that Carousel bus services were looking to source a further single-deck vehicle to fill a gap in service. Arriva routes had been renumbered in an online system, causing issues with reduced bus services, particularly around secondary school journeys. Members were keen to understand the council's policy on this and why were members not informed of changes in service. Officers from the Council and Arriva had been asked to attend the High Wycombe Town Committee to discuss the issues.

Actions To follow up with officers and arrange further discussions

11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

13th March 2024