



# Community Board update

## Beaconsfield and Chepping Wye: 11 September 2024

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### National planning policy framework (NPPF) consultation

As you may be aware the Government have announced their intention to change the NPPF and have launched a consultation as part of this review:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-reforms-to-the-national-planning-policy-framework-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system>

Please note the deadline for responding to the consultation is Tuesday 24 September 2024.

The consultation proposes a number of important changes to national planning rules, for example on how local housing need is calculated and on development in the Green Belt.

For Buckinghamshire, the consultation proposes a housing need figure of 4,122 new homes a year, which is 41.5% higher than the figure derived from the existing government formula for calculating housing need. The consultation also proposes not to allow councils to demonstrate exceptional circumstances to deviate away from this figure.

Alongside these changes there are several others that we would like to bring to your attention, as such we have invited town and parish councils to attend an online meeting, which will outline what the proposed main changes are, what they mean and what the future proposals are.

There is no requirement to let us know which meeting you would like to attend. The meetings are on Tuesday 10 September at 6pm and also on Thursday 12 September at 6pm. Both sessions will be on Teams and will be for an hour and a half. You will only need to attend one

session, as they will both follow the same format. Details of how to join the meetings were included in the email that was sent to clerks.

Buckinghamshire Council is considering a response to this consultation at a special Cabinet meeting on 16 September. The papers for this meeting will be published late on Friday 6 September and you will be able to read our draft response here:

<https://buckinghamshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=337&MId=19011>

## A new model for Community Boards

A review of the Community Boards has been undertaken following the outcome of the Boundary Commission Review, which reduces unitary Members from 147 to 97, together with some ward boundary changes.

The Council has agreed to make savings as part of the medium term financial plan (MTFP) which result in a reduced total budget of £1m from 2025/26. Considering all of these changes, a report will be considered by Cabinet on 10 September which recommends a new model of eight Community Boards - a reduction from the current 16 - which will take effect immediately after the local elections in May 2025.

While the proposed model will increase the geographical boundaries for the Boards, they will build on the strengths we have developed in engaging local partners, identifying key priorities for the local communities and drawing in contributory funding. The proposed new Board areas are also coterminous with the new Buckinghamshire Council ward boundaries which will come into effect in May 2025.

In terms of the use of resources, the proposed model will ensure that each Board is able to have a dedicated community board manager and a total sum of £250k will be available for project funding.

You can read the report in full online, as item 8 of the Cabinet agenda: [Agenda for Cabinet on Tuesday, 10th September, 2024, 10.00 am - Modern Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

## Consultations

### **Library Flex model (10 July to 18 September 2024)**

The Library Flex model proposes a new way of operating some Buckinghamshire libraries, reflecting changes in library usage over the years, by having staff available at times of greatest

customer need and use of self-operated technology to provide library services at quieter times.

Library Flex will also provide an opportunity to increase opening hours, benefitting people who work, commuters and students. Currently many libraries open from 10am but could open earlier without staff and until later in the evening, and for longer during exam times so that people can go there to study.

Residents are being asked when they would most like staff to be available and when they would prefer to be able to visit the library.

The consultation also includes a review of opening hours at Burnham Library and a proposal to open High Wycombe Library on Monday instead of Sunday – both of which are separate from the Library Flex proposals.

Find out more about the proposals and have your say at [buckinghamshire.gov.uk/library-flex](https://buckinghamshire.gov.uk/library-flex)

## **Buckinghamshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) (2 September to 13 October 2024)**

We have launched a public consultation on our proposed Buckinghamshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). This ambitious plan aims to identify priorities for enhancing and expanding cycling, walking and wheeling networks across Buckinghamshire, with the overall aim of providing increased transport choices, promoting healthier lifestyles, reducing traffic congestion, and contributing to environmental sustainability.

The council has already developed local LCWIPs for Aylesbury Garden Town, Buckingham, and High Wycombe, with each recommending ways to improve walking, cycling and wheeling infrastructure in those towns. However, there is currently no comprehensive LCWIP that covers the whole Buckinghamshire Council area.

The Buckinghamshire LCWIP aims to address this by identifying key priorities for new or improved infrastructure that will connect towns and villages, making cycling, wheeling and walking safer, more accessible, and more convenient for residents and visitors alike. The council is now seeking feedback from the public to ensure that the plan meets the needs and expectations of the community.

Find out more information and have your say at [buckinghamshire.gov.uk/LCWIP](https://buckinghamshire.gov.uk/LCWIP)

## **Money Matters budget consultation (29 August to 13 October 2024)**

We are preparing our spending plans for 2025/26 and asking residents, businesses and other local stakeholders to give their views on which services should be prioritised.

The 'Money Matters' survey is the opportunity for residents to have a say on what's important to them and how they would like to see the council's budget distributed.

Councils across the country continue to experience significant financial pressures due to rising costs and added demand on services. In particular, Buckinghamshire Council has seen social care costs escalate even further in recent months due to more vulnerable residents needing help.

With continuing pressures on household budgets after a period of high inflation and other turbulence, it's important that residents tell the council how they want to see their council tax spent during the next financial year.

Find out more and have your say at [buckinghamshire.gov.uk/money-matters-consultation](https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/money-matters-consultation)

**All consultation and engagement activities being run by Buckinghamshire Council can be found on the website: [yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com](https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com)**