

Unconfirmed



Minutes of a Meeting of the **Community Partnership Board** held via Zoom
on Monday, 7 September 2020 at 6.00pm

Members of the Community Partnership Board present:

Steve Gallant (Chairman of the Community Partnership Board and Leader of East Suffolk Council),
Chris Abraham (Chief Executive of Community Action Suffolk (CAS)),
Paul Ashdown (Chairman of the Lowestoft and Northern Parishes Community Partnership),
Chris Blundell (Chairman of the Kesgrave, Rushmere St Andrew, Martlesham, Carlford and Fynn Valley Community Partnership),
Jenny Ceresa (Chairman of the Carlton Colville, Kessingland, Southwold and Villages Community Partnership),
Judy Cloke (Chairman of the Beccles, Bungay, Halesworth and Villages Community Partnership),
Tony Cooper (Chairman of the Aldeburgh, Leiston, Saxmundham and Villages Community Partnership),
Kerry Cutler (Superintendent and Southern Area Commander for Suffolk Constabulary),
Louise Hardwick (NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Group),
Susan Harvey (Member of the Greenprint Forum),
Mark Jepson (Chairman of the Felixstowe Peninsula Community Partnership),
Michael Ladd (Suffolk County Councillor for the Kessingland and Southwold Division),
Tom McGarry (Head of Stakeholder Engagement for EDF Energy),
Carol Poulter (Chairman of the Framlingham, Wickham Market and Villages Community Partnership),
Russ Rainger (Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC))
Stephen Singleton (Chief Executive for the Suffolk Community Foundation),
Letitia Smith (East Suffolk Council Cabinet Member for Communities, Leisure and Tourism),

Others present:

Andy Cuthbertson (Communities and VSC Lead for Suffolk County Council),
Matt Makin (Democratic Services Officer, East Suffolk Council),
Luke Bennett (Partnerships Manager, East Suffolk Council),
Nick Khan (Strategic Director, East Suffolk Council),
Ben Porter (Funding Manager, East Suffolk Council),
Nicole Rickard (Head of Communities, East Suffolk Council and NHS Norfolk & Waveney / Ipswich & East Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Groups), and
Nicola Wotton (Deputy Democratic Services Manager, East Suffolk Council).

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Tim Passmore (Police and Crime Commissioner for Suffolk), Lisa Perkins (Vice Chairman of the Community Partnership

Board and Realisation Director for British Telecom), Paul Sharp (Superintendent and East Suffolk Policing Commander), Paul West (Cabinet Member for Ipswich, Communities and Waste, Suffolk County Council), and Roger Wright (Chief Executive, Britten Pears Arts).

Apologies for lateness were received from Kerry Cutler (Superintendent and Southern Area Commander for Suffolk Constabulary), as she was dealing with a serious incident which had occurred earlier in the day.

N.B. Kerry Cutler joined the meeting at 6.47pm.

Steve Gallant reminded everyone that the meeting was being broadcast live to the other Members of the Council, via the East Suffolk Council YouTube channel, however the recording was not available for the public to view.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Steve Gallant presented the Minutes from the last meeting of the Board, which was held on 23 June 2020 and, by consensus, those present confirmed that the minutes were a true record.

RESOLVED

That the Minutes from the Board Meeting held on 23 June 2020 be approved as a true record.

3. Feedback from the Task and Finish Group

Steve Gallant invited Stephen Singleton to give an update on the work of the Task and Finish Group.

Stephen Singleton reminded those present that the Board had previously agreed that it would focus upon the following 3 priorities:

- Social Isolation and Loneliness
- Sustaining Community Hubs and Community Resilience
- Supporting the most Vulnerable Communities and People.

The Task and Finish Group was comprised of Stephen Singleton (Chair), Chris Abraham, Mark Jepson, Michael Ladd, Tom McGarry, Lisa Perkins, Letitia Smith and Louise Hardwick.

The Task and Finish Group met on 4 August 2020 and those present focussed upon the context, challenges and what was already happening in East Suffolk to address these issues. They then agreed some specific actions against each theme. It was noted that for four of these actions, Outcome Proposals had been created, which requested

investment by the Board from its 2020/21 funding allocation of £300,000. The Outcome Proposals were attached as appendices to the report, for completeness.

After due consideration, a number of actions were created, for the consideration of and approval by the Board. They are as follows:

Priority 1: Social Isolation and Loneliness

Action 1 – Councillor Smith introduced the proposal to invest £50,000 additional funding in the Hidden Needs grant programme aimed at tackling Social isolation and Loneliness in identified hot spot areas. (See Appendix One for the Outcome Proposal 1 relating to this action).

Action 2 – Louise Hardwick introduced the proposal to fund 25 additional Grandpads (or BT equivalent) to enable people with limited resources and no IT equipment/Wi-Fi to get connected (particularly in the north of the District) – cost £25,000. (See Appendix Two for the Outcome Proposal 2 relating to this action).

Action 3 - Hold a focus group with our Community response groups to identify what interventions have worked best to support those who are isolated and lonely and expand/sustain these groups (no direct cost but links to Action 5).

Action 4 – Consider how the funding proposal from Student Life for a Mental Health First Aid programme in schools fits with existing initiatives in each CCG area e.g. a new Clinical Psychology model being piloted in the west and the VCS Vision and Voice approach in the east, to ensure that there was no risk of duplication and confusion in schools.

Priority 2: Sustaining Community Hubs/Community Resilience

Action 5 – Councillor Smith introduced the proposal to invest £100,000 of funding in a new East Suffolk VCSE Bounce Back Fund. Focus on four themes:

- helping local VCSE organisations and community groups to survive and thrive in a new context e.g. funding for infrastructure (e.g. a phone tree or CRM system for a new Good Neighbour Scheme), promotion, adaptation, or other costs
- helping local community buildings to reopen and resume enabling community activities safely e.g. for signage, PPE, disposable plates, and cutlery
- helping youth organisations, groups, and clubs to adapt their activities and continue to support the mental and physical health and wellbeing of young people
- helping organisations who involve volunteers to thrive and grow in line with the volunteering strategy and campaign. (See Appendix Three for the Outcome Proposal 3 relating to this action).

Action 6 – Chris Abraham introduced the proposal to allocate £5,000 of funding for a specific East Suffolk Volunteering Campaign (linked to, and building upon, the Suffolk campaign) to help people to get into volunteering as a pathway back into work, retain new Covid-19 volunteers by offering them additional volunteering opportunities and support existing volunteers to continue in a new context. District-wide campaign but with a specific focus on areas such as Lowestoft where volunteer numbers are low. (See Appendix Four for the Outcome Proposal 4 relating to this action).

Priority 3: Supporting the most vulnerable people and communities

Action 6 - Work with the key Covid-19 response groups in East Suffolk to develop a place focussed approach to Hardship and Food Poverty and scope out any additional resources required.

Action 7 – Task and Finish Group to meet again between the September and December Board meetings in order to develop proposals around this theme for the December Board meeting. It was felt that further work is needed to understand current/planned initiatives and, specifically, any gaps in East Suffolk. The Group was keen to explore supporting people to retrain and develop new skills, stimulating Apprenticeships, equalities impacts and money management support and felt that actions may well need to be place specific as some areas of the District are likely to be impacted more than others.

Action 8 – the Group considered a proposal from the ESC Economic Development Team to encourage people, particularly those shielding and most vulnerable to feel safe in using their town centres again (total cost £19,000) through a Shop Local Safely campaign. Whilst supportive of the principle of opening up town centres again, particularly to vulnerable people, it was felt that there was a lot of material already out there and this may duplicate other initiatives e.g. Safe Places and the LEP two-day campaign. It was agreed to work with the Team to scope this out further and bring a proposal back to the Task and Finish Group when it meets to consider vulnerability.

It was noted that the total amount of funding to be allocated was £180,853 and that the Task and Finish Group were due to meet again in October.

Louise Hardwick mentioned that an additional £25,000 of funding from the CCG would be available to purchase some additional grandpads, which was extremely positive. It was noted that the grandpads which had already been issued had been very well received and had proved to be very popular. They enabled older people who had not used the internet before to attend virtual medical appointments, online shopping and to keep in touch with friends and family. The grandpads were simple, secure and did not need wifi or broadband.

Councillor Blundell commented that he was very interested in the grandpads and was keen to learn more. Louise Hardwick confirmed that they were easy to use, with large icons and a demonstration could be provided if requested. Steve Gallant commented that grandpads could be bought on the open market and were currently leased on a short term contract. It was hoped that people would enjoy the benefits of the grandpads and would become more technologically able, so that they would want to progress and buy their own equipment, once they had gained confidence on how to use them. The grandpads could then be returned to the Council and then be re-issued to someone else. Louise Hardwick commented that there was 24/7 help available, should people have trouble using the grandpads and they had proven to be really beneficial. Andy Cuthbertson commented that he felt it was the online skills that were the problem in getting older people online, not a lack of kit. He was very pleased that there was 24/7 support available.

Councillor Cloke queried if there was any means testing or criteria for being lent a grandpad? Nicole Rickard clarified that there was no means testing, however criteria would be introduced to make sure that recipients were permanent residents in the

District in future. It was noted that a demonstration of the grandpads could be provided for the Board members. Nick Khan added that some statistics on the grandpads usage could be provided outside of the meeting, if needed and there had been significant demand for the grandpads, once it was known that they were available on loan.

Councillor Ashdown asked if the grandpads would work in areas with poor signal? It was reported that grandpads would work in most areas. They used a sim card to get signal and there had been no issues or concerns so far. It was noted that the IT team could help if any grandpad users needed assistance with boosters etc due to poor signal.

Clarification was provided that should any Councillors know of any constituents who would benefit from a grandpad, they should inform their Communities Officers and they would be able to assist.

There being no further questions, those present confirmed their support for the proposals and it was unanimously

RESOLVED

- a) That the Board approves the proposed funding allocation set out below and in more detail in the Outcome Proposals attached as Appendices 1-4 to the report:

Hidden Needs Grants Programme	£50,000
Purchase of additional Grandpads	£25,000
East Suffolk VCSE 'Bounce Back' Fund	£100,000
East Suffolk Volunteering Campaign	£5,853
TOTAL	£180,853

- b) That the Task and Finish Group should meet again prior to its December meeting, with a particular focus on Theme 3 'Vulnerable People and Places' in order to develop outcome proposals for consideration at the next Board meeting.

N.B. Superintendent Kerry Cutler arrived during the discussion on this item at 6.47 pm.

4. Transport

Steve Gallant reminded that Transport had been identified as one of two key priorities for the East Suffolk Community Partnerships and Community Partnership Board (alongside Social Isolation and Loneliness). The Community Partnerships have identified many dimensions to the transport priority – for example connectivity, green vehicles, walking and cycling, community transport and alternative forms of transport provision.

At its meeting in March the Board had agreed that transport would be one of its priorities and proposed that an East Suffolk transport workshop/hothouse event be held in May/June to further define the issue, clarify the priorities, and identify specific gaps in provision). £75,000 of the 2019/20 Community Partnership Board budget was also allocated to start to address this priority based on projects and priorities emerging from the hothouse session.

When the Board met in June this had not progressed due to the focus on the Covid-19 response and the restrictions on large face to face gatherings which obviously made a 'hothouse' session impossible. The Board recommended that the funding be returned to be reallocated for other more pressing business to be discussed at that meeting – and that the Board revisit the transport priority again soon.

Since then the Community Partnerships had reconvened after the initial focus on the Covid-19 response and the partnerships that have met so far have reviewed and re-confirmed their priorities. Transport issues remain a priority and key element of the discussions in many of the partnerships, particularly given the links to other key areas of activity e.g. isolation, health and wellbeing and youth activities and there is a keenness amongst their memberships for the Board make progress on addressing this.

It was also clear that we need some expertise in East Suffolk to work with the Board to focus on the specific dimensions of transport where the Board/local partners can have most impact, identify potential projects and help local organisations and groups to develop these.

The decision to hold the hothouse session has been reviewed:

Constraints:

- Government restrictions on events / social contact due to Covid-19
- Uncertainty over timescales for easing restrictions
- Possibility of sudden local or national lockdowns again in the future

Therefore, the option to 'stay the Same' and organise an event at Adastral park within the next 12 months has been discounted.

Options:

- Replace with a virtual hothouse by organising a large, high profile 'real time' event that can manage large number of delegates, incorporates a main stage / plenary for speakers and delegates and allows breakouts. Although this is possible, it will require significant time and resources to organise and would lead to further delay in identifying how the Board can begin to address this priority.
- Organise smaller, more targeted virtual event(s) to address some of the more burning issues raised by the Community Partnerships. These could be organised more readily and would begin to get things moving. Representatives from individual Community Partnerships which have Transport as a priority could then participate in these discussions.

Steve Gallant then expanded upon the recommendations contained within the report on Transport for this meeting.

First Recommendation: It was noted that an initial meeting had been held with ESC officers, the Head of Passenger Transport and the Rural Transport Manager from SCC to scope what they can do for the Community Partnership Forum, which was due to take place from 2 – 6 November 2020.

It was suggested that 2 virtual sessions on the Wednesday, 4 November, which had been allocated to Transport, could be based on the key messages that came out of the Community Partnership workshops at the end of 2019:

- i) Rural transport: presentation of the data / current provision / potential gaps followed by two or three examples of more local projects (for example the proposed trial EV taxi bus service between Framlingham and C Ashe)
- ii) Active & sustainable Transport: Overview of the changing national policy landscape towards walking / cycling and a picture of what is happening/planned in East Suffolk as a result.

Each session could end with a discussion about how we could work through the CPs to support / add to what is planned.

Second recommendation: Steve Gallant took the opportunity to clarify “commissioning some expertise”. He felt that those who were commissioned must have a tight focus on delivering tangible outcomes on the ground at a community level – not more strategy development, as this was already undertaken by SCC and others. For example, by identifying community transport gaps and challenges across East Suffolk and developing projects to deliver what needs to be done to fill them. This could include a campaign to recruit drivers / support to negotiate training and insurance issues etc.

This work could be achieved either by a 12 – 18 month temporary post, based within one of the partner organisations and funded through the CPB budget – or alternatively by buying some consultant time.

Third recommendation: Steve Gallant reported that no figure had been put on this yet, however, if the Board allocated all of the funding requested at this meeting, then they would have allocated a total of £250k to the priority around Social Isolation and Loneliness and nothing yet to transport. This would leave approx. £190k remaining for this Financial Year.

Councillor Ashdown commented that rural bus services had been greatly reduced and this had contributed to isolation. He stated that his local Rugby Club used their mini bus to take elderly people shopping and they used volunteer drivers. He queried whether this could be done elsewhere in the District? Steve Gallant stated that localised initiatives could be successful, however many initiatives struggled with funding and were not sustainable. Councillor Blundell reported that in his experience, a major problem was insurance for the mini bus drivers and who was responsible overall for the vehicle. Volunteers may also be a little unreliable on occasion.

Luke Bennett updated the Board on behalf of Carol Poulter (who had dropped out of the meeting) on the Rural Mobility Fund, which was providing transport using electric vehicles. A trial was currently being developed for the Wickham Market, Campsea Ash area. He reported that if it was successful, it could be launched in other areas too. Carol had offered to bring an outcome proposal to a future Board meeting and those present confirmed they would be interested in this.

There being no further questions, those present confirmed their support for the recommendations contained within the report. Luke Bennett confirmed that it would be helpful to get Board Members input into the job description and person specification for the 12 – 18 month temporary post in recommendation 2, unless consultants time was used instead. The Board then

RESOLVED

- (a) That, in order to avoid further delay, the plans for a hothouse would be put on hold and focus would be on a more targeted approach. For example, focus on ensuring that the Transport priority is given substantive focus during the Community Partnership Virtual Forum in November.
- (b) That the Board would either commission some expertise to work with the Board to identify potential 'quick win' transport projects and help local organisations and groups to develop these, or a temporary 12 – 18 month post would be created for this role instead.
- (c) That the Board be prepared to allocate funding from the 2020/21 Community Partnership Board budget to this priority, ringfenced to support local project development and delivery.
- (d) That a Member led Task Group be convened to work up solutions and report back to the Board at its next meeting.

5. Community Partnerships Annual Forum 2020: Arrangements and Board Member Participation

Steve Gallant reported that Community Partnership Forum was an opportunity to celebrate the early wins and the impact of the Community Partnership Board and the 8 Community Partnerships. It was also an opportunity to share knowledge and expertise in the Suffolk System and beyond to work together for the benefit of communities and businesses in East Suffolk.

Unfortunately, due to Covid-19, it was not possible for large numbers of people to meet in person, therefore it had been decided that it would be best to host a week-long programme of virtual events using different formats, so that people can select which sessions are relevant to them. Delegates would be able to join as many sessions as they wish across the week.

Luke Bennett then provided an update on the sessions that would be provided during the week-long Forum:

Monday – The Launch event would be introduced by Steve Gallant and the following webinar would involve Dominic Campbell from FutureGov, a high profile speaker who would cover service redesign, digital transformation, response to Covid-19 and there would be an interactive Q and A session.

Tuesday – Facilitated virtual workshops focussing on Priority 1 – How East Suffolk is coming together to tackle social isolation and loneliness.

Wednesday – Facilitated virtual workshops focussing on Priority 2 – Transport in East Suffolk.

Thursday – Webinars on the Smart Towns Initiative and a further session on bringing technology/community/horizon scanning.

Friday – Looking to the Future and the impact of Covid-19 and other drivers for change going forwards, involving a presentation and Q and A session.

Councillor Ashdown queried the length of the individual sessions. It was reported that each session varied in length, and they were between 40 minutes to 2.5 hours. Detailed information would be provided on the individual sessions, when booking places online.

It was confirmed that Luke Bennett would send out 'save the date' information for the Community Partnership Forum, so that diaries did not otherwise get filled up.

Steve Gallant stressed that it was important for Board members to be visible at the event so asked that they make themselves available to attend at least one session if possible.

RESOLVED

That the Board was happy with arrangement for the Community Partnership Forum and that Board members would make every effort to attend.

6. Community Partnership Activity

The Board then received a short presentation from Steve Gallant, which gave a recap on the creation of the Community Partnerships and an update on their progress to date.

It was noted that the Community Partnerships had met at least once prior to the first lockdown in 2020 and all would have met again by mid-September 2020. Many Community Partnerships had set up Task and Finish Groups to promote collaboration and to develop outcome proposals. Those present were pleased to note that £102,811.64 had been allocated / proposed for community projects and activities so far. A further £177,188.36 remained to be allocated before April 2021. The Board were also pleased by the wide range of projects that had been proposed across the District.

The Community Partnership Chairs were then invited so give a short update on their Community Partnerships:

Councillor Ashdown – He reported that his CP were focussing upon reducing obesity and were looking at working with pre-schools to positively influence children from a very young age.

Councillor Cooper – He reported that his CP were focussing upon Social Isolation and Loneliness and a Task and Finish Group had been set up to lead on this.

Councillor Blundell – He reported that his CP had not yet finalised the projects that they would support, however there were lots of different ideas and projects to be considered at the next meeting. He was pleased that so many positive suggestions had been received.

Councillor Cloke – She reported that her CP had been keen to support the initiatives put in place to help people during lockdown. The CP had received a number of proposals for consideration which were all of a high standard, it would be difficult to choose which ones to support.

N.B. Russ Rainger left the meeting during the consideration of this item at 7.34 pm.

RESOLVED

That the update on Community Partnership Activity be received.

7. Future Work Plan

Steve Gallant and Luke Bennett updated those present that the Board's Task and Finish Group had recommended that it should meet again to develop proposals around vulnerability linked to the Economic Recovery following the lockdown.

It was suggested that the Task and Finish Group would look at equalities, money management, skills development and apprenticeships. All those present were agreeable to that suggestion.

RESOLVED

That the Task and Finish Group would meet again to look at vulnerability linked to the Economic Recovery following lockdown.

8. Any Other Business

Community Partnership Board meetings on YouTube

Steve Gallant reported that the Community Partnership Board meetings which were being held remotely via Zoom and streamed to YouTube, were currently only able to be seen by East Suffolk Councillors, the meetings were not currently viewable by the general public. He wondered whether it would be preferable to have the Board meetings on YouTube, for everyone to view? The Board had currently allocated £180,000 to good projects this evening and it was important to share the good work that was taking place.

Kerry Cutler commented that the Police felt that Zoom was not a good platform to use, due to various security issues. The Police and several other outside organisations were not able to use Zoom because of this and would only be able to dial in to join Zoom meetings. It was reported that the Council may soon have MS Teams installed and it was possible that the Teams platform could be used for Board meetings in due course.

Councillor Blundell raised concerns that other people, who were not on the Board, may wish to contribute to the meetings. Clarification was provided that only Board members would be able to participate in the meetings, the public would be able to view the meeting only, via YouTube, they could not participate.

Councillor Cloke queried if there were any cost implications with Steve Gallants proposal and it was confirmed that there was not.

There was then a consensus among all those present, that future meetings of the Community Partnership Board would be able to be viewed by the public, on YouTube.

RESOLVED

That future meetings of the Community Partnership Board would be available to view by the public, on YouTube.

There being no further items to be raised under any other business, Steve Gallant thanked everyone for attending and participating in this meeting.

The meeting concluded at 7.43 pm

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Chairman