

**Confirmed**



Minutes of a Meeting of the **Community Partnership Board** held in the  
Conference Room, Riverside, Lowestoft  
on Monday, 5 September 2022 at 4.00pm

**Community Partnership Board Members 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),  
Lesley Beevor (SALC representative),  
Bobby Bennett (Suffolk County Council, Cabinet Member),  
Chris Blundell (Chairman of the Kesgrave, Rushmere St Andrew, Martlesham, Carlford and Fynn  
Valley Community Partnership),  
Norman Brooks (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),  
Susan Harvey (Greenprint Forum representative),  
Rachel Hunt (Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board),  
Mark Jepson (Chairman of the Felixstowe Peninsula Community Partnership),  
Tom McGarry (Head of Stakeholder Engagement for EDF Energy),  
Lisa Perkins (Vice Chairman of the Community Partnership Board and Realisation Director for  
British Telecom),  
Carol Poulter (Chairman of the Framlingham, Wickham Market and Villages Community  
Partnership),  
Stephen Singleton (Suffolk Community Foundation),  
Letitia Smith (ESC Cabinet Member with responsibility for Communities, Leisure and Tourism),  
Nicola Turner (Acting Inspector, Suffolk Constabulary).

**Others present:**

Luke Bennett (Partnerships Manager, East Suffolk Council),  
Andrew Cuthbertson (Communities and VSC Lead, Suffolk County Council),  
Andy Joliffe (Communities Officer),  
Sam Kenward (Communities Officer),  
Nick Khan (Strategic Director, East Suffolk Council),  
Matt Makin (Democratic Services Officer, East Suffolk Council),  
Ben Porter (Funding Manager),  
Jack Raven (Project Manager, EDF Energy),  
Nicole Rickard (Head of Communities, East Suffolk Council and NHS Norfolk & Waveney / Ipswich  
& East Suffolk Integrated Care Boards),  
Nicola Wotton (Deputy Democratic Services Manager, East Suffolk Council)

## **1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

Steve Gallant welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Maddie Baker-Woods, Louise Hardwick, Michael Ladd, James Mallinder, Tim Passmore and Roger Wright.

## **2. Minutes**

Steve Gallant presented the Minutes from the last meeting of the Board held on 13 June 2022. He then asked Luke Bennett to give a short update on a couple of matters which were referred to in the minutes.

Luke Bennett reported that in relation to Item 9, Outcomes from the Annual Forum 2022, it had been suggested that an additional event could be held in the North of the District. Due to the additional workload to respond to the cost of living crisis, there was not the capacity for this to take place this year. In relation to Item 11, Forward Work Programme, it had been suggested that a Scoping Group be set up to look at ways for the Community Partnerships to engage with local businesses in their areas. Lisa Perkins and Tom McGarry were supporting this initiative and a round table discussion with key business representatives was scheduled to take place on 2 November. The discussion would focus on how businesses can support the Ease the Squeeze campaign.

There being no comments or amendments proposed for the minutes, it was therefore

### **RESOLVED**

That the Minutes from 13 June 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

## **3. Update on the Cost of Living Programme**

N.B. Letitia Smith and Carol Poulter joined the meeting during this item.

Steve Gallant commented that the Cost of Living Crisis was affecting residents and businesses alike and the Council was preparing a programme of support to assist them through this unprecedented time. He then invited Nicole Rickard to update the Board on progress to date.

Nicole Rickard reported that the Task and Finish Group, supported by staff in the Communities Team at East Suffolk Council, had previously developed an outcome proposal focussed on the four key areas for Action identified through an initial workshop held to scope the programme - Money, Food and Essentials, Energy and Fuel and Housing - and £100,000 of funding had been allocated to the programme.

Nicole then gave a detailed presentation on the Ease the Squeeze project, a copy of which would be posted on CMIS after the meeting. It was noted that the branding for the project would appeal to all people and would help to reduce the stigma involved in

asking for help. The new pages on the Council's website would provide information for those people who needed help, as well as those people who wished to volunteer or donate to the project.

The Board noted that a Financial Inclusion Strategy had been developed and 16 roadshows were planned for the market towns in East Suffolk between September and November 2022, to raise awareness of the support available to those in need. Over 70 projects had been identified through the workshops for staff, Councillors, partners and the June Community Partnership Board meeting. 12 priority projects had been identified through a voting process and Nicole provided an update on the following projects:

1. Network of Warms Rooms (E3)
2. Food Network Co-ordinator (F1)
3. Community Pantries (F3)
4. Handyperson Project (E9)
5. Cooking on a Budget Classes (F7)
6. Microwaves/Slow Cookers/Hobs (F11/F15/H12)
7. Comfort Food (F5)
8. ID Document Fund (M8)
9. Field to Fork Projects (F8)
10. Clean, warm bedding/Winter Warmth Packs (E12/E2)
11. Digital and Phone projects (M5)
12. School uniform/prom/interview Clothes Banks (F14)

Nicole then updated Members on the funding for the Cost of Living Programme, it was noted that funding was approaching £1 million and she reported that many people were approaching the Council for help, for the first time. The Board noted the detailed Outcome Proposal for the Cost of Living Programme and confirmed their support for the projects listed within. Nicole then took the opportunity to thank the Communities Team for all their hard work to date, to assist the residents of East Suffolk.

Paul Ashdown gave an update on an opportunity to purchase a Community Hub in the Lowestoft and Northern Parishes Community Partnership area, which could be used for a variety of projects. Steve invited Paul to bring a business case to the next CPB meeting in December 2022, to seek funding in support of this project.

Chris Blundell commented that the rural populations were scattered over wide areas, therefore, mobile Food Banks or Pantries were needed to support these residents, rather than expecting residents to travel. Norman Brooks then asked if there was any progress in relation to setting up a mobile Food Bank? Nicole reported that this was being explored and she confirmed that it would be useful to supplement the fixed Food Banks and Community Pantries in this way. It was noted that work was progressing to improve the Food Pathways for Food Banks, as donations from the public had reduced significantly over recent weeks and months.

Susan Harvey stated that many rural parishes had charities of their own, whose money could potentially be used to support local residents who were struggling. There followed some discussion in this respect and it was agreed that Nicole and the Funding Officer would investigate this further, outside of the meeting.

Andy Cuthbertson commented that the Board needed to be aware of the impact of the cost of living crisis on the wider voluntary community sector. Many voluntary groups had had to close, as a result of rising utility costs and reductions in the hours that volunteers could provide, as many had been working additional hours to supplement their income. Chris Abraham commented that she would be keeping an eye on the situation. It was noted that the ability to only claim 45p per mile when undertaking volunteer driving was a problem, as it no longer covered costs. Susan commented that village halls provided a vital service, enabling people to mix and socialise, which was positive for their mental health and wellbeing. However, the rising cost of electricity was making the halls too expensive to use and, therefore, many clubs and groups were no longer able to meet.

There being no further questions or comments the Board moved to the recommendations and it was agreed by consensus:

#### **RESOLVED**

- 1) To advise Nicole Rickard if any of the Board Members' organisation/partnerships could provide support for the Cost of Living programme, in any way.
- 2) That a report on progress will be brought to the meeting to be held in December 2022, including about take up of and demand for the various projects.
- 3) That a business case will be brought to the next meeting to be held in December 2022, regarding the possible purchase of a Community Hub in the Lowestoft and Northern Parishes CP area.
- 4) That the Board supported the Cost of Living Outcome Proposal.

#### **4. Focus on Community Partnerships**

Letitia Smith invited Board Members to send her their comments and feedback on the latest Community Partnership Newsletter. She then invited the 2 presentations to commence.

##### Beccles, Bungay and Halesworth Community Partnership

Judy Cloke, Chairman of the Beccles, Bungay and Halesworth CP gave an update on their progress over the past year. It was noted that their 2 priorities were:

- Tackling social isolation and loneliness for all ages including young people
- Improving physical and mental health and wellbeing, enabling people to live healthy and encouraging physical activity including cycling and walking

Judy reported that one of the projects that had been supported was for Oral Health Packs. This had involved funding for 600 oral health packs for 11 year olds, which had been shared via primary schools, scout groups and food banks, to promote good oral hygiene. Each pack contained a toothbrush, toothpaste, timer and information sheet. Judy was pleased to report that 43% of young people surveyed stated that they had

made changes to looking after their teeth and 40% were brushing longer than before they received their packs.

Another project that had been supported was Slipper Swap, which had previously been a success in the Carlton Colville, Kessingland and Southwold Community Partnership. The project enabled older people to swap an old, worn out pair of slippers, for a new pair, free of charge. The aim of the project was to help prevent falls in the home and also to provide a gateway to additional support. This project had been very well received and referrals continued to flow in.

Steve Gallant thanked Judy for her update and commented that whilst the Slipper Swap project was unusual, it was clearly impactful and engaging with local communities.

#### Kesgrave, Martlesham, Rushmere St Andrew, Carlford and Fynn Valley Community Partnership

Chris Blundell, Chairman of the CP, introduced Andy Joliffe who gave an update on the Road Safety project to date. It was noted that this CP area had a mixture of very busy roads, such as the A12, and quieter country lanes, which both had their issues. He reported that a Road Safety Forum had been set up to work with partner organisations to try and improve dangerous junctions and road safety overall. The outcomes of the project included:

- Consistent attendance at the Forum
- New CP attendees, eg: Grundisburgh
- Highways engagement and trials in our CP
- Speed Indicator Device data influencing Police resourcing
- More hi-vis protection for young children
- Kesgrave Speed Watch
- SAVID expansion to 7 villages
- Road Safety Week – November 2021 40,000 vehicles saw the promotion 15,000 young people via Suffolk Rural social media Week of action with Speed Watch volunteers
- Lobbying and problem solving leading to outcomes
- National charity Brake aware of our work and success

Chris Blundell reported that he was very pleased with the way in which different organisations were working together to improve road safety in the area.

## **5. Tackling Social Isolation and Loneliness – Next Steps**

Steve Gallant invited Nicole Rickard to give a presentation on this item.

Nicole reported that since the Community Partnerships were formed in 2019, Social Isolation and Loneliness had been the top priority for the Board and identified as a priority by seven of the eight individual Community Partnerships. The Covid-19

pandemic, specifically the national lockdowns, shone a spotlight on isolation and loneliness and its impacts were still being felt by people of all ages. There was also evidence that significant numbers of people in Suffolk do not feel that it is safe to return to previous groups and activities.

Nicole touched on some of the health risks associated with loneliness, which included:

- People who are widowed, with a long- term illness or with a disability are more likely to experience loneliness
- 43-45% of people reporting bad or very bad health are often/always lonely
- Loneliness is likely to increase your risk of death by 26% (Holt-Lunstad, 2015)
- Loneliness is worse for you than obesity and associated with high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke
- Loneliness, living alone and poor social connections are as bad for your health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. (Holt-Lunstad, 2010)
- Loneliness is a risk factor for depression in later life and puts people at greater risk of cognitive decline and dementia
- Half a million older people go at least five or six days a week without seeing or speaking to anyone at all
- Two fifths of all older people (about 3.9 million) say the television is their main company

It was noted that loneliness mapping had been undertaken across East Suffolk, which tended to show that loneliness was the highest in urban areas. The prevalence of often / always feeling lonely was highest among 16-24 year olds and this got lower as age increased. However, there were significant numbers of people who often/always feel lonely across all age bands.

Nicole updated the Board on the 15 ideas for addressing social isolation and loneliness identified at the Forum in March 2022. She also circulated a form for all those present to complete, an electronic copy had also been sent to all Board Members, to see if anything had been omitted from the list. Board Members were asked to send their completed forms to Nicole, outside of the meeting.

Mark Jepson asked how this area of work impacted on the Council's service provision? Steve reported that there was no statutory duty for the Council to undertake this work, however, it was important to support local communities wherever possible and to avoid all duplication.

Tony Cooper queried if fewer people were now using the Council's Leisure Centres? Steve reported that the Leisure Centre's were energy efficient, however, he acknowledged that people had less cash to spare at the moment. He anticipated that Council facilities would be used differently and creatively in future. Letitia commented that they could be used as social hubs in future.

Rachel Hunt commented on the importance of the work that the Council was undertaking and the need for partner organisations working together to share information. She stated that nothing should be done in isolation, there should be an overlay, which was integral to the Integrated Care System's way of working.

Stephen Singleton commented on financial hardship, which would make isolation worse, due to the shame and embarrassment involved. He stated that this issue required a sophisticated and systematic approach.

There being no further discussion, it was therefore

#### **RESOLVED**

- 1) That the ideas from the Forum workshop about key sources and places of connection to reduce loneliness, and priority groups be noted, and any gaps be identified and sent to Nicole Rickard.
- 2) That the proposed approach to convene a focus group of residents, reform the Task and Finish Group and develop an outcome proposal for the December Board meeting be endorsed.
- 3) That all consider their future participation in the Task and Finish Group – either the Board Member themselves or someone else from their organisation/partnership.

#### **6. Youth Voice**

Sam Kenward gave presentation to the Board. It was noted that Youth Voice was a district wide forum with a difference and provided a conduit where young people could submit their concerns for their local area and ideas on how to improve it. The main Youth Voice form was online, however, there was also direct engagement with young people in various settings such as school visits, out of school clubs and high school assemblies.

Youth Voice was re-launched in January 2022 and since then, there had been around 465 submissions/engagements. Once a term, all the responses were collated and sent in one report to key decision makers and partners, which included local councillors, police, health and highways. Key themes that had been raised included:

- Safety on the streets and in skate parks
- Social activities and facilities for young people
- The environment and litter
- Support around mental health, including people students can talk to

The Board noted that there had been significant progress in relation to some of the concerns raised eg litter, poor lighting and the general condition of 5 underpasses in Kesgrave. As a result, work had been undertaken on improving the underpasses using a local street artist and designs from local young people being painted on the walls, lighting was repaired and anti-graffiti coatings added to the artwork. This had been very well received and the young people had been pleased to see the requested improvements to their local environment.

Youth Voice had started to be noticed, both locally and nationally. Councils in other parts of the Country were interested in adopting the concept of Youth Voice and in May

2022, the Local Government Association featured Youth Voice as a case study about young people.

It was noted that Youth Voice provided a useful snapshot of what young people felt about their community, at that time. This could lead to more opportunities for exploration about what young people want and how different partners can work together to achieve this.

Steve Gallant commended this innovative project and noted how difficult it could be to engage with young people.

Nick Khan stated that this was a great initiative and all commendations were well deserved. It was important for the Council and partners to respond to the requests of young people and to try and co-solve the issues together.

Chris Blundell commented that he would expect different concerns to be raised by different age groups and it would be interesting to see an age break down of the issues raised. He also stated that it was important for all of the Community Partnership Chairmen to have sight of this information too, so that they were aware of young people's concerns in their CP area. Sam confirmed that the information could be broken down by age in future reports.

## **7. Transport and Travel Task Group Update**

The Board received a presentation from Norman Brooks, Nick Khan and Jack Raven regarding the work of the Transport and Travel Task Group.

Norman highlighted that Andrew Summers, Strategic Director of Transport East, was a member of the Task Group. This was very helpful as Transport East was now the national lead sub regional transport organisation for rural transport. Andrew's engagement with the Task Group was very important and he provided great input and strategic knowledge.

Nick reported that the Task Group was investigating community transport in East Suffolk. It had decided to focus on demand responsive transport. As such, the 'Lowestoft Buzzabout' pilot had been taking place in the North of the District and work was underway to develop an App to enable the public to make bookings. The App had significant potential and, if successful, could be used more widely, outside of Suffolk.

Jack then provided more detail regarding the Lowestoft Buzzabout pilot. The pilot had been launched on 4 July 2022 and bookings on the new service were averaging around 6 per week, 3 per day, however, the overall target was 10 bookings per day. Further marketing and communications were planned to encourage more people to use the service. A survey was also planned to understand how the service was being used and also get user stories for marketing purposes.

In respect of the App development, it was noted that a suggested contracting arrangement had been proposed, feedback had been sought on a preferred supplier and new research had been completed. The next steps were to develop and set up the



inception workshop, identify the model and start the procurement process for the app development.

The Board then received an update on Suffolk County Councils Katch pilot scheme and it was noted that a new contract had been agreed in May to extend the pilot to the end of the year. There had been a change in the subsidy arrangements and an additional route had been added towards Snape. The Board was pleased to note that bookings were increasing gradually and promotional activity was ongoing, including a loyalty scheme. There was also increased publicity, generally, such as posters and timetable adverts.

The Board noted that the CATS and Active Travel projects would be developed next and further information would be provided in due course. The Community Transport Business Feasibility Study was currently progressing and a meeting was planned to finalise the recommendations. The aim would be to test the concept of the transport community business in one CP area. Nick confirmed that formal bids had not been submitted yet, however, a review of costings and the business case would be undertaken and brought to a future meeting for consideration.

Steve thanked Norman, Nick and Jack for their ongoing hard work in respect of transport issues in the district.

## **8. Spot Wellbeing**

Chris Blundell presented an Initial Outcome Proposal and request for the Board to fund health and wellbeing courses delivering appropriate exercise, health information and socialising for the over 50s, in an attempt to stay as healthy as possible, both mentally and physically. He reported that the scheme had been very successful in his CP area and a survey had shown a 98% satisfaction rate amongst those who had attended Spot Wellbeing. As a result, he felt that it was important to share this project with the other CP areas in the district. After further discussion it was

### **RESOLVED**

That, 9 courses of SPOT Wellbeing's Health and Wellbeing course, at a cost of £12,600 be approved, as follows:

- 1) 2 courses within the Kesgrave, Martlesham, Rushmere St Andrew, Carlford and Fynn Valley – match funding two courses already approved for this CP as of July 2022.
- 2) 1 in each of the other 7 Community Partnership areas to expand the provision across the district on a trial basis. Venues, etc. will be confirmed in partnership with SPOT Wellbeing.

## **9. Forward Work Plan**

Steve Gallant discussed the Forward Work Plan and the following items were confirmed for the December meeting:

- Transport Plans
- Social Isolation and Loneliness Task and Finish Group Plan – proposals

## 10. Any Other Business

### Stephen Singleton

Steve Gallant reported that this would be the last Community Partnership Board meeting that Stephen Singleton would be attending, as he would be semi-retiring from his role with the Suffolk Community Foundation. He took the opportunity to thank him for his fantastic work over the last 18 years and stated that he should be very proud of all of his achievements. All those present congratulated Stephen and wished him all the best for the future.

### Community Partnership Newsletters

Chris Blundell took the opportunity to request some additional paper copies of the Community Partnership Newsletter. It was noted that although some copies could be provided, however, the aim was to share the document electronically, where possible.

## 11. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Thursday, 8 December 2022 at 10.00 am in the Peter Pears Recital Room at Snape Maltings, Snape Bridge, Snape, IP17 1SP.

The meeting concluded at 6.31 pm

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Chairman