

UNCONFIRMED



Minutes of a Meeting of the **Community Partnership Board** held at East Suffolk House

On Wednesday 13 September 2023 at 2pm

**Community Partnership Board Members Present:**

Councillor Caroline Topping - Chair of the Community Partnership Board and Leader of East Suffolk Council

Chris Abraham - Community Action Suffolk

Lesley Beevor – SALC representative

Councillor Bobby Bennett, Suffolk County Council Cabinet Member

Councillor John Fisher - Chair of the Aldeburgh, Leiston, Saxmundham and Villages Community Partnership

Councillor Katie Graham – ESC Cabinet Member with responsibility for Communities, Leisure and Tourism

Councillor Alan Green - Chair of the Carlton Colville, Kessingland, Southwold and Villages Community Partnership

Councillor Kay Yule – Vice Chair of the Melton, Woodbridge and Deben Peninsula Community Partnership

Councillor Rosie Smithson - Chair of the Felixstowe Peninsula Community Partnership

Danny Steele Vice Chair of the Lowestoft and Northern Villages Community Partnership

Councillor Ed Thompson - Chair of the Kesgrave, Rushmere St Andrew, Martlesham, Carlford and Fynn Valley Community Partnership

Karen Moy- Director of Programmes, Suffolk community foundation

**Others present:**

Luke Bennett (Partnerships Manager, East Suffolk Council),

Nick Khan (Strategic Director, East Suffolk Council),

Nicole Rickard (Head of Communities, East Suffolk Council)

Louise Thomas (Communities Officer),

Paul Wood (Head of Economic Development and Regeneration),

Lorraine Fitch (Deputy Democratic Services Manager, East Suffolk Council)

Alli Stone (Democratic Services Officer, East Suffolk Council)

James Chandler (Skills and Investment Lead, Economic Development)

Jo Belfield (Communities Officer for Beccles, Bungay, Halesworth & Villages)

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**1. Apologies for Absence**

Lisa Perkins - Current Community Partnership Board Vice-Chair Adastral Park & Research Realisation Director for BT

Councillor Paul Ashdown - Chair of the Lowestoft and Northern Parishes Community Partnership  
Louise Hardwick - NHS Ipswich and East Suffolk Integrated Care Board  
Councillor Beth Keys-Holloway - Chair of the Beccles, Bungay, Halesworth and Villages Community Partnership  
Councillor Michael Ladd - Suffolk County Council representative  
Councillor Stephen Molyneux - Chair of the Melton, Woodbridge and Deben Peninsula Community Partnership

## **2. Welcome and Introduction**

Councillor Caroline Topping welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Lorraine Fitch the new Democratic Service Manager at East Suffolk Council.

All those present introduced themselves.

On behalf of the Partnership Board, Councillor Topping offered thanks to Chris Abraham for her dedication and work she had done in Suffolk over her time with Community Action Suffolk

Having reviewed CP Board arrangements with the Vice Chair and Strategic Director, Councillor Topping recommended the following arrangements be put in place:

Meetings from now on would begin with a performance update to summarise progress that the Board is making to deliver its four priorities. The update would focus on 'live' projects and report on their impact, together with any spend against the CP budget.

The purpose being to ensure Board members were up to speed with current activity before discussing new business at each meeting.

The second part of meetings would be an interactive workshop session to generate ideas and solutions to some of the significant issues the board are looking to address in East Suffolk.

Councillor Topping asked that every member of the Board consider leading or supporting a session to maximise on the effectiveness of each session.

The Board can also invite other partners to facilitate when it is advantageous to do so.

The purpose was to ensure every member of the Board has an equal opportunity to shape the work and contribute to successes achieved.

Councillor Topping also advised that in the usual way the meeting will aim for matters to be agreed by consensus rather than a formal vote as much as possible.

### **3. Minutes**

Councillor Topping presented the minutes from the last meeting held on 27 June 2023. There being no comments or amendments to the minutes it was

#### **RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2023 be agreed as a correct record.

### **4. Community Partnership Board Performance Overview**

An update was provided on projects which have both been delivered and live. There will only be updates on live projects going forward. This update is to cover projects which the Board has initiated since it was set up in 2020.

The Head of Communities, East Suffolk Council presented to the board an update on priorities:

#### **Social Isolation and Loneliness**

21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Hubs is a live project in this priority area. This is a grant scheme funded through the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF). The aim is to encourage digital, circular economy, business space, food provision, health and wellbeing and net zero projects in community spaces.

#### **Transport and Travel**

There has been lots of work regarding transport and travel which encompasses a multi-agency group including Suffolk County Council, Transport East, East Suffolk Council and other partners. There has been a lot of officer and volunteer time in the development of work looking at responsive transport options.

#### **Mental Health and Wellbeing – focus on young people**

Well Minds East Suffolk (Live project). The programme included 'The Essentials' training for community groups/youth organisations, small grants for VCFSE organisations, Theatre in Education programme and Cuppa and Chat projects. Well Minds grant programme is live, five projects complete.

SPOT wellbeing project was an expansion on a project from Kesgrave, Martlesham, Rushmere, Carlford and Fynn Valley Community Partnership. A good example of work coming from one Community Partnership and being rolled out across others.

There have been other projects which have similarly been rolled out across more than one partnership. This is really good to see.

#### **Tackling inequalities:**

Included the following initiatives, Ease the Squeeze a live Project with £100,00 CPD funding and £870,000 match funding.

Contribution to the circa £1 million (including staffing) East Suffolk cost of living programme co-designed with partners – 12 key projects and Community Help Hub

Other areas of work have focused on supporting community members to move into paid employment or training. The CAS 'Volunteering Pathways project had 131 participants referred or attended training.

**MENTA – Ambitions to employ** - Programme to support emerging startups, micro-businesses and SMEs to develop their knowledge & capability for taking on employees and those looking for work opportunities. 28 participants completed the programme. Creation of peer network of SME's and micro-businesses.

**East Coast College – Energise** - The Energise project was set up to support adults in the coastal and rural areas of East Suffolk to develop skills and confidence to aid employment readiness and positive outcomes

## **5. Community Partnership Updates - Carlton Colville, Kessingland, Southwold and Villages**

The first round of meetings had taken place with second meetings scheduled to take place shortly. There had been some funding for workshops to support Community Partnership chairs in their work with the partnerships.

There were 2 priorities for the partnership outlined in the presentation:

### **Reduce social isolation and loneliness**

#### **Facilities, activities and education for young people**

#### **Priority one - Reduce social isolation and loneliness**

The issues identified:

- Rurality
- Age demographic: larger than average elderly population
- Mental health issues.
- Family situations : new parents, domestic abuse etc
- Deprivation and Cost of Living crisis
- Lack of volunteers for existing community services.
- Covid
- Digital interactions

There was a volunteering project implemented to address the issues identified.

“To implement the Suffolk Volunteering Strategy and action plan at a local level with the aim of increasing the recruitment and retention of volunteers in order to maximise the benefits of volunteering for residents and communities.”

#### **Priority two: Facilities, activities and education for young people**

- Rurality
- No secondary schools in our CP area.

- Mental health issues.
- Deprivation and Cost of Living crisis.
- Digital interactions

Actions carried out by the partnership were discussed:

1. Fund the setup costs for the THRIVE programme in two local primary schools.
2. Fund one member of staff to go through Thrive practitioner training at one primary school. They already have the full Thrive programme which is fully embedded. Kessingland have offered to mentor the other schools
3. Fund the adoption of the Early Minds approach in one of our small, rural primary schools.
4. Understanding Trauma training for 20 staff across our local primary schools and support services, led by the Solihull Approach.
5. Fund the purchase of age-appropriate emotional literacy RESOURCE PACKS for 5 settings.

Secondary School Counselling project, funding for one extra day was provide for St John Leman in 12 week blocks.

In 2022 The CP contributed funds towards the Ease the Squeeze project. These were allocated to school uniform support in areas that didn't yet have uniform banks and slow cookers/microwaves to mitigate cost of oven use or where there were no facilities. Some funds remain for winter 2023/2024.

The principles of the partnership were outlined as:

- Data and intelligence led
- Flexible and free to respond
- Good stewards
- A partnership
- Proactive as well as reactive
- Committed to equity

Councillor Topping added that the Community Partnerships can move their meetings around the localities. There would just need to be a risk assessment carried out for any new venues being used. Meetings can also take place more regularly that once a quarter if a partnership chose to.

The board discussed the mental health in young people following the presentation point on pink slips being received in school. Concerns were noted in the volume and issues being highlighted by young people.

The impact of COVID was discussed regarding the number of children who have not returned to school following the pandemic. The importance of working on early interventions to build resilience to keep people well before they experience crisis.

## **6. UK Shared Prosperity Fund Skills Programme Update**

Following the main Board meeting of the East Suffolk Community Partnership, the East Suffolk Economic Development Team and colleagues from the Suffolk County Council Skills Team led a workshop on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) people and skills programme in 2024/25 in order to identify local priorities for the use of the funding.

Ahead of the workshop there was a briefing pack circulated that provides data and the current context of the skills landscape, which is re-attached to this pack, and at the meeting a presentation was provided (slides also attached).

During 2024/25, East Suffolk Council will be investing £250,107 into an East Suffolk specific local economy led skills programme. This is in addition to the £396,001 that is allocated to a Suffolk wide skills programme which will address county wide challenges and opportunities whilst achieving economies of scale.

Within the workshop, participants were asked to note down what they consider their top-5 gaps in local skills provision they feel exist and up-to 5 suggested programmes that could address these. These were then discussed in groups and collective responses were compiled.

Following a full review of the responses individually and as groups, the following key themes have been identified:

- Employer Engagement
- Apprenticeship Support
- Youth Employment
- Personal Development
- Adult Inactivity/Accessibility

Local Programme for East Suffolk will be looking at:

- Local Careers Fair/Activity
- Youth Enterprise
- Youth Employment Service
- Business Mentoring

Suffolk County focus is on Personal Development Service, Adult Economic Activity and Apprenticeship Support.

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UK shared prosperity fund. Approaching the 3rd year People and Skills. 2.75 million. Allocated mostly.

## **7. Community Partnership Annual Forum 2024**

The Partnerships Manager outlined the plans for the upcoming Community Partnership Annual Forum which was scheduled for 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024 and would be held at Trinity Park

Positive feedback was received from the last event:

Delegate feedback (approx. 110 responses).

- **98.17%** found the event useful.
- **97.25%** will change the way they work because of attending.

The Partnerships outlined the offer for delegates attending:

- Excellent networking opportunities across a range of different sessions.
- Get up to speed on what is happening and what is on the horizon in East Suffolk.
- Opportunity to collaborate and improve life for everyone who lives and works in East Suffolk.
- A platform to promote their organisation or business to a wide audience.

**Theme: East Suffolk: Sustainable Communities** and there will workshops, seminars, a keynote speech, a market place and an opportunity for agencies to network.

A link will be sent to Board members who are encouraged to share with their networks.

## 8. Taking Inequalities Workshop

**Community Foundation-** philanthropic hub using the interest from an endowment fund, to fund grants across Suffolk. This has included cooking courses for families, food bank work, pop up pantries for churches. There has been work in Ipswich focusing on hypertension issues within BAME communities.

There was a women and girls fund which includes projects regarding raising aspirations for young females with mental health needs and wider health / lifestyle needs.

The Break through fund was highlighted, funding individuals up to £500 for items such as purchasing a bike so could employment could be accessed. Another example offered was funding to buying clothing for an interview. It is an open project.

A new digital inclusion project was due to launch in a few weeks time.

Surviving winter was discussed and funding opportunities available to support communities who cannot afford to access fuel payments or pay their own bills. Food poverty will also be looked as lots of people are accessing food banks.

### Feedback from workshop

Joined two together and the following themes were discussed:

A lack of access to service, disabilities for long term illness

Remove barriers to accessing services, group support and accessing GP support

Issues identified: Focussed on absolute poverty Increasing numbers of families creeping into this bracket at the importance of early intervention in families and people not feeling done to.

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Chair