

Beccles, Bungay, Halesworth and villages Community Partnership

Action Notes of the Meeting held in Bungay Community Centre, Old Grammar Lane, Bungay on Monday, 20 September 2021 at 6.00pm

Core Membership:

ESC Councillors – Cllr Judy Cloke (Chairman), Cllr Sarah Plummer, Cllr Caroline Topping.

Town and Parish Councils – Cllr Annette Dunning (Halesworth Town Council), Cllr Beryl Matthews (Wissett Parish Council), Cllr Joyce Moseley (Halesworth Town Council), Cllr Bob Prior (Bungay Town Council), Cllr Wendy Summerfield (Worlingham Parish Council).

Partnership Organisations – Fran Bedding (Community Action Suffolk), Phil Love (Suffolk Family Carers), Eric Sewell (Apollo Youth Centre).

Others present – Zane Blanchard and Peter Holmes (Barsham and Shipmeadow Parish Council), Sarah Carter (Democratic Services Officer), Sam Kenward (Communities Officer), Nicole Rickard (Head of Communities).

Item	Discussion
1.	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>The Chairman of the CP, Councillor Judy Cloke, welcomed everyone to the meeting and set out a few housekeeping points to assist with the smooth running of the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from ESC Councillors Alison Cackett, Tony Goldson and David Ritchie, Cllr Graham Catchpole (Bungay Town Council), Cllr Sue Collins (Bungay Town Council), L Drewery (Active Communities Manager), Emma Healey (Halesworth Volunteer Centre) and Cllr Chris Punt (Westhall Parish Council).</p>
2.	<p>Notes of the Previous Meeting</p> <p>The Notes of the meeting held on 14 June 2021 were agreed as a correct record.</p>
3.	<p>Community Partnership Board Update</p> <p>The CP received a report which provided details of the progress and outcomes of the CP Board meeting held on 6 September 2021.</p>

	<p>The Chairman advised that she had given a short presentation on what this CP was doing in its area and that it was available on YouTube if members wished to view.</p> <p>The Head of Communities explained that many points had been covered as detailed in the written report but she made particular reference to transport having been the main agenda item and the impact of Covid on the East Suffolk area. There were now issues with hoarding and the lockdown had affected the mental health of local people.</p>
4.	<p>Small Grants Scheme</p> <p>The Communities Officer advised that the scheme had been open during May and June for organisations to apply for grants up to £1,000. He had arranged a drop-in session with the Funding Officer for groups to ask questions before submitting their bids. That had worked well and was likely to be used by other CPs.</p> <p>The Communities Officer advised that 19 applications had been received with 12 being funded totalling nearly £11,000. Some of the applications received had not met the criteria or were outside the CP's area. Along with the CP Chairman, they were now doing cheque presentations to some of the groups. That had resulted in them meeting the groups and seeing what they were doing, as well as gaining publicity for the groups and the CP.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked the Communities Officer for his work in overseeing a successful funding scheme.</p>
5.	<p>Review of Priorities</p> <p>a) <u>Results of Priorities Survey</u></p> <p>The Chairman advised that the Communities Officer had set up a survey to seek the CP's views on existing priorities. 25 responses had been received which was positive (<i>a copy of the document has been published with the Agenda papers</i>). The three existing priorities were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transport 2. Mental health and wellbeing 3. Reduce social isolation <p>Whilst it was considered that all three were still relevant, questions had been raised over transport being too large a topic for the CP to address. Other issues had come to the forefront including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enabling/supporting physical activities,

- households managing money better,
- keeping safe and supporting children, and
- knowledge of life skills for both parents and teenagers.

The Head of Communities advised that the CP Board was supporting sustainable transport and had made a considerable investment over the last two years. There had been additional concerns over supporting people on low income both up to and beyond Christmas and with physical activity levels having dropped, the local CCG was hoping to keep people as well as possible whilst waiting for hospital appointments.

The CP discussed in detail the proposed reduction in Universal Credit of £20, the impact of rising cost of petrol, energy and food, the costs of getting children to school where free transport was not provided, the cut in furlough monies, and the distressing calls received from parents about financial issues in general.

The CP agreed that the developing active and sustainable transport solutions/community transport priority was still an issue but larger than the CP could resource. As the CP Board was dealing with transport itself, it would work more effectively for this CP to fee into the work being done strategically at Board level. It was also agreed that the CP Board should be asked to consider the issues about transport for education and the cost of living where people might need support with life skills. These were likely to be issues affecting people across the whole district. This was supported.

The Head of Communities advised that Covid response money had been used to support private sector tenants and she would need to check if the presence of ESC officers in Beccles library was due to restart. The County Council had extended welfare assistance to March and with such concerns over school transport, she would refer that back to the Board.

Action: Nicole Rickard

In discussing the CP's future priorities, comment was made that young people should be considered as well as cycling/walking and physical/mental health wellbeing. It was possible that funding to borrow a bike could work in the CP's communities and the Communities Officer was looking at bespoke workshops in late November to dedicate time to progress strands of the wellbeing priority. Whilst discussing cycling, it was generally agreed that some roads were dangerous and improvements to footpaths and routes in the countryside were badly needed. The CP agreed that cycling fell within two categories – pleasure and transport – and such an activity would support the improvement of physical wellbeing. There was also a lack of information as to the suitability of routes whether it be easy, relating to the width, being hilly or similar. Comment was made that the County Council

should be made aware that the Worlingham to Beccles cycle path was not usable and more common sense should be used.

The CP supported the proposals to continue with wellbeing and tackling social isolation for all age groups. It was agreed that the Communities Officer and Democratic Services Officer would liaise to formulate the wording of the new priorities in line with the CP's discussions.

Action: Sam Kenward and Sarah Carter

Subsequent to the meeting, the CP's priorities are therefore:

- *Tackle social isolation and loneliness for all age groups including young people.*
- *Improve physical and mental health and wellbeing to enable people to live healthy lives and encourage physical activity including walking and cycling*

b) Rural Proofing Workshop

The Communities Officer provided the CP with details and outcomes of the Rural Proofing Workshop that had been held on 20 July 2021 (*a copy of the document has been published with the Agenda papers*). The main items for the CP to consider covered:

- How it communicates to residents directly.
- Conducting an asset mapping and data compilation of villages in the patch to assess precise needs.
- How we can work with neighbouring CP areas to support villages that are on the border and pivot towards our area even if they are in another CP area.
- Explore setting up a rural help desk for residents in the area.

The CP discussed various aspects and agreed that work needed to be undertaken to bring the rural services survey up to date and produce an asset register, or interactive map similar to that in Felixstowe, taking into account the information already available in the parishes and the Neighbourhood/Local Plans.

It was agreed that could commence now, followed by consideration being given to other suggestions such as a rural helpdesk. It was suggested that Helen in the Communities Team might have some capacity to start the necessary work.

Action: Nicole Rickard and Sam Kenward

c) Project Ideas

The Communities Officer reminded the CP that its next meeting was in January and he commented on various project ideas that had been suggested, full details of which had been circulated to the CP members. These were discussed in detail and funding agreed as follows:

Half Term Holiday Activities for Young People

Offering open access free holiday activities for young people in each market town and the surrounding villages. £600 per market town split between the October and February half terms and provision during the Christmas holiday.

Agreed £1,800

Sports Provision for the over 65s

An extension of the Extra Time scheme in Beccles previously funded by the enabling Communities Budget.

Agreed £2,220 with the balance of £1,000 suggested to be considered for funding by Connected Communities

Wild Wellbeing for Older Community Members (over 55s)

An extension of the previous sessions providing nature-based activity events promoting physical and mental health and wellbeing, whilst also tackling isolation and loneliness.

Agreed total £3,000 - £1,000 for each market town with groups to seek additional funding from alternative sources

Halesworth Community Larder

To refurbish its facility so as to further aid its services. It was understood that the group had applied for Boost Funding and other grants.

Agreed to delay any financial support until further costings were known and other grants had been confirmed.

Beccles Community Hub

This was to support the running of a new community hub/volunteer centre being set up in Beccles.

Agreed to offer £2,000 subject to the CP Chairman, Head of Communities and Communities Officer being satisfied with the Business Plan.

Note: Due to her involvement in this project, Councillor Topping left the meeting for the Beccles Community Hub item and took no part in the discussion and voting thereon.

	<p><u>Clinks Care Farm</u> Whilst the farm was based just over the border in Norfolk, it was noted that they worked cross boundaries and served both Beccles and Bungay offering a post Covid pandemic support project. Agreed £2,000</p> <p>Action: Sam Kenward</p> <p><u>Best Parish Newsletter</u> The Communities Officer proposed running a competition/awareness campaign to celebrate newsletters in local areas. However, this was not urgent. Agreed to consider at next CP meeting with a view to doing this in the Spring</p> <p>Action: Sarah Carter for next Agenda</p>
6.	<p>Connected Communities Suffolk</p> <p>The Communities Officer gave a brief update with regard to the Connected Communities project as well as the Rural Coffee Caravan and advised that the next Connected Communities steering group meeting was due to be held in the next couple of weeks.</p> <p>Cllr Dunning referred to and encouraged everyone to be familiar with the forthcoming Sight Awareness Week and One Suffolk.</p>
7.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The Communities Officer advised that there had been good press coverage over the Summer Activities and recent cheque presentations. Articles had been in the Beccles and Bungay Community News and Halesworth Community News too.</p>
8.	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Monday, 10 January 2022 at 6pm via Zoom.</p>

The meeting concluded at 8.27pm.