

**Chesham Action Partnership
Management Committee Meeting
Tuesday 1st September 2009 at Chesham Town Hall**

M-09.09-1

In attendance:

Dr Tom Gorsuch (Chairman)	Chesham Society
Mr David Carter (Treasurer)	Chesham Society
Ms Kathryn Graves (Secretary)	Chesham Town Council (CTC)
Mr Bill Richards	CTC
Mr Hugh Wilson	Chesham Resident
Cllr Gill Walker	CTC
Mr Phil Folly	COPAG/Chesham Environmental Group (CEG)
Ms Barbara Richardson	COPAG
Mr Ken Austin	Chesham Community Vision/CEG
Cllr Noel Brown	Bucks County Council (BCC), Chiltern District Council (CDC)
Ms Mora Walker	Chesham Museum
Cllr Peter Yerrell	Pond Park Community Association
Ms Sandy Coyle	Paradigm Housing
Ms Angela Martin	BCC Adult Learning and Libraries
Mr Henricus Peters	CEG

Apologies:

Management Committee: Julie Murdoch – Business Link, Mr David Gardner – CDC, Mr Geoff Gigg – Paradigm Housing

Mr Malcolm Godwin – BCC, Dr Siobhan Bygate - Chesham High School, Ms Deborah Taylor - Bucks PCT, Ms Moira Hamer - Amersham & Wycombe College, Mr Cecil Sinclair - CDC

1. Minutes of Meeting of 14th July 2009

The minutes of the meeting of the 14th July 2009 were agreed as a correct record.

2. Matters Arising

(i) Profile of Chesham

Dr Tom Gorsuch asked whether the Profile of Chesham had been submitted to Chesham Town Council (CTC) for consideration. Mr Bill Richards (BR) stated that the profile would be discussed at the Policy & Resources Committee meeting of the 14th September 2009.

3. Local Area Forum

BR read out to the group an email that he had received from Ms Alison Derrick of BCC relating to the establishment of the Local Area Forum (LAF). The inaugural meeting will be held on the 16th September. It is proposed to have one

representative per rural parish and five representative shared between ChAP and CTC councillors. BCC have left it for ChAP and CTC to decide the proportion of representatives from the two groups that will make up the five representatives. Subject to ratification on the 16th September, the LAF will consist of four BCC councillors, 12 CDC councillors, five rural parish representatives and five Chesham representatives.

The consensus of opinion was that the five Chesham representatives should consist of three Chesham Town Councillors and two ChAP representatives. BR will be reporting on this and other issues relating to ChAP and the LAF to the Policy and Resources Committee meeting on the 14th September 2009.

The group agreed that this proposal on representation was a very positive response from BCC.

The monies available to the LAF up to April 2010 will be as follows:

£8,000 – local priorities

£5,000 – positive activities for young people

£5,000 – small project budget for initiatives such as nursery provision, IT improvements, disabled access improvements, etc.

TG reported that he had received information on a proposed bid for youth diversionary activities from Mr David Gardner (CDC) who has asked for ChAP's support for the bid. The project intends to provide diversionary activities in known youth anti-social behaviour hot spots in Chesham and the outlying parishes.

TG invited the group to raise any other bids. Possible projects that were suggested included salt bin provision, tree planting along Broad Street and Berkhamstead Road to absorb carbon emissions, tree replacement along Chesham's avenues and new software for Chiltern Voice.

The group agreed to postpone further discussion on possible bids until later in the meeting.

Cllr Noel Brown (NB) arrived at 2.20 pm.

A query was raised as to whether match-funded bids would be acceptable to the LAF. NB stated that match-funding was helpful, but not a pre-requisite.

4. Chiltern Core Strategy Document – ChAP Response

TG informed the group that CDC had asked ChAP for a response to its draft Core Strategy document. The Core Strategy sets out an overall vision to guide the future of the area and includes plans showing where the District's housing requirement up to 2026 will be delivered.

TG has made a response to CDC incorporating the points raised at previous ChAP meetings, including the effect of over-development on Chesham, whether the infrastructure can support the planned levels of development, the importance of the retail and commercial sector and the issue of deprivation.

A discussion was held on the proposed level of new development in Chesham (750 dwellings by 2026), including the identification of the Cameron Road allotments and the Amersham and Wycombe College campus on Lycrome Road as potential sites for future developments. Cllr Peter Yerrell opined that the Cameron Road allotments should not be developed, as a replacement site developed on green belt land on the edge of town would be less accessible to users. Mr Ken Austin (KA) stated that the sloping nature of the site would mean that any development would exacerbate the existing problem of excessive run-off.

KA expressed his concern over the impact of new developments on the sewerage system and the increased demand that would result on the Chilterns' already over-abstracted catchments. Mr Phil Folly (PF) expressed dismay that Hivings Hill has been ear-marked for a further 50 dwellings, when existing properties cannot be sold because they are regularly flooded.

It was noted that the Core Strategy does not refer to the ideas of the Chesham Society to build dwellings over Star Yard and the Waitrose Car Park and NB suggested that these ideas should be raised again.

Within the strategy, CDC has said it will support measures planned by ChAP aimed at making Chesham a better place and specified four key projects:

- (i) Lowndes Park improvements
- (ii) Pond Park community hub
- (iii) Enterprise hub for sustainable business
- (iv) Demand-responsive taxi-bus service

TG said that it was important for ChAP to become active in these areas if it was to benefit from the support of CDC.

TG opined that ChAP should continue to monitor the development of the Core Strategy and requested that if anyone had any further opinions they should let him know.

5. Action on Pond Park

Arising from discussions at the Management Committee meeting on the 14th July 2009 (see *Minute No. 3*), PY clarified that the Belmont Club building is owned by CDC, and that the Belmont Club have recently renewed their lease with CDC. Thanks to Paradigm Housing, the Pond Park Community Association (PPCA) and the Belmont Club are now in discussions and it may become possible to use one of the Club's rooms for community activities. It was, however, noted that this does not provide an ideal community facility and can only be viewed as an interim solution.

A meeting for all stakeholders will be held in early October to identify the best possible location for a community centre and PY asked for a representative from ChAP to attend. BR will send the details of the meeting to TG.

Action: Mr Bill Richards

PY expressed his dismay at CDC's refusal to give planning permission for a replacement pavilion at Marston Field that would be of a sufficient size to include a community area, particularly when CDC have acknowledged the need for a community hub in Pond Park. NB suggested that the reasons for refusal should be revisited, particularly as CTC have decided to reconsider the future plans for Marston Pavilion.

After some discussion it was agreed that TG would write to CDC outlining ChAP's support for PPCA's work to develop a community facility, expressing our disappointment with CDC's lack of action over a number of years and to pressure CDC to regard provision of a community hub in Pond Park as a priority.

Action: Dr Tom Gorsuch

6. New Projects

(i) Walkers Are Welcome

PF explained that the project to make Chesham a Walkers Are Welcome town is being led by Chesham Environmental Group. Chesham now has associate status with Walkers Are Welcome and it is hoped to obtain full status in February/March 2010.

PF outlined the six conditions required to become a Walkers Are Welcome town and the progress to date. The application for Walkers Are Welcome status must be formally endorsed by CTC. BR informed the group that a report will be going to the Policy and Resources Committee Meeting on the 14th September 2009.

The consensus of opinion was that this project is directly in line with ChAP's objectives and ties in with the Chesham Community Vision aim to develop a visitor strategy.

PF has been funding the publicity personally, but has now made a grant application to ChAP. The Management Committee agreed to cover expenditure to assist with publicity up to £250 on the condition that evidence of expenditure is provided to the Treasurer by Chesham Environmental Group.

Action: Mr Phil Folly and Mr David Carter

7. Tourism

(i) Promotional DVD

Mr David Carter (DC) provided an update on his discussions with Amersham & Wycombe College concerning the production of a DVD to promote Chesham in its entirety.

Ms Sandy Coyle (SC) told the group about Cliff Productions, a local company with a lot of expertise in making localised films and working with young people. SC also said that it should be possible to make an application for funding through Mediabox to help cover costs.

(ii) Tourist Information

Ms Mora Walker reported that it is the intention of Chesham Museum to act as an information centre and that the Museum will be making an application to ChAP for funding for display racking for leaflets. Although there will be an entrance fee for the Museum, access to the tourist information leaflets will be free of charge. BR referred to the tourist centre at Wendover as a good local model for the provision of tourist information.

In response to a query about hospitality training for local retailers, bed & breakfast operators, etc., Ms Angela Martin agreed to identify whether BCC Adult Learning provides any such training and offered to report back to the committee.

Action: Ms Angela Martin

(iii) General Tourism Issues

KA suggested that the fingerpost signs in the High Street should be maintained, repaired and updated. KA also felt that there should be signs at the entrances to the town that provided a better indication of what Chesham is. There was general support for this concept amongst the group although highway safety issues and concern over urban clutter were raised. Ken agreed to draft out his ideas in more detail for circulation to the group.

Action: Mr Ken Austin

PY suggested that banners promoting local business should be hung upon the Town Arch at the entrance to the High Street.

Ms Barbara Richardson left the meeting at 3.49 pm.

8. Annual General Meeting

TG informed the group that the first AGM should be held in the near future, as the partnership is nearly one year old. The group felt that it would be appropriate to hold the AGM coincident with the next Management Committee meeting.

Ms Mora Walker left the meeting at 3.52 pm.

9. Any Other Business

(i) Neighbourhood Action Group

PF reported that there is a Neighbourhood Action Group meeting at Chesham Town Hall in the evening of the 1st September and that this is open to the public.

(ii) Shelley Gardens Celebratory Day
PY distributed a leaflet publicising the Celebratory Day on the 26th September to demonstrate the success of the lottery-funded project to create a green, welcoming space at the Shelley Road path. The event is aimed at families and will include environmental activities for children.

PY explained that work will be continuing, with the next activity being a Tree Dressing event on the 28th November.

(iii) LAF Funding Bids
In a continuation of the earlier discussion (see *Minute No. 3*) there was some confusion as to whether bids needed to come through ChAP/CTC before submission to the LAF or whether independent bids would be accepted by the LAF. The group agreed that it was necessary to obtain clarification on this from BCC.

PF stated that COPAG may look to the LAF for funding to support their intergenerational project "Technology for the Terrified", although the plans for the project are still under development.

After a brief discussion it was agreed that ChAP would support in principle the CDC bid for £3,000 for diversionary activities for young people.

Mr Henricus Peters left the meeting at 4.05 pm.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 20th October 2009 at 2 pm.

The meeting closed at 4.09 pm.