

HITCHIN COMMITTEE

9th March 2010

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT	AGENDA ITEM No.
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TITLE OF REPORT: CHAMPION NEWS AND FINANCE REPORT

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY, PARTERNSHIPS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

PORTFOLIO HOLDER: COUNCILLOR TRICIA COWLEY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of the activities and schemes with which the Community Development Officer has been involved.
- 1.2 To bring to the Committee's attention some important community based activities that will be taking place during the next few months.
- 1.3 To advise the Committee of the current expenditure and balances of the Area Committee's delegated funds.
- 1.4 For the Committee to confirm the level of assistance to be awarded to the 2010 Vaisakhi Procession - Appendix B.

2. FORWARD PLAN

- 2.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

3. PROJECT/ACTIVITY/SCHEME DETAILS

3.1 Hitchin Outdoor Pool Extended Opening

Further to the presentation made earlier regarding the proposed extension to the opening hours at Hitchin Outdoor Pool, the Hitchin Area Committee is ask to consider approving a funding award to cover the following hours during the summer holiday period only.

Two evenings a week from 6.30pm – 8.00pm (1.5hours) at a cost of £3,250 and depending on club usage.

3.2 Play Rangers

During February 2010 half term, North Herts District Council Play Rangers Service provided free play opportunities for children aged 5 – 13 years. The sessions took place in Bancroft Gardens on the Wednesday and Thursday of half term, from 12.30pm – 2.00pm and verbal update on how the sessions went will be given on the evening.

3.3 Town Talk

Notes and any actions arising from the last Town Talk, held on Tuesday 12th January 2010 are attached as Appendix C.

3.4 **Cadwell Lane/Hitchin Residents Alliance**

At the meeting held on Tuesday 26th January 2010 it was agreed to take a recommendation to the next meeting of Hitchin Area Committee.

This recommendation is at 8.5.

The updated Action Plan is attached as Appendix D.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 18th May, 2010.

3.5 **North Herts Minority Ethnic Forum**

Surgeries have continued to be held at the Forum, once a month, on a Wednesday from 1.30pm – 2.30pm. The next one is on Wednesday 24th February 2010.

3.6 **Westmill Steering Group**

Meetings with partners, residents and current Community Centre users continue with regard to the proposed new Community facility in John Barker Place.

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 10th March, 2010.

3.7 **Hitchin Health Awareness Day**

Preparation and planning has started with regard to the 2010 Health Awareness Day which is scheduled for Saturday 19th June, 2010.

3.8 **Vaisakhi 2010**

The Vaisakhi procession this year takes place on Saturday 17th April, 2010.

Meetings have been taking place with regard to the road management plan for the procession to ensure a safe event for both those who take part and those spectating.

3.9 **Hitchin Work Plan**

The updated Hitchin Work Plan is attached as Appendix E.

3.10 **Councillors' engagement in Schools**

The Councillors' engagement session in schools for the Spring term, will be held in The Priory School on Monday 22nd March, Hitchin Boys School on Tuesday 23rd March and Hitchin Girls School on Wednesday 24th March 2010. All the sessions will begin at 12.30pm – 1.30pm and Members will be asked about their possible availability to attend.

3.11 **Youth Spend**

The first Hitchin Youth Spend event took place at Sub Zero on Saturday 20th January 2010. About 50 young people attended the event and three of the five groups that applied made presentations to those present.

Following the presentations the Voice of Hitchin Youth co-ordinated the voting process and announced the result. The group that came top in the voting would receive the full amount of funding they requested and the rest of the groups would get an amount commensurate with the voting result.

Although there were a number of technical hitches with the varying IT formats the groups used to present the event it had a successful outcome.

The results from the evaluation of the event, by those present, will be looked at and applied to any similar future event.

3.12 **Highways Work Programme**

The updated Highways Work Programme is attached as Appendix F.

3.13 Rough Sleepers and Street Homelessness

The Community Development Officer, with other Officers, visited Watford New Hope Trust who work with the homeless in the Watford area. The visit was to investigate initiatives that have been successful elsewhere with regard to Rough Sleepers and Street Homelessness.

A joint working group has been established along with a Services and Support Project Group and a Multi Agency panel.

3.14 Two Bees Residents Association

The launch of the above Association, which covers Brampton Park Road and Balmoral Road, takes place on Wednesday 24th February 2010 at 7pm. An oral update will be given at the Committee meeting.

3.15 Walsworth Festival

Preparation and planning for this year's Walsworth Festival has begun. The Festival this year takes place on Sunday 23rd May, 2010.

4. FINANCE REPORT

4.1 The budget sheets are attached as Appendix A.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Committee has delegated powers to administer funds from the budgets described.

5.2 There are no legal implications pertinent to this report.

6. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications that have not been specified in the main body of the report.

7. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS

7.1 Ward Members will be consulted about relevant grant applications.

7.2 Ward Members have been consulted in connection with projects that have been carried forward from previous years.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community Development Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being.

8.2 That the Committee is asked to note the budgetary expenditure and balances carried forward from the Visioning, Development and Ward budgets.

8.3 That the Committee consider the level of funding to be awarded to the Vaisakhi Procession 2010.

8.4 That the Committee consider the level of funding to support extended swimming sessions at Hitchin Swim Centre in 2010 as outlined in 3.1.

- 8.5 Cadwell Lane/Hitchin Residents Alliance referral - That two elements of the Hitchin Transport Plan relating to:-
- 1) improving the cycling route from the Industrial Area to the Town Centre
 - 2) improving the lights at Cadwell Lane junction for pedestrian and cycles
- be decoupled from the Transport Plan and be treated as an independent project.

9. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 To ensure that the Committee are kept informed of the work of the Community Development Officer.
- 9.2 This report is intended simply to inform Members of the financial resources available to the Committee. It draws attention to the current budgetary situation, assists in the effective financial management of the Area Committee's budget and ensures actions are performed within the Authority's Financial Regulations and the guidance in the Grants procedure.
- 9.3 The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims and Strategic Objectives of the Council.

10. APPENDICES

- 10.1 Appendix A - Annual Grant and Development Discretionary Budget Update
- 10.2 Appendix B - Vaisakhi Procession 2010
- 10.3 Appendix C - Town Talk Notes 12th January 2010
- 10.4 Appendix D - Cadwell Lane/Hitchin Residents Alliance Action Plan
- 10.5 Appendix E - Hitchin Committee Work Plan 2009 -2010
- 10.6 Appendix F - Highways Work Programme 2009/2010

11. CONTACT OFFICERS

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