

TITLE OF REPORT: CHAMPION NEWS AND FINANCE REPORT

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY, PARTERNSHIPS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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.

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 Member School Surgeries**

A number of School Surgeries with Members took place the week beginning Monday 21st June, 2010. Teachers at the schools are finding these surgeries a good way of involving young people in local democracy with pupils becoming more involved in discussing issues affecting Hitchin.

The Hitchin Members who have been involved in delivering the sessions find it very useful in engaging local young people. Some of the issues discussed were the Churchgate Redevelopment and Youth clubs used by young people.

3.2 Town Talk

Notes and any actions arising from the last Town Talk, held on Tuesday 8th June 2010, are attached as Appendix B.

3.3 ROTW

Rhythms of the World have won a national award from the Charity Awards 2010 in the Arts, Culture and Heritage category. They received their award at a star studded ceremony in London on June 10th 2010.

Plans for this year's Festival are going well and the organisers have formally recently been issued with an Event Premises Licence from the Council's Licensing Section that covers the whole event.

3.4 Bancroft Park

Groundwork Hertfordshire has been contracted to develop a vision plan to guide future improvement of Bancroft Park. The development stages of this project will begin in early July 2010 with an aim to be completed by mid October, 2010.

A steering group of Members and community groups is to be formed and scheduled to meet in July. A public consultation then to be held in the park on Saturday 7th August, 2010.

3.5 Democracy Week

Democracy Week this year takes place week beginning 11th October, 2010, with the main Youth Question Time event to be held at Fearnhill School in Letchworth.

In addition, following feedback from last year's event, it has been agreed to hold 'mini' youth question times in all the four towns prior to the main event October 2010.

This will give the opportunity for more young people to be involved and also endeavour to gather perhaps generic questions and issues to be raised at the main. It is also hoped that there will be more exchange between the pupils from the various participating schools.

In Hitchin the 'mini' youth question time will take place at Hitchin Boys School on Tuesday 5th October, 2010, in the morning. A representative from each political party in Hitchin will be invited to join the panel along with other representatives from organisations within the Hitchin area.

3.6 Hitchin Area Committee Work Plan

The updated Hitchin Area Committee Work Plan is attached as Appendix C.

3.7 Hitchin Festival

Hitchin Festival begins on 25th June 2010 and runs until 25th July, 2010. There are a wide range of activities to suit all ages including drama, music, walks and talks, culminating in the Rhythms of the World Festival 24th and 25th July 2010.

3.8 Highways Work Programme

The updated Highways Work Programme is attached as Appendix D.

4. FINANCE REPORT

- 4.1 The Committee's Annual Grant and Development Discretionary Budget Update is 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 have been consulted on 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 formally allocate a £1,000 grant award to Hitchin in Bloom 2010, which was provisionally agreed at the Committee's meeting held on 8th June, 2010.

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 - Town Talk Notes 9th March 2010
- 10.3 Appendix C - Hitchin Area Committee Work Plan 2010/2011
- 10.4 Appendix D - Highways Work Programme 2010/2011

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