

<b>HITCHIN COMMITTEE</b>	
<b>14<sup>th</sup> September 2010</b>	
<b>*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM No.</b>

**TITLE OF REPORT: CHAMPION NEWS AND FINANCE REPORT**

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY, PARTERSHIPS 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 consider the level of assistance to be awarded to North Herts Over 50’s Forum – Appendix B
- 1.5 For the Committee to consider the level of assistance to be awarded to Walsworth Festival – Appendix C
- 1.6 For the Committee to consider the level of assistance to be awarded to the Afro Caribbean Seniors and Carers Lunch Club - Appendix D
- 1.7 For the Committee to consider the reallocation of Capital Visioning 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 ROTW 2010**

The Rhythms of the World Festival took place on two sunny days, Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> July 2010, and once again the Festival was very well supported with 19,000 people attending on Saturday of which 6,000 were young people and 11,000 on Sunday.

The 2011 Festival will be the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Rhythms of the World and it has been scheduled to take place on 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> July 2011 at the Priory site.

There will be a debrief meeting between the organisers and statutory authorities in early September, 2010.

A full Rhythms of the World Festival Report will then come to the November Hitchin Area Committee meeting.

### 3.2 **Town Talk**

Notes and any actions arising from the last Town Talk, held on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2010, are attached as Appendix E.

### 3.3 **Bancroft Park**

A Consultation Group meeting took place on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2010 with members of various organisations, including the existing park user groups and discussions covered their future needs and desires for the Park.

A further Public Consultation event took place on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> August 2010, in the Park which attracted a large number of people who completed questionnaires about what they would like to see in the Park. Groundwork Hertfordshire are currently analysing the results. A further Consultation Group meeting will be arranged in September, 2010, along with work with local schools and some outreach work with young people.

The overall results of all the consultation elements will not only be used as a base to make firm proposals for the Park, but also assist in making applications for the required external funding.

### 3.4 **Democracy Week**

In the week prior to Democracy Week (week beginning 11<sup>th</sup> October 2010), a Hitchin Youth Question Time event will be held at Hitchin Boys School on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2010, from 9.30am to 12pm.

This will be followed by a North Herts District wide Youth Question Time event held at Fearnhill School in Letchworth during Democracy Week on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2010.

### 3.5 **Hitchin Festival**

Once again Hitchin Festival was very well subscribed with many events being sold out.

### 3.6 **Hitchin Community Centres**

The four Hitchin Community Centres, which are each run by a committee of volunteers, continue to serve the public by being available for a variety of organisations to hire for community use such as Mum and Toddler Groups, Over 50's Groups, Tea Dancing, Karate, Scouts and Guides, Bingo and much more.

The Committees meet monthly to discuss management and operational issues, Walsworth Community Centre on the second Monday of the month, St Michaels Community Centre on the first Tuesday of the month, Westmill Community Centre on the third Monday of the month and St John's Community Centre approximately every six weeks.

With some of the issues in running a Community Centre being similar, for example cost of utility bills, the Committees have decided to get together about every three months to discuss issues and exchange ideas regarding operation.

The first one will take place on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2010 at 7.45 for 8pm hosted by St Michaels Community Centre.

### 3.7 **Hitchin Boys School**

The two pupils from Hitchin Boys School ran their business promotion event on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> August in Hitchin Market Place and 18 businesses took part. Everybody enjoyed the event and thought it was very worthwhile.

### 3.8 **North Herts Action Group for Single Homeless**

Two consultations mornings with the single homeless have taken place at Christchurch. Also present were representatives from North Herts College, North Herts Centre for Volunteer Service, Westminster Drug Project and the Sanctuary. These consultations are to get the views of the single homeless about services, accommodation and activities they may require.

The next meeting is at the Sanctuary on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September 9.30am – 12.30am

Ultimately the provision of a hostel/day centre rather than a night shelter is key to improving the facilities available and progress is being made towards this.

### 3.9 **Hitchin Town Hall Update**

Both NHDC and the Hitchin Initiative have completed their separate business plans for a new museum and community venue in Hitchin Town Hall. A specialist consultancy, Strategic Leisure, has been appointed to give a detailed financial appraisal of both plans, and is currently finalising a draft report. Council officers have held regular meetings with the community steering group, and the business plans use a common format, enabling Members to easily compare the details of both the schemes.

The Authority has been told by English Heritage to expect a decision on the possible listing of the Town Hall by the end of September. Listed building status could have a significant impact on either or both proposals. Once this has been made known to the Authority, another public meeting will be held.

As a result of the delay on a listing decision, it will not be possible to report back to Council on the proposals in September as originally planned. Therefore a report on the implications will be presented to Cabinet 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2010.

### 3.10 **Hitchin Shopmobility**

Hitchin Shopmobility held their Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2010. Once again, thanks to the generosity of collectors and donations the bank balance is healthy. Shopmobility will now come under the umbrella of Hitchin Initiative for administrative purposes and while the Committee will meet a couple of times a year for feedback and to plan any extension or fundraising, the Initiative will look after overall finance and ensure that Shopmobility is at the forefront of any discussions re Town Centre Development.

### 3.11 **Time Bank**

Response to the Time Bank initiative has not been entirely successful in Purwell and it has been decided to extend the area outward and to become known as 'Hitchin North Time Bank'. It is hoped that this will enable the Time Bank to link in with more schools, organisations and youth groups.

### 3.12 **Cadwell Lane and Hitchin Residents Alliance**

As Hertfordshire County Council has lodged an appeal against the decision of the Planning Inspectorate, with respect to the public enquiry relating to enforcement action, the proposed final meeting of the action group, as discussed at the last Hitchin Area Committee meeting, has not yet taken place. There is therefore no update.

### 3.13 **TASTE 2010**

The Taste Event, which is an event for young people's organisations in Hitchin to showcase their activities, will take place this year on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2010 in the Market Place. In previous years this has been attended by up to ten organisations from Scouts and Guides, Judo, Rugby, Youth Theatre, Table Tennis

and many more.

At this event the 2011 Hitchin Youth Spend – project funding initiative will be launched with Youth Presentations taking place in January 2011.

**3.14 Voice of Hitchin Youth**

The Voice start their 2010/2011 meetings on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2010 with about three members left after an exodus to University/ College/Work. The first item on the agenda will be recruitment.

**3.15 Councillors Surgeries**

The next Councillors Surgery at the North Herts Minority Ethnic Forum will take place on Wednesday September 29<sup>th</sup> 2010, 1.30pm – 2.30pm.

A surgery has also been arranged at the Afro Caribbean Senior and Carers Lunch Club on Friday 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2010, from 2pm – 3pm. It is hoped to continue these surgeries quarterly. Members will be asked for their availability for these surgeries.

**3.16 Hitchin Community Radio Project – Millfm**

Hitchin Community Radio Project Millfm streamed live on the 13<sup>th</sup> August at 'millfm.co.uk' and had 883 hits in the first few days, with an average listening time of 15 minutes which is a good start. An up to date report on the project will be available at the Committee's November Meeting.

**3.17 Scrutiny Task and Finish Group – Activities for Teenagers**

The Group began their scrutinising in Hitchin in July 2010, and are now visiting and meeting representatives of organisations from the other towns and rural areas. An update report will be available in the Autumn.

**3.18 Highways Work Programme**

The updated Highways Work Programme is attached as Appendix G

**3.19 Hitchin Area Committee Work Plan**

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

**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 consider the level of funding to be awarded to North Herts Over 50s Forum – Appendix B
- 8.4 That the Committee consider the level of funding to be awarded to Walsworth Festival – Appendix C
- 8.5 That the Committee consider the level of funding to be awarded to Afro Caribbean Seniors and Carers Lunch Club – Appendix D
- 8.6 That the Committee formally allocate £18,000 from Capital Visioning to Hitchin Community Radio - Millfm as agreed in principle at the meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2010.
- 8.7 That the Committee formally allocate £20,000 to Hitchin Initiative for capital Improvements to Market Stalls and Market area.
- 8.8 That the Committee consider the reallocation of the remaining Capital Visioning of £33,706 to a specific project or a number of initiatives.

## **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 - North Herts 50+ Forum Grant application
- 10.4 Appendix C - Walsworth Festival Grant application
- 10.5 Appendix D - Afro Caribbean Seniors and Carers Lunch Club Grant Application
- 10.4 Appendix E - Town Talk Notes 13<sup>th</sup> July 2010
- 10.5 Appendix F - Hitchin Area Committee Work Plan 2010/2011

10.6 Appendix G - Highways Work Programme 2010/2011

**11. CONTACT OFFICERS**

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