

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 Democracy Week**

The Hitchin Youth Question Time on the 5th October 2010, went well with the young people raising a number of interesting questions. Results from the workshops and the questions raised are available. One of the issues that arose was feedback from the various activities such as Councillors' Surgeries in school and consultations. A better method for giving feedback is being investigated with the schools.

3.2 Hitchin in Bloom

The judging for Hitchin in Bloom is now complete and the results will be announced in The Comet. The awards ceremony will take place in December and Hitchin Area Committee will receive a presentation, about the event at the next Area Committee meeting on 11th January 2011.

3.3 Hitchin Community Centres

The Community Centres joint meeting went well with a number of similar issues being discussed. Another meeting has been arranged in the new year.

3.4 St Mary's Church Community Archaeology Project

The project, which Hitchin Area Committee supported with a grant award, is currently having Carbon 14 dating carried out on skeletons which came from the Market Place and which are believed to be early Christian (5th/6th century). If it is confirmed, it will re-write the early history of Hitchin and prove that the Church has origins in the Roman period.

The Church is applying to the Bishop to have the original Minster status restored and if successful there will be a public service on Mothers Day (for the area Mother Church) next year and another round of talks and exhibitions will be held in the Church.

3.5 **TASTE Event**

The event went well with Hitchin Band playing in the afternoon and the Judo Club demonstrating most of the day with many young people having the opportunity to try it out.

The youth organisations present really appreciated the chance to promote their organisation their organisation and it is hoped that young people will be more aware of what is available locally.

Lewis and Josh from the Boys School brought their business skills to the event and will be in charge of organising the event on behalf of the Voice of Hitchin Youth, (which they have now joined) next year.

3.6 **Ransoms Recreation Ground Pavilion**

The refurbished pavilion and new area for Triangle Community Garden, was supported financially by Bearton Ward Councillors, has now been completed and will be officially opened on Sunday 31st October, 2010 at 4pm, when a number of Halloween activities will be taking place.

3.7 **King George V Recreation Ground**

The re furnished play area, which includes 'adult' equipment, has been completed and will be opened on Monday 1st November, 2010. Present will be some of the children from Wilshere Dacre School who took part in the consultation regarding the type of equipment they would like to see there. It is also hoped that some 'elderly' people, who were also involved at the concept stage, will also be present to try out the new 'adult' equipment.

3.8 **School Surgeries**

A reminder that the Autumn Term School surgeries will be held week beginning 6th December, 2010, 12.30 – 1.30pm. Monday in Priory School, Tuesday at Hitchin Boys and Wednesday at Hitchin Girls.

3.9 **Purwell Youth Project**

Groundwork have been working with young people in Purwell and as a result of consultations the need for additional activities in the area was highlighted. The young people requested a BMX dirt track alongside the existing facilities at the playing fields. With the help of North Herts District Council Grounds Maintenance Team, this was completed over the recent half term.

3.10 **Highways Joint Member Panel**

Members are requested to propose schemes and projects, that will be considered by the Joint Member Panel at their meeting in January 2011, for implementation in 2011-2012 and refer to Appendix C.

3.11 **Graffiti**

At a recent Priory Ward Police Panel meeting the subject of graffiti in the Town Centre and other areas was raised. The Community Development Officer was asked to investigate this and to let Members know the reply. North Herts District Council no longer clean graffiti on property belonging to Herts County Council who now arrange for this to be done separately. Therefore, any graffiti on their property is reported to them to action independently.

A number of letters have been sent to Town Centre businesses re the graffiti on their premises, as North Herts District Council requires their permission before cleaning. Unfortunately the businesses have either not replied or consented.

3.12 Hitchin Area Committee Work Plan

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

3.13 Highways Work Programme

The updated Highways Work Programme is attached as Appendix C. See 3.10 above.

4. FINANCE REPORT

4.1 The Committee is asked to note the budgetary expenditure, balances and carry forwards from the Development Budgets and the Visioning Budgets

4.2 The Committee's updated Annual Grant and Development Discretionary Budget spreadsheet 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.

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 - Hitchin Area Committee Work Plan 2010/2011
- 10.3 Appendix C - Highways Work Programme 2010/2011

11. CONTACT OFFICERS

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