

HITCHIN COMMITTEE	
8th March 2011	
*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT	AGENDA ITEM No.

TITLE OF REPORT: CHAMPION NEWS AND FINANCE REPORT

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY, PARTNERSHIPS 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.

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 School Surgeries

The School surgeries this term will take place the week beginning the 21st March, 2011. Monday 21st in The Priory School, Tuesday 22nd in Boys School and Wednesday 23rd in Girls School. Members are asked to make known their availability for any of these days.

3.2 North Herts Minority Ethnic Forum

A surgery took place on Wednesday 26th January, 2011. Unfortunately, as there was low attendance, it was decided that the frequency of the surgery sessions should be set at three monthly intervals, rather than every month. It was also suggested that the awareness posters get circulated more widely. Members comments welcomed.

3.3 Hitchin in Bloom 2010

The event last year was run by The Comet Newspaper and launched at the end of April 2010. Editorial coverage stretched over a number of weeks with additional In Bloom promotion spread throughout the paper.

The Hitchin and Letchworth Awards Event for invited finalists took place in early December 2010 in Letchworth. In Hitchin the winners were:-

Best Business Garden - The Bird in Hand
 Best Community Garden - Triangle Community Garden
 And Best Front Garden and Best Back Garden also awarded in Hitchin.

A Plant Centre is to run the In Bloom competition this year and more information will be available in June, 2011.

3.4 **Youth Spend**

The Youth Spend event on the 29th January, 2011, was very well attended with eight of the nine groups that applied for funding making formal presentations. The respective awards are in the process of being released with additional support in helping some of the groups finding other external sources of funding.

3.5 **Police Neighbourhood Panels**

The aim of the Police Neighbourhood Panels is to become more community led and discussion is taking place on how this can be achieved. Members will be kept informed on progress made and any improvements or changes which are proposed.

3.6 **Bancroft Afro Caribbean Lunch Club**

The Councillors' Surgery at the Afro Caribbean Lunch Club will take place on Friday 4th March, 2011 at 12.30pm, at Bancroft Hall, Bancroft Gardens. Members are asked to make known their availability for this date.

3.7 **Cadwell Lane**

A number of actions from the work that has been done in respect of the above are still outstanding. These are:-

- The question of ownership of a piece of land in the area which is still under investigation.
- The possibility of play equipment being put on the Cadwell Lane Field for younger children in the area. Unfortunately due to having been a landfill site previously and as a result of a landscape impact investigation carried out on the area, it was stated that any development on this site would entail significant expenditure and that it would not be suitable for a play area.
- A Permission Hearing took place on the 25th January, 2011, as to whether Herts County Council could appeal the recent Planning Enquiry decision in favour of the Metal and Waste Recycling. The appeal was granted and a full hearing will take place which is expected that this will take approximately 1.5 days. Members will be notified the date of the full hearing when known.

3.8 **Forthcoming Events**

- Fair-trade Fortnight launches in the Market Place on Saturday 26th February, 2011 10am – 3pm.
- Pancake Fayre on Saturday 5th March 9am – 4pm
- Pancake Races on Tuesday 8th March High Street and Market Place 10am – noon.
- Sir Henry Wood Memorial Concert with the BBC Symphony Orchestra at St Mary's Church on Friday 15th April, 2011.
- Hitchin Health Awareness Day on Saturday 21st May, 2011 from 9.30am – 1.30pm

3.9 **Vaisakhi 2011**

The organisers of Vaisakhi have decided that, owing to the closure of Cambridge Road for the bridge repairs and the concerns raised by the strategic authorities, the procession will not take place this year.

They have decided, after considering various options, that a celebration programme will be held at the Gurdwara.

3.10 **Walsworth Festival**

The Festival this year takes place on Sunday 22nd May, from 11am – 4pm. There will be the usual exciting displays in the arena, as well as a variety of community stalls and displays. Food and refreshment will be available throughout the day with activities to interest all the family.

The Festival organisers have planned a fund raising Quiz Night on Friday 1st April, 2011 at Walsworth Community Centre.

3.11 Police Cadets

A North Herts Police Cadets unit has been launched with 39 applications from a balanced number of men & women. An assessment weekend will be held when it is likely that many of the participants will be taken on.

3.12 Community Centres

Members of the Management Committees of the various Community Centres in North Herts will be meeting at St Michaels Community Centre, Hitchin, on Tuesday 22nd February 2011 at 7.30pm. This follows on from the successful Hitchin Community Centres get together held in September last year, where those present found it very useful sharing ideas and good practice.

3.13 Voice of Hitchin Youth

The Voice now have representation from each of the senior schools in Hitchin. To enable the Voice to engage with more young people it is planned that these representatives become a central focal point in their schools to find out what young people want in their town and any issues they may have. These views be taken back to the Voice for consideration. Feedback will then be given to the young people through these representatives. The Area Committee will be kept informed and requests made if any issues require their support

3.14 Royal Wedding – Street Parties

Herts County Council have guidance outlining the procedures to holding street parties on the occasion of the Royal Wedding in April.

Residents wishing to hold a street party will get the information required on the Herts County Council website.

<http://www.hertsdirect.org/envroads/roadstrans/highways/royalparty/>

3.15 Hitchin Area Work Programme

The updated Hitchin Area Committee Work programme is attached as Appendix D.

3.16 Highways Work Programme

The updated Highways Work Programme is attached as Appendix E.

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.

4.3 The Committee is asked to consider a grant award of £1,086 to The Priory School World Challenge – Appendix B.

4.4 The Committee is asked to consider a grant award of £1,250 to YOPEY (Young Person of the Year Award) – Appendix C.

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 The Priory School World Challenge – Appendix B
- 8.4 That the Committee consider the level of funding to be awarded to YOPEY (Young Person of the Year Award) – Appendix C

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 – The Priory School World Challenge Grant Report
- 10.3 Appendix C – YOPEY (Young Person of the Year Award)
- 10.4 Appendix D - Hitchin Area Committee Work Plan 2010/2011
- 10.5 Appendix E - Highways Work Programme 2010/2011

11. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 11.1 Margaret Bracey, Community Development Officer. Ext: 4830.
Email. margaret.bracey@north-herts.gov.uk
- 11.2 Lois Stewart, Group Accountant. Ext: 4566.
Email. lois.stewart@north-herts.gov.uk