

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

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To advise the Committee on the current expenditure and balances of the Area Committee delegated budgets.
- 1.2 To bring to the Committee's attention details of recent requests received for Area Committee Development Discretionary Grant Funding made by community groups and local organisations.
- 1.3 To advise the Committee of the activities and schemes with which the Community Development Officer has been involved.
- 1.4 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 Braille**

A local artist, who is blind, sculpts oversized Braille spots to form messages highlighting Disability. He wished to place an installation of his work on Windmill Hill but this proved to be impractical permanently. However, he exhibited them on the Hill one Saturday during Hitchin Festival, that exhibition managed by himself.

It was also arranged for the spots to be displayed within the site at the Rhythms of the World Festival where they prompted much discussion.

**3.2. TASTE 2012**

The fourth Taste Event, which gives young people an opportunity to 'taste' something different, with regard to activities they can participate in, takes place on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> October, 2012, in Hitchin Market Place from 11am – 4pm. It also gives the organisations, that provide a variety of activities for young people, showcase for these activities.

**3.3 Hitchin Youth Issues Group -R.I.S.E. Project**

Hitchin Youth Issues Group, a group of youth providers in Hitchin that meet each term to discuss youth issues, forthcoming activities and events, to ensure that there is no overlap and services are being provided in the right areas, received a sum of money from Groundwork specifically for a youth project in Hitchin.

A sub committee met to decide upon and instigate a project. It was decided that to make this a worthwhile, lasting project for the young people of Hitchin further

funding would be sought from a number of sources and the R.I.S.E project was developed. R.I.S.E. (Relationships, Identity, Self Esteem/Belief/Awareness, Educated Choices) will start, for the first year of the project, in The Priory School for Year 9s in October.

The Priory School was chosen as the first school for the Project because it is a mixed school. The project will also run in three areas of Hitchin, Westmill, Purwell and Town Centre in the Summer term 2013. The project will climax with a showcase event for the young people in the Market Place on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2013, celebrating their successes and achievements with an evening celebration for the young people.

Hitchin Area Committee are being requested for the same amount of funding to compliment the original amount received, £5,000. (Appendix C). Four organisations providing activities to young people in Hitchin will be working on the project and one will be presenting tonight on behalf of the group to enable Members to ask questions.

#### 3.4 **YOR Radio**

YOR Radio held a roadshow in Hitchin Market Place on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2012. A variety of musical acts performed including the winner of the Voice Talent Competition. The roadshow was to raise awareness of the radio and on a lovely sunny day many people took the opportunity to stop and listen and find out about YOR Radio.

#### 3.5 **YOPEY (Young People of the Year)**

Nominations have began for the Young People of the Year Award 2012. Hitchin Area Committee supported this organisation with funding of £1,250 in March 2012. The closing date for applications is 31<sup>st</sup> October 2012 and the Award Ceremony will take place at the University of Hertfordshire on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2012. Information at [www.youngpeopleoftheyear.org](http://www.youngpeopleoftheyear.org) or [www.yopey.org](http://www.yopey.org).

#### 3.6 **Hitchin Youth Music Festival**

The first Hitchin Youth Music Festival, run by Hitchin Town Band, will take place on Sunday November 25<sup>th</sup> 2012 at Kingshott School, Hitchin. The Band received funding from Hitchin Youth Trust to run the event and the Chair and Vice Chair of Hitchin Area Committee, on behalf of the Committee, have agreed to sponsor a Trophy for the Festival at a cost of £20.

#### 3.7 **Community Reassurance Event**

Two Community Reassurance Events took place in Hitchin, one on the Westmill Estate in July, 2012, and one in the Town Centre on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2012. These days prove very successful with a number of agencies working in partnership dealing with a variety of issues from litter to DVLA clamping untaxed vehicles.

#### 3.8 **Cycle Rack in Woodside Car Park**

A resident has suggested a cycle rack in Woodside Car Park near the Queen Mother Theatre. Investigations are being made as to design and costs. Members will be kept updated.

#### 3.9 **Young Parents Group**

A Young Parents Group meet at Oughtonhead Children's Centre and pay for the Crèche facilities there. Up to now this has been funded by Youth Connexions who have now said they have no more funds for this.

The Youth Workers supporting the young parents are looking for funding to enable this to continue.

An approach to Hitchin Area Committee and County Councillors Locality budget is being considered. Members will be kept updated.

**3.10 King George V Playing Fields – Skatepark**

The postponed consultation on the improvements to the skatepark at the King George V playing fields took place on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> August 2012. Displays of the proposed improvements were available and competitions took place. Members will be updated at the Area Committee meeting.

**3.11 Hitchin Area Work Programme**

The Hitchin Area Committee Work programme 2012/2013 is attached as Appendix B. This programme now includes Highways projects and the projects raised at the Hitchin Area Committee meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2012, re Section 106 monies.

**3.12 Events 2012**

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> August – Westmill Community Fun Day

Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> September – Open Day Celebration at Hitchin Museum

Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> September – Councillors Surgery in Market Place

**4. FINANCE REPORT & FUNDING DECISIONS TO B MADE**

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 That the Committee consider granting £5,000 (match funding) to the R.I.S.E. Project as outlined in 3.3 of this report. (Appendix C).

4.4 That the Committee approve the sponsorship of a trophy for Hitchin Youth Music Festival for £20 as outlined in 3.6 of this report.

**5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The Terms of Reference in relation to Area Committees confirm that they may establish and maintain relationships with outside bodies/voluntary organisations which includes discretionary grant aid/financial support. However, this does not include grants for district wide activities.

5.2 Section 2 Local Government Act 2000 provides that the Council has power to do anything which it considers likely to promote or improve the economic, social or environmental well-being of its area. This would apply on the basis that financial assistance to voluntary and community organisations improves the economic, social or environmental well-being of the District or part of it.

5.3 Section 137 Local Government Act 1972 provides specific authority for the Council to incur expenditure on anything which is in the interests of and will bring direct benefit to its area. This includes a charity or other body operating for public service.

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

**6. FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Members are asked to note the information detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for the current financial year 2012/13.

- 6.2 The spreadsheet also details the pre-allocations carried forward from the previous financial year 2011/12 to the current financial year 2012/13.

## **7. HUMAN RESOURCE AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The local MoUs are managed by the Community Development Officer as part of the regular work programme.
- 7.2 The great majority of the voluntary and community projects that are funded by the Council have equality and social inclusion as a key objective of their purpose. Such projects work very closely with and for the more disadvantaged and potentially socially excluded within our communities.
- 7.3 All activities undertaken by the Council, its committees, Community Development Officers or agencies working on its behalf are to be conducted in accordance with the NHDC Corporate Equality Strategy and relevant Equalities legislation.

## **8. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS**

- 8.1 Consultation with Members has occurred in connection with the allocation of funds for Community Projects.
- 8.2 Consultation with the respective officers and external agencies/groups has taken place with regard to funding proposals for Area Committee Discretionary Development Funds.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community Development Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being.
- 9.2 That the Committee is asked to note the budgetary expenditure and balances carried forward from the Visioning, Development and Ward budgets.
- 9.3 That the Committee consider a grant of £5,000 to match fund the R.I.S.E. project as outlined in 3.3 of this report.
- 9.4 That the Committee approve of the decision to support Hitchin Youth Music Festival by sponsoring a trophy at a cost of £20.

## **10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 To ensure that the Committee are kept informed of the work of the Community Development Officer.
- 10.2 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.
- 10.3 The allocation of funds will improve the services provided by the local organisations and groups that are available and accessed by various members of the community.

- 10.4 The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims and Strategic Priorities of the Council.

## **11. APPENDICES**

- 11.1 Appendix A - Annual Grant and Development Discretionary Budget Update
- 11.2 Appendix B - Hitchin Area Committee Work Plan 2012/2013
- 11.3 Appendix C – Hitchin Youth Issues Group (RISE Project)

## **12. CONTACT OFFICERS**

- 12.1 Margaret Bracey, Community Development Officer. Ext: 4830.  
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### **Contributors;**

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## **13. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 13.1 Review of Policies and Procedures for Financial Assistance to Voluntary and Community Organisations, November 2002.

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