

TITLE OF REPORT: COMMUNITY UPDATE AND GRANT APPLICATIONS

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

1. SUMMARY

- 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 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 take place during the next few months.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the budgetary expenditure, balances and carry forwards from the Development, Visioning and Ward Budgets as set out in Appendix A.
- 2.2 That the Committee considers grant funding of £1000 to the Hitchin Stroke Group (as outlined in 8.2 and at Appendix B).
- 2.3 That the Committee considers grant funding of £363 to Furniture Link towards a vehicle. (as outlined in 8.3 and Appendix C).
- 2.4 That the Committee considers awarding support funding in relation to any potential Highways schemes as proposed and discussed under section 8.5 of this report.
- 2.5 That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community Development Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Hitchin.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To ensure the Committee is kept informed of the work of the Community Development Officer.
- 3.2 This report is intended 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 the Grants policy.

- 3.3 The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims expressed in the Priorities for the District.
- 3.4 Production of this report is a requirement of the 'Priorities for the District' in which the Community Development Officer is required to produce a formal report to the Area Committee on four occasions per annum in line with the Civic Calendar.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 There are no alternative options being proposed other than those detailed within the text of this report. However in the course of debate at Committee, Members may wish to comment and offer additional views on any of the items raised within this report.

5. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS

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

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This Report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 Members are asked to note the information detailed in Appendix A Area Committee Budget Spread sheet, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for the current financial year 2014 - 2015.
- 7.2 The spread sheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial years including balances and past expenditure relating to the allocated and un-allocated Area Capital Visioning Budgets available to the Committee.
- 7.3 The current level of unallocated funds within the Area Committee's 2014/15 Area Grant Budget is **£18,020**
- 7.4 There are no funds within the Area Committee's 2013/14 Area Grant Budget that remain uncommitted. However, there are funds available allocated to generic headings.
- 7.5 The current level of unallocated funds within the Area Committee's existing small MoU Budget is **£280.00**

8. PROJECT/ ACTIVITY/ SCHEME DETAILS

8.1 Hitchin Stroke Group

The group, founded in 1990, aims to improve the speech of stroke victims, increase sociability with other patients and provide carer respite for two hours per week at Anderson House in Florence Street, Hitchin, run by North Hertfordshire Homes. There are currently nine beneficiaries, one of whom sits on the management committee; beneficiaries also include the carers of the stroke victims, as there are an additional five volunteers.

The group's main expenses are room hire, travel costs and outings. A small charge is made to participants to attend. The two hour meeting each week during term time is often the highlight of the week for the patients and their carers providing them the opportunity to socialise in a supportive and non-judgemental environment. This provides an increased benefit to both their quality of life and an overall reduction in health care costs.

The group are requesting £1600 towards their costs. They are also applying to the Waitrose Community Fund (green token fundraising scheme). The grant report for this project is presented at Appendix B.

8.2 NHCVS Furniture Link.

Furniture Link was set up to provide low cost furniture to the local community of North Herts and to reduce the amount of bulky goods sent to landfill. They have a showroom based in Letchworth.

Furniture Link are seeking funding of £363 from the Hitchin Committee towards the provision of a good quality second hand van. Furniture Link is a fully independent project of North Herts Centre for Voluntary Services. The vehicle will replace the existing van which is on its last legs. A vehicle This is needed to collect donated and then deliver the furniture to those seeking support and help.

The total cost of replacing the existing vehicle will be £14,034. Furniture Link is requesting £2,900 from NHDC. As the project covers the whole of the district each area committee is being asked for a contribution. Approximately 50 per cent of the users of the service are based in Letchworth, therefore a contribution of £1,450 is being requested from within the Letchworth Committee budget. The remaining 50 per cent is being split a further four ways between, Hitchin, Baldock & District, Royston & District and Southern Rural Committees who will be asked to contribute £363 each.

Other funds are being sought from NHCVS £4234, HCC Locality Budget £2900, LGCHF £3000, and Herts Community Fund £1000. The grant report for this project is presented at Appendix C.

8.3 CAYPOW Summer Activities

Following the grant of £660 awarded to CAYPOW at the July meeting for a programme of summer activities for young people on Westmill Estate the programme that the coordinator has arranged is as follows:

Outings

Pool Party	23rd August	Hitchin Swimming Pool
Last Day Fun Day	28th August	Community Centre
Go-Karting	29th August	Teamworks Karting, Letchworth

Daily Outdoor Activities - All @ The Multi Use Games Area

Basketball
Football
Cricket
Rounders
Hunt
Park

Daily Indoor Activities - All @ The Coffee Mill

Wii
XBox
Pool
Laptops
Table Games inc Puzzles
Loom Bands
Table Tennis
Football Table
Arts & Crafts

8.4 Association of Traditional Shotokan Karate

Members will recall that an application for funding was first submitted to the previous Hitchin Committee, following which members requested additional information before committing any award. Officers sought further information in regard to other funding streams, profitability etc in order to put the request forward again at this meeting for further consideration, but following those enquiries, the group have withdrawn their grant application.

8.5 Highways Matters

It was agreed that a section entitled 'Highways Matters' is included within the Area Grant applications and community update Report for each committee cycle to facilitate debate and enable appropriate feedback on any of the proposed or listed schemes.

Any new proposals will be forwarded to the respective Herts County Councillor for consideration, who will in turn report back and advise the Committee accordingly.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

9.2 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 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.

9.3 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.

9.4 The Committee, as a body, has delegated powers to administer funds from the budgets described.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 In the past few years there has been no inflationary allowance to the main Area Committee Budget and the 2014 - 2015 baseline budget has stayed the same as the previous year.

10.2 The former MoU Budget is subject to a 7.1 per cent reduction each year through to financial year 2015 - 2016.

10.3 Appendix A provides the detailed budget position for the Committee.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no risk entries that have been recorded on Covalent, the Council's Performance & Risk system. Individual events should have their own risk assessments in place to mitigate any health and safety issues. There are no pertinent risk implications for the Authority associated with any items within this report.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The Equality Act 2010 came into force on the 1 October 2010, a major piece of legislation. The Act also created a new Public Sector Equality Duty, which came into force on the 5 April 2011. There is a General duty, described in Paragraph 12.2, that public bodies must meet, underpinned by more specific duties which are designed to help meet them.

12.2 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of its functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

12.3 The projects which comprise the Community Development Officers' workload, and area committee funding assigned to community projects are assessed to ensure that they are as inclusive as possible to members of the local community. The only deviation to this is where a minority group may specifically receive funding or allocation of resources to address a particular area of need or 'gap' in provision.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 As the recommendations made in this report do not constitute a public service contract, the measurement of 'social value' as required by the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 need not be applied, although equalities implications and opportunities are identified in the relevant section at Section 12 above

14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 There are no pertinent Human Resource implications associated with any items within this report

15. APPENDICES

- 15.1 Appendix A Hitchin Area Committee Budget Report 2014/15
- 15.2 Appendix B Hitchin Stroke Group – Grant Report
- 15.3 Appendix C Furniture Link – Grant Report
- 15.4 Appendix D Area Committee Summary Update 2014 – 2015

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17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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