

**LETCHWORTH COMMITTEE**  
**17 JULY 2013**

**\*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**AGENDA ITEM No.**

**9**

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

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY & 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 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 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 Budgets and Visioning Budgets as set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 That the Committee considers grant funding of £774 towards the cost of one lockable cupboard and learning resources for the Apna Punjabi School as outlined in 8.2. (Appendix 2)
- 2.3 The Committee considers grant funding of £300 to Young People of the Year Award as outlined in 8.1 (Appendix 3)
- 2.4 That the Committee considers grant funding of £500 to Cortex towards hall hire and public liability costs as agreed in principle at the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2013, but which could not be agreed at the time as the committee was not quorate. (Appendix 4)
- 2.5 That the Committee considers grant funding of £790 to the 7<sup>th</sup> Letchworth Scouts Group to cover the cost of Coach Hire for a weekend residential on the Golden Hynde and HMS Belfast in London and as outlined in 8.3 (Appendix 5)
- 2.6 That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community Development Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Letchworth Garden City.

### **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 in the Grants procedure.
- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 Production of this report is a requirement of the Corporate Plan in which the Community Development Officer is required to produce a formal report to the Area Committee 6 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 1 Area Committee Budget Spreadsheet, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for the current financial year 2013/14.
- 7.2 The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial year 2011/12 including balances and past expenditure relating to the allocated and un-allocated Area Capital Visioning Budgets available to the Committee.

## **8. PROJECT/ ACTIVITY/ SCHEME DETAILS**

### **8.1 Young People of the Year Award**

This application has been deferred from the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> March in order to allow the applicant to present to the members of the Letchworth Area Committee.

Young People of the Year Award is a Hertfordshire wide campaign that aims to improve the image of young people in the media and by society as a whole. Rewarding the good work that many young people carry out provides positive role models for others and improves the public perception of Youth.

The organisers work closely with Letchworth Schools, Highfield and Fearnhill to encourage young people to take part in voluntary activities, help others and improve the lives of people around them. The organisation is requesting £300 of grant funding towards providing sessions in Schools.

The organisation has individually applied to all five NHDC Area Committees and requesting a grant of £300 from each. They have also gained sponsorship from businesses such as Johnson Matthey, Tesco, Runwood Homes, Mitsubishi Electric and in kind contributions from the University of Hertfordshire and Elstree Studios. They have also been successful in gaining funding from other local authorities within Hertfordshire. This sponsorship will contribute to the project as a whole, which covers the entire county and culminates in a prestigious awards ceremony to be held in either Elstree or Hatfield.

To date the Hitchin, Royston & District and Southern Rural Area Committees have respectively granted £300 each to assist in the running and organisation of Yopey this year. The Baldock & District Area Committee declined to offer funding support this year.

### **8.2 Apna Punjabi School**

The School runs from the Sikh Temple based at Irvin House on Icknield Way. They offer Punjabi classes to anyone aged 8 years and up who would like to learn to read, write and speak Punjabi. Volunteers teach students to GCSE level.

Following their presentation to Area Committee on June 12<sup>th</sup> 2013, members suggested that there may be suitable furniture available in Town Lodge. An appointment was arranged by the Community Development Officer for representatives from the group to view suitable items in Town lodge and two small lockable cupboards were identified and donated to the group.

As there was no other suitable furniture stored at Town Lodge, the group is still looking for a further large cupboard at a cost of £310 and the supply of learning resources to the sum of £464.

The group would therefore like members to consider grant funding of £774 to go towards the cost of learning resources and one large cupboard for storage.

### **8.3 7<sup>th</sup> Letchworth Scouts**

As a celebration for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 7th Letchworth Scout Group, the leaders are organising a weekend residential trip to London for the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts sections of the Group.

They plan to take 70 children and young people away on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> September 2013 travelling by either Coach or Train. The Beavers and the Cubs will be spending the night on the Golden Hynde, whilst the Scouts will be staying on HMS Belfast overnight. The children & young people will also have time to sight see other parts of the Capital.

The group is requesting £790 in order to cover the cost of the Coach Hire. Parents will be paying £30 for each child to attend. The group have also been fund raising to cover the other expenses for the trip. They have completed a sponsored bag pack in Sainsbury's Supermarket, in which they raised nearly £350. They made and sold cakes on a Stall in Letchworth Town Centre which raised £200 and have received sponsorship from Letchworth Rotary, Watford Football Club and a donation from the Scout Fellowship Fund. The Group has also contributed £1,000 towards the costs from their own group funds.

#### **8.4 Highways Matters**

8.4.1 In response to minute 98 of the Letchworth Area Committee Minutes, 13th March 2013 the Transport Policy Officer can report that the Traffic Regulation order has been investigated and that there is no issue with the signs and lines in Rushby Mead. The County Council Consolidated order plan 2012 however reads Zone D Mon-Sat 8.00 to 6pm, but should be Mon -Fri 10-11 & 4-5pm which is incorrect. The appropriate officer at the County Council has been informed and a request has been made that the plan is amended.

8.4.2 It is proposed that a section entitled ' Highways Matters ' is included within the Area Champion's News 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.

For the longer term, consideration of how proposals are made, handled, prioritised and reported back are included in the scope of a Highways Task and Finish review by NHDC and relevant partners, scheduled to take place in September 2013. The outcomes of that review, and any improvements recommended, will be reported back in due course through the council's committee system, and of course to Area Committees.

#### **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 includes discretionary grant aid/financial 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 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 2012/13 baseline budget has stayed the same as the previous year.

10.2 The former MoU Budget is subject to a 7.1% reduction each year through to financial year 2015/16.

## **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<sup>st</sup> October 2010, a major piece of legislation. The Act also created a new Public Sector Equality Duty, which came into force on the 5<sup>th</sup> April 2011. There is a General duty, described in 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 paragraphs 12.

## **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 1 Letchworth Area Committee Budget Report 2013/14
- 15.2 Appendix 2 Apna Punjabi School – Grant Report
- 15.3 Appendix 3 YOPEY – Grant Report
- 15.4 Appendix 4 Cortex - Grant Report
- 15.5 Appendix 5 7<sup>th</sup> Letchworth Scouts - Grant Report
- 15.6 Appendix 6 Area Committee Summary Update 2012 - 2013

## **16. CONTACT OFFICERS**

- 16.1 Author: Claire Morgan Community Development Officer – Letchworth  
Telephone: 01462 474226  
Email: [claire.morgan@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:claire.morgan@north-herts.gov.uk)
- 16.2 Contributors: Shah Mohammed, Assistant Accountant  
Telephone: 01462 474240  
Email: [shah.mohammed@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:shah.mohammed@north-herts.gov.uk)  
  
Liz Green, Head of Policy & Community Services  
Telephone: 01462 474230  
Email: [liz.green@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:liz.green@north-herts.gov.uk)

## **17. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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