

**LETCHWORTH AREA COMMITTEE
13 NOVEMBER 2013**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

7

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 Budget and Visioning Budget as set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 That the Committee considers grant funding of £500 to K Entertainers towards the cost of providing entertainment to residents within local Care / Retirement Homes and Sheltered Accommodation Centres (as outlined in 8.1 and appendix 2).
- 2.3 That the Committee considers grant funding of £2,000 to Child UK toward the cost of re-launching the Wilbury Youth Club. (as outlined in 8.2 and appendix 3).
- 2.4 That the Committee considers grant funding of £1,000 to North Herts Roadrunners towards the cost of the purchase of a Race Clock. (as outlined in 8.3 and appendix 4).
- 2.5 That the Committee considers grant funding of £1,500 to the Fenners Group towards the cost of publicity and marketing a two week project to run Art projects for the local community. (as outlined in 8.4 and appendix 5).
- 2.6 That the Committee considers grant funding of £105 to the Drop In Diner towards the cost of running a Christmas Day event for socially isolated people. (as outlined in 8.5 and Appendix 6.)

- 2.7 That the Committee considers awarding support funding in relation to any potential Highways schemes as proposed and discussed under section 8.6 of this report.
- 2.8 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 Priorities of the Council.
- 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 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.

- 7.3 The current level of unallocated funds within the Area Committee's 2013/14 Area Grant Budget is **£20,182**
- 7.4 The current level of unallocated funds within the Area Committee's 2012/13 Area Grant Budget is **£4,494**
- 7.5 The current level of unallocated funds within the Area Committee's MoU Budget is **£1,680**
- 7.6 The current level of unallocated funds within the Area Committee's Capital Visioning Grant Budget is **£6,601**

8. PROJECT/ ACTIVITY/ SCHEME DETAILS

8.1 K Entertainers

K Entertainers were set up in 1990 and the group visits Care Homes and Sheltered Accommodation musically entertaining the residents with songs that they know and can sing along to. They are also available for special occasions. Their Constitution states their objective as 'provide free entertainment to the elderly, sick or disabled people within warden controlled complexes'.

The group is seeking a grant funding of £500 towards the cost of providing festive and seasonal entertainment evenings and transport to and from the venue, for the elderly and less mobile residents living in local residential homes and sheltered accommodation within Letchworth.

The group currently provides entertainment in four locations in Letchworth, Haymont Court, Hadleigh Retirement Living, McFadyen Webb House and the White House Nursing Home. The group also perform at three locations within Hitchin and therefore has also applied to the Hitchin Area Committee for support funding.

The grant report for this project is outlined in Appendix 2.

8.2 Wilbury Youth Club – Child UK

Child UK is seeking £2,000 Grant funding towards the cost of running the Wilbury Youth Club for 2 years. The total cost of the project will be £14,625 and applications are being made to both the Housing Associations involved on the Wilbury estate, being North Herts Homes and Howard Cottage. Child UK have also approached the County Councillor representing the ward re consideration of some funding via the Ward Locality Budget process.

The proposed project will build on the previous activities over the last two years that helped set up the Wilbury Youth Club following PEC intervention. This has delivered a variety of sports, arts and crafts activities for children and young people from ages 8 to 11, in the Wilbury Ward. A proportion of the children and young people regularly attending are considered by Child UK workers to be vulnerable and / or involved in anti-social behaviour in some way. The club will be located in an accessible and preferred venue to be confirmed, which is likely to be the Scout HQ at Icknield Way.

Since the target age range is from 8 to 11 years old, the activities offered will convey the most popular ones chosen by young people of that age group. A variety of outdoor sports and craft equipment will be used. This will enable the young people to put their skills and energy into a positive outlet with professional guidance. The project intends to promote a healthier lifestyle to young people in a safe and sociable environment.

CHILD UK will help to sustain the project and help mentor volunteers to assist in future delivery (Year 2). Their Senior Youth Club Supervisor will be available to mentor and share a wealth experience to help make the youth club self-sustainable in future. Community Development will work closely with Pro-Action and the PCSO allocated to the project, which will also assist in signposting the young people to the activities provided at the club.

Outputs deriving from the intervention / support:

- A programme of sporting and leisure activities for young people. The project is aimed at 8-11 year olds but we would also include any siblings who may just be slightly out of the specified age range.
- Timescale: 2 hour sessions to be provided once a week over a 40 –week period per year. Two paid staff in year one, and one paid staff in year two plus a volunteer.
- Timings: 4.45pm-7.15pm. (2 hours session- including 15 minutes for preparation and 15 minutes clear up and dispersal- TBC)
- Dates: January 2014 to December 2015 (Dates TBC).
- Approx. 12-18 children and young people to attend the sessions on a weekly basis.
- Demonstration of successful partnership working amongst the local community and stakeholders, that will help to break down barriers with local young people.
- A register will be taken each week to see how many and who regularly attends the project.

Possible Outcomes:

- Positive lead in the reduction in anti-social behaviour whilst the project is running.
 - Referrals to specialist/other sports clubs and activity.
 - Positive feedback from young people through the use of informal questionnaires.
 - Young people learn alternative ways of spending their leisure time.
 - Young people learn positive ways of expressing themselves.
 - Young people develop improved confidence and self-esteem from achieving a level of skill in a new activity.
 - To improve the social skills of those young people engaging.
 - To mentor potential volunteers to help in future delivery and sustainability.
- The grant report for this project is outlined in Appendix 3.

8.3 North Herts Road Runners

The club are seeking £1,000 grant funding towards the cost of purchasing a race clock and carry case for use at running events throughout the year.

This will be used for a number of races each year including the Standalone 10k, Greenway Challenge and First Saturday of the Month 5k. The Club currently hire clocks for these events at a cost of between £45 - £50 each time. The total cost of a Race Clock is £3000. The club will also apply for £1,000 from the Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation and will provide the remainder required from their own funds. The grant report for this project is outlined in Appendix 4.

8.4 Fenners Group Art Workshops

The artists' based group is seeking £1,500 grant funding towards a project taking place in June 2014 that will provide two weeks of free art workshops and drop-ins for the local community. This will coincide with an exhibition of work by Digswell Arts Trust fellows.

The group will be offering free art activities for children and families in Letchworth for all ages and abilities. The workshops will create enthusiasm and self esteem and help people to discover skills that they can continue to develop at home. The workshops will be promoted via Letchworth schools, children's centres and local community groups who might like to send groups along to take part.

The total cost of running the two week project will be £12,517. Grant funding applications have also been made to Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation, Herts County Council Locality Budget via County Councillors and the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation.

This project ran very successfully in Summer of 2013 with over 1000 adults and children attending over the two week period. The participants took part in activities including working with Textiles, Glass, Ceramics, Print Making and Sculpture. These workshops provide an opportunity for disadvantaged groups to access art in a way that they may not usually be able to participate in.

The grant report for this project is outlined in Appendix 5.

8.5 Drop In Diner

This project is run in partnership with Cheap as Chips and Cortex. They will run a drop in event on Christmas Day for anyone who is socially isolated over the Christmas Holidays. This includes homeless people, elderly and anyone who might be suffering from loneliness.

This will be the third year that the event has taken place. The event brings together those who would otherwise spend Christmas day alone. The benefits from the event are that people form new social contacts and friends which encourages them to join in other activities and groups that prevent exclusion in the longer term. The group are applying for funding to cover the cost of the venue Howard Garden Social Centre and to purchase disposable cups, plates, napkins etc.

In previous years the event has been a great success with approximately 40 people attending through out the day.

The grant report for this project is outlined in Appendix 6.

8.6 Highways Matters

It was agreed 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.

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 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 1st October 2010, a major piece of legislation. The Act also created a new Public Sector Equality Duty, which came into force on the 5th 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 K Entertainers – Grant Report
- 15.3 Appendix 3 Child UK– Grant Report
- 15.4 Appendix 4 North Herts Road Runners – Grant Report
- 15.5 Appendix 5 Fenners Group – Grant Report
- 15.6 Appendix 6 Drop In Diner – Grant Report
- 15.7 Appendix 7 Area Committee Summary Update 2013 - 2014

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17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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