

LETCHWORTH COMMITTEE
11 JUNE 2014

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

7

TITLE OF REPORT: GRANT APPLICATIONS AND COMMUNITY UPDATE

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 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 £1,500 to Letchworth & Baldock Lions Club towards the cost of the Community Firework Display (as outlined in 8.1 and appendix 2).
- 2.3 That the Committee considers grant funding of £688 for Home-start towards an 8 week programme of events for disadvantaged and vulnerable families. (as outlined in 8.2 and appendix 3).
- 2.4 That the Committee considers grant funding of £1,043 to Jackie's Drop In Centre, Letchworth towards computer equipment (as outlined in 8.3 and appendix 4).
- 2.5 That the Committee considers grant funding of £1,500 to Letchworth Town Centre Partnership towards cost of the Christmas Town Centre events programme including the Christmas Lights Switch on. (as outlined in 8.4 and appendix 5).
- 2.6 That the Committee considers grant funding of £485 to Garden City Samba towards dance costumes and marketing costs. (as outlined in 8.5 and Appendix 6.)
- 2.7 That the Committee considers grant funding of £750 to Association of Traditional Shotokan Karate for marketing and publicity costs to recruit those with disabilities. (as outlined in 8.6 and Appendix 7.)

- 2.8 That the Committee considers grant funding of £200 as one fifth of the cost towards a project for North Herts Samaritans to install CCTV at their HQ in Nuns Close, Hitchin. (as outlined in 8.7 and Appendix 8)
- 2.9 That the Committee considers awarding support funding in relation to any potential Highways schemes as proposed and discussed under section 8.8 of this report.
- 2.10 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 policy.
- 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 4 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 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 2014/15.

- 7.2 The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial year 2013/14 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 **£26,435**
- 7.4 There is **£220** funds carried forward from within the Area Committee's 2013/14 Area Grant Budget that remains uncommitted.
- 7.5 The current level of unallocated funds within the Area Committee's Capital Visioning Grant Budget is **£601**

8. PROJECT/ ACTIVITY/ SCHEME DETAILS

8.1 Letchworth & Baldock Lions Club

The Lions Club is seeking a grant funding of £3,000 to assist in covering the costs of the pyrotechnics for the annual Community Firework Display at the Letchworth Football Club. The event is now in it's 30th year and is the only public Firework Display in the Town.

The Letchworth Lions raise funds throughout the year at their Community Fun Day event in the Summer and street collections at Christmas. Their aim is to raise funds for donation to local good causes and groups.

The Firework Display is an important public event in the Town. An entrance fee of approximately £5.00 per head is charged and although the event is obviously weather dependant in terms of attendance, on average each year 1000 people attend.

The event costs £7,700 to put on and the Lions receive sponsorship from local businesses and funding of £2,100 from Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation. As for any such public event, there will be additional NHDC officer and other partners' input sought on safety and organisational aspects through the district's Safety Advisory Group to ensure the event is conducted safely.

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

8.2 Home-start

Home-start is seeking grant funding of £963 which accounts for 70% funding towards an 8 week programme of events for disadvantaged and vulnerable families to be delivered during the summer holiday period.

Those attending will come from both Letchworth and Baldock and therefore a similar grant application is being put before the Baldock & District Area Committee for the remaining 30% of the funding required.

Home-start has a contract with Herts County Council to run their core activities which support families with young children who are experiencing stress and difficulties. They provide support, friendship and practical help to families, preventing family crisis and breakdown. They also receive financial support from Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation.

This core funding does not cover the costs relating to 8 week out reach Healthy Lifestyle Strategy event for which they are seeking funding from the Area Committee.

The programme of events will promote healthy living, supporting parents and children in the understanding of a well balanced diet and making healthy choices. It will educate families about long term health implications and information on inexpensive accessible sources of fresh seasonal food. As part of the programme they will hold budget cookery sessions and fun tasting sessions, healthy breakfasts and lunches, hands-on food preparation and sharing meals together. They will promote the benefits of physical activity and a range of stimulating creative art and crafts. This will also include sessions of baby sing and sign and holistic therapies for health and well being.

Positive Outcomes from the sessions will be:

- Increased knowledge and awareness of healthy lifestyles and implications of making healthy choices.
- A marked improvement in children's language, communication and play skills.
- Parents increased level of confidence, independence and wellbeing.
- Parents and children widen their network of relationships, use of community support services and networks effectively.

Families will pay £1.00 as a token contribution for each session.

The grant report for this project is outlined in Appendix 3.

8.3 **Jackie's Drop In Centre**

Jackie's Drop in Centre provides social activities for adults with learning disabilities in an informal atmosphere, based in St Michaels House on Norton Way South.

It is entirely run by volunteers and solely relies on fund raising activities and grant awards. They have approximately 160 members attending the centre who are aged from 18 to 80 years old. The Centre is applying for £1,043 Grant funding towards computer equipment.

Jackie's Drop In Centre wishes to expand the services they provide in both the computer and craft rooms. The provision of additional computers that are safer for their members to use, which are self contained units permanently wired to eliminate any possible trip hazards.

The project is developing at a fast rate, and the Centre needs to expand the facility. They have gained permission to expand some of the rooms in the centre and take over the other floors of the building. By expanding the crafts room and computer areas, they will be able to accommodate increased numbers to take part in crafts and information technology activities.

The project will benefit those using the centre as it will assist them to become computer literate, undertake on line learning packages, use the internet and understand how to use the internet safely to do banking, purchase items and use social media. There is also a national drive to increase computer literacy in readiness for imminent changes to the welfare system, including universal credit when it is introduced.

The grant report for this project is outlined in Appendix 4.

8.4 **Letchworth Town Centre Partnership**

The Town Centre Partnership is seeking grant funding of £3,000 towards cost of the Christmas Town Centre events programme including the Christmas Lights Switch on.

A presentation was made at the last meeting of the Letchworth Area Committee in March 2014, but as insufficient funds were available in the Discretionary Budgets it was agreed to postpone a decision until the first meeting of the new financial year.

It is intended that whilst the new Letchworth BID has its own board, the Letchworth Town Centre Partnership will also remain in place for the time being at least, in order to progress this series of events and activities designed to bring more people into the town centre.

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

8.5 **Garden City Samba**

Garden City Samba have recently added a number of dancers to their group. They are applying for grant funding of £485 towards the cost of producing simple, eye-catching costumes that match the groups colours and project the right kind of image for a fun, friendly community band.

The funding would be used to purchase appropriate fabric for these costumes and pay for basic costume making.

In addition, they would like to produce new promotional materials, featuring the dancers in their costumes, to advertise this new element to the group and generate renewed interest from people who might wish to join or book them for future community events. The group relies on securing a number of paid performances each year to enable financial sustainability.

The dancers currently borrow costumes from the dance tutor, but they do not reflect the ethos of Garden City Samba.

To ensure cost effectiveness, the costumes will belong to Garden City Samba and will be kept centrally so that they can be passed on to new recruits.

The benefits of dance from a health and fitness point of view are proven and the particular style of dance they are offering is accessible to people of all ages and any reasonable level of fitness, including those with little or no previous experience of dance. The style of dance mixes movements from popular/carnival and traditional elements which will also gives people an opportunity to learn more about Brazilian and African culture.

Free taster classes are available to anyone wishing to come along and try it out for themselves and the group provide concessionary rates to attract those on low incomes and the hardest to reach members of the community.

Those joining the group will benefit from the community and social aspects of belonging to a friendly, community group and the pride that comes from performing together successfully. Belonging to a thriving community group, particularly when playing and performing music together, has positive benefits for mental health.

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

8.6 Association of Traditional Shotokan Karate

This is a project to actively promote traditional martial arts to people of all ages with disabilities, within mainstream clubs. It is designed to open up the benefits of self esteem and confidence to people that are normally excluded from mainstream activities.

The Association of Traditional Shotokan Karate is a not for profit organisation. The purpose of the project is to help all people access an activity that helps give self esteem and confidence.

The group is requesting £750 grant funding for marketing and publicity costs for two classes, one in Letchworth and the other based in Hitchin.

The Hitchin Area Committee will also be asked to consider funding 25% of the project costs.

The grant report for this project is outlined in Appendix 7.

8.7 North Herts Samaritans

North Herts Samaritans are requesting £1,000 funding towards installation of Close Circuit Television for their HQ premises in Hitchin. This is required in order to monitor face to face interviews within the premises, as well as improved security to the building at the front and rear entrances.

As the services provided covers the whole of the district the four other Area Committees will also be asked to consider contributing one fifth of the funding required equating to £200 from each Committee.

The grant report for this project is outlined in Appendix 8.

8.8 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 2014/15 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 2014/15

- 15.2 Appendix 2 Letchworth & Baldock Lions Club – Grant Report
- 15.3 Appendix 3 Home-start – Grant Report
- 15.4 Appendix 4 Jackie’s Drop In Centre – Grant Report
- 15.5 Appendix 5 Letchworth Town Centre Partnership – Grant Report
- 15.6 Appendix 6 Garden City Samba – Grant Report
- 15.7 Appendix 7 Association of Traditional Shotokan Karate – Grant Report
- 15.8 Appendix 8 North Herts Samaritans – Grant Report
- 15.9 Appendix 9 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.