

ROYSTON AREA COMMITTEE

July 27th 2011

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

TITLE OF REPORT: CHAMPION NEWS

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY, PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of the activities and schemes with which the Community Development Officer has been involved during the past month.
- 1.2 To bring to the Committee's attention some important community based activities that will be taking place during the next few months.
- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 To advise the Committee on the current expenditure and balances of the Area Committee delegated budgets.

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 Free After Three project

Members will recall that this scheme was initiated by this Committee, and is a grant-funded subsidy of parking charges. It was initially set up as "Free After Three-Thirty", funded by contributions from this Area Committee and County Councillors' Locality Budgets. Royston First then proposed to make a contribution to enable the scheme to start at 3pm, hence "Free After Three": this made free parking available to parents/carers on the afternoon 'school run' too.

Since the subsidy is paid through a variety of grants, the impact of any changes to the parking tariffs is likely to be absorbed by the grant contributors, and the scheme is therefore relatively insensitive to changes in the tariffs.

The administrators of the County Councillors' Locality Budget have sought an evaluation of last year's funding, and the CDO and the Town Manager will be undertaking an informal survey of levels of parking in the town centre next week, before and after 3pm. It is hoped to be able to compare these figures with the baseline figures provided in a survey last year. Purely anecdotal evidence suggests that the scheme has been successful.

3.2 **Other work**

CDO assisted with the Rural Grants Fund update to the documentation for the 2011/12 round.

CDO assisted with scheduling of the High Sherriff's visit to the District on July 4th and accompanied the party on the day; visits in this Committee's area were made to the Tuesday Hang-out at the Coombes Community Centre in Burns Road and the Reed Cricket Club.

CDO provided some photographs to accompany press releases.

4. **FUNDING DECISIONS TO BE MADE / CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 A spreadsheet showing the detailed spend to date of the Area Committee budgets is enclosed as Appendix A.
- 4.2 A grant application has been received from the Reed Parish Plan Working Group for publication of the parish plan, and is attached as Appendix B.
- 4.3 A grant funding request has been drawn up on behalf of the Council's Children's Services Team for support for Hang-Out Tuesday Drop-In Centre, and is attached as Appendix C.
- 4.4 A grant application has been received from the Rotary Club of Royston for a tactile map of the town, and is attached as Appendix D.
- 4.5 A grant funding request has been drawn up for internal budgeting support for a Royston based Kids Are OK project, and is attached as Appendix E.

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 A of the report, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for the current financial year 2010/11.
- 6.2 The spreadsheet also details the pre-allocations carried forward from the previous financial year 2009/10 to the current financial year 2010/11.

- 6.3 In addition, the spreadsheet includes the balances relating to allocated Visioning Budgets available within the Royston & District area.

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 the 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 considers making a grant award of £250 to Reed Parish Plan Working Group for publication of a parish plan.
- 9.3 That the Committee considers making a grant award of £1,250 to NHDC Children's Services Team in support of the Hang-Out Tuesday Drop-In Centre.
- 9.4 That the Committee considers making a grant award of £50 to Rotary Club of Royston for a tactile map of the Town centre.
- 9.5 That the Committee considers making a grant award of £1,000 as internal budgetary support for a Royston based the Kids Are OK project.

10. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 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 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.
- 10.4 The allocation of funds will improve the services provided by local organisations and groups that are available and accessed by members of the community.

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix A – Finance spreadsheet.
- 11.2 Appendix B - Grant Form, Reed Parish Plan Working Group
- 11.3 Appendix C - Grant Form, Children's Services - Hang-Out Tuesday Drop-In Centre.
- 11.4 Appendix D - Grant Form, Rotary Club of Royston
- 11.5 Appendix E - Grant Form, Internal budgetary support - Royston Kids Are OK project.

12. CONTACT OFFICER

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13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 13.1 Review of Policies and Procedures for Financial Assistance to Voluntary and Community Organisations, November 2002.
- 13.2 Community Governance Reviews – Full Council Meeting 25th February 2010.

