

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

## REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of the activities and schemes with which the Community Development Officer has been involved.
- 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****BMX Track Project**

The CDO and the Community Development Manager will shortly be meeting with the project manager Phil Townsend to discuss progress. He has already informed us that the Sport England application has appeared on a list at British Cycling for approval and an outcome is likely to be known prior to Christmas.

**Underpass**

Since the opening of the Railway Underpass, no street cleansing has taken place. Additional bins have been installed by NHDC, and are used and emptied. The underpass now contains a relatively small amount of "user rubbish", mostly cans and one broken bottle, and a fair amount of windblown material, largely leaves and some paper.

The CDO has checked with NHDC Street cleansing, and the contractor to determine when cleaning is likely to commence. The CDO and the Chairman have also emailed the HCC project manager to ask the same question. The HCC project manager replied on November 13<sup>th</sup> that she was seeking to place an order with the new HCC maintenance provider, Ringways, to carry out an interim tidy, but in reality the process for having it put on the 'confirm' system might happen first. (i.e. it might become part of the standard schedule first.) The CDO will report verbally on any further progress at the meeting.

### **Members' Surgery**

A member of the public suggested that the route of the No.26 bus route could be slightly adjusted to pass through Trumpington Park and Ride site, thus improving travel from Royston to Addenbrookes Hospital.

The CDO has explored this through publicly available timetables and routes, and at present it appears that the suggestion is valid: a traveller on the No.26 could then transfer to the Busway A route, which passes through the hospital. A suggestion was also made that such a transfer already exists between the No.26 and the No.7, which both stop in Maris Lane, not far away from the Park and Ride site. However, the No.7, which also goes hourly to Addenbrookes, is scheduled to leave Maris Lane one minute before the arrival of the hourly No.26. Adjusting this timetable by enough time to ensure a straightforward and reliable transfer would achieve a similar benefit to that originally proposed, an option the CDO has passed to the relevant bus companies/transport department for consideration.

### **Parish Challenge**

The target date for this meeting is the second week in December, but before then there is substantial work to be done in collating and checking the applications.

### **Highways Matters**

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.

Members' attention is drawn to Appendix D Joint Funded Highways Schemes / Proposals Form which will list and track the progress of joint funded Highways schemes or proposals raised by the Committee.

New proposals will be logged on the form and forwarded to the respective Herts County Councillor for consideration.

### **Other work**

The CDO met recently with art teachers from Meridian and other Royston schools to discuss approaches to painting a mural in the newly completed underpass. This was a very useful meeting which suggested several practical approaches which could help with decorating the underpass without prejudicing its lightness and feeling of safety.

The CDO attended a session with 6<sup>th</sup> formers at Meridian School with the Chairman and the Mayor as part of Local Democracy Week. It was saddening that the students – primarily in the sciences – had so few questions to ask. One useful spin-off from that meeting was an informal discussion with the Head of Geography, who showed us some maps drawn up by his students – rather older students than those with whom we normally meet in Citizenship Classes. These indicate areas the students like, areas they don't like, and areas they find useful. These maps constitute a most useful extension to the work done by Members as part of the annual Citizenship project. The CDO has received copies of these maps from the school, and will shortly be starting to analyse these.

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

- 4.1 A spreadsheet showing the detailed spend to date of the Area Committee Development budget is enclosed as Appendix A.

Members will recall that at their last meeting they agreed to re-allocate some grants not drawn down or where the project was withdrawn, back to the Committee's grant budget. That has been done, and has been shown on Appendix A as a balancing negative amount under each relevant item.

- 4.2 A grant application has been received from the 10<sup>th</sup> Royston Scouts for support funding for a wheelchair access ramp, and is attached as Appendix B.
- 4.3 Members will recall that a previous application from Young Enterprise, to run a series of programmes running businesses, was deferred pending clarification. This application is re-submitted as Appendix C with the distribution of the classes indicated.

## **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 2012/13.
- 6.2 The spreadsheet also details the pre-allocations carried forward from the previous financial year 2011/12 to the current financial year 2012/13.
- 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 awarding a grant of £1,500 to the 10<sup>th</sup> Royston Scouts towards provision of a disability ramp for the scout hut.
- 9.3 The the Committee considers awarding a grant of £1,000 to Young Enterprise for classes in Meridian and Barley Schools.
- 9.4 That the Committee considers any new Highways proposals that it wishes to joint fund and to forward such schemes on to the respective County Councillor for consideration.

## **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 Application – 10<sup>th</sup> Royston Scouts.
- 11.3 Appendix C – Grant Application – Young Enterprise Scheme.
- 11.4 Appendix D – Joint Funded Highways Projects / Proposals Form.

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