

TITLE OF REPORT : CHAMPION NEWS & FINANCE REPORT

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

1. SUMMARY

- 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. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the activities and schemes with which the Community Development Officer has been involved.
- 2.2 The Committee is asked to note the budgetary expenditure, balances and carry forwards within the Area Committee Development Budget Spreadsheet attached as Appendix A.
- 2.3 That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community Development Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being.
- 2.4 That the Committee considers making a grant award of £500 to Barkway Parish Council for Parish Reading Rooms equipment.
- 2.5 That the Committee considers making a grant award of £960 to NHDC Children's Services Team for support for HangOut Tuesday DropIn Centre.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To ensure that the Committee are 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 the 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 A 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 2012/13 including balances and past expenditure relating to the allocated and un-allocated budgets available to the Committee.

7.3 The current level of unallocated funds within the Committee's Development Budget is £13,813.

7.4 The current level of unallocated funds within the Committee's MoU Budget is £0.

7.5 This report has been produced to keep Members informed of the work of the Community Development Officer for Royston.

8. PROJECT/ACTIVITY/SCHEME DETAILS

8.1 BMX Track

Opened on schedule, with over 50 users on the first open evening, and with consistent high levels of use, often double last year's. The first major event was the formal opening on July 7th, which the CDO attended. The opening was performed by Oliver Heald QC MP, ably assisted by the Mayor of Royston, Cllr Robert Smith. Following the official opening, 171 riders took part in races from BMX clubs in Royston, Milton Keynes, Peterborough, Ipswich, Norwich, Walpole and Braintree. The new track complies with the national BMX standards, and forms part of the important 'legacy' to the Olympics post 2012.

8.2 Royston Cinema

The Royston Picture House opened with a Gala performance of The Great Gatsby; formally opened by the Mayor, Cllr. Robert Smith, and a Royston resident of 100 years, on July 1st, 2013, the 100th anniversary of the opening of the first Royston cinema, to the day. Alongside a number of financial contributors, NHDC has assisted with the allocation of £60k of Section 106 planning gain toward this project.

8.3 Anti-social behaviour

Work is now in hand on two projects in Burns Road, one to reduce overlooking of a residence by spectators at the BMX track, and one to prevent young people using a the wall of a house as a football goal.

8.4 Barkway Pavilion

Members will recall that this project was awarded £50,000 through the Council's PACIF Rural Grants Fund in 2010 towards the £140,000 cost of replacing the football pavilion. Currently the project has raised £91,000 with a further £9,000 in pledges from local donors. The original PACIF two year deadline expired in early April 2013, but was extended until the end of July 2013.

8.4.1 The Community Development Manager and Community Facilities Manager are working with the Pavilion Project team towards a bid submission to the Football Foundation's 'Build the Game' fund which can give grants of up to £50k. The Foundation's Eastern Region Facility and Investment Manager will be asked to include the Pavilion in a series of project site visits in the District due to take place shortly. This will hopefully result in progressing matters towards a grant award, such that full funding for the project can be achieved.

8.5 Other work

The CDO deputised for an injured Letchworth CDO at the recent Heritage Foundation Funding Fair, which was attended by over 170 people. In the event the Letchworth CDO was able to attend, and both CDOs were extremely busy with lots of enquiries about grants from across the District.

8.6 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. This is to ensure that communication remains effective following the demise of the previous Joint Member Panel for each district.

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.

8.7 FUNDING DECISIONS TO BE MADE / CONSIDERED

- 8.8 A spreadsheet showing the detailed spend to date of the Area Committee budgets is enclosed as Appendix A.
- 8.9 A grant application has been received from Barkway Parish Council for Parish Reading Rooms equipment , and is attached as Appendix B.
- 8.10 A grant application has been received from NHDC Children's Services Team for support for HangOut Tuesday DropIn Centre, and is attached as Appendix C.

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 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.
- 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 Members are asked to note the information detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for the current financial year 2012/13.
- 10.2 The spreadsheet also details the pre-allocations carried forward from the previous financial year 2011/12 to the current financial year 2012/13.

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 A – Finance spreadsheet.
- 15.2 Appendix B - Grant Form, Barkway Parish Council
- 15.3 Appendix C - Grant Form, NHDC Children's Services Team

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17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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