

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 £250 to Royston Foodbank for funding for shelving equipment.
- 2.5 That the Committee considers making a grant award of £1000 to Angels Support Group for support for fortnightly Royston sessions until April 2014.
- 2.6 That the Committee considers making a grant award of £300 to Rotary Club of Royston for the Royston Technology Tournament.
- 2.7 That the Committee considers making a grant award of £176 to Barkway Parish Council for projection equipment for the parish council.
- 2.8 That the Committee considers making a grant award of £1000 to Royston Town Band for construction of new rehearsal room for the band.

- 2.9 That the Committee considers making a grant award of £500 to Budgetary Support, Royston Area Cttee. for Coombes Community Centre extension.
- 2.10 That the Committee considers making a grant award of £500 to Royston Town Council for funding for hanging baskets.
- 2.11 That the Committee considers making a grant award of £500 to Royston Town Council for site clearance for the new Town cemetery.
- 2.12 That the Committee considers awarding support funding in relation to any potential Highways schemes as proposed and discussed under section 8.5 of this report.

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 2013/14 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 £18,787.
- 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 ASB issues

A 'flower-bed' has been installed at the rear of the Coombes Community Centre to hinder those who wish to kick their football against a resident's sitting-room wall.

8.2 Coombes Community Centre

The Centre has been running at capacity for some time, and the Management Committee has outlined some plans towards building an extension to the centre. By creating facilities which would assist the BMX track users, and provide some additional facilities for longer-term hirers, this could have a significant benefit to the centre's income.

Outline concepts drawn up by the Management Committee have been passed to NHDC Property Service for costing – this element is the subject of a funding application to this meeting.

8.3 Other work

The CDO spoke on funding issues at the first meeting of the Royston Community Forum in the Town Hall in October: the meeting was attended by 46 people representing 38 local groups. It is to be hoped that the Forum will flourish as a means for community groups to exchange ideas and best practice.

8.4 The CDO received a letter of thanks from the Clerk of Barkway Parish Council:

"On behalf of Barkway Parish Council, thank you very much for the £500 received from the Area Committee... The enhancements to the Reading Room, made possible with this funding, have been very well received. Village organisations are now keen to make use of this room for their meetings as it is a clean, warm and comfortable environment and we are receiving constant compliments from new users who never realised how nice it was in there!"

8.5 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.

8.6 GRANT FUNDING DECISIONS TO BE MADE / CONSIDERED

- 8.6.1 A spreadsheet showing the detailed spend to date of the Area Committee budgets is enclosed as Appendix A.

Members should note that this indicates both the Committee's base budget (£18,660) and any monies allocated in previous years which will not be spent, as well as the carry-forwards from the 2012-13 financial year. Funds available to the Committee currently total £18,787.

- 8.6.2 A grant application has been received from Royston Foodbank for funding for shelving equipment, and is attached as Appendix B.
- 8.6.3 A grant application has been received from Angels Support Group for support for fortnightly Royston sessions until April 2014, and is attached as Appendix C.
- 8.6.4 A grant application has been received from Rotary Club of Royston for Royston Technology Tournament, and is attached as Appendix D.
- 8.6.5 A grant application has been received from Barkway Parish Council for projection equipment for the parish council, and is attached as Appendix E.
- 8.6.6 A grant application has been received from Royston Town Band for construction of new rehearsal room for the band, and is attached as Appendix F.
- 8.6.7 A grant application has been received from Budgetary Support, Royston Area Cttee. for Coombes Community Centre extension, and is attached as Appendix G.
- 8.6.8 A grant application has been received from Royston Town Council for funding for hanging baskets, and is attached as Appendix H.
- 8.6.9 A grant application has been received from Royston Town Council for the Town cemetery, and is attached as Appendix I.

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, Royston Foodbank
- 15.3 Appendix C - Grant Form, Angels Support Group
- 15.4 Appendix D - Grant Form, Rotary Club of Royston
- 15.5 Appendix E - Grant Form, Barkway Parish Council
- 15.6 Appendix F - Grant Form, Royston Town Band
- 15.7 Appendix G - Grant Form, Coombes Community Centre
- 15.8 Appendix H - Grant Form, Royston Town Council, hanging baskets
- 15.9 Appendix I - Grant Form, Royston Town Council, Town cemetery.

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17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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