

TITLE OF REPORT : GRANT APPLICATIONS AND COMMUNITY UPDATE**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 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 1.
- 2.3 That the Committee considers a funding award of £1,000 to Royston Runners to help support the provision of a storage unit for equipment as detailed in 7.6 of this report and Appendix 3.
- 2.4 That the Committee considers a funding award of £200 to North Herts Samaritans to help support the provision of CCTV at their offices as detailed in 7.7 of this report and Appendix 4.
- 2.5 That the Committee considers a funding award of £1,400 to Royston Arts Festival to help towards the publicity, equipment and room hire costs of the festival as detailed in 7.8 of this report and Appendix 5.
- 2.6 That the Committee considers releasing grant award of £1,000 to develop costings and feasibility plans to redevelop the sports & cricket pavilion at Therfield.

Members may wish to confirm the allocation of this amount from the pre-committed funds to the group which the committee awarded at its meeting on 15th January 2014 and as detailed in 7.9 of this report.

- 2.7 That the Committee acknowledges the recent release of this year's MoU awards to Royston based groups as detailed in 8.6 of this report.
- 2.8 That the Committee considers awarding support funding in relation to any potential Highways schemes as proposed and discussed under section 8.7 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 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 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 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 budgets available to the Committee.
- 7.3 The current level of unallocated funds within the Committee's Development Budget is **£18,660**.
- 7.4 All funds in the Committee's MoU Budget have been released as detailed in 8.7 of this report.
- 7.5 This report has been produced to keep Members informed of the work of the Community Development Officer for the Royston & District Area.

8. GRANT REQUESTS

8.1 Royston Runners

Grant funding of £1,000 is requested to contribute towards the total cost of £2,500 for the purchase of a container for the storage of equipment at The Heath Sports & Social Club.

8.2 North Herts Samaritans

North Herts Samaritans are requesting total funding of £1,000 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 cover 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 Area Committee.

8.3 Royston Arts Festival

Grant funding of £1,400 is requested towards the total costs of £17,000. The funding will be used to assist with publicity, equipment and room hire costs for the Royston Arts Festival in September.

8.4 Therfield and Kellshall Sports & Social Club

Members will recall at the Area Committee meeting held on 15th January 2014 the committee pre-allocated funding to the level of £2,585.

Over recent weeks officers have met on site with representatives from the Sports & Social Club, the Cricket Club and the Parish Council, to discuss the future possibilities of refurbishing / developing the pavilion.

The Club committee has recently negotiated the go-ahead to redraft the pavilion's lease agreement with the Conservators for a further 25yrs, with the provision of a new clause giving the Club the ability to formally sub-lease the pavilion during certain days within the cricket season to the Royston Cricket Club to use the pitch and pavilion as a Home base for the foreseeable future.

The revised lease and length of term will enable the Sports and Social Club to apply for significant external funds to assist with the capital required to redevelop/rebuild the pavilion. However, to get to that position the Club needs to finance the legal costs associated with redrafting the lease, the drawing up of some indicative plans for a new

building and to fully cost out the project, in order to understand the size and sums involved.

The Sports and Social Club estimate the immediate legal fees regarding the lease to be approximately £800 and a further £700 to engage someone to technically draw up some plans for a new build and a QS to cost out the pavilion project.

The Club can commit £500 from its reserves and is looking for the Royston and District Committee to approve unlocking £1,000 of the pre-allocated funds for these vital feasibility plans & costings.

9. PROJECT/ACTIVITY/SCHEME DETAILS

9.1 Serby Avenue Youth Shelter Project

The Community Development Officer (CDO) has carried out a consultation with residents of Serby Avenue and surrounding roads regarding the possible installation of a Youth Shelter at Serby Avenue. A flyer was delivered to all households that surround the Serby Avenue Park and MUGA area during early May and the feedback period was open for 3 weeks and ended on Friday 23rd May.

During the consultation period the CDO received 4 correspondences of complaint from residents about the proposed Youth Shelter, citing anti-social behaviour as their main concerns

The CDO suggests that the Royston and District Committee members consider a different location for the Youth Shelter which is being funded by Royston First.

9.2 Royston Arts Festival – Mosaic Project

As part of the 8th Royston Arts Festival, the group are investigating the feasibility of creating a permanent mosaic at Royston Priory Memorial Gardens. This mosaic would be in the shape of the Royston Crow. The CDO is liaising with relevant NHDC services to determine if this project is achievable and will feed back to the Royston Arts Festival Committee.

9.3 Barley Parish Plan

Over the past couple of months Officers have attended and advised the Parish Council and now latterly the newly formed Barley Villagers' Plan Group at the bi-weekly Wednesday evening meetings at the Town House.

Terms of reference of the group have been drawn up and finalised, as well as a timeline project plan running up to the launch of the Group's activities and plans for the future which is to be promoted at this year's village show.

Where possible and as appropriate, Community Development Officers will continue to support the work of the group in preparation for all the stages and processes involved in the development of a Parish Plan.

9.4 Barkway Pavilion Project

Plans are now underway to release the first tranche (£25k) of the project's PACIF grant award. Officers are also working to agree a cash flow profile with the project committee such that the remainder of the PACIF grant and the qualifying s106 funding available, can be released against identified delivery milestones in line with the release of the funding awarded by the Football Foundation.

It is hoped that work on the project will start within the next 4-6 weeks so that the facility is ready for use in time for the start of the new Football season.

9.5 **Royston BMX Club**

The Club's recent planning application for a storage container to be situated in the dip on the far side of the track level with the Start Hill has unfortunately not been approved.

Following the track enhancement works last year Club membership and interest in the sport has quite literally exploded and a summary of the Club's activities and future plans was provided in an email to Members and others interested parties on 28th April 2014.

Clearly for the club to develop to its full potential and in line with Sport England and British Cycling development visions, some form of storage / event office structure is required to support the National & Regional events plus the club's own programme of activities.

The club is somewhat disappointed in the initial rejection of its development plans from a planning point of view and therefore is liaising with Community Development Officers to ascertain the best and most appropriate way to perhaps move its plans forward.

9.6 **Royston Based Memorandum of Understandings 2014/15**

Members are asked to note the award of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the four organisations detailed below.

This is the final award under the current 3 year MoU arrangements which was subject to 7.1% annual decrease.

| Organisation | 2014/15 Award |
|--|----------------------|
| Royston Volunteer Centre | £2,750 |
| Royston Community Transport | £2,200 |
| Royston Cave | £750 |
| Royston & District Town Twinning Assoc | £170 |

9.7 **Highways Matters**

It is proposed that a section entitled 'Highways Matters' is included within the Area Champion's Grant applications and community update 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 or revised schemes 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 is included in the scope of a Highways Task and Finish review by NHDC and relevant partners, which took place in late 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.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 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 support. However, this does not include grants for district wide activities.
- 10.2 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.
- 10.3 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.
- 10.4 The Committee has delegated powers to administer funds from the budgets described.

11. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 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 2014/15.
- 11.2 The spreadsheet also details the pre-allocations carried forward from the previous financial year 2013/14 to the current financial year 2014/15.
- 11.3 In the past few years there has been no inflationary allowance to the Area Committee Budgets and the 2014/15 baseline budget has stayed the same as the previous year.

12. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 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.

13. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 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.
- 13.2 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.

- 13.3 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.

14. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 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.

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 There are no pertinent Human Resource implications associated with any items within this report.

16. APPENDICES

- 16.1 Appendix 1 – Area Committee Development Budget Spreadsheet 2014/15.
- 16.2 Appendix 2 – Area Committee Summary Update 2014/15.
- 16.3 Appendix 3 – Area Committee Grant Form – Royston Runners
- 16.4 Appendix 4 – Area Committee Grant Form – North Herts Samaritans
- 16.5 .Appendix 5 – Area Committee Grant Form – Royston Arts Festival

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18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

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