

TITLE OF REPORT: COMMUNITY UPDATE AND GRANT APPLICATIONS**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 £250 to Royston & District Town Twinning Association to assist with costs associated with the visit of the Royston Twinning town of Grossalmerode, to celebrate 40 years of twinning. The funding is to assist with the costs for a visit to Sandringham, as detailed in 8.1 of this report and Appendix 3.
- 2.4 That the Committee considers a funding award of £1,200 to Royston & District Volunteer Centre to cover staffing costs associated with the management of a new software solution, as well as marketing, promotional and office costs, as detailed in 8.2 of this report and Appendix 4.
- 2.5 That the Committee considers a funding award of £363 to Furniture Link to help support the purchase of a collections van as detailed in 8.3 of this report and Appendix 5.
- 2.6 That the Committee considers awarding support funding in relation to any potential Highways schemes as proposed and discussed under section 9.4 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 This report has been produced to keep Members informed of the work of the Community Development Officer for the Royston and District Area.

8. GRANT REQUESTS

8.1 Royston and District Town Twinning Association

Grant funding of £250 is requested to contribute towards the total cost of £1,720 in order to assist with costs associated with the visit of the Royston Twinning town of Grossalmerode, to celebrate 40 years of twinning. The funding is to assist with the costs for a visit to Sandringham.

8.2 Royston and District Volunteer Centre

Royston and District Volunteer Centre is requesting funding of £1,200 to cover staffing costs associated with the management of a new software solution, as well as marketing, promotional and office costs.

8.3 Furniture Link

Grant funding of £363 is requested towards the total cost of £14,340 to help support the purchase of a collections van.

- 8.4 Members are asked to note the funding applications currently being considered, as detailed in the table below:

Project
Funding support to Royston Town Council to assist with a Community Art Project at Coombes Hole.
Funding support to the organisers of Wimpole ParkRun to assist with the set up of a ParkRun Junior project.

9. PROJECT/ACTIVITY/SCHEME DETAILS

9.1 Royston BMX Track

The Community Development Officer (CDO) is working with the Royston BMX group to secure funding for a new pavilion at the BMX track. The pavilion will be used for the storage of equipment, as well as a providing an office for use on event days.

The CDO is liaising with Royston First to determine if funds allocated for the proposed Youth Shelter at Serby Avenue could be reallocated to the BMX project. Negotiations are underway between the BMX Group and Royston First and it is hoped that funds in the region of £10k can be allocated to the project.

9.2 Fitness Trail at York Way

The contractor, Bridge Timber Play, has now been appointed for the York Way Fitness Trail and work will be completed during October.

9.3 Road Naming in Royston

The CDO is liaising with colleagues in Planning regarding the formal naming of a road in Royston. The road which links Fish Hill and Market Hill is to be called Market Lane.

Installation of the new sign will be implemented on completion of a formal application from the Royston Town Council.

9.4 Highways Matters

It is proposed that a section entitled 'Highways Matters' is included within the Area Champion's Community Update and Grant Applications 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. He or she will, in turn, report back and advise the Committee accordingly.

9.5 Titchmarsh Close Proposed Parking Scheme:

The possible inclusion of Titchmarsh Close into the current Zone B, Gower Road permit parking scheme, was discussed at Royston Committee in September 2013. At that meeting officers reported that there was little response to the initial pre-consultation and it was suggested that, based upon the low level of response from residents, the scheme implementation should be postponed and further considered as part of the Royston Town-Wide Parking Review, to commence in 2015/16.

Officers are currently fully involved in the Letchworth Parking Review, as well as completing outstanding schemes in Knebworth and Hitchin.

Members have since asked officers to seek a quote for amending the current Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) in response to further requests from local residents.

The proposal would be to:

- (i) Extend the current permit restriction for Zone B in Gower Road into Titchmarsh Close, i.e. Mon - Fri 10:00-11:00 and 16:00-17:00 except Permit Parking, and
- (ii) Include No. 1 Major Haddock Close in the list of properties eligible to purchase a permit in Zone B.

Officers have obtained a quotation from Herts County Council (HCC) to undertake this work. The overall detailed estimated cost is outlined below:

HCC to draft and prepare the necessary paperwork for the Traffic Regulation Order	£950
Costs for the TRO in the local paper, advertising MHDC's intention to make the Order (legal requirement)	£500
Advertising costs for the made TRO, assuming delegated officer approval has been sought (legal requirement)	£500
Estimated Contractor costs for installing the necessary lines and signs on the street	£800

NHDC officer time to assess representations and prepare the necessary delegated reports (this cost is included as it is ahead of the Royston Review and resources need to be funded appropriately)	£500
Total Estimate for Works	£3250

HCC will not be able to commission this work until some time in October and it will take a minimum of six months to complete, depending on the number of representations received.

It is for the Committee to consider and decide whether they wish to progress this scheme, due to local need and urgency, by financing it ahead of the Royston Parking Review. There will be corporate funding available for this scheme, to be included as part of the Royston Parking Review, to commence in 2015/16. Typically, each town-wide review takes 2/3 years to complete, and as such, it is not possible to identify at this time when Titchmarsh Close would be programmed within the Review, as individual road schemes are not generally progressed in isolation but as part of a larger number of roads to benefit from economies of scale.

9.6 Rural Update

Reed Village Hall Roof Works

The Chairman of the Parish Council informed officers that unfortunately it was unlikely that the planned enhancement works to the building's roof would take place over the summer, as the preferred contractor had declined the works. The Hall's Management Group is now seeking alternative companies to undertake the refurbishments.

Barley Parish Plan

Officers continue to support and give advice on the development of a Parish Plan for Barley. Recent advice has been given relating to possible funding streams to improve the children's play area on the Plaistow.

Barkway Pavilion Works

Work continues to plan and officers have visited the site and approved the release of further staged payments.

NHDC Rural Grants Programme 2014-15

The scheme is live and open for grant applications from Parishes until Friday 27th September 2014.

9.7 Royston Community Surgery

Feedback on matters raised at the Surgery held on Saturday 12th July 2014 at Angel Pavement is:

- Footway leading from Layston Park down to London Road – overhanging trees and shrubs, detritus causing a slip hazard. The Grounds Maintenance Officer has inspected and the contractor has cut back vegetation and cleared the pathway;
- Rear of 36 Shakespeare, backing onto the block of Flats 18-34 – there are street cleaning issues, with grass cutting and ivy growing up the fence. The Grounds

Maintenance Officer has inspected, the NHH grass specification is under 60mm. The area is periodically swept, in line with the contract;

- Investigate the location to site a salt bin by green plantation area. The Grounds Maintenance Officer has suggested possible siting near the dog waste bin at the end of Hunters Close;
- Comments regarding recent letters in the Press re. the Heath – no action;
- The pavement in Mill Road and the walkway through to Lumen Road – surface condition and rubbish and bottles are left from night time economy on Friday and Saturday evenings. Liaison required with the Waste & Recycling Team to include the area and organise periodic sweeps;
- Royston FC support re. recent views to relocate – no action;
- South Cambs' recent closure of the Household Recycling Site – No Action (there are no current restrictions or ways to enforce cross border disposal);
- Unsafe pedestrian passage in front of the old Peacocks Store, owing to construction of scaffolding works - no further action required. Highways have been informed, but construction is already approved and scaffolding works licenced;
- Access to Kings House & Princes Mews – blocking in and parking on pavement issues. This area is already known and on the list to raise with Police at next appointment;
- Speeding issues coming down the hill on the A10 into the town. This issue is already known - raise with Police at next appointment.

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 the 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 & District Town Twinning

16.4 Appendix 4 – Area Committee Grant Form – Royston & District Volunteer Centre

16.5 .Appendix 5 – Area Committee Grant Form – Furniture Link

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18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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