

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT	AGENDA ITEM No. 9
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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 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 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 The Committee is asked to consider a Grant Award of £734 to Barkway Parish Council to assist with the purchase of new picnic benches, a new waste bin and a dog waste bin for Barkway Recreational Ground.
- 2.4 The Committee is asked to consider a Grant Award of £1,183 to Barley Town House to assist with renewing the curtains on both floors at the facility.
- 2.5 The Committee is asked to consider a Grant Award of £800 to Royston Means Business to assist with the purchase of traffic management signage for the Royston Christmas event.
- 2.6 The Committee is asked to acknowledge the recent release of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) Grants **for one year only** to Royston Cave (£750) who presented at the September Royston & District Area Committee.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To ensure that the Committee are kept informed of the work of the Community 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.

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. ISSUES

- 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 2015/16.
- 7.2 The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial year 2014/15 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 **£15,930**. The Committee also has **£923** funding available in the pre-allocated funds brought forward from the 2014/15 financial year.
- 7.4 This report has been produced to keep Members informed of the work of the Community Officer for the Royston & District Area.

8. GRANT REQUESTS

8.1 Barkway Parish Council

Following on from all the efforts in rebuilding the Pavilion, the Parish Council is seeking grant funding of £734 to contribute towards the total cost of £1,468 for the purchase of new picnic benches, a new waste bin and a dog waste bin at the Recreational Ground.

8.2 Barley Town House

The Managing group at the Barley Town House is seeking grant funding of £1,183 to help with the costs associated with renewing all the curtains on both floors of the building. Total cost of the project is £2,365.

This project follows on from other enhancements at the Hall, including extensive works to the downstairs kitchen area. The new curtaining will improve attractiveness of the hall to hirers / potential users and help retain heat during the winter months.

8.3 Royston Means Business

Royston Means Business is seeking grant funding of £800 to assist with the purchase of traffic management signage for the Royston Christmas event. This signage will also be made available to other groups planning future events in Royston.

8.4 Members are asked to note the funding applications currently in the pipeline but not yet ready for funding consideration as detailed in the table below.

Project
Potential funding support re Rural Schools Ceramics & Pottery Project – Possible sessions with Reed, Barley & Therfield Schools.
Funding support to assist with costs for staging a Royston Town Centre Cycle Criterium Race in 2016.
Funding support to assist with costs for holding the Barkway 10k run in 2016.
Funding support to assist with extension and kitchen refurbishment works proposed at Barkway Village Hall.
Funding support to Royston Town Youth FC to assist with equipment costs and publicity costs for a new youth team for 4-6 year olds.
Funding support to Royston Volunteer Centre to assist with costs associated with running a series of volunteering workshops in 2016 for the elderly and those reaching retirement age.

9. PROJECT/ACTIVITY/SCHEME DETAILS

9.1 Town Centre Street Furniture Maintenance Project

Maintenance and painting works were carried out on the street furniture on Royston High Street and side streets during September. The works which were carried out by HJ Haywood & Son Ltd are now complete and have helped improve the look of the town.

The Town Centre Maintenance project was one of many actions arising from the Royston Town Centre Working Party which is made up of representatives from the District Council, Town Council, County Council, Royston First and officers from North Herts District Council. Other projects have included the Royston deep clean and the Royston Fingerpost maintenance works.

9.2 Land at the end of Green Drift

The Royston CO continues to liaise with colleagues at Hertfordshire Highways regarding the unadopted land at the end of Green Drift. The Royston CO will continue to update Members with developments.

9.3 Royston Festival

The Royston Festival which was held between the 18th and 27th September was a great success. The Royston CO supported Creative Royston with the event paperwork as required by North Herts Safety Advisory Group and also with publicising the festival in the surrounding villages. The Royston CO also provided marshal support at the Royston Rocks Music Festival at The Old Bull Inn.

9.4 Royston Means Business Christmas Event

The Royston CO is assisting Royston Means Business with preparations for their Christmas Market event which will be held on Royston High Street between 12 noon and 5pm on Saturday 12th December.

For the safe running of this event, a road closure will be in place along Royston High Street. The organisers have applied for both a Temporary Event Notice (TEN) and a Town Police Clauses Act (TPCA). The Royston CO will be attendance at the event to assist with traffic management issues and to provide marshal support.

9.5 Barkway Parish Council

The Royston CO is supporting the Barkway Parish Council with their planning for extension and kitchen works at Barkway Village Hall. The project is projected to cost in the region of £50k and the Royston CO is investigating possible funding routes to generate in the region of £20k for the building works. The Royston CO is liaising with colleagues in Planning to ascertain if any appropriate UUs / s106 funds are available and will also assist the Parish Council in an Awards for All application if necessary.

Funding may also be sought from the Royston & District Area Committee at a future meeting.

9.6 Royston Road Cycling Criterium Event

The Royston CO and CM will be supporting Councillor Ben Lewis with the planning for the first ever Royston Road Cycling Race proposed to be held during June or July 2016. This event will be held in the Town Centre with the route likely to include parts of Market Hill and Fish Hill. A committee has been set up for this and will meet on a regular basis.

9.7 Councillor Surgery Updates

To promote the Councillor Surgeries the Royston CO has produced posters which will be displayed on Royston Town Council Notice Boards around the town and also in shop windows. Detailed in Appendix 2 are the issues that have been raised at recent surgeries and also any actions arising.

9.8 **Additional Salt Bin Provision**

There have been requests via the Royston Councillor Surgery process for additional salt bins in Royston. The Royston CO is looking at the areas requested and is liaising with colleagues in Grounds Maintenance and Highways to ascertain land ownership. The Royston & District Area Committee is requested to agree the release of funds from their base budget for the purchase of salt bins.

9.9 **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.

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 include 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, provided the expenditure is in accord with agreed Council policy.

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 2015/16.

11.2 The spreadsheet also details the pre-allocations carried forward from the previous financial year 2014/15 to the current financial year 2015/16.

11.3 In the past few years there has been no inflationary allowance to the Area Committee Budgets and the 2015/16 baseline budget has stayed the same as the previous year.

12. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 There are no relevant 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 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 2015/16.
- 16.2 Appendix 2 – Royston Councillor Surgery – Queries and Outcomes
- 16.3 Appendix 3 – Area Committee Grant Form – Barkway Parish Council
- 16.4 Appendix 4 – Area Committee Grant Form – Barley Town House
- 16.5 Appendix 5 – Area Committee Grant Form – Royston Means Business

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18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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