

ROYSTON & DISTRICT COMMITTEE

14th September 2016

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

TITLE OF REPORT: GRANT APPLICATIONS AND COMMUNITY UPDATE

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS:
COUNCILLOR TONY HUNTER

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 £500 to Royston Choral Society to assist with costs for putting on a concert of Handel's '*Messiah*' at Royston Parish Church in November. Funding to assist with publicity costs (posters, flyers, tickets , programmes) venue hire costs, music hire costs and staging.

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 expressed in the Corporate Plan.

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 2016/17.

7.2 The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial year 2015/16 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: - **£6,400.**

The Committee also has **£245** funding available in pre-allocated funds brought forward from the 2015/16 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 **Royston Choral Society**

Grant funding of £500 is requested to contribute towards the total cost of £5,100 to assist Royston Choral Society with costs for putting on a concert of **Handel's** 'Messiah' at Royston Parish Church in November. Funding to assist with publicity costs (posters, flyers, tickets & programmes) venue hire costs, music hire costs and staging.

- 8.2 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
Funding advice & support to assist with costs for putting on the Barkway 10k run in 2016.
Funding advice & support to Barkway Parish Council to assist with extension and kitchen refurbishment works at Barkway Village Hall.
Funding advice & support to Royston Town Youth FC to assist with equipment costs and publicity costs for a new youth team for 4-6 year olds.
Initial funding advice and support to Barkway & Barley 1 st Schools re proposals to develop and enhance external playground areas at both sites..
Funding advice & support to assist the Friends of Therfield 1 st School in the creation of an external covered communal area re hosting village / community events and extra curricular activities. The school has managed to secure all the necessary funding for this project from a £9k Awards for All grant and will no longer require funding support from the Committee.
Initial funding advice & support to assist Reed 1 st School in the development of a village library / community learning hub facility.
Initial advice & support to the Reed Village Hall Management Committee re the proposal of setting up a youth club at the Hall on Thursday evenings.
Advice & support to the Coombes Community Centre Manager re possible future enhancements / refurbishment projects to the facility.

9. PROJECT/ACTIVITY/SCHEME DETAILS

9.1 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.

Following discussions with Hertfordshire Highways,, the Royston CO is now working with the Hertfordshire County Council's Rights of Way Team, to make the pathway a Public Right of Way.

In order to do this, it will be necessary to improve the route construction, remove the gates at both end and install appropriate signage.

The Royston CO has liaised with Moody Homes and they have confirmed that they are willing to carry out the necessary works to bring the pathway up to specification so that it can become a Public Right of Way.

The Royston CO has briefed the residents who raised the pathway issue through the Councillor Surgery mechanism and they are happy with the proposals although they feel that low-level lighting would also benefit the location.

Funding would be required if lighting was to be included in the project. It should be noted however that lighting is not a requirement of a Public Right of Way.

If works are carried out and the pathway becomes a Public Right of Way, the area will be maintained by Hertfordshire County Council.

9.3 **Royston Festival**

The Royston CO continues to support Creative Royston with the planning for this year's festival. This includes providing assistance with the licensing paperwork, event planning paperwork and others as required by the North Herts Safety Advisory Group.

The two showcase events for the Festival are the Royston Carnival Event in Priory Memorial Gardens on Saturday 24th September and the Royston Music Festival which will be held at 10 venues across Royston on Sunday 25th September.

As part of the Royston carnival event, Creative Royston had planned for a procession through the town, finishing in Priory Memorial Gardens. Unfortunately this is no longer possible as a S16A order can only be used once in a 12 month calendar period for each location and has already been used for the Ad Hoc event in July. To request a further S16A it would be necessary for HCC to apply to the Secretary of State for permission to use it again. This process would require a minimum of 14 weeks notice from receiving a completed TTRO application from the event organiser. There is insufficient time to process the order.

The Royston CO will provide marshal support at both events to ensure that they run smoothly and without incident.

9.4 **Ad Hoc Summer Soul Event**

The Royston CO worked closely with Ad Hoc on the build up to event. As well as attending numerous planning meetings, the Royston CO also assisted with the event management plan and the road closure application. The Royston CO also secured the First Aid provision for the event when the original provider withdrew at short notice.

The Royston CO and CM provided support to the 4th Ad Hoc Summer Soul event on Saturday 9th July. As well as assisting with the event set up, the Royston CO and CM also provided support throughout the day, assisting with Traffic Management and marshalling,

Whilst the event was well supported, a number of issues did arise during the day which will need to be addressed if the event is to continue in the future. These included residents and businesses unable to get suitable access to the town, issues with the traffic management plan and several incidents during the evening which required police intervention. There will be a North Herts Safety Advisory De-brief meeting in September and the Royston CO will update the Committee at a future meeting.

9.5 **Therfield Pre-School**

Therfield Pre-school is currently run from the Village Hall but the facility has limitations in terms of spacing both for the children and with parking.

The group has recently received some initial drawings for the proposed venue. During the upcoming months the Royston CO & CM will be working with the group on both funding applications and their business plan.

The group will also need to determine the potential user groups for the new pavilion as this will help identify the potential funding streams that can be approached for the project.

9.6 **Highways Matters**

This section is included within the community update report for each committee cycle to facilitate debate and enable appropriate feedback on any of the proposed or listed Highways related schemes.

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 aid/financial support but excluding grants for district-wide activities. The Committee has delegated powers, as a body, to allocate discretionary budgets and devolved budgets within the terms determined by the Council and outlined in the current Grant Policy agreed by Cabinet in June 2016.

10.2 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides a General Power of Competence which gives local authorities the power to do anything that individuals generally may do. This may be for, or otherwise than for the benefit of the authority, its area or persons resident in its area.

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 **as a body** has delegated powers to administer funds from the budgets described. Whilst individual ward members may comment on and support (or not) any grant application put before the committee, the decision to award is afforded only to the Royston & District Area Committee itself under the Council's Constitution and provided such committee is quorate at the time of such decision.

11. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 In the past few years there has been no inflationary allowance to the main Area Committee Budget. From the 2016/17 financial year, a proposal was made through the council's corporate business planning process to reduce the overall amount the council awards by way of grants, both area committee and district wide, by a suggested 20%. Following member workshops, there was a request that whilst the principle of saving approximately £86k of revenue was supported, the current level of district MoUs should be retained, thus the area committee element was reduced by a greater amount.

11.2 Appendix 1 provides details of the 2016/17 budget position for the Area Committee.

12. **RISK IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 There are no relevant risk entries that have been recorded on Covalent, the Council's performance and risk system. Individual events should have their own risk assessments in place to mitigate any health and safety issues. Whenever a request for grant funding for equipment is received, the recipient of the funding will be advised to obtain insurance for the item to avoid a repeat request for funding in the event of the equipment being stolen or damaged. There are no pertinent risk implications for the Authority associated with any items within this report.

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 – Area Committee Grant Form – Royston Choral Society

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18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 18.1 Review of Policies and Procedures for Financial Assistance to Voluntary and Community Organisations, November 2002.
- 18.2 Review of Grants Policy Report to Cabinet June 2016.