

ROYSTON & DISTRICT COMMITTEE

30th November 2016

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

TITLE OF REPORT: GRANT APPLICATIONS AND COMMUNITY UPDATE

REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR FINANCE, POLICY & GOVERNANCE

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 £300 to Small Acts of Kindness CIC to assist with costs of sourcing and distributing Warm in Winter Gift Bags to older people living in North Herts.
- 2.4 The Committee is asked to consider a Grant Award of £4,677 to contribute towards the total cost of £87, 304 for Home–Start Royston & South Cambridgeshire to run the Brighten the Blues project.

- 2.5 The Committee is asked to consider a Grant Award of £295 to Therfield Village Preschool to cover costs for elevations drawings to be drawn up by a quantity surveyor.
- 2.6 The Committee is asked to consider a Grant Award of £1,000 to North Herts Emotional Health in Schools Service (NESSie) to assist with costs for running a series of workshops /forums in Royston and the surrounding villages for parents and children on the topics of self-harm and mental health issues.
- 2.7 The Committee is asked to consider reallocating the £200 carried forward from the 2015/16 financial year for dog bins to the base budget for 2016/17 period,

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: - **£6,145.**

The Committee has £200 brought forward from the 2015/16 financial year under Leisure & Environmental Projects. This money was allocated to dog bins but has not been spent. Members may wish to reallocate this to the base budget for the 2016/17 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 Small Acts of Kindness CIC

The Committee is asked to consider a Grant Award of £300 to Small Acts of Kindness CIC. Small Acts of Kindness is an unregistered charity, consisting of 50 volunteers, which has been operating since 2014.

The group is seeking £2,100 in total from North Herts District Council and will be making representation at all 5 Area Committees during the November / December 2016 cycle of meetings.

Funding is being sought to assist with costs of sourcing and distributing 150 Warm in Winter Gift bags to older people living in North Herts. Each Warm in Winter Gift bag contains a large fleecy blanket, thermal socks, hat and gloves, a mug and a selection of hot drinks.

North Herts CVS, North Herts Community Transport and Hertfordshire Independent Living Services have all made requests for gift bags for their clients living in Hitchin, Baldock, Royston, Letchworth and the villages of Knebworth, Whitwell and Ashwell.

8.2 Home-Start Royston & South Cambridgeshire

The Committee is asked to consider a Grant Award of £4,677 to contribute towards the total cost of £87,304 for Home-Start Royston & South Cambridgeshire to run the Brighten the Blues project.

This project comprises of an early intervention home visiting service supporting local families with children under 9 in combating poor mental health issues. Funding requested would enable support for 3 families in Royston for a year. Support would include weekly visits for the families with a qualified volunteer from Home-Start.

The average cost for support per family per year is £1559. Funding requested covers home visiting volunteer costs, coordinator costs and publicity costs.

8.3 Therfield Village Preschool

The Committee is asked to consider a Grant Award of £295 to Therfield Village Preschool to cover costs for elevations drawings to be drawn up by a quantity surveyor.

These drawing are required to enable the group to apply for planning permissions and also for applying for funding from a range of potential funding streams.

8.4 North Herts Emotional Health in Schools Service

The Committee is asked to consider a Grant Award of £1,000 to North Herts Emotional Health in Schools Service (NESSie) to assist with costs for running a series of 6 workshops /forums in Royston and the surrounding villages for parents and children on the topics of self-harm and mental health issues.

8.5 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 Barkway Parish Council to assist with extension and kitchen refurbishment works at Barkway Village Hall. Planning deferred until 2017.
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.
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.
Funding advice and support to Reed Cricket Club to assist with purchase of new equipment including training nets.

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 and Moody Homes regarding the unadopted land at the end of Green Drift.

Moody Homes have agreed to fund the necessary works to bring the pathway up to the required specification so that it can be accepted as a Hertfordshire Right Of Way. As part of these works Moody Homes will also arrange for the removal of the gates at both ends of the pathway and for the installation of the necessary 'Right of Way' Signage.

If these measured are deemed satisfactory by the Herts Right of Way Team, works will be carried out in the first quarter of 2017,

9.2 Royston Festival

The Royston CO provided marshal support at the Royston Festival's Carnival event in Priory Memorial Gardens on Saturday 24th September. The event was well supported and passed without incident. The other showcase event of this year's festival was the

Royston Musical Festival which was held across 9 venues in Royston on Sunday 25th September. This was well supported and will be repeated as part of the 2017 festival.

9.3 **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 Royston CO & CM continue to work with Therfield Pre-school and other interested parties on a new pavilion project for Therfield. The project is being driven by Therfield Pre-School and Therfield Cricket Club.

The Pavilion will be used as the new preschool as well as a sports facility for the village. In terms of sporting activity the venue will be used by both Therfield and Royston Cricket Clubs and potentially by local youth football clubs.

The group have been given consent by Royston Conservators to develop a new pavilion on the land of the current pavilion site.

During the first quarter of 2017, the group will hold a series of public meetings to gauge views on the proposed new pavilion design.

9.4 **Royston Means Business Christmas Market Event**

The Royston CO has been assisting the organisers with the planning of the Christmas Market Event which will be held for the fourth time on Sat 10th December.

The Royston CO will be providing marshal support on the day and will be assisting with the event set up and take down.

9.5 **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 Southern Rural 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 2016/17.
- 16.2 Appendix 2 – Area Committee Grant Form – Small Acts of Kindness CIC
- 16.3 Appendix 3 – Area Committee Grant Form – Home-Start Royston & South Cambs
- 16.4 Appendix 4 – Area Committee Grant Form – Therfield Village Preschool
- 16.5 Appendix 5 – Area Committee Grant Form – North Herts Emotional Health in Schools Service

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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.