

**SOUTHERN RURAL AREA COMMITTEE
THURSDAY 28 MARCH 2013**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

7

TITLE OF REPORT : CHAMPION NEWS & FINANCE REPORT

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 Development Discretionary 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 awarding support funding to the Knebworth Festival Committee as outlined in section 8.1 of this report.
- 2.4 That the Committee considers awarding support funding to Gt Ashby Community Council to assist in delivering the consultation process involved in developing a Community Plan as outlined in section 8.2 of this report.
- 2.5 That the Committee considers awarding support funding to the Young People of the Year Award scheme as outlined in section 8.3 of this report.
- 2.6 That the Committee considers awarding support funding to the Ickleford Squash Club – Coaching Initiative as outlined in section 8.4 of this report.
- 2.7 That the Committee considers awarding support funding in relation to potential Highways schemes as proposed and discussed under section 8.6 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 procedure.
- 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 6 occasions per annum 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 2012/13.
- 7.2 The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial year 2011/12 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 **£194**

- 7.4 The current level of unallocated funds within the Committee's MoU Budget is **£790**
- 7.5 The current level of unallocated funds within the Committee's Ward Member Budgets is **£900**
- 7.6 This report has been produced to keep Members informed of the work of the Community Development Officer for the Southern Rural Area.

8. PROJECT/ACTIVITY/SCHEME DETAILS

8.1 Knebworth Festival 2013

The Festival's organising committee is seeking grant funding of £500 towards the provision of the Fun Day, which is part of the Festival Week an planned for Saturday 29th June2013.

One of the main features of the Fun Day will be the Music Zone which is a sound stage that is hired in at a cost of £1,200 to provide an opportunity for young people to bring their skills and ideas to the Festival and show case their talents.

The overall estimated cost in providing all the Festival events & activities this year is £8,105 with a net cost of £4,705

The cost of providing the Fun Day element within that programme is £3,775

Funday Costings Breakdown

Inflatables	£945
Stage hire	£1200
Entertainment	£850
Marque hire	£250
St Johns first aid	£280
Stall hire	£250

Income from all the events is estimated at £3,400 and the Committee is expecting to underwrite approximately £3,000 of the overall costs along with other sources of funding, benefits in kind and donations.

Knebworth Village Festival 2013 Programme Summary

From Friday 21st June (pre- festival event) to Sunday 30th June 2013

Friday 21st June

Stevenage and Knebworth Arts Group present a play about Emily Wilding Davison the suffragette who threw herself in front of the king's horse at the Derby in June 1913. This has been written by Ros Connelly one of the group's favourite lecturers.

Thursday 27th June

Knebworth Twinning Association will be organising a Celebrity Talk by Alistair Scott, President of the British Interplanetary Society.

Friday 28th June

The Knebworth Community Chorus will be presenting an evening of music in St Martins.

Saturday 29th June

The big Fun Day event on the Recreation Ground from 1pm.

The day was so successful last year with lots of activities & fun for all ages

Music zone

The music stage will be the focus for local talent and people are invited to sign up to sing, do a turn, dance or play a tune.

Community Zone

Various community stalls with a 'Mini Farmers Market' area selling a range of produce from deli, bread, veg, cheese and much more.

Kids Zone

Craft workshops, North Herts Play Rangers, Knebworth Primary School and local Nursery Schools.

Sunday 30th June

Knebworth House from 6.15pm - A garden tour, hog roast and music.

Details of this unique event together with the full Festival programme will be announced later in the year.

8.2 Great Ashby Community Council

Great Ashby Community Council is currently working through the process of developing a Community Plan. Support funding of £885 is being sought to help with the consultation phase of the process.

This includes the preparation, distribution and collection of a community questionnaire which will largely be done online, the printing of postcards publicising the survey and the running of some focus groups.

Information on the whole process and the ways in which people can give their feedback will be detailed on the Community Council's website, in GASBAG, the local press and posters / leaflets at the Community Centre & local shops.

8.3 Young People of the Year Award

Young People of the Year Award is a Hertfordshire wide campaign that aims to improve the image of young people in the media and by society as a whole. Rewarding the good work that many young people carry out provides positive role models for others and improves the public perception of Youth.

The organisers work closely with local to encourage young people to take part in voluntary activities, help others and improve the lives of people around them. The organisation is seeking a grant award of £300 to assist in providing sessions in local Schools.

The organisation is applying to all five NHDC Area Committees and requesting £300 from each. They have also gained sponsorship from businesses such as Johnson Matthey, Tesco, Runwood Homes, Mitsubishi Electric and in kind contributions from the University of Hertfordshire and Elstree Studios. They have also been successful in gaining funding from other local authorities within Hertfordshire. This sponsorship will contribute to the project as a whole, which covers the entire county and culminates in a prestigious awards ceremony to be held in either Elstree or Hatfield.

Members are advised of the that status re applications to the other Area Committees:-

Letchworth AC – Group to present at the Committee’s next meeting
Hitchin AC - £300 grant approved at the Committee’s March meeting
Royston AC - £300 grant approved at the Committee’s March meeting
Baldock AC – Application not considered

8.4 **Ickleford Squash Club – Coaching Initiative**

The Club is seeking funding of £554 to enable 2 squash members to attend a training course and obtain ESR (England Squash and Racquetball) Level 1 coaching qualification.

The club currently run ladies squash training sessions every Sunday. These sessions are free of charge and are aimed at encouraging more females to play squash / racquetball. As a direct result of these sessions ladies now represent approximately 12% of the membership and several have now progressed to play in the internal mixed squash leagues.

There are currently no qualified squash coaches in the Club and this training will enable them to improve the quality of coaching that is available. The course also includes CRB checks and a Protecting Young People in Sport on line training module, which will help pave the way for the club to offer junior squash training sessions at some point in the future.

All of the training sessions that are currently run by the club on Sundays are delivered run by volunteers, open to the public and free of charge.

8.5 **Ward Member Grants**

Members are to note that the following Ward Member Grants have been proposed & approved over the last month. In addition Members are asked to consider committing any balances within their respective Ward Member Budgets prior to the 31st March 2013.

Cllr Tom Brindley

£450 – Codicote Youth Rugby Initiative

Cllr Sal Jarvis

£250 – Gt. Ashby Youth Club Support

£150 – Gravely Playground Fencing

£300 – Wymondley Bus Stops

Cllr Jane Gray

£200 – Knebworth Link Up Lunch Club

Cllr Faye Barnard

£360 – Kings Walden Village Hall – External Paving Works

Cllr David Barnard

£105 – Offley Parish Tractor

Cllr John Bishop

£300 – Kimpton Memorial Hall – Insulation Works

8.6 **Highways Matters**

It is proposed that a section entitled ' Highways Matters ' is included within the Area Champion's News 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.

8.6.1 **Wymondley Bus Stops**

Members are asked to consider the proposal of match funding County Councillor Highways funds with Area Committee Funds re the provision of Bus Shelters in Wymondley.

9. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 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 aid/financial support. However, this does not include grants for district wide activities.

9.2 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.

9.3 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.

9.4 The Committee has delegated powers to administer funds from the budgets described.

10. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 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 2012/13.

10.2 The spreadsheet also details the pre-allocations carried forward from the previous financial year 2011/12 to the current financial year 2012/13.

11. **RISK IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 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.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 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.
- 12.2 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.
- 12.3 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.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 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.

14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

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

15. APPENDICES

- 15.1 Appendix 1 - Area Committee Development Budget Spreadsheet.
- 15.2 Appendix 2 – Area Committee Work Programme 2012/13.
- 15.3 Appendix 3 – Grant Report for Knebworth Festival 2013
- 15.3 Appendix 4 – Grant Report for Gt Ashby Community Council - Community Plan
- 15.4 Appendix 5 – Grant Report for Young People of the Year Award Scheme
- 15.5 Appendix 6 – Grant Report for Ickleford Squash Club – Coaching Initiative

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17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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