

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL



5 June 2020

Our Ref Letchworth 17.06.20
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To: Members of the Committee: Councillor Daniel Allen, Councillor Kate Aspinwall, Councillor Morgan Derbyshire, Councillor Gary Grindal, Councillor Terry Hone, Councillor David Levett, Councillor Ian Mantle, Councillor Helen Oliver, Councillor Sean Prendergast, Councillor Sue Ngwala, Councillor Mike Rice and Councillor Adem Ruggiero-Cakir

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A
MEETING OF THE LETCHWORTH COMMITTEE**

to be held as

A VIRTUAL MEETING

On

WEDNESDAY, 17TH JUNE, 2020 AT 7.30 PM

Yours sincerely,

Jeanette Thompson
Service Director – Legal and Community

****MEMBERS PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU DOWNLOAD ALL AGENDAS AND REPORTS VIA THE MOD.GOV APPLICATION ON YOUR TABLET BEFORE ATTENDING THE MEETING****

Agenda **Part I**

Item	Page
1. ELECTION OF A CHAIR FOR 2020/21 To elect a Chair of Letchworth Committee for the Civic year 2020/21.	
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
3. ELECTION OF A VICE-CHAIR FOR 2020/21 To elect a Vice-Chair of Letchworth Committee for the Civic year 2020/21.	
4. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS Members should notify the Chair of other business which they wish to be discussed at the end of either Part I or Part II business set out in the agenda. They must state the circumstances which they consider justify the business being considered as a matter of urgency. The Chair will decide whether any item(s) raised will be considered.	
5. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS Members are reminded that any declarations of interest in respect of any business set out in the agenda, should be declared as either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Declarable Interest and are required to notify the Chair of the nature of any interest declared at the commencement of the relevant item on the agenda. Members declaring a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest must withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the item. Members declaring a Declarable Interest, wishing to exercise a 'Councillor Speaking Right', must declare this at the same time as the interest, move to the public area before speaking to the item and then must leave the room before the debate and vote.	
6. LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY BID MANAGER To receive a verbal presentation from the Letchworth Garden City BID Manager.	
7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION To receive petitions, comments and questions from the public including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Green Care at Norton.	

8. GRANTS AND COMMUNITY UPDATE
REPORT OF THE POLICY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

(Pages 5
- 14)

To update the Committee on the activities and actions of the Communities Officer, to advise on the current expenditure and balances of the delegated budgets and to consider applications for grant funding.

9. WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS

To receive any verbal reports from Members regarding Ward matters and Outside Organisations.

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**LETCHWORTH COMMITTEE
17 JUNE 2020**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: GRANTS AND COMMUNITY UPDATE

REPORT OF THE POLICY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

CURRENT COUNCIL PRIORITIES: BE A MORE WELCOMING AND INCLUSIVE COUNCIL / BUILD THRIVING AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES / RESPOND TO CHALLENGES TO THE ENVIRONMENT / ENABLE AN ENTERPRISING AND CO-OPERATIVE ECONOMY

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To advise the Committee on the current expenditure and balances of the Committee Grant budgets
- 1.2 To bring to the Committee's attention details of recent requests received for Committee grant funding, made by community groups and local organisations
- 1.3 To advise the Committee of the activities and schemes with which the Community Engagement officers have been involved in.
- 1.4 To bring to the Committee's attention some important community-based activities that will take place during the next few months.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Committee be recommended to consider allocating funding from their discretionary community budget towards the projects below.
- 2.2 **£2,500** to Green Care at Norton for disabled accessibility as outlined in 8.1.1
- 2.3 That the Committee be recommended to endorse the actions taken by the Community Engagement team to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Letchworth.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To ensure the Committee is kept informed of the work of the Community Engagement Team.

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 by assisting in the effective financial management of the Area Committee's budget. This ensures that all actions are performed in line with the Authority's Financial Regulations, the Council's Constitution, and the guidance of the Grants Policy as agreed by Cabinet in January 2020

3.3 The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims of the Council 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 included within this report.

5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

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 bodies/groups has taken place regarding funding proposals for Committee Funds.

6. FORWARD PLAN

6.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

7. BACKGROUND

7.1 With reference to the Council's Constitution, Section 9.3 Area Committees will include budgets for the purpose of providing grants and discretionary budgets that may be used within the area of the Committee for economic, social and environmental well-being. Under the current grant criteria there is no upper limit outlined for the amount of grant funding to be allocated which can be decided at the Committee's discretion.

7.2 Members are asked to note the information detailed in Appendix 1. Letchworth Area Committee Budget Spread sheet, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for 2020/21. The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial years, including balances and past expenditure.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

Councillors are at liberty to consider any amount requested in a grant application as long as the Letchworth committee has sufficient funds in the 2020/2021 budget.

8.1 Grant Applications

8.1.1

Applicant Project	Green Care at Norton CIC Installation of safe walkways suitable for wheelchair users and those with restricted mobility.
Sum requested	£2,500
Total project cost	£5,600
Match funding	£2,100 Herts Community Fund
Previous support	£2,052 (£1000 not spent after getting a cheaper quote)
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Council Objectives	Build thriving and resilient communities / respond to challenges to the environment

At the Area Committee Meeting in March 2020 it was suggested by elected members that Green Care investigated and costed how to make the project's physical infrastructure more accessible for those with physical disabilities.

This money will be used to install safe walkways, a social area and raised beds so that those with physical disabilities can access Green Care. The project already benefits North Herts residents who are experiencing social exclusion through either loneliness, unemployment, learning difficulties, mental illness or who are recovering from ill health. Given additional funding for accessibility will also enable those with mobility issues to safely take part.

This project gives ongoing long-term support to vulnerable and socially excluded residents in order to overcome social exclusion through loneliness, isolation and mental health issues. These issues are likely to be much more prevalent after the lockdown. It also supports participants in the project to take the first steps into paid employment through collaboration with partner organisations; Settle Homes Tenancy Support, Job Centre Plus and Create Community Network's 'Foundations 4 Work' programme.

This support takes the form of allotment-based food and flower growing adapted to the needs of participants. Advice and support are given to participants to enable them to cook and appreciate fresh produce which they have grown. The surplus fresh produce and flowers which are produced will in turn be donated to food bank outlets or those in need in Letchworth and North Herts. Wherever possible reclaimed and upcycled materials are used for the project's infrastructure. They have already made use of scrap timber, a second hand shed, donated compost bins and scrap artificial turf.

Match Funding

Herts Community Fund awarded Greencare £2,100 last month. A saving of £1,000 was made on money from the original grant of £2,052 given by Area Committee, as a **local and cheaper** source was found for the polytunnel (previously it was a national source).

As Councillors had made a point of offering ongoing support to the project it was felt that returning the underspend would not be the best use of officer's time.

It has been agreed that this £1,000 will be used towards this next phase of the project, the cost of walkways and raised beds, hence the group only requiring the additional £2,500 as requested.

8.2 Community Engagement and update on Previous Grants awarded

8.2.1 Policy and Community Engagement Team

This has been an unprecedented time for all of us. 'Business as usual' came to a temporary halt. Having said that, the Team have been as busy as ever:

- Liaising with Letchworth Heritage Foundation, North Herts Healthy Hub and HertsHelp to ensure that residents get the help and support they need.
- Funding was awarded to North Herts CVS at the end of the last financial year in the form of a delegated decision, using the remaining amount in the 2019/20 budget.
- Work to support the YC Herts Youth Council has continued via a virtual platform; attended a virtual joint meeting between North Herts and Stevenage Youth Councils.
- Signposting residents and local projects to sources of help such as food, mental health and domestic abuse.
- The first telephone Councillors' surgery was held.
- Keeping in touch with network groups via telephone and email.
- Attended online training sessions around community, mental health and well-being and how we might manage coming out of lockdown.
- Supporting local neighbourhoods by providing 'rescued' food.
- Funding given at the last meeting: Letchworth Festival have returned their funding as the event could not go ahead this year. The £3000 returned has been put back under the carry-forward on the budget sheet Appendix 1.
- Letchworth Roller Hockey Club have postponed taking their allocated funding until required.
- Green Care successfully installed their social shed and polytunnel:



- St. Thomas's church were unable to go ahead with the replacement door at this time.
- No response from Letchworth Army Cadets, though they would not have been able to meet since March.

8.3 Highways Matters

8.3.1 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.

8.3.2 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.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Area Committees have delegated power under section 9.8.1 (a) & (b) 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 December 2019. Section 9.8.2 (h) of the Constitution in respect of Area Committees' Terms of Reference provides that they may: "establish and maintain relationships with outside bodies/voluntary organisations operating specifically with the area including, where appropriate, the provision of discretionary grant aid/financial support etc. but excluding grants for district-wide activities".

9.2 Chapter 1, s1-8 of the Localism Act 2011 provides a General Power of Competence which gives local authorities the powers to do anything provided that it is not specifically prohibited in legislation.

9.3 Section 137 of the 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. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 As outlined in Appendix A Committee budget 2020/21.

10.2 The agreed budget for this financial year remains at £11,000. The carry over amount from 2019/20 was £4,828. However, a grant of £3,000 awarded to the Letchworth Festival in 2019/20 has been refunded as the event has been cancelled due to Covid-19. This has increased the carry forward funding to £7,828, of which £5,468 has been allocated leaving £2,360 available for allocation.

10.3 The grant funding applied for in this round adds up to **£2,500**. The committee has sufficient funds to award the full amount to all organisations as outlined on the report. If all the grants considered at this meeting are agreed it will leave a total of £10,860 available for allocation for the next meeting.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no relevant risk entries that have been recorded on Pentana Risk, 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.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

12.1. In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their 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.

12.2. Area committee funding is awarded to community groups that clearly demonstrate positive impact on the community and wider environment. The projects outlined in this report seek to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

13.1. The Social Value Act and "go local" requirements do not apply to this report.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

14.1. There are no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this report.

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 – Committee Budgets 2020/21

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

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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 Grant Policy Cabinet January 2020

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LETCWORTH BUDGET 2020/21

SUMMARY/ TOTALS	Funding	Allocated	Spent	Outstanding	Unallocated Budget					
Discretionary Grants brought forward from 2019/20	£4,828	£2,468	-£1,304	£3,772	£2,360					
Discretionary Grants 2020/21	£11,000	£0	£0	£0	£11,000					
Total	£15,828	£2,468	-£1,304	£3,772	£13,360					

DISCRETIONARY BUDGETS

	Funding	Code	Project	Allocated	Date	Spent	Outstanding	Unallocated	
Funds Brought Forward from 19/20	£4,828		Small Acts Of Kindness	£1,800	19/06/2019	£0	£1,800		
			Letchworth Rink Roller Hockey Club	£2,500	11/03/2020	£528	£1,972		
			Returned Payment - Letchworth Garden City Festival Committee	-£3,000		-£3,000	£0		
			Tilehouse Counselling	£640	14/04/2020	£640	£0		
			North Herts Centre for Voluntary Service	£528	02/04/2020	£528	£0		
Total	£4,828			£2,468		-£1,304	£3,772	£2,360	

DISCRETIONARY BUDGETS

	Funding		Project	Allocated	Date	Spent	Outstanding	Unallocated	Comments
2020/21									
Base Budget	£11,000						£0		
							£0		
							£0		
							£0		
							£0		
Total	£11,000			£0		£0	£0	£11,000	

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