

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL



26 November 2021

Our Ref Southern Rural Committee/ 9 Dec 2021
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To: Members of the Committee: Councillor Faye S Frost (Chair), Councillor George Davies (Vice-Chair), Councillor David Barnard, Councillor John Bishop, Councillor Ian Moody, Councillor Lisa Nash, Councillor Sam North, Councillor Claire Strong, Councillor Mandi Tandi and Councillor Terry Tyler

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A

MEETING OF THE SOUTHERN RURAL COMMITTEE

to be held in the

COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES

On

THURSDAY, 9TH DECEMBER, 2021 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. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2. MINUTES - 21 OCTOBER 2021 To take as read and approve as a true record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 21 October 2021.	(Pages 5 - 12)
3. 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.	
4. 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.	
5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION To receive petitions, comments and questions from the public.	
6. GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TEAM LEADER	(Pages 13 - 22)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To advise the Members on the current expenditure and balances of the Committee Grant budgets.• To bring to the Members' attention to recent requests received for Committee grant funding, made by community groups and local organisations.• To advise of the activities and schemes with which the Community	

Engagement officers have been involved in.

- To bring to the Members' attention some important community-based activities that will take place during the next few months.

7. WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS

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

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Public Document Pack Agenda Item 2

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

SOUTHERN RURAL COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES
ON THURSDAY, 21ST OCTOBER, 2021 AT 7.30 PM

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Councillor Faye S Frost (Chair), Councillor George Davies (Vice-Chair), Ian Moody, Lisa Nash, Claire Strong and Mandi Tandi*

In Attendance: *Rebecca Coates (Community Protection Manager), John Marshall (Community Safety Team Leader), Claire Morgan (Community Engagement Team Leader) and William Edwards (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager).*

Also Present: *At the commencement of the meeting approximately 5 members of the public, including registered speakers.*

63 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 1:18

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors John Bishop, David Barnard, and Terry Tyler.

64 MINUTES - 24 JUNE 2021

Audio Recording – 1:42

Councillor Faye Frost proposed, Councillor Lisa Nash seconded and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 24 June 2021 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair, with the following addendum:

At Minute 60: “The grant awarded previously by this Committee to Offley & Stopsley Cricket Club was for £2000, meaning that if a like award were to be made the amount should be increased by £500 only.”

65 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – 5:27

There was no other business notified.

66 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 5:45

- (1) The Chair welcomed those present at the meeting, especially those who had attended to give a presentation;

- (2) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded;
- (3) The Chair drew attention to the item on the agenda front pages regarding Declarations of Interest and reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question.

67 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Audio recording – 6:48

Natalie Barton-Pye, Lucy Gallard and Neil Jay – Offley Allotment Association – thanked the Chair for the opportunity to address the Committee in support of their grant application and gave a presentation including:

- They were seeking a grant asking for funds to get running water installed on the allotment site
- The allotments in Offley had been around in their current location for about three years; previously, the plots were managed by the landlord.
- Earlier this year, the landlord approached the ploholders and asked if they would create an association, to manage the plots and pay a lease;
- The association became responsible for maintaining the site, collecting the rent, and making sure everything was maintained and safe on the site
- Plot holders did not have any access to running water. During the winter months, they have water collection facilities; however, they do not have a source of water that is communal on the site which during the summer months becomes an issue because they collect or store enough water.
- The allotment accommodates 31 plots, serving around 35 people and their families, and a school;
- Installing permanent water access would save around a tonne of CO2 a year, and would allow ploholders without vehicles to access water year round.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Claire Strong
- Councillor Faye Frost
- Councillor Lisa Nash
- Councillor Mandi Tandi

In response to questions the Offley Allotment Association advised:

- Plot rent was £18 a year for a half plot, or £30 for a full plot;
- The allotment association was unable to charge much more than that until running water and security could be provided;
- They were keen to keep rates low to ensure the allotments were accessible to people on low incomes;
- Fundraising events including a quiz night and a Christmas market were planned;
- £500 discretionary funding from the parish council had been secured;
- There were other flat costs associated with running the allotments including ground rent, insurance, and maintenance of communal areas;
- The landowners had provided some water troughs for water storage
- Funding from Affinity Water, the supplier, was no longer available;
- Any support the Committee could offer would be gratefully received, and funds were essential for the future success of the project; without water installed the association were concerned ploholders attracted to the site would lose crops and become disheartened with the project.

The Chair thanked the Offley Allotment Association for their presentation.

Parish Councillor Dr. Rebecca Riches-Duit – Little Wymondley Parish Council thanked the Chair for the opportunity to address the Committee in support of their grant application, and gave a presentation including:

- She had agreed to take on the task of investigating the cost of purchasing and installing a new defibrillator for the parish and seeking grant funding;
- The Parish Council did not have sufficient finances of its own to achieve this due to competing financial priorities partly related to COVID-19;
- They were asking the Southern Rural Committee for a grant of £2225 pounds to purchase and install a defibrillator in the centre of Little Wymondley
- The money would be spent on the purchase and installation of a tier one defibrillator that suits the community or the untrained user situation, to be installed on the outside wall of the Baptist Church on Stevens Road, which runs through the centre of the village;
- The community would benefit from having a defibrillator accessible to assist anybody in cardiac arrest;
- There was a defibrillator in the Parish but it was some way from the centre of the village in the locked sports pavilion and primarily intended for use during accidents at sporting events.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Claire Strong
- Councillor Faye Frost
- Councillor Lisa Nash

In response to questions Parish Councillor Dr Rebecca Riches-Duit advised:

- They did not believe the County Councillor for their area had the funding available to support this project;
- The defibrillator in the sports pavilion was not sufficient for the needs of the community at large;
- They would be able to look at funding the installation of the defibrillator themselves but funding from the Committee would be required to acquire it;

The Chair thanked Parish Councillor Dr Rebecca Riches-Duit for her presentation.

68 GRANT APPLICATIONS AND COMMUNITY UPDATE

Audio Recording – 37:22

The Community Engagement Team Leader presented the report entitled Grant and Community Update along with Appendices A and B and drew attention to the following:

- The application by Kimpton Parish Council had been withdrawn;
- Recalculated accordingly the budget sheet showed £7365 remaining, and the two grants as requested totalled £7674 which would leave a shortfall of £309;
- Members were not able to award both grants as requested due to the budget shortfall.

It was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee endorse the actions of the Community Engagement Team to promote greater community capacity and wellbeing in the Southern Rural area.

a) GRANT APPLICATION: OFFLEY ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

Audio Recording – 39:00

The following Members asked questions and took part in debate:

- Councillor Ian Moody
- Councillor Claire Strong
- Councillor Faye Frost
- Councillor George Davies

Points raised included:

- Section 106 money could be investigated as a source of funding;
- This application was for 60% of the Committee's total budget and there were more meetings in the civic year to consider;
- The installation of water needed to be in place before the summer but until then was not urgent;
- The Committee valued the allotment project and saw its worth for the local community;
- The allotment association had fundraising ventures planned;
- The County Councillor for the area should be approached for funding from their locality budget;
- There was presently a 3 year lease on the land and spending public money on land not certain to be in public use in the near future was a concern;
- The allotment association was encouraged to return to the Committee in December once their fundraising situation was further explored.

Councillor Claire Strong proposed that the application be deferred to the next meeting. Councillor Lisa Nash seconded.

On the vote it was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee **DEFER** consideration of this application to until the next meeting.

REASON FOR DEFERRAL: To allow officers and the applicant to further explore financial options beside grant funding to support the project.

b) GRANT APPLICATION: WYMONDLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Audio Recording - 47:01

The following Members asked questions and took part in debate

- Councillor Claire Strong
- Councillor Faye Frost

Points raised included:

- The Parish Council had indicated that they would be able to find funds for installation themselves;
- The Committee preferred that community groups thoroughly explore alternative fundraising options or part funding rather than requesting that the Committee fully fund a project in the first instance.

Councillor Faye Frost proposed, Councillor Claire Strong seconded and it was:

RESOLVED: That grant funding of **£1925** be awarded to Wymondley Parish Council towards the purchase and installation of a Tier 1 defibrillator.

69

FLY-TIPPING AND ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME IN THE SOUTHERN RURAL AREA

Audio Recording – 50:00

The Community Protection Manager and Community Safety Team Leader gave a presentation on fly tipping and environmental crime in the Southern Rural area, raising points including:

- Fly tipping had continued to increase, particularly over the last 18 months to 2 years during the pandemic, and Council officers and partners have been working really hard to tackle the issue.
- From a low point in 2012/13, where 561 offences were recorded, fly tipping has massively increased to last year where 1871 offences were recorded. The increase on last year was 72%.
- A lot of can be attributed to the early stages of lockdown.
- Even though restrictions were being eased and waste sites are reopened, offences are still at a similar rate as to last year;
- 40% of flight tips that were cleared were in the Hitchwood, Offa and Hoo areas which accounted for 967 offences out of just under 2,500.
- Out of the 80 offences so far this year in that area, 12 have had evidence to link to a person or an address; 8 of those 12 relate back to Luton.
- While there had been an increase in offences and reports there had been no increase in staff to address them and the team was stretched;
- In the last year 27 fixed penalties were issued, 6 individuals were prosecuted the team issued 10 Community Resolutions under the Anti Social Behaviour Act.
- This year a further 12 fixed penalties had been issued, with one court prosecution and increased community resolutions up to 19;
- The top five areas for fly-tipping throughout North Herts in the last three years were Hitchwood, Offa and Who at 967, Chesfield on 170, Arbury on 130, Weston and Standon at 109, and Knebworth at 100.
- The team was working on data analysis to map offences;
- The Southern Rural area was vast and had no natural centre which made prevention difficult;
- Work was ongoing with Luton Borough Council, the Shared Anti-Fraud Service, and the National Anti-Fraud Network to prevent fly tips and track offenders;
- The team was also working with community groups and parish councils to encourage the public to engage responsible waste contractors and to report fly tips;
- Court proceedings against fly-tippers were not always effective measures due to long lead in times and low fines;
- Lobbying work was underway to influence government policy in this area to make court orders a more effective deterrent;
- Fly tips were now being advertised on the North Herts website and social media channels broadcasting the fines associated with them.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Claire Strong
- Councillor Faye Frost
- Councillor Mandi Tandi
- Councillor Ian Moody

In response to questions the Community Safety Team Leader advised:

- Fines are set by government for fixed penalty notices. The maximum that the Council can issue currently is £400 on a fixed penalty, and the minimum they can be reduced to is £120; NHCs rate was £300
- Most fixed penalty notices were paid and payment terms were available for those who could not afford to pay in one instalment;
- People issued with fixed penalty notices could not be named and shamed if and when the fine was discharged as it was not considered a criminal offence, and liability ends with the payment of the fine.
- Setting up permanent CCTV cameras in rural areas was difficult in that identifying hotspots was hard and there were not readily available power supplies;
- 'Wildlife,' style cameras were sometimes used but these were often detected by offenders;

In response to questions the Community Protection Manager advised:

- When the Committee last received an update on fly tipping numbers were down; incidences had since increased;
- The Herts Waste Partnership was leading on lobbying efforts to influence the government and Sentencing Council on improving the impact of court proceedings against fly-tipping; Members could support these efforts by amplifying this message and liaising with other authorities including local MPs;
- Work was being done to educate the public on licensing and the necessity of checking whether waste carriers were disposing of waste legally to prevent fly tips before they occur;
- There was certainly a correlation between the closure of waste disposal services at the start of the pandemic lockdown and an increase in fly tips.

The Chair thanked the Community Protection Manager and Community Safety Team Leader for their presentation.

70 INFORMATION NOTE: HITCHIN RURAL SAFER NEIGHBOURHOOD REPORT

Audio Recording: 1:32:46

The Committee received the information note of the Hertfordshire Constabulary entitled Hitchin Rural Safer Neighbourhood Report.

Councillor Faye Frost noted that she had been in contact with Sergeant Guy Westwood due to concerns about an officer's conduct in the area. She reiterated that she felt 99.9% of the time the police in the area were helpful, thorough, and diligent. Eight or nine members of the same village had come forward to say they had a problem with a police officer, and she had been to Sergeant Westwood and Sergeant Nelms who were instantly responsive. They brought this officer in, listened to everyone's concerns, and put forward extra training for this officer to resolve the issue.

71 SECTION 106 ANNUAL UPDATE 2020/21

Audio Recording: 1:34:47

The Development and Planning Manager presented the report entitled Section 106 Annual Update 2020/2021 along with Appendices 1-5. He drew attention to the following:

- The Planning team have been producing an infrastructure funding statement, in line with government requirements to produce an annual statement of everything that happens in relation to infrastructure funding in Section 106 to be published in December 2021

- in March 2021 Cabinet decided not to invest in producing a Community Infrastructure Levy in line with officers advice that we needed to use the spare funds we had in Planning to fund what we was described as the master planning project for the major strategic sites that will be delivered upon the adoption of the local plan;
- There were very few new agreements in the Southern Rural area that were being reached in development, as they only apply to schemes of more than 10 dwellings;
- One agreement with Odyssey Health Club had delivered significant funds for the NHS and public spaces;
- Members would see fewer small 106 Agreements made in future, with those that were reached being larger and more targeted;
- In future the report would present a more in the round view of the Section 106 agreements and Unilateral Undertakings.

On the vote it was:

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Committee note the content of the report.
- (2) That the Committee agree that a report shall continue to be presented on an annual basis to the Area Committee, which sets out full records of all Section 106 activity for the preceding financial year and which reflects changes in legislation and practice.
- (3) That, other than where a contribution has been negotiated for a specific purpose or project, Ward Members of the area where the Section 106 Obligation or Unilateral Undertaking funding is generated and the Area Committee be consulted prior to funding being allocated away from that area. Members must note that the discretionary funds are rapidly diminishing and will not be replaced under current legislation and practice, for reasons that are set out in this report.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

- (1) To ensure that there is a robust system for negotiating and managing Section 106 Obligations and Unilateral Undertakings, that records activity for each financial year and is placed in the public domain.
- (2) To ensure that the process is kept under constant review and Member scrutiny and that the risk associated with this activity is managed in an appropriate manner.

72 WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS

Audio recording – 1:40:30

Councillor Lisa Nash provided an update to the Committee on Knebworth Festival and the Knebworth Town Twinning Association.

Knebworth Festival

Knebworth Festival Committee was reinvigorated with new team members, and they're working towards the Christmas lights, which were on the 19th of November. The main festival week was planned in June.

Knebworth Town Twinning Association

The Twinning Association had held a Bastille Day fundraising event. There would also be a fundraising quiz at the weekend on Saturday.

Councillor Claire Strong provided an update to the Committee on an event with the 'Within the Walls,' project from Down the Woods CIC and commended the organisation on the gardens

Thursday, 21st October, 2021

which were worth visiting, and spoke of having met with residents and members who intended to participate in the courses offered by the group.

The meeting closed at 8.13 pm

Chair

SOUTHERN RURAL COMMITTEE 9 December 2021

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

TITLE OF REPORT: GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE

REPORT OF: THE POLICY & COMMUNITIES MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

CURRENT COUNCIL PRIORITIES: BUILD THRIVING AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

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 **£1,500** to Offley Allotment Association towards the installation of running water on the allotment sites as outlined in 8.1.1.
- 2.3 **£441** to Breachwood Green towards a litter picking project in the village and surrounding areas as outlined in 8.1.2.
- 2.4 **£500** to Pirton Sports & Social Club towards a new pump for the hot water system and new covers for the cold-water tanks in the roof space as outlined in 8.1.3.
- 2.5 That the Committee be recommended to endorse the actions taken by the Community Engagement team to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Southern Rural.

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.
- 7.2 Members are asked to note the information detailed in Appendix 1. Southern Rural Committee Budget spreadsheet, which relates to the Committee budget balances for 2021/22. The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial year, including balances and past expenditure.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

Councillors are at liberty to consider any amount requested in a grant application if the committee has sufficient funds in the 2021/2022 budget.

8.1 Grant Applications

8.1.1

Applicant	Offley Allotment Association (OAA)
Project	Installation of running water on the allotment sites.
Sum requested	£2,150
Total project cost	£5,449
Joint funding	£1,100 Christmas Market £1,000 Offley PC £250 Cllr Barnard HCC Locality Budget £950 S106 via the PC
NHDC Policy met	YES
Council Priorities	Build thriving and resilient communities

This application has been deferred from the last Southern Rural Committee meeting held in October. For full details of the original application please refer to the agenda and minutes for the meeting of 21st October 2021.

<https://democracy.north-herts.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=153&MId=2666&Ver=4>

The group originally applied for the full amount of the project cost without additional funding from other sources. There were also concerns regarding the length of the lease agreement with the landowner Pilkington Farms of just 3 years.

Since October, officers and Members have been liaising with the HCC local councillor, Offley Parish Clerk and the OAA to seek additional funds.

In addition, the OAA have been looking to fund a secure gate at the entrance to the site. In November, there was a fly-tipping incident at the entrance which was set alight destroying the wooden gate. The landowner has replaced the gate with a more secure metal gate meaning that the OAA no longer need to figure this into any future expenditure.

The group have met with the landowner to seek agreement that should the site be taken back and used for other purposes other than community allotments the landowner will refund the cost of the installation of mains water to the site.

The group have amended their original application and have requested £2,150. Since they no longer need to also fund a secure entrance the officer recommendation is to provide £1,500 as outlined in 2.2.

8.1.2

Applicant	Breachwood Green
Project	Litter picking equipment.
Sum requested	£441
Total project cost	£916
Joint funding	£100 personal contribution £375 HCC Cllr Barnard Locality Budget
NHDC Policy met	YES
Council Priorities	Build thriving and resilient communities

The Breachwood Green Group were set up last year to coordinate parish wide litter picking, environmental enhancement events and campaign against speeding in the village. The funding they are requesting is to be used for publicity and publications including maintaining their website to advertise for volunteers and advertise events and activities to the local community, Public Liability Insurance, litter picking equipment and health and safety equipment. The litter pick events will take place monthly and as well as improving the local environment also serve to bring local residents together with a common goal which improves community cohesion generally.

The events are advertised by leaflets door to door and via the Parish Council meetings and posters on notice boards in Breachwood Green, Ley Green, parish shop, local pubs and businesses and bus stops.

The group plan to plant 250 trees in spring next year. If they haven't already liaised with the Council's Green Space team to receive trees as part of the Queen's Jubilee year canopy project, the Community Engagement officer will put them in contact.

8.1.3

Applicant	Pirton Sports and Social Club
Project	A new pump for the hot water system and new covers for the cold-water tanks in the roof space.
Sum requested	£500
Total project cost	£820
Match funding	£320 from reserves
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Council objectives	Be a more welcoming and inclusive Council Build thriving and resilient communities

Pirton Sports and Social Club provides sporting and social activities and facilities for residents of Pirton and the surrounding areas and is the hub of sporting activity in the village.

During the pandemic the changing and shower facilities for sports clubs were unused for 15 months and as a result the hot water system now needs a new pump and new covers for the cold-water tanks in the roof space to retain their cleanliness. Currently the showers cannot be used due to the fault that developed in the pump.

All adult football and cricket teams using the clubhouse will benefit from the showers being available again. Almost all the players in the home sides (5 teams) are local to Pirton and Hitchin, whereas visiting teams can be from anywhere in Hertfordshire or Bedfordshire.

8.2 Community Engagement Update

8.2.1 The team have been continuing to engage and network with local community groups and initiatives. This involved:

- Liaising with colleagues in Planning and Lilley Parish Council to secure S106 funding to purchase and install a defibrillator on the Cassel Memorial Hall
- Processing grants to utilise the £100k Health Protection Board funding to assist the community's recovery following the Covid 19 Pandemic. Currently 16 grants being processed in this round and we're now applying for a further £50k for another round. We have a waiting list of five applications.
- Processing and working with Food Provision Groups to distribute the Winter Support grants and the new Household Support Grants, either by direct funding or provision of supermarket vouchers.
- Supporting various local and district wide Network Groups such as Youth Action, Food Provision and the newly formed Arts and Culture Network.
- Continuing to work with, and add to, the Arts Cooperative which was set up after the Hitchin Arts and Culture Town Talk.
- Continuing to share and disseminate information on social media and to mailing lists, keeping in touch with the community, voluntary, statutory and non-statutory agencies.
- Gathering speakers and information for the Cabinet Panel for Community Engagement and Co-operative Development.
- Assisting in the organisation of the Chair's Recognition Awards and next year's Holocaust Memorial Day event.

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 Sections 9.8.1 (a) and 9.8.1 (b) of the Council's Constitution in respect of the Area Committees' Terms of Reference, notes the following: - To allocate discretionary budgets within the terms determined by the Council and to allocate devolved budgets and activities within the terms determined by the Council. This is outlined in the current Grant Policy agreed by Cabinet in January 2020. Section 9.8.2 (h) of the Constitution in respect of Area Committees' Terms of Reference notes 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 2021/22
- 10.2 The current balance available in the budget to allocate at this meeting is £5,440. The total amount of funding requested adds up to £2,441. If the Committee agree the level of funding as outlined in the recommendations this will leave an amount of **£2,999** to utilise at the last meeting of the financial year in March 2022.

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 Environmental Impact Assessment has been undertaken. The application for Offley Allotment and the related actions have been considered and on balance it is likely that positive environmental impacts will outweigh and outnumber any negative impacts. The allotment makes good use of water butts to collect rainwater, and this will remain their preferred water source. However, drier spells mean that there is a need for a supplementary water source on-site. An onsite source can help to reduce the journeys made by car to the allotment as there will no longer be a need to transport water from home. It is therefore suggested to proceed with ‘No major change’ to the actions. Please see the attached Environmental Impact Assessment for further information.

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 – 2021/22 financial year budget sheet.

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

SOUTHERN RURAL AREA COMMITTEE BUDGET 2021/22

<u>SUMMARY/ TOTALS</u>	<u>Funding</u>	<u>Allocated</u>	<u>Spent</u>	<u>Outstanding</u>	<u>Unallocated Budget</u>					
CARRY FORWARD BUDGET 2020/21	£165	£165	£165	£0	£0					
BASE BUDGET 2021/22	£10,200	£4,760	£4,760	£0	£5,440					
TOTAL	£10,365	£4,925	£4,925	£0	£5,440					

<u>2020/21</u>	<u>Funding</u>		<u>Project</u>	<u>Allocated</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Spent</u>	<u>Outstanding</u>	<u>Unallocated Amount</u>	<u>Comments</u>
CARRY FORWARD BUDGET 2020/21	£165		Lilley Parish Council - noticeboard	£165	24-Jun-21	£165	£0		Total grant awarded £500. £335 from 2021/22 budget
	£165			£165		£165	£0	£0	

<u>2021/22</u>	<u>Funding</u>		<u>Project</u>	<u>Allocated</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Spent</u>	<u>Outstanding</u>	<u>Unallocated Amount</u>	<u>Comments</u>
BASE BUDGET 2021/22	£8,700		Lilley Parish Council - noticeboard	£335	24-Jun-21	£335	£0		Total grant awarded £500. £165 from 2020/21 c/fwd budget
Repayment of Grant 4656 - Kings Walden PC	£1,500		Kimpton Cricket Club - wicket mower	£2,500	24-Jun-21	£2,500	£0		
			Wymondley Parish Council - defibrillator	£1,925	21-Oct-21	£1,925	£0		
	£10,200			£4,760		£4,760	£0	£5,440	