

28 November 2024

Our Ref Hitchin Community Forum 10 December
2024

Contact. Community / Partnership Team
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To: Members of the Committee: Councillors Ian Albert (Chair), Clare Billing (Vice-Chair), Val Bryant, Jon Clayden, Sam Collins, Elizabeth Dennis, Keith Hoskins MBE, Chris Lucas, Nigel Mason, Dave Winstanley, Daniel Wright-Mason and Donna Wright

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A

MEETING OF THE HITCHIN COMMUNITY FORUM

to be held in the

HITCHIN TOWN HALL, BRAND STREET, HITCHIN, SG5 1HX

On

TUESDAY, 10TH DECEMBER, 2024 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. 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.	
3. HITCHIN BID TOWN CENTRE UPDATE To receive a verbal update from the Hitchin BID Manager on their work in Hitchin town centre.	
4. PUBLIC PRESENTATION - GRANT APPLICATIONS To consider community grant applications for recommendation to the Executive Member for Community and Partnerships.	(Pages 5 - 18)
5. PRESENTATION - EVERYONE ACTIVE COMMUNITIES TEAM Presentation by the Communities Team from Everyone Active about their work in the community.	
6. TOWN TALK - OPEN DISCUSSION To open the floor to questions and discussion relevant to Hitchin.	
7. HITCHIN MOSQUE UPDATE Hitchin Mosque representatives to update the forum on their search for new premises.	
8. CHURCHGATE To hear a short written update about the Churchgate consultation read by the Forum Chair.	
9. PRESENTATION - PARKING TARIFF CONSULTATION Presented by Cllr Daniel Allen, Leader of North Herts Council.	
10. COMMUNITY MATTERS	

To receive an update from County Councillor Ian Albert on the recent flooding and fires in Hitchin.

11. COMMUNITY UPDATE

To provide the Forum with an update to ensure Members are kept informed of the work of the Community and Partnerships Team.

(Pages
19 - 20)

12. WARD MATTERS & OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

To receive any verbal reports from Members and members of the public regarding Ward matters and Outside Organisations.

13. FUTURE COMMUNITY FORUMS

To discuss topics for future meetings.

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REPORT (FOR RECOMMENDATION & NOTING BY COMMUNITY FORUM)

HITCHIN COMMUNITY FORUM
DATE 10 DECEMBER 2024

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

SERVICE DIRECTORATE: LEGAL & COMMUNITY

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

THAT THE COMMUNITY FORUM:

- 2.1 Considers and notes the information within this report.
- 2.2 Makes recommendations to the Executive Member for Community & Partnerships on the grant applications detailed below.
- 2.3 Carers in Hertfordshire - **£1,393** towards setting up and running a support hub in Hitchin for unpaid carers
- 2.4 The British Schools Museum - **£1,133** towards updating display room for exhibitions
- 2.5 Hitchin Town Youth Football Club - **£1,300** towards two sets of goal posts
- 2.6 Caudwell Youth - **£1,800** towards the salary of a Youth Support Coordinator

3. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The Community Grant budget for Hitchin Community Forum 2024/25 is **£18,147**.
- 3.2 Community grant payments totalling **£9,969** have been made to date, as itemised in Appendix 1.
- 3.3 The remaining budget available for community grants for the Hitchin area for 2024/25 therefore stands at **£8,178**.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Following the decision of Full Council on 18 April 2023, a Community Forum shall consider applications for community grants in its area and make recommendations to the Executive Member for Community & Partnerships on them. The Executive Member has delegated authority to make these Executive decisions under section 14.6.8(b)(ii)A 5 of the constitution, in consultation with the Service Director: Legal & Community. That decision will be subject to a 5 clear working day call-in period, following publication in the Members Information Service (MIS) and on the Council's website.
- 4.2 Other issues raised in this report are for information and noting and therefore no direct legal implications arise.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 As outlined in Appendix 1 and under item 3.3 the remaining Community Grant budget available is **£8,178**.
- 5.2 The total amount of funding requested for this meeting is **£5,626**.
- 5.3 If the applications outlined in Appendices 2, 3, 4 and 5 are recommended by the Forum and subsequently approved by the Executive Member for Community & Partnerships, there would be **£2,552** available for Community Grants for the remainder of the 2024-2025 financial year.

6. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Good risk management supports and enhances the decision-making process, increasing the likelihood of the Council meeting its objectives and enabling it to respond quickly and effectively to change. When taking decisions, risks and opportunities must be considered.
- 6.2 There are no relevant risk entries that have been recorded on Ideagen Risk Management, 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.

7. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 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.
- 7.2 Community Grant funds are 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.

8. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Social Value Act and "go local" policy do not apply to the matters contained within this report, as there are no recommendations on procurement.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

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

10. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The activities of the Community & Partnerships team are covered by existing budgets.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 Terms of Reference for Community Forums, Section 9 of the Council Constitution updated April 2024.

11.2 Community Grants Criteria Policy May 2023.

12. APPENDICES

12.1 Appendix 1. Hitchin Community Grant Budget 24-25

12.2 Appendix 2. Carers in Hertfordshire

12.3 Appendix 3. The British Schools Museum

12.4 Appendix 4. Hitchin Town Youth Football Club

12.5 Appendix 5. Caudwell Youth

12.6 Appendix 6. Community Updates

13. CONTACT OFFICERS

13.1 Author

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HITCHIN COMMUNITY FORUM

SUMMARY FINANCIAL POSITION 2024/25

<u>Original Budget</u> <u>2024/25</u>	<u>Carry Forward</u> <u>Budget 2023/24</u>	<u>Total Funding</u> <u>2024/25</u>	<u>Grants</u> <u>Allocated</u>	<u>Unallocated</u> <u>Budget</u>
£16,000	£2,147	£18,147	£9,969	£8,178

FUNDED PROJECTS

<u>Project</u>	<u>Forum Date</u>	<u>Grant Allocated</u>
Rotary Club of Hitchin Tilehouse - Youth support	11-Jun-24	£550
Hitchin Community Gardens - Bushcraft for Wellbeing sessions	11-Jun-24	£1,612
Herts Vision Loss - establish Sight Life Social Group in Hitchin	11-Jun-24	£2,000
The Sadie Centre - Positive Movement technique training.	09-Sep-24	£1,500
Angels Support Group Hitchin - online support groups and workshops.	09-Sep-24	£1,940
Groundwork East - 'Grow It, Cook it, Share It' course.	09-Sep-24	£2,367
TOTAL HITCHIN COMMUNITY FORUM		£9,969

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Appendix 2 – Carers in Hertfordshire

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Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	6094		
Name of Organisation	Carers in Hertfordshire		
Organisation Type	Registered Charity		
Ward	All of Hitchin		
Project Type	Support for unpaid carers		
Green option considered?	/		
NHC Councillor involvement that may constitute a conflict of interest	None that we are aware of.		
Previous financial support within six years	None		
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	Yes	Accounts
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes	Yes
Total applied for	£1,393	Total project cost	£2,705
Officer Summary			
<p>Carers in Hertfordshire are a countywide charity for unpaid carers looking after a friend, neighbour or relative due to illness, frailty, mental health need, disability, or substance misuse. They support all carers, including very young children, either living, caring, or working in Hertfordshire to find support, advice, build connections and provide a platform to have their voice listened to.</p> <p>They are applying for funding towards setting up and running a carer support hub, based in Hitchin, which is free to unpaid carers. They currently have 1,900 unpaid registered carers who live in Hitchin, and they have highlighted that they would like a hub in Hitchin. They currently run a hub in Letchworth, Royston and Stevenage.</p> <p>The hub would run once a month for 1.5 - 2 hours and they are seeking a contribution to set it up and towards the cost of running the hub for 12 months. They have predicted this based on costs for their hubs across the county. The hub location will be confirmed should they secure funding and welcome any venue suggestions.</p> <p>At the hub, they would provide refreshments, wellbeing and advice activities, and a place for carers to express the ups and downs of caring.</p> <p>They have built connections with local businesses, organisations and charities to provide free or reduced cost activities which they will continue to do for the Hitchin Hub, based on the wants and needs of the attendees. In addition to this, their Carer Support Advisors attend three times a year to provide additional 1:1 support for attendees, identifying those who may need further support and thus avoiding a potential crisis in their caring role.</p> <p>Breakdown of costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff support (volunteer manager, volunteer coordinator, hub coordinator, hub admin) £2170 • Hire and refreshments £419 • Activity costs, volunteer phone, advertising £116 			

*Funding will only be released on receipt and approval of all supporting documentation

They are contributing £1,000 through fundraising and have applied for £312 to The Big Give.

They have also applied to:

- Royston Community Forum for £1,393 towards costs of running their hub in Royston for 12 months.
- Letchworth Community Forum for £1,393 towards costs of running their hub in Letchworth for 12 months.

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Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	6088			
Name of Organisation	The British Schools Museum operated by Hitchin British Schools Trust			
Organisation Type	Museum – Registered Charity			
Ward	The Museum is in Hitchin Highbury Ward			
Project Type	Museum display			
Green option considered?	/			
NHC Councillor involvement that may constitute a conflict of interest	Cllr Jon Clayden is a NHC Member representative			
Previous financial support within six years	None			
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	Yes	Accounts	Yes
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes		
Total applied for	£1,133	Total project cost	£2,333	

Officer Summary

The British Schools Museum’s mission is to preserve the last remaining Monitorial Schoolroom in the world. They use it and their other historical classrooms to tell the story of the history of education. They host school trips for children to experience historical school lessons and open to the public as a Museum space at the weekends.

They are applying for funding towards putting on an exhibition from Spring 2025 - Autumn 2025 on the childhood story books of the late Queen Mother, Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon. The Bowes-Lyon family, and their ancestral home close to Hitchin at St Paul’s Walden Bury, are an important and much-loved part of the town’s history. They hope to bring a part of this history to life in a way that has never been explored before, and to open it free to all visitors in an accessible space, ensuring that no members of the community are excluded. They hope for around 1000+ local visitors during their standard opening hours.

For this, they need to ensure that their display room is adequate in terms of heating, humidity, lighting and display for these precious books. There is currently no working heater in this space. This project would also enable them to make this space accessible both for this display and beyond for future exhibitions. As they envision inviting members of the community to collaborate with them in using this display space, to create shared exhibitions that focus on areas of particular interest to different groups.

The heater and dehumidifier are recommended by their electrician Oliver Russell Ltd as adequate for the needs of the room. The other items have been sourced from internet research as the best value for money.

Raymond James Consulting (Hitchin) are sponsoring £1,000 and the British Schools Museum are contributing £200 from their reserves.

*Funding will only be released on receipt and approval of all supporting documentation

Breakdown of costs:

• Dimplex Night Storage Heater	£1188
• Storage Heater Installation	£150
• 2x 20l Dehumidifier	£300
• 12 x Security Acrylic Shelf Covers	£358.68
• 8x Foamex Information Display Boards	£222.56
• 1x Acrylic Map Display Board	£87.66
• 30m LED Light Strips	£26

Appendix 4 – Hitchin Town Youth Football Club

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Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	6089			
Name of Organisation	Hitchin Town Youth Football Club			
Organisation Type	An FA accredited football club			
Ward	They use Holwell Recreation Ground and members are from Hitchin and surrounding villages			
Project Type	Youth Football			
Green option considered?	/			
NHC Councillor involvement that may constitute a conflict of interest	Cllr Keith Hoskins – funding £300 towards the project through Herts Locality Budget Cllr Claire Strong – Trustee at Rands Education Foundation which is funding £2,404.66 towards the project			
Previous financial support within six years	None			
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	No – <i>in principle agreement</i>	Accounts	Yes
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes		
Total applied for	£1,300	Total project cost	£4,809.33	

Officer Summary

Hitchin Town Youth Football Club support the local community with creating a Football Club that enables young children to engage in the sport they love, building on social development. The whole youth football club has 30 teams with approximately 440 players- approximately 250 are from Hitchin itself, 100 from the surrounding villages (within 5 miles) and around 50 from further afield, Letchworth, Baldock & Stevenage.

The football club trains midweek within the Hitchin Area with games across North Herts. They generally use the goalposts provided by pitch owners, however in the case of Holwell, their facilities are in dis-repair and therefore to cover the purchase of two new sets of goalposts, would be beyond their normal expenditure.

It costs circa £110K to run Hitchin Town Youth FC on an annual basis and these costs are covered by player registration fee's (£260 per year).

It's important the goalposts are removable so they can be locked-up after each game and avoids them being damaged and vandalised. It is estimated across the lifetime of these goals (10 years) around 20,000 children will have the benefit of using them at Holwell Recreation Ground.

Breakdown of costs excluding VAT:

1 x 9aSide Goalpost set (16x7ft)	£1,041.94
1 x Junior 11 Goalpost set (21x7ft)	£2,720.84
Carriage	£245

They have agreed funding of £300 from Cllr Hoskin's Hertfordshire Locality Budget, £2404.66 from Rands Education Foundation and contributing £104.67 from reserves.

*Funding will only be released on receipt and approval of all supporting documentation

They are also applying to the Southern Rural Forum for £700.

There is an in principle agreement for funding for forum recommendation. The funding will only be released when a query on the safeguarding policy has been resolved.

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Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	6082			
Name of Organisation	Caudwell Youth			
Organisation Type	Youth support organisation			
Ward	Hitchin area			
Project Type	Support for at risk young people			
Green option considered?	/			
NHC Councillor involvement that may constitute a conflict of interest	None known.			
Previous financial support within six years	None.			
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	Yes	Accounts	Yes
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes		
Total applied for	£1,800	Total project cost	£24,506	

Officer Summary

Caudwell Youth support young people at-risk aged 11 to 24 through person-centred volunteer mentoring for up to two years. They support young people with a wide range of needs, primarily in the categories of mental health, care experience, offending behaviour and exploitation. Further information can be found at [Caudwell Youth](#).

Caudwell Youth are requesting funding towards the salary of a Youth Support Coordinator supporting young people in North Herts. It will also support the cost of training, DBS checking and supporting volunteer mentors.

They are currently working with eight young people in the Hitchin area.

Support is person-centred using a range of tools:

- 1:1 mentoring
- Helping with education, access to functional skills learning
- Supporting with housing related challenges
- Applications for jobs, training, benefits, IDs, residency
- Registering and accessing NHS services
- Signposting to other services such as food banks
- Opportunities that build resilience and positive use of time
- Activities that build positive social connections

The total project cost reflects their overall running costs, the remaining amount of £22,706 is funded through John Caudwell match funding, donor contributions and core funding from trusts and foundations. Caudwell currently have several applications in progress to secure further funding to cover the remaining costs.

Caudwell Youth are also applying for £1,800 from the Royston Community Forum.

*Funding will only be released on receipt and approval of all supporting documentation

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Districtwide Community Updates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants of between £5,000 and £20,000 have been approved for a range of community groups across the district using money from North Herts Prosperity Fund, a pot of £210,000 funded by the UK Government. • The Community Partnerships Team have launched the North Herts Heroes Awards. There are five categories to nominate anyone who you think deserves to be recognised for their services to our local community. The Awards will be presented at the Chairs Civic event on Friday 28th February. Information on how to nominate are available on the North Herts Council website. North Herts Heroes North Herts Council • The Community Partnerships team worked with the Royal British Legion and Letchworth BID to deliver the Letchworth Remembrance Day parade on 10 November 2024. • Co-ordinating various local and district wide Network Groups including Youth Action, Food Provision, Arts and Culture and Green and Growing Group. • Coordinating voluntary support response to Asylum Seekers based in North Herts. • Continuing to facilitate NHC Councillors' Community Surgeries. • Sharing and disseminating information on social media and to mailing lists, keeping in touch with the community, voluntary, statutory, and non-statutory agencies.
Area Community Updates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Partnerships Officer has met with local organisations to build connections and support, this includes Walsworth Community Centre Committee and North Herts African and Caribbean Community Group. • This also includes networking at events such as the Herts County Council Annual Conference, Triangle Community Garden Summer Fete, Live Longer Better event at North Herts Leisure Centre and Citizens Advice AGM. • Officer support at the Churchgate Regeneration Hub. • North Herts College held The Big Draw Festival on 29th October, which had been part funded by a Hitchin Community Grant. Below is feedback from the grant applicant: <p><i>"The Big Draw Festival was a huge success with over 300 people attending this year and it was brilliant to see the local community come together to explore their creativity. Big Draw events are held across the country and it was a great opportunity to open our doors and showcase some of the curriculum areas we offer post-16. Seeing the smiles on people's faces, from parents and grandparents to children of all ages, has really helped to show the positive influence art can have on our wellbeing. It's been great to see all areas of the college come together to run this fantastic event and we can't wait to start planning our next community event!</i></p> <p><i>The community grant we obtained really helped to make the event extra special and ensured we had enough resources so that everyone could join in"</i></p>

Below is a list of community groups in Hitchin that received funding from the Prosperity Fund:

- £6,000 - FC Comets, a youth football club in Hitchin, towards a mower that is suitable for the grounds in autumn/winter months.
- £12,225 - Hitchin Youth Allotment to expand and offer more opportunities to schools and community groups to take part in their activities.
- £19,134 - North Herts Minority Ethnic Forum towards community projects and revitalising their base.
- £20,000 - Triangle Community Garden towards making plots more accessible, providing a kitchen area and improving biodiversity.
- £5,427 - Zeo Church towards their Helping Hands project, which improves people's homes with volunteers carrying out 'odd jobs'.
- The full list can be found here [Over £200k given to 20 groups making a difference in North Herts | North Herts Council](#)