

30 August 2024

Our Ref Hitchin Community Forum 9 September
2024

Contact. Community Partnerships
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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

MONDAY, 9TH SEPTEMBER, 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 3 - 14)
5.	TOWN TALK - CHURCHGATE Presentations from North Herts Council and Lambert Smith Hampton, followed by Q&A.	
6.	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 15 - 16)
7.	WARD MATTERS & OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS To receive any verbal reports from Members and questions from members of the public regarding Ward matters and Outside Organisations.	
8.	FUTURE COMMUNITY FORUMS To discuss topics for future meetings.	

Agenda Item 4

REPORT (FOR RECOMMENDATION & NOTING BY COMMUNITY FORUM)

HITCHIN COMMUNITY FORUM 9 SEPTEMBER 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. The Sadie Centre - **£1,500** towards funding the cost of the design and delivery of a ten-day training programme for trainers in the award-winning Positive Movement technique.
- 2.4. Angels Support Group Hitchin - **£1,940** towards part-funding their online support groups and workshops for a year, for Hitchin based families.
- 2.5. Groundwork East - **£2,367** to fund their Grow It, Cook It, Share It course for 6 weeks.

3. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 There is total resource of **£18,147** for Hitchin Community Grants in 2024/25. Community grant payments totalling **£4,162** have been made to date, as itemised in Appendix 1. The remaining budget available for community grants for the Hitchin area for 2024/25 therefore stands at **£13,985**.

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 paragraph 3.1 and detailed in Appendix 1, the remaining Community Grant budget available is **£13,985**.

- 5.2 The total amount of funding requested for this meeting is **£5,807**.

- 5.3 If the applications outlined in Appendix 2, 3 and 4 are recommended by the Forum and subsequently approved by the Executive Member for Community & Partnerships, there would be **£8,178** available for Community Grants for the remainder of the 24-25 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 positive environmental implications associated with Groundwork East's grant application. They will be helping the community to gain a better awareness around collective impacts/responsibilities on the environment, topics will include reducing food miles, recycling green waste etc.

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. The Sadie Centre

12.3 Appendix 3. Angels Support Group Hitchin

12.4 Appendix 4. Groundwork East

12.5 Appendix 5. 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	£4,162	£13,985

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
TOTAL HITCHIN COMMUNITY FORUM		£4,162

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Appendix 2: The Sadie Centre

=Document Control:

Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	6040			
Name of Organisation	The Sadie Centre			
Organisation Type	Registered charity – charity number 295219			
Ward	Covers the whole of Hitchin			
Project Type	Ten-day training programme for trainers in the award-winning Positive Movement technique.			
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	Yes - £1,700 for a defibrillator through a grant of £850 from the Hitchin Area Forum and £850 from Letchworth Area Forum.			
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	Yes	Accounts	Yes
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes		
Total applied for	£1,500	Total project cost	£6,100	

Officer Summary

The Sadie Centre offer a range of flexible, low-cost and effective therapeutic options to help residents move through emotional and psychological challenges. This funding would cover the cost of the design and delivery of a ten-day training programme for trainers, in the award-winning *Positive Movement* technique.

The *Positive Movement* technique is an amalgam of techniques drawn from the Alexander Technique, Adaptive Yoga and Mindfulness. It is for older people with mobility problems or who are living with long-term conditions.

The Train the Trainer programme would be delivered in weekly sessions in one of their on-site classrooms. Then the Positive Movement programmes themselves would be delivered in accessible community facilities in Letchworth and Hitchin. This would create a team of teachers equipped to train new tutors, to deliver the programme widely amongst the local community.

Initially funded by a small Lottery grant and then by two Herts County Council *Innovations* grants, the programme has been delivered throughout Hertfordshire in 31 venues. Robust before-and-after evaluations of 140 participants demonstrated that 80-90% experienced reduced anxiety, stress and fear of falling, improved self-confidence, increased energy, and a greater ability to look after themselves in their own homes.

The Sadie Centre estimates that during year one, they would be able to deliver in Hitchin five venues hosting their 20-week programmes, each delivered twice throughout the year - amounting to a total of 10 programmes, each with 15 participants i.e. a total of 150 participants. Their ultimate aim is to have *Positive Movement* established as a local free, preventative service.

They were awarded £1,500 from Letchworth Community Forum in June, the room hire of £2,100 is an in-kind contribution and £1,000 is from Health Inequalities Funding.

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

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Appendix 3: Angels Support Group Hitchin

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Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	6066		
Name of Organisation	Angels Support Group Hitchin		
Organisation Type	Registered Charity		
Ward	All of Hitchin		
Project Type	Online support groups and workshops		
Green option considered?	/		
NHC Councillor involvement that may constitute a conflict of interest	None that we know of		
Previous financial support within six years	None		
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	Yes	Accounts
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes	
Total applied for	£1,940	Total project cost	£2,763
Officer Summary			
<p>Angels Support Group Hitchin provide support and guidance to parents/carers/siblings of children who are diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and/or Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and their associated conditions.</p> <p>Based in Hertfordshire, they provide individualised, professional expertise and advice. They work alongside parents to build understanding of their children's conditions, their rights, ensuring their needs are met at home, at school, and in the community. Their key aim is to maximise the individual potential of each child and young person.</p> <p>They are applying for funding to part-fund their online support groups and workshops for a year, to cover the cost of their Hitchin based families. They are also applying to all other Community Forums, to cover the costs of attendees from other areas, which are listed at the end of this document.</p> <p>They run 50 online groups a year comprising of 38 x 2-hour daytime groups (half a support group format with a facilitator and half workshops on a variety of topics) and 12 evening online support groups. As the project is run virtually, they can have up to 50 participants per group. Their groups run weekly on Tuesdays at 10am-12pm. They also run evening online support groups for those unable to access daytime groups, that run four times a term on a Thursday evening from 7.30pm-8.30pm.</p> <p>Last year 245 parents attended the online support groups, attending an average of three groups over the year. 82 of those parents were from North Herts and 31 of those were from Hitchin.</p> <p>They are contributing £634 through community fundraising and £189 from the National Lottery.</p>			

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

Below is a breakdown of costs of the project in proportion to costs relating to Hitchin attendees:

- Contribution towards staff costs to run the support groups, admin and management related to the groups - £2,017
- Contribution towards running costs: zoom licences, facilitator costs - £387
- Contribution towards overheads: insurance, website costs, rent - £359

Below is a breakdown of the funding they are applying for from the other Community Forums. Costs have been worked out in proportion to how many attendees they expect from each area, based on previous year's figures.

- Baldock Community Forum - £1,828
- Letchworth Community Forum - £1,502
- Royston Community Forum - £1,063
- Southern Rural Community Forum - £2,232

Appendix 4: Groundwork East

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Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	6085			
Name of Organisation	Groundwork East			
Organisation Type	Registered Charity			
Ward	Hitchin Oughton			
Project Type	Wellbeing project for families			
Green option considered?	Attendees will gain a better awareness around collective impacts/responsibilities on the environment where topics will include reducing food miles, recycling green waste etc.			
NHC Councillor involvement that may constitute a conflict of interest	None that we know of			
Previous financial support within six years	None			
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	Yes	Accounts	Yes
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes		
Total applied for	£2,367	Total project cost	£2,367	
Officer Summary				
<p>Groundwork East takes practical action to create a fair and green future in which people, places, and nature thrive. They support local communities and businesses to build capacity and resilience to tackle hardship, achieve a just transition to net-zero and help nature recover in a way that reduces inequality and leads to better work and healthier, happier lives.</p> <p>They are applying for funding for their Grow It, Cook It, Share It course at Oughton Family centre. It is delivered in person, over 6 weeks, with 2-hour sessions each week. It teaches families how to grow their own fruit and vegetables through supervised gardening and how to prepare healthy meals through simple cooking sessions.</p> <p>By working together on the practical tasks, and sharing a meal together, families will have the chance to develop their confidence; build friendships and support networks that will last beyond the formal learning environment. By encouraging learners to participate in outdoor practical activities they are also supporting them to improve their physical health and mental wellbeing and that of their whole family.</p> <p>The course will take place at the Oughton Family Centre, where they have an established partnership and have delivered these courses for a number of years. Both their outdoor space and classroom setting is utilised. On average, they predict 20 beneficiaries per course.</p> <p>Courses are delivered by experienced tutors who have practical skills and experience of growing and cooking, as well as working with adult and pre-school children. Course delivery is underpinned by a tried-and-tested quality system. Funding for the course would enable individuals to attend the course free of charge.</p>				

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

Below is a breakdown of costs of the project:

- Staff time per session (including travel from main office in Hatfield) 3 hours x £53 = £159, 6 sessions - **£954**
- Planning, Preparing & Purchasing resources (food, seeds, etc). 2.5 hours x £53 = £132.50 x 6 - **£795**
- Site Visit, Risk Assessment, Management/Evaluation, Marketing: 6 hours (£53) - **£318**
- Project Costs: seeds, food for cooking activities, composts, pots, growing diaries for families, printing, etc. - **£150**
- Mileage for 6 Sessions & Site Visit - **£150**

Districtwide Community Updates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. • The team have a budget of £210,000 from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to use for applications for grant funding of between £5,000 and £20,000. The deadline for applications is midnight on 1st September. Successful applicants should receive funding by the end of October, to be spent by end of March 2025.
Area Community Updates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Bike (Mark Nash), a mobile cycle repair service based in Hitchin, attended two events in Hitchin in May, with funding assistance from an Active Travel England grant awarded to Hertfordshire County Council: Hitchin Eco Day on Sat 11 May, organised by Plastic Free Hitchin. Hitchin Bike Day on Sat 25 May, organised by TCA (The Cycle Agents). Both events were well attended. On-the-day repairs helped keep people cycling safely. Mark is also a passionate ambassador for cycling, and his presence and conversations with people raised the profile of cycling and will hopefully have encouraged a few people to get back on their bike over the summer. Mark is also distributing vouchers for people to arrange an at-home cycle check and basic maintenance for £10, also subsidised by the Active Travel England grant. • The next Westmill Network meeting, co-ordinated by the team, is on 5th September. • The Community Partnerships Team Leader has been working with the Save Club 85 Steering Group to continue the operations of Club 85, a live music venue on Whinbush Road in Hitchin. The building's owner needs to sell, and the group has explored renting or purchasing a new location. However, purchasing the current building is the most practical option. After negotiations, the owner has agreed to sell to Club 85 if they can raise the funds. The group plans to set up a Community Interest Company (CIC) with shareholders to enable community ownership of the building. They have started an initial fund to cover professional legal advice for setting up a not-for-profit company with robust governance which will facilitate the application to large-scale funding pots. They will also look to engage a professional fundraiser to apply for suitable project funding. The group has successfully raised around £10,000 and will soon establish the CIC to raise the £2 million needed to purchase the building.

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