

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL



19 November 2025

Our Ref Southern Rural Community Forum 27
November 2025

Contact. Community and Partnerships Team
Direct Dial. 01462 474405
Email. community@north-herts.gov.uk

To: Members of the Area Forum: Councillors Dominic Griffiths (Chair), Vijaiya Poopalasingham (Vice-Chair), David Barnard, Joe Graziano, Caroline McDonnell, Ralph Muncer, Lisa Nash, Steven Patmore, Louise Peace, Claire Strong, Paul Ward and Laura Williams

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A

MEETING OF THE SOUTHERN RURAL COMMUNITY FORUM

to be held in the

**HYBRID (VIRTUAL / COUNCIL CHAMBERS, COUNCIL
OFFICES, GERNON ROAD, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY, SG6
3JF)**

On

THURSDAY, 27TH NOVEMBER, 2025 AT 7.30 PM

Yours sincerely,

Isabelle Alajooz
Director – Governance

****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.	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - GRANT APPLICATIONS To consider community grant applications for recommendation to the Executive Member for Governance.	(Pages 3 - 14)
4.	PRESENTATION - CCTV CCTV presentation from North Herts Council Community Safety Team , followed by Q&A.	
5.	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)
6.	WARD MATTERS & OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS To receive any verbal reports from Members and questions from members of the public regarding Ward matters and Outside Organisations.	
7.	FUTURE COMMUNITY FORUMS To discuss topics for future meetings.	

REPORT (FOR RECOMMENDATION & NOTING BY COMMUNITY FORUM)

SOUTHERN RURAL COMMUNITY FORUM
DATE 27 NOVEMBER 2025

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

SERVICE DIRECTORATE: GOVERNANCE

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 Governance (formally Community & Partnerships), the Leader 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 Governance on the grant applications detailed below.
- 2.3 Kimpton Folk Festival - **£1,500** towards hiring The Living Theatre to deliver workshops to local schools and a performance at the 2026 festival.
- 2.4 Knebworth Youth Project - **£1,500** towards youth worker salaries for 2026.
- 2.5 Pirton Sports & Social Club - **£750** towards the purchase of chairs and chair trolley.

3. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The Community Grant budget for Southern Rural Community Forum 2025/26 is **£15,000**.
- 3.2 Community grant payments totalling **£4,298** have been made to date, as itemised in Appendix 1.
- 3.3 The remaining budget available for community grants for the Southern Rural area for 2025/26 therefore stands at **£10,702**.

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 (now Governance) on them. The Executive Member is the Leader of the Council and has delegated authority to make these Executive decisions under section 14.6.9(b)(iii)A of the constitution, in consultation with the Service Director: Governance. 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 The Terms of Reference of the Community Forum can be found in Section 9 of the constitution which states that the forum will *'consider and act as an advisory body to the relevant Executive Member responsible for grants who approves these (in consultation with the relevant Director)'*.

- 4.3 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 Community Grant budget available is **£10,702**.

- 5.2 The total amount of funding requested for this meeting is **£3,750**.

- 5.3 If the applications outlined in Appendices 2, 3 and 4 are recommended by the Forum and subsequently approved by the Executive Member for Governance there would be **£6,952** available for Community Grants for the remainder of the 2025/26 financial year.

- 5.4 The applications outlined in Appendix 2 and 4 have been determined to be a Subsidy under the Subsidy Control Act as there is a market for music festivals and for venue hire. Both applicants have confirmed that the value of grants that they have and will receive means that the proposed payment can be treated as Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA) under the Act. The Council will ensure that it carries out the necessary steps for the payment to be treated as MFA, but ultimate responsibility is with the applicant.

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 May 2024.
- 11.2 Community Grants Criteria Policy March 2025.

12. APPENDICES

- 12.1 Appendix 1. Southern Rural Community Grant Budget 25-26
- 12.2 Appendix 2. Kimpton Folk Festival
- 12.3 Appendix 3. Knebworth Youth Project
- 12.4 Appendix 4. Pirton Sports & Social Club
- 12.5 Appendix 5. Community Updates

13. CONTACT OFFICERS

13.1 Author

Laura Hartley, Community Partnerships Officer
Email: laura.hartley@north-herts.gov.uk

13.2 Contributors

Daisy Harris, Policy and Strategy Apprentice
Email: daisy.harris@north-herts.gov.uk

Tim Everitt, Performance & Risk Officer
Email: tim.everitt@north-herts.gov.uk

Luke Franklin, Service Accountant
Email: luke.franklin@north-herts.gov.uk

Claire Morgan, Community Partnerships Team Leader
Email: claire.morgan@north-herts.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank

SOUTHERN RURAL COMMUNITY FORUM

SUMMARY FINANCIAL POSITION 2025/26

<u>Original Budget</u> <u>2025/26</u>	<u>Carry Forward Budget</u> <u>2024/25</u>	<u>Total Funding</u> <u>2025/26</u>	<u>Grants</u> <u>Allocated</u>	<u>Unallocated</u> <u>Budget</u>
£15,000		£15,000	£4,298	£10,702

FUNDED PROJECTS

<u>Project</u>	<u>Forum Date</u>	<u>Grant Allocated</u>
Pirton Community Choir - purchase of a piano stool, microphone boom, keyboard in addition to a case and stand	17th June 2025	£1,073
Whitwell 25 Football Club - hire of the Recreation ground and pavilion	17th June 2025	£1,125
Offley Parish Council - purchase of Christmas trees and lights for village festivals	11th September 2025	£600
Preston School Association - replacement of the outdoor activity trail	11th September 2025	£1,500
TOTAL SOUTHERN RURAL COMMUNITY FORUM		£4,298

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 2. Kimpton Folk Festival

=Document Control:

Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	6143			
Name of Organisation	Kimpton Folk Festival			
Organisation Type	CIO			
Ward	Codicote & Kimpton			
Project Type	School			
Green option considered?	None.			
NHC Councillor involvement that may constitute a conflict of interest	None known.			
Previous financial support within six years	From Southern Rural Community Forum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> £750 in March 2023 towards providing free entertainment at the Kimpton Folk Festival. 			
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	Yes	Accounts	Yes
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes		
Total applied for	£1,500	Total project cost	£5,000	
Officer Summary				
<p>Kimpton Folk Festival (KFF) organises the annual festival that brings nationally recognised folk musicians to multiple venues in Kimpton, offering free performances and attracting over 500 attendees. Alongside the main festival, KFF support local businesses, promote community music-making, and host free pop-up concerts, helping to raise the profile of Kimpton and other local villages as a vibrant and welcoming place.</p> <p>For the 2026 festival, KFF is partnering with The Living Theatre and local primary schools to deliver a special children's performance and a series of drama workshops. The aim is to engage over 400 children from rural communities in creative activities that foster confidence, connection and community spirit. The programme includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four 45-minute workshops in each participating school in the months leading up to the festival. Two workshops on the day of the festival. Two performances on the day of the festival. <p>The total cost of this project is £5,000. KFF is requesting £1,500 from the forum to cover The Living Theatre's fees for delivering the workshops and performances. Other costs include marquee hire, traditional craftspeople, materials for creative sessions and live music from local performers. Further funding is being sought from Kimpton Parish Council and through festival-led fundraising to cover these costs.</p> <p>This initiative builds on the festival's existing community engagement, which already includes free performances, local school choirs, and maypole dancing. It responds directly to the Children's Commission's 2022 call to connect children with their communities, especially those facing rural isolation or financial barriers. By offering inclusive, creative opportunities, the project will help children develop social bonds, self-esteem, and a sense of belonging, while enriching the cultural life of the wider community.</p>				

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

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 3. Knebworth Youth Project

=Document Control:

Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	6144			
Name of Organisation	Knebworth Youth Project			
Organisation Type	Unregistered charity			
Ward	Knebworth			
Project Type	Youth Workers			
Green option considered?	None.			
NHC Councillor involvement that may constitute a conflict of interest	None known.			
Previous financial support within six years	No			
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	Yes	Accounts	Yes
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes		
Total applied for	£1,500	Total project cost		£4,600
Officer Summary				

Knebworth Youth Project provides a youth club for children aged 10 to 13 living in Knebworth. The club runs every Friday evening during school term time in the halls of Trinity Church, offering a safe, engaging space for around 30 young people. In a village with limited youth provision, the club plays an important role in supporting young people through social education, entertainment and consistent adult guidance.

Each session is staffed by two part-time youth workers, supported by a small group of volunteers. The youth workers are present from 18:00 to 21:30, covering setup, delivery and clear-up, while the club itself runs from 18:30 to 21:00. This structure ensures a well-managed and supportive environment where young people can build friendships, confidence, and community connection.

The project is requesting funding to contribute towards the £4,600 needed to cover youth worker salaries for 2026. This funding is essential to maintain the quality and consistency of the club's delivery. Knebworth Youth Project is actively exploring funding options for 2026 and 2027 to ensure long-term sustainability. So far, £7,000 has been secured or is pending from Knebworth Family Churches, Knebworth Village Trust, and Knebworth Parish Council, with an additional £700 raised through fundraising and reserves.

By continuing to offer this weekly club, the Knebworth Youth Project supports young people at a crucial stage in their development, providing a positive outlet in a rural setting where opportunities for social engagement are limited.

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

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 4. Pirton Sports & Social Club

=Document Control:

Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	6139			
Name of Organisation	Pirton Sports & Social Club			
Organisation Type	Club			
Ward	Offa			
Project Type	Purchasing of chairs and chair trolley.			
Green option considered?	None.			
NHC Councillor involvement that may constitute a conflict of interest	None known			
Previous financial support within six years	From the North Herts Prosperity Fund: <ul style="list-style-type: none">£10,660 for new folding tables, stackable chairs, trolley, picnic benches, barbeque and storage shed.			
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	Yes	Accounts	Yes
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes		
Total applied for	£750	Total project cost	£921	
Officer Summary				

Officer Summary

Pirton Sports & Social Club (PSSC) provides sporting and social activities and facilities for residents of Pirton and the surrounding area, based at the village's recreation ground.

The recreation ground is a central space for the community, regularly used by residents and visiting sports clubs. This summer, it hosted a number of successful outdoor events, particularly the popular Friday Evening Socials, which have drawn large crowds. With the new pavilion due to open next year, the scale of activities is expected to increase, and having adequate resources will support this growth. The grounds have welcomed at least 1,200 residents this year, with many more attending from surrounding areas.

Earlier this year, the club received a grant from the North Herts Prosperity Fund to replace ageing outdoor furniture, including tables, picnic benches, and a barbecue. Due to a special offer at the time of ordering, they were able to purchase four more large tables than originally planned. However, this left them 24 chairs and a trolley short, and they are now seeking to match the numbers for consistency and practicality.

PSSC is requesting £750 from the forum towards the purchase of 24 identical stackable chairs and a trolley for storage and transport. The total project cost is £921, with PSSC contributing £121 from its own reserves and fundraising efforts. The new chairs will match the existing set, allowing for easy stacking and mobility, and will support the club's expanding programme of outdoor events.

This will help PSSC continue to provide inclusive, well-equipped events that bring the community together and make full use of the village's shared spaces.

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

This page is intentionally left blank

Districtwide Community Updates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Partnerships Team are launching the North Herts Heroes Awards on 21 November, in which we aim to celebrate people in the local community. There are five categories for nominations, please nominate anyone who you think deserves to be recognised. Nominations close on Sunday 4 January. The winners will be celebrated at an awards event on Thursday 19 March. Information on how to nominate will be available on the North Herts Heroes web page • The Community Partnerships team worked with the Royal British Legion and Letchworth BID to deliver the Letchworth Remembrance Day parade on 9 November 2025. • The new Community Grants Application platform was launched on 17 November. • To commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day, a video will be shared via North Herts Council socials on 27 January. • 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
<p>The Community Partnerships Officer Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to attend Parish Council meetings to make closer links with the parishes and local groups. • Presented at the North Herts & Stevenage Centre for Voluntary Service's Funding Summit on 18 September. • Visited Pirton JoyCare who received a Community Grant last year to help them continue to support the older community in Pirton. • Met with the Neighbourhood Team Sergeant for Hitchin Urban and Hitchin Rural. • Supporting a Scam Awareness workshop with the NHC Community Wellbeing Team and Herts Police on 16 December in Knebworth. • A reminder to Councillors that they are very welcome to arrange any meetings or ward walks with the Community Partnerships Officer.

This page is intentionally left blank