

**SOUTHERN RURAL COMMITTEE
26 MARCH 2020**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE

REPORT OF THE POLICY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

CURRENT COUNCIL PRIORITY: ATTRACTIVE AND THRIVING / PROSPER AND PROTECT
/ RESPONSIVE AND EFFICIENT

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

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee be recommended to consider the provision of grant funding to the organisations outlined below:
- 2.2 **£3,500 to Codicote Tennis Club** towards resurfacing the tennis courts as outlined in 8.1.1
- 2.3 **£500 to Offley Entertainment Committee** towards the promotion of the VE Day/Weekend events. 8/10th May 2020 as outlined in 8.1.2
- 2.4 **£600 to Preston Summer Swim** towards the cost of Lifeguard training as outlined in 8.1.3
- 2.5 **£810 to St Pauls Warden Primary School PTA** towards the cost of purchasing a bicycle shelter as outlined in 8.1.4
- 2.8 That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for the Southern Rural Area.

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 existing Grants policy as agreed by Cabinet in June 2016.
- 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 Corporate 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 decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 With reference to the Council's Constitution, Section 9.3 Area Committees will include budgets for the purpose of providing grants and discretionary budgets that may be used within the area of the Committee for economic, social and environmental well-being. Under the current grant criteria there is no upper limit outlined for grant funding to be allocated which can be decided at the Committee's discretion.
- 7.2 Members are asked to note the information detailed in Appendix 1. Southern Rural Committee Budget Spread sheet, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for 2019/20. The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial years, including balances and past expenditure.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Grant Applications

8.1.1

Applicant	Codicote Tennis Club
Project	Resurfacing the tennis courts
Sum requested	£3,500
Total project cost	£53,300
Joint funding	£13,500 Fundraising £34,500 from Clubs' funds
Annual expenditure 2018	£11,722
Funds held (year end 2018)	£53,000 Including fixed assets
Previous support	£4,250 between 2006 and 2016
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Current Priority	Attractive & Thriving and Prosper & Protect
New Council Priorities	Build thriving and resilient communities / respond to challenges to the environment / enable an enterprising and co-operative economy

Over the last 5 years several tennis clubs within the area have re-surfaced their courts with artificial turf (Advantage Pro) which now appears to be the playing surface of choice. It is a competitive and performance surface suitable for all players helping to improve ability and mobility. It has the added advantage of supporting an ageing membership as it is kinder on players joints (more forgiving than a hard surface) and has better grip in the wet. Overall an improvement to health & safety. The club are beginning to find themselves at a disadvantage to some other clubs and with their ageing membership they wish to provide improved facilities for both members and the wider community. The improved surface will help to (i) attract more members to the sport (ii) retain the ageing members, and (iii) assist with avoiding injury and enabling members / non-members to enjoy playing for as long as possible - ultimately leading to improved health benefits.

The Codicote Tennis Club provide sports and social activities to the local community, and currently have c130 active members, lower than previous years, which is believed to be because the facilities are no longer compatible with some other clubs. The membership costs are set at a competitive level (lower than other Clubs in the area) to ensure the sport is not seen as elitist. They also offer free memberships to financially disadvantaged individuals. Whilst this is a member's club with fee income to support the overall expenses and infrastructure of the Club, non-members can hire the courts. They also offer the courts for free for charity and community fundraising events - which has been a regular feature for many years. They run social activities and encourage visitors to attend. We have successfully held several events this year raising £1,600 of profit towards the costs of the new courts.

The club's activities / courts are available 365 days a year between sunrise and 10pm. The club run regular sessions including leagues and competitions for members throughout the year. They also have a twice weekly session where non-members or people new to the sport can trial our facilities and learn to play, before deciding on whether to join and become more involved in tennis.

The Club will be using £34,500 of their existing sinking fund put aside to support infrastructure. They have secured £10,000 from the Luton Airport Fund, £2500 from the Parish Council and £1,000 from the HCC Cllrs Locality Budget. In addition, they have raised £1,800 from fund raising events.

The club are requesting £2,000 above the £1,500 suggested within the current grant policy. However, the committee can agree to provide funding of any amount if the funds are available within the budget.

8.1.2

Applicant Project	Offley Entertainment Committee (OEC) promotion of the VE Day/Weekend events. 8/10th May 2020
Sum requested	£500
Total project cost	£1,500
Joint funding	£500 Parish Council, £500 Pilkington Farm Partnership
Annual expenditure	The OEC has not operated since 2014 and therefore have no accounts or funds.
Funds held	None
Previous support	
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Current Priority	Attractive & Thriving
New Council Priorities	Be a more welcoming and inclusive council / build thriving and resilient communities / respond to challenges to the environment

The OEC have been resurrected to hold funds needed to promote the VE Day / Weekend events in Offley. Organisations from the village are working in partnership to put on a programme of events over the weekend of Friday 8th to Sunday 10th May.

The OEC are working in partnership with Offley Recreation Centre, Offley Place Hotel, St Mary Magdalene church and other local businesses and public houses.

The draft itinerary so far is as follows:

Friday 8th May

VE Family Celebration Day at Offley Recreation Centre

Saturday 9th May

VE Day Celebration Ball to held at Offley Place Country Hotel

Sunday 10th May – events at St Mary Magdalene Church.

8.1.3

Applicant	Preston Summer Swim Club
Project	Training lifeguards
Sum requested	£600
Total project cost	£2000
Joint funding	£1400 from income raised
Annual expenditure	£2000
Funds held	None
Previous support	None
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Current Priority	Attractive & Thriving, Responsive and Efficient
New Council Priorities	Be a more welcoming and inclusive council / build thriving and resilient communities / respond to challenges to the environment /enable an enterprising and co-operative economy

The Preston Summer Swim provides an opportunity for families to spend time together outdoors. It brings the local community together and promotes wellbeing and exercise to all but in particular to children. Many local children have learned to swim whilst at the Summer Swim.

The Club is inclusive to all and where a family or individual have financial difficulties there is the opportunity for the fee to be waived. This is decided on a case by case basis.

The summer swim takes place during July and August every year at the swimming pool that is part of the Princess Helena College.

The school kindly allows the use of the pool whilst their pupils are on the Summer break. Preston Summer Swim work closely with the school to deliver this provision to the residents of Preston and the surrounding areas. The club gives a donation to the school towards the running costs of operating the pool during the summer.

It costs £2000 approximately to operate the club for 8 weeks and the cost of training the lifeguards is £600 which is the amount of grant funding the club are requesting.

The course costs are £300 per head and cover the National Pool Lifeguard Qualification, Automated External Defibrillator and First Aid at Work Courses. The course is provided by accent training a subsidiary of Stevenage Leisure Ltd.

8.1.4

Applicant	St Pauls Warden Primary School PTA
Project	Purchase and installation of a bike shed
Sum requested	£810.00
Total project cost	£1,158.00
Joint funding	£347 from groups' own reserves
Annual expenditure	£1,377.83
Funds held	£14,270.58
Previous support	None
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Current Priority	Attractive & Thriving, Prosper & Protect, responsive and efficient
New Council Priorities	Be a more welcoming and inclusive council / build thriving and resilient communities / respond to challenges to the environment /enable an enterprising and co-operative economy.

The St Pauls Warden Parent Teacher Association are looking to purchase a bike shed which children can use to store their bikes safely during the school day. By providing a bike shed to keep bicycles locked safely away it will encourage children to cycle to school. This encourages good habits for the future, environmental awareness, road safety and health / wellbeing. Encouraging the use of sustainable transport helps to limit the number of motorised traffic.

8.2 Previous Grant Awards

Breachwood Green Cricket Club received £780 in March 2019 towards the cost of securing the footing of two storage containers. They have reported that they haven't completed the project but plan to do so in April and will feed back to the committee for the June meeting with photos of the completed project.

8.2 Highways Matters

8.2.1 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.

Any new proposals or revised schemes will be forwarded to the respective Herts County Councillor for consideration who will in turn report back and advise the Committee accordingly.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Area Committees have delegated power under section 9.8.1 (a) & (b) to allocate discretionary budgets and devolved budgets within the terms determined by the Council and outlined in the current Grant Policy agreed by Cabinet in June 2016. Section 9.8.2 (g) of the Constitution in respect of Area Committees' Terms of Reference provides that they may: "establish and maintain relationships with outside bodies/voluntary organisations operating specifically with the area including, where appropriate, the provision of discretionary grant aid/financial support etc. but excluding grants for district-wide activities".
- 9.2 Chapter 1, s1-8 of the Localism Act 2011 provides a General Power of Competence which gives local authorities the powers to do anything if 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 1 Committee budget 2019/20
- 10.2 There are carry over amounts from 2018/19 equating to £2,282 and these funds will be utilised ahead of allocating this financial year's budget.
- 10.3 At the last Southern Rural Committee meeting held on October 10th the Committee agreed to put the £280 allocated to each ward member back into the main Development Budget. The Development Budget for 2019/20 now contains £8,700.
- 10.4 The grants outlined in in this report equate to **£5,410** the £2,282 in the 2018/19 carry forward will be fully utilised and the remaining £3,128 will be taken from the 2019/20 Budget.
- 10.5 The amount remaining to be carried over from the 2019/20 will be **£5,572**

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. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 There are no pertinent Human Resource implications associated with any items within this report.

15. APPENDICES

- 15.1 Appendix 1 - 2019/20 financial year budget sheet

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

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17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 17.1 Review of Policies and Procedures for Financial Assistance to Voluntary and Community Organisations, November 2002.
- 17.2 Review of Grant Policy Cabinet June 2016.