

**LETCHWORTH COMMITTEE**  
**14 OCTOBER 2020**

**\*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**TITLE OF REPORT: GRANTS AND COMMUNITY UPDATE**

REPORT OF THE POLICY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR 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 **£2,000** to The Settlement as outlined in 8.1.1
- 2.3 **£760** to 7<sup>th</sup> Letchworth Scouts as outlined in 8.1.2
- 2.4 That the Committee be recommended to endorse the actions taken by the Community Engagement team to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Letchworth.

**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. Letchworth Area Committee Budget Spread sheet, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for 2020/21. The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial years, including balances and past expenditure.

**8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS** - Councillors are at liberty to consider any amount requested in a grant application as long as the Letchworth area committee has sufficient funds in the 2020/2021 budget.

## 8.1 Grant Applications

### 8.1.1

<b>Applicant Project</b>	<b>The Settlement</b> Electronic and computer equipment to allow online access for participants
<b>Sum requested</b>	£2,000
<b>Total project cost</b>	£4,860
<b>Match funding</b>	£2,260 personal donations from service users
<b>Previous support</b>	£0
<b>NHDC Policy met</b>	Yes
<b>Council Objective:</b>	Building thriving and resilient communities;

The Letchworth Settlement have always been self-sufficient and have never needed to request financial assistance. However due to Covid-19 all sources of income halted. The centre was facing imminent closure but had a last-minute reprieve when donations flooded in from the community.

With the current Covid virus restrictions all the courses run will have to be subsidised initially due to restricted class numbers, so the monies raised through the community will be used to support classes and the core running of the Settlement. In order to support tutors and to encourage members to engage, a number of courses will be up and running soon. With social distancing measures in place classes will have to be offered virtually so funding is required for digital equipment.

### 8.1.2

<b>Applicant Project</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup> Letchworth Scouts</b> To continue regular meetings
<b>Sum requested</b>	£760
<b>Total project cost</b>	£4,760
<b>Match funding</b>	£4000
<b>Previous support</b>	Yes
<b>NHDC Policy met</b>	Yes
<b>Council Objective:</b>	Building thriving and resilient communities

Due to the Covid crisis, the Scout group has been unable to meet and collect subscriptions since Easter. Meetings started again w/c 14th September currently held outside. As members of the Scout Association they are obliged to pay an annual census fee to the national body; this covers insurance, levy for activity centres, paid support staff, activity resources and adult training. The Scout Association (itself a charity) has not offered any discounts and in fact is increasing the census fee for next year. The 7th Letchworth Scout Group currently has 56 members aged between 6 and 14 years. The hall is rented (many other groups own their own halls); gift aid has dwindled and due to Covid membership is currently falling. The annual census fee due in 2021 is expected to be £58 per member, a total of £3,248. Weekly activities cost around £9 per young person per term so £1512 a year.

Letchworth Civic Trust has given the group £2500 and the other £1500 comes from Gift Aid and voluntary subs from members.

This Scout group primarily serves the residents of Wilbury in Letchworth and activities have always been made as affordable as possible.

## **8.2 Community Engagement and Update on Previous Grants Awarded**

### **8.2.1 Policy and Community Engagement Team**

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

- Issuing the postponed grant award of £2,500 to Letchworth Rink Hockey Club- The club are looking to support a potential ten new junior members and once new risk assessments are in place they hope to begin training soon.
- Continued liaison with Letchworth Heritage Foundation, YC Herts, Wilbury and Jackman's network groups, North Herts Youth Council and the Green and Growing network group.
- Continuing to Support the Edi-Cit-Net project as part of the city team.
- Liaising with Democratic Services re helping with young people attending the proposed Parliament Week in November.
- Continuing to share and disseminate information.
- Facilitating virtual Councillors' Surgeries via Zoom.
- Liaising with Community Grant applicants including: Letchworth BID, Black Voice Letchworth, Kings Community Church, Imajica Theatre, reviewing all applications; in addition supporting team colleagues with district-wide and Covid-19 related funding applications such as Garden House Hospice and Herts ViewPoint.
- Liaising with community group leaders re events for Black History Month.
- Continuing participation in the Gender Pay Gap Group and the Staff Consultation Forum.
- Supporting the Legal and Community Service Director's PA with organising a visit for the High Sherriff next year.
- Working with colleagues on the organisation of 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 Within the Terms of Reference in the Constitution, the Area Committees have delegated power under paragraphs 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 2020. Paragraph 9.8.2 (h) 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 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 1 - Committee Budgets 2020/21.
- 10.2 The carry over amount from 2019/20 was £4,828. However, a grant of £3,000 awarded to the Letchworth Festival in 2019/20 has been refunded as the event has been cancelled due to Covid-19. This increased the carry forward funding to £7,828, which has been fully spent.

The agreed budget for 2020/21 year remains at £11,000 of which £140 has been spent leaving £10,860 to be allocated.

- 10.3 The grant funding applied for in this round adds up to **£2,760**. The committee has sufficient funds to award the full amount to all organisations as outlined on the report. If all the grants considered at this meeting are agreed it will leave a total of £8,100 available for allocation for the next meeting.

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

## **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 – Committee Budgets 2020/21.

## **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