

ROYSTON COMMITTEE
9 JUNE 2021

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE

REPORT OF THE POLICY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

COUNCIL OBJECTIVES: 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 advise the Committee of the activities and schemes with which the Community Engagement officer has been involved in.
- 1.3** 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** **£794** to Royston Town Youth Football Club to assist with costs for the purchase of replacement pitch divider nets for the artificial pitch facility at King James Academy. as outlined in 8.1.1.
- 2.3** **£1500** to Royston Community Association to assist with costs for the purchase of 30 new padded and stackable chairs for the Coombes Community Centre as outlined in 8.1.2.
- 2.4** That the Committee be recommended to endorse the actions taken by the Community Engagement Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Royston.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1** To ensure the Committee is kept informed of the work of the Community Engagement Officer.

- 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 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. 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. Royston Area Committee Budget Spread sheet, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for 2021/22. The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial year, including balances and past expenditure.

7.3 Funding available for the Committee to allocate during 2021/22 is summarised below:

	2020/21 Carry Forward	2020/21 Base Budget	Total Budget Remaining
Royston	£1145*	£6,000	£7,145

*Carry forward was £2645 from 2020/21 before the £1,500 was released for the Free After 3pm Parking Initiative.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Grant Applications

8.1.1

Applicant Project	Royston Town Youth Football Club Funding support to assist with costs for the purchase of replacement pitch divider nets for the artificial pitch facility at King James Academy.
Sum requested	£794
Total project cost	£1,694
Match funding	£900 split evenly between Cllr Fiona Hill and Cllr Steve Jarvis's Herts County Council Locality Budgets.
Previous support	Yes, £385 in 2017 to assist with costs for setting up Futsal Royston and £1250 in 2010 to assist with costs for setting up several new girls' football teams. Total award £1,635.
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Council objective:	Build thriving and resilient communities

Royston Town Youth FC are seeking funding support from the Royston & District Committee to assist with costs for the purchase of replacement pitch divider nets for the artificial pitch facility at King James Academy.

Royston Town Youth FC is a not for profit organisation that has been in operation since 1872. The club provides football for children of both genders from 3 to 18 years. The group is made up of 13 Volunteer Committee Members and around 100 volunteers. The replacement pitch divider nets are required as the original nets are full of holes creating a trip hazard. Whilst the artificial pitch is used by students at King James Academy, the divider nets are only used by Royston Town Youth FC and other football clubs that use the facility including Royston Town FC, Bassingbourn FC and Royston Hockey Club. The divider nets are required to allow for multiple sessions to be run at the same time. The divider nets are used 6 days a week. Royston Town Youth FC are unable to put any match funding into the project as all fundraising efforts and any surplus funding remaining from the season is pumped into a sink fund which is raising funds for a new replacement surface for the artificial pitch which is likely to cost in the region of £250k. Members are asked to note that the match funding from Cllr Steve Jarvis and Cllr Fiona Hill is on the condition that Royston Town Youth FC are successful in securing the £794 from the Royston & District Committee. The application is criteria compliant and the officer recommendation is the award of £794.

8.1.2

Applicant	Royston Community Association
Project	Funding support to assist with costs for the purchase of 30 new padded and stackable chairs for the Coombes Community Centre
Sum requested	£1,500
Total project cost	£1800
Match funding	£300 from the Royston Town Council's Mayors Fund
Previous support	No support from Area Committee in last 5 years.
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Council objective:	Build thriving and resilient communities

The Royston Community Association is seeking funding support from the Royston & District Committee to assist with costs for the purchase of 30 new padded and stackable chairs.

The Coombes Community Centre has been a hub for community groups since 1976. The centre is well used by young and old and caters for a wide variety of clubs including sports, education, leisure, music, mental health and wellbeing. In addition, the centre also caters for nursery provision, church services and is also used regularly for blood donor sessions and as an election polling station when required. The purchase of new chairs was identified as an essential requirement following a recent Health and Safety Audit where the current chairs were deemed not to meet fire safety regulations. The application is criteria compliant and the group has secured some match funding via the Royston Town Council Mayors Fund.

8.2 Future Grants

The Royston Community Engagement Officer (CEO) has been working with several groups / organisations who are seeking funding support from the Royston & District Committee. The application below was not in a position to be tabled at the June meeting so has been deferred until the October meeting. Details of the application are included in the table below:

Group	Project	Funding Requested
Royston Choral Society	Funding support to assist with publicity, equipment and venue hire costs for concert to be held during 2021.	Not known at this stage.

8.3 Community Engagement Updates

8.3.1 Support for Businesses during the Covid-19 Pandemic

The Royston CEO continues to signpost local businesses and community groups to business support grants that are available to them during the Pandemic. This has included funding support available from the NHDC Additional Restrictions' Grant. At the time of writing this report I can confirm that the Coombes Community Centre has received this funding.

8.3.2 Bus Shelters

The bus shelter for Icknield Walk is due to be installed between Tuesday 25th and Wednesday 26th May 2021. The installation works were due to be carried out on the 11th and 12th May but were delayed whilst the Royston CEO investigated who owned the land where the shelter was to be installed. On investigation it was discovered that the preferred site for the shelter was owned by the Settle Group, so the shelter location was relocated to land owned by the County Council.

In terms of the bus shelter planned for Melbourn Street, a scan was carried out in January 2021 to ensure that the proposed site was not going to disrupt any Utilities. The scan was successful, and the positioning of the shelter has been agreed by the contractors and Hertfordshire County Council. Royston Town Council have raised the Purchase Order for the works but due to the current Pandemic it is unlikely that the works will be carried out before November 2021. The Royston CEO will continue to liaise with the Contractors and Highways and will update Members on progress with the scheduling accordingly.

The Royston CEO has no further update on the proposed bus shelter for Melbourn Road. Members will recall that this shelter was originally scheduled in as part of the Royston Town Council works using S106 Sustainable Transport funding but is now being picked up by a local Developer.

Once installed all bus shelters will be maintained by Hertfordshire County Council.

8.3.3 Bicycle Racks

The bike shelter project on Market Square Car Park was completed during May 2021. As part of the works all the white and yellow lining within the car park was painted. The Royston CEO assisted the Town Council with the planning for this project and also suspended the car park to ensure the area was kept traffic free to allow for the painting of the lines. This project was paid for using S106 Sustainable Transport funds.

The Royston CEO is currently in communication with Royston Conservators to ascertain if there is a need for a bike shelter on the Heath. Funding is available from S106 Sustainable Transport.

8.3.4 Potential new band stand for Priory Memorial Gardens

The Royston CEO is working with Royston Town Council on a project to install a new band stand on Priory Memorial Gardens. This project is still in the early stages but discussions have taken place between Royston Town Council and North Herts District Council's Ground Maintenance team.

Royston Town Council will undertake a public consultation regarding the proposed band stand as the idea has not received wide support.

Funding under S106 Community Facilities has been provisionally allocated to a band stand but can be re-allocated to a different project if the public consultation opposes the initiative.

8.3.5 Trinity Life Church Community Facility Project

Trinity Life Church was successful in its application for funding from the Community Facilities Capital Projects funding Stream, securing £50k to assist with the refurbishment and alterations of The Old School House Building. The project will include replacing the kitchen and toilets, improving disabled access and improving the rear office space.

The Royston CEO will oversee the project and will release the funds on completion of the various stages of the works.

8.3.6 Street Food Heroes at Priory Memorial Gardens

The Royston CEO continues to liaise with the organiser of Street Food Heroes with plans for their 3 events which will be held on Priory Memorial Gardens on Saturday 5th June, Saturday 17th July and Saturday 14th August. The Royston CEO has assisted the organiser with the paperwork required by the North Herts Safety Advisory Group and has also arranged for the Public Toilets to have extended opening on each event day. The Royston CEO will also provide the organisers with social distancing signage to increase the safety of all attendees.

8.3.7 Walkandtalk Initiative

The Royston CEO is working with the organisers of the walkandtalk initiative to create both a 5km and 10km signed route. The Walkandtalk project was set up during the current Pandemic to help people to cope with their mental health and wellbeing. The Royston CEO had hoped that signs for the routes could be displayed on Highways Street furniture, but this was not possible as it was not within the signage guidelines. The Royston CEO has liaised with colleagues in Waste and Grounds Maintenance and the plan is now to have stickers on bins around the town showing the routes. This is subject to the sticker design being approved by all parties.

8.3.8 Developer Contributions / s106 & other Capital Funding projects

The Royston CEO has worked with external groups and colleagues in the Planning Department in the potential utilisation developer contributions and other sources of capital funding available. Under s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended, contributions/obligations can be sought from developers towards the costs of providing community and social infrastructure, the need for which has arisen as a result of a new development taking place. This funding is commonly known as 'Section 106'.

Projects Completed:

- Fencing project at side of Coombes Community Centre to address anti-social behaviour
- Fencing project at Royston BMX to address anti-social behaviour
- Bike Shelter at Market Square Car park
- Bus Shelter at Icknield Walk

Projects in process:

- Enhancement of sporting facilities at Royston Heath with the Conservators.
- The possibility of seeking a new venue for Royston Scouts currently based at Roysia School.
- Enhanced provision of Bus Shelters at potential sites within the town
- Provision of cycle racks around Royston Town Centre.
- Youth / Spectator Shelter to address anti-social behaviour around Coombes Area
- Resurfacing and lighting project on Public Right of Way Land linking Ivy Farm with Green Drift. (this project was on the work programme for 2020/21 but has been delayed due to the Covid-19 Pandemic)
- A505 Cycle Path project
- Access and Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) improvements to Royston Town Hall
- All weather Hockey pitch for Royston
- Barkway PC re the installation & disabled access to the Recreation Ground & Pavilion
- Kitchen and toilet improvements in the main hall of Royston Town Hall.

If members have any projects in mind which may potentially benefit from utilising capital funds derived via the Planning process, please contact the Community Engagement Officer to investigate further possibilities.

The Community Engagement Team is also collating a database of future requirements in terms of community need across the District in preparation & response to potential developments arising from the Local Plan.

Such perceived need will be communicated to planning officers to assist when negotiating any new planning obligation with prospective developers. Similarly, if Members have any suggestions of suitable projects or possible future requirements within their wards please inform the Community Engagement Officer.

8.4 Highways Matters

- 8.4.1 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.
- 8.4.2 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 Sections 9.8.1 (a) and 9.8.1 (b) of the Council's Constitution in respect of the Area Committees' Terms of Reference, notes the following:- To allocate discretionary budgets within the terms determined by the Council and to allocate devolved budgets and activities within the terms determined by the Council. This is outlined in the current Grant Policy agreed by Cabinet in January 2020. Section 9.8.2 (h) of the Constitution in respect of Area Committees' Terms of Reference notes 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 2021/22.
- 10.2 The agreed base budget for this financial year is £6,000. The Committee has £1,145 carry forward from the 2020/21 financial year giving a total budget of £7,145 to allocate across the 4 meetings in 2021/22.

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 - 2021/22 Financial Year Budget Sheet.

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.