

**ROYSTON COMMITTEE
20 OCTOBER 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.

£1,221 to Home Start Royston, Buntingford and South Cambridgeshire to assist with costs for providing counselling support to one vulnerable family from Royston for a period of 9 months as outlined in 8.1.1.
- 2.2 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 the remainder of 2021/22 is summarised below:

	2020/21 Carry Forward	2020/21 Base Budget	Total Budget Remaining
Royston	£0	£4,851	* £4,851

*Whilst the Committee has £4,851 left to allocate, £1,500 is allocated annually to the Free After 3pm Parking Initiative. This amount is allocated at the March meeting and carried forward to the next Financial year. The funding therefore available to allocate across the three remaining meetings of the year is £3,351.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Grant Applications

8.1.1

Applicant	Home-Start Royston, Buntingford & South Cambridgeshire
Project	Funding support to assist with costs for providing counselling support to one vulnerable family in Royston for 9 months
Sum requested	£1,221
Total project cost	£1,521
Match funding	£300 from own funds
Previous support	Yes, £1050 in 2019 to assist with counselling support costs for a vulnerable family. The group have also, in the last 5 years, received £1,885 from the Covid Support Fund
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Council objective:	Build thriving and resilient communities

Home Start Royston, Buntingford & South Cambridgeshire are seeking funding support from Royston & District Area Committee to provide Home Visiting Service (HVS) support for one vulnerable family in the Royston area with children under 9 for a period of 9 months.

The aim of HVS is to prevent the vulnerable family from descending into crisis. The funding requested will enable the HVS to have the family supported by a highly-trained volunteer, who will visit the family for 2 to 3 hours every week, providing emotional and practical support, which is non-judgemental, confidential and free. Support is tailored to the family's individual needs from the outset with the aim being to empower the family and enable them to become independent of further help. The families that would benefit from the service would be those struggling with a diverse range of issues such as: • Post-Natal Depression • Depression • Anxiety • Low Self-esteem • Lack of Ability to Engage in Children's Development • Social Isolation

• Bereavement • Disability • Domestic Abuse • Family Breakdown • Children’s Behavioural Problems • Children’s Developmental Delay. The funding requested is solely for the benefit of one family in Royston and not for use in other areas of South Cambridgeshire. The application is criteria compliant.

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 December 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 early 2022.	Not known at this stage.

8.3 Community Engagement Updates

8.3.1 Bus Shelters

The bus shelter for Ickniel Walk was finally installed during late May 2021. The Royston Community Engagement Officer (CEO) has visited the location on numerous occasions since its installation and can confirm it is being well used by residents in the area.

In terms of the bus shelter planned for Melbourn Street, the Purchase Order has been submitted by Royston Town Council but due to Covid-19 the lead in time for installation is around 26 weeks. The current window for installation is from mid-November 2021 until mid-January 2022.

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 Royston CEO worked with the Conservators of Therfield Heath on a project to introduce
introduce new bike racks at the Heath. This project was completed early September and saw 5 bike stands installed on the car park area next to the Heath Sports and Social Club. This project was funded from S106 Sustainable Transport monies.

8.3.4 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.

Building works are due to commence mid-October and it is hoped the refurbishment project will be completed by January 2022.

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

8.3.5 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 has liaised with colleagues in Waste and Grounds Maintenance and the plan is n to have stickers on bins around the town showing the routes. This is subject to the sticker design being approved by all parties.

The Royston CEO is still waiting on the sticker design from the organisers of the walkandtalk initiative but will continue to chase.

8.3.6 Therfield , Royston & Kelshall Sports Association (TRAKSA) Funding Application

In April 2019, TRAKSA was awarded £50k from the Community Facilities Capital Projects Fund for a new pavilion in Therfield which would be home to cricket, football and a variety of community groups. Due to delays in securing the Land Lease and inability, due to Covid-19, to secure the additional match funding, TRAKSA was required to reapply for the funding at the September meeting of the Community Facilities Capital Projects panel.

The Royston CEO provided the group with support throughout the application process and their funding was agreed at the Panel meeting in September. Whilst funding has been agreed, monies will not be released until TRAKSA has secured the necessary Planning Permissions and the match funding for the Project.

8.3.7 St John The Baptist Church Funding Application

The Royston CEO provided support to a group applying for funding support from the Community Facilities Capital Projects Fund for St John The Baptist Church in Royston. It was hoped that this application would be tabled at the September Panel meeting but due to several gaps in the paperwork the application was deferred until later in the year.

Funding is required to refurbish the Church toilets and improve accessibility. The Royston CEO will continue to support the group with their application.

8.3.8 Signage to tackle littering from vehicles on A505

Littering from vehicles was identified as an issue by the Royston Town Centre Working Party in 2020. The areas worst affected were between the Royston McDonalds roundabout and the A10 roundabout. The Royston CEO looked at what other local authorities were doing to address this and found that Dacorum Borough Council had used signage to tackle the issue. The Royston CEO agreed the signage to be adopted and through joint funding from Royston First and HCC Councillors Locality budgets, the signage was purchased and installed on 8 locations along the A505 during late September.

8.3.9 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
- Bike racks at Heath Sports and Social Club

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 £4,851 left to allocate across the remaining 3 meetings in 2021/22. If the Committee awards the full amount requested by Home-Start Royston, Buntingford and South Cambridgeshire, they will have £2,130 left to allocate across the remaining 2 meetings of the financial year.

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 - 2020/21 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.