

**LETCHWORTH COMMITTEE
7 MARCH 2018**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

7

TITLE OF REPORT: GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE

REPORT OF THE COMMUNITIES MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS

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

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To advise the Committee on the current expenditure and balances of the Area Committee budgets.
- 1.2 To bring to the Committee's attention details of recent requests received for Area Committee Grant Funding, made by community groups and local organisations, which conform to the Authority's Grants Policy approved by Cabinet on June 14th 2016.
- 1.3 To advise the Committee of the activities and schemes with which the Community Officer has been involved.
- 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 endorses the actions taken by the Community Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Letchworth.
- 2.2 That the Committee be recommended to consider the provision of grant funding to the organisations outlined below:-
 - 2.2.1 Groundwork Hertfordshire £2,968 to deliver informal sessions for families to engage with the natural environment on Norton Common as outlined in 8.1.1
 - 2.2.2 That any unspent or unallocated amounts in the 2017/18 budget be allocated to Community Initiatives.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To ensure the Committee is kept informed of the work of the Community 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 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 with regard to funding proposals for Area 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 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 2017/18.
- 7.2 The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial years, including balances and past expenditure relating to the allocated and unallocated Area Capital Visioning Budgets available to the Committee. These figures are outlined under Item 10.1.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Grant Applications

8.1.1 Groundwork Hertfordshire

Groundwork is applying for £2,968 to deliver informal sessions on Norton Common for parents and their children aged 0-8. The supervised outdoor play sessions will help parents to gain the skills and confidence needed to use local green spaces for exercise and fun. It will help families to discover a local green space, explore its wildness, help to conserve it and share their experiences and learning with other people. The project will take place between January and March 2018 delivery will be 12 x 1.5 hour sessions, delivered over 6 weeks.

Despite evidence that being active outdoors and engaging with nature can provide substantial benefits for physical and mental health, unfortunately there is also some evidence that children are playing outdoors less than in previous generations (e.g. National Trust's Natural Childhood report 2012) and are therefore not developing the active play habits that lay the foundations for becoming active adults

This project will develop local families' capacity to provide their young children with a stimulating, enjoyable and free play actively in their local green spaces. It will also work towards tackling inactivity by getting families outdoors and being active.

They will be working with groups of families and with the networks and services that support them to develop the skills they need to promote active children's play habits. Groundwork has run similar programmes for groups of families for example in Borehamwood (Hertfordshire), Bedford and Fenland in Cambridgeshire and their project evaluation demonstrates that parents become more confident, children more active and outgoing, and that connections made between families continue outside of Groundwork-led activity.

Families who play together outside will be healthier and more resilient through increased physical activity and improved communication. Training provided to professionals and volunteers will ensure that skills are passed onto new families in future. Increased use of parks and green spaces by families will make neighbourhoods feel safer and more vibrant.

Amount requested £2968 Total project value £3968

The organisation have secured £1000 towards the project from the Tesco Bags for Life funding.

Costs include:

Planning – 17 hours of staff time

Initial meetings and communication with children centre management/staff

Site visits for H&S check

Seeking permissions from NHDC (permit application to be completed)

Design Scheme of work – unique to site

Purchase resources

Booking families on the courses - 15 hours of staff time

4 x visits to children centre(s) to promote course

Take phone calls/emails for bookings and recording information

Communications with Children Centres

Delivery – 50 hours of staff time

Delivery will be 12 x 1.5 hour sessions. Delivered over 6 weeks to two different groups. Dates of delivery can be flexible and will be agreed with the Children Centre. Time also includes: Travel, set up and take down, session evaluation time with centre staff, mileage, purchasing resources plus 6 hours contingency time.

The hourly rate Groundwork use is calculated in the following way:

Full Cost Recovery methodology		
Groundwork Hertfordshire		
Overhead costs for 2017-18 (Herts only)	£130,743.00	
Available staff hours within Trust (Herts only)	£ 20,275.00	
Project officer actual hourly rate	£ 22.50	using 80% fee earning of 1652 hours (after leave & 3 days for training & sickness removed) includes officer salary, NI, 8% pension
Contribution to overheads	£ 6.45	£130,743 divided by 20,275 hours
Contribution to senior management, admin & support costs	£ 11.25	
Total Full Cost Recover hourly rate	£ 40.20	

8.2 Update on Community Engagement

8.2.1 Jackman's Community Centre

The Jackman's Community Centre have successfully applied for the Community Facilities Capital Grant and received funding towards the cost of installing new disabled toilet facilities utilising a former cleaning cupboard. They are also renovating the existing ladies and gents facilities to the same standard in order to provide high standard of quality to enhance services to future hirers.

8.2.2 Youth Engagement Project

Following regular networking meetings with agencies providing services targeting children and young people, it has been identified that there appears to be a lack of social activities aimed at this group in Letchworth.

The Communities team have engaged a Communities Officer on a part time temporary basis to engage with both partner agencies and young people in town in order to identify this need. We will be looking to develop the youth offer to the area of Letchworth. Working with key partners from the Letchworth Youth Action Group new youth opportunities will be identified across the town.

Officers will be identifying possible social enterprise ventures with young people at the heart of the business. The project is currently in phase 1; engaging young people to ascertain what they would like to do. In partnership it is aimed to support them in forming a constituted group from which they can secure external investment.

In the longer term the desire is to make the project centrally based in the Town Centre. Outreach work will be taking place in the outlying areas such as the Grange, Wilbury and Jackmans. During the outreach consultation stage we will be supported by staff from HCC YC Herts. Additionally we are looking to re-install the active youth voice from Letchworth so that their views can be heard at decision making level within the Council.

8.2.3 Cycle Rack Project

The installation of the equipment is currently at a standstill due to winter temperatures. The remaining items requiring installation all require new concrete bases. To ensure the long term reliability of the concrete bases, they need the minimum overnight temperature to be 3 degrees or higher for a number of days after the base been installed. The contractor has advised that weather conditions are not likely to be suitable until mid/late March. All of the shelters are manufactured and ready to go as soon as the contractor is able to proceed.

The works that have been completed so far are:-

Letchworth Leisure Centre –	Rydale shelter and 2 tire racks
Garden City Academy –	new Harlan compound shelter, refurbish existing bike shelter, new scooter racks and a scooter pod from another company
Grange Junior School –	Harlan compound shelter, 2 new scooter racks, remove existing bike shed
Guide Hut, Ickniel way –	cycle stands
St Georges Church –	cycle stands
Stonehill primary school –	scooter racks and sheeting
Pixmore infant school –	a scooter pod but I will check the file when I get into the office

Outstanding jobs requiring new bases

Highfield School
Pixmore School
Hillshott infant school
Scout Hut on Rushby Mead
North Herts Homes Flats – Bittern Way, Jarden, Kirkby, Lannock and Oakhill
Letchworth Town Hall car park (this one does not require a base, but will be done on a visit with one of the other jobs)

Other Prospective locations

District Council Offices – Rowland Way
Town Centre Locations to be agreed with Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation and Herts County Council
Ickniel Infant School

8.3 **Highways Matters**

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 Section 9.8.2 (g) of 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". The Area Committees also 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.
- 9.2 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides a General Power of Competence which gives local authorities the powers to do anything:-
- An individual may generally do
 - Anywhere in the UK or elsewhere
 - For a commercial purpose or otherwise, for a charge or without a charge
 - Without the need to demonstrate that it will benefit the authority, its area or person's resident or present in its area.
- 9.3 Section 137 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 An amount of £6,877 was carried forward from the 2016/17 financial year, from which grants totalling £6,098 have been allocated to date. This leaves an amount of £779 available.

As outlined in Appendix 1; the discretionary grant budget for 2017/18 is £19,500 therefore providing a total of £20,279 available to provide grant funding to eligible groups and organisations.

Grant funding allocated at this meeting will be spent from the 2016/17 carry forward in the first instance.

Following the decision by Members at Full Council meeting on Thursday 8th February on efficiency measures to Area Committee budgets for the 2018/19 financial year; the annual grant budget for Letchworth Committee will be £13,500.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no relevant risk entries that have been recorded on Pentana Performance, 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” policy 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 - 2017/18 financial year budget sheet

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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