

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE

REPORT OF: THE POLICY & COMMUNITIES MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

CURRENT COUNCIL PRIORITIES: PEOPLE FIRST, SUSTAINABILITY, A BRIGHTER FUTURE TOGETHER

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 **£500** to Offley Parish Council towards a new noticeboard for the village of Offley as outlined in 8.1.1-8.1.4.
- 2.3 **£1157** to Kimpton Primary School for a painting station as part of their playground development as outlined in 8.1.5-8.1.10.
- 2.4 **£659** to Breachwood Green Charity Group (CIO) for two community coffee mornings, website management and annual insurance for litter picking in 8.1.11-8.1.14.
- 2.5 That the Committee be recommended to endorse the actions taken by the Community Engagement team to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Southern Rural.

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 July 2021.
- 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, during 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. Southern Rural Area Committee Budget spreadsheet, which relates to the Committee budget balances for 2022/23. The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial year, including balances and past expenditure.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

Councillors are at liberty to consider any amount requested in a grant application if the committee has sufficient funds in the 2022/2023 budget.

8.1 Grant Applications

8.1.1

Applicant	Offley Parish Council
Project	Noticeboard for the village of Offley.
Sum requested	£500
Total project cost	£1,812.19
Match funding	£300 HCC Locality Budget £1,012.19 Parish Reserves
Previous support	2020: £2,000 towards playground equipment
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Council objectives	People First

8.1.2 Offley Parish Council would like to purchase a new noticeboard for the village of Offley as the existing board is old, leaks and is difficult to operate.

8.1.3 The Parish has many posters on display promoting local groups and businesses, as well as communicating important dates such as Parish Council meetings and Police Surgeries.

8.1.4 All residents and visitors to the village will benefit from being able to view latest updates.

8.1.5

Applicant	Kimpton Primary School
Project	Painting station (part of playground redevelopment).
Sum requested	£1,157
Total project cost	£1,157
Match funding	Exploring options for the rest of the playground redevelopment.
Previous support	None from NHC
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Council objectives	People First A Brighter Future Together

8.1.6 Kimpton Primary School are in the process of developing the KS1 playground environment for their early years children to improve both their well-being and more importantly to enhance their physical development that was so greatly affected during the pandemic lockdowns.

8.1.7 They have considered different proposals and have chosen one which has the least financial layout but the maximum impact on the developmental skills of the children. It will include things such as a climbing/obstacle track, water play area, stage for play acting etc.

8.1.8 As part of this development, they are applying for funding for a painting station. Below is a mock up from the company of the painting station:



**PB111
Painting Station**







All our timbers are pressure treated with a chrome-free and arsenic free preservative which protects against decay and insect attack for 20 years.



High spec, co-extruded polyethylene 'Playtec' panels. It is extremely durable, will not fade in sunshine, it is unaffected by moisture, will not delaminate.



High quality countersunk torx head wood screw with special thread. Hardened steel with a brass effect finish.



Fastenings are tamper proof or capped with secure custom-made plastic tamper proof covers. All footholds have a slip-resistant surface.



Free Fall Height: N/ A
Minimum Area: 1.15m x 0.3m

Features:

- Perspex Panel
- Playtec Surround
- Playtec Paint Pot Holder
- Timber Post Construction

PAINT POTS NOT INCLUDED





Images show previous version of PB111 Painting Station

8.1.9 The playground development is all about putting people first. The children are the primary beneficiaries but the skills they will learn and the improvements to their development both physically and socially, as well as improved well-being, will also benefit their families.

8.1.10 The design and materials used in the playground development have been chosen specifically to be long-lasting and hard wearing. Happy children are better learners, better learners will have a brighter future together with their families.

8.1.11

Applicant Project	Breachwood Green Charity Group (CIO) Two community coffee mornings, website management and annual insurance for litter picking.
Sum requested	£659
Total project cost	£669
Match funding	£10 funds raised from coffee shop June 2022.
Previous support	2021 £441 for litter picking equipment
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Council objectives	People First Sustainability

8.1.12 Breachwood Green Charity Group conduct monthly Parish-wide litter picks to keep the area clean using local resident volunteers. They provide pop-up not-for-profit coffee shops to encourage social interaction and mobilisation in the local community.

8.1.13 They would like funding towards:

- Hall hire and refreshments for two community coffee mornings which will be held in October and December 2022. It is hoped that through charging for the refreshments, this will go towards funding future events.
- Management of their website which is used to communicate and engage with the local residents and avoid paper wastage – www.breachwood.green.
- Annual insurance for litter picking.

8.1.14 Local residents will benefit from the group's work as the meetups provide an opportunity to connect and build community resilience. In one year, they have increased from 4 to 15 volunteers involved in their monthly litter picking.

8.2 Community Engagement Update and previous grants awarded

8.2.1 Community Engagement Team

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

- Co-ordinating the first online Parish Forum Network meeting for 26th September, for Parishes to connect and share current challenges and issues.
- As part of a webinar for North Herts CVS, we are putting together a short online presentation to highlight local support available for Ukrainian refugees, available from 14th September.
- Processing grants to utilise the Health Protection Board funding to assist the community's recovery following the Covid 19 Pandemic.

- To celebrate Local Democracy Week and Parliament Week in October/November, the team are developing youth democracy activities for Keystage 2 primary school children.
- Supporting various local and district wide Network Groups such as Youth Action, Food Provision, Arts and Culture and the newly resurrected Green and Growing Group.
- Continuing to share and disseminate information on social media and to mailing lists, keeping in touch with the community, voluntary, statutory and non-statutory agencies.

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 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 July 2021. 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 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. Southern Rural Area Committee budget 2022/23.
- 10.2 The 2022/23 base budget was **£8,700**, with **£222** carried forward from the 2021/22 budget. **£1,780** was granted at the last Committee meeting. This leaves a budget available of **£7,142**.
- 10.3 The grant applications for this meeting total **£2,316** and if the Members agree the grants outlined in this report this will leave a balance of **£4,826**.

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 Breachwood Green Charity Group securing annual insurance for litter picking will enable them to continue maintaining and improving their local environment.

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 – Appendix 1 Southern Rural Area Committee budget 2022/23

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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 July 2021.