

SOUTHERN RURAL COMMITTEE 20 December 2022

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

TITLE OF INFORMATION NOTE: COMMUNITY UPDATE

INFORMATION NOTE OF THE POLICY & COMMUNITIES MANAGER

PRIORITY: PEOPLE FIRST, SUSTAINABILITY, A BRIGHTER FUTURE TOGETHER

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 At this meeting, no decisions need to be made by Members of the Committee. This is due to not receiving grant applications that meet our grant criteria and this information note is to advise the Committee on:
- 1.2 The current expenditure and balances of the Committee Grant budgets.
- 1.3 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. STEPS TO DATE

- 2.1 To ensure the Committee is kept informed of the work of the Community Engagement Team.
- 2.2 This note 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. INFORMATION TO NOTE

3.1 As outlined in Appendix 1. Southern Rural Area Committee budget 2022/23

- 3.1.1 The 2022/23 base budget was **£8,700**, with **£222** carried forward from the 2021/22 budget. Grants awarded to date total **£3,306** which leaves a budget available of **£5,616**.

3.2 Community Engagement Update

3.2.1 Community Engagement Team

- 3.2.2 The team have been continuing to engage and network with local community groups and initiatives. This involved:
 - Reviewing the Parish Forum Network for Parishes to connect and share current projects, challenges, and issues.

- Meeting with Pirton Parish Council to discuss their Capital Grant Application to build a replacement pavilion.
- Providing advice to resident in Codicote on how to develop their community garden project idea - to set up a charity and use green spaces to combat isolation.
- Provided support at North Herts Council's Walking and Cycling Consultation event in Knebworth on 20th October. This led to a separate tour of Knebworth facilitated by Councillor Lisa Nash.
- Arranging attendance at the next Codicote Parish Council meeting.
- Connecting with Community Development Action – Hertfordshire's Rural Community Charity and exploring ways of working together.
- Sharing information to Community contacts that can help with the current 'Cost of Living Crisis' and sharing information about local 'Warm Hubs'.
- To celebrate Local Democracy Week and Parliament Week in October/November, the team developed youth democracy activities for Keystage 2 primary school children. Councillors and members of the team have been visiting schools for assemblies and Q&A sessions.
- Gathered speakers and information for the Cabinet Panel for Community Engagement and Co-operative Development. The theme of the talk was the 'Cost of Living Crisis' and was held on 17th October.
- The team helped co-ordinate the Letchworth Remembrance Day event which was held on 13th November 2022.
- The team are co-ordinating an event for Holocaust Memorial Day which will be on 27th January 2023.
- Continue to facilitate the NHC Councillors' Community Surgeries.
- 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.

4. NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 We recommend Members to encourage local groups that are organising summer events to send applications by 6 January 2023.
- 4.2 We recommend Members to contact the Assistant Community Engagement Officer to arrange any ward visits in 2023.

5. APPENDICES

- 5.1 Appendix 1 – Appendix 1 Southern Rural Area Committee budget 2022/23.

6. CONTACT OFFICERS

6.1 Author:

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7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Review of Policies and Procedures for Financial Assistance to Voluntary and Community Organisations, November 2002.

7.2 Review of Grant Policy, Cabinet July 2021.