

SOUTHERN RURAL COMMITTEE 2 March 2023

***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 **£2,485** to Breachwood Green JMI School PTFA towards a new spectator rail which will enclose the sports pitch as outlined in 8.1.1-8.1.4.
- 2.3 **£1,500** to Kimpton Folk Events to provide free entertainment at Kimpton Folk Festival on 1st July 2023 8.1.5-8.1.9.
- 2.4 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	Breachwood Green JMI School PTFA
Project	Spectator Rail
Sum requested	£2,485
Total project cost	£24,285 – for overhaul of outside play space
Match funding	£3,000 Funds already raised by PTFA £1,000 Donations from parents Christmas events £15,000 Local Business Grant £2,800 to still raise for whole project phase 1
Previous support	None
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Council objectives	People First A Brighter Future Together

8.1.2 The Breachwood Green JMI School Parent Teacher Friends Association are raising funds to overhaul the outside play space of the school. The project is to remove the existing old climbing apparatus, and install an artificial grass, fenced sports pitch, and then to install new climbing apparatus in the playground area.

8.1.3 This grant would pay for the spectator rail, which will enclose the sports pitch. In the unlikely event the prices increase in the time since the quote was received, the school and PTFA would address any shortfalls through fundraising. This is the most competitive quote, having approached four companies.

8.1.4 The current 85 pupils at the school and future pupils will benefit from the improved facilities for years to come. The children will also be able to play in the new sports pitch in all weathers.

8.1.5

Applicant Project	Kimpton Folk Events Free entertainment at Kimpton Folk Festival on 1 st July 2023
Sum requested	£1,500
Total project cost	£7,450
Match funding	£1,500 Fundraising concerts £250 Charity buckets £200 Programme Ads £1,000 stall rental/concessions £3,000 to still raise - in the process of preparing grant applications to other funding bodies
Previous support NHDC Policy met	£390 in 2019 towards folk festival At the time of writing this report we are awaiting a robust Safeguarding Policy from Kimpton Folk Events. If the Committee approve funding for this grant, it will be conditional of receipt of an adequate policy.
Council objectives	People First A Brighter Future Together

8.1.6 Kimpton Folk Events are raising funds to cover the cost of the free entertainment provided at The Kimpton Folk Festival on 1st July. The festival is planned to start at 11.30am and end at 11pm, comprising of a wide range of top-quality music and other activities.

8.1.7 The festival consists of both ticketed concerts and free events to enable the festival to be accessible to all. They offer free entertainment as part of their commitment to supporting emerging folk musicians and introducing new audiences to live music. The free activities are designed to benefit families and others not wishing, or able, to pay for the ticketed events.

8.1.8 They will include performances by a wide range of folk musicians, both local and from further afield. In the Dacre rooms, they will be providing free music workshops to young and not so young aspiring musicians which will cover a range of instruments and musical topics. Also, folk music sessions and opportunities for 'open mic' performances will be available at 'The Boot'.

8.1.9 Putting on an event of this size and variety in a small village brings together people from across the whole community, with some 60 volunteers helping on the day, in addition to those actively involved with the Charity on an ongoing basis. Visitors are expected from: Kimpton, Codicote, St Paul's Walden, Peters Green, Whitwell, Blackmore End, Gustard Wood, Wheathampstead, Harpenden, St Albans, Luton, Hitchin, Stevenage, Hatfield, Welwyn and Royston, and further afield, through their connections with local folk clubs.

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:

- Continuing to review and gauge interest in the Parish Forum Network for Parishes.
- The Assistant Community Engagement Officer attended the Codicote Parish Council meeting in January and Wymondley Parish Council meeting in February to highlight the work of the Community Team.
- The team co-ordinated an event for Holocaust Memorial Day which was on 27th January 2023. The recording can be viewed online [North Herts Council marks Holocaust Memorial Day | North Herts Council \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/news/2023/01/27/north-herts-council-marks-holocaust-memorial-day).
- The team are co-ordinating the North Herts Heroes Awards ceremony which will be on 3rd March 2023.
- Co-ordinating various local and district wide Network Groups such as Youth Action, Food Provision, Arts and Culture and Green and Growing Group.
- Continue to facilitate the NHC Councillors' Community Surgeries.
- 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. Grants awarded to date total **£3,306** which leaves a budget available of **£5,616**.
- 10.3 The grant applications for this meeting total **£3,985** and if the Members agree the grants outlined in this report this will leave a balance of **£1,631** to carry forward into the 2023/24 budget.

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 None.

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.