

ROYSTON COMMITTEE 23rd 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 Members on the current expenditure and balances of the Committee Grant budgets.
- 1.2 To bring to Members' attention recent requests received for Committee grant funding, made by community groups and local organisations.
- 1.3 To advise of the activities and schemes with which Community Engagement officers have been involved in.
- 1.4 To bring to Members' attention some important community-based activities that will take place during the next few months.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Committee considers allocating funding from their discretionary community budget towards the projects below:
- 2.2 **£777** to Cambridge Russian School towards social and English language sessions for Ukrainian residents as outlined in paragraphs 8.1.1-8.1.4 of this report.
- 2.3 **£2086** to Roman Way Supporters towards overhauling their nature garden as outlined in paragraphs 8.1.5-8.1.11 of this report.
- 2.4 That the Committee agrees that any unspent funds from the 2022/23 financial year be allocated to the Royston Area Committee budget for the 2023/24 period.
- 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 Royston.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To ensure Members are 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. Royston Area Committee Budget spreadsheet, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for 2022/23. The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial years, including balances and past expenditure.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

Councillors are at liberty to consider any amount requested in a grant application as long as the Royston Area Committee has sufficient funds in the 2022/2023 budget.

8.1 Grant Applications

8.1.1

Applicant Project	Cambridge Russian School (CRS) Social and English language sessions for Ukrainian residents.
Sum requested	£777
Total project cost	£1,077
Match funding	£300 HCC locality budgets
Previous support	No
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Council objectives	People First A brighter future together

8.1.2 Cambridge Russian School teach children of Russian-speaking heritage Russian language and additional activities (programming, chess, maths, art and drama) taught in Russian language.

8.1.3 The group have recently welcomed several Ukrainian students to their lessons and have received grant funding from Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire to cover the fees of students from their areas. CRS have one Ukrainian student who lives in Royston and they would like funding to help cover his fees for the summer term, which totals £252.

8.1.4 CRS would also like to provide an opportunity for local Ukrainians in Royston to have weekly gatherings, with an English language workshop and information on other topics of interest. This would cost £25 per hour for room hire. The group would like to have a room for 1.5 hours per week, which would cost £825 for the period of April-September.

8.1.5

Applicant Project	Roman Way Supporters Completion (phase two) of the Roman Way Academy nature garden.
Sum requested	£2086
Total project cost	£5,664.45
Match funding	£500 supermarket community grant £300 HCC locality budgets £2,779.18 fundraising
Previous support	No
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Council objectives	People First A brighter future together

- 8.1.6 Roman Way Supporters host fund-raising events to provide fun, engaging, all-inclusive extra-curricular activities for the children at Roman Way Academy and raise money for funding additional resources, equipment and experiences for the school.
- 8.1.7 The group are requesting funding towards the completion of the school's nature garden, a large area of land, approximately 750m², on the school premises which has been unused for many years.
- 8.1.8 In 2022, school staff, Diamond Academy Learning Trust and Roman Way Supporters combined their efforts to use the outdoor space to create a nature garden for the benefit of all the children at the school and the wider community.
- 8.1.9 The activities in 2022 included:
- Initial clearance of undergrowth to create safe pathways
 - Creation of three raised planters to allow the children to grow vegetables
 - Building of a pond with pond dipping platform
 - Purchase of pond dipping equipment
 - Purchase of one wooden storage container.
- 8.1.10 The group are now moving onto phase 2 of the project, which this application pertains to. Activities to be carried out include:
- Landscaping company and tree surgeon to further clear broken and overhanging trees/branches/brambles and undergrowth to allow a more usable, immersive and safe space for the children.
 - Large chalkboard for learning leadership, documenting nature finds and to immediately enhance potential for English teaching and learning.
 - English learning station, to provide workspace and storage specifically for English learning resources.
 - Wipeable individual white boards.
 - Wooden pencils for use in learning activities in the garden.
 - Wraparound wooden seating to go around the trees.
 - Wooden teepees to provide seating and spaces to play, learn and create.
 - Den building kits.
- 8.1.11 To further supplement the grant request for Phase 2 above, the Roman Way Supporters are looking to seek sponsorship and charitable donations of non-essential resources to further raise the impact of the nature garden for the students and wider community.

8.2 Community Engagement Update

8.2.1 Community Engagement Team

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

- Coordinating and hosting the North Herts Heroes Awards 2023. The winners of the Young Star Award and the Health Award are from Royston. The event can be viewed here: [North Herts Heroes Awards 2023 - YouTube](#)
- Supporting North Herts CVS and Letchworth Heritage Foundation with planning the All About Us Community Conference, an event for groups districtwide. [All About Us Community Conference Tickets, Thu 23 Mar 2023 at 09:30 | Eventbrite](#)
- 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 \(north-herts.gov.uk\)](#).
- 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.
- Facilitating NHC Councillors' Community Surgeries.

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. Royston Area Committee Budget spreadsheet.

10.2 The 2022/23 base budget was **£6,000**, with **£3,130** carried forward from the 2021/22 budget, giving a total budget for the year of **£9,130**. Grants awarded to date total **£5,451**. This leaves a budget available of **£3,679**.

10.3 The grant applications for this meeting total **£2,863** and if Members agree the grants outlined in this report this will leave a balance of **£816** 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 The grant requested by Roman Way Supporters would help improve the local habitat.

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. Royston Area Committee Budget spreadsheet

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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.