

**HITCHIN COMMITTEE
5 JUNE 2018**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

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.
- 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 considers allocating funding from their discretionary community budget towards the projects below:
 - 2.1.1 £1,500 11th Hitchin (Holy Saviour) Guides towards summer activities, outings and equipment as outlined in 8.1.1
 - 2.1.2 £1,320 to British Schools Museum for essential roof maintenance as outlined in 8.1.2
 - 2.1.3 £1,500 to Headway who are requesting £3,750 towards the cost of therapy Sessions as outlined in 8.1.3
 - 2.1.4 £2,500 to Hitchin Christian Centre to provide debt centre, job club and life skills training as outlined in 8.1.4
 - 2.1.5 £1000 to Hitchin Rugby Club to set up their own arm of the JOCA. As outlined in 8.1.5

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| 2.1.6 | £3,756 to Rhythms of the World towards a one day community event as outlined in 8.1.6 |
| 2.2 | That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Hitchin. |

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 A Hitchin Area Committee Budget Spread sheet, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for 2018/19.

- 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.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Grant Applications

8.1.1 11th Hitchin (Holy Saviour) Guides

11th Hitchin (Holy Saviours) Guides are a registered charity that empowers the girls to experience life-changing adventures, to achieve their potential, make a difference and to be their best.

They are seeking funds to enable all the Guides to have the opportunity to take part in all activities on offer. They are requesting a total of £1500 which towards the cost of summer activities, outings and equipment.

8.1.2 British Schools Museum

The British Schools Museum is a registered charity who welcomes visitors from the community and disadvantaged groups.

They are looking to complete essential maintenance of the roof, there are many loose tiles which are a health and safety hazard and this is causing leaks to the roof meaning that they have had to cancel group meetings. They have requested £1,320 to contribute to the cost of these works.

Renovating the roof will provide a safe environment for all visitors of the museum and preserve the conservation of the listed building. The work will ensure longevity of the roof and enable the museum to continue working with the local community protecting the physical heritage environment.

8.1.3 Headway

Headway is a registered charity that provides support and care for those affected by a brain injury. They support carers to understand the effects of a brain injury through therapeutic and peer support activities. At present Headway is the only organisation locally that focuses directly on individuals affected by a brain injury.

The annual cost of providing services is £20k Headway is aiming to cover 50% the costs of therapeutic and peer support activities. They have applied for £6,000 from Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation and £4000 from the Peoples Post Code Lottery fund.

The organisations have requested a total of £10,000 from North Hertfordshire District Council to go towards the cost of these sessions for those affected by a brain injury. The service supports people from Hitchin, Letchworth & Baldock. The £10k has been divided by per capita percentage between the three Area Committees £3,750 from both Letchworth and Hitchin and £2500 from Baldock. However, each Committee will be at liberty to contribute to the over all amount as they see fit.

There is a need to support a highly vulnerable group of people affected by a brain injury, to enable them to reach their potential. Running the project will enable those individuals to return to meaningful activity, reducing social isolation and enable them to rebuild their confidence.

8.1.4 Hitchin Christian Centre

Hitchin Christian Centre is a registered charity that works with the community to provide employability support. They run a debt centre, job club and life skills courses aimed at disadvantaged, low income families and individuals needing support with securing and locating suitable employment. Individuals looking to learn new life skills will have the opportunity through the support of the staff and volunteers.

They are requesting a total of £2,500 which will be put towards the operational costs which includes all staff and volunteer training.

8.1.5 Hitchin Rugby Club - JOCA Hitchin

Following the successful implantation at Welwyn Rugby Club, Hitchin have taken up the challenge to set up their own arm of the JOCA charity (Just one Click Away). The service is made available via volunteers to act as a first point of contact for club members who may be struggling with a variety of challenges (all of which can impact mental health)

JOCA is a welfare committee dedicated to promoting and ensuring pastoral care and general well-being for all members of the club. The aim will be to nurture a culture within the club where peers will talk to each other, and support each other rather than bottle things up and allow them to get out of control. "It isn't a weakness to need a friendly ear (even if you're a bloke). We start this with our minis buddy system and promote this ethos right from 7 to 70 across the club"

The funding is required to support the launch and implantation of JOCA at Hitchin rugby club. This will involve promotional material, training (spotting the signs) for their responders

They are requesting a total of £1000 to set up their own JOCA Charity (Just one Click away). The service is made available via volunteers to act as a first point of contact for club members who may be struggling with a variety of challenges.

8.1.6 ROTW

Rhythms of the World are a registered charity run by volunteers providing an opportunity for the local community to organise and participate in events that celebrate culture and the arts.

They plan to have a day of music and arts in the Market Square, St Mary's Church and High Street on Saturday 11th August from 11:30 until 20:00. The total cost of putting on this event is estimated to be in the region of £10k.

The ROTW committee are seeking local business sponsorship up to a total of £3,000, they have £600 from donations and £1,590 from the charity's reserves. They, will be raising a further £600 from ticketed events at Club 85 and hope to generate £750 profit on pitch fees for stalls on the day.

They are requesting £3,756 from the Hitchin Area Committee to make up the shortfall.

8.2 **Update on Previous Grants awarded and Community Engagement**

8.2.1 Grants awarded to groups who provide Counselling services

At the request of Cllr Simon Harwood at the last meeting of the Hitchin Area Committee on 6th March 2017 (*Minutes of meeting held 06.03.18 item 60 (2)*) outlined below is a list of organisations providing a counselling service that have received funding from Area Committee budgets in the last 2 years.

- Tilehouse counselling received £4,964 in March 18
- Hitchin Stroke Group received £2,000 December 2017
- Living room Hertfordshire received £2500 in March 17
- Resolve Drug and Alcohol counselling Received £1,274 December 16
- Hitchin Counselling Service received £2,700 April 16
- Herts Young Carers £2,706 April 16
- Family Matters received £931.00 March 16 and £1,230 in July 2017
- Mind In Mid Herts January £1,040 January 2016

8.2.2 Family Matters

Family Matters were awarded £1,230 at the Hitchin Area Committee meeting in June 2017.

Some of this funding was used during the summer period last year to subsidise the cost of outings and activities for disadvantaged parents and their children. This year the group will use the remainder of the funding and have a wide range of experiences and trips planned for the families that attend the weekly group.

These include:

- games and activities in Bancroft Park with free refreshments
- Family Matters Little Fishes Fun Swim sessions at Hitchin Indoor Swimming Pool.
- healthy eating fun food tastings, at Oughton Children's Centre where parents, carer's and children all prepare lunches, snacks, smoothies to sit together at the end of the session and enjoy together.
- Sing & Sign and Music & Movement sessions also through the summer. All sessions are open to families with under and over fives so the whole family can join in the fun. Parents, Dads, Grandparents and any Carer's are most welcome to come along.

Charmaine Rogers who coordinates the group informed the Communities officer,

“Everyone at Family Matter’s very much appreciate the ongoing support and encouragement from The Area Committee without this invaluable support I would not be in a position financially within Family Matter’s to be able to offer the very deserving, often hard to reach young families in Hitchin and surrounding villages, this programme of diverse, stimulating, fun activities.

“We will be offering any families living in rural areas or any family within Hitchin transport too and from the group. “

8.2.3 Community Facilities

The lease agreement with the Walsworth Community Centre has now been agreed. Work is underway to renovate the building and funding from the Community Facilities Capital Grant is being released in phases as each part of the project is undertaken.

The North Herts Minority Ethnic Forum have met all the conditions placed on the Grant awarded to them for the extension on the building. One of these was that planning permission should be in place; this had now been gained with out any issues. The other was to ensure that they had a long enough lease on the building from Howard Cottage Housing Association, which also proved not to be an issue. Officers from the Communities Team are meeting with the group to discuss the project and funding will be released in increments when the work commences.

8.2.4 Section 106 funding

Prior to 2016 Section 106 funds were collected from developers from information supplied by officers in Planning there are the following amount available for suitable capital projects under each heading:

Leisure:	£37,212.30
Pitch Sports:	£6,142.49
Play Space:	£4,016.25
Public Realm:	£9952.18
Sustainable Transport:	£122,035.88

If members have suggestions for projects that these amounts might be used for please contact the Communities Officer to investigate further possibilities.

The Communities Team are also collating any future requirements in terms of capital funds to support larger scale community needs. These will be communicated to planning officers to assist when negotiating any new unilateral undertakings with prospective developers. If members have any suggestions of suitable projects or requirements within their wards please inform the Communities Officer.

8.2.5 Update on information requested regarding Churchgate

The discussion in regard to the proposed Churchgate renovations at the last meeting held on 6th March 2018 has been brought to the attention of the Deputy Chief Executive and he has confirmed that officers are fully aware of the steps that lead from the riverside up to St Mary’s Square and the inscription on them.

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 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. Section 9.8.2 (g) of the 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",
- 9.2 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 (S1-8) provides a General Power of Competence which gives local authorities the powers to do anything provided that it is not specifically prohibited in legislation:-
- 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 As outlined in Appendix A Committee budget 2018/19:-
The agreed budget for this financial year is £13,700. In addition to £13,131 carried forward from 2017/18 equates to a total amount of £26,831 for the provision of Community Development Grants. It is suggested that any funds allocated use the 2017/18 funding in the first instance.
- 10.2 Should Members be minded to provide grant funding as requested under recommendation 2.1 the total awarded will equate to £13,826. This would leave an amount of £13,005 to allocate prior to the end of the financial year.
- 10.3 The Capital Visioning funds are now all been drawn down and utilised for redevelopment projects in Bancroft Gardens.

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 A - 2018/19 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