

LETCHWORTH COMMITTEE
06 June 2018

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

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, which conform to the Authority's Grants Policy approved by Cabinet on June 14th 2016.
- 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 endorses the actions taken by the Community Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Letchworth.
- 2.2 That the Committee be recommended to consider the provision of grant funding to the organisations outlined below:-
 - 2.2.1 To Best Before Cafe £576 to set up weekly 'pop-up' community café hoping to tackle food poverty and food waste as outlined in 8.1.1
 - 2.2.2 To Crystalites Majorettes £750 towards the cost of new uniforms and support members from disadvantaged backgrounds as outlined in 8.1.2
 - 2.2.3 £1500 to Headway who are requesting £3,750 towards the cost of therapy Sessions as outlined in 8.1.3
 - 2.2.4 To Letchworth Rink Hockey Club £1000 towards hall hire and coaching fees as outlined in 8.1.4

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| 2.2.5 | To Norton Bowls Club £500 for the purchase of ditch liners as outlined in 8.1.5 |
| 2.2.6 | To Transition Town Letchworth £300 contribution towards the cost of project resource books and first aid training for volunteers as outlined in 8.1.6 |
| 2.2.7 | To Wilbury Community Forum £342 towards the cost of venue hire for the Community Café as outlined in 8.1.7 |
| 2.2.8 | To North Herts Multiple Sclerosis Society £747 to purchase an exercise bike for their physio sessions based at Hadleigh as outlined in 8.1.8 |
| 2.2.9 | To Ashwell, Baldock & Letchworth Scouts £246 towards purchase of high visibility bibs. |

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

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Grant Applications

8.1.1 Best Before Café

Best before café is a weekly 'pop-up' community café hoping to tackle food poverty and food waste in Letchworth. This will be through providing refreshments, light snacks, hot food and groceries to the community. The food used comes from surplus/unsold food donated by supermarkets. The food and drink has no pricing, instead the community are able to make donations of money, time or skills.

They are requesting £576 which will cover the costs of resources and marketing. This will include the purchase of a; tea urn, filter coffee machine, toaster, industrial scales and crockery.

The café will enable edible food to be rescued rather than end up on landfill. The café will provide a sense of togetherness by having a pay as you like theme, this will attract all means of people from the community.

8.1.2 Crystalites Majorettes

Crystalites Majorettes are a dance group open to both boys and girls from the age of 4. They currently have 16 in the troupe and they perform at various fetes and for good causes including the Armed Forces day in Letchworth Centre and performances for the elderly at care homes.

They are looking to get new uniform in preparation for their upcoming competitions they are requesting a total of £ £750 to cover the cost of the new uniform.

The group provides the troupes with the opportunity to engage with the community through events and competitions. There are both physical and social benefits from the group as friendships are built and confidence is boosted.

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 organisation 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.

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 Letchworth Rink Hockey Club

Letchworth Rink Hockey Club train and participate in regional, national and international tournaments. They have clubs from youth through to senior both female and male players who compete competitively.

They are requesting funds to be able to set up a new academy for children, this would be open to all and they would teach the skating skills and techniques of the game. They are seeking a total of £1000 to cover the costs of the hall hire and the coach.

Those living in Letchworth and the surrounding towns would benefit from the academy; it will provide both physical and social elements to the children participating.

8.1.5 Norton Bowls Club

Norton Bowls Club was established in 1908 and provides a facility for the community to play bowls. The community have the opportunity to become a member of the club and participate in regular games of bowls.

They are seeking a total of £500 to buy some ditch liners for the ditch surrounding the Bowling Green; this protects the bowls should they go off the green.

Norton Bowls club provides physical activity and social amenities for the community both members and non members.

8.1.6 Letchworth Transition Towns

Transition Towns is a registered charity working to build a more sustainable Letchworth by locally tackling the challenges of climate change, economic resilience and future energy supply. They run projects to help people reduce their reliance on fossil fuels.

Transition Towns have signed up as the community lead to deliver the Surfers against Sewage Plastic free Coastlines Community toolkit. They are seeking a total of £300 to contribute to the costs of the project resource books, First aid training and printing of resources.

Letchworth will be provided with information which will help reduce the use of plastics. The project will promote changes that will lead to a reduction in single use plastic waste and promote reusable cups, bottles and lunch boxes.

8.1.7 Wilbury Community Forum

Wilbury Community forum is an unregistered charity that runs a monthly free café in Wilbury for the whole community.

They are seeking a total of £342 to cover the cost of Hall hire for 11 months.

Wilbury have a high percentage of people on low incomes and they do not have a community hall. The community forum enables people in the community to come together to develop interests and provides a sense of togetherness.

8.1.8 North Hertfordshire Multiple Sclerosis Society

North Hertfordshire Multiple Sclerosis Society offer a weekly health and fitness programme. They offer their members assistance to help them retain good fitness through weekly Physiotherapy and Pilates sessions.

The society wants to purchase some new equipment for the members. They are seeking a total of £747 which would cover the cost of one exercise bike.

The society offers both physical and social benefits to those with multiple sclerosis, they are given the opportunity to socialise and take part in regular exercise.

8.1.9 Letchworth, Baldock & Ashwell District Scouts.

The Letchworth, Baldock & Ashwell District Scouts are seeking £410 to assist with the purchase of 30 numbered bibs that will be used for both day and night hikes. These are needed for hikes that will be taking place in July.

At the time of compiling this report, the group were unable to submit the required paperwork within the application deadline. If the Committee are minded to consider an award, grant funding could be released in time via the Delegated Authority process.

In terms of breakdown, 54 cubs/scouts are from Ashwell, 118 cubs/scouts are from Baldock and 248 cubs/scouts are from Letchworth. The bibs being purchased will be made available to all those scouts within Letchworth, Baldock & Ashwell District Scouts.

Based on the numbers above, if an award was to be approved, contributions from the Letchworth and Baldock & District Area Committees would work out to be:-

- **Letchworth Area Committee £246**
- Baldock & District AC - Town Ward £123 and Arbury Ward £41.

8.2 **Update on Community Engagement**

8.2.1 Cycle Rack Project

Other Prospective locations

District Council Offices – Rowland Way

Town Centre Locations to be agreed with Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation and Herts County Council

Icknield Infant School

8.3 **Discretionary Section 106 Capital funds for Letchworth**

Sustainable transport - £94,000

Public realm - £4,200

Play space - £18,719

Informal open space - £12,666

Community Centres - £10,372

The remainder is waste collection which is straight forward transfer to more bins, affordable housing which is spent throughout the District, health which goes to the CCGs or money received for a particular project already identified in the S106 agreements.

8.4 **Highways Matters**

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.

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 1; the discretionary grant budget for 2018/19 is £13,700. £18,496 was carried forward from the 2017/18 financial year therefore, providing a total of £32,196 available to provide grant funding to eligible groups and organisations. Grant funding allocated at this meeting will be spent from the 2017/18 carry forward in the first instance.

If Members are minded to agree all the grants put forward for consideration in this report the total funding allocated will be: £7,629, leaving a remainder of £25,167 for allocation at the three further meetings scheduled for the civic year.

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 1 - 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