

**North Herts Council
SOUTHERN RURAL COMMUNITY FORUM**

**Meeting held at Codicote Peace Memorial Hall
On Thursday 12 September 2024 at 7.30pm**

NOTES

Present: Cllr David Barnard (Chair) (DB), Cllr Claire Strong (Vice Chair) (CS), Cllr Joe Graziano (JG), Cllr Dominic Griffiths (DG), Cllr Ralph Muncer (RM), Cllr Steven Patmore (SP), Cllr Louise Peace (LP), Cllr Vijaiya Poopalasingham (VP) and Cllr Paul Ward (PW)

In attendance:

Laura Hartley (Community and Partnerships Officer) (LH)

Also present:

At the commencement of the meeting there were around 7 members of the public (MOP), including registered speakers.

Meeting Started at **19:30**

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Laura Williams, Cllr Caroline McDonnell, Cllr Lisa Nash and Cllr Daniel Allen.

2. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr Barnard welcomed everyone in attendance.

Highlighted that the Forum is an informal, inclusive meeting to share ideas.

Community Governance Review

The Council resolved to commence a Community Governance Review for the whole district which focuses on parish level arrangements.

The first stage of the review is to consult, and the council is inviting residents, parish councils and any interested parties to have their say on current arrangements as well as suggestions for future arrangements via a survey which is open until **7 October**.

There is a dedicated webpage on the Council's website titled 'Community Governance Review' which includes a link to the survey.

Please can I encourage you to complete the survey. If anyone has any queries regarding the Consultation, please email CommunityGovReview@north-herts.gov.uk

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN RELATION TO GRANT APPLICATION

The Community Partnerships officer informed those present that there is £16,555 available in the Southern Rural grant budget. If all grants are recommended and subsequently approved, there will be £10,127 remaining in the budget for the remainder of the financial year.

Received presentations in support of grant applications by the following:

Emily Evans presented the Groundwork East application.

Members enquired and received satisfactory answers about:

- Other external funding received to the organisation
- Costings for the family per sessions
- Monitoring of Southern Rural residents that will be attending sessions at Knebworth House
- How they will target Southern Rural villages and schools.
- How sessions are advertised and booked by families
- The inclusivity of sessions to those with disabilities

Groundwork East vote

DB proposed.

RM seconded.

CS abstained from voting. The remaining eight Members voted in favour of recommending Groundwork East application for £1,982 towards Wild Play sessions.

Bethan Desai presented the Angels Support Group Hitchin application.

Members enquired and received satisfactory answers about:

- Level of support and frequency of each type of support in the 1:1 service.
- Monitoring of Southern Rural families and targeted support
- Previous and future funding for the group
- Ages that are supported
- Referrals

Angels Support Group Hitchin vote

CS proposed.

PW seconded.

Unanimous vote in favour of recommending Angels Support Group Hitchin's application for £2,232 towards their 1:1 service.

Roger Piepenstock and Scott Boatwright presented the Offley & Stopsley Cricket Club application.

Members enquired and received satisfactory answers about:

- Other sources of funding and internal funding towards the project
- Improvements to website
- Schedule of training throughout the year
- Capacity of current members and future plans for the club
- Storage of equipment

Offley & Stopsley Cricket Club vote

PW proposed a reduced amount of £1,812.

LP seconded.

Unanimous vote in favour of recommending Offley & Stopsley Cricket Club application for £1,812 towards purchase of cricket equipment.

4. PRESENTATION – EVERYONE ACTIVE

Danny Kingston and Kirsty Jones, Everyone Active, presented on Active Communities.

- Everyone Active runs a GP Exercise Referral scheme for people with long-term health conditions. Instructors are able to assess and signpost a suitable exercise program.
- Offer free Parkinson's membership available. This includes free core membership for the Parkinson's patient and up to 3 carers on their account, also for free.
- Also offer free memberships for cared for and care experienced children.
- Aim is to deliver and mirror their program that takes place in Stevenage, within North Herts.
- Work with national governing bodies, local charities, clubs, and community groups. They offer support with funding bids, upskilling volunteers, venue higher, etc., depending on the needs of the group.
- Active Communities:
 - The Active Communities program is delivering sports and fitness sessions out in community sessions, making it more accessible across the district.
 - A consultation was sent out, receiving around 300 responses. This informs and guides the Active Communities program.
 - Don't have to have gym membership to take part.
 - Looking at what is currently run in the community venues and add to the timetable, not replicate current offers.
 - In contact with community venues and looking further in how to engage with communities.

5. COMMUNITY UPDATE

Laura Hartley, Community and Partnerships Officer, presented the Community Update.

6. WARD MATTERS & OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

RM raised that there is Full Council on 19th September for anyone wishing to attend to contact Committee Services to register.

DB informed the forum on the Deposit Return Scheme that will be introduced in the future.

7. TOPICS FOR FUTURE FORUMS

- Invite Parish Councils within the Southern Rural area to talk with members.
Venue: Council Chambers
- March – Police update TBC
Venue: TBC

MEETING CLOSED 21:15