

**LETCHWORTH COMMITTEE
4 MARCH 2019**

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, 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.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Committee considers allocating funding from their discretionary community budget towards the projects below:
- 2.2 **£2,760** to Home-Start Herts towards the cost supporting 6 families in need in Letchworth as outlined in 8.1.1
- 2.3 **£880** to North Herts 50+.who are requesting support funding towards the cost of producing publicity materials as outlined in 8.1.2
- 2.4 **£2,500** to the Khalsa Youth Football Association towards the development of young people to coach and mentor younger players as outlined in 8.1.3
- 2.5 That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Letchworth.

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 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. Under the current grant criteria there is no upper limit outlined for the amount of grant funding to be allocated which can be decided at the Committee's discretion.
- 7.2 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 funding applications**

Applicant	Home-Start Hertfordshire
Project	Support families in Letchworth
Sum requested	£2,760 = £460 x 6 families
Total project cost	£6,900 = 15 families across the District
Match funding	From Letchworth, Baldock and Southern Rural
Annual expenditure	£344,857 (as of March 2018)
Funds held	£113,000 (as of March 2018)
Previous support	None – support has been provided to Home-Start North Herts which became part of Home- Start Herts.
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Strategic objective met	Attractive & Thriving, Responsive & Efficient

8.1.1

Home-Start Hertfordshire was created when the Herts County Council withdrew core funding from the each of the Home-start organisations including Home-Start North Herts. The service was able to continue by joining together to form a County wide provision. Although NHDC have provided grant funding to Home-Start North Herts in the past (their last grant was awarded in 2015) we have not yet provided funds to Home Start Herts.

The charity provides local, family-support that offer emotional and practical help to parents with at least one child under 12. Their team of trained volunteer family mentors visit families in their own home, building trusted relationships and providing focused support that is tailored to the family's individual needs. In addition to other areas of the County they operate widely across North Herts apart from Royston which is covered by Home-Start South Cams.

This grant is required in order to help families who are currently waiting for support in North Herts. This grant would allow the use trained volunteers from the local community, to support families in their own homes for up to 3 months. As part of their service, families are sign posted to other organisations such as local family groups, Citizens Advice, Mental health teams, Family Centres, Safer Places and Housing Associations.

They are currently supporting 16 families in North Herts. However, there are still 15 families in the North Herts area that are waiting for much needed support. These are as follows;

- Baldock – 2 families (= £ 920)
- Hitchin – 5 families = (£2,300)
- **Letchworth – 6 families = (£ 2,760)**
- Southern Rural – 2 families = (£ 920)

Working with families to support them and signposting them onto other organisations, allows them to thrive and improves their wellbeing. The support provided is inclusive, families or parents can self refer or may be referred via health or social services. Home-start's main objective as a charity is that they are dedicated to helping parents be the best they can be, so that their children can have the best possible start in life. They have had many parents in the past who have become Home-Start volunteers after receiving our support and so have been able to give something back to help other families in the local community.

8.1.2

Applicant	NH50+ Forum
Project	Provide printed publicity material to attract socially isolated older people
Sum requested	£880.00
Total project cost	£1,200
Match funding	From group reserves and memberships
Annual expenditure	£2,737
Funds held	£2,517
Previous support	£1,000 in 2010
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Strategic objective met	Attractive & Thriving, Responsive & Efficient

The NH 50+ Forum are requesting funds to finance publicity to promote their activities to those who might be lonely and isolated as well as their existing members.

The group is aimed at anyone over the age of 50. The group are aware of other similar local initiatives and are hoping to become involved in the Connecting Lives initiative which is being promoted by Herts County Council. The leadership of the forum keep up to date with national policy and initiatives around ageing. They recently attended a conference in London on the 'Campaign to end Loneliness'.

They are a multi-ethnic group who offer companionship and friendship to all those able and to those unable to access it themselves. The group currently serve an average of 40 people monthly by providing access to information on exercise, mental health and dementia, benefits and financial matters as well as occasional social trips out.

They meet in a variety of community venues and cafes around Letchworth mainly. Members pay £8.00 per year for their membership and some activities have a small charge.

The group aim to keep their activities as accessible as possible whilst remaining self sustainable.

The funding they are requesting is to help towards the cost of having new leaflets and posters designed and printed. This is still the best way for many older people to find out information about what is going on locally as they may not be conversant with social media or other on line platforms.

8.1.3

Applicant	Khalsa Football Academy
Project	Development of young people to coach and mentor younger players
Sum requested	£2500
Total project cost	£5306.40
Match funding	£2806 from organisation reserves
Annual expenditure	£23,799.59
Funds held	£4,904
Previous support	£2000 in March 2014 for workshops
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Strategic objective met	Attractive & Thriving, Responsive & Efficient

The Khalsa Football Academy (KFA) uses a variety of soccer based sports including; Futsal, Football Joga, and Panna in order to develop young people, cultivate leadership skills, community spirit and community cohesion between young people from different cultures and backgrounds. They have been undertaking this work since they set up in the late 1980s.

The project operates from the Fearnhill Sports Centre alongside out reach work around Letchworth.

They are applying for funds towards a new project which aims to train up to 35 Volunteers.

30-40 Volunteers are to be trained as JFL leaders, gain qualifications and have an insight into supporting participants with special needs and help bridge the integration of special needs community with the wider community.

Up to 20 Youngsters aged 14 -18 and 10-15 volunteers 18 plus. The volunteers will be able to continue activities within the Fearnhill Sports centre KFA programs and also have the skills set to support special needs participants. Initially they aim to support from 6-10 Participants through individual and group programs enabling intense interactive programs to help support and develop participants but also provide opportunities for young coaches.

The project is planned in three phases as outlined below:-

- Phase one: will enable young leaders to have the opportunity to be part of a community network hub to support leaders and special need participants and their families by sharing knowledge and experience. Working in pairs individual and team environments and more importantly the connection will increase with participants, mentees and volunteers away from the regular sessions through phone contact, emails, text and meetings and even separate weekday taster sessions if needed at Fearnhill. The platform will provide the opportunity for volunteers to learn about planning sessions, facilitating drills and sessions, organising themed sessions that could be monthly events which provide experience for the volunteers and leaders of the project with the help and leadership of the project officer.

- Phase Two: provides an opportunity for volunteers to provide individual sessions that are intense interaction to start with up to 8-10 Special needs participants with individual sessions and provide Info-Research packs to help identify and support health development. Phase 2 to deliver Workshops for BSL and produce info packs.
- Phase Three: will bridge the gap between special needs participants and the wider community. An opportunity for special needs participants to integrate with the wider community and Conventional learning participants to work and be involved in activities with Special needs participants.

The funding will be used towards the cost of:

- 1) Training venue for volunteers to gain JFL qualifications and provide an insight into supporting special needs programs using Futsal.
- 2) Sensory Futsal equipment; colour coded cones and bib and target goals.
- 3) JFL Packs
- 4) Tutor costs
- 5) Support packs - info to support volunteers and participants, gut psychology, dietary advice, and self regulation.
- 6) Coaches cost

8.2 Update on Community Engagement

8.2.1 Whitethorn Bowls Club Grant

Following the presentation at the previous meeting of the Letchworth Area Committee in December 2018, the Whitethorn bowls club have now provided all the necessary paperwork for officers to release the funds awarded at that meeting.

The group requested £3,000 but were awarded £1,500. The Bowls club continue to fund raise toward the project to renovate the collapsing ditch walls surrounding the bowls green and relay the uneven paving slabs surrounding the green with creation of disabled access.

Work is underway with club members undertaking much of the work themselves.

8.3 **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) of the Constitution 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 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; the discretionary grant budget for 2018/19 is £13,700 plus £1,800 donated from members allowances which totals £15,500

£18,496 was carried forward from the 2017/18 financial year therefore, providing a total of £32,196 available.

Any future grant funding allocated will be spent from the 2017/18 carry forward in the first instance.

There have been two meetings held this financial year on 6th June and 19th September where the committee agreed the allocation of £10,064 grant funding across 12 different local organisations. This leaves **£8,432** in the 17/18 carry over amount.

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" 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.