

**SOUTHERN RURAL AREA COMMITTEE
7 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 be recommended to consider the provision of grant funding to the organisations outlined below:
- 2.2 **£920** to Home-Start Herts towards the cost supporting 2 families in need in Letchworth as outlined in 8.1.3 as outlined in 8.1.1
- 2.3 **£1,248** to Breachwood Green Village Hall towards the purchasing a defibrillator and training to use it. as outlined in 8.1.2
- 2.4 **£1,125** to Knebworth town twinning who are requesting support for the incoming visit from guests of the twinned town of Chatelaillon-Plage as outlined in 8.1.3

- 2.5 **£998** to FC Comets Football towards the cost of purchasing additional goals posts as outlined in 8.1.4
- 2.6 **£2500** to Kimpton Folk Festival towards the cost putting on a community event as outlined in 8.1.5
- 2.7 **£780** to Breachwood Green Cricket Club towards the cost of maintenance of the Cricket Club Facilities to be split as follows: £265 from Cllr Barnard's Ward Member Budget, £265 from Cllr Frost's Ward member budget and £250 from the main development budget.as outlined in 8.1.6
- 2.8 That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for the Southern Rural Area.

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 Southern Rural Area Committee Budget Spread sheet, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for 2018/19.
- 7.3 The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial years, including balances and past expenditure.
- 7.4 The current level of unallocated funds within the Committee's Development Budget for 2018/19 is **£7,582**
- 7.5 The current level of unallocated within the Committee's Ward Members 2018/19 Budget is **£3,650**
- 7.6 The total amount of grant funding requested = **£7,571**

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Grant Applications for Consideration

8.1.1	Applicant	Home-Start Hertfordshire
	Project	Support families in Southern Rural Area
	Sum requested	£920 = £460 x 2 families
	Total project cost	£6,900 = 15 families across the District
	Match funding	From Letchworth, Baldock and Hitchin.
	Annual expenditure	£344,857 (as of March 2018)
	Funds held	£113,000 (as of March 2018)
	Previous support	None
	NHDC Policy met	Yes
	Strategic objective met	Attractive & Thriving, Responsive & Efficient

Home-Start Hertfordshire was created when the Herts County Council withdraw 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 offers 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	Breachwood Green Village Hall
	Project	Purchase and training to use Defibrillator
	Sum requested	£1,248
	Total project cost	£1,782
	Match funding	£534.00
	Annual expenditure	£6,148
	Funds held	£10,878
	Previous support	March 2017 £836 towards Car Park lighting
	NHDC Policy met	Yes
	Strategic objective met	Attractive & Thriving

Breachwood Green Village Hall is requesting funding for the purchase of a defibrillator for the use of hall users and the wider community. The main activities of the hall are the hosting of a Cricket club, gardening club, Active Together, Women's Institute, Football, Table Tennis.

8.1.3	Applicant	Knebworth Town Twinning
	Project	Transport for visiting guests
	Sum requested	£1,125
	Total project cost	£4,175
	Match funding	£3,050 fund raising activities
	Annual expenditure	£8,012
	Funds held	£15,495
	Previous support	£300 August 2016 assistance with Public Liability Insurance
	NHDC Policy met	Yes
	Strategic objective met	Attractive & Thriving

The KTA is hosting a 4-day cultural exchange in April 2019, with 37 visitors from Chatelaillon-Plage. Application is for funding to cover transport costs in the form of coaches/ minibuses to travel to heritage sites in the local area.

8.1.4	Applicant	FC Comets
	Project	Purchase of Goal Posts
	Sum requested	£998
	Total project cost	£1,118
	Match funding	£120 fund raising activities
	Annual expenditure	£15,097
	Funds held	£12,103 as of June 18
	Previous support	None
	NHDC Policy met	Yes
	Strategic objective met	Attractive & Thriving

The FC Comets are based in Hitchin, however they operate from Ickleford Recreation ground with football teams for boys and girls from the ages of 6 to 11. They share the ground with Hitchin Town FC's team for 9-year-old boys and Hitchin Belles girls' football teams for children aged 6 to 11.

The club are seeking funding to purchase two new sets of metal goals which are the correct size to use for all boys and girls' teams for players aged 6 to 11. The goals will provide shared equipment to be used by all the junior teams who play at Ickleford Recreation Ground. The existing goals used by FC Comets are plastic and over 10 years old and are no longer fit for purpose. They have been able to raise funds for paying for weekly operational costs of the teams, such as kits and training and playing equipment.

However, the cost of substantial one-off equipment such as goals is very difficult. The cost of normal season running costs and raised through subscriptions, sponsorship and fundraising events such as Christmas team photos and football prediction competitions.

Although FC Comets is the applicant the goals will be used by the teams of FC Comets, Hitchin Town and Hitchin Belles. The matches for these teams are spread across Saturdays and Sundays which means both sets will be used twice a week throughout the season which runs between September and May. The clubs have a close working relationship with several coaches (including the lead applicant) heavily involved in both FC Comets and the Hitchin Belles.

There are currently circa 110 children between the ages of 6 to 11 playing at Ickleford Recreational Ground across 10 teams ranging from 5 to 7 a-sides.

New teams enter the under 7s age group every year the backfill the teams as they get older. Therefore, the goals will be benefit at new in-take of circa 30 children every year for the next 10 years.

8.1.5	Applicant	Kimpton Folk Festival
	Project	1 day folk music festival on Saturday July 6th 2019
	Sum requested	£2500
	Total project cost	£18,505
	Match funding	£4640 from fundraising activities a further £11,000 pending from various donations, grant applications and projected ticket sales.
	Annual expenditure	£41,140
	Funds held	£11,130
	Previous support	£1000 March 2017
	NHDC Policy met	Yes
	Strategic objective met	Attractive & Thriving

The Festival provides a family-focused event centred on Kimpton's Village Green, in addition to 5 concerts in adjacent indoor venues which include:-

- Performances by a wide range of local folk musicians
- Performances by a limited number of well-known folk musicians
- Performances by up-and-coming young local folk musicians
- Performances by local choirs and folk dance groups
- Free folk music workshops and other activities
- Free folk music sessions and open mic performances

Staging and Venues: Main concerts will be held in Kimpton Memorial Hall and in Kimpton Parish Church.

The Village Green will act as a central location for the Festival, where food, drinks and a range of craft stalls will be located and where a variety of musical performances will take place, including by local choirs.

A series of Workshops (different instruments, singing, song writing etc.) will take place in the Dacre Rooms, close to the Village Green, and (in the case of French Community Dance) in Kimpton School. Folk music sessions will also take place at the Boot Public House, where Morris and Appalachian Dancing will also be performed.

Professional assistance with Stage set-up/Sound system/Announcements will be secured and provided

The event directly benefits; members of local communities, specifically Kimpton and surrounding villages, local musicians, local schoolchildren and families
It may also increase interest in future Kimpton events (due to an increased awareness of the village and its activities) as well as attracting other visitors from the wider Herts/Beds/Bucks/Cambridgeshire/North London region.

8.1.6	Applicant	Breachwood Green Cricket Club
	Project	Maintenance of the Cricket Club Facilities
	Sum requested	£780
	Total project cost	£1,100
	Match funding	£320 from club reserves
	Annual expenditure	£1,900
	Funds held	£3487
	Previous support	£800 March 2017 for a mobile cricket net
	NHDC Policy met	Yes
	Strategic objective met	Attractive & Thriving

The Breachwood Green Cricket Club serve not only Breachwood Green but it is also used by 40 – 50 players from the surrounding villages Kings Walden Preston, Offley, and Lilley.

The club keep their equipment in two large storage containers. These are currently based on timber supports. However, the wood in the supports has rotted causing the containers to subside and sink into the ground.

The funding is required in order to re-set and level the containers

Cllrs David Barnard and Cllr Faye Frost have agreed by email to officers to provide the remaining amount in their discretionary ward budgets to this project they both have £265 unallocated which equates to £530.

The remaining amount from the development budget would be £250.

8.2 Update on Community Engagement

8.2.1 Gravelly Parish Church PCC

Assistance is being provided in seeking potential funding streams for internal enhancements to the Church, including the provision of kitchen, toilet facilities and a community open space.

8.2.2 Ickleford Sports & Social Club

Are in the process of putting forward an application to the Community Facility Capital Grant Panel for support funding to undertake various enhancements to the main building, including; roofing system, external cladding and rectifying issues with current car parking surfaces / arrangements

8.2.3 Pirton Sports & Social Club

Officers have had provisional discussions with the management committee with regards to utilising planning contributions as well as potentially applying for a Community Facilities Capital Grant possibly later in the year.

8.2.4 Knebworth Park Cricket

Initial discussion with representatives from the cricket club investigating potential funding that could be used to relocate the club from it's current location in Knebworth Park grounds to an area of land in old Knebworth opposite the Lytton Arms public house.

8.2.5 1st Codicote Scout Group

Officers have undertaken an Initial discussion with a representative from the district executive committee, regarding potential funding for enhancements to the existing scout HQ on Bury Lane recreation ground.

8.2.6 Developer Contributions / s106 Funding projects

Community Officers have worked with external groups and colleagues in the Planning Department in the potential utilisation developer contributions and other sources of capital funding available.

Gravelly Parish Council

- The Community Development Manager attended the January meeting of Gravelly PC to brief them on section 106 contributions and how to access potential future funding from new developments.

If members have any projects in mind which may potentially benefit from utilising capital funds derived via the Planning process please contact the Communities Officer to investigate further possibilities.

The Communities Team is also collating a database of future requirements in terms of community need across the District in preparation & response to potential developments arising from the Local Plan.

Such perceived need will be communicated to planning officers to assist when negotiating any new planning obligation with prospective developers. Similarly, if members have any suggestions of suitable projects or possible future requirements within their wards please inform the Communities Officer.

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 The budget carried forward from the 2017/18 Development budgets has been fully utilised
£818 has been spent from 2017/18 budget leaving £7,852 available to release. In total the amount of funding available for allocation is £11,232 in the Development Budget and £3,900 split between Ward Members who have £390 allocated for eligible groups & projects within their respective Wards. Any unspent Ward budgets will be reallocated into the development budget for the 2019/20 financial year.

The total grant funding requested at this meeting is: **£7,571**

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 a positive impact on the community and wider environment. The projects outlined in this report seek to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between all members of the community.

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 – Southern Rural Area Committee Budget Sheet 2018/19

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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.