

ROYSTON & DISTRICT AREA COMMITTEE
13 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.
- 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 a Grant Award of £850 to the Royston University of the Third Age for the purchase of electrical equipment including a camcorder, projector and speakers for use at their meetings.
- 2.2 That the Committee considers the purchase from its base budget of a banner for better promotion of the Councillor Surgeries. Cost is likely to be in the region of £100
- 2.3 That the Committee agrees that any unspent funds from the 2018/19 financial year be allocated to Community & Environmental Projects.

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| 2.4 | That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Royston. |
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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 within the 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 Royston Area Committee Budget Spread sheet, which relates to the Area Committee budget for 2018/19.
- 7.2 There was no carry forward from the 2017/18 financial year.

7.3 Members should note that £1,000 has been added to the 2018/19 base budget. This funding was transferred from the Members Allowances Budget.

7.3 Following the grants awarded at the Royston & District Area Committee meeting in November, the Committee has **£1,420** in total to allocate in the remaining meeting of the 2018/19 financial year.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Grant Requests

8.1.1	Applicant	Royston University of the Third Age
	Project	Funding support to assist with the purchase of equipment
	Sum requested	£850
	Total project cost	£1,210
	Match funding	£360 own funds
	Annual expenditure	£19,275
	Funds held	£15,900
	Previous support	None
	NHDC Policy met	Yes
	Strategic objective met	Responsive & Efficient

Royston University of the Third Age (U3A) are seeking funding support from the Royston & District Area Committee to assist with the costs for purchasing electrical equipment to assist with group meetings. Electrical equipment to include a camcorder, a projector and speakers.

Royston U3A is a registered charity and has been operating since May 2015. The group is made up of 12 volunteer committee members. The aim of the group is to offer semi-retired and retired people of Royston and surrounding areas the opportunity to come together and engage in social activities. The group has over 500 members. The group did meet at Royston Church but since the recent fire have been meeting at Royston Town Hall. The application is criteria compliant and the officer recommendation is £850.

This organisation receives no Rate Support or other formal benefits from NHDC.

This organisation has not received an NHDC grant in the last five years.

8.2 **Update on Community Engagement Initiatives**

8.2.1 Pathway at end of Green Drift

The Herts Right of Way Team is now liaising with Meadfleet and is preparing the creation order for the path.

The Legal fees to progress the order have now been paid.

The draft order for the works has now been approved by Moody Homes but at the time of writing this report, approval has not yet been received from Redrow Homes.

The original plan was to enhance the pathway but this will now not be undertaken as part of the initial works. It is envisaged that once the pathway is adopted by the Herts Right of Way Team, the possibility of lighting the pathway will be investigated. With this in mind it is deemed inappropriate to carry out any enhancements to the pathway for the time being.

8.2.2 Coombes Community Association

The Royston CO continues to sit on the above group which meets on a quarterly basis and provides advice and support accordingly.

Over recent months there has been a significant increase in vandalism and anti-social behaviour targeted at the centre. The Royston CO is working with the Coombes Community Association, the Police and the Community Safety Team at the Council to address the issue.

All parties are investigating the feasibility of installing a spectator shelter in close proximity to the Coombes Community Centre where young people can meet socially. The suggestion of a spectator shelter arose from discussions between the Police and several of the young persons who regularly congregate at the Community Centre.

8.2.3 Royston Pageant

The Royston CO continues to work with the Royston Historical Pageant Committee in the setting up of a new event for the Royston calendar in 2019. The event currently named as the Royston Pageant, will be held for the first time on Sunday 7th July next year.

The original plan was for the event to be held across 3 locations, namely, Royston Heath, Fish Hill Square and Priory Memorial Gardens. However due to staffing and first aid concerns the event will now be held solely at Priory Memorial Gardens.

The Royston CO will sit on the planning group and will assist with event management, licensing issues and road closure requirements for the Pageant.

8.2.4 Royston Premises Licence

The Royston CO is working with Royston Means Business, Licencing and the Police to establish a single Premises licence holder for the town.

8.2.5 Royston Day Centre

The Barn, Upper Kings Street. Officers are providing support & advice re seeking funding to address internal enhancements at the centre which will result in an application to the CFCPFS hopefully in March 2019.

8.2.6 Royston First BID

Cabinet at its meeting on 18th December 2018 gave approval for officers to progress to the formal Ballot stage within the BID renewal process.

The ballot timetable for the Royston First BID renewal has commenced in line with the timescales below:-

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| • Publication of Notice of Ballot | by 22 nd January 2019 |
| • Ballot packs issued | by 5 th February 2019 |
| • Day of ballot | 6 th March 2019 |
| • Declaration & Results Announced | 8 th March 2019 |
| • Start of new 5 year BID term (if approved) | 1 st April 2019 |

8.2.7 Developer Contributions / s106 & other Capital Funding projects

The Royston Community Officer & Communities Manager have worked with external groups and colleagues in the Planning Department in the potential utilisation developer contributions and other sources of capital funding available.

Projects include:

- Enhancement of sporting facilities at Royston Heath with the Conservators.
- The possibility of seeking a new venue for Royston Scouts currently based at Roysia School.
- Fencing to the rear of Coombes Community Centre to improve safety and to reduce risk of anti-social behaviour.
- Barkway PC re the installation & disabled access to the Recreation Ground & Pavilion
- Enhanced provision of Bus Shelters at potential sites within the town
- Therfield Sports Pavilion, which will result in a joint application to the CFCPFS hopefully in March
- Royston British Legion, internal refurbishments & enhancements which will result in an application to the CFCPFS hopefully later in year

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) 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 Royston & District Area Committee has £1,420 left to allocate in the remaining meeting of the 2018/19 financial year. The Committee has no carry forward from the 2017/18 financial year.

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 - 2017/18 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 Grants Policy Cabinet June 2016.