

LETCHWORTH COMMITTEE
19 JUNE 2019

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE

REPORT OF THE POLICY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

COUNCIL 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 Committee Grant budgets.
- 1.2 To bring to the Committee's attention details of recent requests received for Committee Grant Funding, made by community groups and local organisations.
- 1.3 To advise the Committee of the activities and schemes with which the Community Engagement officers have been involved in.
- 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 allocating funding from their discretionary community budget towards the projects below:
- 2.2 **£1,800** to Small Acts of Kindness towards the care packages for socially isolated frail elderly in Letchworth. As outlined in 8.1.1
- 2.3 **£1,200** to Kip Education CIC to cover the cost of providing workshops in secondary schools regarding awareness of gangs and knife crime as outlined in 8.1.2
- 2.4 That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community Engagement 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 Engagement Team.
- 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 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 2019/20. The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial years, including balances and past expenditure.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Grant Applications

8.1.1

Applicant Project	Small Acts of Kindness Provision of care packages to socially isolated frail elderly.
Sum requested	£1,800
Total project cost	£2,500
Match funding	£700 Royston & District Committee
Annual expenditure	£84,287.55
Funds held	£18,955.33
Previous support	£2,700 in December 2016 split between; all 5 area committees.
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Strategic objective met	Attractive & Thriving

Small Acts of Kindness is seeking funding support from both the Letchworth and Royston & District Committees to assist with the purchase and distribution of 100 Warm In Winter Gift Bags to older people living in North Herts. Funding would be split in the ratio of 60% Letchworth and 40% Royston based on the identified recipients of the bags. Elderly residents in Royston and Letchworth have been identified as needing support as those areas have a higher population of older residents. Requests for the bags have come from North Herts CVS, North Herts Community Transport and Hertfordshire Independent Living Services.

Small Acts of Kindness was set up in 2014 as a Community Interest Company. In 2018 it was registered as a CIO with the Charity Commission. It is made up of 15 Committee Members and 150 Volunteers. Since 2014, the group have been sourcing and distributing Warm in Winter Gift Bags to elderly people. The bags contain a large fleecy blanket, thermal socks, hat and gloves and a mug together with a selection of hot drinks and soup. The application is criteria compliant and the officer recommendation is for the award of £1,800.

8.1.2

Applicant Project	KIP Education CIC Gang & Knife Crime workshops in with year 9's
Sum requested	£1,200
Total project cost	£5,000
Match funding	Police Crime Commissioner Fund
Annual expenditure	£30,603.38
Funds held	£21,078.68
Previous support	None

NHDC Policy met Yes
Strategic objective met Attractive & Thriving, Prosper and Protect

KIP Education CIC, is an organisation focused on young people's self-esteem and confidence and the repercussions of those needs not being met, whether it be around sexual health, addiction, self-harm, knife-crime & gangs or bullying.

They are requesting funds towards running sessions for approximately 400 year 9s across both Highfield and Fearnhill Schools covering Gang's and Knife crime.

KIP Educations Gang & Knife Crime Session is a lively session led by an ex-gang member/criminal justice expert who delivers the workshop to young people of all ages. It is an interactive workshop, capturing all learning styles.

Through measuring "distance travelled" they will evidence a positive behaviour attitude change around:

- Changing attitudes towards Serious Crime
- Changing perceptions around reporting knife crime
- Awareness of the consequences of committing serious crime
- Changing perceptions around girls committing serious crime
- Opening diversionary activities for young people in Hertfordshire
- Awareness of local support services

KIP education are confident that by delivering these sessions their work will support young people, support services and the local community in the following ways:

Build on success – Support the current work in the county increasing referrals and joined up working to provide targeted, continued support.

Crime & Serious Crime – Change attitudes and behaviours around crime and serious crime, by engaging with young people through their services and reducing crime figures across Hertfordshire.

Misuse of Drugs and Alcohol – By reducing behaviour associated with the misuse of drugs and alcohol young people will see increased health benefits and life choices with the community feeling safer and seeing reduced anti-social behaviour incidents.

8.2 Community Engagement and update on Previous Grants awarded

8.2.1 Policy and Community Engagement Team Restructure

Following the corporate wide restructure of the district council, there have been some changes to the Council's Corporate Policy and Community team. This has resulted in the merger of the Community Development Team and the Policy Team. This has created a new team which is called Policy & Community Engagement.

The team is managed by the Policy & Community Engagement Manager. Reuben Ayavoo (previously the Senior Policy Officer) takes up this post.

The Policy & Community Engagement Manager will directly supported by the Community Engagement Team Leader (Claire Morgan), Community Engagement Officer – Events (Ashley Hawkins) covering Royston and Baldock Committees and Trainee Policy Officer (Kei-Retta Farrell).

The Community Engagement Team leader will be supported by two Assistant Community Engagement Officers and Grants and Data Systems officer.

The Community Engagement team will be covering Letchworth, Hitchin and the Southern Rural Committee's.

The Community Engagement Officer – Events will cover the Area committees of Baldock and Royston; support events in Royston and Baldock and seek to support new district events as practical; link officer to the North Hertfordshire Safety Advisory Group.

8.2.2 Plans for Plinston Hall

Community Engagement Team Leader has been liaising with a new group in the process of setting up who intend to take over the lease to operate Plinston Hall as a Youth and Community venue.

The group are called OB1 and plan to change the name of the building to the Cantina. Their plans include operating a youth and community café, a youth club, music rehearsal rooms, recording and radio facilities, renovating the dance studios and theatre space to hire to community groups, dance groups, amateur dramatic groups and so on. They are looking into starting a Hackspace for Letchworth along side a 'Men in Sheds' type project that targets older men who are more likely to be socially excluded to work together making, mending and providing practical activities that encourage shoulder to shoulder communication.

The project is in the very early stages. The group are in the process of negating a lease agreement with the Heritage Foundation as well as looking at what form of company set up would be suit their purpose and objectives.

It is hoped to organise a site visit for Members in the near future to hear first hand from the group about their plans.

8.3 **Highways Matters**

- 8.3.1 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 As outlined in Appendix A Committee budget 2019/20

The agreed budget for this financial year is £11,000 in line with the 20% reduction in grant budgets as agreed by full council.

All carry forward amounts from previous years:

2017/18	£2,232
2018/19	£15,500

Providing a total of **£28,732** in the budgets to provide grant funding.

- 10.2 Should Members be minded to provide grant funding as requested under recommendation 2.1 the total spend from the Committee Budget will be **£3,000**

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 1 - 2019/20 financial year budget sheet

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

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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.