

ROYSTON & DISTRICT COMMITTEE
13 SEPTEMBER 2017

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

9

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 grant award of £1,000 to Royston Swimming Club to help towards the costs of equipment including a lap top computer, a banner for the club, resistance bands and a sports equipment trolley for storing all equipment at Royston Leisure Centre as detailed in 8.1.1.
- 2.2 That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Royston.

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 Members are asked to note the information detailed in Appendix 1 Royston Area Committee Budget Spread sheet, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for 2017/18.

7.2 There was no carry forward from the 2016/17 financial year.

7.2 At the July 2017 meeting the Royston & District Area Committee awarded £5,700 leaving £5,000 to allocate in the remaining 3 meetings.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Update on Community Engagement & Grant Request

8.1.1 Royston Swimming Club

Royston Swimming Club is seeking funding support of £1,000 against an overall cost of £1,170 to assist with equipment costs for the club including a laptop computer for booking swimmers in, a club banner to be used at events across Hertfordshire, resistance bands and a sports equipment trolley for storing all equipment at Royston Leisure Centre. Up to 130 young people between the ages of 9 and 16 are members of Royston Swimming Club. This is the first time that the group has applied for funding from the Royston Committee.

8.1.2 Creative Royston

The Royston Communities Officer (CO) is assisting the Creative Royston with plans for this year's Royston Festival which will be held on Friday 22nd to Sunday 24th September.

Support has included assistance with licensing issues, parking, waste management, landowner consent, first aid provision and support with drafting the event management plans as required by the North Herts Safety Advisory Group.

The Royston CO will also provide marshal support to the Carnival event at Priory Memorial Gardens on Saturday 23rd September.

8.1.4 Pathway at end of Green Drift

The Royston CO continues to liaise with Moody Homes and Herts Right of Way Team on the pathway at the end of Green Drift.

Moody Homes have agreed to bring the pathway up to the required specification for it to be adopted as a Public Right of Way. It is hoped that the required works will be completed by the end of October.

8.1.5 S106 Matters

The Royston CO and CM continue to work with local groups to secure funding for projects. This includes the Therfield Pavilion Project, a number of initiatives at Royston Heath with the Conservators and a disabled access lift for Coombes Community Centre.

8.1.6 Coombes Community Association

The Royston CO continues to sit on the Coombes Community Association. The Coombes Community Centre have recently completed the refurbishment of the first floor bar area which now consists of a large and small meeting room area. Whilst the rooms are being used, the club has yet to secure a regular booking for the space.

8.2 **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 Terms of Reference in relation to Area Committees confirm that they may establish and maintain relationships with outside bodies/voluntary organisations which include discretionary grant aid/financial support but excluding grants for district-wide activities. The Committee has delegated powers, as a body, 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.

9.2 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides a General Power of Competence which gives local authorities the powers to do anything:-

- An individual may generally do
- Anywhere in the UK or elsewhere
- For a commercial purpose or otherwise, for a charge or without a charge
- Without the need to demonstrate that it will benefit the authority, its area or person's resident or present in its area.

9.3 Section 137 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 All Area Committees saw a 55% decrease in funding in the 2016/17 financial year. There are 4 meetings in the 2017/18 Committee cycle and members must ensure that sufficient funding is available for all meetings. The Royston Committee had an original budget of £10,700 for the 2017/18 financial year. £5,700 was allocated at the July meeting leaving £5,000 for the committee to allocate.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no relevant risk entries that have been recorded on Covalent, 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 All projects that are assigned area committee funding are assessed to ensure that they do not negatively impact on any part of the local community. The only deviation to this is where a minority or marginalised group may specifically receive funding or allocation of resources to address a particular area of need or 'gap' in provision.

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.
- 15.2 Appendix 2 – Grant Form – Royston Swimming Club.

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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.