

**SOUTHERN RURAL COMMITTEE
8 JANUARY 2020**

PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

TITLE OF REPORT: GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE

REPORT OF THE POLICY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: 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 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 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. Southern Rural 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 Due to the change of date of this meeting from December 2019 to January 2020 it was felt that the delay in provision of funding to the Codicote Pre-School would detrimentally affect the project. The grant was therefore, decided under delegated decision by the Service Director for Legal and Community in consultation with the Chair of the Southern Rural Committee, the Ward Member for Codicote and the executive member for Community Engagement. In their application the group requested £960.00 but Members felt that funding of £750.00 would be sufficient.

Applicant Project	Codicote Pre-School Purchase of Puddle Suits for outdoor play in inclement weather
Sum requested	£960.00
Total project cost	£1,109
Match funding	£150 raised from a funding raising photo shoot
Funding Provided	£750.00
Annual expenditure 2018	£58,395
Funds held (year end 2018)	£36,813
Previous support	£300 June 2017
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Strategic objective met	Attractive & Thriving and Prosper & Protect

Codicote Pre-School are an early year's pre-school with registered charity status. They take 2-3year olds and start them on their educational journey getting them ready by exposing them to the idea of numbers, letters, their fellow classmates and the world around them.

The Pre-School are based in the Parish Centre next to the local church in Codicote. As the space is rented they are limited as to what they can do with it. However they have invested in various aspects; storage and the garden because these are key to the children's day to day enjoyment.

The storage is required to pack away the setting each day for other bookings that come in so the more efficient the storage is the more toys can be kept on site. The garden is the latest investment. This benefits the children in the setting and others who use the space.

As the Pre-School have now created a usable outdoor play space they are requesting funding to purchase Puddle Suits so that the children can use the space in all weather conditions.

The suits are high quality and durable to be fully windproof, waterproof and washable and last for many years. They will be stored on site so that they can be used by the 35 – 40 children attending from the in and around the Codicote area.

The funding requested will purchase 30 suits in a variety of sizes @ £28 per suit, in addition to a wheeled rack to hang coveralls and wellington boots which costs £267.00

- 8.1.2 The Community Engagement Officer has been liaising between the Kimpton Parish council and planning officers in order to utilise £7,800.79 Section 106 funding under the play space contributions for use to provide permanently placed outdoor table tennis tables for anyone in the local community to use whenever they wish.
- 8.1.3 Discussions have taken place between Offley Parish Council and Planning Officers in regard to utilising £28,470.72 Section 106 funds towards the cost of renovating the drive and the car park access of the Offley Recreation Ground

8.2 Highways Matters

- 8.2.1 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 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 1 Committee budget 2019/20
- 10.2 There are carry over amounts from 2018/19 equating to £3,032 and these funds will be utilised ahead of allocating this financial year's budget.
- 10.3 At the last Southern Rural Committee meeting held on October 10th, the Committee agreed to put the £280 allocated to each ward member back into the main Development Budget. The Development Budget for 2019/20 now contains £8,700.
- 10.4 The grant outlined in point 8.1.1 for Codicote Pre-School provided £750 which will be taken from the £3,032 carry forward amount from 2018/19. This will leave a remainder of £2,282 in the carry forward.
- 10.5 With £2,282 remaining in the 2018/19 carry forward development budget and £8,700 in the 2019/20 development budget provides the Southern Rural Committee with £10,982 for allocation at the last meeting of the financial year in March.

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.