

**SOUTHERN RURAL COMMITTEE**  
**5 October 2017**

**\*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**AGENDA ITEM No.**

**8**

**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 14<sup>th</sup> 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 be recommended to consider the provision of grant funding to the organisations outlined below:
  - 2.1.1 Codicote Football Club - as outlined below in 8.1.1
  - 2.1.2 Knebworth Youth Project - £1,000 as outlined below in 8.1.2
- 2.2 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 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 2017/18.

7.2 The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial years, including balances and past expenditure.

7.3 The current level of unallocated funds within the Committee's Development Budget for 2017/18 is **£9,200**.

7.4 The current level of unallocated within the Committee's Ward Members 2017/18 Budget is **£4,650**.

## **8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS**

### **8.1 Grant Applications for Consideration**

#### **8.1.1 Codicote Football Club**

After Six years away, the village's Senior Men's football side returned back to playing at Codicote, bringing the highest level of Football to the village for 100 years.

7 years ago the club left the village to ground share with Hertford Town in a bid to move up the Football pyramid system, primarily because the facilities at the Bury Lane Recreation Ground did not meet Football Association's facility requirements.

Successful promotions and a second ground share at Gosling Sports Park in WGC resulted in the club being second only to Stevenage FC in the local area and further entry in the FA Cup and FA Vase was achieved.

In December 2014 the Club received full planning permission for floodlights and a new purpose built supporters stand to replace the old breeze block stand at the Bury Lane site in order to meet FA grading regulations. This meant the Club needed to raise an estimated £30,000 of the £100,000 project costs to support the progression of all Clubs using Recreation Ground whilst giving the senior sides the long term financial security to enable them to climb the Football Pyramid.

The Football Foundation funded up approximately 70% of the overall project costs and the club managed to find the required balance via Sport England, Lafarge and any other sources.

With Codicote FC in the Spartan South Midlands League, the venue receives visiting teams from Herts, Beds, Bucks and London, thus enhancing the reputation for sporting achievement whilst hosting mid-week Floodlit Football, which has never before been the case.

The new facilities at the Recreation Ground have helped expand the youth section and have provided a focal point for both senior and youth sections to work closer together and make greater use of the facility regarding training and coaching sessions.

The youth sides at Codicote range from U6 to U17 supplying Football for over 100 plus boys and girls in and around the Codicote area. The enhanced provision of facilities at the site have also minimised unnecessary travelling by parents to other facilities across the county.

The Club clearly has a continued commitment in enhancing facilities at Bury Lane and in doing so has two current projects / schemes which it wishes to address.

Current projects the club would like to address / improve at the site include:-

- Pitch maintenance – The Pitch maintenance programme needs to be at a level which supports the current use / activity of the grassed areas at the site. Therefore each of the resident clubs takes on the additional drilling, rolling and special treatments required re their respective playing areas. Such works are becoming extremely costly as there is a need to engage specialist contractors each time, added to the fact that drainage at the site is very poor. As a result the club is looking to purchase its own equipment ie sit on mower & roller and then get volunteers within the clubs to undertake the works.

- Training - As a Charter Standard Club, it needs to achieve a level of coaching and first aid for the club to keep its status. This unfortunately means that training needs have to be met on a regular basis and has formed to be a constant challenge, as coaches and management within the club inevitably move on.

There is an evident need to continually train and assist volunteers in taking on roles within the Club, which require attendance to various training seminars / sessions with the Club looking to help volunteers with any associated costs.

At the time of compiling this report full costings relating to the above initiatives had not come through. Therefore Club representatives are to run through the full details as part of their presentation on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2017.

### 8.1.2 Knebworth Youth Project

Knebworth Youth Project delivers two evening sessions per week and offers a varied programme of activities throughout the year.

- Friday evenings at the Trinity Church Hall for 10 – 13 year olds
- Thursday evenings at the Pavilion in the Recreation Ground for 14 – 18 year olds

Both sessions are free to attend and open to all. The Project is overseen by a management committee made up of volunteers and representatives from a variety of supporting community groups and organisations within the village.

The project receives no funding from Youth Connexions (HCC) and purely survives on local fundraising and in kind support. For example:

- The Knebworth Village Trust provides a small annual grant to cover insurance and youth worker costs.
- Trinity Church provides the venue for the Friday night sessions and some funding via the Bourne Bequest for staff.
- The Parish Council provides the Pavilion free of charge for the Thursday evening sessions.
- Knebworth Family of Churches makes occasional donations from coffee morning proceeds.

The project has been running for many years and has proved to be invaluable and a real asset when engaging with young people within the village.

The club constantly strives to deliver varied and engaging sessions and activities each week and is looking for some support funding from the Area Committee to purchase various materials for use at these sessions as well as offsetting costs of visiting activity coordinators ie dance tutors to run specific sessions from time to time.

The project is seeking funding support from the Area Committee in the region of £1,350 which if approved would enable both sessions to operate for around two years based on the average costs detailed below.

- |  |             |
|--|-------------|
| • Materials £5 per week per club session (£10 x 39 Term time only) | £390        |
| • 2 x £80 sport / dance instructor sessions                        | £160        |
| • 2 x leader training sessions @ £63 each                          | <u>£126</u> |
|  | £676 pa.    |

## 8.2 Update on Community Engagement

### 8.2.1 UU's / s106 Contributions & Funding Advice

The CM is liaising with a number of Parishes and rural groups re the potential unlocking of collected UU (Unilateral Undertakings) & s106 contributions held by the Authority and in cases assisting to compile evidence of need within each community re any current and future developments.

These are subject to meeting relevant criteria set under regulation and by which the Authority must abide.

The CM is also liaising with a number of community facilities within the Southern Rural Area re potential applications to the Authority's Community Facilities Capital Projects Funding Scheme. The scheme is currently open to community groups and organisations seeking capital funding assistance for awards between £10k & £50k to help enhance local community facilities in order to make them sustainable for future years.

Current Parishes / groups seeking advice / support:

- **Offley & Cockernhoe PC** – Major enhancements to facilities at the Recreation Centre utilising £214k s106 developer contributions and improvements to facilities at the village hall. Plus advice & support re a current Capital Projects Grant application to refurbish the Cricket Pavilion.
- **Holwell Parish Council** – Advice & support re capital funding to renew the Cricket / Football Pavilion and potential application to the Authority's new Community Facilities Capital Projects Improvement Funding Scheme and assistance from NHH.
- **Pirton Parish Council** – Advice & support re UUs & s106 funding.
- **Pirton Village Hall** – Advice & support re capital funding to provide an additional room for rental, improvements to the kitchen facilities and better storage.
- **Knebworth Parish Council** – Advice & support re the drawing down of UUs & s106 funds re enhancements to play equipment at Lytton Fields.
- **St Ippolyts** - Advice & support re the drawing down of UUs & funds to help fund the new provision of external gym / exercise equipment located at the recreation ground.
- **Lilley Village Hall & PC** – General grant funding advice re enhancements to the Village Hall and the possibility of developing a future Capital Projects Grant application.
- **Codicote** – John Clements Sports & Community Centre, advice & support re a current Capital Projects Grant application re the provision of a Health & Wellbeing unit within the Centre.

### 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 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.

## **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 A – Southern Rural Area Committee Budget Sheet 2017/18

### **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