

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT	<p style="text-align: center;">AGENDA ITEM No.</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">7</p>
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TITLE: CHAMPION NEWS AND COMMUNITY REPORT

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & CULTURAL SERVICES

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of the activities and schemes with which the Community Development Officer has been involved since the previous Committee meeting.
- 1.2 To bring to the Committee's attention some important community based activities that will be taking place during the next few months.

2. ISSUES – PROJECT/ACTIVITY/SCHEME DETAILS

2.1 **Big Lottery Playful Ideas Fund** – Since NHDC agreed to mainstream the Rural Play Project from October 2008, the Big Lottery Fund have advised us to withdraw our Playful Ideas application on the grounds that the project would no longer seem to be innovative. However, rural play project has continued to visit Parish Council's to offer assistance in applying to smaller funds to enhance the level of provision that the Rural Play Project is able to offer.

2.2 **Southern Rural Art Workshop Roadshows** – Following the Committee awarding £3,000 to support commissioning of the Letchworth Arts Centre to deliver a programme of ten art workshops, the following villages have been selected as project locations: Breachwood Green, Cockernhoe, Codicote, Graveley, Great Ashby, Holwell, Kimpton, Knebworth, Pirton & St Ippolyts.

Delivery of the specific roadshows will be included in the programmes of the following 2008 annual rural events: Codicote Village Day, Great Ashby Fun Day, Knebworth Village Festival & the Kimpton May Festival.

2.3 **Parish Plans** – In consideration of this agenda item being postponed from the 20th February 2008 Committee meeting, those Parish Councils and Parish Plan Groups who have now undertaken their respective Parish Plans have been invited back to the Area Committee meeting to each give a 5 minute presentation on how their Plans are being implemented. These are: Codicote, Ickleford, Kimpton & Knebworth. Aspects covered by each Parish include:

- The concept of your respective Parish Plan (PP)
- How you went about undertaking the PP
- The issues/obstacles you had to overcome in completing the PP
- The Community involvement/Engagement with your PP
- The 'Way Forward/Future for your PP

A representative from the Community Development Agency for Hertfordshire (CDA for Herts) as the Rural Community Council (RCC), will also be attending to give a 5 minute

presentation to outline the level of support & advice given to Parish Councils on Parish Plans.

- 2.4 **Transport Fundamental Service Review (TFSR)** – The Southern Rural Community Development Officer has been asked to represent rural views as part of the current TFSR. Discussions with Members, as well as visits to other local authorities will be undertaken to assess best value practices.
- 2.5 **North Hertfordshire Rural Strategy 2005-10** – This is currently being updated to review its Key Priorities in line with the objectives set out within the strategy. Updates will be obtained from the Council and via strategic external partnerships, to ensure it is current to 2007/08.
- 2.6 **Member Ward Visit** – A ward visit to meet with St Pauls Walden Parish Council took place on 3rd March 2008 to discuss the continued partnership working between the Council and Parish Councils, for the benefit of the community.
- 2.7 **Parish Challenge Underspend** – Part of the underspend from the 2006/07 Parish Challenge underspend has been agreed to fund the following two projects for essential new play equipment, as identified in the Council's 2004/05 'The Way Forward' which documents an audit of all rural play areas undertaken by the Council's Parks and Open Spaces Officer.

A new multi-play unit has been selected for Wymondley Parish Council to be installed in the Little Wymondley Recreation Ground and a new set of swings for Reed Parish Council to be installed in the Reed Play Area. Both installations will include the appropriate safety surfacing and it is anticipated that both installations will take place in May/June 2008. There will be photo call events arranged to officially handover the commissioned installations to the respective Parish Councils. Both Parish Councils will thereafter insure and maintain the play equipment in line with the annual independent safety inspections undertaken.

- 2.8 **Envirocrime District Audit** – The Audit Commission undertook an Envirocrime District Audit Inspection during the week commencing 10th March 2008. Meetings took place with various partner agencies, officers and Members to assess the overall functioning of environmental crime partnerships. Issues that impact on rural areas eg: fly-tipping, were considered.
- 2.9 **Annual Parish & Town Council Conference** – A meeting of officers took place on 20th March 2008 to initially plan the forthcoming 2008 conference. As in previous years all rural Members, Parish & Town Councils will be formally invited to attend. An update will be given at the meeting to advise Members of the agreed time and date.
- 2.10 **North Hertfordshire Highways Joint Member Panel (NHHJMP)** – Members of the Southern Rural Area Committee are requested to review the information presented at Appendix A. The Chairman is requested to lead a debate on potential highway projects and or traffic management schemes associated with the themes identified at 1.1 (8) Appendix A in the Southern Rural Area that could be considered for joint funding with the NHHJMP 2008/09 Discretionary Budget.

Members are also requested to list the location for disabled parking bays identified at 1.7 (6) in Appendix A.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community Development Officer to promote greater community capacity and well being for rural communities.
- 3.2 That the Committee give consideration to the information provided at Appendix A, and determine any such schemes or projects that could be considered for joint matched funding with the NHHJMP Discretionary Budget for 2008/09.
- 3.3 That the Committee also list possible locations for disabled parking bays identified at 1.7 (6) in Appendix A.

4. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 To ensure that the Committee are kept informed of the work of the Community Development Officer.

5. APPENDICES

- 5.1 Appendix A – Potential Projects or Schemes - NHHJMP 2008/09 Discretionary Budget.

6. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 6.1 Garry Gover (Community Development Officer – Southern Rural Area)
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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE HIGHWAYS PARTNERSHIP – JOINT MEMBER PANEL DISCRETIONARY BUDGET 2008-2009 – POTENTIAL PROJECTS OR SCHEMES

1.1 Members' attention is drawn to Minute 39 of the Joint Member Panel Meeting (JMP) held on 28 January 2008 where under items (3), (4) and (8) it was resolved that in the next cycle of Committee meetings an officer be requested to present a report in the next cycle of Committee meetings for Members to identify:

(3) *...road safety measures that could be joint funded within the Joint Member Panel Discretionary Budget for the next and ensuing financial years;*

(4) *.... schemes in each area that could be put forward for joint funding in the JMP Discretionary Budget for 2008-2009 in accordance with the agreed themes;*

And

(8) *.....indicate the following themes with which specific schemes which could be proposed for joint funding:*

1. Minor re-surfacing works;

2. Road safety schemes;

3. Maintenance of verges;

4. Enhancement of town centres and village centres;

5. Maintenance of rural highways;

6. Referrals from NHDC Area Committees for works;

7. Maintenance in town centres.

1.2 Thus, in light of resolution (3) and above, Members are requested to list potential schemes that could be put forward for joint funding in the JMP Discretionary Budget for 2008-2009 in accordance with the 7 themes listed in resolution (8) above:

1.3 The proposed schemes listed by the Area Committee will then be forward to the North Hertfordshire Highways (NHHP) District Manager, who will then assess each of the schemes, in line with the agreed procedure set out between NHDC and HHP. Those schemes that are considered feasible and satisfy the above themes would then be reported back to the Southern Rural Committee, together with outline cost estimates to prioritise and agree match funding from their discretionary budgets in the new civic year.

1.4 The amount to be put forward as part of the JMP Discretionary Budget for 2008-2009 contribution is yet to be finalised and will be reported at the JMP meeting on 21 April 2008, and will be reported together with the proposed outline schemes to the Area Committees.

2007-2008 Agreed Schemes:

1.5 For information, the agreed 2007-2008 JMP Discretionary budget of £100,000 is the entire discretionary budget funding available to the JMP Panel and must support all costs associated with the approved schemes, i.e. works, design, consultation, plus any investigations and feasibility studies.

1.6 The following schemes listed below are the agreed schemes for 2007-2008 as presented to the JMP on 28 January 2008:

a)	A10 London Road, Royston - VA Sign (design fee)	2,000
b)	Verge Protection Works	40,000
c)	Jackson's Lane, Reed - New footway	8,250
d)	Maintenance of VA signs	1,000
e)	Norton Road/Pond Lane - Waiting restrictions (Baldock AC)	1,000
f)	Evaluation of VA sign sites (Hitchin AC)	500
g)	The Maples - Waiting restrictions (Hitchin AC)	3,000
h)	A602/Sunnyside Road - Right turn ban (Hitchin AC)	3,000
i)	Briary Lane/Sun Hill - Waiting restrictions (Royston AC)	5,000
j)	B656 Codicote speed limit extension (S Rural AC)	2,000
k)	Rock Road Royston - Extension of waiting restrictions	3,000
l)	Footway Surfacing Package	31,250
	Total - approved schemes	

(Budget = £100,000) **£100,000**

1.7 Disabled Parking Bays

Members' attention is also drawn to item 37 of the JMP minutes of 28 January 2008 where:

(6) That the NHDC – Hertfordshire Highways Liaison Officer be requested to provide (via Champion News) to each of the five NHDC Area Committees at the earliest opportunity the relevant list of possible locations for Disabled Bays in each area as prepared in consultation with the North Herts District Manager;

1.8 It is to be noted that the JMP also resolved that all matters concerning the development of a Disabled Parking Bays Strategy be taken forward in liaison with the NHDC Transport Fundamental Service Review Group. Disabled parking bays have been included in the scoping report for the Transport FSR agreed by PARC on 31st January 2008, and will be taken forward as part of the review.

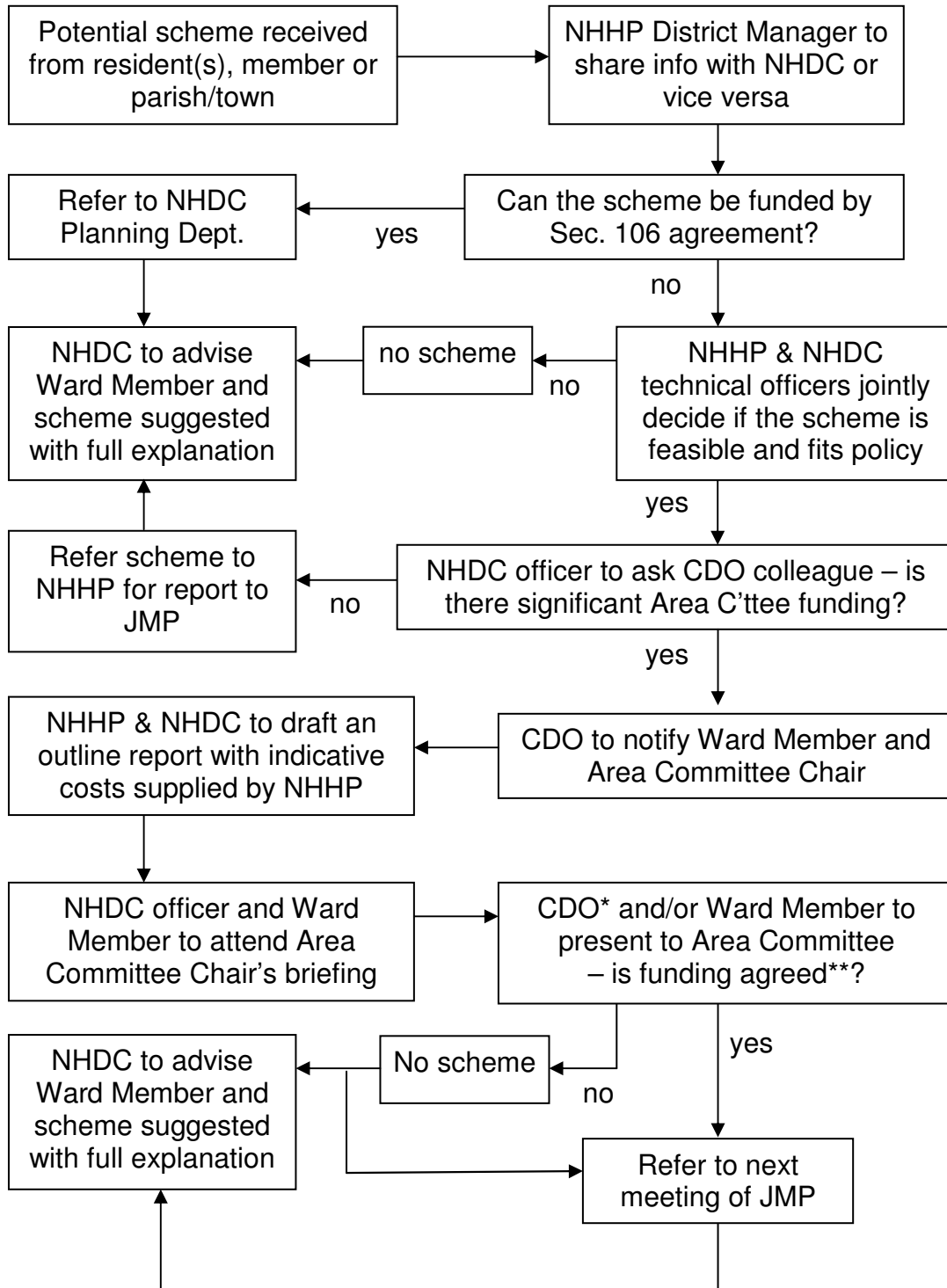
In conclusion:

1.9 Members are therefore requested to:

a) list PROJECTS or SCHEMES in the Southern Rural Area that they wish to put forward for inclusion in the JMP Discretionary budget for 2008-2009; and

b) list possible locations for Disabled Bays at the Southern Rural Committee meeting, or alternatively they either email Louise Symes, Projects Manager in Planning Services (louise.symes@north-herts.gov.uk) direct with their proposals or pass to the Southern Rural Committee Administrator by Friday 11 April 2008.

Process for progressing joint funding NHHP:NHDC - DRAFT ver.2, 3/12/04



* CDO may be replaced by NHDC engineer or other officer if the report is very technical or complex

** Funding agreed = Area Committee agree the proportion or maximum they will fund and delegate decision on exact figures to NHDC Officers

All decisions and outcomes to be recorded for learning purposes