

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. FORWARD PLAN

- 2.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Not Applicable.

4. ISSUES – PROJECT / ACTIVITY / SCHEME DETAILS

- 4.1 North Herts Big F.A.B. Event

In partnership with Herts County Council's 'Wellbeing for Over Fifties' project group, the 50+ Community Development Officer is coordinating the largest event aimed people between 55 and 70 the district has seen so far. This project is being seen as pilot by Herts County Council, which is looking to roll out similar events county wide.

On Saturday June 14th 2008 at the Spirella Building in Letchworth, people from across the district will be invited to attend a community engagement exercise called 'Talking about My Generation'. In conjunction, the Big F.A.B. (Fifty and Above) Event will take the form of an Information fair with a Free Prize Draw, Health Checks, Complementary Therapies, Stalls provided by local community groups and organisations, as well as Tours of the public areas of the Spirella building.

Using the information gained from the community engagement process, the 'F.A.B. Development Plan - 2009 to 2012' will be drawn up to look at what activities and services will be required by the new generation of retired people in North Herts.

To be involved in the event or for more information contact 50+ Development Officer on 01462 474226.

4.2 Service Level Agreements

A review of the Council's Policies and Procedures for Financial Assistance to the Voluntary and Community Sector is currently underway, with a report scheduled to go to Cabinet in the near future. This review includes the arrangements for Service Level Agreements as well as the general grants that are awarded by Area Committees.

4.3 Pirton Parish Council

The Parish Council is considering the re-marking of the MUGA for sports other than tennis, as an endeavour to encourage greater use of the area, especially by young people within the village. In addition the Parish Council would also like to address the provision of storage for sports equipment at the same time.

The Parish Council believes the total cost of the work would be in the region of £3,500 and feels that it is now in the position to move the project forward. Community Development Officers are providing advice on the possible routes and sources of funding available and will update the Committee accordingly.

4.4 Codicote Parish Plan Action Group

The Action Group felt that the Southern Rural Community Development Officer's address at their last meeting was of enormous value, with regards to the development of their plan.

The group has made a request to further discuss the criteria for funding assistance in the production of a Parish Plan and Community Development Officers are to provide advice on the possible routes and sources of funding available.

The Group has two further meetings scheduled for June and July 2008.

4.5 NHDC Rural Community Grants Launch 2008/09

This year's Rural Community Grants round was launched at the end of May 2008 via direct mail to the Parishes and other rural community groups.

The grant schemes relate directly to those in the rural areas of the District, offering various opportunities for Parish Councils, and independently community operated facilities, to apply for grants to support projects / initiatives in their local areas.

In the past successful applications for funding have been made for projects such as refurbishments to a Village Hall building, the refurbishment of a children's playground, or the purchase and installation of new play equipment and for smaller funding requirements associated with parish cleansing and/or enhancement initiatives.

The grant schemes available for 2008/09 are:-

Parish Amenity Capital Improvement Fund
Maximum Award: £50,000.00 / minimum Award: £28,000.00

Parish Challenge
Maximum Award: £15,000

Parish Playground Fund
Maximum Award: £2,000

Parish Cleansing and Enhancement Fund
Maximum Award: £1,300

The deadline for completed applications must be received by noon on 30th September 2008, and an application form and full details on how to apply can be found on the Council's website.

Officers will be holding a drop in session at the main offices at Gernon Road (dates and times to be confirmed) to meet with those interested in submitting an application for funding and also for the respective groups to find out more about the different funding streams available.

Members in carrying out their civic duties may want to advise various groups that the grant schemes are now live and signpost them onto Community Development for further information.

The main contact for all grants for the time being is the Community Facilities Manager - Peter Underwood on 01462 474669.

This further information is to be circulated via the Members Information Service and an update article is to appear in the next edition of Outlook.

4.6 Parish & Town Councils Conference 2008

The Conference has been scheduled for Monday 16th June 2008, at 5.30pm for refreshments and the formal Conference start at 6.00pm.

The Draft Agenda at the time of writing this report, is detailed below.

- 18.00 Welcome and introduction

Councillor Tricia Gibbs, Portfolio Holder for Community Engagement and Rural Affairs

- 18.05 Green Issues

Councillor Claire Strong, Portfolio Holder for Policy and Green Issues

- 18.15 Climate Change Strategy for North Hertfordshire

An interactive session facilitated by the Energy Saving Trust.

- 19.25 Waste and Recycling

Councillor Lynda Needham, Portfolio Holder for Waste and Recycling

- **19.30 In-Vessel Composting** – presentation and discussion
Daniel Kingsley, NHDC Service Manager (Waste Management)

- **19.50 Progress Report on the Rural Strategy Action Plan (2005 – 2010)**

Liz Green, NHDC Head of Policy, Partnerships and Performance

- **20.05 North Hertfordshire Partnership (LSP)**

Appointment of two Parish and one Town Council representatives

Introduction by John Campbell, NHDC Chief Executive

- **20.30 Post Office Closures** – consultation update

Liz Green, NHDC Head of Policy, Partnerships and Performance

4.7 Graveley Parish Plan

Community Development Officers are providing advice and support to the Parish Plan Group and have been requested to attend the first development meeting on Wednesday 4th June 2008 at 8.00pm.

5. **CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS**

5.1 Consultation with the respective agencies, organisations and Ward Members has taken place with regards to the projects, activities and events mentioned in Section 4 of this report.

6. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community Development Officer to promote greater community capacity and well being for rural communities.

7. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 That the Committee enforces the actions and policies involved in the tasks and projects undertaken by the Community Development Officer.

8. **CONTACT OFFICERS**

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