

RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

Any interest to declare/ or conflict and any dispensation granted N/A

SERVICE DIRECTORATE: Legal and Community

1. DECISION TAKEN

The provision of funding of **£1,523** to North Herts Talking Newspaper from the District Wide Budget as outlined in 8.1.

2. DECISION TAKER

Executive Member - Community Engagement- Cllr Judi Billing, in consultation with the Service Director: Legal and Community (under section 9.8.2 (h) and 14.6.9(b)(iii) 5 of the Constitution).

3. DATE DECISION TAKEN:

22nd June 2020

4. REASON FOR DECISION

- 4.1 At their meeting on the 17th December, Cabinet approved the inclusion of one-off funding for district-wide grants in 2020/21. £10,000 has been allocated to provide a guaranteed funding source in the first year

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 There are no alternative options being proposed other than those detailed within the text of this report.

6. CONSULTATION (INCLUDING THE EFFECT ON STAKEHOLDERS, PARTNERS AND THE PUBLIC)

- 6.1 The grant was discussed and recommended by the Community Facility and District Wide Grant panel at the virtual meeting on Wednesday 17th June.
- 6.2 Consultation with the respective officers and external bodies/groups has taken place with regards to this funding proposal via Area Committee Grant Funds.

7. FORWARD PLAN

- 7.1 This decision is not a key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

8. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1

Applicant	North Herts Talking Newspaper
Project	Purchase of equipment
Sum requested	£1,523
Total project cost	£3023.64
Joint funding	£1500.60 Pending application to Stevenage Community Trust
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Council Priorities	Be a more welcoming and inclusive Council /Build thriving and resilient communities

The North Herts Talking Newspaper produces a free weekly audio version of local newspaper, news items and letters, together with national magazine articles. Distributing this to blind and partially sighted clients. They loan clients easy-to use audio players to enable them to hear this local news.

They operate from their own homes, selecting and reading articles, producing and distributing the memory sticks that contain the audio.

The group are requesting funding to purchase:

- stand-by / replacements for the audio stick duplicator needed to load talking news onto memory sticks each week: (one for each of client.)
- additional memory stick players to replace broken players and for the use of new clients.
- zipped postal wallets to send out audio sticks in each week. Note cycle of sending and returning requires approximately 3 times as many wallets as clients.

This critical equipment will ensure continuity of our weekly service to our blind and partially sighted clients.

They currently have the following client numbers across North Herts: -

Hitchin 9

Letchworth 10

Baldock 4

Royston 3

The total of 26 in North Herts is about 50% of their total number of clients.

The group have outlined a budget of around £10,000 will be required to undertake the project. They have applied for HCC Locality budget which has been agreed in addition there have been many generous donations from within the local community and other statutory bodies in Knebworth. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Southern Rural Committee suggested they would like to provide £1,000 from the development budget.

A presentation by the applicant was made to the Panel members present and they were happy to agree to recommend grant funding of £1,523 as requested.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1. The Terms of Reference in relation to the Community Facility Capital and District Wide Revenue Grant panel do not provide the delegated power to make a funding decision but can make recommendations to the Executive member for Community Engagement to make a decision using their delegated authority in consultation with the relevant Service Director.
- 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.
- 9.4 The decision taker signing the Decision Notice has delegated authority to take such a decision in accordance with the North Hertfordshire District Council Constitution under section under section 9.8.2 (h) and 14.6.9(b)(iii) 5 in relation to Community engagement, including financial assistance and grants to external organisations.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 £10,000 has been set aside for District Wide Grants that cover more than one Committee area. This is the first meeting of the financial year. Allocation of £1,523 to the North Herts Talking Newspaper will leave a budget of £8,477.

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 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 decision.

14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

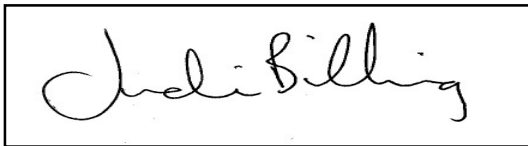
14.1 There are no pertinent Human Resource implications associated with any items within this report.

15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Officers have received and approved the grant application, mission statement and accounts.

NOTIFICATION DATE; 26th June 2020

Signature of Executive Member Decision taker

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judi Billings".

Date : 22 June 2020

Signature of Service Director: Legal and Community

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "J. L. Henry", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Please Note: that *unless urgency provisions apply* EXECUTIVE decisions cannot be implemented until 5 clear working days have elapsed after the decision has been taken to allow for scrutiny call-in.

Call-in does not apply to NON-EXECUTIVE DECISIONS