Appendix D PHASE (Providing Help and Support in Education)

* Phase will provide virtual mentoring sessions of 30 minutes to young people across Hitchin who are struggling with social isolation, increased mental health struggles, loneliness, anxiety and other issues as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
* **Have applied to Hitchin Committee (June round) for a grant of £1925 to cover staffing costs of providing virtual mentoring sessions.**
* **The UK government have recently released advice on supporting children and young people's mental health during this pandemic as they are anticipating a surge in referrals for mental health support.**
* **The application is to support 34 young people through this programme.**
* Previously, school mentoring was paid for by schools for specific in need / at risk students, this is only a few hundred pounds a month and does not cover the wage bill . This programme is open to all young people. Phase budgeted fundraising income of £3500 per month, this has dropped to near zero since lockdown. We anticipate a drop in other funding from supporters and church in the coming weeks.
* £15,000 of their reserves sit as "designated funds" being gifted to us for specific purposes so cannot be used for general expenditure
* The Charities reserves policy is to hold 6 months expenditure in reserve so the Trustees need to keep around £55,000 to comply with that policy
* That only leaves around £18,000 that will quickly disappear with the expected drop in overall fundraising / giving.

GRIT (Growing Resilience in Teens)

GRIT is a 12 week programme designed to build resilience and improve self confidence and esteem thereby reducing self destructive behaviour. The group have made attempts to access the Corona Virus Relief Fund Grants from Herts Community Foundation but were unsuccessful. Their fundraising efforts have been hampered by the pandemic.Many fund raising events, including our May Ball have had to be cancelled and they represented vital funding for the GRIT Programme Teens are at an increased risk of mental illness during this period and we are able to offer a solution.

The organisation has adapted and evolved to be able to offer GRIT over Zoom and are looking at a wider roll out to reach more teens, but we do require further funding to do this.

Tilehouse Counselling

They have recently been issued with a Delegated Decision grant - The provision of funding of £1,280 to Tilehouse Counselling.  This amount is to be split equally between the Hitchin and Letchworth Committee budgets who will contribute £640 each. This funding will facilitate the delivery of 8 counselling sessions to five people by covering staffing costs. Counsellors are paid £32.00 per session. i.e. 40 counselling sessions.

“**We have had a surge of enquiries from people suffering increased anxiety, and from people whose family relationships are suffering.  In some cases domestic abuse has occurred”**

A statement from them below:

As we are not able to provide face-to-face counselling for the time being we are continuing to offer counselling by telephone and Zoom.

Fortunately, we have five counsellors who are professionally trained in telephone counselling - this is recognised by the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy, and while very different to face-to-face counselling it is by no means a 'second best'.

In addition, our telephone counselling is something we are keen to develop and grow.  Some people prefer the anonymity of it, and it makes counselling accessible to people who are agoraphobic, or have mobility or transport issues.

We have been deluged with new enquiries for support and many of the clients already in therapy with us are suffering increased anxiety with the uncertainty we all face.

We have had to put on hold all plans for future fundraising events and are very concerned about reduced funds available from charitable trusts over the coming months.  In spite of this, we remain absolutely committed to keeping our service available in our community and are acutely aware that mental health problems are not going to lessen during this challenging time.