

## 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 **£1,280** 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.

##### **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:**

14 April 2020

##### **4. REASON FOR DECISION**

- 4.1 This grant application has been received in between the next planned round of Committee Meetings and it is time sensitive (in response to the Covid-19 outbreak) it cannot be considered at the next meeting taking place in June 2020. Therefore, it is considered appropriate to progress the application via a delegated decision.
- 4.2 The Chairs and the Vice Chairs of both the Hitchin and Letchworth Committees have been consulted and have provided email evidence of their support to provide £640 from their Committee's development budget in order to fund this application.

##### **5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

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 Chairs and the Vice Chairs of both the Hitchin and Letchworth Committees have been consulted.

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: Tilehouse Counselling

Tilehouse Counselling was established in 2001 and provides individual, professional counselling for North Herts residents, aged 13 up.

Since the Coronavirus lockdown Tilehouse Counselling have received a surge of enquiries from residents with increased anxiety and from people whose family relationships are suffering. In some cases, domestic abuse has occurred.

The £1,280 being requested would cover the cost of paying counsellors to provide 40 additional telephone counselling sessions. Tilehouse Counselling could offer counselling to five people on their waiting list who are affected by domestic abuse.

Operating costs for the project:

- £1,280 staffing costs

TOTAL £1,280

Previous Support: £4,964 in March 2018

NHDC Policy met: Yes

Strategic Objectives met: Build Thriving and Resilient Communities

Respond to challenges to the environment

## 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 January 2020.

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 The agreed budgets for 20/21 financial year is £11,000 for both Hitchin and Letchworth Committees.

Both committees currently have the full allocation of budget available.

The £640 from each committee will leave £10,360 remaining in their 2020/21 budgets.

## **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.

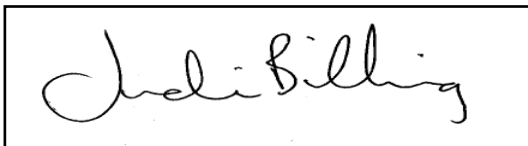
### 15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

### NOTIFICATION DATE

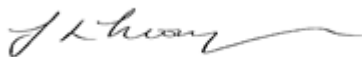
17.4.2020

Signature of Executive Member Decision taker

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

Date 14.4.2020

Signature of Service Director: Legal and Community

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "J. L. H. ...", written in blue ink.

Call-in does not apply to NON-EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

**In respect of Executive Decisions, as per section 6.3.11(b) of the Constitution 'Call-In and Urgency', the call-in procedure does not apply when the decision being taken is urgent. For the purposes of the current Coronavirus pandemic, this decision is considered to be urgent (as normal meetings and the decision-making process has currently been suspended, pending implementation of new virtual meeting regulations). The Chair of Council has been informed and agrees that the decision is a reasonable one in the circumstances and is to be treated as a matter of urgency.**