

**7.05 pm Cllr Charlotte Hodivala. Chairman**

**Amenities, Leisure and Community Services**

The work of the Committee includes :

- community related services and support
- development and upkeep of our recreational facilities,
- improvements to play areas

This financial year the Committee has awarded Community Grants to the value of £89,200 to 16 different organisations. Since the start of the Community Grant scheme in October 2016 we have supported a wide variety of projects including:

- environmental projects - notice boards, equipment and tools and path way improvements at our local parks , air quality monitors and tree planting events
- Arts and culture - supporting choirs, the art trail and a school cultural enrichment programme in our primary schools
- health and well-being - funding a dementia café refurbishment, mentoring schemes and play and stay groups for families and
- young people - community development, youth workers and young people attending the special Olympics.

This year we have focused on Community planning where local communities are encouraged to identify the issues which are important to them. Council is working with Compass Support to develop a plan for Falcon Lodge which will run from 2018 to 2021. The Community Conference held in January identified environment improvements, better use of existing facilities and city-wide recognition of the investment needs as the priorities. A new Community Plan which aims to address these issues will be finalised in the coming months.

Other community support projects include:

- Autism West Midlands commissioned to deliver Autism advice sessions for carers and families.
- A grant of £40,000 to support a Changing Places Toilet in the Gracechurch Centre.
- Five defibrillators supplied in conjunction with Community Heartbeat

We have been working to improve our play areas. A total of £75,000 worth of improvements are being made including new play equipment and safety surface at Calder Drive playing fields, a new toddler multi-play unit at Princess Alice public space and new equipment at Withy Hill recreation ground and an interactive play area at Mere green Community Centre. sensory play area . I am delighted that the Trim Trail developed a part of my Mayors Challenge has now been installed at New Hall Valley. Improvements to our parks include an allocation of £30,000 to improve Rectory Park and a budget of £50,000 for Park Enhancements during the current financial year as part of making our town healthier and happier.

We have also commissioned Birmingham City Council to produce drawings for a master plan for a destination play area at Town Gate in Sutton Park.

We invested £68,700 in new lighting features for the local centres this Christmas and planted 40,000 bulbs to brighten the town this spring. The Sutton Coldfield in Bloom working party are working on new projects to enhance and improve our local environment and encourage local residents, community groups and business to support the Town's entry into Heart of England in Bloom for the first time in 2018.

