

**NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**BALDOCK & DISTRICT COMMITTEE  
(Baldock, Arbury and Weston and Sandon Wards)**

**Meeting held at The Community Centre, Simpson Drive, Baldock.  
on 4 July 2005 at 7.30 p.m.**

**PRESENT:** *Councillors I.J. Knighton (Chairman), M.E. Weeks (Vice-Chairman), G.C. Hollands, S.K Jarvis, M.R.M. Muir and A.D. Young.*

**IN ATTENDANCE:** *Area Planning Officer, Community Development Officer (Baldock Area and Youth) and Committee and Member Services Officer.*

**ALSO PRESENT:** *Inspector G. Camp and PC Steve Gibbs (Hertfordshire Constabulary)*

**15. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

**16. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 May 2005 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Chairman.

**17. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business was submitted for consideration by the Committee.

**18. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Councillor M.E. Weeks declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 8 – Planning Applications: Knights Templar School – as a member of his immediate family was a member of the Baldock Town Youth Football Club, who were supporting the application, and was a pupil at the Knights Templar School. Councillor Weeks reserved his right to speak and vote in regard to this application.

Councillor I.J. Knighton declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 8 – Planning Applications: Knights Templar School – as a member of his immediate family was a member of the Baldock Town Youth Football Club, who were supporting the application, and was a pupil at the Knights Templar School. Councillor Knighton reserved his right to speak and vote in regard to this application.

Councillor A.D. Young declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 8 – Planning Applications: Knights Templar School – as members of his immediate family were pupils at the Knights Templar School. Councillor Young reserved his right to speak and vote in regard to this application.

**19. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Mr Neath, Secretary of the Baldock Town Youth Football Club, had given due notice that he wished to speak at the meeting regarding the planning application submitted by the Knights Templar School, for the provision of an all weather training pitch.

Mr Neath informed the Committee that the Baldock Town Youth Football Club had over 400 members of all ages, who regularly undertook football training and coaching courses. He explained that, at present, lack of proper facilities in Baldock for training and matches meant that some of the teams were having to travel as far as Pirton. The provision of an all weather training pitch would enable the Club to establish firmer links with the town and also give the opportunity for other sporting use, such as hockey matches.

Mr Neath presented a petition to the Committee which had almost 1,000 signatures, supporting the application.

The Chairman accepted the petition on behalf of the Committee and thanked Mr Neath for addressing the Committee.

**20. CHAMPION NEWS**

The Community Development Officer for Baldock presented a report of the Strategic Director of Customer Services to the Committee, which advised them of the activities undertaken by the Community Development Officer for Baldock since the meeting of the Committee held on 23 May 2005, and brought to their attention some important community based activities that would be taking place during the next few months.

The Community Development Officer for Baldock informed the Committee that matters were now progressing in relation to the adoption of the footpath from Sale Drive to the A505 in Baldock. However, construction of the footpath along the boundary of Hartsfield School, providing access to the town centre from the Clothall Common Estate, had been further delayed as it could not be added to the Integrated Works Programme for Hertfordshire Highways until the Local Transport Plan had been published. The Community Development Officer for Baldock informed the Committee that this Plan was unlikely to be completed before the end of the year, but stated that involvement of Safer Routes to Schools in this scheme would help move it up the list of works and ensure a faster implementation.

The Community Development Officer for Baldock further informed the Committee that a Play Day event would be held at the newly refurbished Chiltern Road play area at the beginning of August 2005. As the date of this event would precede the date of the next meeting of the Committee, the Community Development Officer for Baldock suggested that the authority to make a decision whether to financially support this event be delegated to the Baldock Town Ward Councillors, from whose Discretionary budget the funding would come.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the report of the Strategic Director of Customer Services be noted;
- (2) That the actions taken by the Community Development Officer for Baldock to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Baldock communities be endorsed;
- (3) That authority to make a decision whether to financially support the Play Day to be held at the Chiltern Road play area be delegated to the Baldock Town Ward Councillors.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To keep members of the Committee apprised of the latest developments in community activities in Baldock.

**21. BALDOCK & DISTRICT AREA COMMITTEE DEVELOPMENT & AREA VISIONING BUDGETS 2005/6**

The Community Development Officer for Baldock presented a report of the Strategic Director of Customer Services to the Committee, which set out the budgetary situation for the Committee, together with one additional grant application that had been received.

The Arbury Ward and Weston and Sandon Ward Councillors expressed concern at the allocation of Visioning monies to these rural Wards, as provision had not previously been appropriately made. The question was also raised that, following the completion of the Rural Strategy, additional funding had been allocated for rural initiatives, and yet no mention had been made of these monies.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the current expenditure and balance of the Development Budget be noted;
- (2) That clarification be sought to determine the availability of additional funding for Visioning work in the rural areas of the Baldock and District Committee, to ensure a better, more equitable provision be made for works in that area.

**REASONS FOR DECISION:**

- (1) The report was intended to apprise Members of the financial resources available to this Committee. It drew attention to the current budgetary situation, assisted in the effective financial management of the Committee's budget and ensured actions were performed within the Authority's Financial Regulations and the guidance contained in the Grants procedure;
- (2) The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims and strategic priorities of the Council.

**22. GRANT APPLICATION – RADWELL SOCIAL CLUB**

**RESOLVED:** That the sum of £400 be awarded to the Radwell Social Club as a financial contribution toward the purchase and fitting of new curtains for Radwell Village Hall.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims and strategic priorities of the Council.

**23. PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

The Committee heard a representation by Mr Peter Chapman, Headmaster of the Knights Templar School, Baldock, as the applicant for planning application 05/00137/1. Mr Chapman emphasised the excellent facilities currently available for use by both the school and the local community, and stated that the addition of an all-weather training pitch would bring further use to the facilities. He reiterated the points previously made by Mr Neath (see Minute 19 – Public Participation) and also informed the Committee that the Knights Templar School had just been awarded Specialist School Status for Sports, and would in 2006 be designated as a "hub" school, providing the instigation and support for sports development throughout Baldock, Hitchin, Letchworth Garden City and the surrounding villages.

**RESOLVED:** To determine the applications as set out in the report of the Planning Control and Conservation Manager as submitted to the Committee in the following schedule:

**SCHEDULE**

<b>Reference Number</b>	<b>Description of Development and location</b>	<b>Decision</b>
<b>05/00740/1</b>	<b>Land (rear of 27-43 Alder Close) at Holroyd Crescent, Baldock</b> Temporary use of land for retention of contractors' compound and associated buildings.	<b>WITHDRAWN</b> (see (a) below)
<b>05/00137/1</b>	<b>Knights Templar School, Park Street, Baldock</b> Artificial sports pitch with associated floodlighting and fencing (as amended by drg. 018/08/04 received 02/06/05)	<b>GRANTED</b> (see (b) below)

<b>05/00627/1HH</b>	<b>Thistley, Fore Street, Weston</b> 1.5 storey side and rear extension including extensions to existing flat dormer window. Front pitched roof dormer windows. Re-positioned front gable extension and bay windows. Single storey side extension.	<b>GRANTED</b> (as per report)
<b>05/00775/1HH</b>	<b>11 Hitchin Road, Weston</b> Erection of front wall and entrance gates.	<b>REFUSED</b> (see (c) below)

- (a) The Area Planning Officer informed the Committee that planning application reference 05/00740/1 had been **WITHDRAWN** by North Hertfordshire Homes Limited (the applicant) as an alternative location had been agreed in the car park of Tesco. A letter from the Chief Executive of North Herts Homes confirming withdrawal was read out to the Committee.

The Committee welcomed the withdrawal of this application and noted that the applicant had stated that the compound would be removed from Holroyd Crescent within 2 weeks. It was also noted that informal conversations with residents in the vicinity of the site had indicated that they would be prepared to be involved in reinstating the land for use by the community, through measures such as informal "policing" of the site to protect the grass.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the withdrawal of the application and commitment by North Hertfordshire Homes Limited to remove the compound within 2 weeks be noted;
- (2) That urgent measures be taken to reinstate the land at Holroyd Crescent for community use as soon as possible.

**REASON FOR DECISIONS:** To ensure that the compound is removed from the land at Holroyd Crescent in short course and that the land be reinstated for community use.

- (b) **RESOLVED:** That, in relation to planning application reference 05/00137/1, planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the conditions set out in the report of the Planning Control and Conservation Manager, and the following additional condition:

*9. That the perimeter fencing for the site be maintained in perpetuity for the life of the development hereby approved.*

*Reason: To prevent the formation of alternative routes to the site which may give rise to parking on the highway verge and other problems associated with unauthorised access.*

- (c) **RESOLVED:** That, in relation to planning application reference 05/0775/1HH, planning permission be **REFUSED** for the following reason:

*The proposed gates and walls, by reason of their height and prominence, would introduce a feature prejudicial to the street scene in this part of Hitchin Road.*

**24. PLANNING APPEALS**

The Area Planning Officer informed the Committee that the following planning appeals had been lodged since the meeting of the Committee held on 23 May 2005:

Appellant	Mr P Castle
Reference number	05/00238/1HH
Address	42 Station Road, Ashwell
Proposal	Detached garage.
Method	Written Rep.

The Area Planning Officer informed the Committee that the following appeals had been determined since the meeting of the Committee held on 23 May 2005:

Appellant	Mr T Farr
Reference number	04/01612/1
Address	Land at 57 Ashwell Street
Proposal	Detached dwelling.
Decision	Appeal DISMISSED

Appellant	Mr S Boulter
Reference number	04/01289/1HH
Address	29 Ivel Way, Baldock
Proposal	Single storey front extension.
Decision	Appeal DISMISSED

Appellant	Mr and Mrs Coulson
Reference number	04/01328/1
Address	1-4 Post Office Row, Weston
Proposal	Detached dwelling
Decision	Appeal DISMISSED

## **25. COMMUNITY POLICING UPDATE**

Inspector G. Camp and PC S. Gibbs of Hertfordshire Police were in attendance at the meeting, and provided the following crime statistics for Baldock:

*Note – comparison figures are taken for the periods April-June 2004 and April-June 2005*

All crime - up 2%  
Burglary of houses – down 24.9%  
Robbery – up 200% (3 instances, in comparison with 1)

Motor vehicle offences and violent crimes were also slightly up (no comparative figures provided).

Figures for June had improved however – all crime was down over 19%, and violent crime was down over 34%.

Inspector Camp informed the Committee that PC Sweeney and PCSO Nash had now returned from long-term sick leave and were taking targeted action on trouble hotspots in the town, including West Avenue Park, Bakers Close Recreation Ground, and the rear car park at Tesco. He also informed them that there was an ongoing problem solving initiative in relation to the problems with anti-social behaviour at the West Avenue Park, including the integration of CCTV coverage in that area, which involved the Police, District and County Council.

Inspector Camp stressed to the Committee that he and his team were available to assist with any difficulties arising in the area, and they could be contacted at Baldock Police Station. He also reminded the Committee that any interested Members were

welcome to go on a “ride along” with members of his team to see them in action. He also confirmed, in response to a question from the Committee, that the annual Town Meeting, attended by the Police Authority and the District and County Councillors, would still go ahead.

Inspector Camp asked the Committee what sort of information and input they required from the Police at Area Committee meetings, and how often they would like the Police to attend. The Committee agreed that the crime statistics and general operational updates that were provided met their requirements, and stated that they would be happy for the Police to attend twice a year to provide this information. They stated that the interim contact they had with Inspector Camp and his team met their ongoing needs, and Inspector Camp confirmed that they would be willing to attend meetings relating to specific issues if required.

The Chairman thanked Inspector Camp and PC Gibbs for attending the meeting, and for the information they had provided.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the report of Inspector Camp be noted;
- (2) That future Community Policing Updates take place twice a year, with additional police attendance when required for specific issues.

**REASON FOR DECISION:** To keep the Committee apprised of Community Policing issues and initiatives.

The meeting closed at 8.50 p.m.

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Chairman