

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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

**Meeting held at Hartsfield JMI School, Clothall Road, Baldock
on 6 November 2006 at 7.30 p.m.**

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

IN ATTENDANCE: *Head of Revenues & Benefits, Area Planning Officer, Senior
Community Development Officer (Youth) and Committee & Member
Services Officer.*

ALSO PRESENT: *5 members of the public.*

56. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Marilyn Kirkland.

57. MINUTES

When considering the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2006, the Committee agreed that they were a true record of the proceedings. However, concerns were expressed about issues that had arisen subsequent to that meeting in relation to the proposed disposal of land adjacent to 27 Dark Lane, Sandon (Minute 47 refers).

As the Councillor for Weston & Sandon Ward (in which the site is located), Councillor S.K. Jarvis expressed his surprise that a report had not been presented to tonight's meeting on this matter as it had been established that another potential site was available in Sandon. This information was the subject of a report to be considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 14 November 2006 and a public meeting in Sandon on 25 November 2006. Councillor Jarvis also stated that it would be inappropriate for the Cabinet to make a decision with regard to this piece of land until the outcome of the public meeting in Sandon was known.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2006 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Chairman.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That the decision on disposal of the land adjacent to 27 Dark Lane, Sandon be deferred until after the public meeting in Sandon had taken place, to allow the residents of the village to express their views on the proposals;
- (2) In light of the identification on an alternative site for the development of affordable housing in the village, that a report be brought back to the meeting of this Committee to be held on 4 December 2006, to allow the Committee to comment on the proposals.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS: To allow all stakeholders sufficient opportunity to provide input on proposals prior to Cabinet taking a decision on the disposal of land.

58. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was submitted for consideration by the Committee.

59. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor A.D. Young declared a prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 7 – Baldock & District Area Committee Development & Area Visioning Budgets 2006/2007: Grant

Application – Baldock Crusaders Netball Club - as members of his immediate family played for the Club. Councillor Young withdrew from the meeting for the duration of this item.

Councillor I.J. Knighton declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 7 – Baldock & District Area Committee Development & Area Visioning Budgets 2006/2007: Grant Application – Baldock Crusaders Netball Club - as members of his family played for the Club. Councillor Knighton withdrew from the meeting for the duration of this item.

Councillor M.R.M. Muir declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 7 – Baldock & District Area Committee Development & Area Visioning Budgets 2006/2007: Baldock Town Twinning Association as he was a member of the Association. Councillor Muir reserved his right to speak and vote on this matter.

Councillor I.J. Knighton declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 7 – Baldock & District Area Committee Development & Area Visioning Budgets 2006/2007: Baldock Town Twinning Association as he was the Council's representative to the Association. Councillor Knighton reserved his right to speak and vote on this matter.

Councillor M.E. Weeks declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 7 – Baldock & District Area Committee Development & Area Visioning Budgets 2006/2007: Baldock Town Twinning Association as he was the Council's representative to the Association. Councillor Weeks reserved his right to speak and vote on this matter.

60. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No items were presented for consideration by the Committee under public participation.

61. CHAMPION NEWS

The Senior Community Development Officer (Youth) presented a report of the Head of Community Development & Cultural Services to the Committee, which advised them of the activities undertaken by the Senior Community Development Officer (Youth) since the meeting of the Committee held on 25 September 2006, and brought to their attention some important community based activities that would be taking place during the next few months.

The Committee expressed their disappointment with a recent article in a local newspaper which had portrayed Baldock in a very negative light. They acknowledged the town was currently experiencing a quieter period whilst consultation on regeneration proposals took place, but drew attention to some of the work currently taking place in the town and expressed the hope that the newspaper's reporters would show more respect for the town and its residents and businesses in future.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the report of the Head of Community Development & Cultural Services be noted;
- (2) That the actions taken by the Senior Community Development Officer (Youth) to promote greater community capacity and well-being for communities in the Baldock & District area be endorsed.

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

62. ANNUAL GRANTS AND DEVELOPMENT DISCRETIONARY BUDGET 2006/2007

The Senior Community Development Officer (Youth) presented a report of the Head of Community Development & Cultural Services to the Committee, which set out the budgetary situation for the Committee, together with one additional grant application that had been received.

The Senior Community Development Officer (Youth) also informed the Committee that the Baldock Town Twinning Association was seeking additional funding in future financial years. The Association receives £154.50 each year from the Council under a Service Level Agreement, which was allocated from a central fund. However, this was deemed to be low in comparison to other areas, and had been supplemented by additional funds from the Committee on several occasions in the past. The Senior Community Development Officer (Youth) therefore asked the Committee to consider whether to make this additional funding every year.

The Committee agreed that the Baldock Town Twinning Association did not receive appropriate recompense in comparison with the other Associations in the District, but felt it was not appropriate to supplement the central funds with Committee funds. Instead, the Committee felt that the method of allocation of funds to the Associations should be properly investigated to ensure that in future all funds were allocated in accordance with the same criteria, to ensure fair distribution to all Town Twinning Associations in the District, including the Baldock Town Twinning Association.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the current expenditure and balance of the Development Budget be noted;
- (2) That the Head of Community Development & Cultural Services be requested to review the allocation of funds to Town Twinning Associations in the District to ensure fair distribution of funds from the financial year 2007/2008;
- (3) That a report be brought to the Committee at its meeting to be held on 4 December 2006 with regard to the funding of Town Twinning Associations, following the above review.

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.

63. GRANT APPLICATION – BALDOCK CRUSADERS NETBALL CLUB

Councillors I.J. Knighton and A.D. Young left the meeting for the duration of this item.

RESOLVED: That the sum of £1,140 be awarded to the Baldock Crusaders Netball Club as a financial contribution toward the cost of coaching courses and first aid equipment and training. This money shall be allocated from Committee budgets as follows:

£205.00 From Arbury Ward
£180.00 From Baldock East Ward
£595.00 From Baldock Town Ward
£160.00 From Weston & Sandon Ward

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.

64. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

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

SCHEDULE

Reference Number	Description of Development and location	Decision
06/02189/1	Village Hall, Maiden Street, Weston Single storey front extension following demolition of existing entrance foyer, bar and WC. Single storey extensions to east and west elevations following demolition of side porch. Insertion of rooflights to side elevation roof slope.	GRANTED (See (a) below)

(a) **RESOLVED:** That, with regard to planning application reference 06/02189/1, planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out wholly in accordance with the details specified in the application and supporting, approved documents and plans, or with minor modifications of those details which have previously been agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority as being not materially different from those thereby permitted.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with details of which form the basis of this grant of permission.

3. Samples of the materials to be used on all external elevations and the roof shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to any works to implement this permission commencing.

Reason: To ensure that the development has an acceptable appearance in the Conservation Area.

4. Details of the proposed front entrance door shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to any works to implement this permission commencing.

Reason: To ensure that the development has an acceptable appearance in the Conservation Area.

65. PLANNING APPEALS AND ENFORCEMENT

The Area Planning Officer informed the Committee that the following planning appeals had been lodged since the meeting of the Committee held on 25 September 2006:

Appellant	Mr and Mrs Wilmott
Reference number	06/01326/1

Address	Westbury Farmhouse, Ashwell
Proposal	Erection of two 1.8m –1.92m high wooden gates with 2m high posts.
Method	Written representations.
Appellant	Mr and Mrs G Walton
Reference number	06/00052/1
Address	Icknield Way, Baldock
Proposal	Two storey, two bed dwelling linked to existing terraced house, one car parking space
Method	Written representations.

The Area Planning Officer informed the Committee that the following appeals had been determined since the meeting of the Committee held on 25 September 2006:

Appellant	Mr N M Phillips
Reference number	05/01468/1
Address	81 Larkins Close, Baldock
Proposal	Development of land without complying with planning condition to provide car parking space.
Decision	Appeal Allowed

Appellant	Mr P Jarvis
Reference number	05/01764/1
Address	Gardners Lane, Ashwell
Proposal	One dwelling, access and parking.
Decision	Appeal Dismissed

The Area Planning Officer informed the Committee that no planning enforcement action had been authorised or taken since the meeting of the Committee held on 25 September 2006. However, he informed the Committee that an appeal by hearing would take place against enforcement action taken with regard to the following planning enforcement case:

Appellant	Mr P Jarman
Reference number	05/00376/1ENF
Location	The Stables at Cedar House, Green End, Sandon.
Subject	Change of use of first floor of The Stables to self contained residence.

The Area Planning Officer confirmed that he would provide a further update to the Committee at a future meeting, once the appeal had taken place.

66. SERVICE & FINANCIAL PLANNING – SAVINGS & GROWTH 2007/2008 TO 2011/2012

The Head of Revenues & Benefits presented a report of the Strategic Director of Financial & Regulatory Services to the Committee which sought their views on the provisional savings and growth items as part of the consultation process on Service and Financial Planning for 2007/2008 onwards. The Head of Revenues & Benefits confirmed that all feedback from the Committee would be presented to Cabinet before it set the draft Budget on 19 December 2006.

The following documents were appended to the report:

- Appendix 1 – Savings – Service Options
- Appendix 2 – Savings – Income Increase Options
- Appendix 3 – Growth – Revenue Options
- Appendix 4 – Growth – Capital Options
- Appendix 5 – Cabinet Comments on Savings Proposals (17 October 2006)

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the report of the Strategic Director of Financial & Regulatory Services be noted;
- (2) That the following recommendation made by the Committee be considered when formulating the draft Budget:
 - Saving Item Ref. SG20 – Deletion of Contribution to Subsidised Bus Routes – whilst acknowledging the need to make savings, and that this is not a District Council responsibility, the Committee would urge the Cabinet to ensure that, in discussions with Hertfordshire County Council regarding the future subsidisation of bus services in North Hertfordshire, the need to ensure continued provision of vital rural bus services be stressed.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) To ensure that all Members were consulted on the proposed savings and growth bids and afforded the opportunity to comment before Cabinet set the draft Budget on 19 December 2006.
- (2) To ensure that the Council was able to adjust its base expenditure downwards to narrow the gap between our 2007/2008 District Requirement figure, as adjusted for anticipated capping limits, and our service spending requirements.

The meeting closed at 8.31 p.m.

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Chairman