

**NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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

**Meeting held in The Baldock Community Centre, Simpson Drive, Baldock  
on 17 September 2007 at 7.30 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

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

**IN ATTENDANCE:** *Stuart Izzard (Senior Community Development Officer)  
David Miley (Democratic Services Manager)  
Susanne Gow (Committee and Member Services Officer).*

**32. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**33. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**34. MINUTES – 7 AUGUST 2007**

**RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 August 2007 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendment:

Minute 25 - omitted from the Baldock Town Centre Enhancement Scheme Category A list for consideration, under "Style and character of materials and street furniture" was the following:

- Street lighting is to be of a contemporary design.

**35. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS**

The Senior Community Development Officer advised the Committee that he had two items which had occurred since the Agenda had been despatched, and with the Chairman's permission he would present them after the Area Committee Development and Visioning Budgets, Agenda Item 9:

- Financial contribution towards the Baldock Town Christmas lights, currently supported mainly by Baldock Rotary Club;
- Donation to four Baldock school libraries of the book 'Ancient Baldock'.

**36. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor M.R.M. Muir declared a personal interest in Item 43 – Financial Support for Baldock Christmas Lights - as he is a member of Baldock Rotary Club, that he would remain for the item and reserved the right to speak and vote.

**37. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no items presented under public participation.

**38. REVIEWS OF POLLING DISTRICTS, POLLING PLACES AND POLLING STATIONS**

The Democratic Services Manager submitted the Report of the Returning Officer on the reviews of polling districts, polling places and polling stations required by the Electoral Administration Act 2006.

The report was presented in order that the Baldock and District Committee could consider any appropriate revisions to the existing polling districts and polling places, and express their views on the location of the polling stations within each ward and polling district. Considerations to be taken into account included: accessible and convenient polling stations; the size of the polling place; and to note that each parish or community should have their own polling place where possible.

The general opinion of the Baldock and District Committee was that there was no ideal polling place in Clothall, as electors had to use the local Junior School, or in Bygrave, as electors had to make use of a portable booth as a polling station.

However, as there were no better alternatives to these, and the rest of the polling districts, places and stations in Baldock and District were satisfactory, the Members agreed that it was appropriate to accept the current arrangements.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) That the current scheme of polling districts and polling places within the area of the Committee be confirmed;
- 2) That comments relating to the location of the polling stations be relayed to the Returning Officer.

**REASON FOR DECISIONS:**

To enable the Council to review the Local Authority's polling districts and polling places.

**39. COMMUNITY SAFETY AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ISSUES IN BALDOCK**

The Head of Policy, Partnership and Performance submitted a report on the latest position regarding drink-related antisocial behaviour following initial consideration of a Designated Public Places Order (DPPO) sometimes called an 'alcohol-free' zone in Baldock. In her absence, questions on this report were taken by the Senior Community Development Officer.

The Committee examined the report and discussed its findings, reaching the conclusion that to press for establishment of a Designated Public Places Order would have a detrimental effect on the residents of Baldock by raising their expectations when there was no chance of anything further being done than the Police keeping a watching brief on the situation, as they are doing at present. It was decided to wait and observe the results of the Royston DPPO, which should be concluded in 2009, and then make a decision about whether or not to do the same for Baldock when they have carefully examined the success of the Royston initiative.

Several Members commented that there were many places in Baldock where young people gathered and caused a nuisance to other Baldock residents through their actions, bad language and excessive noise, shouting and revving of car and motorcycle engines. It was noted that Security provided at Tesco in London Road, Baldock, did nothing to disperse the gatherings behind the store in the evenings, and the Committee agreed that the Police should be dealing with the gatherings of youths who were causing a nuisance throughout Baldock.

Members contributed to a list of places which had the worst gatherings, resulting in scared, annoyed and angry residents in Baldock looking to the Baldock and District Committee to help them.

**RESOLVED:**

- 1) That the Baldock and District Committee note the activities already under way in Baldock to address the wide range of antisocial behaviour and nuisance issues;
- 2) To accept the officers' recommendation not to proceed with consultation on the establishment of a Designated Public Places Order at this time, given the alternative measures at the disposal of the Police and other agencies to tackle on-street drinking;
- 3) That the Baldock and District Committee receive an oral update from the local Police at their next meeting on progress to date in tackling petty crime in Baldock.

#### **REASONS FOR DECISIONS:**

- 1) That whilst there is antisocial behaviour through drinking of alcohol taking place in Baldock Town Centre, other powers are already available to the Police to deal with the majority of cases, and this report demonstrates some of those activities.
- 2) To conform with the intentions expressed by Cabinet in their meeting of 28 February 2006 (Minute 181 refers);
- 3) To ensure that the work of the Locality Panel for Baldock be reported to the Committee.

#### **40. CHAMPION NEWS AND COMMUNITY REPORT**

##### Baldock Town Hall Feasibility Study

The Senior Community Development Officer (SCDO) advised the Committee that officers were continuing to offer support to the Town Hall Community Group in the development and production of a Community Use Business Case for Baldock Town Hall.

The SCDO and the Community Facilities Manager were to meet representatives of the Group, to enable them to submit their proposals to the Local Authority in September 2007, prior to reporting back to the Baldock and District Committee at the meeting to be held on 21 January 2008.

##### Baldock Town Centre Enhancement Scheme

As part of the Town Centre Enhancement design process, an open meeting was held in early September for local businesses to be consulted on the preliminary proposals regarding some form of restricted/short term parking in Baldock. North Herts District Council officers and the consultants, Building Design Partnerships, described the parking proposals and sought the local businesses' input and comments on the suggestions.

##### Baldock Town Partnership

The Baldock Town Partnership was invited to attend the Business Parking Meeting, both to consider the issue for local business and to promote their own role and ambitions in Baldock.

##### Baldock Chartered Street Fair – 2 to 6 October 2007

Plans for this year's Chartered Street Fair had commenced, and Hertfordshire Highways had applied for a formal 16a Temporary Road Closure.

North Hertfordshire District Council officers, representatives from Building Design Partnerships, the Town Centre Enhancement design consultants, and Abbott's Amusements would have joint discussions regarding the proposed design features and programme of works for the Chartered Street Fair in 2008. These would be followed by a site visit to look at specific locations in relation to the design proposals, including re-siting of the generators.

The Chairman thanked the Senior Community Development Officer for his efforts in arranging for the generators to be located in appropriate positions during the Fair.

#### Clothall Village Hall

Although the project group had secured over £100,000 of external funding towards the associated site works and rebuilding of a new village hall, and had also applied to National Lottery, Biffa and other grant-making charitable trust funds, they still continued to seek possible funding sources for other parts of the project. The Senior Community Development Officer (SCDO) informed the Committee that a further sum of £4,700 had been awarded to the project by the charity Help the Aged.

Full planning consent and building regulations had been granted for the project, with some external works and other conditions relating to the new CO<sub>2</sub> emissions regulations.

#### Baldock Bowls & Social Club

The Senior Community Development Officer (SCDO), together with other officers of the Council, continued to assist the Club in developing a Community Amateur Sports Association and hoped that one of the groups involved will take on the task of future management of the MUGA.

#### Ashwell United Reform Church Hall and Ashwell Village Hall

The Senior Community Development Officer and Community Facilities Manager visited the site with regard to funding proposed works at both sites. The SCDO commented that the Parish Amenity Capital Improvement Fund (PACIF) would be an ideal grant stream for the Ashwell URC project.

#### Weston Parish Council, Recreation Ground

Representatives from Weston Parish Council met the Senior Community Development Officer regarding the possibility of securing external funding to build a new Club House at the recreation ground, Weston. The project coordinators through the Parish Council requested an additional £1,700 from the Weston & Sandon Discretionary Ward Budget, making a total of £4,000 being committed to the project, which required the Chairman to approve the decision in principle via interregnum and be ratified at the next Area Committee Meeting, to be held on 19 November 2007.

#### Sandon Village Hall

The SCDO and the Community Facilities Manager met with the Chairman of Sandon Parish Council regarding the Parish Amenity Capital Improvement Fund (PACIF) grant application for proposed refurbishment works to the Hall. As a result funding issues were resolved with an aim for works to commence in the near future.

#### North Herts District Council Grants Deadline

All Parish Councils were reminded by letter that the deadline for applications for the Parish Challenge, the Playground Challenge and the Parish Enhancement and Cleansing Fund was 30 September 2007. This date was also the deadline for the Parish Amenity Capital Improvement Fund (PACIF) applications.

#### Clothall Common – Community Initiatives and Environmental Projects

Works continued on the environmental projects and initiatives raised at the 2006 Community Open Evening.

Traffic calming measures were sought in Yeomanry Drive. The Ward Member for Baldock East and officers from Hertfordshire Constabulary, North Herts District Council and Hertfordshire Highways carried out inspections to find solutions to vehicles constantly speeding in the area.

It was agreed that this be referred to the next North Hertfordshire Highways Partnership Joint Member Panel on 15 October 2007 for consideration.

#### 'Ancient Baldock' – Book Gifts

An oral update on this was provided by the Senior Community Development Officer. Following discussion, the Baldock and District Committee agreed to fund the purchase of 140 books, 35 each going to Hartsfield, St John's and St Mary's Junior Schools and 35 to Knights Templar School, the books to be held in the School Libraries against such a time as they can be used for school projects.

#### Letchworth Gate

An oral update on this was provided by the Senior Community Development Officer. He had been informed by Hertfordshire Highways that the bunds had not been altered, and that there was therefore no reinstatement to do. Members were of the opinion that this was not the case, as there were aerial photographs and plans in existence that showed the original number and layout of the bunds, and requested that the original scheme designs and plans be obtained via Planning Control. A Committee Member for Baldock Town would meet with a member of Hertfordshire County Council and a member of Hertfordshire Highways onsite, to resolve this problem.

#### ***RECOMMENDED TO NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE HIGHWAYS JOINT MEMBER PANEL:***

That consideration be given to use part of the Panel's discretionary budget for the funding of traffic calming measures on Yeomanry Drive, Baldock, as required, on the basis of match funding from the relevant Area Committee.

#### ***RESOLVED:***

That the Committee endorsed the actions taken by the Senior Community Development Officer to promote greater community capacity and wellbeing

#### **REASON FOR DECISION:**

To allow the Committee to enforce the actions and policies involved in the tasks and projects undertaken by the Senior Community Development Officer.

#### **41. BALDOCK AND DISTRICT AREA COMMITTEE DEVELOPMENT AND AREA VISIONING BUDGETS 2007/2008**

The Senior Community Development Officer (SCDO) tabled three grant applications for determination at the Meeting: for financial support towards the Churches Together in Baldock Children's Holiday Activities Scheme; to supply four schools in Baldock with copies of a book by a local author, entitled 'Ancient Baldock'; and to part-fund new additions to the Baldock Town Christmas lights.

Members were asked to note the information in Appendix 1, which related to Area Committee Budget balances for the Financial Year 2007/08, the pre-allocations carried forward from 2006/07, and the balances allocated to Visioning Budgets available to respective wards within the Baldock and District area.

#### ***RESOLVED:***

- (1) That the budgetary expenditure, current balances and carry forwards from the Ward Development Budgets 2006/07, the Small Area Grants Budget and the allocated Area Visioning Budgets be noted;

- (2) That the pre-allocations of uncommitted Ward Development Discretionary Funds to respective projects and initiatives within each Ward Budget be noted.
- 3) That the Baldock and District Committee allocates £250 from the Ward Development Discretionary Budgets to fund the continued work of the Churches Together in Baldock.

**REASON FOR DECISIONS**

To use the allocation of funds that are available and accessed by various members of the community to improve the services provided by the local organisations and groups.

**42. GRANT APPLICATION – CHURCHES TOGETHER IN BALDOCK**

**RESOLVED:** That the sum of £250 from Baldock Ward Development Discretionary Budgets be awarded as a contribution to the Annual Baldock Children’s Holiday Activities Scheme run by Churches Together in Baldock, by assisting in the purchase of equipment and items needed to provide a varied programme of activities during school holidays.

**REASON FOR DECISION**

The allocation of funds would improve the services provided by the local organisations and groups that are available and accessed by various members of the community.

**43. GRANT APPLICATION – ‘ANCIENT BALDOCK’ – BOOKS GIFT**

**RESOLVED:** That the sum of £560 be set aside from the Baldock Wards Development Discretionary Budgets for the purchase of copies of the book ‘Ancient Baldock’ – 35 to be donated to each School Library at Hartsfield Junior School, St John’s Junior School, St Mary’s Junior School and Knights Templar School.

**REASON FOR DECISION**

The allocation of funds will improve the services provided by the local organisations and groups that are available and accessed by various members of the community.

**44. GRANT APPLICATION – BALDOCK TOWN CHRISTMAS LIGHTS**

**RESOLVED:** That the sum of £2000 be awarded from the Baldock Wards’ Development Discretionary Budgets to part-fund new additions to the Baldock Town Christmas lights.

**REASON FOR DECISION**

The allocation of funds will improve the services provided by the local organisations and groups that are available and accessed by various members of the community.

The meeting closed at 8.20 p.m.

.....  
Chairman