

**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 21 January 2008 at 7.30 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** *Councillors A.D. Young (Chairman), Marilyn Kirkland, I.J. Knighton  
and M.E. Weeks.*

**IN ATTENDANCE:** *Claire Morgan (Community Development Officer)  
Susanne Gow (Committee and Member Services Officer).*

**ALSO PRESENT:** *Inspector Jason Thorne (Hertfordshire Constabulary)*

**56. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Inspector Jason Thorne, who he had invited to give the Committee Members a crime statistics update.

**57. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were apologies for absence from Cllr M.R.M. Muir and Cllr S.K. Jarvis.

**58. MINUTES – 19 NOVEMBER 2007**

**RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2007 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

**59. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no notification of any other business to this Committee Meeting.

**60. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

**61. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no items presented under public participation.

**62. CRIME STATISTICS IN THE BALDOCK DISTRICT – VERBAL POLICE UPDATE**

At the request of the Chairman, Inspector Jason Thorne visited the Baldock and District Committee Meeting to give current statistics on a variety of crimes, the majority of which were down in numbers.

He revealed that dwelling burglary had increased by 6%, including distraction burglaries. Motor vehicle crimes had also seen an increase, but this was countered by an increase in detection rates.

The implementation of Operation Saturnalia had targeted a few specific roads at one time, and had seen a take up of security measures. This Operation was to continue, with Community Safety Officers visiting vulnerable areas to warn people to be on their guard, especially against distraction burglaries, at all times. Inspector Thorne confirmed that the majority of these residents were elderly, and the Community Development Officer, who also works with people over 50, offered to ensure that those elderly people with whom she was in contact, were also aware of basic security measures promoted by Operation Saturnalia.

There had been a slight increase in the numbers of robberies, but Inspector Thorne felt that enquiries were progressing satisfactorily.

The Committee were informed that Operation Tarantula was currently in progress, targeting vehicle crime. A high visibility patrol car was used, and its officers advised drivers of vulnerable vehicles in the area not to leave valuable items on show in their

cars. This process is to continue, coupled with Action Days, to ensure the message is reinforced. There have also been thefts of diesel fuel in the rural district surrounding Baldock, and investigations have resulted in a recent arrest.

Inspector Thorne stated that criminal damage has been reduced, and a number of youths have been detained due to good policing and detection.

Regarding youths with Anti-Social Behaviour Orders, a reduction in the numbers of young people gathering at the rear of Tesco has been achieved, possibly with the help of CCTV and the co-operation of Tesco staff. Patrols have been concentrated there, and three motor vehicles have been confiscated. During the half term holiday in February 2008, efforts will be concentrated on youth-related crime.

The Members asked Inspector Thorne whether the Police authorise the putting up of Neighbourhood Watch and Residents' Association signs, and he confirmed that he would authorise this action.

The Chairman thanked Inspector Thorne for his informative update on crime statistics in Baldock, and stated that he hoped that the Police would give their help and support to counter bad driving during the difficult period at the start of the Baldock Town Centre Enhancement. Inspector Thorne confirmed that the Police would be glad to offer their help at this critical time, and looked forward to returning with a further update on Baldock crime statistics in 12 months' time.

#### **63. CHAMPION NEWS**

The Community Development Officer (CDO) for Baldock and District introduced the report of activities that had taken place since the last meeting on 19 November 2008.

##### The 'Ancient Baldock' book – presentation to schools

Three of the four schools in Baldock had been presented with 35 copies each of this book for their school library. As some of the children had also encouraged their parents to buy the book, it has now gone into a second print, and further copies will be available shortly.

##### Nightingale Tenants' Association

Following a meeting with Hertfordshire Highways (HH), it was agreed that the 'Give Way' lines painted at the junctions of both Templar Avenue and Mons Avenue, and Willian Way and Nightingale Way, are to be programmed into the HH works programme, with the works hopefully being undertaken between May and September 2008.

##### Baldock Town Partnership

It was confirmed that the Baldock Town Partnership would buy a database CD from Thompson Local Directory containing addresses of businesses in the Baldock area. The CDO reiterated that plans are being made for the production and quarterly distribution of a business newsletter as well as a walking guide to Baldock, to encourage visitors into the town to help with Baldock's trade.

##### Ashwell Cycling Club

As stated in the CDO's report, Ashwell Cycling Club needed funds to purchase specialised grass track racing bicycles, as they have now found and earmarked a site for their racing track. The application for the 'Awards for All' Lottery Fund was now almost complete. Any donation from North Herts District Council would be made from the Arbury Ward Discretionary Development Budget, with Ward Member approval.

##### Bypass Landscaping – Old Wallington Road

Hertfordshire Highways had definitely agreed the provision of funds for a planting scheme of shrubs and hedges at the entry to the Old Wallington Road (now a footpath/bridleway).

The Chairman thanked the Community Development Officer for her Champion News report, and informed the Members that replacement of the bunds at the Baldock bypass near the contractors' site is no longer on the Agenda, as Hertfordshire Highways have agreed to replace them

**RESOLVED:**

That the Committee endorsed the actions taken by the 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 Community Development Officer.

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

The Community Development Officer (CDO) tabled a grant application for determination at the Meeting: for financial support for the staging of the Ashwell Music Festival 2008.

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.

The Committee were informed that unallocated money would be withdrawn or the budget reduced. Discussion ensued, and one Member suggested that funds be put aside for small projects required throughout the Town which may arise during the Baldock Town Centre Enhancement, such as planting shrubs, provision of bins, etc. Both Baldock Town and Baldock East Wards and Sandon Ward have already done this, and Arbury Ward will shortly submit a similar document to the CDO.

It was stated that funds should be allocated for Youth Development from Area Visioning, and the Member for Baldock East proposed through the Chairman to allocate £50 from her Discretionary Budget to the North Herts Book Festival.

The CDO informed Members that the tenders for contractors to work on the Baldock Town Centre Enhancement have been received, and the contractors will be appointed March 2008.

Some residents had raised objections to the temporary one-way system currently being installed by Hertfordshire Highways to facilitate the commencement of the Town Centre Enhancement work.

**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 and acknowledged;
- (3) That the Baldock and District Committee notes and acknowledges the amounts of uncommitted Ward Development Discretionary Funds within each respective Ward Budget and considers the allocation of those funds to projects and initiatives;
- (4) That £250 from the Arbury Ward Development Discretionary Budget is allocated by the Baldock and District Committee to help fund the organisation of the Ashwell Music Festival 2008.

**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.

**65. GRANT APPLICATION – ASHWELL MUSIC FESTIVAL 2008**

**RESOLVED:** That the sum of £250 from the Arbury Ward Discretionary Development Budget be approved to assist with the development and delivery of the annual Ashwell Music Festival's programme planned by the Friends of St Mary's, Ashwell.

**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.

The meeting closed at 8.09p.m.

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Chairman