

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 March 2008 at 7.30 p.m.**

MINUTES

PRESENT: *Councillors A.D. Young (Chairman), M.R.M. Muir (Vice 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: *Brian Doyle (Baldock Rotary Club)
Mr Dodds (Baldock Rotary Club)
Geoff Godschalk (Ashwell Cycle Club)*

66. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Mr Doyle and Mr Godschalk for attending the Baldock and District Committee Meeting to give the Committee Members updates on their respective organisations.

67. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received by Committee and Member Services in respect of Councillor Steve Jarvis.

68. MINUTES – 21 JANUARY 2008

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2008 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

69. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

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

70. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no items presented under public participation.

71. BALDOCK ROTARY CLUB - VERBAL UPDATE ON PROVISION OF CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

Before Mr Dodds, PR and Press Officer of the Baldock Rotary Club began speaking to the Committee, Councillor Michael Muir declared a personal interest, as he is a member of this organisation.

Mr Dodds revealed that the Baldock Rotary Club had provided and maintained Christmas lights in the town of Baldock from the last week in November to the following 6 January, for the past 30 years. They had received both complaints and compliments on the lights, but now wished to update the type of lights used, as those in current use were meant to lay flat against the buildings on the High Street and the other main streets in Baldock, whereas it was considered that the lights would look more effective strung from the lamp posts at right angles to the highway. This would also mean that the buildings currently used to support the lights were less likely to be damaged, as the fabric of some of these old buildings were fragile, being composed of daub and wattle, and prone to damage easily while attaching the lights. Mr Dodds also declared that risk assessments needed to be made, as members of the Rotary Club themselves put up the lights each year, and as Health and Safety was very important they felt that this task should be done by professionals.

Mr Dodds told the Members of the Committee that for the future, the Baldock Rotary Club was in need of practical and financial help from other people and organisations, with the supply of new lights, the testing and erection of them. They were happy to

work in co-operation with North Hertfordshire District Council and the Baldock Town Partnership to improve and update the display, but for this they required more donations, as the cost of maintaining the current display, let alone improving it, was rising each year. On top of the provision cost, the current maintenance cost was £200 p.a.

The Chairman thanked Mr Dodds, and stated that the Baldock and District Committee were grateful for the provision of the Christmas lights, which enhance the appearance of Baldock town centre every Christmas.

Discussion ensued, and the Members declared that now was the time to sort out the electricity supply for the Christmas lights for future years, before the Baldock Town Enhancement Scheme begins. They wanted to have some idea of the way forward in the provision of electricity to lamp posts. Mr Dodds was asked if there was anything else he thought should be done, which the Chairman could put to the Baldock Town Centre Partnership.

One Member, also a Hertfordshire County Councillor, revealed that Hertfordshire Highways had refused permission for the Baldock Christmas lights to be mounted on lamp posts, as it would cost £30,000. Funds would also need to be found for a professional electrician to install the lights, as they are currently put up by members of the Baldock Rotary Club. The hope was stated that now that dialogue has been opened with the Baldock Town Centre Partnership and the best solution has been found, progress could be made. Another suggestion made was that cantilever arms could be used to display the lights.

It was revealed that sponsorship for the Christmas lights has been sought from Tesco to match the £3,500 from the Baldock Town Partnership, and the Chairman stated that there is a fund to enhance local areas, and he will speak with the relevant officers.

The Baldock and District Committee wished to formally record their thanks for the efforts which the Baldock Rotary Club had made in providing and maintaining the Christmas lights over the years.

72. ASHWELL CYCLE CLUB – VERBAL PRESENTATION

Mr Geoff Godschalk, Club Secretary of Cycle Club Ashwell, gave the Baldock and District Committee the background to the Club. He stated that it had started as a road cycling club with just three members seven years ago, and now had 88 members of all ages, including one young member of 17 who is about to go professional. The Club was vibrant and active, and as well as road cycling, covered social cycling, time trials and social cycling.

Mr Godschalk declared that young people are the future of the club, and there were several 15 and 16-year-old cyclists, as well as middle-aged and senior members. The Committee of Cycle Club Ashwell had decided to start a Youth Section for cyclists aged 9 to 16, and training would be needed to cover bike handling and riding together, as well as competitive riding. The Club Secretary assured the Baldock and District Committee Members that grass track cycling is safe, but required specialist track bikes, which had no brakes. They would have to provide facilities, trainers and the bikes, together with transport, spare parts, tyres, etc. The total budget required would rise to £9,500 within two years. The Ashwell Parish Council had agreed to provide the grass track, but this was on a field shared with other sports, which meant that the track had to be re-marked every week. The Baldock and District Committee had already made a contribution towards the track, and the Club had a broad membership from all over the area. £1,250 had been donated to the Club, but the first 10 track bikes were on order, and for this a deposit of £3,000 was needed urgently. The Club had applied for a grant from Lottery Awards for All, and was anxiously awaiting the result. £2,000 was needed to guarantee delivery of the track bikes.

The Committee were informed that Victoria Pendleton's father rides with Cycle Club Ashwell, and comes with other experienced members to teach the younger members. The Club was excited at forming a Youth Section, and looking to the future would ideally like to put up a dome, to assist in training for the 2012 Olympics in London.

The Club also aspired to becoming a Go-Right Club, supported by the British Cycling Association. For this they required another two trained coaches and another £7,500. They currently co-operated with Welwyn Wheelers and other local cycle clubs, and Tri-Sports helped with maintenance. Membership for children and young people was £5 and £7, and for adults, £25 p.a.

The Members of Baldock and District Committee then discussed this item, and the Chairman asked the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and E-Government whether he thought that the North Hertfordshire Sports Council could be of assistance. The Portfolio Holder answered in the affirmative, and said that the Sports Council were able to hand out grants to deserving cases. The Community Development Officer was asked to put the North Herts Sports Council and Cycle Club Ashwell in touch with each other. One Committee Member stated that he was sure that there was a relevant Hertfordshire County Council grant which would cover this.

Mr Godschalk was asked what types of cycling they taught in Cycle Club Ashwell, and he informed the Members that they covered all types of cycling except for BMX, as they did not have the facilities for this. He then gave a full explanation of how a member could progress from Category 4 to Category 1 and the Elite grades. He covered the process of new members and how they are taught to use the basic, but specialised bikes for off-road cycling, as they have no brakes. He told the Committee that the Club hoped to buy 10 track bikes this year and 10 more next year, which would allow all the cyclists who wanted to, to try track cycling.

The Chairman thanked Mr Godschalk on behalf of the Baldock and District Committee, and said that they all considered that he and the Club's Committee had done a fantastic job so far. He asked Mr Godschalk to pass his congratulations on to the Committee and members of Cycle Club Ashwell, and hoped that their efforts would result in them raising and training a future Gold Medallist.

73. CHAMPION NEWS

The Community Development Officer (CDO) for Baldock and District introduced the report of activities that had taken place since the last meeting of the Baldock and District Committee on 21 January 2008.

The 'Ancient Baldock' book – presentation to schools

Presentation of copies of the book were made to St Mary's Junior School on 10 March 2008. All four schools in Baldock have now been given this book for use in their libraries.

Ashwell United Reform Church

Support had been given to the Ashwell United Reform Church on their application for WREN funding. This project had secured £50,000 of NHDC funding through the current year's PACIF, which, together with the WREN funding, will help to refurbish the Church hall and kitchen facilities.

Baldock Guide Hut

Baldock Guides would like to redevelop their building on Meeting House Lane, and had been provided with advice on sources of funding and project management processes.

Baldock Town Partnership

The first edition of the Baldock Town Partnership's Newsletter had been produced and circulated, and aimed to raise awareness of the Partnership and some of the current issues facing Baldock.

The Partnership had also put together a list of organisations in the town in order to define its 'constituency' and to help develop a wider readership of its Newsletter. It had also been involved with a response to the Authority's Local Development Framework Land Allocations document.

Knights Templar Music Project with the City of London Sinfonia

The CDO is supporting Knights Templar School in organising an educational project so that GCSE Music students have an opportunity to work with the composer of the City of London Sinfonia (CLS). Two other schools in North Hertfordshire, Hitchin Boys and Hitchin Girls are also involved in the project, which will result in a concert at Knights Templar School on Friday 18 April 2008, where the students will perform their new compositions during a concert by the City of London Sinfonia.

Bypass Landscaping – Old Wallington Road

Hertfordshire Highways had agreed to fund this project, the work to be carried out by the Countryside Management Service (CMS). Following consultation with the Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Department and a neighbouring tenant farmer, CMS would purchase a mixture of native hedgerow species for planting.

CMS was also considering planting some native bulbs that could form a Community Action Project next autumn.

To enable Old Wallington Road to be more easily accessed from the Clothall Common estate, two small footbridges of a simple 'ditch board' design would be installed at separate points along the ditch that runs in line with the path.

Baldock Festival 2008

NHDC has received a full Event Management Document for the Medieval Street Fair on Saturday 17 May 2008, including permission to close the High Street car parking area, and an application for a Temporary Event Licence to cover the event.

The CDO would assist in the various applications and processes to ensure that all was in order for the event to occur.

North Herts Book Festival 2008

Three events have taken place in Baldock as part of the North Herts Book Festival:

- On March 6 2008 there was a poetry reading event in The Orange Tree public house;
- On 8 March 2008 there was a 'Big Baldock Book Swap' at the Baldock Community Centre, with storytelling for young children, at which the CDO assisted;
- On 13 March 2008, local author and broadcaster Sarah Harrison gave a presentation at the Baldock Community Centre.

Ashwell Tennis Club

Representatives from the Club would be advised by CDOs regarding possible external and NHDC funding streams, which may help with the development of tennis and other sports in Ashwell.

North Hertfordshire Highways – Joint Member Panel

Members of the Baldock and District Committee was requested to review the information presented at Appendix A, and the Chairman was requested to lead a debate on potential highway projects and/or traffic management schemes associated with the themes identified at 1.1 (8) Appendix A in the Baldock area that could be considered for joint funding with the JMP Discretionary budget 2008-2009.

The Chairman thanked the Community Development Officer for her Champion News report, and asked all Members to consider what highway projects or traffic schemes in their Wards they would like to be considered for presentation to the Joint Member Panel for joint funding, and email them to the Projects Manager Planning Control or to the Committee and Member Services Officer as soon as possible.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Committee endorsed the actions taken by the Community Development Officer to promote greater community capacity and wellbeing
- 2) That the Baldock and District Committee, with consideration to the information provided at Appendix A, provide to the Projects Manager Planning Control or the Committee and Member Services Officer (preferably by email), any such schemes or projects that could be considered for joint matched funding with the JMP Discretionary Budget for 2008-2009.

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.

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

The Community Development Officer (CDO) took the Committee through the Baldock and District Budget Statement for 2007/2008, and advised the Committee that there were three grant applications for determination.

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 CDO requested Members to email her with a list of any further projects/initiatives for commitment of the remaining unallocated sums within their respective Ward Development Discretionary budgets for expenditure in the new financial year 2008/2009.

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 noted and acknowledged the amounts of uncommitted Ward Development Discretionary Funds within each respective Ward Budget and considered the allocation of those funds to projects and initiatives;
- (4) That £500 from the Arbury Ward Development Discretionary Budget was allocated by the Baldock and District Committee to help fund the grass track cycling project being organised by Cycle Club Ashwell;
- 5) That £750 from the Area Committee Discretionary Budgets was allocated by the Baldock and District Committee to help fund the construction of net facilities for the Baldock Town Cricket Club and the provision of cricket coaching programmes for children and young people;

- 6) That £1,000 from the Arbury Ward Development Discretionary Budget was allocated by the Baldock and District Committee to help fund the development of a dedicated village green for Bygrave;
- 7) That the following commitments of unallocated Ward Developments Discretionary Budgets were indicated to the Community Development Officer as possible future projects within each ward:-

Arbury Ward - Balances to be allocated to Rural Youth projects.

Weston & Sandon Ward - £1,200.00 in principle, to be allocated to a pending application for Sandon Village Hall chairs and any remaining funds to go to Rural Development Projects.

Baldock East Ward - Unallocated funds to go towards Clothall Common Environmental Projects.

Baldock Town - Unallocated funds to go to Town Projects/Initiatives.

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.

75. GRANT APPLICATION – CYCLE CLUB ASHWELL

RESOLVED: That the sum of £500 be awarded to support funding required to extend the cycle facilities available for young people during the summer months in Ashwell and the surrounding area, encouraging responsible citizenship, contributing to healthy living and reducing social exclusion, thus leading to an improved quality of life.

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.

76. GRANT APPLICATION – BALDOCK CRICKET CLUB

RESOLVED: That the sum of £750 from the Baldock and District Committee Development Budget be approved to part-fund the construction of net facilities at the Avenue Park cricket ground and the delivery of a 'Quick Cricket' project for Baldock schools as well as a coaching programme for Colt players.

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.

77. GRANT APPLICATION – BYGRAVE PARISH COUNCIL

RESOLVED: That the sum of £1,000 be awarded from the Arbury Ward Discretionary Development Budget for the development of a village green in Bygrave, for use in community events and activities, on condition of the acquisition of the leasehold of the land.

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 8.52 p.m.

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Chairman