

TITLE OF REPORT: CHAMPION NEWS AND FINANCE REPORT

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY, PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Committee on the current expenditure and balances of the Area Committee delegated budgets.
- 1.2 To bring to the Committee's attention details of recent requests received for Area Committee Development Discretionary Grant Funding made by community groups and local organisations.
- 1.3 To advise the Committee of the activities and schemes with which the Community Development Officer has been involved.
- 1.4 To bring to the Committee's attention some important community based activities that will be taking place during the next few months.

2. FORWARD PLAN

- 2.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

3. PROJECT/ACTIVITY/SCHEME DETAILS

3.1 Baldock Town Partnership

An Italian Street Market has been organised for 13th & 14th March and also for dates later in the year in the months of July and December. It is hoped that changing the days from Friday/Saturday to Saturday/Sunday and arranging additional attractions on the Sundays will help to increase footfall.

For example, it has been arranged that an exhibition of Ferrari's will be shown on Sunday at the Italian Market scheduled in March.

In addition, it is hoped to organise a Farmers' market in June.

The Chair of the Baldock Town Partnership, James Lunham has been in contact with Wendy Fairs and has managed to negotiate permission for the BTP to organise any Markets on the High Street during the next 12 months, without being charged.

The BTP has organised a publication called the ***Baldock Heritage Guide*** which, as well as providing an outline of the history of the town, also gives information on local businesses, maps, useful telephone numbers etc. The TCM will be arranging distribution of the guide to homes in and around Baldock , as well as in local retail premises and community centres.

3.2 **Bush Spring Residents Meeting**

Over the past three months there have been two meetings held to discuss issues at the Bush Spring play area on Clothall Common. The first on 9th December 2009 and a follow up meeting on February 9th 2010.

Issues were raised regarding the positioning of the football posts and the lighting of the area. At the most recent meeting, 9 residents attended along with Cllr Kirkland and officers from Community Development and Grounds Maintenance.

The following action points were agreed to be undertaken by Grounds Maintenance Officers;

1. The existing equipment would be removed to ground level and, after a delay, would be replaced with a new basketball hoop at the other end of the tarmac area.
2. The damaged areas of chain-link fence would be renewed.
3. Officers are to consider replacement of the broken area of fence with a formal entrance.
4. No additional hedging would be installed.
5. The lighting column would be left off.

Any further meetings with residents on this issue will be organised if requested and following the agreed actions being carried out.

3.3 **Baldock Youth Council**

The Youth Council are in the process of planning the Bfestival 2010 to take place on the 10th July 2010. They are preparing a bid to the 'Youth Opportunities Fund' for an amount in the region of £25,000. Youth Connexions are applying for a full premises licence, in order to increase the capacity of the event.

As well as the musical element to the festival the emphasis will be on educating young people to keep themselves safe. This will include road safety, sexual health advice, security on the internet, drug and alcohol awareness.

The group are also planning a programme of summer events around the issue of Road Safety following the tragic death of Jake Chapman. They are planning workshops on safe cycling, road safety and safe driving for young drivers aged 17 to 19 years of age.

4. **FUNDING DECISIONS TO BE MADE / CONSIDERED**

4.1 The Committee is asked to note the budgetary expenditure, balances and carry forwards from the Development Budgets and the Visioning Budgets. Members are requested to consider committing any unallocated funds outlined in Appendix 1, prior to the end financial year

4.2 A spreadsheet showing the detailed spend to date of the Area Development budget is enclosed as Appendix A.

4.3 Weston Village Hall

A Fast Track Grant of £200 has been awarded from discretionary budgets by the Ward Member for Weston & Sandon to Weston Village Hall, to help fund the Strength & Balance Class aimed at older people and those with health and mobility issues. The Class covers a specialised exercise programme designed to strengthen muscles and help balance, which assists in preventing falls. Many of the group have been attending for over 12 months and are progressing, therefore necessitating additional equipment.

- 4.4 Ashwell Baby & Toddler Group
A Fast Track Grant of £350 has been awarded from discretionary budgets by the Ward Member for Arbury Ward to assist with paying the increased room hire charges.
- 4.5 Ashwell Parish Council
A Fast Track Grant of £465 has been awarded from discretionary budgets by the Member for Arbury Ward, to assist with improvements to Ashwell Cemetery, namely a new notice board and replacement of fencing & hedge.
- 4.6 Baldock Cricket Club
A Fast Track Grant of £500 has been awarded from discretionary budgets on a percentage split across Baldock Town, Baldock East and Arbury Wards. The grant is to assist with the purchase of an automatic bowling machine that will assist in training sessions for all parts of the Cricket Club including the Colts and Adults sections of the Club.
- 4.7 Baldock Bowls & Cricket Social Club
A Fast Track Grant of £500 has been awarded from discretionary budgets on a percentage split across Baldock Town, Baldock East and Arbury Wards. The grant is to assist with the costs incurred in the upgrading of the pavilion that acts as a community facility for not only all of the clubs based at Avenue Park, but also many other community groups from the town. The grant award is to assist with renovations to the main club room, staircase and inner lobby area.
- 4.8 Knights Templar School Duke of Edinburgh Award Unit
Members are asked to consider grant funding of £1,500 towards the purchase of waterproof maps, GPS devices and equipment for participants in the DofE award scheme.
- 4.9 Christchurch Baldock 'Money Secret' Course
Members are asked to consider grant funding of £370 towards a 6 week course in managing personal finance, budgeting and debt management. The course will be open to anyone in the community who would like to attend at a subsidised cost of £2.00 per person.
- 4.10 Baldock Festival
Members are asked to consider grant funding of £924 in order to purchase additional lightweight market stalls to replace the old 'Hitchin' stalls used for the May Street Fair. The stalls are also loaned to community groups and organisers of local events, such as Friends of St Mary's for the Christmas Gala and the Youth Council for the Bfestival.
- 4.11 Baldock Town Partnership
Members are asked to consider grant funding of £1,300 to assist in the provision of marketing and publicity materials for the setting up of a monthly farmers' market in the Town Centre.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Committee has delegated powers to administer funds from the budgets described.
- 5.2 There are no other legal implications pertinent to this report.

6. FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Members are asked to note the information detailed in Appendix A of the report, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for the current financial year 2009/10.
- 6.2 The spreadsheet also details the pre-allocations carried forward from the previous financial year 2008/09 to the current financial year 2009/10.

7. HUMAN RESOURCE AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no human resource and equalities implications pertinent to this report.

8. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS

- 8.1 Consultation with Members has occurred in connection with the allocation of funds for Community Projects.
- 8.2 Consultation with the respective officers and external agencies / groups has taken place with regard to the funding proposals for Area Committee Discretionary Development Funds.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The Committee is asked to note the budgetary expenditure, balances and carry forwards from the Development Budgets.
- 9.2 That the Committee considers the allocation of uncommitted budget balances prior to the end of the financial year as outlined in Appendix 1.
- 9.3 That the Committee acknowledges the recent fast track grant of £200 made to Weston Village Hall.
- 9.4 That the Committee acknowledges the recent fast track grant of £350 to Ashwell Mother & Toddler Group.
- 9.5 That the Committee acknowledges the recent fast track grant of £465 to Ashwell Parish Council.
- 9.6 That the Committee acknowledges the recent fast track grant of £500 to Baldock Cricket Club.
- 9.7 That the Committee acknowledges the recent fast track grant of £500 to Baldock Bowls & Cricket Social Club.
- 9.8 That the Committee considers the grant application from Knights Templar Duke of Edinburgh Award Unit of £1,500.
- 9.9 That the Committee considers the grant application from Christchurch Baldock of £370.
- 9.10 That the Committee considers the grant application from Baldock Festival of £924.
- 9.11 That the Committee considers the grant application from Baldock Town Partnership of £1,300.

- 9.11 That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community Development Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for the Baldock & District Area.

10. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 10.1 To ensure that the Committee are kept informed of the work of the Community Development Officer.
- 10.2 This report is intended simply to inform Members of the financial resources available to the Committee. It draws attention to the current budgetary situation, assists in the effective financial management of the Area Committee's budget and ensures actions are performed within the Authority's Financial Regulations and the guidance in the Grants procedure.
- 10.3 The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims and Strategic Objectives of the Council.
- 10.4 The allocation of funds will improve the services provided by local organisations and groups that are available and accessed by members of the community.

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1 – Area Committee Financial Grant Budget Update.
- 11.2 Appendix 2- Grant report for Baldock Festival
- 11.3 Appendix 3 - Grant report for Knights Templar Duke of Edinburgh Award Unit
- 11.4 Appendix 4 - Grant report for Christchurch Baldock
- 11.5 Appendix 5 - Grant report for Baldock Town Partnership

12. CONTACT OFFICERS

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