

PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT	AGENDA ITEM No
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TITLE OF REPORT: CHAMPION NEWS & FINANCE REPORT – BALDOCK & DISTRICT AREA COMMITTEE – MONDAY 9th JANUARY 2012

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

PORTFOLIO HOLDER COUNCILLOR TRICIA COWLEY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of the activities and schemes with which the Community Development Officer has been involved.
- 1.2 To bring to the Committee's attention some important community based activities that will be taking place during the next few months.
- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 To advise the Committee on the current expenditure and balances of the Area Committee delegated budgets.

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

Since the November Area Committee Meeting, the Baldock Town & District Partnership (BTADP) has held one event which was the Baldock Christmas Weekend (Friday 2nd – Sunday 4th December 2011).

Baldock Christmas Weekend

The Baldock Christmas Weekend opened with the BTADP's Christmas dinner at St Mary's Church Hall on the Friday night. This was well supported with the 100 plus in attendance treated to a four course dinner with wine and entertained by 2 live bands.

On the Saturday, the High Street was transformed in to a Winter Wonderland with a 30 stall Christmas Craft market, ice rink, numerous fun fair rides and

live music. On Sunday the festivities continued with an Italian market replacing the Christmas Craft market.

The weekend event was very popular with many of the stalls selling out. Equally important, the event also helped drive up footfall for the local businesses. The weekend event was a great community event with numerous groups including the Baldock Scouts, pre-school groups, church groups involved throughout the weekend.

Finally the weekend event proved to be a be a critical income generator for the BTADP bringing in approximately £2,500.

Markets

The weekly Wednesday market which has been struggling over the past couple of months is now operating with 8 regular stalls. The BTADP has now been running the weekly market for one year, since replacing Wendy Faires. In this time the market has doubled in size, with new stalls coming in including a clothes stall, a better fish stall and a puzzles book stall.

The BTADP will be having a promotional push in the first quarter of 2012 to attract more stalls to the weekly market and to encourage more residents to use the market. The Baldock Community Development Officer (CDO) will be assisting this process by distributing leaflets and posters around all the villages that feed into Baldock.

The monthly Farmers Markets which proved so popular during 2011 will reconvene in February 2012 and will be held on the second Saturday of each month until November.

Membership Scheme & BNG

Since the November Area Committee Report, there have been no additions to the membership scheme. There are still 35 businesses signed up to the scheme, securing approximately £1,000 in revenue per month for the BTADP.

Equally, there has also been an increase in membership to the Baldock Network Group (BNG), with a further 2 members signing on in the last month. There are now 21 full members of the BNG with 3 further members in the pipeline. Money generated from the annual memberships and the bi-weekly breakfast meetings will secure in the region of £2,500 funding for the partnership per annum.

Monthly Car boot sales

As an additional income generator the BTADP is looking to start running monthly car boot sales in the Baldock High Street car park. Planning for this is underway with car boot sales looking to be held on the last Sunday of each month from March 2012 onwards. It is hoped that this will help generate an additional £200-£300 a month for the BTADP.

BTADP Calendar of Events

The BTADP is still working on its Calendar of Events for 2012. This will be distributed around Baldock and the surrounding villages by the Baldock TCM and the Baldock CDO during January 2012 and will be presented to the Baldock & District Area Committee in the March meeting. Events already scheduled for 2012 include the Baldock Beast Half Marathon, Baldock Day,

The Big Lunch, Balstock Family Fun Day and the Baldock Christmas Weekend.

Events

Future events planned by the BTADP include:

- Farmers Market (Saturday 11th February 2012)
- Baldock Beast Half Marathon (Sunday 18th March 2012)

3.2 Baldock Youth Council

The Baldock Youth Council (BYC) continues to meet on a weekly basis. The BYC is run by Youth Connexions with support from the Baldock CDO. The group continues to struggle for members but has been boosted with 3 new members since the November meeting, bringing the membership up to 7 young people aged between 13 and 15.

3.3 Reinstatement of Cellar doors

At the time of writing this report, the works have still to be completed to the cellar hatches at both the Goldcrest and The George and Dragon Public Houses. This issue has been ongoing since April 2011 with the contractor now needing to replace the two cellar hatches that they installed during August/September 2011. Payment for the works will be withheld until the work is satisfactorily completed. Work is expected to be completed during January 2012.

3.4 Signage in Ashwell

The Baldock CDO continues to liaise with Hertfordshire Highways and the Ashwell Retail Group regarding new signage for Ashwell. At the time of writing this report there was no further information available relating to this matter. A verbal update will be provided at the January 2012 Baldock & District Area Committee meeting.

3.5 Baldock Half Marathon

The Baldock CDO continues to work with the Baldock TCM and Chris Coghlan from Endurorunning.com to bring a half marathon to Baldock. In the November Area Committee report the date for the race was confirmed as Sunday 25th March 2012. Due to other conflicted races on this date, the date for the Baldock Half Marathon has moved to Sunday 18th March 2012.

The Baldock CDO has submitted the Race Permit Application to the Association of Running Clubs and the Event notification form to the North Herts Safety Advisory Group and at the time of writing this report no feedback had been received. A verbal update will be provided to Members at the January 2012 Baldock & District Area Committee meeting.

The BTADP are the Race organisers for the Baldock Half Marathon and will be responsible for the registration of all runners and the running of the event on the day. The Baldock CDO, who will be running in the race will provide support to the TCM over the coming months to ensure the event is a success.

The Baldock Half Marathon will be an important future income stream for the BTADP, bringing in between £6,000 and £8,000 per annum.

3.6 **Pond Lane**

At the request of Baldock Members, the Baldock CDO has been investigating the issue of overhanging trees on Pond Lane. It has been established that the grass verges and trees along Pond Lane were never adopted or maintained by either NHDC or Hertfordshire Highways.

It also became apparent that the developers (Daniels Bros) who built the homes in the two cul de sacs off Pond Lane in the early 80's do not own the land.

Following an inspection by NHDC'S Ground Maintenance Team which identified that the trees in question were diseased, Herts Highways have agreed on grounds of public safety to pay for the necessary work to be carried out.

3.7 **Avenue Park Sports and Social Club**

The Baldock CDO has met with Graham Woods, Green Keeper for Baldock Bowls Club and member of the Avenue Parks Sports and Social Club Management Committee regarding the possibility of installing a disabled lift / chair at the venue.

The function room at the Avenue Park is becoming increasingly popular and is hired out on a regular basis. As well as being used by the clubs that operate from the park, namely Baldock Crusaders Netball Team, Baldock Bowls Club, Baldock Cricket Club and Baldock Youth Football club. The venue is also used for Rotary Club meetings, birthday parties, Christenings and other social & family celebrations.

Whilst the venue has a disabled toilet, there is no disabled access to the first floor function room. With the increased usage of the function room it is now crucial to provide full disabled access to the first floor.

Avenue Park Sports and Social Club building is owned by NHDC who have been kept in the loop about this project and will have the final say in terms of the design of the scheme.

The Baldock CDO has identified S106 Leisure Contribution monies which could be used for the project. The next stage will be for the Avenue Park Management Committee to seek quotes for the works. As well as S106 money, the project may require additional funding from Baldock & District Area Committee and Hertfordshire County Council Locality funding pots.

3.8 **Highways Work Programme**

The Highways Work Programme detailing works either carried out or planned within the Baldock & District in the current financial year, are detailed in Appendix 2.

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.

4.2 A spreadsheet showing the detailed spend to date of the Area Committee Development Budget is enclosed as Appendix 1.

4.3 **Baldock Community Association**

A Fast Track Grant of £150 was awarded to the Baldock Community Association from the Baldock Town Members Preallocated Town Projects Initiatives pot for the purchase of decorations and transport costs for the Community Centres Christmas Day event for local pensioners.

4.5 **Clothall Common Project**

A Fast Track Grant of £103 was awarded from the Baldock East Ward Member's 2011/12 Base Budget for leaf clearance at Clothall Common.

4.6 **Current Funding Applications**

The Baldock CDO is awaiting the completed funding application paperwork on the following projects. These were not received in time for this report but will be processed once the appropriate paperwork is received.. The projects are detailed in the table below.

Ward	Project
Weston & Sandon	Funding support for group setting up street party in Weston as part of the Royal Jubilee Celebrations.
Arbury	Funding support for Hinxworth Allotment Group.
Baldock Town	Funding support for the purchase of new equipment for Baldock Museum.
Baldock East	Funding support for associated works re the creation of a disabled parking bay for Clothall Common.
Arbury & Baldock Town / Baldock East	Funding support for the purchase of equipment for the Asheteria and Baldock Groups. Funding application will be submitted by Jen Brown, St Mary's Youth Worker in 2012.

4.7 **Remaining budgets available to Baldock & District Ward Members and the allocation of funds for projects in 2012/13**

Detailed below are the remaining funds available to Ward Members in both Preallocated Budgets and the 2011/12 Base Budget. The figures highlighted below are based on the funds remaining and take into account the recent grant recommendations already requested by Ward Members to the Baldock CDO.

Members are asked to note that remaining budget funds from the 2011/12 area base budget must be spent or allocated to a project before the end of the current financial year.

Detailed over the page are the remaining base and preallocated budgets by Ward:

Baldock Town

PreallocatedTown Project Initiatives Pot uncommitted	1793
Base Budget	6690
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	8483

Baldock East

Preallocated Community Initiatives pot uncommitted	17
Base Budget	617
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	634

Arbury

Preallocated Rural Community Projects pot uncommitted	1686
Base Budget	2182
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	3868

Weston and Sandon

Preallocated Rural Community Initiatives pot uncommitted	122
Base budget	2150
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	2272

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Terms of Reference in relation to Area Committees confirm that they may establish and maintain relationships with outside bodies/voluntary organisations which includes discretionary grant aid/financial support. However, this does not include grants for district wide activities.
- 5.2 Section 2 Local Government Act 2000 provides that the Council has power to do anything which it considers likely to promote or improve the economic, social or environmental well-being of its area. This would apply on the basis that financial assistance to voluntary and community organisations improves the economic, social or environmental well-being of the District or part of it.
- 5.3 Section 137 Local Government Act 1972 provides specific authority for the Council to incur expenditure on anything which is in the interests of and will bring direct benefit to its area. This includes a charity or other body operating for public service.
- 5.4 The Committee has delegated powers to administer funds from the budgets described.

6. FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Members are asked to note the information detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for the current financial year 2011/12.
- 6.2 The spreadsheet also details the pre-allocations carried forward from the previous financial year 2010/11 to the current financial year 2011/12.

7. HUMAN RESOURCE AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The local MoUs are managed by the Community Development Officer as part of the regular work programme.
- 7.2 The great majority of the voluntary and community projects that are funded by the Council have equality and social inclusion as a key objective of their purpose. Such projects work very closely with and for the more disadvantaged and potentially socially excluded within our communities.
- 7.3 All activities undertaken by the Council, its committees, Community Development officers or agencies working on its behalf are to be conducted in accordance with the NHDC Corporate Equality Strategy and relevant Equalities legislation.

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 The Committee is asked to acknowledge the recent Fast Track Grant Award of £150 to the Baldock Community Association for the purchase of decorations and transport costs for the Community Centre Christmas Day event for the elderly.
- 9.3 The Committee is asked to acknowledge the recent Fast Track Grant Award of £103 for the Clothall Common Leaf Clearance project.

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 Priorities 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 Development Budget Spreadsheet.
- 11.2 Appendix 2 - Hertfordshire Highways Work Programme 2011/12.
- 11.3 Appendix 3 - Area Committee Work Programme 2011/12.

12. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 12.1 Ashley Hawkins (Community Development Officer – Baldock & District Area)
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13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 13.1 Community Governance Reviews – Full Council Meeting 25th February 2010.