

TITLE OF REPORT: CHAMPION NEWS & FINANCE REPORT

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

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

There have been no High Street events/activities organised by the Baldock Town & District Partnership (BTADP) since the last report to the Area Committee in January. The BTADP had planned on running its first Farmers Market of the year in February, but this was unfortunately postponed due to poor weather.

Markets

Since the January Area Committee Report, the Baldock Town Centre Manager (TCM) has been successful in securing two new stalls for the Wednesday Weekly Market. The new stalls are a Free Range Poultry stall and a Photography stall. This brings the number of regular stalls up to 10.

The monthly Farmers Markets which proved so popular during 2011 were due to reconvene in February, but due to poor weather this will now recommence in March 2012.

Membership Scheme & BNG

Since the January Area Committee Report, there has been 1 new addition to the membership scheme, with Brown and Gammons signing up as a Gold member. This brings the total number of businesses signed up to membership scheme up to 36, 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 3 members signing on since the January Area Committee. There are now 24 full members of the BNG with 2 further members in the pipeline.

Monthly Car boot sales

In the January Area Committee Report it was reported that the BTADP would be starting a monthly Car boot sale from March 2012. The BTADP has decided to delay this new venture until April so as to allow time to effectively publicise the initiative in the local newspapers. Monthly Car Boot Sales will be an additional income generator for the BTADP securing between £200-£300 a month.. The Car Boot Sales will be held on one Sunday a month on the High Street Car park.

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 Community Development Officer (CDO) during late February to early March.

Events

Future events planned by the BTADP include:

- Farmers Market (Saturday 10th March 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 BYC has a number of projects planned for the coming months including a 'cake bake' event which will raise money for a local charity.

The Baldock CDO is working closely with the BYC to enable them to get involved in a number of local projects. These include the skate park project and working with the Baldock Town Hall Group.

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. NHDC is still waiting for the revised drawings/designs for the replacement cellar doors from the contractors architects. Payment for the works will be withheld until the work is satisfactorily completed. Work is now

expected to be completed by April 2012 and not January as was reported in the January Area Committee Report

3.4 **Signage in Ashwell**

Since the January Area Committee Meeting there has been little progress in this project. The Baldock CDO will continue to liaise with the Ashwell Retail group until this project is completed.

3.5 **Baldock Half Marathon**

Since the January Area Committee Report the Baldock CDO and TCM have been busy securing sponsorships for the Baldock Half Marathon. So far, in the region of £7,000 has been secured, with sponsorship coming from North Herts Homes, Nuffield Health, Up and Running Sports, Trisports and numerous businesses from around Baldock.

The Baldock Half Marathon will be an important future income stream for the BTADP and by securing sponsorship to cover the running costs the event will potentially bring in between £6,000 and £8,000 per annum for the group.

At the time of writing this report, there are currently 250 runners entered into the race.

3.6 **Pond Lane**

The tree work at Pond Lane, which encompasses work to the two Horse Chestnut trees was completed in late February 2012. The work was carried out by NHDC and paid for by Hertfordshire Highways.

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.

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 Avenue Park Management Committee are currently seeking quotes from builders for this project.

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 Town Partnership**
A Fast Track Grant of £500 was awarded to the Baldock Town Partnership to assist with the publicity costs for promoting the Baldock Half Marathon. This funding was apportioned between all the Ward Members' Budgets using the usual percentage split.
- 4.4 **Hinxworth Parish Council**
A Fast Track Grant of £350 was awarded from the Arbury Ward Member's 2011/12 Base Budget for the provision of car parking spaces at Hinxworth allotments.
- 4.5 **Ashwell Music Festival**
A Fast Track Grant of £250 was awarded to the Ashwell Music Festival Committee to assist with the publicity costs for promoting the festival. This funding came from the Arbury Ward Member's 2011/12 Base Budget.
- 4.6 **St Mary's Youth Worker Projects**
Members are asked to consider grant funding of £2,000 to the St Mary's Youth Worker for the purchase of new equipment for the two clubs currently provided in Baldock for children. Funding is also requested to assist with travel costs.
- 4.7 **Baldock Town Hall Group**
Members are asked to consider grant funding of £1,000 to the Baldock Town Hall Group to help cover the costs of surveyors, solicitors, architects and accountants fees as well as meeting room hire charges.
- 4.8 **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 at Clothall Common.
Arbury	Funding support for the purchase of software to assist with the production of the Village Voice Publication.
Baldock Town / Baldock East	Funding support for Baldock Town Youth Football Club to assist with the purchase of new goal posts and other equipment.
Baldock Town / Baldock East	Funding support for Football Future to assist with the costs for coaching and training.

4.9 **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 & District 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.

Members may wish to consider allocating some of their outstanding funds from the 2011/12 financial year budgets to Jubilee Celebrations / Olympics events.

Detailed below are the remaining base and preallocated budgets by Ward:

Baldock Town

Pre-allocated Town Project Initiatives Pot uncommitted	1533
Base Budget	6690
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	8223

Baldock East

Preallocated Community Initiatives pot uncommitted	17
Base Budget	337
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	354

Arbury

Preallocated Rural Community Projects pot uncommitted	1686
Base Budget	1492
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	3178

Weston and Sandon

Preallocated Rural Community Initiatives pot uncommitted	122
Base budget	2080
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	2202

4.10 **Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)**

At the November 2011 Area Committee meeting, Members agreed to continue to provide financial assistance to the 7 groups within Baldock that currently receive a MOU grant. The table below details the financial support

this would mean for each of the groups for the three year period starting with the 2012/13 financial year.

Members will note, funding support to the MOU's is subject to a 7.1% decrease in the 2012/13 and 2014/15 financial years.

Group /Organisation	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Ashwell Museum	320	300	280	260	260
Baldock Festival	1020	950	880	820	820
Baldock Retirement Sewing Club	400	370	350	320	320
Baldock Seniors Club	1300	1210	1120	1040	1040
Baldock Town Partnership	2320	2150	2000	1860	1860
Baldock Town Twinning	300	280	260	240	240
Baldock Rotary Club	940	870	810	750	750

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 £500 to the Baldock Town Partnership to help with the publicity costs for promoting the Baldock Half Marathon.
- 9.3 The Committee is asked to acknowledge the recent Fast Track Grant Award of £350 to Hinxworth Parish Council for the provision of car parking spaces at Hinxworth Allotments.
- 9.4 The Committee is asked to acknowledge the recent Fast Track Grant Award of £250 to Ashwell Music Festival to help with the publicity costs for promoting the festival.
- 9.5 The Committee considers making a Grant Award of £2,000 to St Mary's Youth Worker for the purchase of new equipment for the two clubs currently provided in Baldock for children.
- 9.6 The Committee considers making a Grant Award of £1,000 to the Baldock Town Hall Group to cover the costs of surveyors, solicitors, architects and accountants fees as well as meeting room hire charges.
- 9.7 The Committee agrees the award of the Memorandums of Understanding to the 7 groups/organisations in Baldock as detailed in 4.10 above.

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.
- 11.4 Appendix 4 – Grant Report for St Mary's Youth Worker Projects.
- 11.5 Appendix 5 – Grant Report for Baldock Town Hall Group Project.

12. CONTACT OFFICERS

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13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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