

PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT	AGENDA ITEM No
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TITLE OF REPORT: CHAMPION NEWS & FINANCE REPORT – BALDOCK & DISTRICT AREA COMMITTEE – MONDAY 28th MAY 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 March Area Committee, there has been 3 Farmers Market events in Baldock. The Farmers markets are held on the second Saturday of the month and run from February through to November each year. This date is fixed so as not to clash with other town’s Farmers Markets.

Members will note that the February Farmers Market was cancelled due to the poor weather conditions. The Farmers Market did go ahead in March and April and as always was well supported by the residents of Baldock. Both months were supported by 15+ market stalls selling a variety of goods including flowers/plants, fruit & veg, homemade pies, breads, chutneys and fresh meat.

The Baldock Community Development Officer (CDO) supports all the Farmers market events both by producing the Advance Notice materials, attending each event and assisting with the stall set up and take down.

At the time of writing this report the May Farmers Market had not taken place. A verbal update on this event will be made at the May Area Committee.

Markets

The weekly Wednesday market continues to operate although has been hampered in recent weeks by the poor weather. Since the Baldock Town & District Partnership (BTADP) took over the running of the weekly market from Wendy Faires (Dec 2010), the market has more than doubled in size. The Baldock Town Centre Manager (TCM) has managed to attract a number of new popular stalls including a free range poultry stall and a photography stall. Unfortunately the market no longer has a fish stall nor the popular clothes stall. The fishmonger has moved to the Oxford City market, while the Clothes Stall is moving to a shop in Hitchin. The Baldock TCM is in negotiations to bring the previous Fish Stall owner back to the market in time for the Summer.

Membership Scheme & BNG

Since the March Area Committee Report, there have been no new additions to the membership scheme. The Membership scheme currently has 36 members, securing approximately £1,000 in revenue per month for the BTADP.

The Baldock Network Group (BNG) meets on alternate Tuesday mornings at Zeus Hotel and continues to thrive. Since the March meeting, the BNG has recruited 2 further members, bringing membership up to 26. The BNG is now one year old and is both a crucial income generator for the BTP and also a powerful tool for linking local businesses.

Monthly Car Boot Sales

It was reported in previous Committee reports that the BTADP would be starting a monthly Car Boot Sale from April 2012 onwards. This would take place on the last Sunday of each month in Baldock High Street (on the car park not grassed areas) between 9am and 12noon at a charge of £6 per car.

Monthly Car Boot Sales will be an additional income generator for the BTADP securing approximately £200 a month.

Unfortunately due to poor weather the first Car Boot Sale planned for April was cancelled. The Baldock CDO will be supporting this monthly event by liaising with NHDC Parking Services and producing advanced warning materials to ensure that the car park area is kept clear for traders.

BTADP Calendar of Events

The BTADP Calendar of Events is included in Appendix 4 of this report. Highlights for this year include The Big Jubilee Lunch (3 June), Baldock Day (14 July), Balstock Community Stage (8 September) and Baldock Christmas Fair.(1,2 December)

Events

Future events planned by the BTADP include:

- The Big Jubilee Lunch (Sunday 3rd June 2012)
- Farmers Market (Saturday 9th June 2012)
- Baldock Bike Challenge (Sunday 24th June 2012)

3.2 **Baldock Youth Council**

The Baldock Youth Council (BYC) has changed from meeting weekly to meeting on the first and last Wednesdays of each month. The BYC is run by Youth Connexions with support from the Baldock CDO.

As regularly reported in Champs News, the BYC continues to struggle for numbers. Attempts have been made to boost membership through a number of recruitment drives but still the group only has 4 regular members.

As a final push to recruit new members the BYC have produced a short video which will be shown in school assemblies during May 2012.

In terms of current activities the group have organised a 'cakebake' event which will be raising money for the Headway Charity and they will also be involved in the skate park project in Baldock and the youth element of the Town Hall project.

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 former 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 July 2012 and not April as was reported in the March Area Committee Report.

3.4 **Signage in Ashwell**

Since the March 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**

The Baldock Half Marathon was held on Sunday 18th March 2012 and was a great success with more than 400 runners taking on the 'Baldock Beast' challenge.

As well as being a successful event for the BTADP in terms of income generated, the Half Marathon also helped raise the profile of the picturesque villages of Wallington and Sandon and helped drive footfall for the local eateries in Baldock.

The event was also a very good example of the community working together with volunteers from numerous groups helping on the day, including Baldock Scouts, Baldock Guides, Baldock Rotary and Baldock 41 Club.

The event passed without incident and the response from both participants and spectators was very positive. The Baldock Beast Multi-terrain Half Marathon will be repeated on an annual basis for many years to come.

The Baldock CDO would like to thank all Baldock & District Area Committee Members for their support on the day.

3.6 **Baldock Bike Challenge**

Following the success of the Baldock Beast Half Marathon, the Baldock CDO is working with the BTADP and the Stevenage and North Herts CTC on a bike challenge.

This event will be held on Sunday 24th June as part of National Bike Week. As well as encouraging more people to use their bicycles, especially in this Olympic year, this event will be another income generator for the BTADP and will drive footfall not only for the businesses of Baldock but all the villages that the ride passes through including Ashwell, Hinxworth, Bygrave, Caldecote, Newnham, Wallington, Sandon, Rusden and Weston.

The ride will consist of either 1 or 2 loops, covering a distance of 26 or 55 miles. The ride will start in Baldock High Street at 10am and all participants will have until 5pm to complete the course.

All riders will be given a map of the course and also a ride card which must be stamped at various checkpoints along the circuit. Local cafés, pubs and village halls will be used as checkpoints.

Entry fee for this event is £8 for 1 loop, £10 for both loops and £2 discount for CTC members.

It is envisaged that this event will attract in excess of 300 riders and like Baldock Half Marathon will help raise the profile of Baldock & its many villages.

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 **The Big Jubilee Lunch**

The Big Lunch is a national event that is now into its third year. The BTADP has been supporting this community event from the start and the 2012 event promises to be the best yet.

This year the BTADP hope to entice more than 400 residents to come into the town centre and sit down for lunch together and be entertained by a selection of live bands. There will also be face painting and inflatable fun for children.

Last year's event was entitled 'Flavours of the World' and residents could chose either Indian food, Greek food or Australian Barbecue. As this year's event coincides with the Royal Jubilee, food this year will be British based and will include the traditional roast beef dinner, fish and chips and barbecue.

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 Museum & Local History Society**

A Fast Track Grant of £323 was awarded to the Baldock Museum & Local History Society to assist with the purchase of polyester envelopes to protect the museum photographs. This funding came from the Baldock Town 2011/12 Base Budget.

4.4 **Rock Solid After School Club**

A Fast Track Grant of £500 was awarded to the Rock Solid After School Club to assist with room hire charges and the purchase of equipment. This funding came from the Baldock Town preallocated Town Projects pot and the Baldock East Ward Member's 2011/12 Base Budget.

4.5 **Football Future**

A Fast Track Grant of £300 was awarded to Football Future to assist with training costs and the purchase of new equipment. This funding came from the Baldock Town Preallocated Town Projects pot and the Baldock East Ward Member's 2011/12 Base Budget.

4.6 **Baldock Town Youth Football Club**

A Fast Track Grant of £500 was awarded to Baldock Town Youth Football Club to assist with the purchase of new goals. This funding came from the Baldock Town, Baldock East and Weston & Sandon Ward Budgets.

4.7 **Hinxworth Village Voice**

A Fast Track Grant of £300 was awarded to the Hinxworth Village Voice group to assist with the purchase of software for the publication. This funding came from the Arbury Ward Members Preallocated Rural Community Projects pot.

4.8 **Hinxworth Allotment Group**

A Fast Track Grant of £365 was awarded to the Hinxworth Allotment Group to assist with the purchase of fencing to protect the allotments from rabbits and foxes. This funding came from the Arbury Ward Members Preallocated Rural Community Projects pot.

- 4.9 **St John Ambulance Letchworth & Baldock Branch**
A Fast Track Grant of £300 was awarded to St John Ambulance to assist with the purchase of new uniforms and safety equipment. This funding came from the Baldock Town 2011/12 Base Budget.
- 4.10 **Baldock Town Hall Group**
A Grant of £1,000 was awarded to the Baldock Town Hall Group to assist with the costs of surveyors, solicitors, architects and accountants fees as well as meeting room hire charges. This funding came from the Baldock Town Preallocated Town Projects Pot and the Baldock East 2011/12 Base Budget.
- 4.11 **St Mary's Youth Worker**
A Grant of £1,000 was made to the St Mary's Youth Worker to assist with equipment costs for the two Baldock based drop in centres. This funding came from the Baldock Town, Baldock East and Arbury 2011/12 Base Budgets.
- 4.12 **Ashwell Baby & Toddler Group**
A Fast Track Grant of £350 was awarded to the Ashwell Baby & Toddler Group to assist with equipment costs and training costs for staff and helpers. This funding came from the Arbury Ward Members 2012/13 Base Budget
- 4.13 **Weston Parish Council**
A Fast Track Grant of £150 was awarded to Weston Parish Council to assist with the costs of equipment including bunting for the Weston Jubilee Street Party Event. This funding came from the Weston & Sandon Preallocated Rural Projects Pot.
- 4.14 **Wallington Village Hall**
A Fast Track Grant of £100 was awarded to the Wallington Village Hall Committee to assist with the costs of equipment including bunting for the Wallington Jubilee Street Party Event. This funding came from the Weston & Sandon Preallocated Rural Projects Pot.
- 4.15 **Sandon Parish Council**
A Fast Track Grant of £500 was awarded to Sandon Parish Council to assist with the costs of purchasing a secure storage facility for equipment at Sandon Sports & Social Club.
- 4.16 **Disabled Parking Bay for Clothall Common**
A Fast Track Grant of £60 was awarded by the Baldock East Member to assist with the marking of a disabled parking area on the Clothall Common estate.
- 4.17 **Saracens Cricket Club**
Members are asked to consider grant funding of £1,000 to the Saracens Cricket Club to assist with the purchase of equipment and also to cover the costs of essential coaching training for its members.
- 4.18 **Baldock Cemetery Group**
Members are asked to consider grant funding of £1,000 to the Baldock Cemetery Group to assist with the costs associated with carrying out a consultation exercise. The Baldock CDO has spoken with the Service Manager Grounds at NHDC who advised that the Baldock Cemetery Group are responding to previous NHDC reports regarding the capacity at Baldock

Cemetery. Local residents consider that there is a need for a local facility which they are willing to develop and fund themselves. This is the same scenario that currently exists in Royston. This approach was agreed as council policy at Cabinet in 2011.

4.19 **Current Funding Applications**

The Baldock CDO is awaiting the completed funding application paperwork for the following project. This was not received in time for this report but will be processed once the appropriate paperwork is received.. The project is detailed in the table below.

Ward	Project
Baldock Town	Funding support for 3 rd Baldock Guides to assist with rewiring work and the purchase of a new water heater at the Guide Hut on Meeting House Lane.

4.20 **Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's)**

Following agreement of Members at the March meeting, the Baldock CDO has released the 1st year funds to the 7 groups which receive a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) from the Baldock & District Area Committee.

This will be followed by further funding awards in 2013/14 and 2014/15. Funding will be subject to an annual decrease of 7.1%. The table below shows the funding that will be awarded during the 3 year MOU arrangement.

Group /Organisation	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Ashwell Museum	300	280	260
Baldock Festival	950	880	820
Baldock Retirement Sewing Club	370	350	320
Baldock Seniors Club	1210	1120	1040
Baldock Town Partnership	2150	2000	1860
Baldock Town Twinning	280	260	240
Baldock Rotary Club	870	810	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 2012/13.

6.2 The spreadsheet also details the pre-allocations carried forward from the previous financial year 2011/12 to the current financial year 2012/13.

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 £323 to Baldock Museum & Local History Society for the purchase of polyester envelopes to protect the museum's photographs and documents.
- 9.4 The Committee is asked to acknowledge the recent Fast Track Grant Award of £500 to Rock Solid After School Club to assist with the room hire charges and the purchase of equipment.
- 9.5 The Committee is asked to acknowledge the recent Fast Track Grant Award of £300 to Football Future to assist with training costs and the purchase of new equipment.
- 9.6 The Committee is asked to acknowledge the recent Fast Track Grant Award of £500 to Baldock Town Youth Football Club to assist with the purchase of new goals.
- 9.7 The Committee is asked to acknowledge the recent Fast Track Grant Award of £300 to Hinxworth Village Voice to assist with the purchase of software for the publication.
- 9.8 The Committee is asked to acknowledge the recent Fast Track Grant Award of £365 to Hinxworth Allotment Group to assist with the purchase of fencing to protect the allotments.
- 9.9 The Committee is asked to acknowledge the recent Fast Track Grant Award of £300 to St John Ambulance Letchworth & Baldock Branch to assist with the purchase of new uniforms and safety equipment.
- 9.10 The Committee is asked to acknowledge the Grant Award of £1,000 to Baldock Town Hall Group to assist with the cost of surveyors, solicitors, architects and accountants fees as well as meeting room hire charges.
- 9.11 The Committee is asked to acknowledge the Grant Award of £1,000 to St Mary's Youth Worker to assist with the equipment costs for the two Baldock based Drop In centres.
- 9.12 The Committee is asked to acknowledge the recent Fast Track Award of £350 to Ashwell Baby & Toddler Group to assist with equipment costs and training costs for staff and helpers.
- 9.13 The Committee is asked to acknowledge the recent Fast Track Award of £150 to Weston Parish Council to assist with the costs of equipment including bunting for the Weston Jubilee Street Party.
- 9.14 The Committee is asked to acknowledge the recent Fast Track Award of £100 to Wallington Village Hall to assist with the costs of equipment including bunting for the Wallington Jubilee Street Party.
- 9.15 The Committee is asked to acknowledge the recent Fast Track Award of £500 to Sandon Parish Council to assist with the costs for purchasing a secure storage facility for equipment at Sandon Sports Centre.
- 9.16 The Committee is asked to acknowledge the recent Fast Track Award of £60 for the installation of a disable parking bay on Clothall Common.

- 9.17 The Committee considers making a Grant Award of £1,000 to Saracens Cricket Club to assist with the purchase of equipment and also to cover the costs of essential coaching training for its members.
- 9.18 The Committee considers making a Grant Award of £1,000 to the Baldock Cemetery Group to assist with the costs associated with carrying out a consultation exercise.
- 9.19 The Committee is asked to acknowledge the award of the Memorandums of Understanding to the 7 groups/organisations in Baldock as detailed in 4.20 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 – BTP Calendar of Events 2012
- 11.4 Appendix 5 – Grant Report for Saracens Cricket Club.
- 11.5 Appendix 6 – Grant Report for Baldock Cemetery Group.

12. CONTACT OFFICERS

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13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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