

**INFORMATION REPORT
TO BALOCK & DICTRICT AREA COMMITTEE
MEMBERS**

TITLE OF REPORT : CHAMPION NEWS & FINANCE REPORT

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PORTFOLIO HOLDER – COUNCILLOR
TRICIA COWLEY

1. SUMMARY

- 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 and to advise on the reallocation of funding to the 2013/14 financial year.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the activities and schemes with which the Community Development Officer has been involved.
- 2.2 The Committee is asked to note the budgetary expenditure, balances and carry forwards within the Area Committee Development Budget Spreadsheet attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.3 The Committee is asked to identify new project codes for unallocated funds to be carried forward to the 2013/14 financial year.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To ensure that the Committee are kept informed of the work of the Community Development Officer.
- 3.2 This report is intended 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.
- 3.3 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.

- 3.4 Production of this report is a requirement of the Corporate Plan in which the Community Development Officer is required to produce a formal report to the Area Committee 6 occasions per annum in line with the Civic Calendar.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 There are no alternative options being proposed other than those detailed within the text of this report. However in the course of debate at committee, Members may wish to comment and offer additional views on any of the items raised within this report.

5. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS

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

6. FORWARD PLAN

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

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 Members are asked to note the information detailed in Appendix 1 Area Committee Budget Spreadsheet, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for the current financial year 2012/13.
- 7.2 The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial year 2011/12 including balances and past expenditure relating to the allocated and un-allocated budgets available to the Committee.
- 7.3 The current levels of unallocated funds within the Committee's Ward Discretionary 2012/13 Base Budgets are:

	Base Budget	Preallocated Budget	Total Remaining
Baldock Town Ward	£4855	£1704	£6559
Baldock East Ward	£1600	£0	£1600
Arbury Ward	£1590	£1513	£3103
Weston & Sandon Ward	£2700	£1162	£3862

- 7.4 The current level of unallocated funds within the Committee's MoU Budget is £0
- 7.5 This report has been produced to keep Members informed of the work of the Community Development Officer for Baldock. This is a requirement of the Corporate Plan in which the Community Development Officer is required to produce a report for members on 6 occasions per annum.

8. PROJECT/ACTIVITY/SCHEME DETAILS

8.1 Baldock Town & District Partnership

The Baldock Town & District Partnership (BTADP) has held two events since the January Area Committee. These were the Baldock Pancake Race (Tuesday 12th February) and the Baldock Beast Multi-terrain Half Marathon (Sunday 24th February). At the time of writing this report neither event had taken place. A verbal update will be provided at the meeting.

Markets

Whilst the Wednesday market was disappointing in 2012, there has been a positive start to 2013 with 2 new stalls now trading in Baldock. These include a Fish Stall and a mobile accessories stall. The Baldock Town Centre Manager (TCM) is also in negotiations to bring a new bread stall to the Wednesday market in the next couple of months.

The monthly Farmers Market will return to Baldock in March. As with 2012, these will be held on the 2nd Saturday of the month.

The Baldock TCM is actively seeking new stall for both markets through editorial content in the local papers as well as social media sites such as Facebook & Twitter. These processes are also being used to encourage more people to use the market, as lack of footfall was cited as the major factor for poor market performance in 2012.

Car Boot & Monthly Indoor Antique Fair

Whilst poorly supported in 2012, the BTP will try again with the car boot this year, with the first car boot planned for the last Sunday in April. As with many events in 2012, the car boot was hampered by poor weather and lack of footfall in 2013.

The BTADP is looking into the possibility of running a monthly indoor antique fair, with Zeus Hotel identified as the probable venue.

BTP Calendar of Events

Detailed in Appendix 3 is the BTP Calendar of Events for 2013. The Baldock TCM and the Baldock CDO will be circulating the calendar of events to all households in Baldock and also around the villages during March 2013.

8.2 Sale Drive

The Baldock CDO continues to work closely with colleagues from Planning, Grounds Maintenance and Highways on a project to improve pedestrian safety at a path behind Sale Drive by improving the lighting in the area.

The Baldock CDO has received costings of £1,500 from Highways for the installation of a lighting column. However, confirmation on them covering any future maintenance costs has yet to be received. Once this has been confirmed the Baldock CDO will liaise with Planning for the release of S106 monies to pay for the scheme.

8.3 Baldock Beast 2013

The Baldock Beast will be held on Sunday 24th February and a verbal update will be provided to members at the March meeting.

8.4 Bakers Field

The Baldock CDO & the Community Development Manager are working with community groups and liaising with colleagues in Estates and Parks and Countryside on a project to reopen the building known as the 'Shed'.

The Baldock CDO has met with representatives from both Baldock Town Football Club and Baldock Town Youth Football Club who are interested in working together to refurbish the Shed into a facility serving as a home for both the clubs and a venue for wider community activities.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 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.
- 9.2 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 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.
- 9.3 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.
- 9.4 The Committee has delegated powers to administer funds from the budgets described.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 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.
- 10.2 The spreadsheet also details the pre-allocations carried forward from the previous financial year 2011/12 to the current financial year 2012/13.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no risk entries that have been recorded on Covalent, the Council's Performance & Risk system. Individual events should have their own risk assessments in place to mitigate any health and safety issues.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 The Equality Act 2010 came into force on the 1st October 2010, a major piece of legislation. The Act also created a new Public Sector Equality Duty, which came into force on the 5th April 2011. There is a General duty, described in 12.2, that public bodies must meet, underpinned by more specific duties which are designed to help meet them.
- 12.2 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of its functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment,

victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

- 12.3 The projects which comprise the Community Development Officers' workload, and area committee funding assigned to community projects are assessed to ensure that they are as inclusive as possible to members of the local community. The only deviation to this is where a minority group may specifically receive funding or allocation of resources to address a particular area of need or 'gap' in provision.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 As the recommendations made in this report do not constitute a public service contract, the measurement of 'social value' as required by the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 need not be applied, although equalities implications and opportunities are identified in the relevant section at paragraphs 12.

14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 There are no pertinent Human Resource implications associated with any items within this report.

15. APPENDICES

- 15.1 Appendix 1 - Area Committee Development Budget Spreadsheet.
15.2 Appendix 2 – Area Committee Work Programme 2012/13
15.3 Appendix 3 – Baldock Town Partnership Calendar of Events 2013.

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

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17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 17.1 Review of Policies and Procedures for Financial Assistance to Voluntary and Community Organisations, November 2002.