

TITLE OF REPORT : CHAMPION NEWS & FINANCE REPORT

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

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.

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 considers making a Grant Award of £650 to Baldock Allotments Association to cover the costs for the replacement of a small section of fencing across the car park at the North Road site.

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 'Priorities for the District' in which the Community Development Officer is required to produce a formal report to the Area Committee on 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 2013/14 financial year.

7.2 The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial year 2012/13 including balances and past expenditure relating to the allocated and un-allocated budgets available to the Committee.

7.3 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.

7.4 Members are asked to note the information below detailing the recent release of the 2nd year Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) payments to the relevant groups in Baldock and surrounding villages.

Group / Organiser	Amount awarded in 2013/14
Ashwell Museum	£280
Baldock Festival Committee	£880
Baldock Retirement Sewing Club	£350
Baldock Senior Club	£1120
Baldock Town Partnership	£2000
Baldock Town Twinning	£260
Baldock Rotary	£810

- 7.5 Members are asked to acknowledge the recent Fast Track award of £230 to the Nightingale Residents Association for the purchase of banners to promote the events and activities held at Nightingale Park. This funding came from the Baldock Town Members preallocated Town Centre Initiatives fund.
- 7.6 Members are asked to consider grant funding of £650 to the Baldock Allotment Association to cover the costs for the replacement of small section of fencing across the car park at the North Road site.
- 7.7 Members are asked to note the funding applications currently being considered as detailed in the table below.

Ward	Project
Weston & Sandon	Funding Support for Clothall Village Hall Committee for the purchase of tables and chairs for the venue.
Arbury	Funding support for Caldecote Church Friends for the purchase of new website software
Baldock Town	Funding support for the Friends of Hartsfield School Committee to assist with the costs for providing Paediatric First Aid Training courses to parents and helpers at Hartsfield School.

8. PROJECT/ACTIVITY/SCHEME DETAILS

8.1 Baldock Town & District Partnership

The Baldock Town & District Partnership (BTADP) has held three events since the March Area Committee. These were the April and May Farmers Markets and the April Car Boot Sale.

Farmers Markets

The monthly Farmers Market returned to Baldock High Street in March following a winter break. As with last year, the format has remained the same with the monthly market being held on the second Saturday of each month.

Members will recall that during 2012 there was a considerable slump in the Farmers Market with poor footfall and weather being cited as the major contributing factors. During this period the number of stalls trading dropped from 20 to 8.

Thankfully, there has been a resurgence in the monthly markets with both the April and May events attracting 15+ stalls. New additions to the Farmers Market in 2013 include a garden furniture stall, a honey stall, a cake stall and a jewellery stall.

Car Boot Sale

The monthly Car Boot was a new initiative set up by the BTADP IN 2012. This activity was poorly supported during 2012, hampered by poor weather and lack of footfall. However, the BTADP decided to continue with the event in 2013 with a Car Boot Sale to be held in the High Street on the last Sunday of each month.

Since the turn of the year the BTADP has held a Car Boot Sale in both March and April, but with only limited success. The March event was supported by just 1 trader while the April event had 3 traders. The BTADP remain optimistic that support for this event will increase during the summer months. At the time of writing this report the May Car Boot Sale had not been held. A verbal update will be provided at the next meeting.

Weekly Markets

After a disappointing 2012, the weekly market is beginning to flourish again with a number of new traders now in attendance. These include an artisan bread stall and a hardware stall which also doubles as a computer/electronics repair station.

Events

Future events planned by the BTADP include:

- Baldock Big Lunch (Sunday 2nd June 2013)
- Farmers & Craft Market (Saturday 8th June 2013)
- Baldock Cycle Challenge (Sunday 23rd June 2013)
- Baldock Car Boot Sale (Sunday 30th June 2013)
- Baldock Day (Saturday 13th July 2013)

8.2 Baldock Festival

The 30th Baldock Festival was held in Baldock between Friday 3rd May and Sunday 19th May. As with previous years the Baldock CDO has supported the Baldock Festival Committee both in the planning, promotion and implementation of the event.

The Baldock CDO also attended a number of events including the Book Fair (which raised £650 for Garden House Hospice), two Community lunch days at Baldock Community Centre and the Medieval Street Fair.

8.3 Baldock Cycle Challenge

The second Baldock Cycle Challenge will be held on Sunday 23rd June. This event is being organised by the Baldock CDO in conjunction with the Baldock Town Partnership and the Stevenage and North Herts CTC.

The Baldock CDO has been involved in the planning and promotion of this event which will hopefully attract in the region of 200 riders and generate £2k for the BTADP.

8.4 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 and annual maintenance costs of £60 for the anticipated 25 year life of the column. This is an overall project cost of £3000.

Before approaching Planning for the release of S106 monies to pay for the scheme, the Baldock CDO is liaising with officers in Estates to secure the adoption of the land by NHDC. This remains the only stumbling block to progressing this project.

8.5 Bakers Field

The Baldock CDO & the Community Development Manager continue to work with representatives from both Baldock Town Football Club and Baldock Town Youth Football Club on the project to reopen the building known as the 'Shed'.

Following discussions with relevant officers at the council, the next stage in the process is for the Football Clubs to produce a business plan. The Baldock CDO will support the clubs in this process.

8.6 Baldock Big Lunch

The fourth Baldock Big Lunch will be held on Sunday 2nd June in Baldock High Street. The Big Lunch is a nationwide initiative set up by the Eden project that invites communities to sit down together for lunch. This year, the BTADP is offering residents and visitors to Baldock the choice of a fish and chip supper, traditional roast dinner, Australian barbecue or an Indian meal. As well as good food there will also be live music and numerous activities to keep the children amused including bouncy castles and face painting.

Tickets are now on sale and are priced at £8 per adult and £4 per child.

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 2013/14.

- 10.2 The spreadsheet also details the pre-allocations carried forward from the previous financial year 2012/13 to the current financial year 2013/14.

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 (to follow)
- 15.2 Appendix 2 – Area Committee Work Programme 2013/14.
- 15.3 Appendix 3 – Grant Report for Baldock Allotment Association.

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

16.1 Ashley Hawkins (Community Development Officer – Baldock & District Area)
Telephone: 01462 474225
Email: ashley.hawkins@north-herts.gov.uk

16.2 Contributors: Shah Mohammed, Assistant Accountant
Telephone: 01462 474 4240
Email: shah.mohammed@north-herts.gov.uk

Liz Green, Head of Policy & Community Services
Telephone: 01462 474230
Email: liz.green@north-herts.gov.uk

17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

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