

**TITLE OF REPORT : CHAMPION NEWS AND 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 acknowledges the Discretionary Ward Grant of £150 to Caldecote Church Friends group to assist with required maintenance work to the church roof which has developed dry rot.
- 2.4 That the Committee considers awarding support funding in relation to any potential Highways schemes as proposed and discussed under section 8.8 of this report.

**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 Policy.

- 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 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 'Priorities for the District' in which the Community Development Officer is required to produce a report for members on 6 occasions per annum.

- 7.4 The Committee acknowledges the recent Discretionary Ward Grant of £150 to Caldecote Church Friends group to assist with required maintenance work to the church roof which has developed dry rot.
- 7.5 Members are asked to note the funding applications currently being considered as detailed in the Table below:

<b>Ward</b>	<b>Project</b>
Weston & Sandon	Funding Support for Clothall Village Hall Committee for the purchase of tables and chairs for the venue.
Weston & Sandon	Funding Support for Wallington & Rushden Villages Halls for the purchase of curtains and blinds at the venues.
Baldock Town	Funding Support for Baldock Town Twinning Association to assist with the purchase of Baldock Town Twinning banners that can be used at Twinning events both in Baldock and the Twin towns of Eisenberg in Germany and Sanvignes-les-Mines in France
Baldock Town	Funding Support for Friends of Baldock Green Spaces to assist with the costs for the purchase and maintenance of a new dog bin for Ivel Springs
Baldock Town /Baldock East / HCC Locality Budget	Funding support for the Friends of Hartsfield School Committee to assist with the costs for providing Paediatric First Aid Training courses to parents and voluntary helpers at Hartsfield School.
Arbury	Funding support to Wolverley House in Ashwell for the purchase of a carpet bowls set for the residents.

## **8. PROJECT/ACTIVITY/SCHEME DETAILS**

### **8.1 Baldock Town & District Partnership**

The Baldock Town & District Partnership (BTADP) has held two events since the September Area Committee meeting. These were the October Farmers' Market and the Baldock 10k run.

#### **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. During 2013, the Farmers' Market has performed extremely well with an average of 18 stalls in attendance monthly compared with just 8 stalls during 2012.

Due to poor weather on the day, the October Farmers' Market was poorly supported with only 7 stalls operating on the day. There will be no Farmers'

Market in November but a Farmers / Craft Winter Market will be held in Baldock High Street on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November as part of the Baldock Christmas weekend event.

### **Weekly Markets**

The weekly market continues to operate with 7 regular stalls each week.

### **Memberships**

Money generated from the BTADP Membership scheme has dipped considerably during 2013, dropping from £1,300 per month at the tail end of 2012 to £830 in August 2013. Factors for this decrease include businesses closing down or changing hands and others not renewing their subscription to the membership scheme.

The Baldock Town Centre Manager (TCM) has been tasked with increasing memberships as income generated is crucial for ensuring the full time salary status of the Baldock TCM. Progress with this has been slow with the monthly income from memberships currently at £950.

The Baldock TCM, who has recently taken up self employed status with the Partnership, is required to secure monthly memberships and other forms of income that total in the region of £1,600, primarily to cover direct salary costs. If a sustainable solution is not forthcoming in achieving a higher monthly income each month, the BT&DP may be forced to reduce it's regular monthly outgoings by re-negotiating a reduction in service with the TCM.

### **Baldock Town Guide**

The BDATP is working on a new Baldock Town Guide.

The Town Guide will be complete by November with a circulation of 7500 copies planned for December 2013 . The Town Guide will also be available as a pdf.

Through the sale of advertising space in the publication, the Baldock Town Guide could generate income in the region of £5k for the BTADP. As well as being an income generator for the Partnership, the Guide will also help to raise the profile of many local groups such as the Baldock Rotary, Baldock Festival and the Baldock Town Hall Group, all of which have editorial in the Guide.

The BDATP Calendar Of Events for 2014 will also be included in the Town Guide.

### **Events**

Future events planned by the BTADP include:

- Ashwell Multi-terrain Half Marathon (Sun 24 Nov 2013)
- Baldock Christmas weekend (Fri 29 to Sat 30 Nov 2013)

## **8.2 Baldock Fire Work Display**

At the time of writing this report 700 tickets had been sold for the Baldock Fire Work Display. It is predicted that around 1500 people will attend the event, generating in the region of £3000 for the BTADP.

A verbal update on this event will be presented at the November Committee meeting.

### 8.3 **Sale Drive**

The Baldock CDO has recently met with colleagues in Highways to finalise the costings for the Sale Drive project.

Phase 1 will be to install adequate lighting along the existing desire path at a cost of approximately £3,000, whilst phase 2 will be to construct the informal 27m footpath and cutting back of encroaching vegetation in the area costing a further £3 - £4,000.

Unilateral Undertakings contribution collected under Sustainable Transport category have been identified and assigned to this project.

### 8.4 **Baldock Chartered Street Fair**

The Fair returned to Baldock High Street and White Horse Street on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October and trading on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> to Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October.

The Baldock CDO and Community Development Manager were attendance to watch the Fair pull on and also monitored the fair during its three days of operating.

The Fair was not as well attended as previous years, closing early at 945pm on the first two days of operating. The final day of the Fair was more positive, with both the fair ground staff and local businesses benefitting from increased footfall in the town centre.

There were no reported problems during or after the Fair from residents, businesses, the Police, Hertfordshire Highways, or services at North Hertfordshire District Council.

As in previous years there were a number of minor matters that needed attention the morning after the main fair rides had left the area, re oil & diesel spillages, which were later rectified by the Fair organisers.

### 8.5 **Ashwell 10k**

The Ashwell 10k was held on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September and was supported by 170 runners, generating in the region of £2k for the BTADP.

### 8.6 **Ashwell Multi- terrain Half Marathon**

The second Ashwell Multi-terrain Half Marathon will be held on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2013. This will be run over the same course as last year.

Entry for this event opened in September and so far there have been around 70 entries. It is predicted that in the region of 150 runners will run on the day.

Unlike, the Baldock 10k and the Ashwell Half Marathon of 2012, there will be no parking at the venue for runners. The Baldock CDO has secured free bus transfer to the race start point from Baldock High Street by Cozys Travel.

### 8.7 **Baldock Christmas Weekend**

The Baldock Town and District Partnership (BTADP) Christmas event will be held on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2013.

As with previous years, the BTADP will be opening the weekend festivities by hosting the partnership Christmas dinner dance on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November. At the time of writing this report neither the venue or costings for the function have been finalised.

On Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> November, there will be a craft/farmers market, live music, funfair rides and an ice rink in Baldock High Street.

#### **8.8 Highways Matters**

A section entitled 'Highways Matters' is included within all the Area Champions' News Reports for each committee, designed primarily to facilitate debate and enable appropriate feedback on any of the proposed or listed schemes. This is to ensure that communication remains effective between district & county.

Any new proposals or revised schemes will be forwarded to the respective Herts County Councillor for consideration who will in turn report back and advise the Committee accordingly.

### **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 1<sup>st</sup> October 2010, a major piece of legislation. The Act also created a new Public Sector Equality Duty, which came into force on the 5<sup>th</sup> 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 2013/14.

## **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.