

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 and to advise on the reallocation of funding to the 2014/15 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 A and to advise on the reallocation of funding to the 2014/15 financial year.
- 2.3 The Committee acknowledges the recent Grant Award of £1,179 to the 1st Baldock Scout Group to assist with the purchase of patrol tents and a marquee for use by both Baldock 1st and 2nd Scout Groups.
- 2.4 The Committee acknowledges the recent Grant Award of £400 to Ashwell Music Festival to assist with the publicity costs for promoting the two week event.
- 2.5 The Committee considers the Grant Award of £1,250 to Merry-Go-Round Under Fives to assist with the purchase of new age appropriate and durable play equipment for the facilities refurbished garden area. (Appendix C).
- 2.6 The Committee considers the Grant Award of £900 to Rushden Village Hall to assist with the purchase of an awning for the back of the hall. (Appendix D to be tabled at the meeting).

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 on no less than 4 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 A 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 Members are asked to advise on the project codes to be set up for the

reallocation of under spent funds to the 2014/15 financial year.

- 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 no less than 4 occasions per annum.
- 7.4 The Committee acknowledges the recent Grant Award of £400 to Ashwell Music Festival to assist with the publicity costs for promoting the two week event.
- 7.5 The Committee acknowledges the Grant Award of £1,177 to Baldock Scouts to assist with the purchase of patrol tents and a marquee for use by both Baldock 1st and 2nd Scout groups.
- 7.6 The Committee considers the Grant Award of £1,250 to Merry-Go-Round Under Fives to assist with the purchase of new age appropriate and durable play equipment for the facilities refurbished garden area. (Appendix C).
- 7.7 The Committee considers the Grant Award of £900 to Rushden Village Hall to assist with the purchase of an awning for the back of the hall. (Appendix D to be tabled at the meeting).
- 7.8 Members are asked to note the funding applications currently being considered as detailed in the table below:

Ward	Project
Baldock Town	Funding support for Avenue Park Committee to assist with the cost for installing a stair lift at the venue.
Baldock Town / Baldock East	Funding support for Baldock Community Centre to assist with cost for enhancement works and DDA improvements to the Youth Wing building.
Baldock Town / Baldock East / Weston & Sandon	Funding support for Baldock Town Partnership to assist with the cost for the British Red Cross to provide First Aid cover for the Baldock Beast Multi-terrain Half Marathon.
Weston & Sandon	Funding Support for Clothall Village Hall Committee for the purchase of tables and chairs for the venue.
Arbury	Funding support to Wolverley House in Ashwell for the purchase of a carpet bowls set for the residents.
Arbury	Funding support to Radwell Parish Council for the purchase of new gate posts for Radwell Village Hall.

- 7.9 The current levels of unallocated funds within the Committee's Ward Discretionary 2013/14 Base Budgets are:

	Base Budget	Preallocated	Total
Remaining			
Baldock Town Ward	£5783	£4785	£10568
Baldock East Ward	£2542	£134	£2676
Arbury Ward	£2033	£2853	£4886
Weston & Sandon Ward	£1853	£3762	£5615

8. PROJECT/ACTIVITY/SCHEME DETAILS

8.1 Baldock Town & District Partnership

The Baldock Town & District Partnership (BTADP) has held one event since the January Area Committee. This was the Baldock Beast Multi-terrain Half Marathon. An update on this event is provided later in this report

Farmers Markets

The monthly Farmers Market will recommence on Saturday 8th March. The Farmers Market format will remain the same with markets held on the 2nd Saturday of each month from March until November.

Weekly Markets

Since the January meeting, the number of regular stalls has dropped again, from 4 to 3. The winter months are notoriously poor for markets, with poor weather resulting in poor footfall for market traders. The Baldock Town Centre Manager (TCM) is hoping to secure a new fruit and vegetable stall holder in the coming months.

Memberships

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 dropping since the January meeting from £1000 to £820. The Baldock TCM is however optimistic that memberships can rise to £1100 by end of March 2014.

The Baldock TCM, who has recently gone self employed, needs to secure monthly memberships in the region of £1600 or a move to part time employment will be required.

Baldock Town Guide

The BDATP is working on a new Baldock Town Guide.

The Town Guide which was originally due to be completed and circulated in December 2013, has been delayed further and is now likely to be produced and circulated in March / April 2014.

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

Events

Future events planned by the BTADP include:

- Baldock Pancake Race (Tues 4 March 2014)
- Baldock Farmers Market (Sat 8 March 2014)

8.2 Sale Drive

The Baldock CDO has now received a formal quote from Hertfordshire Highways for the installation of adequate lighting and the formalising of the footpath at the rear of Sale Drive. S106 monies have been identified for this project.

NHDC Legal Team is currently looking at the ownership of the land and is looking to secure the adoption of the land from Barratt Homes.

On successful completion of the land adoption, funds will be released to Hertfordshire Highways so that the project can be added to the 2014/15 work programme.

8.3 Baldock Beast Multi-terrain Half Marathon 2014

The third Baldock Beast Half Marathon was held on Sunday 16th February 2014 and used the same course and set up as previous years. At close of registration an impressive 485 runners had signed up for the race.

An oral update on the race will be given at the March Area Committee meeting.

8.4 Avenue Park DDA Improvements Project

The Baldock CDO is liaising with Graham Woods at Avenue Park in a project to install a stair lift at the venue. Draft costings for the project have been received with the overall cost for stair lift installation and refurbishment work to the stairwell in the region of £6.5k.

The Avenue Park Committee have part funding for the project and will be pursuing funding for the remainder from Baldock Area Committee, HCC Locality funding and also S106 in the next couple of months.

8.5 Baldock Area Update

The Baldock Area Update is presented at Appendix B.

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 A 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 A - Area Committee Development Budget Spreadsheet.
- 15.2 Appendix B – Area Committee Work Programme 2013/14.
- 15.3 Appendix C – Grant Application for Merry – Go- Round Under Fives
- 15.4 Appendix D – Grant Application for Rushden VH – (Tabled at Meeting)

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17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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