

**TITLE OF REPORT: GRANT APPLICATIONS AND COMMUNITY UPDATE**

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

PORTFOLIO HOLDER; COUNCILLOR TONY HUNTER

**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of the activities and schemes with which the Community 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 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 budgetary expenditure, balances and carry forwards within the Area Committee Development Budget Spread sheet attached as Appendix 1
- 2.2 The Committee consider a grant award of £400 to Baldock Community Association to assist with costs associated with the production of architectural drawings / plans for the proposed works at the Baldock Community Centre, Youth Wing.
- 2.3 The Committee considers a grant award to Home Start to train volunteers enabling support for 5 additional vulnerable families in Baldock. £500 of any grant awarded will be used to run a family fun day to raise awareness and funds, and members are invited to consider which options may best fit Baldock's need, considering officer advice at para 7.5 of this report..
- 2.4 The Committee considers the grant award of £589 for the Baldock Heritage and Arts Group to cover capital cost of installing lighting and sound equipment at the Baldock Heritage Centre.
- 2.5 The Committee acknowledges the recent release of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) Grants, for **financial year 2015 only** to the following groups in Baldock:-
  - Baldock Town Twinning (£240)
  - Ashwell Museum (£260)

- Baldock Festival (£820),
- Baldock Seniors Club (£1,040)
- Baldock Town Partnership (£1,860)
- Baldock Rotary Club (£750)
- Baldock Retirement Sewing Club (£320)

2.6 That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for the Baldock & District Area.

### **3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 To ensure the Committee is kept informed of the work of the Community 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 of 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 Priorities of the Council.

### **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 RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

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 funding proposals for Area Committee 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. ISSUES**

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 2015/16 financial year.

7.2 The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial year 2014/15 including balances and past expenditure

relating to the allocated and un-allocated budgets available to the Committee.

The current level of unallocated funds within the Area Committees 2015/16 Area Grant Budget is £18,600; a full area breakdown is given on the budget spreadsheet Appendix 1.

Members may wish to note that some funds are 'allocated' to projects for both financial years but as yet the money has not been spent.

7.3 This report has been produced to keep Members informed of the work of the Community Officer for Baldock & District.

7.4 **Baldock Community Association**

The Baldock Community Association is seeking financial support to assist with costs associated to the production of architectural drawings / plans re the proposed works at the Baldock Community Centre Youth Wing in line with building regulations and specifications.

The Community Association is looking to embark on an improvement works project to refurbish and enhance the old Youth Wing to the rear of the main centre. Before the project can commence it is a requirement that architectural drawing/plans are produced showing the scope of the works.

Quotes have been received for the project works with costings in the region of £45-50k and officers have sought initial approval in utilising any suitable funds available via the Planning Contribution process.

See 15.3 Grant Application form – Baldock Community Association appendix 3

7.5 **Home Start North Herts**

Home Start North Herts supports those families who are unable or unwilling to engage in statutory services. Families struggling with mental health, children with disabilities whose behaviour is so challenging they simply can't go out, families with a history of social care intervention, families where parents are terminally ill, or where children are ill and are surrounded by professionals - but have no local family or emotional support.

Home Start see their volunteers grow in confidence as they engage in a 40 hour preparation training course and then begin supporting their first family. Research shows the important role volunteering plays in all generations supporting people back into employment in younger generations and creating purpose in life in retirement.

Locally, Home Start would like to continue to support vulnerable families and constantly seek funding to achieve this objective.

On average it costs about £1,400 to support one family per year. That cost includes training and expenses for the volunteer. The volunteer will spend between 2 to 3 hours with their allocated family once a week. Although sometimes this can be more depending on the families need.

In order to support 5 additional families in Baldock it would cost about £7,000.

Home Start wishes to arrange a family fun day in Baldock. The kind of event would be similar to a local fete, stalls with items for sale, games to play,

bouncy castle etc. They would put together flyers and promote the event locally in the papers, radio and local shops.

They recently held a similar event in Hitchin funded by the Hitchin Area Committee, which went really well, even with heavy rain on the day. This gave the charity an opportunity to talk to and raise the profile of Home-Start to local businesses and the local community. The estimated cost to run the fun day is estimated at £500.

Members should be aware that Home Start are also requesting the same contribution from the Letchworth Area Committee to support families within the Letchworth, however, any funding received for Baldock families will be ring fenced that use.

Members will also be aware from media coverage that Home Start has recently been subject to a cessation of their £390k central grant funding by Herts County Council. The decision to no longer commission 'a discrete home visiting service' was based on what they saw to be a wide range of other funded services available to families with young children. There is a safety net of £200k transitional funding to assist the organisation to move to more sustainable funding and to review their operating model.

This grant award by the Council's Area Committees should also be considered in the light of those potential changes, and HCC considering how other, existing services such as district nurses, health visitors and Children's Centres could also provide additional support to these families in the longer term. The committee may be minded in the interim to provide financial support to relevant elements of the application which best apply to Baldock, such as the Baldock Specific Home Start 'fun day' as described.

See 15.4 Grant Application form - Home Start North Herts appendix 4

7, 6 **Baldock Arts & Heritage Group**

The Baldock Arts Heritage Group is seeking financial support to help cover the installation costs of lighting and sound equipment within the main hall at the former Town Hall to enable higher quality productions & activities to be staged in the future. The Baldock Heritage Centre was awarded £140k of central NHDC funding at transfer of the facility, of which only a modest amount has been spent so far, but this is ring fenced and authorised prior to spend *only for agreed repairs to the fabric of the building* under the original lease agreement.

This grant application is eligible, but not for 100% funding of the total costs. The maximum NHDC contribution within the current agreed criteria is £1,000. Therefore the sum recommended represents 50% of the total cost of the equipment - £598.

See 15.5 Grant Application form – Baldock Arts & Heritage Group appendix 5

7..7 Members are asked to note the funding applications currently being considered as detailed in the table below.

Ward	Project
Baldock Town	Funding support for St Mary's Church to assist with new

	publicity materials to promote the church including a new illustrated Church History booklet and a Discovery Trail for school children.
Baldock Town	Funding support to Howard Cottage Housing Association to assist with costs for running a dementia support group in the Baldock Area. Members are advised that this scheme is currently funded via a public health grant 'ad hoc' grant, in order to assess the benefit of such a scheme for both patients and carers. Indications are that the Baldock scheme, unlike others in the district, does not currently have a high number of users. Howard Cottage Housing Association are also progressing the development of a Social Enterprise model for delivery of this type of support, in order to provide a more sustainable model for larger grant funding schemes, potentially including commissioning through health, and in order to extend the scheme into other areas of Hertfordshire. Members may therefore wish to consider any application for funding once more details of these developments are available.

## 8. PROJECT/ACTIVITY/SCHEME DETAILS

### 8.1 Baldock Town Partnership

At the request of the Chair of the Committee, representatives from the Baldock Town Partnership will now provide a verbal update at every Area Committee meeting. As a result such detail will no longer be covered within the Community Update report.

### 8.2 Baldock Festival

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Baldock Festival was held during two weeks of May and was again very successful. The Baldock CO assisted the Baldock Festival Committee with all paperwork as requested by North Hertfordshire Safety Advisory Group and also attended the Street Festival event to give assistance and guidance where required..

### 8.3 Balstock Community Event

The Balstock Community Event will be returning for a fifth time between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> September 2015. The Balstock event is growing annually and now an important and established event for the pubs and other businesses within the town, which clearly benefit from increased footfall.

The Communities Team has been supporting the Balstock Committee with planning for this year's event and has supported the group in drafting the required paperwork for the event as required by the North Herts Safety Advisory Group.

As with previous years, the CO has liaised with the Fun Fair providers to ensure that all equipment brought to the event meets the relevant Health and Safety standards.

The CO will also assist the group re publicising the event to ensure households within close proximity are aware of the event timings and the general programme of activities over the two days.

Attention will also be given to the residents of Princes Mews with regard to the event and measures have been put in place to ensure that there is not a repeat of the problems experienced last year. Specific barrier fencing for the entrance to Princes Mews will be put in place and a security guard will be in attendance to stop people entering the alleyway.

#### 8.4 **Baldock Community Firework Event**

The Baldock Firework Event will be returning to Baldock for a third time on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> October.

As with previous years, the fireworks are being donated and launched by Tapps Garden Centre. At the time of writing this report, the venue has yet to be confirmed, but will be confirmed shortly. All profit from the event will be donated to the Baldock Rotary Club to assist with the purchase of a new Christmas sleigh.

The CO will provide support to the organisers in the planning of this event to ensure that it runs smoothly and without incident.

#### 8.5 **Baldock Fair**

The Baldock Fair will be returning to Baldock in October and will be operating on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> to Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> October. Fair pull on will commence at midnight on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October and the take down will be complete by 5am on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October. The CO has drafted the required paperwork for the TTRO and this is being processed by Hertfordshire Highways.

The Communities Team will assist Abbott Amusements with the advance warning publicity to residents and businesses and will also assist with organising the removal and storage of street furniture prior to the Fair's arrival in Baldock.

The Communities Team will also be in attendance to oversee the Fair pull on to Baldock High Street and will organise the safety walk round with the Police, Fire and Ambulance Services prior to the opening of the Fair on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> October.

#### 8.6 **Highways Matters**

This section is included within the community update report for each committee cycle to facilitate debate and enable appropriate feedback on any of the proposed or listed Highways related schemes.

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 include discretionary grant aid/financial support. The Committee has delegated powers, as a body, to administer funds from the budgets described. However, this does not include grants for district wide activities.

- 9.2 In addition whilst individual Ward Members may comment on and support (or not) any grant application put before the Committee, the decision to award is afforded only to the Baldock and District Area Committee itself under the Council's Constitution and provided such committee is quorate at the time of such decision.
- 9.3 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides a General Power of Competence which gives local authorities the power to do anything that individuals generally may do for the benefit of the authority, its area or persons resident in its area.
- 9.4 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.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 In the past few years there has been no inflationary allowance to the main Area Committee Budget and the 2015/16 baseline budget has stayed the same as the previous year.
- 10.2 The MoU arrangements as detailed in 2.6 are for a period of 1 year only and their use will be reviewed (as part of the grants review process) again in readiness for commencement of financial year 2016. These replace the former three year MoUs which ended in March 2015.

## **11. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 There are no relevant 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. There are no pertinent risk implications for the Authority associated with any items within this report.

## **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 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 Spread sheet.
- 15.2 Appendix 2 – Area Committee Work Update 2015/16.
- 15.3 Appendix 3 – Grant Application form – Baldock Community Association.
- 15.4 Appendix 4 – Grant Application form – Home Start North Herts.
- 15.5 Appendix 5 – Grant Application form – Baldock Arts & Heritage Group.

### **16. CONTACT OFFICERS**

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

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

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

Kerry Shorrocks, Corporate Human Resources Manager  
Telephone: 01462 474224  
Email: [Kerry.shorrocks@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Kerry.shorrocks@north-herts.gov.uk)

Fiona Timms, Performance & Risk Manager  
Telephone: 01462 474251  
Email: [fiona.timms@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:fiona.timms@north-herts.gov.uk)

Reuben Ayavoo, Policy Officer  
Telephone: 01462 474212  
Email: [reuben.ayavoo@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:reuben.ayavoo@north-herts.gov.uk)

James Ellis, Advisory & Litigation Lawyer  
Telephone: 01462 474212  
Email: [james.ellis@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:james.ellis@north-herts.gov.uk)



**17. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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