

BALDOCK & DISTRICT COMMITTEE
5th September 2016

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

TITLE OF REPORT: GRANTS, AND COMMUNITY UPDATE

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY & COMMUNITY SERVICES

EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS:
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 considers a grant award from the Arbury Ward Budget to the Ashwell Parish Rooms to assist with the provision of new folding tables and internal decoration works as outlined in 8.2.1 and appendix 2 of this report.

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, budget strategy 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 expressed in the Corporate Plan.

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 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's budget for the 2016/17 financial year.
- 7.2 The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial year 2015/16 including balances and past expenditure relating to the allocated and un-allocated budgets available to the Committee.
- 7.3 The current level of funding available within the Area Committee's 2016/17 Area Grant Budget is:-

Baldock Town £4,200

Baldock East £1,600

Arbury £1,242

Weston & Sandon £1,200

- 7.4 The current level of funding available within the Area Committee's 2015/16 Area Grant Budget is:-

Baldock Town £458

Baldock East £516

Arbury £0

Weston & Sandon £1,211

A full area breakdown is given within the Area Committee's Budget Spreadsheet Appendix 1.

8. ISSUES

8.1 This report has been produced to keep Members informed of the work of the Community Officers covering for Baldock & District area.

8.2 Grant funding

8.2.1 Ashwell Parish Rooms

To continue the programme of improvement works to the Parish Rooms at Ashwell, the management committee is seeking funding support to undertake some internal redecoration to the facility following the replacement of the building's main front and end windows.

In Addition, owing to the lack of storage space within the building, the committee is also looking for funding assistance to purchase folding tables which can be easily stored away to the side of the main room when not required, thus making the internal usable space larger for the various groups and organisations that regularly use the facility.

Total costs for the redecoration works is £3,160
And the provision of new lightweight folding tables is £558

8.3 Community update

8.3.1 Balstock

The Baldock CO has been supporting the Balstock organisers with the planning for the 5th Balstock Community Music Festival.

This has included support with the necessary event paperwork required by NH Safety Advisory Group, including TEN application, street trading permit and the event plan.

The lack of accessible Toilet facilities has been an issue at previous events in the town, as a result it is planned to have portaloos situated on the High Street.

8.3.2 Baldock Fair

The Baldock CO has been assisting the Abbots with plans for the 2016 Baldock Chartered Fair. The TTRO for the event has been secured and the fair will be pulling onto Baldock High Street at midnight on Saturday 1st October and trading on Sunday 2nd, Monday 3rd and Tuesday 4th October 2016.

The Baldock CO will assist with the pre – event publicity to local residents and businesses and will co-ordinate the suspension of parking in time for the event.

8.3.3 Baldock Weight Watchers Charity Walk

The Baldock CO is working with the Baldock Weight Watchers group on a sponsored charity walk which will be held in Baldock during October 2016. The walk will start and finish in Baldock High Street.

8.3.2 Other Baldock initiatives the CO & CM have been involved with:

- Funding advice & support re enhancements at Weston Village Hall
- Release of Rural Capital Funding Grant to Wallington Village Hall
- s106 / Planning Contributions advice to Ashwell Parish Council re enhancements to the existing Toilet blocks serving the Recreation Ground. Plus additional advice / support re possible future improvements to the pavilion and other projects within the village

- Guidance re Baldock & Bygrave Neighbourhood Plan

8.4 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 but excluding grants for district-wide activities. The Committee has delegated powers, as a body, to allocate discretionary budgets and devolved budgets within the terms determined by the Council and outlined in the current Grant Policy agreed by Cabinet in June 2016.
- 9.2 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. This may be for, or otherwise than for the benefit of the authority, its area or persons resident in its area.
- 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 **as a body** has delegated powers to administer funds from the budgets described. 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 & District Area Committee itself under the Council's Constitution and provided such committee is quorate at the time of such decision.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 In the past few years there has been no inflationary allowance to the main Area Committee Budget. From the 2016/17 financial year, a proposal was made through the council's corporate business planning process to reduce the overall amount the council awards by way of grants, both area committee and district wide, by a suggested 20%. Following member workshops, there was a request that whilst the principle of saving approximately £86k of revenue was supported, the current level of district MoUs should be retained, thus the area committee element was reduced by a greater amount.
- 10.2 Appendix 1 provides details of the 2016/17 budget position for the Area Committee.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no relevant risk entries that have been recorded on Covalent, the Council's performance and risk system. Individual events should have their own risk assessments in place to mitigate any health and safety issues. Whenever a request for grant funding for equipment is received, the recipient of the funding will be advised to obtain insurance for the item to avoid a repeat request for funding in the event of the equipment being stolen or damaged. 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 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 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 2016/17.
- 15.2 Appendix 2 – Grant Form – Ashwell Parish Rooms

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17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 17.1 Review of Policies and Procedures for Financial Assistance to Voluntary and Community Organisations, November 2002.
- 17.2 Grants Review June 2016 – Cabinet Papers 14th June 2016.