

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL



5 March 2021

Our Ref Baldock Committee – 15.03.2021
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To: Members of the Committee: Councillor Michael Weeks (Chair), Councillor Jim McNally (Vice-Chair), Councillor Steve Jarvis, Councillor Michael Muir, Councillor Val Shanley and Councillor Tom Tyson

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A
MEETING OF THE BALDOCK AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE**

to be held as

A VIRTUAL MEETING

On

MONDAY, 15TH MARCH, 2021 AT 7.30 PM

Yours sincerely,

Jeanette Thompson
Service Director – Legal and Community

****MEMBERS PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU DOWNLOAD ALL AGENDAS AND REPORTS VIA THE MOD.GOV APPLICATION ON YOUR TABLET BEFORE ATTENDING THE MEETING****

Agenda

Part I

| Item | | Page |
|-------------|--|-------------------|
| 1. | WELCOME AND REMOTE/PARTLY REMOTE MEETINGS PROTOCOL SUMMARY Members are requested to ensure that they are familiar with the attached summary of the Remote/Partly Remote Meetings Protocol. The full Remote/Partly Remote Meetings Protocol has been published and is available here: https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/council-and-democracy/council-and-committee-meetings . | (Pages 5 - 6) |
| 2. | APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE | |
| 3. | MINUTES - 27 JANUARY 2020 - 7 DECEMBER 2020 To take as read and approve as a true record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the following dates: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 27 January 2020;• 22 June 2020;• 5 October 2020; and• 7 December 2020. | (Pages 7 - 36) |
| 4. | NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS Members should notify the Chair of other business which they wish to be discussed at the end of either Part I or Part II business set out in the agenda. They must state the circumstances which they consider justify the business being considered as a matter of urgency. The Chair will decide whether any item(s) raised will be considered. | |
| 5. | CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS Members are reminded that any declarations of interest in respect of any business set out in the agenda, should be declared as either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Declarable Interest and are required to notify the Chair of the nature of any interest declared at the commencement of the relevant item on the agenda. Members declaring a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest must withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the item. Members declaring a Declarable Interest, wishing to exercise a 'Councillor Speaking Right', must declare this at the same time as the interest, move to the public area before speaking to the item and then must leave the room before the debate and vote. | |

6. HERTFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY

To receive a verbal presentation from Hertfordshire Constabulary.

7. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To receive petitions, comments and questions from the public.

8. GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE

REPORT OF THE POLICY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

(Pages
37 - 50)

To update the Committee on the activities and actions of the Communities Officer, to advise on the current expenditure and balances of the delegated budgets and to consider applications for grant funding.

9. WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS

To receive any verbal reports from Members regarding Ward matters and Outside Organisations.

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REMOTE/PARTLY REMOTE MEETINGS PROTOCOL SUMMARY

A protocol regarding remote meetings has been devised as a result of The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 No.392 ('the Regulations') to provide guidance for the conduct of any remote meeting of the Council, and its various Committees and Sub-Committees, held under the provisions of the Regulations and subsequent changes to the Constitution.

The full Remote / Partly Remote Meetings Protocol has been published and is available to view on the Council's website via the following link: <https://www.north-herts.gov.uk/home/council-and-democracy/council-and-committee-meetings>

The Council's adopted Constitution will continue to apply to meetings of the Council and its various Committees and Sub-Committees. Where there is a conflict between the protocol and Constitution the Constitution takes precedence.

The protocol applies to this meeting. It outlines processes for conducting remote meetings. Some key points are highlighted here for guidance:

- Prior to the start of a meeting the Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer/Manager ('The Officer') will confirm the meeting is being streamed live. They will confirm that they can see and hear all participating Members, Officers and/or members of the public at the start or upon reconvening a meeting.
- Any person attending the meeting remotely should join no later than 15 minutes prior to allow for technical checks. They should ensure that their name on screen appears in the agreed format, as indicated in the Protocol. They should mute their microphone when not speaking. Their background should be nondescript or virtual/blurred if possible. Headsets are recommended to reduce audio feedback.
- Remember to stay in view of the camera. While on camera everything you do is visible; please observe as far as possible the etiquette you would as if attending a meeting in person.
- Be careful to prevent exempt or confidential papers being seen within the video-feed. When a meeting is in private session there should be only those entitled to be present in the room. The live stream will continue with a holding card displayed.
- If a Member wishes to speak, they should use the raise hand function. Please wait to be invited by the Chair to address the meeting. The normal procedure rules with respect to debate and speaking times will apply as per the Constitution.
- If a Member has declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and is required to leave the meeting during the consideration of an item, they will be placed in the waiting room. It is the responsibility of the Member in question to remind the Chair at the start of such item. The Officer will remind the Chair to return the Member as appropriate.
- Members will need to use the tools in the "Participants" function to vote: using a green tick to indicate 'for', a red cross to indicate 'against', or the "raise hand" tool to indicate an abstention. Where a Member has had to dial into the meeting by telephone, the Chair will ask for verbal confirmation as to how they wish to vote. Leave the vote in situ until told otherwise by either the Chair or Officer.
- The Officer will clearly state the result of the vote and the Chair will then move on.
- Details of how Members voted will not be kept or minuted unless a Recorded Vote is requested or an individual requests that their vote be recorded, although voting may be seen and/or heard on the video recording.
- If there are Part 2 (confidential) items Members will be invited to join a breakout room for these items. You must accept this invitation.
- Once Part 2 (confidential) discussions have concluded Members will need to leave the breakout room. Please do not leave the meeting.

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Agenda Item 3

The following Minutes are attached for the Baldock and District Committee to consider and approve:

- 22 January 2020;
- 22 June 2020;
- 5 October 2020; and
- 7 December 2020.

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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

BALDOCK AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE

**MEETING HELD IN THE
BALDOCK COMMUNITY CENTRE, SIMPSON DRIVE, BALDOCK
ON MONDAY, 27TH JANUARY, 2020 AT 7.30 PM**

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Michael Weeks (Vice-Chair), Steve Jarvis, Jim McNally, Michael Muir and Tom Tyson*

In Attendance: *Louise Symes (Strategic Infrastructure and Projects Manager), Claire Morgan (Community Engagement Team Leader), Marie Pritchett (Parking Projects Officer), Ashley Hawkins (Community Engagement Officer) and Hilary Dineen (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager)*

Also Present: *At the commencement of the meeting approximately 10 members of the public, including registered speakers.*

29 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 23 seconds

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Val Shanley (Chair).

30 MINUTES - 7 OCTOBER 2019

Audio Recording – 28 seconds

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 7 October 2020 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Vice - Chair.

31 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – 43 seconds

There was no other business notified.

32 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 48 seconds

- (1) The Vice-Chair welcomed those present at the meeting, especially those who had attended to give a presentation;
- (2) The Vice-Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded;
- (3) Members were reminded to make declarations of interest before an item, the longer reminder about this and speaking rights was set out under Chair's Announcements on the agenda.

33 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - BALDOCK TOWN YOUTH FOOTBALL CLUB

Audio recording – 1 minute 45 seconds

Prior to the item being discussed Councillor Michael Weeks declared a declarable interest in that his grandson was a member of the Baldock Town Football Club. He advised that he would take no part in the discussion or any decision regarding this organisation.

Mr Juan Cowell, Chairman, Baldock Youth Football Club, thanked the Vice-Chair for the opportunity to address the committee in support of their grant application and informed Members of the following:

- This was a chartered club;
- It catered for boys and girls aged between 6 and 18 years;
- They required the grant funding to assist with equipment and training aids;
- They had to find additional funding to pay for new equipment required by the Football Association;
- They had sponsors who helped pay for the kit;
- It would be difficult to get to the end of this year in credit.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Michael Muir;
- Councillor Jim McNally;
- Councillor Tom Tyson;
- Councillor Steve Jarvis.

In response to questions Mr Cowell advised:

- They currently had 16 teams involving 263 children;
- A new girls team would start play next season;
- They were looking to increase the number of teams;
- They were constantly raising funds through tombolas, quiz nights and a local tournament;
- It was estimated that they would have a shortfall of £2,200 at the end of the year;
- Most players came from Baldock and surrounding villages, with about 40 players coming from Letchworth, Hitchin, Stevenage and Arlsey;
- The previous girls team failed because the person looking after the team left;
- The FA had requirements requiring the amount of training and equipment available to each team;
- They trained at the sports centre and played at schools and the cricket ground;
- Currently each player paid £40 per year, although it cost £137.60 per player;
- Fees would be increased next year.
- They were looking at how they could support those less well off financially.

The Vice-Chair thanked Mr Cowell for his presentation.

34 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - ASHWELL PLAY GROUP

Audio recording – 15 minutes 37 seconds

Ms Merry Smith and Ms Barbara Wolfe, Ashwell Play Group thanked the Vice-Chair for the opportunity to address the Committee in support of their grant application and informed Members of the following:

- They were asking for grant funding to assist with marketing campaign and to help with increased hall hire costs;
- The Play Group had been going for 45 years and was managed by volunteer Trustees;
- They were looking to attract children from outside the village so that they could have consistent numbers at sessions;
- To increase numbers of attendees they would need to have the appropriate number of staff who had been trained to the appropriate level and need to do some marketing;
- Over the years the number of staff had varied;
- They currently had 18 children on the books;
- The requested £1.500 would be matched from their own funds.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Jim McNally;
- Councillor Tom Tyson;
- Councillor Steve Jarvis.

In response to questions Ms Smith and Ms Wolfe advised:

- They held fund raising activities each year including the Village Winter Wonderland, Quiz Night, Duck Race and car boot sales which raised about £4.500 per year;
- They were looking for alternative funding streams;
- They had £9,000 reserves;
- They wanted to be more viable, non profit making and to promote a high quality service as cheaply as possible;
- They held regular in touch days with schools to help the children's transition to school;
- They met at Ashwell Village Hall;
- The 2016 Ofstead rating for the Playgroup was good;
- They were working with the Early Childhood Team to improve services.

Members suggested that they approach local businesses such as Days of Ashwell for sponsorship and consider supermarket schemes such as Tesco's Blue Chip scheme. They also suggested that they should approach County Councillors for funding.

The Vice-Chair thanked Ms Smith and Ms Woolfe for their presentation.

35 COMMUNITY GRANTS POLICY REVIEW

Audio recording – 35 minutes 31 seconds

The Community Engagement Team Leader presented the report entitled Community Grants Policy Review and drew attention to the following:

- The report outlined the proposed changes to the grants policy;
- The process had been simplified;
- The policy was last reviewed in 2016;
- Paragraph 8.2.1 outlined changes to the eligibility criteria;
- Parish and Town Councils and Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) were now eligible to apply for grants but only if it provided additionality;
- The 2016 Policy stated that applicants were ineligible for funding if they had other funding from NHDC within 2 years. This would no longer apply under the new policy;
- These changes would encourage a variety of organisations to apply;
- The new criteria was similar to that of other local authorities and;
- Cabinet had approved two proposals relating to community grants which included the creation of a one-off District-wide budget of £10,000 in 2020/21.

The following Members asked questions and took part in the debate:

- Councillor Michael Muir;
- Councillor Tom Tyson;
- Councillor Michael Weeks;
- Councillor Jim McNally;
- Councillor Steve Jarvis.

In response to questions the Community Engagement Team Leader advised:

- That schools could apply for funding but only for activities that provided additionality;
- That each application would be considered by Members on its merit.

Members were concerned that:

- The eligibility criteria and therefore the number of applications would expand but the amount of money would remain static;
- That Parish Councils could raise money via a precept whereas the District Council had limited funds available;
- That in allocation of grant funding Committees should give due cognisance to Parished/Unparished areas.

RESOLVED: That the proposed review of the Community Grants Policy and criteria be noted

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That the criteria and outline consultation process be approved, subject to the following comments:

- That the ability for Parish Councils to apply for grant funding would increase the number of applicants, whilst the budget remained static;
- That additional pressure would be put on those committees with Parished areas;
- That the District Wide Budget of £10,000 be supported;
- That in allocation of grant funding, due cognisance be made that Hitchin and Letchworth Committees were not Parished;
- That the Policy, in respect of Parish Council eligibility to apply for grant funding, be reviewed in 2 years.

REASON FOR DECISION: The awarding of grant funding awards to organisations, charities and voluntary groups, and the use of grant budgets devolved to Area Committees allows the Authority to further its aims and overarching Priorities of the Council and District.

36 GRANT APPLICATION - BALDOCK TOWN YOUTH FOOTBALL CLUB

Audio recording – 59 minutes 39 seconds

Councillor Michael Weeks had previously declared a declarable interest in that his grandson was a member of the Baldock Town Football Club. He advised that he would take no part in the discussion or any decision regarding this organisation.

The following Members took part in the debate:

- Councillor Steve Jarvis;
- Councillor Michael Muir

Councillor Steve Jarvis proposed that £350 be taken from the Weston and Sandon Budget; Councillor Jim McNally proposed that £950 be taken from the Baldock East and Baldock Town budgets in the normal proportions.

RESOLVED: That, subject to the agreement of Councillor Val Shanley, grant funding of £1,250 be awarded to Baldock Town Youth Football Club to assist with costs for new equipment for the club including kits, goal posts, footballs, bibs, cones, tables and gazebos in the following proportions:

- Weston and Sandon £350
- Baldock Town £684
- Baldock East £216

REASON FOR DECISION: The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims of the Corporate Plan.

37 GRANT APPLICATION - ASHWELL PLAY GROUP

Audio recording – 1 hour 2 minutes 37 seconds

The following Members took part in the debate:

- Councillor Steve Jarvis;
- Councillor Michael Muir;
- Councillor Jim McNally;
- Councillor Tom Tyson.

Councillor Tyson proposed that £500 be taken from the Weston and Sandon Budget; Councillor McNally proposed that £200 be taken from the Baldock East, Baldock Town and Weston and Sandon budgets in the normal proportions.

RESOLVED: That, subject to the agreement of Councillor Val Shanley, grant funding of £700 be awarded to Ashwell Play Group to assist with venue hire and publicity costs in the following proportions:

- Arbury £500
- Weston and Sandon £32
- Baldock Town £128
- Baldock East £40.

REASON FOR DECISION: The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims of the Corporate Plan.

38 NHDC PARKING STRATEGY DRAFT PARKING OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

Audio recording – 1 hour 7 minutes 4 seconds

The Strategic Infrastructure and Projects Manager and Parking Project Officer presented the report entitled NHDC Parking Strategy Draft Parking Operational Guidelines and drew attention to the following:

- These guidelines were prepared following the adoption of the Parking Strategy in October 2019;
- The aim was to present a report, together with the comments from Area Committees to Cabinet in March 2020;

- This was a high-level document that provided guidelines to Officers in order to deliver the Strategy;
- It was seen as a living document and it followed the same framework as the Strategy;
- It considers on-street parking and the possible sale of tickets to park in Controlled Parking Zones in area of low take up;
- It included a parking issues reporting pack, which gave a structure for the public to make reports of parking issues;
- The public would be asked to report issues over a 4 week period;
- This would enable the Council to understand times of stress regarding parking.

The following Members asked questions and took part in the debate:

- Councillor Michael Weeks;
- Councillor Tom Tyson;
- Councillor Steve Jarvis;
- Councillor Jim McNally;
- Councillor Michael Muir.

In response to questions the Strategic Infrastructure and Projects Manager and Parking Projects Officer advised:

- That they were working on an online version of the reporting pack;
- The reporting pack would help officers;
- The reporting pack was based on the version used successfully by the County Council;
- The reporting pack would provide a lot of data;
- The comments of the Area Committees would be considered.

Members concerns regarding the draft Parking Issues Reporting Pack and Operational Guidelines included:

- The reporting pack seemed over complicated and not user friendly;
- There should be an easier way to feed back information;
- Some problems only affected very small areas and this was not the way to provide solutions;
- There should be a facility to upload photographs;
- If people can only complete part of the reporting pack it should not invalidate the information given;
- Feedback should be sought from Councillors following adoption of the guidelines regarding parking issues in Baldock;
- There did not seem to be any connectivity between the document and the Local Plan.

Members made the following comments in respect of the local Parking Strategy:

- The Parking Strategy for Baldock was last completed 6 years ago and needed to be reviewed;
- The Committee needed a timeline for review that had a degree of certainty;
- Proposed growth in the Town will only increase traffic and make the current situation worse;
- The transport sustainability issues now and following new development should be considered now rather than wait for the parking review;
- Enforcement of parking was often not regular or strong enough;
- There was an unrealistic expectation about the number of people who would use alternative methods of transport.

In respect of the local parking strategy the Strategic Infrastructure and Projects Manager advised:

- They had not had available staff, however they were now progressing the work programme;
- They were currently working on the Royston review;
- It was unlikely that the Baldock review would take place in the next year;
- Key safety issues could be addressed;
- There was only one Parking Projects Officer and there was a need to manage her time and budget;
- The Parking Strategy would be reviewed as part of the Local Plan.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET:

- (1) That the following comments of the Baldock and District Committee be taken into account when considering recommendations (2) – (5) below:
 - (i) The reporting pack seemed over complicated and not user friendly;
 - (ii) There should be an easier way to feed back information;
 - (iii) Some problems only affected very small areas and this was not the way to provide solutions;
 - (iv) There should be a facility to upload photographs;
 - (v) If people can only complete part of the reporting pack it should not invalidate the information given;
 - (vi) Feedback should be sought from Councillors following adoption of the guidelines regarding parking issues in Baldock;
 - (vii) There did not seem to be any connectivity between the document and the Local Plan.
- (2) That, subject to consideration of the comments in (1) above, Draft North Hertfordshire District Council Parking Operational Guidelines at Appendix A be considered and adopted;
- (3) That, subject to the comments in (1) above, the draft North Hertfordshire District Council Parking Issues Reporting Pack Part 1 and Part 2 at Appendix B and C be considered and adopted;
- (4) That delegated authority be given to the Service Director - Regulatory to approve minor amendments and format changes to the draft Parking Operational Guidelines as required in consultation with the Executive Member and Deputy Executive Member for Planning and Transport.
- (5) That officers proceed with the work associated with the key projects listed in the Parking Strategy Strategic Action Plan using the Parking Operational Guidelines to implement the policy framework.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS: The draft Parking Operational Guidelines will provide the necessary guidance and assessment criteria for the Parking Strategy policy framework for managing parking across the District in a most cost efficient way that accords with the Council's Corporate Objectives and its Medium Term Financial Strategy.

39 GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE

Audio recording – 56 Minutes 42 seconds and 1 hour 39 minutes 31 seconds

The Community Engagement Officer presented the report entitled Grants and Community Update and drew attention to the following:

Budgets

The Committee currently had £3.470 available for grant funding.

There were no plans to remove any balances remaining in Area Committee budgets at the end of the Civic Year.

Baldock Community Fireworks

The Baldock Community Fireworks was held for the first time at St Marys School on Saturday 9th November.

Despite atrocious weather on the night of the event, the firework display was well supported with more than 1500 spectators attending the show.

Car parking was a bit of an issue.

As well as being a fantastic community event, the firework display also generated over £3.6k profit to be shared between St Marys PTA and local charities.

Councillor Jim McNally advised that there were some lessons for next year's event including access and egress and the siting of the PA equipment.

Baldock Christmas Fayre

The Baldock Christmas Fayre was held on Baldock High Street on Saturday 7th December.

The event was extremely well supported by the people of Baldock and passed without incident.

Members commented that this had been a marvellous event but they had received comment that there were no craft stalls this year/

Councillor Jim McNally advised that they had tried something new this year, but there was room to incorporate a more traditional element in the High Street next year.

Future Events

Councillor Jim McNally advised that the following events would take place:

- 23 February - Baldock Beast;
- 7 June - Big Lunch;
- 15 June - Cycle Challenge;
- 5 December – Christmas Fayre.

The Baldock Community Events Forum also helped with the school fete, Fireworks Night, Balstock Festival and the Rat Run and were looking at the possibility of putting on a disco type event.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community Engagement Officer to Promote greater community capacity and well-being for Baldock;
- (2) That the volunteers supporting the Baldock Events Forum be thanked for their hard work in organising the events in Baldock throughout the year.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) To ensure the Committee is kept informed of the work of the Community Officer.
- (2) To inform Members of the financial resources available to the Committee. It draws attention to the current budgetary situation by assisting in the effective financial management of the Area Committee's budget. This ensures that all actions are performed in line with the Authority's Financial Regulations, the Council's Constitution, and the guidance of the existing Grants policy as agreed by Cabinet in June 2016.

40 WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS

Audio recording – 1 hour 48 minutes 38 seconds

County Councillor Locality Budgets

Councillor Michael Muir reminded Members that County Councillors have a budget of £90,000 to pay for highways issues.

The meeting closed at 9.24 pm

Chair

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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

BALDOCK AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE

**MEETING HELD AS A VIRTUAL MEETING
ON MONDAY, 22ND JUNE, 2020 AT 7.30 PM**

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Steve Jarvis, Jim McNally, Michael Muir, Val Shanley, Tom Tyson and Michael Weeks*

In Attendance: *Ashley Hawkins (Community Engagement Officer) and Matthew Hepburn (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer)*

Also Present: *At the commencement of the meeting approximately 2 members of the public, including registered speakers.*

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Audio Recording – 48 Seconds

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the virtual Baldock and District Committee meeting that was being conducted with Members and Officers at various locations, communicating via audio/video and online and advised that there was the opportunity for the public and press to listen and view proceedings.

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer gave advice regarding the following:

Attendance

A roll call was undertaken to confirm that the required Members, Officers and Registered Speakers were present and could hear and be heard.

If for any reason the meeting was not quorate an Officer would interject the meeting and the meeting would adjourn immediately. Once the meeting was quorate the meeting would resume.

If a remote Member were to lose connection the Chair may adjourn the meeting for a short period to enable connection to be re-established. If the Chair did not adjourn the meeting the Member would be deemed to have left the meeting at the point of failure and be deemed to have returned at the point of re-establishment. Only Members present for the entirety of debate and consideration of an item were entitled to vote.

Live Streaming

The meeting was being streamed live on the Council's YouTube channel. If live streaming failed the meeting would adjourn. If the live stream could not be restored within a reasonable period then the remaining business would be considered at a time and date fixed by the Chair. If the Chair did not fix a date, the remaining business would be considered at the next ordinary meeting.

If technology failed for a member of the public who had attended to participate and was unable to do so, the Chair may decide to adjourn or proceed to the next item of business to allow for connection to be re-established. If connection could not be restored within a reasonable period, the Chair could decide to conclude the remaining business.

Noise Interference

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer asked all in attendance to ensure that electronic devices were muted.

Rules of Debate

If a Member wished to speak they should use the raise hand button and this would alert the host that they wished to speak.

Members were reminded that the normal procedure rules in respect of debate and times to speak would apply.

Voting

When requested to vote, Members were informed to vote using the Green tick for 'Yes', Red Cross for 'No' and Blue Raise Hand for 'abstain'.

Details of how Members voted would not be kept or minuted unless a Recorded Vote was requested or an individual requests that their vote be recorded.

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer would clearly state the result of the vote and the Chair would proceed to the next agenda item.

2 ELECTION OF A CHAIR OF BALDOCK AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2020/21

Audio Recording – 4 Minutes

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer called for nominations for a Chair of the Baldock and District Committee for the Civic Year 2020/21.

Councillor Jim McNally proposed Councillor Michael Weeks which was seconded by Councillor Val Shanley and it was:

RESOLVED: That Councillor Michael Weeks be elected Chair of Baldock and District Committee for the Civic Year 2020/21.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio Recording – 5 Minutes 10 Seconds

There were no apologies for absence.

4 ELECTION OF A VICE-CHAIR FOR THE BALDOCK AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2020/21

Audio Recording - 5 Minutes 10 Seconds

The Chair, Councillor Michael Weeks, expressed his thanks to the former Baldock and District Committee Chair, Councillor Val Shanley, for chairing the Committee in 2019/20.

The Chair called for nominations for a Vice-Chair for the Baldock and District Committee for the Civic Year 2020/21.

Councillor Michael Weeks proposed Councillor Jim McNally which was seconded by Councillor Val Shanley and it was:

RESOLVED: That Councillor Jim McNally be elected Vice-Chair of the Baldock and District Committee for the Civic Year 2020/21.

5 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio Recording – 6 Minutes 41 Seconds

There was no other business notified.

6 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio Recording – 6 Minutes 46 Seconds

- (1) The Chair welcomed those present at the meeting, especially those who had attended to give a presentation;
- (2) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded;
- (3) Members were reminded to make declarations of interest before an item, the longer reminder about this and speaking rights was set out under Chair's Announcements on the agenda.

7 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - INDEPENDENT BALDOCK BEER FESTIVAL

Audio Recording – 7 Minutes 42 Seconds

Ms Tara Geere and Mr Brent Copsey, Independent Baldock Beer Festival, thanked the Chair for the opportunity to address the Committee and gave a verbal presentation regarding their grant application, including:

- The Baldock Beer Festival was more than a beer festival – there were music acts and activities for children;
- The event started on a Friday evening and ran over the weekend;
- The Independent Baldock Beer Festival was set up as a Charitable Trust in 2017;
- Every event raised money to be used for the benefit of Baldock;
- Grants had been given out to numerous organisations;
- There was a 'hardship fund' that was utilised to send children on residential and/or to assist with the payment of buying specialist equipment;
- Money generated at events was donated for the public benefit in Baldock; and
- The festival would have taken place in May. However, in light of the coronavirus pandemic, the event had to be cancelled. Therefore, money has not been able to be raised.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Jim McNally;
- Councillor Michael Muir; and
- Councillor Michael Weeks.

Ms Geere responded to Members questions as follows:

- Following the cancellation of the Beer Festival and Octoberfest as result of Covid-19, there was a cash flow issue which was the reason for requesting grant money from the Committee;
- There was enough space to hold events if social distancing measures were in place at the time as they were able to use the field at the Knights Templar school;
- Money raised would be used to benefit Baldock and the surrounding villages; and
- People attended the beer festival and the Octoberfest from all over North Herts but also visitors came from London, St Albans and Cambridge.

Members agreed to contribute towards the grant request of £1,000 from their Discretionary Budget. The Community Engagement Officer advised the breakdown of the contribution as follows:

Baldock Town - £520.00, Baldock East - £160.00, Arbury - £180.00, Weston and Sandon - £140.00.

8 GRANTS AND COMMUNITY UPDATE

Audio Recording – 27 Minutes 50 Seconds

The Community Engagement Officer informed Members that the grant awarded to the Independent Baldock Beer Festival could be taken from the 2019/20 Carry Forward.

The Community Engagement Officer presented the report entitled Grants and Community Update and drew Members' attention to the following:

Funding:

- Paragraph 7.3 on page 7 within the report which summarised the funding available to the Committee during 2020/21.

Impact on events:

- Owing to the coronavirus pandemic, many events have had to be cancelled including the Baldock Festival and The Big Lunch. Other events have been postponed until September including the Baldock Cycle Challenge;
- Owing to the uncertainty of the pandemic, it was not possible to confirm whether Autumn events would be able to take place; and
- The Community Engagement Officer was in communication with the organisers of the Baldock Chartered Street Fair with regards to that year's event. The Community Engagement Officer had reminded the organisers that to maintain the charter there must be a presence in the town during the 3 day fair period.

Impact on Community Buildings:

- The Baldock Community Centre and Baldock Arts & Heritage Centre were closed in light of the pandemic – both venues had received £10k from the NHDC Business Grant.

Support Groups in response to Coronavirus:

The Community Engagement Officer had been supporting the numerous support groups that have been set up in response to the Pandemic.

The Community Engagement Officer has also assisted with Operation Shield.

RESOLVED: That the actions taken by the Community Engagement Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Baldock be endorsed.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

- (1) To ensure the Committee is kept informed of the work of the Community Engagement Officer;
- (2) This report is intended to inform Members of the financial resources available to the Committee. It draws attention to the current budgetary situation by assisting in the effective financial management of the Area Committee's budget. This ensures that all actions are performed in line with the Authority's Financial Regulations, the Council's Constitution, and the guidance of the existing Grants policy as agreed by Cabinet in January 2020;
- (3) The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims of the Council Plan.

9 GRANT APPLICATION - INDEPENDENT BALDOCK BEER FESTIVAL

Audio Recording – 26 Minutes

Councillor Muir proposed, Cllr McNally seconded and it was:

RESOLVED: That grant funding of £1,000 be awarded to the Independent Baldock Beer Festival to assist towards the cost of purchasing a storage unit for storing equipment at Brandles School.

REASON FOR DECISION: To improve services provided by local organisations and groups which are accessed by the community.

10 WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS

Audio Recording – 31 Minutes 18 Seconds

Members discussed the impact that the coronavirus pandemic had had on Baldock and the surrounding villages.

Members were informed about the cancellation of various events owing to Covid-19, including the Big Lunch, Street Food Heroes and the Cycle Challenge had been postponed from 5 July to 20 September 2020.

Members were informed about the variety of groups that had been set up to support people during the pandemic, including:

Baldock Coronavirus Support Group:

The Group had 3 aims: Deliver food parcels to those in need, provide volunteers and shop for those isolating or shielding and collect prescriptions.

Listening Service:

A listening service had started to provide support to people. The service did not offer advice or counselling but referred people to the appropriate service. It was being led by a Samaritan.

Baldock in Lockdown:

A group open to any amateur photographer.

Other support groups:

- A group in Ashwell got local shops together to deliver food to those shielding.
- A young people's art initiative had been set up to support young people during the pandemic. The initiative was working with Gallery 1066 and Knights Templar.

Other Members' Reports:

- Baldock Household was running until July and full details could be found online;
- The Christmas Fair was still due to take place on 5 December;
- There was a phased re-opening of the market. Currently, stalls were open on a Wednesday and there had been good footfall. More stalls would not be opened until it could be ensured that social distancing measures could be adhered to; and
- The fireworks at St Mary's was still due to take place on 8 November 2020.

11 POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Audio Recording – 49 Minutes 35 Seconds

The Chair requested that the following items be brought to the next meeting of the Baldock and District Committee:

- An update from Affinity Water on Ivel Spring.

The meeting closed at 8.27 pm

Chair

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

BALDOCK AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD AS A VIRTUAL MEETING ON MONDAY, 5TH OCTOBER, 2020 AT 7.30 PM

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Michael Weeks (Chair), Jim McNally (Vice-Chair), Steve Jarvis, Michael Muir, Val Shanley and Tom Tyson*

In Attendance: *Alessandro Marsilli, (Affinity Water), Richie Carruthers (Affinity Water), Matt Ramscar (Environment Agency), Iain Page (Environment Agency), Rob Bakewell (Environment Agency), Simon Ellis (Development and Conservation Manager), Ashley Hawkins (Community Engagement Officer), Hilary Dineen (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager) and William Edwards (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer)*

Also Present: *At the commencement of the meeting approximately 4 members of the public, including registered speakers.*

12 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Audio recording – 30 seconds

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that it was being conducted with Members and Officers at various locations, communicating via audio/video and online. There was also the opportunity for the public and press to listen and view proceedings.

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager undertook a roll call of Members and Officers to ensure that they could hear and be heard and gave the following advice.

The meeting was being streamed live on the Council's You Tube channel and also recorded via Zoom. If live streaming failed the meeting would adjourn. If the live stream could not be restored within a reasonable period then the remaining business would be considered at a later date.

Please stay in view of the camera at all times.

If for any reason the meeting was not quorate an Officer would notify attendees by interjecting the meeting. The meeting would adjourn immediately. Once the meeting was quorate the meeting would resume. If connection could not be restored within a reasonable period, then the remaining business would be considered at a later date.

If a remote Member lost connection the Chair may adjourn the meeting for a short period to enable connection to be re-established. If the Chair did not adjourn the meeting the Member would be deemed to have left the meeting at the point of failure and be deemed to have returned at the point of re-establishment. Only Members present for the entirety of debate and consideration of an item are entitled to vote.

Mobile phones and other noise emitting devices should be muted and the mute button on tablets and computers should be muted when not speaking.

When requested to vote, voting would be via the Green tick for “Yes”, Red Cross for “No” and Blue Raise Hand for “abstain” functions.

The Chair, Councillor Michael Weeks, started the meeting proper.

13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio recording – 2 minutes 50 seconds

There were no apologies for absence.

14 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio recording – 2 minutes 59 seconds

There was no other business notified.

15 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio recording – 3 minutes 5 seconds

- (1) The Chair welcomed those present at the meeting, especially those who had attended to give a presentation;
- (2) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio and film recorded and live streamed on Youtube;
- (3) Members were reminded to make declarations of interest before an item, the longer reminder about this and speaking rights were set out under Chair's Announcements on the agenda.

16 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - REVIVEL

Audio recording – 3 minutes 40 seconds

Sharon Moat, Bernard Butt and Richard Meredith-Hardy gave presentations on behalf of Revlvel regarding water abstraction and the impact on the River Ivel.

Sharon Moat gave a verbal presentation including:

- If Affinity Water would agree to augment the springs with more water would the Environment Agency approve?;
- They were concerned about the spring and the upper reaches of the River Ivel;
- The upper reaches was a perennial stream and chalk stream.
- Historically the river flow was sufficient for mills and trout farms;
- The extraction of water ceases the water flow and affects wildlife;
- The springs was now dry;
- They were concerned about the constant abstraction;
- Ground water sources for public consumption were not sustainable;
- We need to care of our chalk streams;
- They wanted the river flow maintained and abstraction rates linked to the flow.

Bernard Butt queried:

- Whether Affinity would measure water flow and enable the flow to increase at Black Horse Farm.

Richard Meredith - Hardy gave a verbal presentation including:

- In the last 3 – 4 years the Environment Agency had calculated an 11 megalitres a day flow;
- According to Affinity flow records the flow has never reached that level;
- What would the Environment do to get a winter flow of at least 153 litres per second.

The Chair thanked Ms Moat. Mr Butt and Mr Meredith-Hardy for their presentations.

17 **AFFINITY WATER & ENVIRONMENT AGENCY**

Audio recording – 12 minutes 6 seconds

Affinity Water and the Environment Agency provided the Committee with an update regarding water abstraction and the impacts on Ivel Spring and the River Ivel.

Alessandro Marsilli, Affinity Water, gave a PowerPoint presentation including:

- An overview of the current abstraction licence and the last 5 years of abstraction rates;
- Details regarding the ecology of the area;
- An overview of flow rates at various points;
- Abstraction at bore holes was decreased;
- Flow rates were between good and failing;
- An overview of intervention options, including augmentation;
- River restoration could be instigated by augmentation;
- Flow records showed the river was dry at times;
- Flow had increased by 6 megalitres a day;
- All intervention options were satisfactory in principle, although the trigger level needed to be discussed;
- They would wish to cap the abstraction rates in 2024;
- During dry periods the river would be dry even without abstraction;
- Historically there were reed beds that were managed by Angllain Water and used to treat effluent;
- Future planned developments have not been included in the 5 year plan as planning permission had not yet been granted;
- The augmentation scheme should be linked to the flow at Black Horse Farm.

Richie Carruthers, Affinity Water, gave a PowerPoint presentation including:

- The Water Resource Management Plan helped balance supply and demand;
- They recognised that, in the short term, they needed to reduce leakage and reduce demand;
- Ground water supply was a longer term planned alternative to abstraction;
- Affinity were looking at shared reservoirs and shared supplies as well as moving water into the area;
- There was a group of regulators looking at future schemes;
- Some money had been made available for schemes;
- There could be opportunities to transport water from the West Midlands using the Grand Union Canal;
- They were looking at better connectivity between areas, regions and companies

- They recognised the wish for unsustainable abstraction to end, but water was still needed.

Rob Bakewell, Environment Agency, gave a verbal presentation including:

- There were 225 chalk streams, 9 were classified as Special Sites of Scientific Interest, 4 of those were special areas of conservation;
- All other surface bodies of water shared the same level of protection which sought to improve matters, or at least prevent deterioration;
- They had investigated all the bodies of water and identified issues and through those investigations identified a preferred action plan;
- The River Base and Management Plan set out the objectives for all water bodies from which a series of actions were extracted. These actions were then considered on a cost/benefit system;
- The actions were then put into a WinEp which was considered by Ofwat;
- This country put a low value on water and we were all part of the problem;
- Abstraction and leakage were problems which added to the challenge of new developments;
- Nationally there was focus on chalk streams;
- They could only go as far as powers allowed them to do so;
- There were no guarantees that alternative sources of supply would be available;
- Unless there was an environmental reason to object, Affinity could pump as much water as they liked into the streams.

Iain Paige, Environment Agency, gave a PowerPoint presentation including:

- The abstraction licences were granted in the 1960s when there were very different views on environmental issues;
- The cost of addressing the issues had been deemed to be too high;
- They were trying to get Affinity to support ecology;
- There was no long term flow gauging station;
- They needed to address the head waters;
- They recognised that Ivel Springs was an area of concern locally;
- Due to the lack of long term gauged flow records they were using modelled flows;
- If want to get Ivel Springs restored, Affinity needed to reduce the amount of abstraction and this could be achieved by capping the licences;
- River augmentation and river support was the most cost effective way to manage the flow;
- The desired level of flow and associated support had yet to be decided;
- The actions taken to date was as much as could be done at the moment;
- A step change was needed including significant investment and significant reduction in abstraction;
- An holistic view was needed in order to meet the needs of the rivers and streams as well as new developments and growth;
- This was the biggest chance for a step change and for people to get involved.

Matt Ramscar, Environment Agency gave a verbal presentation including:

- He gave an explanation of the modelling of flows and outcomes;
- Want to get away from abstraction and back to natural flows;
- The river support schemes were intended to top up rivers at the most crucial times, but regular use of these schemes cause their own problems.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Michael Muir;
- Councillor Michael Weeks;
- Councillor Tom Tyson;
- Councillor Steve Jarvis;
- Councillor Jim McNally.

In response to questions:

Iain Paige, Environment Agency, advised:

- New licences were issued with flow constraint conditions attached;
- The water company had a duty to ensure there was no deterioration;
- This was the biggest opportunity to feed into the plans for the future;
- Consideration was being given to building a new reservoir, but this would take time;
- There was a need to reduce demand.

Allesandro Marsilli, Affinity Water, advised:

- The river Chess option of reducing abstraction was already in Affinity's 5 year plan;
- They had agreed to cap the licence for the River Ivel in 2024;
- They had money to address water abstraction in the future, but they needed to meet demand;
- They had measured flow monthly for 5 years and could correlate flow with abstraction;
- One intervention was to install flow measuring at Black Horse Farm;
- If have to put in infrastructure in order to increase flow, we need to be aware that this would have an impact;
- Affinity policy was to look at alternatives to abstraction from chalk streams;
- Any future reductions would be voluntary with the levels being decided at a strategic planning level;
- Plans could be modified.

Matt Ramscar, Environment Agency, advised:

- Modelling had demonstrated what the natural flow would have been;
- Flow would vary year to year under natural conditions;

Rob Bakewell, Environment Agency, advised:

- They were expecting Affinity to undertake consultation;
- This was a starting point which would then be refined.

The Chair thanked the presenters from Affinity Water and the Environment Agency for their presentations.

RESOLVED: That Affinity Water and the Environment Agency be requested to update the Committee on the River Ivel in 12 months time.

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Baldock and District Committee to be apprised of the issues affecting the River Ivel and the proposed actions of Affinity Water and the Environment agency to mitigate impact.

NB: A comfort was taken at 9.11pm

NB: The meeting resumed at 9.23pm

18 ANNUAL UPDATE ON S106 OBLIGATIONS FOR THE BALDOCK AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE

Audio recording – 1 hour 54 minutes 20 seconds

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager undertook a roll call to ensure Members and Officers could hear and be heard.

The Development and Conservation Manager presented the report entitled Annual Update on S106 Obligations for Hitchin Committee together with the following appendix:

- Appendix 1 - Current held funds for Baldock.

He drew attention to the following:

- It had been hoped that there would be more to report, this was due to the examination of the Local Plan having been delayed due to the Covid.19 Pandemic.
- New dates for these hearings had not yet been set and this had an impact on the presentation of the SPDs.
- The Developer Contributions SPD had been presented to Cabinet in July and was approved, subject to the Local Plan being adopted;
- A report regarding whether the Council would adopt CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) would be considered by Cabinet in December;
- Paragraph 4.2 detailed a new requirement to administer and report to central Government being an audit of all Section 106 activity;
- Paragraph 8.4.5 detailed the funds Section 106 discretionary funds remaining.

The following Members asked questions and took part in the debate:

- Councillor Steve Jarvis;
- Councillor Tom Tyson;
- Councillor Michael Weeks.

In response to questions the Development and Conservation Manager advised:

- That monies allocated for Public Realm had to be spent on permanent infrastructure;
- S106 monies was only collected in respect of developments of more than 10 dwellings;
- Forms were developed in 2019 that enabled comment from parishes on any application for funding;
- Ward Members were able to bring projects to the attention of the S106 officer and the Community Team were regularly consulted;
- Paragraph 8.14 highlighted the proposed White Paper which would include the intention to introduce National CIL rates.

Members requested that the figures relating to villages be circulated to Members.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the content of the report entitled Annual Update on S106 Obligations for the Baldock and District Committee be noted;

- (2) That a report shall continue to be presented on Section 106 contributions to the Baldock Committee on an annual basis;
- (3) That, other than where a contribution has been negotiated for a specific purpose or project, Ward Members of the area where the Section 106 Obligation or Unilateral Undertaking funding is generated, and the Area Committee be consulted prior to funding being allocated away from that area;
- (4) That the Development and Conservation Manager be requested to circulate figures regarding villages to all Members of the Committee.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) To ensure that there is a robust system for negotiating and managing Section 106 Obligations and Unilateral Undertakings, that records activity for each financial year and is placed in the public domain.
- (2) To ensure that the process is kept under constant review and Member scrutiny and that the risk associated with this activity is managed in an appropriate manner.

19 GRANTS AND COMMUNITY UPDATE

Audio recording – 2 hours 11 minutes 59 seconds

The Community Officer presented the report entitled Grants and Community Update together with the following appendix:

- Appendix 1 - 2020/21 financial year budget sheet.

He drew attention to the following:

- Paragraph 7.3 detailed the budgets available;
- The deadline for submitting grants application for consideration at the December meeting was 26 October 2020;
- Paragraph 8.21 detailed that Covid-19 was still affecting events
- Baldock Fayre took place with one ride, which was required to ensure the future of the charter;
- Baldock Community Centre and the Methodist Centre were successful with their applications to the Community Facilities and District Wide Grants Panel;
- He had been requested to investigate further tree planting. Due to lack of space, cabling etc, this was not possible.

RESOLVED: That the actions taken by the Community Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for the Baldock be endorsed.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

- (1) To ensure the Committee is kept informed of the work of the Community Engagement Officer.
- (2) To inform Members of the financial resources available to the Committee. It draws attention to the current budgetary situation by assisting in the effective financial management of the Area Committee's budget. This ensures that all actions are performed in line with the Authority's Financial Regulations, the Council's Constitution, and the guidance of the existing Grants policy as agreed by Cabinet in January 2020.

- (3) The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims of the Council Plan.

20 WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS

Audio recording –

Councillor Jim McNally advised that the programme of events in the Baldock area had been decimated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer gave an update regarding enquiries so far in respect of proposed parades and wreath laying services on Remembrance Sunday.

The meeting closed at 9.49 pm

Chair

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
BALDOCK AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD AS A VIRTUAL MEETING
ON MONDAY, 7TH DECEMBER, 2020 AT 7.30 PM
MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Michael Weeks (Chair), Jim McNally (Vice-Chair), Steve Jarvis, Michael Muir, Val Shanley and Tom Tyson*

In Attendance: *Ashley Hawkins (Community Engagement Officer), Matthew Hepburn (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer) and William Edwards (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer)*

21 WELCOME AND REMOTE/PARTLY REMOTE MEETINGS PROTOCOL SUMMARY

The Chair welcomed everyone to this virtual Baldock and District Committee meeting that was being conducted with Members and Officers at various locations, communicating via audio/video and online. There was also the opportunity for the public and press to listen to and view proceedings.

The Chair invited the Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer to explain how proceedings would work and to confirm that Members and Officers were in attendance.

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer undertook a roll call to ensure that all Members and Officers could hear and be heard and gave advice regarding the following:

The meeting was being streamed live onto You Tube and recorded via Zoom.

Extracts from the Remote/Partly Remote Meetings Protocol was included with the agenda and the full version was available on the Council's website which included information regarding:

- Live Streaming;
- Noise Interference;
- Rules of Debate and
- Voting.

Members were requested to ensure that they were familiar with the Protocol.

The Chair, Councillor Michael Weeks, started the meeting proper.

22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

23 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business notified.

24 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (1) The Chair welcomed those present at the meeting;
- (2) The Chair advised that, in accordance with Council Policy, the meeting would be audio recorded;
- (3) Members were reminded to make declarations of interest before an item, the longer reminder about this and speaking rights was set out under Chair's Announcements on the agenda.

25 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

26 GRANTS AND COMMUNITY UPDATE

The Community Engagement Officer presented the report entitled Grants and Community Update, including:

- The Community Engagement Officer provided Members with a breakdown of funding available to the Committee as detailed at Paragraph 7.3 on page 8 within the report;
- At next meeting of the Baldock and District Committee scheduled for March 2021, there were two groups expected to attend to ask for a Grant – those groups were Baldock Scouts and a Conservation Group in Ashwell;
- The Community Engagement Officer asked Members to contact him if they knew of any groups that needed a grant;
- The Baldock Beast Half Marathon was the only event to be held during 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic;
- The Christmas Fair did not take place owing to the pandemic. However, the Christmas lights switch-on took place on 5 December 2020 as a virtual event.

Councillor Jim McNally reported at this stage that the Baldock Events Forum were holding a virtual Christmas Fayre in lieu of a physical Christmas Fayre. Small, local businesses were due to advertise on the Baldock Events Forum website and people were able to shop online, helping to support local businesses.

Councillor Jim McNally further added to the Community Engagement Officer's update on the Baldock Beast Half Marathon by advising that the event would be ran differently in 2021 owing to the pandemic. However, despite that, they were hoping for a reasonable number of runners.

After Councillor Jim McNally's update, the Community Engagement Officer continued with his report as follows:

- He was continuing to liaise and support staff at Baldock Arts and Heritage Centre with the phase 2 works at the building;
- During November he promoted on behalf of North Herts CVS, free hand sanitiser for local community groups;
- He had been assisting the Baldock Community Centre with their application to the Covid-19 Support Fund to assist with the costs for insuring and taxing the new minibus. He informed Members that if the Baldock Community Centre were unable to secure funding support from the Covid19 Support Fund, the minibus would not be able to operate.

The Community Engagement Officer enquired with County Councillors Muir and Jarvis as to whether they were able to help with the cost of insuring and taxing the new minibus by using their Members Locality Budget.

Councillor Muir advised that he would need to know the amount that was required and then he could check his locality budget balance.

The Community Engagement Officer responded that he would check the exact amount and provide it to Councillors Muir and Jarvis after the meeting.

The Community Engagement Officer continued with the report as follows:

- He informed Members that the Chair's Awards were open for nominations until 18 December 2020;
- The Holocaust Memorial Day was taking place on 27 January 2020 at 11:00am.

After the Community Engagement Officer's report, Councillor Weeks and McNally provided an update on the market, as follows:

- The market had grown substantially;
- There were a dozen of stalls per week;
- The stall rents were cheaper than other markets; and
- Some small businesses had started to trade at the market.

RESOLVED: That the actions taken by the Community Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for the Baldock be endorsed.

REASONS FOR DECISION:

- (1) To ensure the Committee is kept informed of the work of the Community Engagement Officer;
- (2) This report is intended to inform Members of the financial resources available to the Committee. It draws attention to the current budgetary situation by assisting in the effective financial management of the Area Committee's budget. This ensures that all actions are performed in line with the Authority's Financial Regulations, the Council's Constitution, and the guidance of the existing Grants policy as agreed by Cabinet in January 2020;
- (3) The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims of the Council Plan.

27 WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS

The Chair and Members of the Committee raised various topics under Ward Matters.

Councillor Michael Muir provided the following updates:

- Baldock Rotary Club were running Santa's Sleigh. There would be 2 marshals ensuring that people did not get too close to the sleigh. In normal circumstances, the club would have raised approximately £6,500. However, as a result of the pandemic, donations had been lower. So far, around £1,000 had been raised. A resident in Baldock donated £750.00. People were able to donate via the Rotary Club's Just Giving Page;
- There was lots of positive feedback regarding the Christmas lights;

- There were a number of places in Baldock that had benefited from Councillor Muir's Highways Locality Budget. He had spent his £90,000 Highways budget on footpaths, carriageway resurfacing, bird protection, Temporary Road Traffic Orders, speed surveys, drainage investigations and a Speed Indicator Device on North Road.

Councillor Jim McNally provided the following updates:

- Donations to the Baldock Events Forum could be made via their Facebook page;
- Councillor McNally had received a report from a Constituent that a vehicle was parked on zig-zag lines linked to a pedestrian crossing. He reminded Members and Residents not to park on a Zig-Zag lines on the road.

Councillor Steve Jarvis provided the following updates:

- There were a number of locations in the rural areas that had had roads resurfaced;
- There had been an increase in flooding mainly during the Summer owing to some ongoing drainage issues – those were being investigated.

Councillor Tom Tyson provided the following updates:

- There had been some flooding in Ashwell;
- He commended the Parish Councils particularly Ashwell and Bygrave for their work during the Covid pandemic;
- There had been a problem of overcrowding in Ashwell as many people sought outdoor activities during the lockdown period and certain sites attracted too many people; and
- There was an increase in litter at Ashwell Springs and fly-tipping remained a concern for the rural areas.

Councillor Val Shanley provided the following update:

- He had been assisting elderly people in the Community to get their groceries and collect prescriptions during the pandemic.

Town Talk:

Councillor Tom Tyson raised that Town Talk should be renamed so that it better incorporates the villages surrounding Baldock i.e. 'Baldock Town and Village Talk'

In response, Councillor Michael Weeks agreed with Councillor Tyson that the name should be changed to reflect this. He advised that as a Committee they would have a think of what Town Talk should be called.

Councillor Michael Muir reported that he had distributed approximately 70 Town Talk flyers to shops. However, as many of them were closed during the pandemic restrictions, he had to post them through the letterboxes.

The meeting closed at 8.06 pm

Chair

**BALDOCK AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE
15 MARCH 2021**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE

REPORT OF THE POLICY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

COUNCIL OBJECTIVES: BUILD THRIVING AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To advise the Committee on the current expenditure and balances of the Committee Grant budgets
- 1.2 To bring to the Committee's attention details of recent requests received for Committee grant funding, made by community groups and local organisations
- 1.3 To advise the Committee of the activities and schemes with which the Community Engagement Officer has been involved in.
- 1.4 To bring to the Committee's attention some important community-based activities that will take place during the next few months.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Committee be recommended to consider allocating funding from their discretionary community budget towards the project below.

£500 to Sandon Sports and Social Club to assist with the cost of purchasing a new storage unit for storing equipment at the venue as outlined in 8.1.1.

- 2.2 That the Committee agrees that any unspent funds from the 2020/21 financial year be allocated to Community & Environmental initiatives for 2021/22.
- 2.3 That the Committee be recommended to endorse the actions taken by the Community Engagement Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Baldock.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To ensure the Committee is kept informed of the work of the Community Engagement 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 by assisting in the effective financial management of the Area Committee's budget. This ensures that all actions are performed in line with the Authority's Financial Regulations, the Council's Constitution, and the guidance of the existing Grants policy as agreed by Cabinet in January 2020.
- 3.3 The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims of the Council 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, during debate at committee, Members may wish to comment and offer additional views on any of the items included 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 bodies/groups has taken place regarding funding proposals for Committee Funds.

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

7. BACKGROUND

- 7.1 With reference to the Council's Constitution, Section 9.3 Area Committees will include budgets for the purpose of providing grants and discretionary budgets that may be used within the area of the Committee for economic, social and environmental well-being. Under the current grant criteria there is no upper limit outlined for the amount of grant funding to be allocated which can be decided at the Committee's discretion.
- 7.2 Members are asked to note the information detailed in Appendix 1. Baldock Area Committee Budget Spread sheet, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for 2020/21. The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the previous financial year, including balances and past expenditure.
- 7.3 Funding available for the Committee to allocate during 2020/21 is summarised below:

| | 2019/20 Carry Forward | 2020/21 Base Budget | Total Budget |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Baldock Town | £128 | £2,400 | £2,528 |
| Baldock East | £262 | £1,000 | £1,262 |
| Arbury | £0 | £880 | £880 |
| Weston & Sandon | £157 | £700 | £857 |
| | £547 | £4,980 | £5,527 |

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Grant Applications

8.1.1

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Applicant | Sandon Sports & Social Club |
| Project | Purchase of a storage container for storing cricket and football equipment at the venue |
| Sum requested | £500 |
| Total project cost | £2,500 |
| Match funding | £2,000 from own funds |
| Previous support | Yes, in the past 5 years the group has received £750. This was awarded in 2017 for new windows and external repairs. |
| NHDC Policy met | Yes |
| Council objective: | Build thriving and resilient communities |

Sandon Sports & Social Club is seeking funding support from the Baldock & District Committee to assist with costs for the purchase of a new storage container at the venue for football and cricket equipment. The Club has made the request following a burglary and vandalism of their current shed in February 2021. This application was received after the deadline for grant applications but is being accepted as the vandalism has made it necessary for a new storage facility as a matter of urgency which cannot wait until the next Committee meeting in June/July 2021. The storage facility will home equipment with a value in the thousands.

Sandon Sports & Social Club has been in operation since 1930 providing a venue for both cricket and football for people from the village and surrounding areas. The group is made up of 6 Volunteer Committee members and numerous volunteers from both the cricket and football clubs using the facility. The new storage container is needed due to the current one being recently burgled and vandalised. This new storage container is made of stronger materials and will help keep the equipment secure. The application is criteria compliant and given the extensive match funding being provided by the club the officer recommendation is an award of £500.

8.1.2 Grants in the Pipeline

The Baldock Community Engagement Officer (CEO) has been working with a number of groups / organisations who are seeking funding support from the Baldock & District Committee. Due to a number of factors these applications were not in a position to be tabled at the March meeting so have been deferred until a future meeting. Details of the applications are included in the table below:

| Group | Project | Funding Requested |
|----------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| Baldock Run Talk Run | This is a group for people who wish to use running as a means to help with mental health and is part of a bigger family nationwide. Funding is requested for hoodies / t-shirts, marketing initiatives and promotional materials. | The group is looking for £750. |
| Greening Ashwell | This is a new community group (+40 members) which has been formed to challenge climate change with local initiatives including tree planting and other | The group is looking for £250 |

| | | |
|--------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| | environmental improvements throughout the village . We are particularly keen to involve children and young people as well as older residents. | |
| Magic Moments Pre-school | This group has been heavily impacted by the Pandemic and will be seeking funding support to assist with possible room hire costs and new equipment including a laptop. | The group is looking for £1,000 |

As well as the above groups, the Baldock CEO was working with 1st Baldock Scouts who were hoping to seek funding from the Baldock & District Committee to assist with a soundproofing project at the building. It was not possible to progress this application as the building used by the Scouts is owned by NHDC and as there is less than 5 years left on the lease, it would not be compliant to use Baldock & District funds for this project.

8.2 Community Engagement Updates

8.2.1 Events Update for 2021

Due to the ongoing Pandemic, several of the events planned for the first half of the year have either been cancelled or postponed. The Baldock Beast Half Marathon which was due to be held in February has now been postponed until the 31st October. The Baldock Beer Festival which opens the Baldock Festival in May has been cancelled. At the time of writing this report it is unclear whether the two-week Baldock Festival will be held. The Baldock Events Forum is still planning on running The Baldock Big Lunch on Sunday 6th June and the Baldock Cycle Challenge on Sunday 27th June. The Baldock CEO is in constant liaison with all event organisers and will be assisting them with event paperwork as required. The Baldock CEO will provide the North Herts Safety Advisory Group (SAG) with status updates for all the events and will ensure the North Herts SAG calendar is updated accordingly.

8.2.2 Support for Businesses during the Covid-19 Pandemic

The Baldock CEO continues to signpost local businesses and community groups to business support grants that are available to them during the Pandemic. This has included funding support available during the tier 3 period as well as the current national lockdown.

8.2.3 Hand Sanitiser and social distancing signage for local community groups and venues

During January 2021, the Baldock CEO delivered on behalf of North Herts CVS, hand sanitiser to a number of venues in Baldock including Baldock Community Centre, Baldock Arts & Heritage Centre, 1st Baldock Scouts, Baldock Market and Magic Moments Pre-school. The Baldock CEO also delivered social distancing signage to groups and venues within Baldock and the villages which were provided by Hertfordshire County Council.

8.2.4 Baldock Arts & Heritage Centre

The Baldock CEO continues to liaise and support staff at Baldock Arts & Heritage Centre with the Phase 2 works at the building. At the various stages of the works the Baldock CEO will arrange the release of funds as part of the buildings full repairing lease arrangement. Phase 2 of the project is due to be completed by 2023. Whilst the centre has been closed during the current lockdown, internal decorating works have been carried out. This has included the painting of the museum office and the backstairs at the venue. The Baldock CEO has released funds as requested from the Phase 2 budget. The next project to be undertaken will be replacing the flooring of the main hall which is planned for March/April.

8.2.5 Covid-19 Testing Site at Baldock Community Centre

The Baldock CEO assisted the NHDC Commercial Director in determining suitable sites for Covid-19 testing. The Baldock Community Centre was identified as a possible site but after a site visit with the NHS it was decided to use different locations instead.

8.3 **Highways Matters**

8.3.1 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.

8.3.2 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 Sections 9.8.1 (a) and 9.8.1 (b) of the Council's Constitution in respect of the Area Committees' Terms of Reference, notes the following:- To allocate discretionary budgets within the terms determined by the Council and to allocate devolved budgets and activities within the terms determined by the Council.

This is outlined in the current Grant Policy agreed by Cabinet in January 2020. Section 9.8.2 (h) of the Constitution in respect of Area Committees' Terms of Reference notes that they may:- Establish and maintain relationships with outside bodies/voluntary organisations operating specifically with the area including, where appropriate, the provision of discretionary grant aid/financial support etc. but excluding grants for district-wide activities.

- 9.2 Chapter 1, s1-8 of the Localism Act 2011 provides a General Power of Competence which gives local authorities the powers to do anything provided that it is not specifically prohibited in legislation.
- 9.3 Section 137 of the 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 As outlined in Appendix 1 Committee budget 2020/21.
- 10.2 The agreed base budget for this financial year is £5,000. This has been maintained at the same level as 19/20, following full council's agreement to reverse the planned efficiencies. Carry over amounts from the 2019/2020 budgets is £547, giving a total budget remaining for the Committee for the 2020/21 financial year of £5,527. If funding of £500 is awarded to Sandon Sports and Social Club, the amount to be carried forward to the 2021/22 financial year will be £5,027.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no relevant risk entries that have been recorded on Pentana Risk, 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. In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their 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.

- 12.2. Area committee funding is awarded to community groups that clearly demonstrate positive impact on the community and wider environment. The projects outlined in this report seek to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1. The Social Value Act and “go local” requirements do not apply to this report.

14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1. There are no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this report.

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 There are no pertinent Human Resource implications associated with any items within this report.

16. APPENDICES

- 16.1 Appendix 1 - 2020/21 financial year budget sheet.

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

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18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 18.1 Review of Policies and Procedures for Financial Assistance to Voluntary and Community Organisations, November 2002.
- 18.2 Review of Grant Policy Cabinet February 2020.

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BALDOCK AREA COMMITTEE BUDGET 2020/21

FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD FROM 2019/20

| SUMMARY/ TOTALS | Funding | Allocated | Spent | Outstanding | Unallocated Budget | | | | | | |
|-----------------|---------|-----------|-------|-------------|--------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| BALDOCK TOWN | £648 | £520 | £520 | £0 | £128 | | | | | | |
| BALDOCK EAST | £422 | £160 | £160 | £0 | £262 | | | | | | |
| ARBURY | £160 | £160 | £160 | £0 | £0 | | | | | | |
| WESTON & SANDON | £297 | £140 | £140 | £0 | £157 | | | | | | |
| Total | £1,527 | £980 | £980 | £0 | £547 | | | | | | |

2020/21 BUDGETS

| SUMMARY/ TOTALS | Funding | Allocated | Spent | Outstanding | Unallocated Budget | | | | | | |
|-----------------|---------|-----------|-------|-------------|--------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| BALDOCK TOWN | £2,400 | £0 | £0 | £0 | £2,400 | | | | | | |
| BALDOCK EAST | £1,000 | £0 | £0 | £0 | £1,000 | | | | | | |
| ARBURY | £900 | £20 | £20 | £0 | £880 | | | | | | |
| WESTON & SANDON | £700 | £0 | £0 | £0 | £700 | | | | | | |
| Total | £5,000 | £20 | £20 | £0 | £4,980 | | | | | | |

| BALDOCK TOWN | Funding | | Code | Project | Allocated | Date | Spent | Outstanding | Unallocated Budget | | Comments |
|----------------------------------|---------|--|------|-----------------------|-----------|------|-------|-------------|--------------------|--|----------|
| Funds Brought Forward from 19/20 | £648 | | | Baldock Beer Festival | £520 | | £520 | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | £648 | | | | £520 | | £520 | £0 | £128 | | |

| BALDOCK TOWN | Funding | | Code | Project | Allocated | Date | Spent | Outstanding | Unallocated Budget | | Comments |
|-------------------|---------|--|------|---------|-----------|------|-------|-------------|--------------------|--|----------|
| 20/21 Base Budget | £2,400 | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | £2,400 | | | | £0 | | £0 | £0 | £2,400 | | |

| BALDOCK EAST | Funding | | Code | Project | Allocated | Date | Spent | Outstanding | Unallocated Budget | | Comments |
|--------------|---------|--|------|---------|-----------|------|-------|-------------|--------------------|--|----------|
|--------------|---------|--|------|---------|-----------|------|-------|-------------|--------------------|--|----------|

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|------|--|--|--|------|--|------|----|------|--|
| | | | | | | | | £0 | | |
| Total | £297 | | | | £140 | | £140 | £0 | £157 | |

| <u>WESTON & SANDON</u> | <u>Funding</u> | | <u>Code</u> | <u>Project</u> | <u>Allocated</u> | <u>Date</u> | <u>Spent</u> | <u>Outstanding</u> | <u>Unallocated Budget</u> | <u>Comments</u> |
|----------------------------|----------------|--|-------------|----------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 20/21 Base Budget | £700 | | | | | | | £0 | | |
| | | | | | | | | £0 | | |
| | | | | | | | | £0 | | |
| | | | | | | | | £0 | | |
| | | | | | | | | £0 | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | £700 | | | | £0 | | £0 | £0 | £700 | |

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