

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL



Publication Date

Our Ref Baldock and Villages Community Forum
15 September 2025

Contact. Community and Partnerships Team
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To: Members of the Area Forum: Councillors Alistair Willoughby (Chair), Emma Rowe (Vice-Chair), Rhona Cameron, Steve Jarvis, Michael Muir, Tom Tyson and Stewart Willoughby

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF A

**MEETING OF THE BALDOCK AND VILLAGES COMMUNITY
FORUM**

to be held in the

**THE MAIN HALL, BALDOCK COMMUNITY CENTRE, SIMPSON
DRIVE, BALDOCK. HERTFORDSHIRE SG7 6DH**

On

MONDAY, 15TH SEPTEMBER, 2025 AT 7.30 PM

Yours sincerely,

Isabelle Alajooz
Director – Governance

****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.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
2.	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.	
3.	PRESENTATION - LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION Presentation and Q&A on Local Government Reorganisation. Information on the Local Government Reorganisation can be found in the links below: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Help shape Hertfordshire's future - have your say on changes to local government North Herts Council• Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation North Herts Council	(Pages 5 - 6)
4.	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - GRANT APPLICATIONS To consider community grant applications for recommendation to the Executive Member for Governance.	(Pages 7 - 18)
5.	PRESENTATION - BALDOCK CCTV Presentation by John Marshall the North Herts Council Community Safety Team Leader about the CCTV in Baldock.	
6.	PRESENTATION - AFFINITY WATER Presentation by Ilias Karapanos (Head of Water Resources Management) from Affinity Water about the fresh water infrastructure in Baldock and how it will be increased to support the Growing Baldock development of 3200 houses.	
7.	PRESENTATION - ANGLIAN WATER Presentation by Robert Morris (Growth Liaison Manager – Wholesale	

Services), Hannah Wilson (Pre-Development Planning Manager) and Grant Tufts (Regional Engagement Manager – corporate Affairs) from Anglian Water about the waste water infrastructure in Baldock and how it will be increased to support the Growing Baldock development of 3200 houses.

8. PRESENTATION - URBAN & CIVIC

Presentation of the most recent updates to the Growing Baldock Project by the Project Director, Paul Mumford, from Urban & Civic.

9. WARD MATTERS & OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

To receive any verbal reports from Members and questions from members of the public regarding Ward matters and Outside Organisations.

10. COMMUNITY UPDATE

To provide the Forum with an update to ensure Members are kept informed of the work of the Community and Partnerships Team.

11. FUTURE COMMUNITY FORUMS

To discuss topics for future meetings.

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All Forums, September 2025: Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Update

1. **Summary**

- 1.1 The government's requirement for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) has now reached an important stage in Hertfordshire, as all 11 councils begin to engage with residents, businesses, community groups and other stakeholders on principles and priorities, as well as potential options for future council arrangements.
- 1.2 Engagement events are being held across Hertfordshire throughout September, including the community forums in North Herts. A survey is now open to allow residents to give their views on how local government in Hertfordshire should be organised.

2. **Overview:**

- 2.1 The government's Devolution White Paper requires all local authorities in areas where there are currently two tiers of local government, to develop proposals for reorganisation. These proposals should seek to establish a single tier of local government. District and Borough Councils across Hertfordshire, along with the County Council and the Police and Crime Commissioner, are working closely together to consider future arrangements that will best meet the needs of our communities.
- 2.2 This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to help shape how local services, from bins and planning to libraries and social care, are delivered in Hertfordshire. Councils want to protect what already works well while improving the things that could be better. By taking part, residents and organisations can ensure their voices are heard and any future changes deliver long-term benefits to our communities.
- 2.3 The objectives for LGR are:
 - Simplified, more efficient and more resilient council structures
 - More consistent service access
 - Greater transparency in decision-making
 - A stronger local voice in how councils operate

3. **Steps to date:**

- 3.1 A single unitary council for the whole of Hertfordshire has been ruled out. With a population of 1.2 million, Hertfordshire is too big to be viable as just one council area. It would be larger

than any local authority in the UK and decision-making would become too far removed from our communities. Instead, councils are working together to explore options that are more locally focused and responsive, including multiple unitary authorities that better reflect the identity of different parts of our county.

- 3.2 An initial round of engagement took place in July with several key strategic partners of the council, including town business improvement districts (BIDs). This initial phase focussed on the principles and opportunities behind potential reorganisation options, and aimed to build understanding of the LGR process.

4. Information to note

- 4.1 Hertfordshire's 11 councils have developed three potential options for how local government could be structured in the future. Details for each of the three options can be seen on the display boards at the Community Forum.
- 4.2 A survey is now available online for residents to have their say on the proposals. It's the easiest way to give feedback. The link to the survey is on the display boards.
- 4.3 A website has also launched which has more information about the three options for unitary councils and updates related to LGR in Hertfordshire. The link to the survey is also there. The North Herts Council website also has more information and a link to the site.

5. Next steps:

- 5.1 Feedback from this phase of engagement will be collated and used to shape a final submission for LGR in Hertfordshire. The deadline for submissions is 28 November 2025.
- 5.2 An Extraordinary Council meeting will take place on 13 November 2025 to consider the submission, and a final decision will be made at a Cabinet meeting on 19 November 2025. Other Herts local authorities will also make a final decision that week.
- 5.3 A decision on which proposal to take forward is expected in 2026. It is anticipated that elections to the new unitary authorities will take place in May 2027, and Vesting Day (the date the new councils officially take over from the current councils) will be in 2028.

Note prepared by: Gavin Midgley, Senior Digital Communications Officer and Christine Crofts, Communications Manager

REPORT (FOR RECOMMENDATION & NOTING BY COMMUNITY FORUM)

BALDOCK & VILLAGES COMMUNITY FORUM
DATE 15 SEPTEMBER 2025

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

SERVICE DIRECTORATE: GOVERNANCE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To advise the Community Forum on the current expenditure and balances of the Community Grant budget.
- 1.2 To bring to the Forum's attention details of recent requests received for Community grant funding, made by community groups and local organisations.
- 1.3 To enable Forum Members to make recommendations to the Executive Member for Governance (formally Community & Partnerships), the Leader on grant applications.
- 1.4 To advise the Forum of the activities and schemes with which Community Partnerships officers have been involved in and some important community-based activities that will take place during the next few months.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

THAT THE COMMUNITY FORUM:

- 2.1 Considers and notes the information within this report.
- 2.2 Makes recommendations to the Executive Member for Governance on the grant applications detailed below.
- 2.3 Avenue Park Sports and Social Club - **£1,020** to resolve the issue with the plumbing, currently a Health and Safety concern.
- 2.4 Weston Luncheon Club - **£500** towards the overall hire cost of the Village Hall to host the Luncheon Club.

3. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The Community Grant budget for Baldock & Villages Community Forum 2025/26 is **£8,962**.
- 3.2 Community grant payments totalling **£1,475** have been made to date, as itemised in Appendix 1.
- 3.3 The remaining budget available for community grants for the Baldock & Villages area for 2025/26 therefore stands at **£7,487**.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Following the decision of Full Council on 18 April 2023, a Community Forum shall consider applications for community grants in its area and make recommendations to

the Executive Member for Governance on them. The Executive Member is the Leader of the Council and has delegated authority to make these Executive decisions under section 14.6.9(b)(iii)A of the constitution, in consultation with the Director: Governance. That decision will be subject to a 5 clear working day call-in period, following publication in the Members Information Service (MIS) and on the Council's website.

- 4.2 The Terms of Reference of the Community Forum can be found in Section 9 of the constitution which states that the forum will *'consider and act as an advisory body to the relevant Executive Member responsible for grants who approves these (in consultation with the relevant Director)'*.

- 4.3 Other issues raised in this report are for information and noting and therefore no direct legal implications arise.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 As outlined in Appendix 1 and under item 3.3 the Community Grant budget available is **£7,487**.

- 5.2 The total amount of funding requested for this meeting is **£1,520**.

- 5.3 If the applications outlined in Appendices 2 and 3 are recommended by the Forum and subsequently approved by the Executive Member for Governance there would be **£5,967** available for Community Grants for the remainder of the 2025/26 financial year.

6. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Good risk management supports and enhances the decision-making process, increasing the likelihood of the Council meeting its objectives and enabling it to respond quickly and effectively to change. When taking decisions, risks and opportunities must be considered.

- 6.2 There are no relevant risk entries that have been recorded on Ideagen Risk Management, 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.

7. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 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.

- 7.2 Community Grant funds are 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.

8. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Social Value Act and "go local" policy do not apply to the matters contained within this report, as there are no recommendations on procurement.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

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

10. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The activities of the Community & Partnerships team are covered by existing budgets.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 [Terms of Reference for Community Forums, Section 9 of the Council Constitution updated May 2024.](#)

11.2 [Community Grants Criteria Policy March 2025.](#)

12. APPENDICES

12.1 Appendix 1. Baldock & Villages Community Grant Budget 25-26

12.2 Appendix 2. Avenue Park Sports and Social Club

12.3 Appendix 3. Weston Luncheon Club

12.4 Appendix 4. Community Updates

13. CONTACT OFFICERS

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BALDOCK AND VILLAGES COMMUNITY FORUM

SUMMARY FINANCIAL POSITION 2025/26

<u>Original Budget</u> <u>2025/26</u>	<u>Carry Forward Budget</u> <u>2024/25</u>	<u>Total Funding</u> <u>2025/26</u>	<u>Grants</u> <u>Allocated</u>	<u>Unallocated</u> <u>Budget</u>
£8,600	£362	£8,962	£1,475	£7,487

FUNDED PROJECTS

<u>Project</u>	<u>Forum Date</u>	<u>Grant Allocated</u>
First Garden Cities Homes - Venue and entertainment for the No Limits Social Club	18th June 2025	£1,475
TOTAL BALDOCK AND VILLAGES		£1,475

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Appendix 2 – Avenue Park Sports and Social Club

=Document Control:

Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	6128			
Name of Organisation	Avenue Park Sports and Social Club			
Organisation Type	Club			
Ward	Baldock West			
Project Type	Maintenance of Existing Building			
Green option considered?	Current plumbing standards will be met.			
NHC Councillor involvement that may constitute a conflict of interest	N/A			
Previous financial support within six years	None			
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	Yes	Accounts	Yes
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes		
Total applied for	£1020	Total project cost	£1020*	
Officer Summary				
<p>Avenue Park Sports and Social Club (APSC) have defective plumbing in the gents' toilets. Waste and water do not drain properly resulting in waste ending up on the floor or it causes a blockage. These result in additional cleaning being required, but more importantly, could represent a health hazard. The toilet needs to be re-plumbed.</p> <p>These toilets are used by 110 members and considerable number of visiting teams and guests throughout the season.</p> <p>The New Management Committee of APSC are very keen to upgrade and make the best of the facilities and are looking at ways they can improve sustainability going forward. The property is NHC owned, but on a full repairing lease.</p>				

*Funding will only be released on receipt and approval of all supporting documentation

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Appendix 3 – Weston Luncheon club

=Document Control:

Version	Issue Date	Changes
1.0	NA	First Draft (BE)

Reference	6126			
Name of Organisation	Weston Luncheon Club			
Organisation Type	Club			
Ward	Weston & Sandon			
Project Type	Community / Isolation avoidance			
Green option considered?	N/A			
NHC Councillor involvement that may constitute a conflict of interest	N/A			
Previous financial support within six years	None			
Documentation reviewed and approved*	Safeguarding	Yes	Accounts	Yes
	Demonstrates clear governance	Yes		
Total applied for	£500	Total project cost	£4,000	
Officer Summary				
<p>The Weston Luncheon Club is an asset to the community in Weston. It avoids social isolation by giving locals a place to come and connect with others and received a cooked meal. It runs every week in term time and lasts a few hours or until everyone has eaten and chatted and is ready to leave.</p> <p>The overall cost to keep the Luncheon Club running in 2024 was nearly £4,000. This grant of £500, if approved, would be used towards the cost of the hall hire which is £640pa.</p> <p>The have received a grant of £300 from Weston Parish Council, and to enable them to keep running, they request a donation of £4 per person to help with the costs of the ingredients. The Club is entirely run by volunteers who frequently donate more than just their time into this worthwhile endeavour. These three elements make up the rest of the estimated annual expenditure.</p> <p>This is in Cllr Jarvis' Ward, and he may wish to provide additional details.</p>				

*Funding will only be released on receipt and approval of all supporting documentation

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Districtwide Community Updates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinating various local and district wide Network Groups including Youth Action, Food Provision, Arts and Culture and Green and Growing Group. • Coordinating voluntary support response to Asylum Seekers based in North Herts. • Continuing to facilitate NHC Councillors' Community Surgeries. • Sharing and disseminating information on social media and to mailing lists, keeping in touch with the community, voluntary, statutory, and non-statutory agencies.
Area Community Updates
<p>The Community Partnerships Officer Update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The idea to set up a community networking event similar to the Community Breakfast in Royston is still being investigated. • Baldock Community Centre - both groups have agreed to the MoU and progress toward the long term goal is being made. • Since the last Forum I have continued to attend as many Parish Council meetings as I can and am becoming a familiar face in the Village Communities. • My colleague Laura and I will be presenting at and holding a stall at the North Herts & Stevenage Centre for Voluntary Service's Funding Summit on 18th September. Register at North Herts & Stevenage Centre for Voluntary Services GoVolHerts • A reminder to Councillors that they are very welcome to arrange any meetings or ward walks with the Community Partnerships Officer.

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