

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

BALDOCK AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE

**MEETING HELD AS A VIRTUAL MEETING
ON MONDAY, 15TH MARCH, 2021 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) and Matthew Hepburn (Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer)*

Also Present: *At the commencement of the meeting approximately 5 members of the public, including registered speakers. Darryl Simmonds was present for IT Support.*

28 WELCOME AND REMOTE/PARTLY REMOTE MEETINGS PROTOCOL SUMMARY

Audio Recording – 8 Seconds

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.

29 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio Recording – 2 Minutes 40 Seconds

There were no apologies for absence received.

30 MINUTES - 27 JANUARY 2020 - 7 DECEMBER 2020

Audio Recording – 2 Minutes 48 Seconds

Councillor Michael Weeks proposed and Councillor Jim McNally seconded.

It was **RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 27 January 2020, 22 June 2020, 5 October 2020 and 7 December 2020 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.
- (2) That, with the authorisation of the Chair, his electronic signature and initials be attached to the Minutes approved in (1) above.

31 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio Recording – 4 Minutes 27 Seconds

There was no other business notified.

32 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio Recording – 4 Minutes 37 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 this meeting was being audio recorded as well as filmed. The audio recordings would be available on Mod.gov and the film recording via the NHDC YouTube channel.
- (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 HERTFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY

Audio Recording – 5 Minutes 18 Seconds

Sergeant Stephen Oliphant, Hertfordshire Constabulary, thanked the Chair for the invitation to address the Committee and provided Members with a verbal presentation.

Sergeant Oliphant provided the following Crime Statistics for the Baldock and District area:

Overall Reported Crime: this year (last year)

Baldock Town Ward – 452 (last year 484)
Baldock East Ward – 41 (last year 69)
Arbury Ward – 116 (last year 143)
Weston and Sandon – 76 (last year 83)

Criminal Damage:

Baldock Town Ward – 32 (last year 57)
Baldock East Ward – 7 (last year 13)
Arbury Ward – 10 (last year 12)
Weston and Sandon Ward 8 (last year 7)

Burglary:

Baldock Town Ward – 23 (last year 28)
Baldock East Ward – 1 (last year 12)
Arbury Ward – 14 (last year 18)
Weston and Sandon Ward – 7 (last year 24)

Drugs:

Baldock Town Ward – 13 (last year 16)
Baldock East Ward – 2 (0 last year)
Arbury Ward – 0 (8 last year)
Weston and Sandon Ward – 6 (3 last year)

Theft:

Baldock Town Ward – 64 (last year 65)
Baldock East Ward – 1 (last year 4)
Arbury Ward – 16 (last year 38)
Weston and Sandon Ward – 11 (last year 11)

Shop Theft:

Baldock Town Ward – 26 (last year 26)
Baldock East Ward – 0 (last year 1)
Arbury Ward – 1 (last year 3)
Weston and Sandon – 0 (last year 1)

Vehicle Crime:

Baldock Town Ward – 39 (last year 40)
Baldock East Ward – 4 (last year 8)
Arbury Ward – 20 (last year 22)
Weston and Sandon – 14 (last year 8)

ASB:

ASB figures were for the entire district. However, the trend was similar across the localities.

- All ASB – 2314 this year – last year 2293
- Environmental - 609 – last year 495
- Nuisance - 1193 - last year 1258
- Personal - 512 – last year – 540

Sergeant Oliphant advised that the Police Priorities for Baldock were to focus on Anti-Social Behaviour and Speeding. Sergeant Oliphant also informed Members that his team were working with housing providers and the District Council to tackle ASB.

Sergeant Oliphant advised that his team were working with other organisations to support vulnerable people.

Sergeant Oliphant advised that additional patrols had taken place in order to tackle Covid-19 breaches.

The following Members asked questions:

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

In response to questions raised by Members, Sergeant Oliphant advised that:

- In terms of crime statistics this year meant '01 / 04 /20 to today (15/03/21)' and last year meant '01/04/19 to 31/03/20';
- The local police priorities were focusing on speed enforcement and ways to tackle speeding in the High Street;
- The Police and Crime Commissioner had recently launched a DriveSafe initiative;
- There were no recorded offences of supplying drugs. The figures related to direct possession of drugs;
- Police resources were being directed towards drug possession and supply;
- The priorities which had been set were focusing on drug related crime;
- The team were dealing with a number of issues that crossed over into different areas of police;
- The team were happy to receive 'intelligence' from Councillors;
- Also intelligence received was reviewed;
- The team worked closely with the Council's enforcement officers in order to tackle fly-tipping;
- In a lot of cases, the public reported fly-tipping to the Police. However, this needed to be dealt by the Council's enforcement officers. The Police supported the enforcement officers in their work to ensure offenders were prosecuted;
- There had been no reports of dog thefts over the last 6 months in North Hertfordshire;
- Outcome rates were dictated by the Home Office;

The Outcome Rates were as follows:

- Baldock 12% (LY 9.6%)
- Arbury 6.7% (LY 12.2%)
- Weston and Sandon 14.5% (LY 11.9%).

In response to questions raised relating to the Outcome Rates, Sergeant Oliphant advised:

- That he was comfortable with how his team were responding to crime;
- Victim Surveys were carried out in order to obtain a victim's opinion on the service provided by the Police.

34 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - SANDON SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB

Audio Recording – 44 Minutes 15 Seconds

A verbal presentation was given by David Green, Sandon Sports and Social Club, in regards to the grant application, including:

- Their old shed had been subject to some attempted break-ins;
- There was a need for a secure, robust container to house equipment in;
- The container was able to be painted so that it better suited its natural surroundings; and
- The majority of the price had already been financed. However, they needed £500.00 to help with the cost of purchasing the container.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Jim McNally;
- Councillor Val Shanley;
- Councillor Michael Weeks; and
- Councillor Tom Tyson.

In response to questions raised, Mr Green advised that:

- The container was very secure and robust;
- Other cricket clubs were using something very similar for their equipment;
- Planning Permission was not needed;
- The container would be placed next to the Pavilion;
- The price of the container included delivery;
- The container was purpose built and came painted in whichever colour requested; and
- The container looked like a shipping container.

35 GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE

Audio Recording – 51 Minutes 34 Seconds

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

- Directed Members to the Funding available for the Committee as detailed at Paragraph 7.3 of the report;
- Directed Members to the 'Grants in the Pipeline' as outlined at paragraph 8.1.2 of the report; and
- There was an update to the report in relation to details contained in paragraph 8.2.1. The Big Lunch would now be taking place on 4 July 2021, the Baldock Cycle Challenge would now take place on 5 September 2021 and the Baldock Beast Half Marathon would be taking place on 31 October 2021.

It was:

RESOLVED:

- (1) That any unspent funds from the 2020/21 financial year be allocated to Community & Environmental initiatives for 2021/22;

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

REASONS FOR DECISIONS:

- (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; and
- (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.

36 GRANT APPLICATION - SANDON SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB

Audio Recording – 51 Minutes 34 Seconds

Councillor Steve Jarvis proposed to grant the £500.00 from his Weston and Sandon ward budget.

It was voted and thus:

RESOLVED: That grant funding of £500 be awarded to Sandon Sports and Social Club to assist towards the cost of purchasing a new storage unit for storing equipment at the venue.

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

37 WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS

Audio Recording – 57 Minutes 10 Seconds

Members raised the following topics under Ward Matters and Members' Reports:

Councillor Jim McNally:

- Baldock 5K Rat Run was taking on 12 September 2021; and
- Baldock Futures Fund was looking at setting up board games in the High Street on Saturdays in the Summer.

Councillor Tom Tyson:

- Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall Neighbourhood Plan Referendum was taking place on 6 May 2021. He stressed how important this document was and wished to raise public awareness of it.

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Councillor Michael Muir:

- 2 roads were to be resurfaced during April;
- £77,000 of his County Highways Locality Budget had already been allocated; and
- The majority of resurfacing work was to pavements.

The meeting closed at 8.34 pm

Chair