

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

BALDOCK AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE

**MEETING HELD IN THE BALDOCK ARTS AND HERITAGE CENTRE, OLD TOWN HALL,
HIGH STREET, BALDOCK, SG7 6AR
ON MONDAY, 21ST JUNE, 2021 AT 7.30 PM**

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Jim McNally (Chair), Michael Muir (Vice-Chair), Juan Cowell and Steve Jarvis*

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

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

1 ELECTION OF A CHAIR FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2021/2022

Audio Recording – 0 Seconds

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer opened the meeting and called for nominations for the Chair of the Baldock and District Committee for the Civic Year 2021/2022.

Councillor Michael Muir proposed that Councillor Jim McNally be elected Chair which was seconded by Councillor Juan Cowell.

There being no other nominations, it was:

RESOLVED: That Councillor Jim McNally be elected as Chair of the Baldock and District Committee for the Civic Year 2021/2022.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio Recording – 13 Minutes 20 Seconds

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tom Tyson and Michael Weeks.

3 ELECTION OF A VICE-CHAIR FOR THE CIVIC YEAR 2021/2022

Audio Recording – 50 Seconds

The Chair called for nominations for a Vice-Chair of the Baldock and District Committee for the Civic Year 2021/2022.

Councillor Jim McNally as Chair proposed that Councillor Michael Muir be elected Vice-Chair which was seconded by Councillor Juan Cowell.

There being no other nominations, it was:

RESOLVED: That Councillor Michael Muir be elected Vice-Chair of the Baldock and District Committee for the Civic Year 2021/2022.

4 MINUTES - 15 MARCH 2021

Audio Recording – 14 Minutes 11 Seconds

Councillor Michael Muir proposed and Councillor Steve Jarvis seconded and it was:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 15 March 2021 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

5 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio Recording – 14 Minutes 55 Seconds

There was no other business notified.

6 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio Recording – 10 Minutes 20 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; and
- (4) The Chair welcomed Councillor Juan Cowell, the newly elected Councillor for Baldock East, to the Committee.

7 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - ASHWELL PLAYGROUP

Audio Recording – 3 Minutes 40 Seconds

A verbal presentation was given by Ashwell Play Group regarding their grant application.

Merry Smith, Treasurer at Ashwell Play Group, informed the Committee about how the coronavirus pandemic had had a significant impact on the playgroup's finances, which was one of the reasons grant funding was required.

Councillor Michael Muir informed Ms Smith that her ward Councillor (Tom Tyson) was not present at the meeting. However, Councillor Tyson had emailed the Committee Members giving his support to the application.

8 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - MAGIC MOMENTS

Audio Recording – 16 Minutes 11 Seconds

A verbal presentation was given by Magic Moments regarding their grant application.

Magic Moments informed the Committee about how the coronavirus pandemic had had a significant impact its finances, which was one of the reasons grant funding was required.

Following their presentation, the Chair asked if Members had any questions.

Councillor Jim McNally asked if they had considered hiring a stall at the Baldock Market which would be free of charge in order to help with fundraising.

Councillor Jim McNally explained that as it was the Committee's first meeting in the Civic Year, it was necessary to be prudent with the allocation of the grants as there would be other organisations seeking funding support from the Baldock & District Committee over the coming year.

With this in mind, Councillor Jim McNally proposed that the amount of funding awarded to Magic Moments be lowered to £750.00 instead of £990.00.

In response, Councillor Michael Muir proposed that the amount of funding awarded be reduced further to £500.00 and that he would make up the rest with his Hertfordshire County Council Members Locality Budget.

9 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - GREENING ASHWELL

Audio Recording – 26 Minutes 55 Seconds

A verbal presentation was given by Greening Ashwell regarding their grant application, including:

- A priority task was to plot all the significant trees in the village and seek Tree Preservation Order protection;
- Ashwell was a green oasis;
- Aims to allow wildlife to thrive;
- They were working with farmers and landowners and a wide cross section of the Community; and
- The goal was to reduce the climate change impact locally.

Councillor Jim McNally advised that the ward Councillor, Tom Tyson, supported the application as well.

10 GRANT APPLICATION - ASHWELL PLAYGROUP

Audio Recording – 11 Minutes 33 Seconds

Councillor Michael Muir proposed that the full amount requested be awarded to Ashwell Playgroup which was seconded by Councillor Steve Jarvis.

It was therefore:

RESOLVED: That grant funding of £570 be awarded to Ashwell Playgroup to assist towards the cost of room hire costs.

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

11 GRANT APPLICATION - MAGIC MOMENTS

Audio Recording – 25 Minutes

It was:

RESOLVED: That grant funding of £500 be awarded to Magic Moments to assist towards the cost of purchasing a new laptop and furniture for indoor role play.

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

12 GRANT APPLICATION - GREENING ASHWELL

Audio Recording – 30 Minutes

Councillor Michael Muir proposed and Councillor Steve Jarvis seconded.

It was therefore:

RESOLVED: That grant funding of £250 be awarded to Greening Ashwell to assist with publicity, venue hire and tree planting costs.

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

13 GRANTS AND COMMUNITY UPDATE

Audio Recording – 30 Minutes 35 Seconds

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

- The Community Engagement Officer had been working with a number of groups and organisations who were seeking funding support from the Baldock & District Committee. Future grant applications were detailed at Paragraph 8.1.4 within the report;
- The Baldock Big Lunch which was due to be held on Sunday 4 July had been cancelled owing to the coronavirus pandemic;
- There were a number of events scheduled for 2021 and these were detailed at 8.2.2 within the report; and
- The Community Engagement Officer was liaising and supporting staff at the Baldock Arts & Heritage Centre with the Phase 2 works at the building. The latest project to be completed was the wooden floor of the main hall.

Councillor Jim McNally advised that the Baldock Big Lunch would take place in June next year (2022) and it would coincide with the Jubilee.

The Chair thanked the Community Engagement Officer for his work.

It was:

RESOLVED: That 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.

14 WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS

Audio Recording – 35 Minutes 20 Seconds

The Chair and Members raised concerns about crime in Baldock and advised that policing levels had changed in the town. There was now 1 PCSO which Baldock shared with Letchworth.

The Chair requested that the Chief Inspector attends the next Baldock and District Committee in order to allow Members to raise concerns around crime and policing in Baldock.

The meeting closed at 8.13 pm

Chair