

**BALDOCK COMMITTEE**  
**14 MARCH 2022**

**\*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 advise the Committee of the activities and schemes with which the Community Engagement Officer has been involved in.
- 1.3** 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.

**£850** to Ashwell Playgroup to assist with venue hire costs for 1 academic term. (Summer) as outlined in 8.1.1.

**£980** to Ashwell Tennis & Sports Club to assist with costs for the purchase of a new clubhouse at the venue as outlined in 8.1.2.

**£862** to Knights Templar School for the purchase of gardening equipment and litter picking equipment that will be used by two extra-curricular groups at the school as outlined in 8.1.3.

**£949** to Nightingale Residents Association to assist with costs for repair and maintenance works at Nightingale Park as outlined in 8.1.4.

**£1000** to Nova Wellness CIC to assist with costs for running two, one-hour sessions for 20 carers based in Baldock as outlined in 8.1.5.

- 2.2 That the Committee agrees that any unspent funds from the 2021/22 financial year be allocated to Community & Environmental Initiatives for the 2022/23 period.
- 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 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 2021/22. 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 2021/22 is summarised below:

	<b>2020/21 Carry Forward</b>	<b>2021/22 Base Budget</b>	<b>Total Budget</b>
<b>Baldock Town</b>	£1,148	£2,400	£3, 548
<b>Baldock East</b>	£842	£1,000	£1,842
<b>Arbury</b>	£60	£900	£960
<b>Weston &amp; Sandon</b>	£207	£700	£907
	£2,257	£5,000	£7,257

## 8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

### 8.1 Grant Applications

#### 8.1.1

<b>Applicant Project</b>	<b>Ashwell Playgroup</b> Funding support to assist with venue hire costs for 1 academic term. (Summer)
<b>Sum requested</b>	£850
<b>Total project cost</b>	£1,750
<b>Match funding</b>	£500 from fundraising, £400 from subscriptions
<b>Previous support</b>	Yes, £570 in 2021 and £700 in 2020 to assist with venue hire costs during the Pandemic
<b>NHDC Policy met</b>	Yes
<b>Council objective:</b>	Build thriving and resilient communities

Ashwell Playgroup is seeking funding support from the Baldock & District Committee to assist with venue hire costs for 1 academic term. (Summer)

Ashwell Playgroup has been providing pre-school education for children of Ashwell and the surrounding villages since 1975. It is a registered charity that is made up of 5 Volunteer Committee Members, 2 Full time paid staff, 3 Part time paid staff and 4 Volunteers. The Playgroup caters for 23 families currently. As with a lot of groups, Ashwell Playgroup has been affected by the ongoing Pandemic which has impacted on numbers attending and the group's ability to fundraise. The group has previously received funding support for room hire costs in 2021 and 2020 but before this the group has never applied for funding for room hire costs and has been self-sufficient. Funding

was awarded in 2015 and 2011 but for items of equipment. The application is criteria compliant, and the group has advised that any shortfall in funding can be met from reserves or further fundraising.

8.1.2

<b>Applicant Project</b>	<b>Ashwell Tennis &amp; Sports Club</b> Funding support to assist with costs for new clubhouse at the venue
<b>Sum requested</b>	£980
<b>Total project cost</b>	£21,300
<b>Match funding</b>	£12,510 from club reserves, £4090 from fundraising efforts and £3,600 from other fundraising streams
<b>Previous support</b>	Yes, £300 in 2011 for 2 netball posts and nets
<b>NHDC Policy met</b>	Yes
<b>Council objective:</b>	Build thriving and resilient communities

Ashwell Tennis and Sports Club is seeking funding support from the Baldock & District Committee to assist with costs for the purchase of a new clubhouse at the venue which can be used for changing, meetings, equipment storage and simply as an area to keep dry when it is raining.

Ashwell Tennis Club has been operating in Ashwell since 1961 and provides tennis for all ages. It is a club with around 300 members. The club is made up of 8 Volunteer Committee members. The Club has 2 tennis courts and parking for users. The group is looking for financial support to assist with the purchase of a club house facility at the venue. This would be an area for changing, storage, meetings, and a possible community hub for the wider community. As well as having members from Ashwell, the club also has 3 individual members from Baldock as well as 2 family memberships. The group has secured significant match funding. The Baldock Community Engagement Officer has advised the group that any funding will only be released on receipt of planning application approval and when all funding required for the project is secured. The application is criteria compliant. The funding required is more than the Arbury Ward Member has in his budget and the group has been informed that there is another application coming to the Committee for funding from Ashwell. The group is confident that any shortfall in funding can be met from own funds or further fundraising / funding applications.

8.1.3

<b>Applicant Project</b>	<b>Knights Templar School</b> Funding support to assist with the purchase of gardening equipment and litter picking equipment that will be used by two extra-curricular groups at the school
<b>Sum requested</b>	£862
<b>Total project cost</b>	£1,012.39
<b>Match funding</b>	£150 from fundraising efforts
<b>Previous support</b>	Yes, £1,338 in 2011 for the purchase of sound equipment for the school
<b>NHDC Policy met</b>	Yes

**Council objective:** Build thriving and resilient communities

Knights Templar School is seeking funding support from the Baldock & District Committee for the purchase of gardening equipment and litter picking equipment that will be used by two extra-curricular groups at the school, namely the Green Knights which is a lunchtime club and those involved in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. Both groups are involved in outdoor conservation activities.

Both the Green Knights Group and those students involved in the DoE Award Scheme have given a great deal to the community and conservation of the area. The Gardening club (part of Green Knights) is restarting after a gap due to COVID. The garden has been neglected for the last 2 years and needs clearing and replanting. Since 2020, KTS have supported students to volunteer through helping to plant a new woodland at Ivel Springs with Baldock Rotary Club, as well as organising litter picks, nature-focused citizen science projects and supporting smaller Silver DofE groups to work towards the John Muir Award. The students also support the work carried out by Friends of Baldock Green Spaces, Baldock Rotarians, Revival and Baldock Beats Waste. The new equipment will enable more students to get involved in Conservation initiatives and Community Projects. Equipment the group is looking to purchase includes spades, forks, rakes, gardening gloves, a wheelbarrow, chicken wire, fencing, garden knee pads, litter pickers etc. The application is criteria compliant.

8.1.4

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Nightingale Residents Association</b>
<b>Project</b>	Funding support to assist with costs for repair and maintenance works at Nightingale Park.
<b>Sum requested</b>	£949
<b>Total project cost</b>	£1,660
<b>Match funding</b>	£650.84 from S106 Community Safety funds
<b>Previous support</b>	Yes, £230 in 2013 for the purchase of banners to promote the park.
<b>NHDC Policy met</b>	Yes
<b>Council objective:</b>	Build thriving and resilient communities

Nightingale Residents Association are seeking funding support from the Baldock & District Committee to assist with costs for repair and maintenance works at Nightingale Park. This includes the remarking of the basketball court which is well used by youths in the local area and repair works to the bench in the Community Garden area which has been vandalised.

Nightingale Park is a well-used facility located off Weston Way in Baldock. The park benefits from a popular Basketball Court, a park with equipment for younger children and a community /conservation area. The funding requested is to re-mark the basketball court which is well used by the youth of Baldock and also to repair a damaged bench in the conservation area. Nightingale Residents Association are working with the Settle Group on a larger project to replace one of the basketball posts and to purchase fencing to stop the ball hitting park users in the conservation area. The Baldock Community Engagement Officer has checked but there are no S106 Leisure monies available for this project. The Officer has signposted the Residents Association to numerous funding

streams such as Sport England and Awards for All. The group will require Planning Permission for the fencing project and also consent from the Settle Group. Part funding for this project has been allocated from the S106 Community Safety pot which was also utilised for the marking of the basketball court 9 years ago. The application is criteria compliant.

8.1.5

<b>Applicant Project</b>	<b>Nova Wellbeing</b>
	Funding support to assist with costs for running two, one-hour sessions for 20 carers based in Baldock.
<b>Sum requested</b>	£1,000
<b>Total project cost</b>	£1,200
<b>Match funding</b>	£95 from own funds and £105 from Carers in Herts group.
<b>Previous support</b>	Yes, £975 in 2021 from the Letchworth & District Committee for Therapy events.
<b>NHDC Policy met</b>	Yes
<b>Council objective:</b>	Build thriving and resilient communities

The Nova Wellness CIC provides holistic therapies and treatments to improve the well-being of community members. We are applying for funding to provide GROUP WELL-BEING THERAPY EVENTS for Carers in Baldock. Unpaid Carers provide a huge service to the community saving the NHS millions of pounds each year.

Nova Wellness feel the events will be good value for money because they will help carers who look after a member of their family, to have quality time out to themselves, will help recharge their batteries and support them in their role as primary carers.

Nova Wellness is a Community Interest Company that was set up in 2021. The group is made of 1 Volunteer Committee Member, 1 Fulltime Paid Staff, 6 Parttime paid staff and 5 volunteers. The group is based in Stevenage but works across North Herts. The funding requested is to provide two one-hour sessions for 20 carers based in Baldock. The funding will pay for four events for up to 20 carers each. There will be a minimum of two therapists and an additional staff member at the events, as well as supporting staff back in the office.

The format of the group sessions will be 1hr of group therapy such as guided relaxation and 1hr of insightful therapy demonstrations, tasters, and short treatments, for example acupuncture, sound bowls, relaxing shoulder massage and other. Our therapists will be on sight an hour prior to the event for set up and to welcome the clients arriving to the session. The application is criteria compliant.

8.2. **Future Grants**

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 several factors these applications were not able to be tabled at the October meeting so have been deferred until a future meeting. Details of the applications are included in the table below:

Group	Project	Funding Requested
Haven Group	The funding requested is to cover costs for activities planned for those at the Shelter at Templars, Baldock for a period of 6 months.	Group has sufficient funds currently but will approach the Committee later in 2022.
Baldock Run Talk Run	This is a group for people who wish to use running 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.	Group currently does not need funding but may approach the Committee later in 2022
Baldock vs Coronavirus Support Group	This group is seeking to assist those who have been adversely affected by the Coronavirus Pandemic. This might include counselling support, careers advice and financial assistance. This group will provide a crucial service in Baldock in the aftermath of the Pandemic	Funding requested to be confirmed as group is still in the process of setting itself up as a registered charity.
St Marys Community Fireworks	St Marys PTA is seeking funding support to assist with publicity and equipment costs for the event in November.	Funding requested unknown but an application will be submitted to the Committee later in 2022.
NESSIE (North Herts Emotional Support in Schools Service)	This group is seeking funding support to provide an urgent counselling service to vulnerable children and families needing support following the latest lockdown. NESSIE is currently inundated with requests for support in Baldock, Letchworth and Hitchin. This is high-end need where the children have neurodiversity and have experienced trauma.	The group was successful in securing funding from the Health Protection Board so no longer needs funding from the Committee.

## **8.2 Community Engagement Updates**

### **8.2.1 Farmers on Christmas Lights Tour**

On Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> December around 100 tractors all decorated and lit up for Christmas, visited Baldock, Letchworth and Hitchin. This event was a fundraiser for the Garden House Hospice. The Baldock CEO assisted the organisers with the paperwork required by the North Herts Safety Advisory Group, arranged the suspension of the carpark in Hitchin for the safe congregation of the tractors at the end of the parade and also provided marshal support on the night.

The event was a huge success and was well supported by residents in Baldock, Letchworth and Hitchin and raised over £7.5k for the Garden House Hospice.

The event will return in 2022 and will use the same route and will be held on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> December.

### **8.2.2 Baldock Beast Half Marathon**

The Baldock Beast Half Marathon will be held for a tenth time on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2022. Due to Covid, the 2021 event was held on 31<sup>st</sup> October and as a result of the short time period between the events, uptake for the 2022 event has been down compared with previous years with around 200 expected to take part on 27<sup>th</sup> February. This compares with 350 for the 2021 event and 400 for the 2019 event.

The Baldock Community Engagement Officer (CEO) has assisted the Baldock Events Forum with the planning of the event including publicity and promotion on social media, First Aid cover, Portaloo provision and erection of the advanced warning signage around the course.

The Baldock CEO will also provide support on race day, including checking the course and signage prior to the race, providing marshal support at a key junction and removal of all race signage at the close of the event.

### **8.2.3 Street Food Heroes**

The Baldock CEO is working with the Baldock Events Forum and the organiser of Street Food Heroes for the return of this popular event for Baldock High Street. Street Food Heroes consists of 7-8 food vendors, a mobile bar and DJ. Food vendors for the event are carefully selected so as not to impact on the many wonderful eateries of the town but to offer something different.

Street Food Heroes will trade under the Baldock Events Forum's Street Trading Licence but will have their own Temporary Event Notice (TEN) rather than operate under the Forums Premises Licence.



The Baldock CEO has assisted Street Food Heroes with licensing paperwork and consent from Highways for holding the event on Highways land. The Baldock CEO will also arrange the suspension of parking bays for event.

Street Food Heroes will be visiting Baldock High Street monthly on a Friday from April through to September 2022.

As well as being an income generator for the Baldock Events Forum, these events will also encourage people to come to the town centre and drive footfall for the local businesses.

#### 8.2.4 Baldock EcoFest Event

The second ever EcoFest Event for Baldock will be held on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2022. The Baldock CEO will again be assisting the organisers with event paperwork, suspension of parking and event promotion and publicity. As with the 2021 event, EcoFest will give residents of Baldock and the surrounding villages the opportunity to talk with local experts on a range of issues including reducing food waste, growing your own produce, upcycling and crafting and recycling and composting.

#### 8.2.5 Baldock Festival

The Baldock Festival will be returning to Baldock in May 2022. The two-week festival will start with the Beer Festival which will be held over the Early May Bank Holiday weekend. This event is very popular and as well as being a key community event is also raising funds for some key charities in the area.

The showpiece event of the Baldock Festival is the Baldock Street Festival Day which will be held on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May. The Baldock CEO is working with the Festival Committee on all event paperwork and has also arranged the First Aid for 3 of the events during the two-week festival.

The Baldock CEO will also arrange the suspension of parking for the Baldock Street Festival Day and the Baldock Classic Car Show and will also provide support during the set up and take down of the events.

#### 8.2.6 Baldock Big Lunch

The Baldock Big Lunch was due to be held for a ninth time on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> July but was unfortunately cancelled just a week before the event due to the ongoing Pandemic and concerns about social distancing. The new date for the event in 2022 was originally Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> June but this has been amended now to Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June to coincide with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The Baldock CEO will be assisting the Baldock Events Forum with the preparations for this event including the paperwork as requested by the North Herts Safety Advisory Group. The Baldock CEO will assist with the promotion and publicity for the event and will provide support on the day with event set up and take down.

#### 8.2.7 Ashwell Recreation Ground

The Baldock CEO is assisting Ashwell Parish Council to find funding for new play equipment for the recreation ground. The Baldock CEO has identified £26k from S106 Play Space that can be utilised for this project. The Baldock CEO will be meeting with the Parish Council in the coming months to move this project forward. Due to the ongoing Pandemic, it has not yet been possible to set up a meeting amongst all parties but this will be further investigated in 2022.

The Baldock CEO will also be working with Ashwell Parish Council on the pavilion project during 2022.

#### 8.2.8 Sandon Sports & Social Club

The Baldock CEO has been successful in finding S106 monies to assist Sandon Sports & Social Club with costs for replacing the cladding at the venue. £5619.33 has been allocated to this project from S106 monies for Sandon. The club has been able to source the other funding required for the project with works set to be completed by July 2022.

#### 8.2.9 Funding support for venues via the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grants

The Baldock CEO has signposted the numerous community buildings of the town including the Baldock Community Centre and Baldock Arts & Heritage Centre to funding that is available from NHC Business grants. Depending on the rateable value of the premises, each building will receive a grant of between £2.5k and £6k. This funding will be crucial for community venues which are still struggling financially due to the ongoing Pandemic.

### 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. Combined with the carry forward amounts from the 2019/20 financial year, the Committee has £7,257 left to allocate at the final meeting in the current financial year. The grant applications to be considered at this meeting total £4,641 which if all grants are awarded would leave £2,616 to be carried forward to 2022/23.

## **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.
- 14.2 The grant application for Knights Templar School (section 8.1.3) proposes the purchase of equipment to assist with gardening and litter picking locally. This has the potential to create a positive environmental impact through enabling the continuation of conservation efforts and increasing the quality of the local environment.

## **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**

- 17.1 Author: Ashley Hawkins, Community Engagement Officer for Baldock & Royston  
Email: [ashley.hawkins@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:ashley.hawkins@north-herts.gov.uk) ext.4225

Contributors: Reuben Ayavoo, Policy & Community Engagement Manager  
Email: [reuben.ayavoo@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:reuben.ayavoo@north-herts.gov.uk) ext. 4212

Anne Miller, Assistant Accountant  
Email: [Anne.Miller@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Anne.Miller@north-herts.gov.uk) ext. 4374

Yvette Roberts, Legal Officer  
Email: [Yvette.roberts@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Yvette.roberts@north-herts.gov.uk) ext. 4310

Rebecca Webb , HR Operations Manager  
Email: [rebecca.webb@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:rebecca.webb@north-herts.gov.uk) ext. 4481

Tim Everitt, Performance & Risk Officer  
Email: [tim.everitt@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:tim.everitt@north-herts.gov.uk) ext. 4646

Georgina Chapman, Policy Officer  
Email: [georgina.chapman@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:georgina.chapman@north-herts.gov.uk) ext. 4121

## **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.

