

**BALDOCK COMMITTEE
31 OCTOBER 2022**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

TITLE OF REPORT: GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE

REPORT OF: THE POLICY & COMMUNITIES 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.
- 2.2** **£2,400** to Nova Wellness CIC to assist with costs for running four, one-hour sessions for 20 carers based in Baldock as outlined in 8.1.1
- 2.3** That the Committee be recommended to agree on the provision and frequency of Councillor Surgeries as detailed in 8.3 to 8.13
- 2.4** 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 With reference to point 2.1 above, the Community Engagement Officer is seeking advice from the Committee on the best way forward with regards to Councillor Surgery provision.

3.3 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 July 2021.

3.4 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 2022/23. 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 2022/23 is summarised below:

	2021/22 Carry Forward	2022/23 Base Budget	Total Budget
Baldock Town	£1,334	£2,400	£3, 734
Baldock East	£410	£1,000	£1,410
Arbury	£462	£900	£1,362
Weston & Sandon	£359	£700	£1,059
	£2,565	£5,000	£7,565

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Grant Applications

8.1.1

Applicant Project	Nova Wellbeing Funding support to assist with costs for running four, one-hour sessions for 20 carers based in Baldock.
Sum requested	£2,400
Total project cost	£2,860
Match funding	£220 from own funds and £240 from Carers in Herts group.
Previous support	Yes, £1000 in 2022 from the Baldock & District Committee for Therapy events.
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Council objective:	Build thriving and resilient communities

8.1.2 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.

8.1.3 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.

8.1.4 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 four 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.

8.1.5 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.

8.1.6 Nova Wellness received funding from the Baldock & District Committee in March 2022. This funding was to provide two, one- hour sessions for 20 carers based in Baldock. This was the first time these sessions had been run in Baldock and they proved extremely popular, hence the group wishing to offer double the sessions later in 2022.

8.1.7 Nova Wellness has been advised by the Baldock Community Engagement Officer that the full funding amount requested may not be possible due to the budget available to the Committee which needs to cater for further grant applications at the two remaining meetings of the financial year in December 22 and March 23 respectively.

8.1.8 The application is criteria compliant.

8.2. Future Grants

8.2.1 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 September 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 if further funding for projects is required.
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.
Young at Heart Club	This group is seeking funding to assist with venue hire costs.	The group is seeking £565 but their application has been deferred as they do not currently have a safeguarding policy or staff DBS Checks which are required for all Grant Applications to the Area

		Committee. The group has set up a bank account and the Community Engagement Officer is working with them on a Herts County Council Locality Budget application.
St Marys Community Fireworks	St Marys PTA is seeking funding support to assist with publicity and equipment costs for the event in November.	The group did apply to the June Committee but given they currently have funding for this year's project they have been asked to resubmit an application in 2023 if they have a funding shortfall for the 2023 Community Firework event.

8.3 Community Engagement Updates

8.3.1 Councillor Surgeries in Baldock

8.3.2 Baldock is the only town with an Area Committee within North Herts that does not currently offer Councillor Surgeries as a mechanism for engaging with residents. Surgeries are well established in Hitchin and Letchworth and have been operating in Royston since 2020.

8.3.3 In both Letchworth and Hitchin the surgeries are held monthly while in Royston the surgeries are held every 2 months. The surgeries were held more frequently in Royston but due to poor attendance the Committee agreed to switch to holding them on a two monthly basis.

8.3.4 In all three towns, the surgeries are held in locations where footfall is high and this is something the Baldock Committee will need to consider carefully if they wish to hold surgeries. In Royston the surgery is held within the Saturday Market area, whilst the market square is used in Hitchin and the Letchworth Garden Square Shopping Centre is used in Letchworth.

8.3.5 For Letchworth and Hitchin the surgeries run from 1030 until 12noon whilst in Royston the surgery is held between 10 and 1130am which coincides with the busiest time for the market.

8.3.6 In terms of equipment, pop up gazebos and tables are used for each surgery, and these are currently provided by the various BID groups or by the Police in Royston. Each surgery also has its own banner to promote the surgery.

8.3.7 In terms of format for the surgeries, the relevant Community Engagement Officer will promote the surgeries via social media and posters around the local area and will also ensure that the surgery is set up correctly. Councillor are required to log issues raised on their tablets or on recording sheets and then pass these to the relevant service areas for responses.

8.3.8 In terms of Councillor Surgeries there is a requirement for both Officers and Members to attend sessions at weekends. Experience from the Royston Councillor Surgeries has shown that on most occasions' officers/members heavily outnumbered members of the public in attendance.

8.3.9 When considering the options as detailed in 8.13 below, Members should consider which would be the most appropriate location to ensure footfall for the surgery to maximise the opportunity for engaging with residents. In terms of timings for the surgeries, these are currently held on a Saturday morning either from 1030am to 12noon or 10am to 1130am. Members may also wish to agree on which Saturday of the month to hold the surgery. In Hitchin it is the first Saturday of the month, in Letchworth it is the third Saturday of the month and in Royston it is the second Saturday of the month. Members may wish to consider holding the Baldock Councillor Surgery on the fourth Saturday of the month to ensure resources are available to cover it.

8.3.10 The Baldock CEO would like the Committee to consider and agree on the following options for Councillor Surgeries in Baldock.

Option 1 – Hold a Councillor Surgery at Baldock High Street once a month on a Saturday either 1030am to 12noon or 10am to 1130am.

Option 2 – Hold a Councillor Surgery at Baldock High Street once every two months on a Saturday either 1030am to 12noon or 10am to 1130am.

Option 3 – Hold a Councillor Surgery at Tesco's once a month on a Saturday either 1030am to 12noon or 10am to 1130am. Subject to consent from Tesco's.

Option 4 – Hold a Councillor Surgery at Tesco's once every two months on Saturday either 1030am to 12noon or 10am to 1130am. Subject to consent from Tesco's.

Option 5 – Hold ad hoc Councillor Surgery type events on occasions when there are already events in the High Street such as Baldock Festival, EcoFest or Baldock Christmas Event.

Option 6- Do not hold Councillor Surgery events.

8.3.11 Baldock 5km Rat Run

8.3.12 The Baldock 5km Rat Run will be returning to White Horse Street for a fourth time on Sunday 4th September 2022. This event is organised by Hollinton Health Injury and Wellness centre and all profit is donated to the Garden House Hospice.

8.3.13 The Baldock Community Engagement Officer (CEO) has assisted the organiser with the paperwork as required by North Herts Safety Advisory Group (SAG), organised the funfair equipment for the event and arranged the medals and trophies.

8.3.14 The Baldock CEO will also assist with the event set up and will provide marshal support for the race.

8.3.15 Balstock Community Fun Event

- 8.3.16 Balstock will be returning to Baldock in September. Balstock is Hertfordshire's largest free music festival and will be held in Baldock between Friday 9th and Sunday 11th September.
- 8.3.17 The event was originally held solely within the Public Houses of the town, but with support from the Baldock CEO, a community event was established for the High Street to provide fun for all the family.
- 8.3.18 The High Street event would always include food stalls, funfair rides and attractions for all the family and would showcase young local talent.
- 8.3.19 Due to the substantial planning required for the High Street event, the organisers have decided to hold the event every other year.
- 8.3.20 For 2022, the organisers have applied for a Premises Licence to cater for the increase in numbers attending this popular music festival.
- 8.3.21 The Baldock CEO has assisted the organisers with their event paperwork, licence applications and arranged the parking suspension notices to ensure the event can be set up safely.
- 8.3.22 The Baldock CEO has also arranged the First Aid provision for the event and the funfair provider.
- 8.3.23 As well as being a highly popular community event, Balstock also helps to drive footfall for the local eateries and Public Houses of the town.
- 8.3.24 Profit from the event is shared between 'Feed Up Warm Up', 'Keech Hospice Care', 'Stand- by- me Children's Bereavement Support', 'Merry Go Round Under Fives' and 'The Lister Area Kidney Patients Association'. The organisers have been reminded to hold back a percentage of profit to ensure funds are available to put on future Balstock events.
- 8.3.25 Baldock Cycle Challenge
- 8.3.26 The Baldock Cycle Challenge will return to Baldock on Sunday 18th September 2022. This popular event gives cyclists the opportunity to ride either 25, 30 or 55 miles across parts of North Herts, Central Bedfordshire and South Cambridgeshire.
- 8.3.27 The Baldock CEO has assisted with event paperwork required by SAG, has organised the marshals and checkpoints for the event, assisted with the promotion of the event and will also sign the route ahead of the event on 18th September 2022.
- 8.3.28 Baldock Chartered Street Fair
The Baldock CEO has again been heavily involved with the planning for this year's Baldock Fair which will be operating on Sunday 2nd, Monday 3rd and Tuesday 4th October.
- 8.3.29 The Baldock CEO has assisted with the paperwork as required by SAG, the Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) application to close the road for the event, the First Aid and Waste management arrangements, liaising with the Traffic Management (TM)

company for the road closure signage, the street furniture removal from Baldock High Street and White Horse Street and the parking suspension notices to ensure the area is traffic free for the safe arrival of the Fair.

8.3.30 The Baldock CEO will also assist with the advance warning letters which will be delivered to all households and businesses within the town.

8.3.31 For the 2022 event, following consent from Hertfordshire County Council, the fair will move on to the High Street at 10am on 1st October. In previous years the event 'pull on' was from 00:01am on the 2nd October. It is hoped that the earlier arrival for the fair will cause less interruption to residents. This is a trial arrangement for 2022. As well as using social media, advance warning signage will also be erected around the town to advise residents of the new arrangements for the Baldock Fair.

8.3.33 Ashwell Recreation Ground

8.3.34 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.

8.3.35 Ashwell Parish Council carried out a consultation exercise with stakeholders and park users during February 2022 to ascertain what equipment would be best for the playground.

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

8.3.37 Sandon Sports & Social Club

8.3.38 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.

8.3.39 The works were successfully carried out during July 2022.

8.3.40 Events across North Herts

8.3.41 As well as supporting events in Baldock, the Baldock CEO has also assisted organisers recently with two events in Letchworth namely the Letchworth Colour Run which will be held on Sat 11th June and Armed Forces Day which was held at Broadway Gardens on Saturday 25th June 2022. Both events were well supported and passed without incident.

8.3.42 The Baldock CEO is involved in the planning for the Letchworth Remembrance Service which will be held on Sunday 13th November. Support has included the development of the Traffic Management (TM) Plan and the Town Police Clauses Act Application (TPCA) which will be used to close roads for the safe holding of the Remembrance Event.

8.3.43 The event is being co-ordinated by North Herts Council (NHC) in conjunction with the Royal British Legion under the NHC's Public Liability Insurance.

8.3.44 The Baldock CEO along with colleagues in the Community Engagement Team have recently undertaken training which will allow them to set up and man road closures at Community events. This training will ensure that the Letchworth Remembrance Event can still go ahead if Police resources are not available.

8.4 Highways Matters

8.4.1 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.

8.4.2 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 July 2021. 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 2022/23.

10.2 The agreed base budget for this financial year is £5,000. Combined with the carry forward amounts from the 2021/22 financial year, the Committee has £7,565 to allocate across the 3 remaining meetings of the 2022/23 financial year.

- 10.3 If the Committee was to award the full funding requested by Nova Wellness, the Committee would have £5,165 to allocate at the 2 remaining meetings of the 2023/23 financial year.

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 - 2022/23 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 July 2021.