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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

BALDOCK AND DISTRICT COMMITTEE

MEETING HELD IN THE YOUTH WING, BALDOCK COMMUNITY CENTRE, SIMPSON
DRIVE, SG7 6DH
ON MONDAY, 31ST OCTOBER, 2022 AT 7.30 PM

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors: Michael Muir, Juan Cowell, Steve Jarvis, Tom Tyson, Michael Weeks and Alistair Willoughby*

In Attendance:

Ashley Hawkins (Community Engagement Officer), Edward Leigh (Senior Transport Policy Officer) and Louis Mutter (Committee, Member & Scrutiny Officer)

Also Present:

At the commencement of the meeting approximately 4 members of the public, including registered speakers.

65 ELECTION OF CHAIR & VICE-CHAIR

The Committee, Member and Scrutiny Officer called for nominations for Chair of the Baldock Area Committee for the Civic Year 2022/23.

Councillor Tom Tyson nominated Councillor Steve Jarvis. Councillor Alistair Willoughby seconded.

Councillor Juan Cowell nominated Councillor Michael Muir. Councillor Michael Weeks seconded.

On the vote neither nominated candidate was successful.

The Committee was unable to elect a Chair for the remainder of the 2022/23 Civic year and instead appointed a Chair on a temporary basis for the purposes of the meeting.

Councillor Alistair Willoughby proposed and Councillor Michael Muir seconded and, following a vote it was:

RESOLVED: That Councillor Steve Jarvis be appointed Chair for this meeting of the Baldock Area Committee.

66 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies received from Councillors for this meeting.

67 MINUTES - 20 JUNE 2022

It was:

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 20 June 2022 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

68 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business notified.

69 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (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.

70 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chair invited Ms. Agata Kisicka and Ms. Ethel Morrell from Nova Wellness CIC to give a verbal presentation in support of their grant application.

Ms. Morrell thanked the Chair for the opportunity to speak and highlighted the following key points:

- Nova Wellness CIC is seeking funding for holistic therapy sessions similar to those previously done in the Baldock Community Centre;
- Holistic therapy has been proven to improve wellbeing, mental health and confidence;
- After the pandemic many caring for elderly or high-risk people were able to go out into the community again; these therapy sessions aim to rebuild the community feeling for those who have had to shield;
- There had been lots of requests for more therapy sessions following the previous ones.

The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Michael Weeks
- Councillor Michael Muir
- Councillor Steve Jarvis
- Councillor Alistair Willoughby
- Councillor Tom Tyson

In response to questions, Ms Morell and Ms. Kisicka advised:

- The amount of sessions depends on the amount of funding received; last year there were two sessions and around 20 people were invited to each session;
- Nova Wellness advertises in the Community Centre and online as well as having good relations with Herts Carers;
- Each session is for up to 20 people; they are invited to the following sessions also.

The Community Engagement Officer informed the Committee that the grant budget for the rest of the civic year is £5,200.

71 CONSULTATION ON NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT LOCAL CYCLING AND WALKING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

The Senior Transport Policy Officer presented the report entitled Consultation on North Hertfordshire District Local Walking & Cycling Infrastructure Plan and opened the meeting to questions. The following Members asked questions:

- Councillor Michael Weeks
- Councillor Juan Cowell
- Councillor Michael Muir
- Councillor Tom Tyson
- Councillor Alistair Willoughby

In response to questions the Senior Transport Policy Officer advised:

- Lots of people are actively looking for safe walking and cycling alternatives; Hertfordshire County Council are looking to spend a large sum across the county as a part of the Urban Transport Plan;
- Transport Officers are providing the evidence, it's the Members that decide what is a priority and what money should be allocated where;
- 20 MPH policies do not necessarily need to be done through the LCWIP; if there is strong local support for a 20 MPH zone this should be channelled through a County Councillor;
- Speed bumps/cushions are no longer a recommended traffic calming measure; other measures, such as narrowing the carriageway, or adding pinch points or chicanes, are considered more effective at reducing speeds without unwanted side-effects. Members are encouraged to identify through the LCWIP consultation streets that would benefit from traffic calming measures.

It was:

RESOLVED: That the Committee:

- (1) Notes the report;
- (2) Be encouraged to, individually and through the Area Committee, respond to the North Hertfordshire District LCWIP consultation draft attached at Appendix 1, and encourage residents and local organisations to do so too.

72 GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATES

The Community Engagement Officer presented the report entitled Grants & Community Updates and highlighted the following points:

- Key point in the report is 8.3.1, which details different options for Councillor surgeries in Baldock;
- Baldock is the only town that doesn't hold Councillor surgeries regularly;
- Baldock has seen the Charter Fair and Cycle Challenge and will be hosting Fireworks Events across the town and the Christmas Market in the future.

The following Members took part in the debate:

- Councillor Alistair Willoughby
- Councillor Juan Cowell
- Councillor Michael Muir
- Councillor Michael Weeks
- Councillor Tom Tyson
- Councillor Steve Jarvis

Councillor Steve Jarvis commented that it would be nicer to host Councillor surgeries in the High Street in Baldock, but the most populated place is probably Tesco.

The Committee agreed that subject to approval from Tesco, they would host the surgeries there. They also agreed that they would assess the situation early next year and look to relocate to the High Street if necessary.

The Community Engagement Officer stated that he would need to check the availability of certain equipment such as gazebos.

Councillor Michael Weeks commented that he had received a number of complaints from local businesses about the timing of the Fair. Businesses felt that the Fair came too early on the Saturday and prevented the possibility of shops opening for a few hours.

The Community Engagement Officer stated that, had the Fair come later, they would have been unable to get set up in daylight and would miss an evening as a result.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That £2,000 be awarded 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) That the Committee will look to hold a Councillor Surgery at Tesco's once a month on a Saturday at either 10:30am to 12 noon or 10:00am to 11:30am subject to approval of Tesco, as outlined in 8.3.10 of the officer's report.
- (3) That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community Engagement Officer to promote greater community capacity and well-being for Baldock.

73 WARD MATTERS AND OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS - MEMBERS' REPORTS

Councillor Steve Jarvis as Chair invited Members of the Committee to provide any Ward updates.

Councillor Michael Muir asked the Committee that they should let him know of any road issues in the town so he can deal with them as a County Councillor.

74 POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

The Chair asked Members with additional agenda items to email the Committee Clerk or the Community Engagement Officer whenever possible.

The meeting closed at 8.32 pm

Chair