

**North Herts Council
BALDOCK & VILLAGES COMMUNITY FORUM**

**Meeting held in Baldock Community Centre, Youth Wing
On Monday 9TH June 2025 at 7.30pm**

NOTES

Present: Cllr Alistair Willoughby (Chair) (AW), Cllr Rhona Cameron (RC), Cllr Steve Jarvis (SJ), and Cllr Stewart Willoughby (SW). Cllr Michael Muir (MM)

Absent: Cllr Tom Tyson (TT), Cllr Emma Rowe (Vice Chair) (ER)

In attendance:
Tracy Westgate (Community Partnership Officer) (TW), Cllr Amy Allen (AA), Paul Mumford (Urban & Civic) (PM).

Also present:
At the commencement of the meeting there were 5 members of the public (MOP), in addition to the people named above

Meeting Started at **19:30**

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Tyson, Cllr Rowe, Sue Williams (Grant Applicant)

2. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Cllr A Willoughby welcomed everyone in attendance and noted that the agenda would be in a slightly different order than advertised, items 4 and 5 would be moved ahead of item 3.

He highlighted that the Forum is an informal, inclusive meeting to share ideas.

4. BIN COLLECTION, WHAT'S CHANGING – Cllr Amy Allen

Cllr A Allen delivered a short presentation on the changes to the waste collections that will start for North Hertfordshire residents in August 2025. The addition of a new bin and the cycle changing to a different bin each week for three weeks. She confirmed the paid garden waste subscription service would remain fortnightly, and the food caddy would continue to be collected every week. The presentation highlighted the benefits of the additional curbside collection of soft plastics.

Q. Albert (MOP) – how would you know which bin to put out on which day, if you do not have access to the internet?

A. (AA) – provided several options, including looking out for your local ‘bin-fluencer’ the person who always puts it out early and gets it right. Contacting a councilor by phone. Also, the free computer services at the library or in the reception of the Council Offices on Gernon Road could be used to look the information up. (AA) also noted the actual collection day of the week may change as the new contractors are keen to optimise route efficiency.

(AW) also suggested calling the council offices directly.

5. GROWING BALDOCK UPDATE, URBAN & CIVIC – Paul Mumford

The Growing Baldock ‘The Story so Far & Drop-in Events’ leaflet has been delivered. There are three community engagement events coming up in July.

10am to 2 pm Saturday 12th July at Baldock Community Centre

3pm to 8pm on Wednesday 16th July at St Mary’s Church Hall

1pm to 6pm on Friday 18th July at St. Mary’s Church Hall

The next step is to submit the outline planning application to NHC, this is not a detailed plan and will not show exactly what things might look like.

The District Council then run their Planning Consultation, which may result in changes being requested. This may take approx. 10 months.

The step after, this is for it to go the Planning Committee at County Council.

The second meeting of the Growing Baldock Advisory Forum took place recently. PM confirmed all the information from that meeting. The minutes of which can be found [here](#).

(MM) Requested that none of the houses are visible when approaching Baldock from the North.

(PM) explained how U&C were looking at this, and that some roof lines may be visible, because to make them completely invisible they would lose a lot of building ground as the slope is very shallow.

(MM) suggested putting bungalows closest to the ridgeline.

(PM) confirmed any apartments would be closer to the station so should not impact the view.

Pete Wilkinson (PW) (MOP) – raised that the residents close to the BA2 site had not been consulted with about the building proposals.

(PM) and (AW) noted that Baldock had been identified for a development of this size approximately 20+ years ago, and the BA2 site is believed to have been part of this. It is just that development plans had continuously started and stalled during this time.

Pete Wilkinson (PW) (MOP) – Raised the issues surrounding transport and Baldock already becoming gridlocked if the A1(M) needs to be closed immediately (i.e. not a preplanned closure), even before 3,000 new properties are built.

(PW) Suggested that U&C contact Transport firms about how to plan the roads to avoid Baldock becoming constantly congested.

There was significant discussion around the subject, with the result that (PM) will approach transport firms and potentially the Royal Haulage Association (RHA) for input.

(PW)'s concerns regarding traffic were backed up by (SW).

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – GRANT APPLICATIONS

The Community and Partnerships Officer informed those present that there is £8,962 available in the 2025/26 grant budget. If all grants are recommended and subsequently approved, there will be £7,487 remaining in the budget for the remainder of the financial year.

The following Grant Application was considered, although the applicant was unable to attend the meeting due to illness.

First Garden Cities Homes application.

MM and TW confirmed they had both previously attended the event and seen the value it adds to the local community. Members enquired if it was known when the funding was needed for, i.e. would delaying the decision to the September Forum impact their ability to deliver the ongoing social event. The answer was not known by those in the room and was not recorded in the application form. Considering this, it was decided not to defer the application to the September Forum.

AW proposed.

MM seconded.

Unanimous vote in favour of recommending First Garden Cities Homes application for £1,475 towards the No Limits Social Club, Baldock.

6. MEMBER UPDATES, WARD MATTERS & OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

(MM) None

(SJ) None

(RC) None

(SW) None

(AW) Please to confirm that the new benches are being installed across the town. They should last a long time as they have metal frames and composite plastic seating.

Recently the town have had three major events that all went very well, The Big Lunch, Baldock Festival and the Country Boots, Baldock Roots Festival.

Albert (MOP) – Queried the recent rise in vehicle crime.

(AW) - noted that the Police are aware and are making rounds asking for any supporting evidence from door cameras etc. It was confirmed that if suspicious

activity is taking place the public should contact 999, but if it is after the event, they should use the 101 service.

At this point in the meeting, it was discussed who puts the diversions in place when the A1(M) is closed unexpectedly. ***Subsequently I have spoken with the Police and whilst they close the road where the incident is, they do not put any diversions in place, the public are not given directions on how to get around the road closure.***

Albert (MOP) – The broken drain cover at the bottom of Salisbury Road has not yet been fixed.

(AW) - to chase up.

7. COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS UPDATE (TW)

(TW) presented the Community update as submitted with the papers for the meeting, noting that the minutes for the Baldock Community Centre EGM and AGM are now complete and will be issued by the end of the week.

(AW) updated those present about the Baldock Community Centre meeting which had taken place.

8. TOPICS FOR FUTURE FORUMS

- (AW) confirmed Growing Baldock will be a standing item on the agenda
- Discussion that it would be valuable to have presentations from both Affinity (clean water) and Anglian (wastewater) regarding the expansion of Baldock. (TW) to action.
 - Both (MM) and (SJ) gave additional information about proposed changes, where water will be drawn from Grafham for the new houses. It will firstly be cleaned at Sundon to remove the acid, then have alkali added before reaching Baldock.
- (RC) requested a presentation about the CCTV in Baldock.
 - Where it is
 - What plans are there to increase coverage
 - How much does it cost
- (RC) suggested a presentation about the Bee Corridor which is being planned for Baldock.

MEETING CLOSED 20:58
