

BALDOCK & DISTRICT COMMITTEE
24 June 2019

PUBLIC DOCUMENT

TITLE OF REPORT: GRANTS & COMMUNITY UPDATE

REPORT OF : POLICY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

PRIORITY : ATTRACTIVE AND THRIVING / PROSPER AND PROTECT / RESPONSIVE
AND EFFICIENT

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To advise the Committee on the current expenditure and balances of the Area Committee budgets.
- 1.2 To bring to the Committee's attention details of recent requests received for Area Committee Grant Funding, made by community groups and local organisations, which conform to the Authority's Grants Policy approved by Cabinet on June 14th 2016.
- 1.3 To advise the Committee of the activities and schemes with which the Community Officer has been involved.
- 1.4 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 Committee be recommended to make a Grant Award of £700 to Bygrave Bell Ringers for the purchase of 4 new bell rings as detailed in 8.1.1 below.
- 2.2 That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community 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 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 June 2016.
- 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 Corporate 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 in the course of 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 with regard to funding proposals for Area Committee Funds.

6. FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has 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 the amount of 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 A. Baldock Area Committee Budget Spread sheet, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for 2019/20. The spreadsheet also details pre-allocated sums carried forward from the 2018/19 financial years, including balances and past expenditure.

7.3 Funding available for the Committee to allocate in the 2019/20 is summarised below:

	2018/19 Carry Forward	2019/20 Base Budget	Total Budget
Baldock Town	£608	£2,400	£3,008
Baldock East	£187	£1, 000	£1,187
Arbury	£210	£900	£1,110
Weston & Sandon	£165	£700	£865
			£6,170

7.4 Members are advised that funding should be allocated first from the 2018/19 carry forward and not the 2019/20 base budget.

8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Grant Applications

8.1.1

Applicant	Bygrave Handbell Ringers
Project	Funding support for the purchase of 4 new handbells
Sum requested	£700
Total project cost	£1,308
Match funding	£600 own funds and subscriptions
Annual expenditure	£1,618
Funds held	£890
Previous support	£200 granted in 2004, £205 granted in 2010
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Strategic objective met	Attractive & Thriving

Bygrave Handbell Ringers are seeking funding support from the Baldock & District Area Committee to assist with the purchase of 4 new hand bells.

Bygrave Handbell Ringers have been operating for 20 years. The group is made up of 3 volunteers. The purchase of additional hand bells will allow for new members to join the group. Bygrave Handbell Ringers provide enjoyment for many in the locality including performances at village fairs, old peoples' homes, churches, Womens' Institute, Baldock Festival, Ashwell Festival and many more. The group does not charge for these events but accepts voluntary donations which are shared between the club and various local charities. The group has not applied for funding since 2010. The application is criteria compliant and the recommendation is an award of £700

8.2 Community Engagement Updates

8.2.1 Policy and Community Engagement Team Restructure

Following the corporate wide restructure of the district council, there have been some changes to the Council's Corporate Policy and Community team. This has resulted in the merger of the Community Development Team and the Policy Team. This has created a new team which is called Policy & Community Engagement.

The team is managed by the Policy & Community Engagement Manager. Reuben Ayavoo (previously the Senior Policy Officer) takes up this post.

The Policy & Community Engagement Manager will be directly supported by the Community Engagement Team Leader (Claire Morgan), Community Engagement Officer – Events (Ashley Hawkins) covering Royston and Baldock Committees and Trainee Policy Officer (Kei-Retta Farrell).

The Community Engagement Team leader will be supported by two Assistant Community Engagement Officers and Grants and Data Systems officer.

The Community Engagement team will be covering Letchworth, Hitchin and the Southern Rural Committee's.

The Community Engagement Officer – Events will cover the Area committees of Baldock and Royston; support events in Royston and Baldock and seek to support new district events as practical; link officer to the North Hertfordshire Safety Advisory Group.

8.2.2 Baldock Beast Half Marathon

The Baldock Beast Half Marathon was held for a 7th time on Sunday 24th February and was supported by over 450 runners. The Baldock Community Engagement Officer (CEO) was in attendance on the day providing both marshal support and assistance with the erection and dismantling of all race signage and equipment.

8.2.3 Baldock Festival

The 36th Baldock Festival Street Fair was held on Saturday 18th May 2019 in Baldock High Street. The Baldock CEO provided support both on the build up to the event (support with event paperwork including licence applications, suspension of parking, negotiating on behalf of the Festival Committee for appropriate First Aid provision) and also marshal support on the day providing assistance with the set up and take down of the festival. The event was again a success with great support from the people of Baldock & surrounding villages providing good footfall both for the numerous community /charity stalls trading at the event and for the local businesses of the town.

8.2.3 Baldock Events Forum

The Baldock CEO continues to provide support to the Baldock Events Forum (BEF) with the planning for their events in 2019. This has included support with licensing and event planning paperwork for both the Baldock Big Lunch which will be held on Sunday 2nd June and the Baldock Cycle Challenge which will be held on Sunday 14th July. The Baldock CEO will also provide marshal and event support at both events.

8.2.4 Street Food Heroes

The Baldock CEO was instrumental in bringing Street Food Heroes to Baldock, being the link between the organisers and the Baldock Events Forum. To date, Street Food Heroes has visited Baldock twice, firstly in April and then in May. On both occasions the event was well received by the people of Baldock, especially in April when all food traders sold out.

The event consists of between 6-8 food vendors, a mobile bar and a DJ and operates between 4pm and 9pm. As well as being a family /community event, Street Food Heroes also provides additional footfall for the local businesses and eateries of the town and is an income generator for the Baldock Events Forum.

The Baldock CEO provides support with the publicity of the event and also co-ordinates the suspension of parking which is crucial for the successful running of Street Food Heroes in Baldock. Street Food Heroes will be returning to Baldock in June, July, August and September.

8.2.5 Baldock Fair

The Baldock CEO will be working with Abbots Amusements, Highways, Chevron TM and North Herts Safety Advisory Group to ensure that all is in place for the arrival of the Baldock Chartered Fair on 1st October. As normal the Baldock Fair will be operating on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th October.

The Baldock CEO will be assisting with the Event Management Plan, the TTRO application, the pre event publicity to local households and businesses and overseeing the set up and take down of the Baldock Fair.

8.2.5 Developer Contributions / s106 & other Capital Funding projects

The Baldock Community Engagement Officer has been worked with external groups and colleagues in the Planning Department in the potential utilisation developer contributions and other sources of capital funding available.

Baldock Arts & Heritage Centre

- Works to replace all the first floor windows and refurbish & reconfigure the majority of the ground floor are now complete and the centre had a popular grand opening event on Saturday 11th May. . These schemes utilised funding via a number of sources including a Capital Projects Grant from the Authority, Phase 2 improvement works capital funds and some developer contributions assigned to DDA works which are encompassed within the overall enhancements.

Baldock Community Centre

- As with the Arts & Heritage, the Management Committee at the Community Centre is seeking to refurbish the foyer and toilet area possibly later in the year Community Engagement Officers will assist & advise the project team in securing appropriate funding for the scheme as well as procuring project plans & specification costings in order for the works to be tendered out.

Ashwell Parish Council

- Officers have met with the Parish Clerk & Vice Chair to run through possible schemes likely to be able to make a call on collated developer contributions collated for the Ashwell area.

The main project the PC is considering relates to significant enhancements of the toilet facilities on the recreation ground. At present approximately £40k of developer contributions have been assigned to such works and officers have suggested that the PC submits a grant application to the next round of the Community Facilities Capital Projects Funding Scheme possibly in September /October 2019.

Baldock Methodist Church

- The Baldock CO is working with the Baldock Methodist Church with their application to the Community Facilities Capital Projects Funding Scheme for works to enhance the toilet and kitchen facilities at the venue. The group is currently working on its application and their project will be tabled at the next panel of the Community Facilities Capital Projects Funding Scheme which is currently scheduled for September/ October.

If members have any projects in mind which may potentially benefit from utilising capital funds derived via the Planning process please contact the Communities Officer to investigate further possibilities.

The Community Engagement Team is also collating a database of future requirements in terms of community need across the District in preparation & response to potential developments arising from the Local Plan.

Such perceived need will be communicated to planning officers to assist when negotiating any potential planning obligations with prospective developers. Similarly, if members have any suggestions of suitable projects or possible future requirements within their wards please inform the Community Engagement Officer.

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.

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 The Area Committees also have delegated power under section 9.8.1 (a) & (b) to allocate discretionary budgets and devolved budgets within the terms determined by the Council and outlined in the current Grant Policy agreed by Cabinet in June 2016. Section 9.8.2 (g) of the Constitution in respect of Area Committees' Terms of Reference provides 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 A Committee budget 2019/20

The agreed budget for this financial year is **£5,000** in line with the agreed 20% reduction in grant budgets as agreed by full council. This is split as followed - Baldock Town (£2,400), Baldock East (£1,000), Arbury Ward (£900) and Weston & Sandon (£700)

All carry forward amounts from 2018/19 total **£1,170**. This is made up of the following – Baldock Town (£608), Baldock East (£187), Arbury (£210) and Weston & Sandon (£165).

Total funds therefore available to the Committee are **£6,170**.

- 10.2 Should Members be minded to provide grant funding as requested under recommendation 2.1.1 the total spend from the Committee Budget will be **£700**. It should be noted that the grant request submitted is relevant only to the Arbury Ward Member. If the full funding of £700 is granted, the Arbury Ward Member would be left with just £410 to allocate across the 3 remaining meetings of the 2019/20 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" policy do not apply to this report.

14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 There are no pertinent Human Resource implications associated with any items within this report.

15. APPENDICES

- 15.1 Appendix A - 2019/20 financial year budget sheet

16. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 16.1 Author: Ashley Hawkins, Community Engagement Officer - Events
Email: ashley.hawkins@north-herts.gov.uk Ext: 4225

Contributors: Reuben Ayavoo, Policy & Community Engagement Manager
Email: reuben.ayavoo@north-herts.gov.uk Ext: 4212

Karen Pulham, Technical Assistant to Service Director - Resources
Email: Karen.pulham@north-herts.gov.uk Ext: 4643

Steve Crowley, Commercial Director
Email: Steve.Crowley@north-herts.gov.uk Ext: 4211

Yvette Roberts, Legal Officer
Email: Yvette.roberts@north-herts.gov.uk Ext: 4310

Kerry Shorrocks, Corporate Human Resources Manager
Email: Kerry.shorrocks@north-herts.gov.uk Ext: 4224

Tim Everitt, Performance & Risk Officer
Email: tim.everitt@north-herts.gov.uk Ext: 4646

17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 17.1 Review of Policies and Procedures for Financial Assistance to Voluntary and Community Organisations, November 2002.