

**BALDOCK & DISTRICT AREA COMMITTEE
7 OCTOBER 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 £2,000 to Baldock Rotary Club to assist with costs for improving the Christmas lights of the town. Funding will pay for 2 new frames, more strings, more lights for the tree and the hire of a cherry picker for installing the lights.
- 2.2 Committee be recommended to make a Grant Award of £414 to Baldock Beats Waste to assist with venue hire and publicity costs.
- 2.3 Committee be recommended to make a Grant Award of £1,356 to Turning Worlds to assist with venue hire, publicity costs and equipment costs.
- 2.4 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	£358	£2,400	£2,758
Baldock East	£87	£1, 000	£1,087
Arbury	£0	£810	£810
Weston & Sandon	£115	£700	£815
			£5,470

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	Baldock Rotary Club
Project	Funding support to assist with xmas lights for the town
Sum requested	£2,000
Total project cost	£4,667
Match funding	£2,650 own funds and donations
Annual expenditure	£17,785.13
Funds held	£8,431.58
Previous support	, £500 granted in 2016, £1,500 in 2017. Total of £2,000 in last 5 years.
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Strategic objective met	Attractive & Thriving

Rotary Club of Baldock is seeking funding support from Baldock & District Committee to assist with costs for purchasing and storing additional Christmas lights for Baldock and for the Baldock Christmas Tree. Funding will pay for 2 new frames, more strings, more lights for the tree and the hire of a cherry picker for installing the lights.

The application is criteria compliant. Members should note that the maximum amount that the officer can recommend is £1,500. Members should note that the group does donate a large amount of money each year to local good causes. £14, 020 was shown as given out in the accounts submitted with the funding application. A condition on the award is that the group retains sufficient funds each year to cater for the xmas lights work prior to awarding to local charities.

8.1.2

Applicant Project	Baldock Beats Waste Funding support to assist with venue hire and publicity costs
Sum requested	£414
Total project cost	£414
Match funding	None
Annual expenditure	Unknown as new group
Funds held	N/A
Previous support	N/A
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Strategic objective met	Attractive & Thriving

Baldock Beats Waste is seeking funding support from the Baldock & District Committee to assist with venue hire and publicity costs.

Baldock Beats Waste is a new group which was set up in 2019. The group currently consists of 4 volunteers. The aim of the group is to inform people about issues around waste and recycling and to change peoples recycling habits for the better of the environment. Funding will be used to assist with publicity costs to better promote the group to residents of Baldock and the surrounding villages. Whilst a percentage of funding requested is for venue hire, it should be noted that the venues being used are on long term full repairing leases from North Herts District Council making the application criteria compliant.

8.1.3

Applicant Project	Turning World Funding support to assist with venue hire, publicity costs and equipment costs.
Sum requested	£1,356
Total project cost	£3,676
Match funding	£1,000 own funds / £1,040 participants contributions
Annual expenditure	£2,108.35
Funds held	£1,111.55
Previous support	N/A
NHDC Policy met	Yes
Strategic objective met	Attractive & Thriving

Turning Worlds is seeking funding from the Baldock & District Committee to assist with costs for running a series of dance workshops for residents aged 55+ at Baldock Arts and Heritage Centre. Funds would be used for venue hire, publicity costs and equipment costs. As well as running sessions here for Baldock residents, the group will also be carrying out roadshow style workshops in surrounding villages such as Weston and Ashwell.

Turning Worlds is a constituted not for profit organisation which focuses on dance and movement. The group was set up in order to initiate and lead dance and arts based participatory and performance activities that promote individual and social creativity and well being. The focus for this project is the over 50's in response to the key findings of the Centre for Policy on Ageing report which states that older people do not get enough exercise, taking part in physical activity improves both health and life expectancy, dance benefits the body and the mind and dance promotes emotional wellbeing of older people and combats isolation. This is the first time the group has approached the Committee for funding. Whilst a percentage of funding requested is for venue hire, it should be noted that the venues being used are on long term full repairing leases from North Herts District Council making the application criteria compliant.

8.2 Community Engagement Updates

8.2.1 Baldock Big Lunch

The Baldock Big Lunch returned to Baldock High Street on Sunday 2nd June and was again a successful and well attended event for the Baldock Events Forum with more than 250 people congregating in the High Street to enjoy a lunch provided by one of the local eateries. There was also live music and fun fair rides to keep all ages entertained. The Baldock CEO provided both pre event and event support on the day.

8.2.2 Baldock Cycle Challenge

The Baldock Cycle Challenge returned to Baldock for a seventh time on Sunday 14th July and was supported by record numbers with 240 riders of all ages taking on the challenge. The Baldock CEO provided both pre-event support and marshal support on the day. The Baldock Cycle Challenge will be returning for an eighth time on Sunday 14th June. This earlier date coincides with National Bike Week which should encourage even more participants in 2020.

8.2.3 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.

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 was held once a month in Baldock High Street between April and September and proved extremely popular. It is hoped that the event will return to Baldock again in 2020.

8.2.4 Baldock 5km Rat Run

The Baldock 5km Rat Run, organised by Hollinton Health and supported by North Herts Road Runners and the Baldock Events Forum was held for a second time on Sunday 8th September and was supported by over 200 runners of all ages and abilities.

The Baldock CEO provided pre event support including assistance with TRO and licence applications, liaison with the First Aid company and arranging the medals and trophies.

As well as being a popular running event, the Rat Run also helped raise over £1k for the Garden House Hospice.

8.2.5 Balstock Community Music Festival

Following a year off in 2018, Balstock Community Music Festival was back bigger than ever in 2019 with record numbers attending the largest free music festival in Hertfordshire.

The Baldock CEO again supported the event organisers with pre- event planning including assistance with licencing paperwork, parking suspension arrangements, advance warning publicity to residents, waste arrangements, liaison with the funfair providers and first aid provision. The Baldock CEO also provided support on the day with event set up.

Balstock continues to be a key event in the Baldock Calendar and is a key income generator for the local businesses of the town. As well as being a family /community event, the profit from the event also helps local charities /good causes. This year a percentage of funds raised will be going to Mind in Mid Herts, Luna Animal Rescue, Essex & Herts Air Ambulance & Baldock Town Community Sports Facility.

Whilst the event ran smoothly, there were some issues regarding the waste and litter generated by the event and this will be addressed as part of the planning for Balstock 2020.

8.2.6 Baldock Fair

The Baldock CEO is working with Abbotts 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 has assisted with the Event Management Plan, has secured the TRO for the event, managed the pre event publicity to local households and businesses and will oversee the set up and take down of the Baldock Fair.

8.2.7 Baldock Community Fireworks

The Baldock CEO is working with St Marys School PTA, Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation, Baldock Events Forum and Tapps Garden Centre to bring a Community Firework event to the school on Saturday 9th November.

The Baldock Community Fireworks had previously been held at Hartsfield School but is now to be held at St Marys School.

This event is still in the planning stage as St Mary's is currently in negotiations with Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation to use a field owned by the Heritage for the safe firing of the fireworks.

As with the event at Hartsfield, any profits from the event will be shared between the local primary schools in Baldock.

8.2.8 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 October /November 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 October/ November

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 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). £90 of this total has already been allocated from the Arbury Ward budget leaving **£4,910** for the remaining meetings of the 2019/20 financial year.

All carry forward amounts from 2018/19 total **£560**. This is made up of the following – Baldock Town (£358), Baldock East (£87) and Weston & Sandon (£115).

Total funds therefore available to the Committee are **£5,470**.

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

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17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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