

16 January 2007

Our ref: Letchworth/Jan06
Contact: Tim Hobman
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To: Members of the Letchworth Committee of North Hertfordshire District Council (Councillors M. Paterson (Chairman), Simon Bloxham (Vice-Chairman), Monica Bloxham, J.M. Cunningham, Melissa Davey, Gary Grindal, T.W Hone, David Kearns, Lorna Kercher, David Levett, Lawrence McNamara, Elliot Needham, Mrs. L.A. Needham, and Diane Proudlove)

You are invited to attend a

MEETING OF THE LETCHWORTH COMMITTEE

to be held in

**COMMITTEE ROOM 1, COUNCIL OFFICES, GERONON
ROAD, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY**

on

WEDNESDAY, 24 JANUARY 2007

at

7.30p.m.

Yours sincerely,



David Miley
Democratic Services Manager

AGENDA
PART I

ITEM	PAGE
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	-
2. MINUTES To take as read and approve as a true record the minutes of the special meeting of this Committee held on the 11 January 2007.	-
3. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS Members should notify the Chairman of other business which they wish to be discussed by the Committee at the end of either Part I or Part II business set out in the agenda. They must state the circumstances which they consider justify the business being considered as a matter of urgency. The Chairman will decide whether any item(s) raised will be considered.	-
4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To receive from Members of the Committee any Declarations of Interest in respect of business set out in the agenda. Members should either declare a prejudicial or personal interest and are required to notify the Chairman of the nature of any interest declared. Members declaring a prejudicial interest should not seek to influence the decision and leave the room during that particular item of business.	-
5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION To receive petitions, comments and questions from the public. At the time of preparing the agenda no requests to speak had been received. Any public participation received within the agreed time scale will be notified to Members as soon as practicable.	-
6. COMMUNITY POLICING UPDATE ORAL PRESENTATION BY INSPECTOR GEOFF CAMP, HERTFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY	1
7. AREA GOVERNANCE AND COSTS OF DEMOCRACY REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL SERVICES <i>The Area Committees have been invited to comment on the report presented to Cabinet on 19 December.</i>	3
8. POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES REPORT OF THE RETURNING OFFICER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE <i>The purpose of this report is to assist the Committee to consider revisions to the polling districts and polling places within the area of the Committee.</i>	19

- 9. AN ARTS, MUSEUMS & HERITAGE STRATEGY FOR NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE** **71**
REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL SERVICES
- This report informs the Committee of the development on an Arts, Museums & Heritage Strategy for North Hertfordshire.
The Committee are invited to comment on the draft Strategy prior to final consideration by Cabinet at its meeting on 27 March 2007 and then Council on 29 March 2007.*
- 10. CHAMPION NEWS** **105**
REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL SERVICES
- A summary of the activities undertaken by the Community Development Officer for Letchworth Garden City since the meeting of the Committee held on 13 December 2006 and events taking place in forthcoming months.*
- 11. LETCHWORTH COMMITTEE DEVELOPMENT & AREA VISIONING BUDGETS 2006/07** **109**
REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL SERVICES
- To advise the committee on the current expenditure and balances of the Area committee delegated budgets;*
- To bring to the committee's attention details of recent requests received for Area Committee Development Discretionary Grant funding made by community groups and local organisations;*
- To ask the Committee to consider projects for funding from the Area Committee delegated budgets.*

Future meetings of the Committee will be held on:

7 March 2007

18 April 2007

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LETCHWORTH COMMITTEE

24 January 2007

PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

AGENDA ITEM No.

6

TITLE OF REPORT : COMMUNITY POLICING UPDATE

TO RECEIVE AN ORAL PRESENTATION BY INSPECTOR GEOFF CAMP,
HERTFORDSHIRE CONSTABULARY.

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

7

TITLE OF REPORT: AREA GOVERNANCE AND COSTS OF DEMOCRACY

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & CULTURAL SERVICES

Attached is the report that was considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 19 December 2006.

The Area Committees have been invited to comment on the report before it is reconsidered by Cabinet. Members' views are invited.

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TITLE OF REPORT: AREA GOVERNANCE AND THE COST OF DEMOCRACY BUDGET SAVINGS 2006/07

JOINT REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL SERVICES, HEAD OF PLANNING AND BUILDING CONTROL AND HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

PORTFOLIO HOLDERS: COUNCILLOR TRICIA GIBBS
COUNCILLOR ANDREW YOUNG
COUNCILLOR RICHARD THAKE

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out a series of proposals and options to determine savings which may be made if the Council's approach to its governance and decision making arrangements is restructured.
- 1.2 The aim is to achieve the target of £50,000 under the heading 'costs of democracy' that was agreed as part of the Service and Financial Planning process for 2006/7.
- 1.3 Cabinet is asked to consider and consult on the savings proposals and options prior to making any consequent recommendations to Council on the constitutional change necessary to effect their implementation.
- 1.4 The report is predicated on the need to streamline the decision making processes and procedures of the Council and, in so doing, reduce by a commensurate level the 'bureaucracy' of administration, management and other officer support that the current structures and practices generate. While this is intended to improve efficiency, it will also mean a change in the way the Council works.
- 1.5 For the purpose of this report, the 'costs of democracy' are defined by the following CIPFA budget headings:

Costs of Democracy is a corporate cost centre held within the Chief Executive's Directorate which covers the direct costs and recharges from across the authority to fund the costs of supporting the democratic process. These activities include Member Services, officers time in preparing for and attending meetings, pre-meetings, political briefings, technical and professional advice, corporate management time, Chairman's functions, Member training, allowances etc.
- 1.6 This report also aims to respond to the outstanding issues on Area Governance that were originally identified by the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group in May 2005 and which were considered by Cabinet at its meeting in June 2006.
- 1.7 Any decisions that are taken at this stage need to be mindful of the thinking that is currently contained within the Lyons Review of Local Government, the LGA Paper Closer to People, the Local Government White Paper and the Barker Review.

2. FORWARD PLAN

- 2.1 This report contains a recommendation on a key decision that was referred to in the Forward Plan of 1st May 2006.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At its meeting on 27th June 2006, Cabinet resolved:

To agree that officers undertake further detailed work to review the options in paragraph 4.6 on the area governance and decision making arrangements of the Council in order to meet the future savings requirements of the Service and Financial Planning process.

And

That a further report on proposals for new arrangements will be submitted to Cabinet in October 2006.

- 3.2 Paragraph 4.6 stated:

‘However, it is also evident that these savings cannot be found unless there is a more thorough and systematic review of the overall decision making processes of the Council, which include the following:

- Cabinet and delegated decision making to Portfolio Holders, Area Committees and Officers
- Operational arrangements for PARC/Scrutiny functions
- Cost effectiveness and consistency of planning determination at Area Committees
- Enhancing capacity of community leadership by Area Committees
- Changing the functions of Area Committees
- Reducing the number and frequency of meetings
- Reducing the number and frequency of ancillary meetings, sub-groups, etc’

- 3.3 This report sets out a series of proposals and options with associated costings that aim not only to meet the required savings but also to offer additional for 2007/8.

4. KEY PROPOSALS

- 4.1 In view of the overall budget size and the desire to reduce ‘bureaucracy’ and meet efficiency targets, a strategic approach to finding savings has been adopted through the Financial Strategy. It is considered that a change in the system of decision making across the authority which entails a reduction in the number of meetings and, crucially, a commensurate reduction of work load and officer time in administering and supporting these, will both enable the authority to make the savings and maintain a sustainable position in ensuring transparent, accountable decision making.

- 4.2 The proposals for savings set out in this report have been considered in the framework of the Council’s corporate objectives, the further development of devolved decision making, the drive to improve the community engagement aspects of the democratic process, the need to improve planning performance and to deliver on the enhanced role of community leadership which has developed since the implementation of the

Local Government Act 2000 and the duty contained therein to develop a community strategy and the power to act for the improvement of the well-being of the district. Options recommended may impact on the constitutional framework and how decision making is exercised, with potential changes to consultation feedback, increased use of officer decision making and portfolio holder consultation.

4.3 Frequency and Operation of Key Meetings

Council Meetings

The Council currently meets at a frequency of 9 times per year, with special meetings in addition. The Constitution states that there will be at least 7 timetabled meetings per annum. The proposal is that the frequency could be reduced to 6 times a year with minimal impact on the range of decisions that Council has to make.

Cabinet and Portfolio Holders

It is recognised that Cabinet increasingly has a significant amount of work in which it is involved, at least in terms of the range and length of reports on which it is asked simply to note.

Cabinet presently meets 11 times per year with special meetings in addition. It is proposed that this number could reduce to 6 times per year. A schedule linking to each Council meeting would be established.

By themselves, the reduction of meetings will only contribute marginally to the savings required. Greater savings are feasible if there was to be a change in the way that the decision making that is currently made by Cabinet sitting as a committee would be made instead by individual Portfolio Holders or officers.

It is therefore proposed that a review of the decisions made at Cabinet which could be delegated to Portfolio Holders is undertaken. However, if these were key decisions, they would still require input from Committee Services and would be referenced on the Forward Plan and involve public notification, recording and publication.

It is further proposed that many of the reports currently submitted to Cabinet should be sent out as information items in M.I.S. An increased use of MIS through electronic means would ensure greater member awareness of decisions made.

PARC/Scrutiny

Consideration was given to combining the PARC and Scrutiny Committees, but it is proposed that PARC and Scrutiny should be retained as the most appropriate way in which the performance, review and scrutiny functions can be delivered for the Council.

However, a review of the Terms of Reference for each committee should be undertaken to define more precisely the respective areas of work, so as to avoid any duplication or confusion. Furthermore, it is recommended that the Scrutiny Task and Finish Groups should be limited to two in any one year.

A reduction for each Committee to meet six times per year would help achieve some savings, reflecting the similar reductions to Council and Cabinet.

4.4 **Savings and Implications**

The combined savings made from a reduction of Council, Cabinet, PARC and Scrutiny meetings with consequent increased decision making by Portfolio Holders are set out in paragraph 4.11.

4.5 **Central Development Control Committee**

It is proposed that the area based decision making (ABDM) of Area Committees meeting on a minimum of 45 occasions a year should be replaced by a single central Development Control Committee that would meet for a minimum of 12 occasions a year.

A central Development Control Committee would consist of 15 members, drawn from a wider pool of Councillors representing, each of the five Area Committees. In this way, each area would be directly represented. Cabinet Members would be excluded from this Committee, but it would have to be politically balanced. The current equation used to determine committee membership would suggest 10 Conservatives, 3 Labour and 2 Liberal Democrats.

In determining the role of planning in Area Committees versus a single Development Control Committee, consideration needs to be given to the efficiency and effectiveness of the current arrangement of the five Area Committees working separately in their localities in comparison to having one central Committee that deals with all planning matters for the entire district.

The key drivers to improving planning arrangements are:

1. The speed and efficiency of decision making – BVPI 109 sets a requirement upon the Authority to determine applications within certain time scales.
2. Consistency of decision making.
3. Ability for Members to act as ward representatives (advocates) versus quasi-judicial makers.

1. Speed of Decision Making

The Government's targets for dealing with planning applications means that for major applications 60% of those have to be dealt with within 13 weeks, for minor applications it is 65% within 8 weeks and for other (householder) applications 80% within 8 weeks.

The current arrangements of 45 Area Committees per year mean that in many instances it is 5 to 6 weeks between an Area Committee meeting for any one particular area. Given the current cycle of Area Committee meetings, it is increasingly difficult for applications to be dealt with within the prescribed periods, taking into account:

1. Member call-in arrangements
2. Consultation with statutory bodies
3. Administration of applications

In respect of item 1, Member call-in arrangements have been revised and the call-in period has been reduced from 28 days to 21 days.

For item 2, there is no scope for amending the time period within which statutory consultees can respond. However, the Member call-in period and the consultation for statutory consultees is now in accordance. At present a maximum of 10% of applications which go to committee are determined within the statutory time scales although overall we are achieving our BVPI 109 target. The main factor with the 'poorer' performance of applications that go to Area Committees is the time-cycle of Area Committee meetings. In comparison with authorities across Hertfordshire, and in particular those who have good performance levels, the majority have planning committees which meet with a frequency of between 3 and 4 weeks, but these are centralised and not area.

With regard to item 3, there is a constant improvement in the way that we process planning applications and booking in and handling of applications normally now occurs within 3 days of receipt. This element of service delivery will continue to be kept under review by the Head of Service.

2. Consistency in Decision Making

At present, the five Area Committees act in a quasi-judicial regulatory manner to determine planning applications across the district. It is essential that there is consistency of sound planning advice provided to Members of the various area committees for the handling of applications in order to ensure proper decisions are made. In the past there have been instances where decisions in one area of the district have not been consistent with other areas. This becomes problematic in an appeal situation where appellants can use such different interpretation of policy to seek to justify proposals that the Council does not wish to support. While the Council's appeals record is good, it could be improved further through more consistency in decision making that can be better achieved through a central Development Control Committee.

3. Advocate Versus Decision Maker

In the current system, all Members of the Council are decision makers in respect of planning matters. This can lead to conflict between this regulatory role and the role of community advocate. In responding to any planning application, Members have clear guidance in the Planning Code of Practice, which is designed to assist them in having particular regard to issues of predetermination and perception of bias. This supplements the Code of Conduct.

These cannot avoid all potential threats of unlawfulness in the Council's planning functions but officers are of the view, supported by experience in other authorities, that the establishment of a central Development Control Committee would enable those Members who are not Members of the Development Control Committee to act as local advocates in a less restrictive manner, not being bound by the same constraints as if they were a decision maker. It should also be noted that a member cannot act as an advocate before the Development Control Committee if they have a prejudicial interest.

4.6 Savings and Implications

A move to have all planning applications determined by a central Development Control Committee would significantly reduce the level of Planning Officer time needed to service and advise the Committee.

For example, at present, Area Committee planning business time on average is 75 hours per year in the actual meetings, but this excludes officer travel, set up and take down times. Indeed, Planning Officers often attend for a full Area Committee meeting which takes up considerable more time. A central Committee meeting 12 times a year for an average of 3 hours concentrating solely on planning issues, could operate much more effectively.

Arising from this, it is proposed that there are officer related savings to be made that equate to £3,500 per year.

It is, however, recognised that there may well be further savings to be made in the way in which planning decisions are determined, eg: through collaborative working with Anite and subsequent changes in working practices. Further examination of the wider Planning and Development budgets are required that are outside the scope of this report.

4.7 Changing Functions of Area Committees

Each Area Committee meets at least 9 times per year and in addition to their regulatory function of planning and development control, they have the community leadership and engagement role in which they can establish closer links with the communities that they serve.

However, in the event that the development control function no longer lies with the Area Committees, there will not be the need for them to meet on so many occasions. Within the range of proposals presented in this report, it is suggested that the Area Committees only need to meet a maximum of 6 times a year, commensurate with the frequency of other Council Committees, except Development Control.

Without the regulatory function, and though they may meet less frequently, the Committees will, nevertheless, have greater scope for developing their scrutiny function and, principally, that of community leadership, well-being and engagement.

The development of such actions and approaches is well documented in the present discussions on the Lyons Review and the LGA 's Closer to People and Places – A New Vision for Local Government. There is also a strong focus on improved community leadership within the recently published Government White Paper.

Notwithstanding this 'direction of travel', there still remain significant savings to be made to reduce the costs of democracy and the main element of these will be through a rationalisation of the administrative and organisational officer support given to fewer Area Committees.

To this end, in the illustrative examples set out below, Option 1 proposes to reduce the number of Area Committees by combining the present five to become four, while Option 2 suggests a reduction of five committees to three.

Either way, if the principle of retaining fewer Area Committees is agreed, then further consideration can be given as to the detailed composition of each, especially in the light of changed ward boundaries.

Option 1

Committee	Member Composition	Comments
Royston and District	7	Retention of same Member numbers, reflecting existing balance between urban and rural wards.
Baldock and District	6	As above.
Letchworth and District (formerly part of S. Rural)	Letchworth 13 From SR eg: 5	18 Assumes new Member representation after Boundary Review and includes new Chesfield Ward.
Hitchin and District (formerly part of S.Rural)	Hitchin 13 From SR, eg: 5	18 Assumes new Member representation after Boundary Review.

Option 2

Committee	Member Composition	Comments
Royston, Baldock and District	Royston 7 Baldock 6	13 Amalgamation of Royston and Baldock and rural areas. Creates a more balanced area committee numerically, though covers a very big geographical area.
Letchworth and District	Letchworth 13 From SR, eg: 5	18 As in Option 1.
Hitchin and District	Hitchin 13 From SR, eg: 5	18 As in Option 1.

The Royston and Baldock Committees already have a structure that provides a balance between the local urban and rural areas, so a similar principle can be applied to Letchworth and Hitchin, helping to build stronger linkages between their urban areas and their neighbouring rural hinterland. By merging the rural wards nearest to the respective urban areas, the Southern Rural Area Committee would no longer exist.

While Option 1 reflects the existing Committees of Royston and Baldock with their own specific identities and issues, nevertheless, in terms of member representation, each Committee is less than half the composition of Letchworth and Hitchin. Option 2, therefore, suggests an amalgamation of Royston and Baldock to achieve a more equitable balance of Councillors in comparison to Letchworth and Hitchin.

The above options are only two illustrations of possible revised Area Committee combinations and there are other permutations that can be considered within the overall principle of reducing the number of Area Committees.

4.8 Savings and Implications

It is estimated that staff savings of £53,000 could be found through a reduction of management, administrative and development support given to the Area Committees.

However, it must be appreciated that with a reduced level of support, the remaining three or four Committees will not be resourced to the same level as they might have been in the past. Such support includes community development, member services and non-committee based planning work. There will have to be a change in expectations as to what can be delivered through a reduction in workload that reflects the capacity of a reduced workforce.

A detailed assessment of the service reductions required to match the staffing savings has still to be completed. Implicit in this approach is that there will need to be fewer items dealt with in the formal Council and Committee settings. Without a reduction in decisions being made, there is a danger that the length of meetings may increase or that additional meetings may be called, for which there would be no administrative support.

4.9 Enhanced Community Leadership

During 2006 there has been a number of government driven, national initiatives that have considered, amongst other things, the idea of community leadership within a changing relationship between central and local government.

For example, in May, the Lyons Inquiry on National Prosperity, Local Choice and Civic Engagement was published and there are several suggestions within this that echo the Council's established ambitions to engage more effectively with its local communities.

Also in May, the Local Government Association produced a report entitled 'Closer to People and Places – a new vision for local government', which asserts a bold and radical approach for the future of local government, and in particular develops the concepts of community leadership by local councillors.

The Government White Paper on new forms and functions for Local Government was published in October. Amongst the proposals are those to:

- offer a stronger role for local authorities to lead their communities, shape their areas and bring local public services together
- enable Councillors to better act as advocates/champions for their communities
- publish a revised statutory model Code of Conduct for Councillors, to allow Councillors to speak on licensing and planning issues,
- encourage Councils to provide Councillors with small budgets

All three reports have been considered within the preparation of this report, but the Council will still need to review and determine its position in meeting the new challenges.

However, one practical outcome if the proposed changes to Committees were to be implemented is the reduction in time that Members, particularly back-benchers, would be spending attending meetings. To compensate for this loss of 'responsibility', alternative approaches to the work of councillors will need to be considered. As the White Paper suggests, there could be a new role for Members who will:

- Be the recognised champions for the area, identifying and helping to resolve local concerns
- Act as community leaders who provide direction for their area, mediating between and helping to reconcile competing views and interests, encouraging and aiding people and communities to resolve local problems themselves
- Foster effective relationships with public, private, voluntary and community organisations in their area

Members will need new and different levels of support to enable them to be effective in this changed role. Officers, such as Community Development Officers, would be able to provide some of the professional support that might be needed. However, as noted in 4.7 above, while there may be differing expectations of Members in a new role, further consideration would need to be given to the more limited levels and type of support Members could be able to receive from a reduced workforce.

4.10 Summary of Key Changes

Option 1

Committee	Present Frequency of Meetings	Proposed Frequency of Meetings	Net increase/ Decrease	Savings
Council	9	6 (see note 1)	- 3	
Cabinet	11	6 (see note 2)	- 5	
PARC	9	6	- 3	
Scrutiny	10	6	- 4	
Area Committees	45 (9x5)	24 (6x4)	- 21	
Planning	0	12	+12	
Net Reduction	84*	60*	- 24	

Option 2

Committee	Present Frequency of Meetings	Proposed Frequency Of Meetings	Net increase/ Decrease	Savings
Council	9	6 (see note 1)	- 3	
Cabinet	11	6 (see note 2)	- 5	
PARC	9	6	- 3	
Scrutiny	10	6	- 4	
Area Committees	45 (9x5)	18 (6x3)	-27	
Planning	0	12	+12	
Net Reduction (2)	84*	54*	- 30	

Note 1 – this includes the budget meeting and Annual Council leaving four meetings for regular business

Note 2 – this includes the budget meeting leaving five meetings for key decisions

* To these totals should be added an approximate figure of 30, which represents other meetings that meet either less regularly or on an ad-hoc basis, eg: Highways Panel, Standards Committee, Licensing and Appeals Committee, Audit Sub-Committee.

4.11 Summary of Savings

The savings shown are cashable savings and it is anticipated that further non-cashable efficiency savings will be found as a result of the changed working practices, (e.g. Members may be aware that a number of planning officer posts are currently funded from Planning Delivery Grant (PDG) which expires in 2007/08). These will be identified in future year's service and financial planning process.

The main savings emerging from these proposals are:

Central Development Control Committee & 4 Area Committees:

Salary savings from rationalisation of Officer support to Cabinet, Council, PARC, Scrutiny, Area Committees, Planning, etc.	£59,050
Reduction in general Committee Administration Costs	£2,730
Total	£61,780

Central Development Control Committee & 3 Area Committees

Salary savings from rationalisation of Officer support to Cabinet, Council, PARC, Scrutiny, Area Committees, Planning, etc	£59,450
Reduction in general Committee Administration Costs	£5,740
Total	£65,190

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 By recommendation to the Council, the Cabinet has powers under the scheme of delegation to advise on the allocation of functions to the Committee. It is clear from this report that consultation will need to be undertaken before the Cabinet make a recommendation to the Council to alter the Constitution.
- 5.2 Under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972, only the Council can authorise changes to the Constitution.

6. FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The 'costs of democracy' are contained within direct cost budgets held in the Democratic Service codes in the Chief Executive's Department and others which have recharges applied from across the Council. The total amount of this budget for 2006/07 is £1,628,150 (£428,160 direct and £1,199,990 indirect) (See Appendix 1 for fuller details).
- 6.2 The need for the Council to find year on year savings reductions requires a clear understanding of the strategic priorities to be identified and then achieved.

- 6.3 The original savings target of £50,000 for 2006/7 is unlikely to be achieved, though every effort will be made to reduce the gap. The savings shortfall has been accommodated within the overall financial position of the Council as set out in the report on 2005/6 Annual Statement of Accounts, that was reported to Cabinet at its meeting on 27th June 2006. This savings target was assessed as a medium risk when determining key budget risks for 2006/07
- 6.4 However, it is anticipated that as part of the Service and Financial Planning Process for 2007/8, linked into the additional work that is proposed, then the savings that are required will be implemented for 2007/8 and beyond.
- 6.5 The effective implementation of Area Governance is seen as being central to the democratic engagement and accountability of the Council to its citizens. Failure to do this could result in damage to the reputation of the Council, to its ability to manage the regulatory planning environment, and to deliver on a key strategic objective.

7. HUMAN RESOURCE AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Any improvements to Area Governance and decision making will have to be made within a changing organisational structure, where there will need to be new ways of working and approaches adopted.
- 7.2 A number of the recommendations and ensuing actions have been developed to improve opportunities for those whose views are often excluded from the democratic process and to encourage their greater participation, eg: Actions 30, 33 and 35.
- 7.3 There are likely to be a range of staffing changes that will impact on the way the Council delivers its services. Formal consultation with both the Trade Union and Staff Consultation Forum has commenced with those who will be effected.
- 7.4 The emerging agenda for local government emphasises the need to promote greater equality and diversity and to improve engagement with minority communities and those who often do not become fully involved in the democratic processes. The changes proposed for North Hertfordshire aim to enable such engagement.
- 7.5 Reducing the number of decisions made may in turn reduce the hours spent at committees thus helping to improve the work-life balance for both officers and members. However, the implications of smaller staff teams in Community Development and the Committee Secretariat to cover for sickness, annual leave, emergencies will have to be considered in planning workloads.

8. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS

- 8.1 Scrutiny have requested consideration of this report at the earliest opportunity and any recommendations will be forwarded to Cabinet.
- 8.2 The report will be submitted to all Area Committees for their comments prior to a further report back to Cabinet.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Cabinet is asked:

- 1) To agree the principles of the key proposals of the report as set out in Section 4;
- 2) To agree either Option 1 or Option 2 with regard to the establishment of a central Development Control Committee and a reduction of Area Committees;
- 3) To consult with Area Committees on the finer details of the report and its implications;
- 3) To agree that the Leader of the Council consider a greater delegation of responsibilities to Portfolio Holders;
- 4) To request the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to prepare a report on the constitutional implications of the proposed changes as set out in this report;
- 5) To note that a further report on detailed proposals and timescales for implementation will be submitted with recommendations to Council in February 2007.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To ensure effective implementation of the new Area Governance and decision making arrangements.
- 10.2 To ensure that savings identified within the context of the Service and Financial Planning process for 2006/7 and beyond are achieved.

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1 – Summary of Costs of Democracy.

12. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 12.1 Patrick Candler - Head of Community Development and Cultural Services. Ext 4823
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- 12.9 Liz Green – Head of Policy, Partnerships and Performance. Ext 4230.
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13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 13.1 Report to Cabinet on Area Governance May 17 2005
- 13.2 Report to Cabinet on Area Governance March 15 2005
- 13.3 Report to Area Committees on Area Governance, December 2005
- 13.4 Area Based Decision Making (ABDM) – IDeA Planning Advisory Service 2006
- 13.5 National prosperity, local choice and civic engagement – Lyons Inquiry into Local Government, May 2006.
- 13.6 Local Government Association – Closer to People and Places – a new vision for local government.

APPENDIX 1 – Summary of Costs of Democracy

Cost of Democracy Code Description	Projected Outturn 2006/07
Training	14,790
Car Allowances	8,630
Printing	78,430
Postage	16,030
Telephones	5,030
Member allowances	211,230
Miscellaneous	45,750
Sub Total	379,890
Recharges:	
Chief Executive (including democratic services)	429,520
Customer Services MSU	103,300
Amenity Administration	17,850
Finance and IT	51,320
Environment	29,800
Engineering	7,040
Housing	58,370
Building Services	9,500
Office accommodation	97,780
Legal	11,530
Audit and Financial Services	28,490
Development Control	349,820
Environmental Health	5,670
Sub Total	1,199,990
Chairman's Office	43,330
Leader's Expenses	4,940
Sub Total	48,270
Total	1,628,150

* PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT	AGENDA ITEM NO. 8
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TITLE OF REPORT: POLLING DISTRICTS AND POLLING PLACES

REPORT OF THE RETURNING OFFICER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to assist the Committee to consider revisions to the polling districts and polling places within the area of the Committee.

2. FORWARD PLAN

- 2.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 As a result of the Periodic Electoral Boundary Review, the Electoral Commission have accepted, without modification, the recommendations of the Boundary Committee. An Order has been issued enabling the new arrangements to be put in place in time for the elections due on 3 May 2007.
- 3.2 To introduce the new arrangements it is necessary to revise the existing polling districts and polling places where streets and properties have been moved from one Ward to another. This approach has a potential impact on all polling districts which means that this exercise becomes a complete review for the whole of the Council's area.
- 3.3 Once the new polling districts and polling places have been determined, necessary changes to the Electoral Register will be made in time for a revised electoral register to be published on 1 March 2007 (being the statutory date of the monthly revised register to be used for the purpose of validating nomination papers).
- 3.4 The following definitions are provided to assist the Committee:
- A **Polling District** is an area within a ward containing groups of electors. Each polling district forms a section of the electoral register and is given distinctive letters to distinguish it from other polling districts. Each polling district should form a convenient area for the purpose of polling;
 - A **Polling Place** is an area within a polling district which is small enough for electors to be able to identify with the location of polling station and give scope to Returning Officers to keep under review the sites of polling stations. This could be as tightly defined as a school building or as loosely defined as a geographical area encompassing part or all of a polling district.

4. ISSUES

- 4.1 In considering the establishment or variation of polling districts and places the following rules apply.
- a) all electors must be given such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances and in particular, so far as is reasonable, the places designated shall be accessible to electors who are disabled.
 - b) The designated polling place shall be small enough to indicate to electors in different parts of the polling district how they will be able to reach the polling station.
 - c) Each parish or community shall in the absence of special circumstances be a separate polling district or districts.
 - d) A polling place need not be designated for any polling district if the size and other circumstances are such that the situation does not materially affect the convenience of the electors or any body of them. In these circumstances, the polling place is defined as the area of the polling district.
- 4.2 The proposed polling districts for the whole area of the Committee are illustrated on maps in Appendix A together with a list of the streets to be included within each polling district. For comparative purposes lists of the streets in the current polling districts are set out in Appendix B.
- 4.3 The ward boundaries of North Hertfordshire were last altered in 1999. At that time all polling places were defined as being the building within which the Returning Officer located a polling station. In making this decision the Council effectively decided the location of the polling stations as the Returning Officer was left with little option other than to locate the polling stations within the designated buildings. Since 1999, to relocate a polling station the Returning Officer has been required to report to committee. Locating and re-locating polling stations is not a function of the Council. In order that the Returning Officer is able to fully exercise this responsibility, it is recommended that polling places are defined as being co-terminus with the polling districts. It is considered that the polling districts recommended in this report comply with the rules set out in 4.1
- 4.4 The attention of the Committee is drawn to Appendix C. This lists the polling stations that the Returning Officer intends to use during elections in 2007. Members will note that this is the same list as used during 2006.
- 4.5 There are likely to be few occasions when it will be necessary to move a polling station and when this does occur the Returning Officer will consult with Group Leaders to ensure that any relevant local knowledge is considered.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Section 18 of the 1983 Representation of the People Act requires that every Parliamentary Constituency is divided into polling districts and that a polling place be determined for each polling district. It is the duty of the Council to so divide its area. Constituency polling districts are also used for local government electoral purposes.
- 5.2 Provisions within the Electoral Administration Act 2006 require each local authority to undertake a complete review of the polling arrangements within the Council's area by no later than December 2007 and thereafter at four yearly intervals. The current review enables the Council to discharge the first part of this responsibility.

5.3 Within the Council's Constitution, this responsibility is delegated to area committees.

6. FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications.

6.2 Failure to determine a polling district scheme at this time will mean that the Electoral Registration Officer will be unable to publish the Electoral Register on 1 March, upon which the elections, due to be held on 3 May 2007, will be based.

7. HUMAN RESOURCE AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The Returning Officer keeps the location of polling stations under review. A decision to allow polling places to be coterminous with polling districts will allow the Returning Officer to act without delay in relocating a polling station where access issues arise.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That the Committee agrees to establish polling districts as described in Appendix A.

8.2 That the Committee agrees to define all polling places within the Area of the Committee in such a way that they are coterminous with the polling districts.

9. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 To enable the Council to review the Authority's polling districts in light of the District of North Hertfordshire (Electoral Changes) Order 2006.

10. APPENDICES

10.1 Appendix A - proposed polling districts

10.2 Appendix B – existing polling districts

10.3 Appendix C – Polling stations for use in May 2007

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12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1 District of North Hertfordshire (Electoral Changes) Order 2006.

12.2 Maps describing the existing polling districts of North Hertfordshire.

TITLE OF REPORT: AN ARTS, MUSEUMS & HERITAGE STRATEGY FOR NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & CULTURAL SERVICES

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report informs all Area Committees of the development of an Arts, Museums & Heritage Strategy for North Hertfordshire.
- 1.2 Area Committee are invited to comment on the draft Strategy prior to final consideration by Cabinet at its meeting on 27 March 2007 and then Council on 29 March 2007.

2. FORWARD PLAN

- 2.1 This report contains a recommendation on a key decision that was first notified to the public in the Forward Plan on 1 December 2006.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 An outcome of Museums Service Fundamental Service Review (completed August 2005) was to develop a broader context for the consideration of the Museums and Galleries Services. Consequently, the Project Board set up to manage the implementation of the FSR recommendations agreed that an Arts, Museums & Heritage Strategy for the district should be developed.
- 3.2 Arts activities in their widest sense take place in every town and village throughout North Hertfordshire, while the architectural and archaeological heritage of the District is spread around us. In the past, much of the Council's focus has been on arts, museums and heritage activities within the urban settings, but research underpinning this Strategy suggests that there is a need to provide a more accessible service for all of our residents.
- 3.3 The development of the Strategy fits well within the Strategic Objectives of the Council as set out in the present Corporate Plan 2005-2015, in which there is a commitment to provide first-class leisure and cultural facilities for all our citizens, and also a commitment to protect the environment and conserve the heritage of our historic towns and villages.
- 3.4 The previous NHDC *Leisure & Cultural Strategy 2001-2005* endorsed these commitments, but this now needs updating. The forthcoming Arts, Museums & Heritage Strategy will be incorporated in any future Leisure and Culture Strategy.
- 3.5 The Government, through the Arts Council, the Museums Libraries & Archives Council, and English Heritage, has a range of recent policy initiatives relating to the provision of arts, museums and heritage.
- 3.6 Living East, the Cultural Consortium for the East of England, produced a Regional Cultural Strategy *A better life: The role of culture in the sustainable development of*

the East of England in September 2006. Hertfordshire also has a County Cultural Strategy, *Enjoy! A Cultural Strategy for Hertfordshire 2002 -2007*. The NHDC Strategy supports both the Regional and the County Strategies.

- 3.7 At a public consultation forum held in July 2006, an Arts, Museums & Heritage Working Group was established, to help develop an Arts, Museums & Heritage Strategy. This group consists of representatives of many local groups and societies, all seven museums in the District, and interested Members and individuals.
- 3.8 This group has met on four occasions to give evidence, advice, ideas and comment upon the early stages of this draft Strategy.
- 3.9 The outcomes of the consultation with Area Committees will be considered within the second draft that will be presented to the Arts, Museums and Heritage Forum at its meeting on 5 February 2007.

4. DRAFT ARTS, MUSEUMS & HERITAGE STRATEGY

- 4.1 The draft Arts, Museums & Heritage Strategy and its Action Plan are set out in the attached documentation and the Area Committee is invited to comment upon these as part of a wider public consultation process prior to a final Strategy being prepared for Cabinet and Council approval. In particular, the Area Committee is asked to focus on the relevance and importance of local artistic and heritage interests as well as having a wider view of activities that will benefit the whole district.
- 4.2 The draft Strategy sets out a common vision of Arts, Museums and Heritage Services for the District and identifies ways in which these services can help the Council and its partners achieve the vision – Making North Hertfordshire a vibrant place to live, work and prosper.
- 4.3 The Strategy ensures linkages between national, regional and countywide initiatives whilst, at the same time, it welcomes the aspirations and ideas emerging from local consultations.
- 4.4 It will be used to identify these needs but to locate them in a strategic framework to help plan future provision in the areas of Arts, Museums and Heritage. It will also be used to increase the amount of external funding coming into the District, thereby helping to reduce NHDC subsidy levels.
- 4.5 The draft Strategy acknowledges that there are a number of extant Strategies already in existence that impact upon Arts, Museums and Heritage in the District. This draft Strategy does not seek to replace these, but at a very minimum, to reflect the good work that already is happening and to consolidate all such plans within a clear context.
- 4.6 In the Action Plans, a series of specific plans and programmes are identified, some of which are already happening, but others are planned for future years.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 provides that the Council has power to do anything which it considers likely to promote or improve the economic, social or environmental well-being of its area.
- 5.2 There are no other legal implications.

6. FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 In 2006/2007, the development of the Arts, Museums and Heritage Strategy has been managed within existing financial and human resources. The Strategy has been progressed by seconding the Cultural Services Manager to the post of Project Manager, then providing temporary cover arrangements for the secondment. This arrangement is funded until March 2007, but the project officer post will need to be funded post-March 2007. The additional cost is approximately £15,000.
- 6.2 The on-going costs could be met from a variety of sources, e.g. Area Visioning and Area Committee Development Budgets, but also particularly by generating new forms of inward investment. Should the funding not be identified from these sources or corporate virement, the funding would have to be funded from balances.

7. HUMAN RESOURCE AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no specific human resource implications pertaining to this report.
- 7.2 The development of an Arts, Museums and Heritage Strategy can, however, contribute significantly to raising awareness and improving understanding of the artistic and cultural diversity of all our communities in urban and rural settings and the implementation of activities and programmes to celebrate their richness and variety.

8. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS

- 8.1 There has been substantial consultation with a number of partner organisations and agencies in the drafting of this Strategy, but further consultation now needs to take place with Area Committees, Parish Councils, the Local Strategic Partnership, and other interested parties.
- 8.2 The consultations are planned to conclude on 31 January 2007 and any comments made will be reported back to Cabinet at its meeting on 27 March 2007.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That the Area Committee considers and makes comments on the draft Art, Museums and Heritage Strategy.
- 9.2 That comments so made will be incorporated into the final report for approval by Cabinet and Council at their respective meetings in March 2007.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To ensure that a wide consultation is undertaken on the Art, Museums and Heritage Strategy.

11. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 11.1 The preparation of the draft Art, Museums and Heritage Strategy has considered a number of alternatives and options in determining the priorities expressed by local communities, and the most efficient provision of services.
- 11.2 The draft Strategy aims to provide an effective balance between the identified themes and the means by which these can be implemented.

12. APPENDICES

- 12.1 Appendix 1 – Draft Art, Museums & Heritage Strategy 2007-2011.

13. CONTACT OFFICERS

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14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 14.1 As listed in Appendix 1 – The Art, Museums & Heritage Strategy

Arts Museums & Heritage Strategy

Work in progress

Draft Strategy for Arts, Museums & Heritage in North Hertfordshire

How to comment on this draft Strategy

We welcome your feedback to ensure that this Strategy reflects the views of as many residents of the District as possible. The consultation period will run from 6 December to 31 January 2007. Comments must be submitted by 5pm on 31 January 2007.

Please e-mail comments to: ros.allwood@north-herts.gov.uk

or post to:

Ros Allwood,
Cultural Services Manager,
Museum Resource Centre,
Burymead Road,
Hitchin,
Herts.,
SG5 1RT.

nb. We hope that the final Strategy document will be in colour, with illustrations throughout.

North Hertfordshire District Council Arts, Museums & Heritage Strategy

Contents

Welcome by Leader of the Council
Executive summary
Introduction
Background and context
Scope:
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Glossary of terms
Appendices

Welcome to North Hertfordshire District Council's first Arts, Museums & Heritage Strategy.

[Insert paragraph here]

Cllr. F J Smith

Leader of the Council

1. **Executive Summary** *[To come]*

2. **Introduction**

2.1 This Strategy outlines the role of Arts, Museums and Heritage in North Hertfordshire, and identifies ways in which Arts, Museums and Heritage services can help North Hertfordshire District Council achieve its strategic objectives. It examines the existing provision across the District, ensuring that recommendations are attuned to local needs. The Strategy identifies priorities for Arts, Museums & Heritage in North Hertfordshire, and will be used to plan future provision in all these fields. Our aim is to increase significantly the amount of external funding for Arts, Museums and Heritage coming into the district over the next five years, and the Strategy will help make this ambition a reality.

2.2 Partnership working is key both to central government thinking and to local authorities. This strategy takes account of recent national, regional and county objectives, and will help North Hertfordshire District Council work with its Local Strategic Partners. It demonstrates that the Council values Arts, Museums & Heritage, and the success stories show how Arts, Museums & Heritage already make a positive contribution to the district.

3. **Context**

3.1 **Fundamental Service Review**

This Strategy grew out of the District Council's *Fundamental Service Review* (also known as a *Best Value Review*) of its Museum Service undertaken in 2004-5. Although the Review found that visitors greatly valued all aspects of the service (Hitchin Museum & Art Gallery, Letchworth Museum & Art Gallery, the Education Service with its School Loans scheme, the Archaeology and Natural History services) the two museums were both described as unfit for purpose, and the Burymead Resource Centre as outdated and inefficient.

3.2 **The Review's Recommendations**

The Fundamental Service Review's main recommendations towards providing a better service for the whole district were as follows:

- To develop a Museum/Cultural Strategy
- To develop a new museum store/Resource Centre, possibly in partnership with other local museums
- To improve the School Loans scheme with partnership working
- To use IT to digitise the museum collections

- To close the two existing Council-run museums and instead run a museum and gallery on a single town-centre site, with a saving of £125,000.

These recommendations were approved by Cabinet in August 2005, and a Project Board formed from District Councillors and Officers was set up in November 2005 to implement the proposals (See Appendix 1) .

3.3 Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation

At the same time as the Council Review, the independent Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation had been reviewing its own museum in Letchworth, with the suggestion that an enlarged Letchworth Garden City Museum could open in Letchworth Town Hall. At present plans are still not definite, but if this were to go ahead all the Letchworth collections belonging to the Council and to the Heritage Foundation could be shown together in one museum. This could tell the story of the town from pre-history to the present day, ending the duplication of museum facilities in the Garden City.

3.4 Arts, Museums & Heritage Strategy

Following a public consultation meeting about the Council proposals in January 2006, it was decided to set up five separate Working Groups, one for each of the Fundamental Service Review recommendations, beginning with the first one:

- Production of a Museum/ Cultural Strategy
- New Museum store/ Resource Centre
- New Museum facilities
- Expanded Loan Service scheme
- Digitisation of the Museum Collections

It became clear that a new museums strategy was needed as soon as possible, to update the relevant section of the previous North Hertfordshire District Council *Leisure & Cultural Strategy 2001-2005*. At a second public consultation forum in July 2006 it was agreed to widen the scope of this strategy to include the arts and heritage as well as museums, and an Arts, Museums & Heritage Working Group was formed. This consisted of representatives of many local groups and societies, the seven North Hertfordshire museums, and interested individuals (see Appendix 2). The current strategy document is the result of this consultation forum, and will be incorporated in any future NHDC *Leisure & Cultural Strategy*.

3.5 The National and Regional Context

‘Our aim is for everyone in the country to have the opportunity to develop a rich and varied artistic and creative life...We will know that we are making progress towards achieving this if by 2008 we can see:

- a more confident, diverse and innovative arts sector which is valued by, and in tune with, the communities it serves
- more active participation in the arts by adults and young people across the country’

Our agenda for the arts in the East of England 2006-8. Arts Council England

This NHDC Arts, Museums and Heritage Strategy supports key governmental strategies for the arts, for museums and for heritage. These are listed in Appendix 3.

3.5.1 The strategy also supports the latest regional cultural strategy, ***A better life: The role of culture in the sustainable development of the East of England*** (Living East, 2006) which has the following four main themes:

- Embedding culture in growth and regeneration
- Developing creativity
- Growing cultural tourism
- Capturing the benefits of the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics

These themes provide a focus for investment and decision-making in the region over the next 10-20 years.

3.5.2 Hertfordshire has a County cultural strategy, ***Enjoy! A cultural strategy for Hertfordshire 2002-2007*** (Hertfordshire Cultural Partnership, 2002) which has the following six key messages:

- Making Hertfordshire a more prosperous and attractive place to visit
- Offering children, young people and adults the opportunity to reach their full potential through access to learning and information
- Encouraging children and young people to access and enjoy cultural and leisure activities
- Enabling all members of the community to have more and easier access to different cultural and leisure pursuits
- Valuing and supporting the diverse range of cultural and leisure activities enjoyed across the county
- Working in partnership with national, regional and local agencies to deliver a range of cultural and leisure activities effectively

The NHDC strategy aims to help achieve these county goals within the North Hertfordshire District. It explains the importance of arts and heritage to us all, and incorporates ways in which they can be at the heart of community life.

3.6 The Local Context - North Hertfordshire

3.6.1 North Hertfordshire is predominantly a rural district, with three attractive market towns, the world's first Garden City, and a number of picturesque villages in 33 parishes. It covers 145 square miles/375 square kilometres of rolling country, following the chalk escarpment of the Chiltern Hills from the Bedfordshire boundary in the south west to the Cambridgeshire and Essex borders in the north east. The Icknield Way runs the length of the district, and other ancient trackways and Roman roads give North Herts. a particularly rich archaeological heritage. Baldock and Hitchin are two of only five towns in Hertfordshire listed by the Council for British Archaeology as of national importance; Baldock for its extraordinary

wealth of Iron Age and Romano-British cemeteries, and Hitchin for its medieval street plan.

3.6.2 The population of North Hertfordshire is 119,000. The largest towns are Hitchin (pop. 30,360) and Letchworth (33,690). Royston follows at 14,290, and Baldock with 9260. The district is comparatively wealthy, with low unemployment, although there are pockets of deprivation. It has a very stable population, with more people of retirement age than the national average of 24%; in the towns 34% households contain at least one person of retirement age, and in the rural areas this rises to 43%. Under-16s make up 20% of the population. The cultural mix is the second-most ethnically diverse in Hertfordshire, with an ethnic minority population of 6.8%. This includes people of African, Bangladeshi, Caribbean, Chinese, Indian, Italian, Pakistani and Polish origin, who mostly live in Hitchin and Letchworth. The 2006 District Survey found that 95% of those questioned were satisfied with North Hertfordshire as a place to live.

3.6.3 The percentage of North Herts. residents who regularly visit museums is higher than the national average, and surveys consistently show a high satisfaction rate. However access for disabled visitors is generally poor; not one of the museums in the District has a lift enabling access to displays on different levels, and this is a major cause of public complaint. The newly refurbished Letchworth Arts Centre has had a lift installed, making it the only fully accessible community gallery space in the district.

4. **Scope and definitions**

This strategy covers a very wide subject area, and one which affects everyone living in the district. Even if we don't think that we take part in the arts, or visit museums, whenever we go outside we engage with the historic environment of the North Hertfordshire towns and villages.

The arts In the strategy the arts are defined as all forms of visual art, craft, design, video, film, the performing arts such as music and drama, literature and writing. These activities can be done by individuals or in groups, in public and in private.

Museums Museums are defined in the strategy as those museum collections which are open to the public, whether run by the public, private or voluntary sector.

Heritage In the strategy heritage refers to the architectural heritage of our historic towns and villages, and also the archaeology of the district, which together make up our urban and rural landscapes. The natural heritage is also covered by the countryside collections within the museums.

5. **Inventory of Provision**

As part of the consultation process undertaken to develop this strategy, we undertook an inventory of arts, museums and heritage provision in the district, looking at the type of provision, number of users, and costings. This information is given in Appendix 5.

The main findings are summarised in this section, under the three subject headings, arts, museums, heritage.

5.1 Arts

5.1.1 North Hertfordshire has a varied arts scene, with some excellent facilities, such as the re-launched Letchworth Arts Centre, and Benslow Trust's Lottery funded concert hall. The annual Rhythms of the World Festival in Hitchin is described as Europe's largest free world music festival, attracting around 35,000 visitors over two days in July. The many arts, craft and photography groups, and music and choral societies are listed in Appendix 3. North Herts. schools also provide a range of music, dance and drama performances, some of which are open to a wider public. Schools in Letchworth take part in an annual music festival at Plinston Hall, which also regularly shows tribute bands. There are a number of venues for contemporary live music, such as Hitchin's successful Club 85, Letchworth's Arena Tavern, and the Green Man in Royston. However there is a need for a live music venue for the under-18s, who are not allowed into licensed premises. Another gap is in venues for the performance of dance; there are almost no professional dance performances in the District.

5.1.2 For visual arts and craft, Hitchin, Letchworth and Royston Museums all show regular exhibitions by individual artists and local art and photographic societies. Although the emphasis is on local artists, the larger museums are able to mount contemporary and historic exhibitions of more than local significance, such as Letchworth Museum's Spencer Gore exhibition in 2006. There are a number of private galleries in North Herts.; ICAS Vilas Fine Art and Tuscany Galleries in Letchworth, James Perkins Fine Art, Wall Art and Worx of Art in Hitchin, the Ashwell Gallery in Ashwell. In addition to the museums, public art spaces in the district include the Letchworth Library gallery and the superb gallery space at the Letchworth Art Centre. Every autumn artists in the district open their studios under the Open Studios scheme, run by the Hertfordshire Visual Arts Forum. However there is a severe lack of affordable studio space for younger artists in the District.

5.1.3 North Hertfordshire has surprisingly little public art, historic or contemporary. Hitchin has none at all. In 2003 Commissions East, the public art development agency for the East of England, worked with NHDC to commission a piece of public art for a space beside Letchworth Town Hall, as part of the Garden City's Centenary celebrations. The sculpture 'Paradise Is' by Bettina Furnee was selected. Apart from the War Memorial, Letchworth's only other sculpture is a bust of Ebenezer Howard near Morrison's, commissioned by the Garden City Heritage Foundation. Baldock has a terracotta 'Owl and Pussy Cat' relief

at St. Mary's Infant school by Franta Belsky. Royston has Royston War Memorial, 1922 by Clemons and Fagan; 'Millpole', a carved pole in Priory Memorial Gardens by Dennis Heath, 2000, and a 1991 sculpture outside Royston Library variously called 'Unison' or 'Unity', by Antonia Spowers. Recently an underpass in Letchworth's Grange Estate was painted by Scribbley Artz in partnership with Stonehill School, and the project was so successful that there is now a plan for a similar project at the Jackmans Estate.

5.2 Museums

5.2.1 There are seven museums in the District, two of which are run by NHDC (Hitchin and Letchworth Museums). The others are Ashwell Museum, Baldock Museum, First Garden City Heritage Museum, Hitchin British Schools Museum, and Royston Museum. Between them, the museums hold hundreds of thousands of fascinating and often unique objects relating to the history, archaeology and ecology of the District, and also specialist material about Garden Cities (Heritage Museum) and education (British Schools Museum). In total they receive over 60,000 visitors a year. As a result of the interest generated by the consultation over this document, a North Herts. Museums Network is being set up, giving a forum for discussion over matters of mutual interest, such as partnership projects and shared publicity. A North Herts. Museums leaflet will be published in 2007, which will be an extremely useful promotional tool, and benefit all the museums.

5.2.2 Of the seven museums, only two, Ashwell Museum and the Hitchin British Schools Museum, are completely sure of remaining in their current locations for the foreseeable future. All the rest either will, or may possibly, be moving to new premises. Baldock Museum is currently unsure how long it be able to remain in Baldock Town Hall, and is in discussions about new premises. The First Garden City Heritage Foundation has published its desire to move the Heritage Museum to Letchworth Town Hall. If this were to take place, Letchworth Museum's Garden City collections could be displayed there, telling the town's story in one building. The non-Garden City material currently at Letchworth Museum could then combine with the Hitchin collections, plus the other NHDC archaeology, natural and social history, in one NHDC museum. Royston Museum is in discussions about a possible move at some date in the future – although this is not imminent.

5.2.3 Most of the museums in North Herts. have access problems; Ashwell and Baldock Museums are the only two on one level. None of the other museums is fully accessible, and none has a lift. Many of the museums have storage problems, with too little space, and without ideal temperature and humidity conditions for their objects. All the museums try to ensure access to their material as far as possible, and all will show material to visitors by appointment.

5.3 Heritage

5.3.1 North Hertfordshire has an unusually rich archaeological heritage, with 61 Scheduled Ancient Monuments – the most in any district in the county. It also has over 1700 listed buildings; 25 Grade 1, 105 Grade 2*, and 1604 Grade 2. These range from medieval timber-framed buildings to Arts & Crafts houses of the early 20th century. There are also 13 registered Historic Parks and Gardens, including Letchworth's Broadway Gardens, which were restored and revitalised with a Heritage Lottery Fund grant in 2003 (?). The district has 40 Conservation Areas. North Hertfordshire District Council has a statutory duty under the District Local Plan to conserve its historic environment.

5.3.2 Interest in the heritage of this area is shown by the large number of local history groups and societies, many of whose members undertake research into their particular town or village, often using their local museum for reference material. All these societies tend to rely on volunteers, often retired, for their organisation, and many find it hard to replace committee members.

5.3.3 Participation in the historic environment is deemed by English Heritage as one of the principal ways people express interest and place value on heritage. The government has set a Public Service Agreement (PSA) target to increase participation in heritage by people from under-represented groups (black and ethnic minority, and lower socio-economic groups, and those with a limiting disability) by 3% by 2008. One of the main ways English Heritage hopes to achieve this aim is through the *Heritage Open Day* scheme. Heritage Open Days are England's largest voluntary cultural event, co-ordinated by the Civic Trust in partnership with English Heritage. A large number of historic properties, museums and churches in North Herts. already take part in this scheme, with special public openings one weekend every July. Another annual heritage event is *National Archaeology Week*, held in July under the overall leadership of the Council for British Archaeology. It is supported by most of the museums, which put on a wide range of events and activities. These tend to be free, enabling wide access, and aimed at children as much as adults.

6. Strategic Policy Framework

6.1.1 Consultation has identified strong local interest in particular areas of the district. Where appropriate, this particular sense of place needs to be reflected in the strategy. However other areas, such as archaeology and natural history clearly have a district-wide perspective. The aim is to strike a balance between the local and the district provision.

6.1.2 Partnership-working is seen as the key to providing better services, and is encouraged by all national and regional agencies. Grant-giving bodies nowadays look far more kindly on partnership projects than on individual organisation, and the arts, museums and heritage of the District will increasingly depend on external funding for many of their projects.

6.1.3 Widening access is crucial to the success of the policy. All residents of North Herts. should have equal access to the many arts in their District, to the wide range of different museums, and to the rich archaeological, built and natural heritage. Currently access is denied to many – either through lack of information, or physically. The strategy aims to overcome these problems, allowing those who would like to participate, whatever their age, ethnic background or income level, the opportunity to do so.

6.1.4 Careful investment in the arts and museums has helped the economic regeneration of many different areas of the UK. North Herts. recognises this, and is keen to explore the potential of cultural schemes to drive regeneration and generate inward investment. The 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games will affect North Hertfordshire both socially and economically, and the arts, museums and heritage sector needs to be aware of this, and to make the most of any opportunities, such as tourism, that 2012 brings.

6.2 The Aims of the Strategy

- To set out a common vision of Arts, Museums and Heritage services for North Hertfordshire
- To identify the ways in which Arts, Museums and Heritage services can help North Hertfordshire District Council achieve its strategic objectives
- To use the Strategy to help plan future Arts, Museums and Heritage provision
- To audit the existing provision across the District, to identify local needs
- To increase the amount of external funding for Arts, Museums and Heritage coming into North Hertfordshire by a significant amount, and to reduce the overall NHDC subsidy

6.3 Underlying Principles

6.3.1 The Local Strategic Partnership's vision for the District is:

'making North Hertfordshire a vibrant place to live, work and prosper'

and to work collaboratively with its partners and communities to achieve the vision. It has six strategic objectives:

- Sustainable communities
- Safer communities
- Satisfied communities
- Healthier communities
- Equal communities
- Prosperous communities

6.3.2 This Arts, Museums & Heritage Strategy contributes directly to the following objectives:

Promoting sustainable development of the district to ensure we deliver adequate affordable housing, protect the environment and conserve the heritage of our historic towns and rural areas

by its display and interpretation of collections relating to the local environment and heritage, particularly through the district's museums, with their local history, archaeology and natural history resources, and also through the NHDC Planning and Building Control Service

Ensuring that we listen to our citizens and deliver high-quality, value for money, customer-focussed services

The Fundamental Service Review of the Museum Service found that it had high-quality staff giving an extremely customer-focussed service, but was let down by its buildings, which gave poor value for money. The Strategy aims to find ways of providing more cost-effective services, with better quality buildings and more partnership working

Promoting first class leisure and cultural facilities to contribute to healthy living for all our citizens

The Strategy aims to promote first-class leisure and cultural facilities relating to the arts and/or museums and/or heritage in each of the major towns, and to find new ways of providing services for those in the District's villages

The Arts, Museums & Heritage Strategy also relates to and complements the a number of Council plans and strategies, which are listed in Appendix 4.

7. Implementation

7.1 The Arts, Museums & Heritage Strategy Action Plan

The North Hertfordshire District Council Arts, Museums & Heritage Strategy has identified six policy objectives that will be instrumental in guiding the continued development of arts, museums and heritage within the district. These objectives have been formulated as a result of public consultation, taking into account existing district, county, regional and national priorities.

- To increase the numbers of those participating in and enjoying the creative arts
- To increase the numbers of visitors to museums, galleries and heritage sites
- To improve facilities for experiencing, creating, housing and using the arts, museums and heritage
- To encourage partnership working within this sector
- To use arts, museums and heritage as a means for social inclusion
- To encourage tourism and regeneration in the district though the arts and heritage

See Action Plan, on following pages:

DRAFT Museums & Heritage Strategy Action Plan

Objective 1. To increase the numbers participating in and enjoying the creative arts				
Action	Lead organisation or partners	Outcomes	Timescales	Resources
Provide opportunities for children and young people to experience live theatre/poetry	LAC	Delivery of theatre performance to N. Herts. pupils by professional drama group Delivery of live poetry sessions for N. Herts. pupils <i>Strategic objective: Healthier communities</i>	2007/08 and on-going	The Princes' Trust (£17 per head per pupil)
Run successful Book Festival throughout the District	Festival Committee	More residents enjoy reading and creative writing; possible future tourism benefits <i>Strategic objective: Healthier communities</i>	March 2007 and annually	NHDC, LGCHF, Civic Trust, volunteer time
Provide arts activities for young people over 12, particularly in popular music	LAC	Through access to enjoyable high-quality learning, young people gain in skills and personal development <i>Strategic objective: Healthier communities</i>	2007/8	Arts Council England, PRS Foundation
Use visual arts to help families with literacy and numeracy, using the Plus Strategy	LAC	Through greater literacy and numeracy, families will become more confident, and be able to engage more actively with each other and in the community <i>Strategic objective: Equal communities</i>	2007/8	Arts Council England
To provide more artists' studios in the District	Various	North Herts. artists are more likely to remain within the District, giving social and economic benefits <i>Strategic objective: Prosperous communities</i>	2007/8 and on-going	WREN, private enterprise

DRAFT Arts, Museums & Heritage Action Plan

Objective 2. To increase the numbers of visitors to museums, galleries and heritage sites				
Action	Lead organisation or partners	Outcomes	Timescales	Resources
Publicise all North Herts museums with a widely-distributed joint leaflet.	NHDC	Museum visitors more aware of other North Herts. museums, so more likely to visit. Tourism benefits. <i>Strategic objective: Sustainable communities</i>	2007	NHDC, LGCHF and others
Develop and improve NHDC museum/gallery websites.	NHDC	Increase particularly in younger visitors, who use the internet as their main information source. <i>Strategic objective: Satisfied communities</i>	2007/8 and on-going	NHDC, grant-aid
Put joint leaflet on NHDC website, and also links to all N. Herts. arts/museums /heritage venues	NHDC	Greater awareness of variety of sites/activities on offer in the District. Tourism benefits. <i>Strategic objective: Satisfied communities</i>	2007	NHDC
Engage in national events such as Archaeology Day, Heritage Open Day in partnership	N. Herts. Museums Network	More residents and visitors understand and enjoy the heritage of North Herts. Tourism benefits <i>Strategic objective: Sustainable communities</i>	2007 and annually	NHDC, LGCHF, Civic Trust, volunteer time
Ensure that the NHDC museums each hold a high-quality (probably loaned) exhibition annually	NHDC	Increase in visitor numbers, increase in community awareness and pride in museums <i>Strategic objective: Satisfied communities</i>	On-going	NHDC; grant-aid

Objective 3. DRAFT To improve facilities for experiencing, housing and using the arts, museums and heritage				
Action	Lead organisation or partners	Outcomes	Timescales	Resources
Provide new storage facility for N. Herts. Museum Service, in partnership with other interested museums	NHDC	Museum objects correctly stored, with easy public access to these resources <i>Strategic objective: Sustainable communities; Healthier communities</i>	2008/9	NHDC, HLF, possibly LGCHF and others
Digitise the N. Herts. Museum Service collections	NHDC	Access to collections on-line for residents and visitors, enabling wider understanding of the heritage of North Herts. <i>Strategic objective: Satisfied communities</i>	2008 onwards	HLF and other grant-giving bodies
To determine longer-term arrangements for Baldock Museum	Baldock Museum & Local History Society	Secure future for Baldock Museum, with better display and storage facilities <i>Strategic objective: Satisfied communities</i>	To be decided	Grants
To determine longer-term arrangements for Royston Museum	Royston Town Council	Improved arrangements for the running of Royston Museum <i>Strategic objective: Satisfied communities</i>	To be decided	Royston Town Council, grants
Provide temporary or permanent museum displays in village halls/community centres throughout the District	NHDC	Residents in rural areas gain a wider understanding of their heritage and environment, and benefit from the staff expertise and collections of NHDC Museums Service <i>Strategic objective: Sustainable communities</i>	2007/8	NHDC, HLF and other funds
Provide accessible museum facility in Letchworth to tell the story of the Garden City from prehistory to present	FGCHF	First-class museum in world's first Garden City. NHDC and LGCHF Letchworth collections all displayed under one roof, giving easier access for residents and tourists <i>Strategic objective: Satisfied communities</i>	To be decided	LGCHF
Provide accessible museum facility to display NHDC Hitchin collections, plus other NHDC non-Letchworth material	NHDC	High-quality museum and gallery displaying Hitchin-specific collections, district archaeology, natural history, social history, local history, art and temporary exhibitions, ensuring that the NHDC collections are more accessible for all residents and visitors. <i>Strategic objective: Healthy communities</i>	2011	NHDC, HLF, other museum-specific grant-giving bodies

Objective 4. DRAFT				
To encourage partnership working within this sector				
Action	Lead organisation or partners	Outcomes	Timescales	Resources
To set up the North Herts. Museums Network	NHDC	Regular meetings will enable museums to plan joint projects and publicity, making best use of resources <i>Strategic objective: Satisfied communities</i>	End Jan. 2007 and onwards	NHDC
NHDC Museum Service to continue to give curatorial advice/loans to other museums in the District	NHDC	Smaller museums can benefit from access to expertise of NHDC staff if requested, and from museum loan items, enabling greater professionalism at a local level <i>Strategic objective: Sustainable communities</i>	On-going	NHDC
To develop NHDC Museum Loans Service to include items from all museums in the District	NHDC in partnership with other NH museums	Schools and other community facilities will gain greater access to items from all North Herts. museums. Raised awareness of the individual museums through the use of branded Loan Boxes. <i>Strategic objective: Satisfied communities</i>	2008/9 and onwards	HLF, Esmee Fairburn Foundation
Acquire N. Herts Museums Service van	NHDC	Officers enabled to deliver loan items to other N. Herts. museums; outreach programmes to rural areas; Loan Boxes throughout District <i>Strategic objective: Satisfied communities</i>	2007	NHDC
NHDC Archaeology Officer to spend more time on outreach work with village local history groups	NHDC	Rural communities benefit from expertise and resources of N. Herts. Museum Service <i>Strategic objective: Satisfied communities</i>	2007 onwards	NHDC
Joint marketing of Heritage Open Day events through the District	NHDC with other museums, LGCHF, historic buildings	Greater awareness of the District's heritage <i>Strategic objective: Sustainable communities</i>	2007 onwards	Civic Trust, English Heritage

DRAFT Arts, Museums & Heritage Action Plan

Objective 5. To use arts, museums and heritage as a means for social inclusion				
Action	Lead organisation or partners	Outcomes	Timescales	Resources
Work with N Herts. Minority Ethnic Forum and Ravidassia Centre to increase awareness of arts and museums by BME groups	NHDC	Increased use of NHDC museums by BME groups <i>Strategic objective: Equal communities</i>	On-going	NHDC
NHDC to provide a fully-accessible museum and gallery, with public WCs and lecture/education room	NHDC	Greater use of museum/gallery by disabled people (both individually and in groups), elderly people, mothers with pushchairs, school parties <i>Strategic objective: Equal communities</i>	2011	NHDC, HLF and others
Support 'free' community festivals such as Rhythms of the World	NHDC	Free community events accessible to all lead to greater social inclusion, and can help promote cross-cultural understanding <i>Strategic objective: Equal communities</i>	On-going	NHDC and in-kind support
To provide outreach arts activities for 'hard to reach' young people	LAC	Young people helped to develop into confident adults <i>Strategic objective: Equal communities</i>	2008	Arts Council England or similar
Identify opportunities for BME residents to engage with the arts	LAC, University of Hertfordshire	A greater understanding of how the North Herts. BME communities can engage with the arts will help to plan future provision <i>Strategic objective: Equal communities</i>	2007/08	Awards for All

DRAFT Arts, Museums & Heritage Action Plan

Objective 6. To encourage tourism and regeneration in the District through the arts and heritage				
Action	Lead organisation or partners	Outcomes	Timescales	Resources
Supply TICs and libraries with the new joint museums leaflet	NHDC	Greater awareness of North Herts. museums, so tourists more likely to visit. <i>Strategic objective: Satisfied communities</i>	2007	NHDC, LGCHF and others
Ensure internet links to joint museums leaflet on NHDC and Herts Direct websites	NHDC	Greater awareness of North Herts. museums both locally and nationally <i>Strategic objective: Satisfied communities</i>	2007	NHDC
Ensure that Town Centre Managers are briefed on arts/museums/heritage events and venues, and work in partnership	NHDC, LGCHF, Town Centre Initiative, Chambers of Commerce, Town Councils	Greater buy-in from Town Centre partners, leading to more awareness, better events and increased tourism. <i>Strategic objective: Sustainable communities</i>	2007 and ongoing	Various
Ensure any new museums are high-quality 'flagship projects', in visible town-centre sites	NHDC LGCHF	First-class museums act as tourist magnets. The re-use of historic buildings for arts and museums venues regenerates these buildings, setting a quality benchmark for the surrounding environment. <i>Strategic objective: Healthier communities</i>	?2008 - 2011	NHDC, LGCHF, HLF and others
Support local organisations with publicity for unique heritage sites such as Royston Cave, and the archaeology and natural history of the Icknield Way	NHDC	Greater awareness of the heritage of North Herts., so tourists more likely to visit. <i>Strategic objective: Sustainable communities</i>	On-going	NHDC in-kind

8. **Monitoring and Evaluation**

We need to know that any changes made as a result of this strategy benefit the residents of the district. In order to do this, we will monitor and evaluate where possible.

Performance Indicators

In some NHDC services there are already government Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) which we will continue to use to monitor our performance – examples are the Museum Service PIs, which show the number of visitors, usage of the museums, and number of school groups which visit Hitchin and Letchworth Museums.

All seven museums in North Hertfordshire contribute to an annual Benchmarking scheme run by the County Museum Development Officer, and this will continue to be used to evaluate performance.

For those groups with a Service Level Agreement with the Council, there is already an agreed process of monitoring.

The amount of grant-aid coming in to the district will be used as an indicator.

9. **Abbreviations and Glossary of Terms**

9.1 Abbreviations:

ACE	Arts Council England
AV	Area Visioning
BVPI or PI	Best Value Performance Indicator
EH	English Heritage
HLF	Heritage Lottery Fund
LAC	Letchworth Art Centre
LGCHF	Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
MLA	Museums, Libraries & Archives Council

9.2 Glossary:

[To come]

Appendix 1 - Membership of the Project Board

Elected Members:

Cllr. Paul Clark, Cllr. Tricia Gibbs, Cllr. G. Grindal, Cllr. T. Hone, Cllr. I. Knighton

NHDC Officers:

R. Allwood, P. Candler, L. Hunter (Minutes), J. Robinson, L. Saville

County Council:

A. Hawkins

Appendix 2 - Membership of AMH Strategy Working Group

Elected Members:

Cllr. Julian Cunningham, Cllr. Tricia Gibbs, Cllr. Terry Hone, Cllr. Lynda Needham,

NHDC Officers:

Ros Allwood, Patrick Candler, Lorrae Hunter (Minutes), Cllr. Michael Paterson,

Others:

Jane Arnold, Ellie Clarke, Scilla Douglas, Keith Fitzpatrick-Mathews, Mary Goldsmith, Roger Hawkins, Muriel Hardman, Fiona Haines, David Hodges, Alan Howard, David Howlett, Maria Iredale, Mick James, Trevor James, John Jarvis, Peter Ketteringham, Brendon King, Bob Mardon, Paul Palmer, William Prime, Terry Ransome, David Rice, Cllr. Robert Smith, Dorcas Sanders, Jillian Steyne, Juliet Stockford, Alison Tebbitt, Kate Thompson, John Webb

**Appendix 3 - Government Strategies Consulted During
the Production of this Document:**

Arts:

Arts Council England, Annual Review 2006 (Arts Council England, 2006)
Agenda for the Arts in the East of England 2006-8 (Arts Council England, 2006)

Museums:

Investing in Knowledge: A five year vision for England's museums, libraries and archives (MLA, 2004)
Understanding the Future: Museums and 21st Century Life (DCMS, 2005)
Museums for the Future: A development strategy for Museums in the East of England (MLA East of England, 2006)
Broadening Participation: A Summary of the East of England Museum Hub Plan 2006-8 (Renaissance East of England, 2006)

Heritage:

The Historic Environment: A Force for Our Future (DCMS, 2001)
Heritage Counts: The State of the East of England's Historic Environment, 2006 (English Heritage, 2006)

General:

Values and Vision: The Contribution of Culture (Arts Council, MLA and others, 2005)

**Appendix 4 - NHDC Strategies Consulted During
the Production of this Document:**

Leisure & Cultural Strategy 2001-2005

This aims to encourage participation in the arts, and to preserve and interpret the heritage of the past. It is now in need of updating, and the AMH Strategy will be incorporated in any new Cultural Strategy

Community Strategy (updated 2004)

This aims to improve the quality of life for all local people. It uses information gained from the 'Area Visioning' processes, by which NHDC consults with communities.

Town Centre Strategies – Hitchin (2004), Baldock (2006), Letchworth (draft 2006)

Social Inclusion Strategy 2005-2008

This encourages community development, to offer opportunities as widely as possible, in order to improve the quality of life for all our citizens.

North Herts. District Local Plan No.2

This plan outlines the planning guidelines for the district, and describes the rich historic environment of North Hertfordshire.

Play Strategy 2006-9

This sets out the priorities and identifies the significance of play in North Hertfordshire. Learning through play is an aim of the arts and in the Council museums, in their popular Under-5s sessions.

Appendix 5 - Inventory of Arts, Museums & Heritage Provision in North Hertfordshire

[NB. The Inventory is currently very brief, and does not include details of the majority of the many arts, craft and heritage societies/venues in the District, or performance venues. NHDC is currently auditing these facilities, and will incorporate the results in the final document. Please let us know if you would like a copy of the Audit sheet for your organisation.]

Major Arts Venues:

Benslow Music Trust, Hitchin

Benslow Music Trust is an international music school in Hitchin. The Trust runs residential music courses and also host regular concerts, which are open to the public to attend. The Music School boasts a superb concert hall, built in 2000 and funded by the National Lottery.

Benslow estimate that they have an annual footfall of 4,000 and run 125 residential courses and 10 public concerts per year.

Benslow Music Trust receives financial assistance from NHDC distributed by the Arts Council for North Hertfordshire. The amount varies from year to year but was £2,000 in 2006/07.

The Queen Mother Theatre, Hitchin

The Queen Mother Theatre is based in Hitchin and is run by volunteers. The Bancroft Players own and manage the theatre, which has charitable status and is non-profit making. It runs a busy and popular programme, and is financially self-sustaining.

The Queen Mother Theatre has three main purposes; it is a producing theatre, it hosts professional performances and it is available for hire by community groups at low rates. It anticipates hosting 50-60 performances per Two youth theatre groups use the theatre, with members ranging in age from 10 – 18 years. The theatre has a seating capacity of 170.

In the past that the Queen Mother Theatre has received some financial assistance from NHDC, distributed by the Arts Council for North Hertfordshire, to support under-subscribed professional events.

Letchworth Art Centre (formerly The Place)

Letchworth Art Centre is North Hertfordshire's Arts Centre, based in Letchworth. Founded and run mainly by volunteers, LAC has a diverse programme of art exhibitions, art classes, music concerts and theatre.

In 2006/7 NHDC and Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation committed a total of £30,000 (£15,000 each) which has allowed employment of a development director. It is hoped that this initiative will broaden the appeal of the facility and encourage more outreach work to take place in North Herts., as well as helping LAC to become increasingly self sustainable. LGCHF has contributed towards staffing costs, plus free rent, and plus approx. £500,000 renovation costs. These have included a new entrance, and a lift. There is also a new post of LAC Operations Manager. NHDC is supporting The Place

on the basis that it has aspirations to deliver a range of arts service on an outreach basis – as opposed to supplying artistic services at one site.

North Hertfordshire College

North Hertfordshire College has sites in Hitchin, Letchworth and Stevenage, with a range of venues that can be used for a range of artistic and cultural purposes.

The performing arts department actions approximately 25 shows a year, varying in size from large events played over three nights to small one –off shows. The College does not currently record attendance, but has estimated that there are 2500 audience members per year. The Michael Brown Gallery at the Centre for the Arts in Hitchin has a display area for work by its students and alumni.

Plinston Hall, Letchworth Garden City (owned by Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation)

The Plinston Hall's remit, as part of the objectives of the Letchworth Heritage Foundation, is to benefit the local Letchworth community with the provision of recreation and leisure facilities in the interests of social welfare to improve the quality of life. The Hall provides four function spaces, three bars and on-site catering facilities for public events and private hire available 360 days of the year. Twenty clubs and societies meet weekly at the Hall. The Gardens Gallery upstairs at Plinston Hall is occasionally used for art exhibitions.

During the year a broad range of activities take place including music concerts, ballroom and tea dances, business conferences, discos, play-scheme activities, private parties and social events, collectors' fairs, film, theatre and variety shows. Annual footfall is over 100,000 although many of these will be repeat visits.

The Settlement, Letchworth Garden City

The Letchworth Settlement is a primarily self-funding charity that is also supported by the District Council (approx £400 per year) and the Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation. It hosts a range of classes, performances, lectures and community work, many of which fall under the arts and heritage headings. It has a staged theatre seating 120, and its overall capacity is around 218. The ground floor is suitable for wheelchair users, for which it hosts 'linking together', a group run for wheelchair users. Other classes range from modern Greek to upholstery to University of Cambridge adult education courses. It acts as a venue for local clubs such as the Letchworth Camera Club, the Guild of Weavers and Spinners, the Letchworth Art Society, and associated organisations such as the RSPB. Its annual footfall is estimated to be 42,000 although many of these will be repeat visits

Multi-cultural venues

The Ravidassia Centre, Hitchin

The Ravidassia Centre is a multi-cultural centre serving the needs and interests of the ethnic minorities in the district. The centre has a range of community activities, a number of which come under the arts/heritage head.

The centre stages multi-cultural awareness events such as Black History Month and Passover for a variety of faiths and cultures, and has worked in partnership with Hitchin Museum. The main hall holds 125 people and approximately 22 events are held per annum. In 2004 2,070 visitors visited the centre.

North Herts Minority Ethnic Forum, Hitchin

The NHMEF acts as a conduit for ethnic minority interests and is a venue for multi-cultural events. With an annual footfall of over 10,000 the forum welcomes minority groups from all sections of the community including the Indian sub-continent, Afro-Caribbean, Chinese and European visitors. The centre has recently moved to new premises, which can hold up to 200 – 250 people at any one time within its main hall and associated rooms. It facilitates or delivers a range of services including information and advice; language, dance and IT classes as well as providing an interpreting and translating service.

Annual Arts Events

Rhythms of the World, Hitchin

Rhythms of the World is an annual world music festival that takes place in Hitchin. Boasted as Europe's largest free world music festival, thousands of people flock from far and wide to experience a diverse range of music and entertainment for two days every July. Estimated footfall stands at 35,000. Now in its 13th year, the festival has gone from strength to strength and has tremendous support from the communities of Hitchin. The festival is run entirely by volunteers who donate their time throughout the year to plan and run a successful festival.

North Hertfordshire District Council support Rhythms of the World both financially (approx. £10,000 pa) and in-kind.

Hitchin Festival

The Rhythms of the World event originally was born out of the Hitchin Festival, a 16 day annual event held every July. The festival reflects the interests, diversity and skills of the Hitchin community and beyond. The programme includes guided walks, lectures, concerts, poetry, jazz, art exhibitions and a gardeners' question time, and makes use of public and commercial facilities all over the town centre. Normally the Hitchin Committee gives around £2000 to this event. Many events are free and ticketed events are often sold on the door so there is no footfall data available.

Broadway Gardens Events, Letchworth Garden City

In June 2003 the newly refurbished Broadway Gardens were publicly opened with a staged event. This event has since been repeated in annually. In 2004 there was a range of musical entertainment from a 'classical hour' through to the tribute band 'Kings of Queen'. During 2005 a predominantly youth music event was run in partnership with a local charity. NHDC funded the 2003 and 2004 event (with LGCHF assistance in 2004), with the 2005 and 2006 events grant-aided equally by both NHDC and the Letchworth Garden City Heritage

Foundation, at a total cost of £25,000. It is hoped that there will be more events in this area, organised by local organisations as well as NHDC and LGCHF.

Baldock Festival

The Baldock festival is a fortnight-long event, now in its 23rd year. Running in early May, it makes use of the support and sponsorship of local groups and commercial interests as well as the support of NHDC (£1060 in 2006/7) Spread throughout the town, the festival consists of a wide range of activities including concerts, treasure hunts, competitions, petanque, golf, auctions, drama, local history events and art exhibitions. It climaxes with a historically-themed Street Fair which is sited on the High Street's market place, with fairground rides, Morris dancing, craft stalls, historical re-enactors, and a first aid point. Baldock Museum always runs a special exhibition looking at an aspect of the town's history; in 2006 the NHDC Archaeology Officer also gave free object identification sessions for the public in the museum. Over 5,000 visitors are expected annually.

Royston Kite Festival

This is an annual event, held early summer, attracting around 1000 visitors. Kite enthusiasts attend from all over the country. In 2006/07 NHDC gave £750.

Orchestral Music Concert, Baldock

For many years there has been an annual orchestral concert in Baldock; the result of an ongoing partnership between Knights Templar School in Baldock and North Hertfordshire District Council. The school has welcomed nationally acclaimed orchestras including The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, The Academy of Saint Martin-in-the-Fields and the English Sinfonia. The concert is funded through an NHDC subscription to the Eastern Orchestral Board of approximately £5000pa. An education programme for local schools is run alongside the orchestral concert.

Resources for the Arts

The Arts Council for North Hertfordshire

The Arts Council for North Hertfordshire was established in the 1960's with the aim of providing financial support and assistance to local groups for the arts and arts related activities. The sole source of funding for the Arts Council for North Hertfordshire comes from North Hertfordshire District Council. The ACNH is granted £13,200 per annum to cover the ACNH running expenses and to distribute to arts groups in the District to promote arts activities. On a yearly basis the Arts Council for North Hertfordshire supports over 35 voluntary arts groups in the District for a wide variety of different activities.

Arts Council, England

Arts Council England provides resources to individuals and organisations in North Hertfordshire through Arts Council East. Over the last three years it has provided an individual dance artist in Hitchin with £48,086 and another in

Baldock with £6299. It has provided two visual artists in Hitchin with £31,329, and given Rhythms of the World £5000. In Royston, music project 'Ten Second Window' received £4975 this year.

Art, craft and photography societies: (to be completed)

Hitchin Art Club

Letchworth Art Society

Music and choral societies: (to be completed)

Dance and Performance groups: (to be completed)

Museums

Ashwell Museum

At 75, Ashwell Museum is one of the oldest village museums in the country. It is an independent volunteer museum, run by a charitable trust, and housed in a 16th century timber building in the centre of Ashwell. It has attractive displays on all aspects of village life, particularly those relating to Ashwell. Ashwell Museum receives curatorial advice from NHDC through the MLA Curatorial Adviser scheme. It is a Registered Museum, open on Sunday and Bank Holiday afternoons.

Baldock Museum

Baldock Museum is run by the Baldock Museum and Local History Society, and is a registered charity. It is currently housed in two rooms in Baldock Town Hall, but its future in this building is uncertain, as the Town Hall may be redeveloped. Run by volunteers, the museum has permanent displays of Baldock's history from the Roman period to the present, and an annual changing display on a separate local topic. Under 10% of its collection is currently displayed. The NHDC Archaeology Officer helps Baldock Museum with displays and advice. Open Wednesday and Sunday afternoons, it received 510 visitors in 2005.

Hitchin Museum

Hitchin Museum opened in 1941, in the top floor of a house built in 1825 for John Kershaw, who ran a Hitchin to London coach service. Since 1966 the museum has occupied the whole of the building, which is run by NHDC. The ground floor houses a reception area and shop, two temporary exhibition galleries, local and social history displays, and the Herts. Yeomanry Gallery. Upstairs is a costume gallery, Messrs. Perks & Llewellyn's chemist shop and a small room for researchers. The costume collection is the largest in Hertfordshire, containing around 4000 items. The pharmacy collection, also large, is owned by the Hertfordshire Medical & Pharmaceutical Museum Trust, which also maintains an attractive Physic Garden on a former lawn outside the museum. Less than 10% Hitchin Museum's collections are on display at any one time. The museum has no public lavatory, which increasingly is seen as a problem by potential school groups, and has led to

cancelled bookings. It is a Registered Museum open 5 days a week (closed Wed. and Sun.) and in 2005 received 22159 visitors.

Hitchin British Schools Museum

The British Schools Museum tells the story of elementary education in Britain from 1810 until 1969. Run by a charitable trust, it is staffed almost entirely by volunteers. The museum is set in a unique set of buildings, with the only remaining Lancasterian Schoolroom in the world, built to Joseph Lancaster's specifications, allowing one master to teach 330 boys in one schoolroom. There is also a rare 1853 Galleried Classroom, and a large Girls' and Infants' School, built in 1857. This houses a Meeting Room, Museum of Victorian life, tea room and a gift shop. There is also a restored Victorian Headmaster's house, and Edwardian Classrooms, which feature displays of desks and teaching artefacts from 1905 to 1969. The British Schools Museum is the home of the Jill Grey Collection of 35,000 items relating to early education and childhood, and to the Benchmark Collection, which consists of similar items added since 1987. In addition to general and specialist visitors, the museum receives many school parties. It works in partnership with Hitchin Museum on Tuesdays, offering Victorian schoolday and World War II evacuee experiences to school groups who visit both museums. It is a Registered Museum, open Tuesdays (Feb. – Nov), Saturdays and Sunday afternoons from April to October. The site is currently too cold to open in winter. It receives around 10,000 visitors pa.

First Garden City Heritage Museum, Letchworth Garden City

Letchworth is the world's first Garden City, and the First Garden City Heritage Museum tells the story of the Garden City Movement from its origins to the present day. It is housed in an attractive but small Arts & Crafts building designed in 1907 by the architect Barry Parker. Originally administered by NHDC, it is now an independent museum run by the Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation, with permanent displays and temporary exhibitions reflecting Letchworth's unique history. The museum attracts visitors and students of town-planning from all over the world. There are plans to move to far larger and more accessible premises in Letchworth Town Hall, where more of the collection would be on show. The museum is open daily, closed Sundays. In 2004/5 there were 4262 visitors.

Letchworth Museum & Art Gallery

Founded as a one-storey building by the Letchworth Naturalists Society in 1914, Letchworth Museum has received a number of additions over the years. Letchworth Museum is run by NHDC, and has collections of natural history, archaeology, fine and applied art, costume and social history. The ground floor at Letchworth Museum has a shop and reception area, and an attractive natural history gallery. Halfway up the stairs is a small Mezzanine Gallery, used for exhibitions and for children's workshops. Upstairs is the main art gallery, used for a wide range of temporary exhibitions, and a large archaeology gallery, with very good Iron Age and Roman material, showing the history of the area up to the founding of the Garden City. The art

collection, most of which is currently in store, includes a large number of works by William Ratcliffe (1870-1955), a well-known member of the early 20th century Camden Town Group. The museum also has good collections of general social history, applied art (particularly ceramics), costume and costume accessories. Through lack of display space, these collections are also normally in store, and only used in temporary displays and exhibitions. Letchworth Museum adjoins the Public Library, and when possible borrows its upstairs gallery for school and other groups. Letchworth Museum & Art Gallery has twice received national security clearance to display works from national museums such as the Tate Gallery. It is a Registered Museum open 5 days a week (closed Wed. and Sun.), and received 17,664 visitors in 2005.

Royston Museum

A museum was first established in Royston in 1856, but closed in 1901, and the collection dispersed. In 1965 the Royston and District Local History Society was formed with the main aim of providing a museum for the town, which opened in a room in the Town Hall in 1976. In 1984 Royston Museum moved to its present building, a Victorian Congregational Church Schoolroom. It is administered by Royston Town Council, with trustees nominated by the Local History Society and elected Councillors. A team of volunteers assist the Curator and Assistant Curator. The collection on display documents Royston's history, and also includes a superb display of ceramics and glass from the later part of the nineteenth century to the present day, lent by a private collector. Royston Museum also holds an extensive photographic, newspaper, and document collection, costumes/textiles, and an art collection which includes major holdings of paintings and etchings by E Herbert Whydale. Royston Museum receives curatorial advice from NHDC through the MLA Curatorial Adviser scheme. It is a Registered Museum, open Weds., Thurs. Sats, plus Sunday afternoons during the summer. The museum received 4326 visitors in 2004/5.

Local History Societies (to be completed, and other groups added)

Hitchin Historical Society

Hitchin Society

Letchworth Garden City Society

Baldock Society

North Herts. Archaeology Society

In contrast to the town and village history groups, the North Herts. Archaeology Society is interested in the District as a whole. Founded in 1960 it holds a regular programme of lectures at Letchworth Museum, and for many years volunteer members have undertaken archaeological digs around North Herts. From 2003 – 2005 members worked in partnership with professional archaeologists from Heritage Network, excavating a Romano-British site near Baldock, which has now been identified as a shrine to a newly-discovered

Romano-British goddess, Senuna. The Society is also involved in a community archaeology project in Norton Village, in partnership with Letchworth Museum and the Garden City Heritage Museum. The Society has 120 members, 8 committee members, and 3-4 regular volunteers.

Quotes to be inserted through the Strategy (more to come):

What you told us:

Think of young families and what is important to them

Think of a string of pearls – the North Herts towns set along the ancient Icknield Way

On housing the NHDC Letchworth-specific collections and LGCHF collections together in one building

‘The sensible Letchworth solution..with all the advantage of synergy’

On Hitchin Museum

Expand the present Museum (and Gallery) into the Library building and re-house the Library

It is imperative the Hitchin items stay in Hitchin

On IT

We need to think ahead. We should use technology to its full extent to bring things to life

On heritage/countryside

The common ground under North Herts should be celebrated

I want to see more natural environment. [A museum] should be completely holistic, with an element of countryside – bio-diversity, public health, environmental records

On heritage

I think we need to link archaeology with other things e.g. listed buildings. We want to protect our historic heritage.

‘The historic environment can help to create an immediate sense of pride in an area, a shared sense of belonging, and assist people to identify with the place they live and with their neighbours.’

Heritage Counts. The state of the East of England's Historic Environment 2006. English Heritage

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT	<p style="text-align: center;">AGENDA ITEM No</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">10</p>
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TITLE OF REPORT: CHAMPION NEWS

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of the activities and schemes with which the Community Development Officer has been involved during the past month.
- 1.2 To bring to the Committee's attention some important community based activities that will be taking place during the next few months.

2. THE FORWARD PLAN

- 2.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

3. PROJECT/ ACTIVITY/ SCHEME DETAILS

3.1 Jackmans Youth Provision

A multi-agency project working group, to be headed by the Jackmans Improvement Group (JIG), is currently looking at the possibility of providing a young people's facility on the estate, with project group meetings underway.

3.2 Youth Council

The Youth Development Officer is developing an initiative with Rap – Aid, Herts County Council Youth Services, The Letchworth Garden City Council, Herts Police and North Herts Homes, to look at the creation of a youth group/council/forum to represent all of the Town's young people's views. This is part of the council's corporate plan for 2007/08.

The group is to be based at Mrs Howard Hall, co-ordinated by youth workers, with support from other partner agencies. It is proposed that the lead will be taken by the Town Council.

3.3 Community Carol Concert

The Carol Concert took place on Broadway Gardens on December 16, 2006 and was attended by approximately 80 people. In order to make this a more

central part of Letchworth's Christmas festivities, officers may consider linking this event with the turning on of the Christmas lights event.

3.4 Young Peoples Christmas Party Concert

This event took place on Friday 15th December at the Four Emblems Social Club, and was well attended by approximately 80 young people. Information on drug abuse and issues associated with teenage pregnancy were part of the evenings programme, co-ordinated by Rap- Aid.

3.5 Grange Developments

A basketball court is to be developed on the Grange recreation ground in-conjunction with the skate park improvements scheduled for early 2007. The Community Development Team looking for young people to form a group to take ownership of the site and to come up with practical designs to use the surplus soil to construct their own BMX bike track.

This is aimed to address the problem of young people building dirt tracks in unauthorised places and also provide a legitimate site for a popular leisure activity.

3.6 Howard Hall

At its December meeting, this committee requested more information on the development of Mrs Howard Hall. A short report to this effect is enclosed as Appendix 1 to this Champion News.

3.7 Letchworth Arts Centre

The Arts Centre is now open and is delivering a wide range of activities that are proving popular. There will be a grand opening of the facility on Friday 23rd February 2007 to which Letchworth members will be invited.

3.8 North Hertfordshire Book Festival

A leaflet detailing all the events and activities to be held as part of this event will be circulated to NHDC members through Members Information Service (MIS). A grant application to this committee is enclosed as part of the finance report.

3.9 Jackmans Mural Project

Following on from the success of the Grange underpass mural, the Chief Executive of Letchworth Arts Centre has met with the JIG to devise a similar project in the Jackmans estate. At this stage, it is planned to deliver this project in May 2007.

3.10 Letchworth Outdoor Pool

The Leisure Projects Manager is currently creating a specification for a project which will improve the 'soft' landscaping around the children's pool area, reduce the size of the bin area, improve the general surrounds and purchase a water feature for the small pool. Once created, the work will then be tendered as required by District Council finance regulations, and paid for from the allocation from the Capital Projects budget of this committee, as agreed at the Committee meeting on 13th December 2006.

3.11 **Grange Improvement Forum**

The Senior Community Development Officer is assisting the development of the group and their chosen initiatives, primarily the enhancement of the area in front of and directly associated to the shops.

4. **CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS**

4.1 Consultation has taken place with the respective agencies, organisations and ward members with regards to the activities and events mentioned in section 3 of the report.

5 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

5.1 That the Committee endorses the actions taken by the Community Development Officer to promote greater community capacity and well - being for Letchworth Garden City.

6. **CONTACT OFFICER**

6.1 Tim Stephen, Community Development Manager, x4386 e-mail tim.stephen@north-herts.gov.uk

7. **APPENDICES**

7.1 Update on the development of Mrs Howard Hall.

Update on the Development of Mrs Howard Hall

The refurbishment and extension of Mrs Howard Hall is now almost complete and a formal handover from the building contractor to the council is imminent.

Members will be aware that it comprises a Grade 2 listed hall and adjoining building, formerly known as the Girls' Club House and was the first public building in the garden city having been built as a memorial to Ebenezer Howard's first wife (1905) . The original hall within the building has been in use for some time by the Letchworth Garden City Community Group (LGCCG), a charitable organisation set up to provide community services to the people of Letchworth.

In 2003, this Committee recommended to Cabinet that the LGCCG should be the tenants of the premises. The group's current consortium members are Rap-Aid & the New Life Church. The other two original member groups, Leys Educational Services and Schools Out have unfortunately moved on for business and timescale reasons.

The group has an executive board, which is drawn from the member groups, plus representatives from Choice - pregnancy advisory service, Herts County Council - Children Schools & Families and North Hertfordshire District Council.

In addition to the consortium member groups' activities, the hall is currently being hired every weekday by Funzone for after school activities and the building is also available for hire for general community use at weekends. The group will expand its operation in the provision of services, under full leased terms, using the increased areas available when the new premises are available for use.

The extension and refurbishment of the hall is the final phase of work to the building and a total investment of £861K has been made on the building as follows:

External repairs	£150K
Refurbishment to Main hall	£96K
Extension and refurbishment of the Girl's hall	£615K

Cabinet approved the final costs of the scheme at its meeting on the 19th December 2007.

The future of the hall needs to be linked into the planned developments for Howard Park, particularly in relation to the proposed Lottery application. Initial discussions between the council , its consultants and LGCCG have begun and there has been a positive response.

Members have indicated that they would like a tour of the facility before it opens, and this will be arranged in the near future. Arrangements will also be made for other project stakeholders, including LGCHF, to have a tour of the facility. A full open day for all comers is being planned, but a date has yet to be fixed.

TITLE OF REPORT: LETCHWORTH COMMITTEE DEVELOPMENT & AREA VISIONING BUDGETS 2006/07

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL SERVICES

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 To advise the Committee on the current expenditure and balances of the Area Committee delegated budgets.
- 1.2 To bring to the Committee's attention details of recent requests received for Area Committee Development Discretionary Grant Funding made by community groups and local organisations.
- 1.3 To ask the Committee to consider projects for funding from the Area Committee delegated budgets.

2. FORWARD PLAN

- 2.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Not Applicable

4. ISSUES – FUNDING DECISIONS TO BE MADE

- 4.1 There is one request for funding towards the Letchworth Events during the North Hertfordshire Book Festival. A request on behalf of this organisation was originally presented to the December meeting of this committee, with a decision deferred pending more information. Appendix 1a and 1b relate respectively to a report on this application and event publicity.
- 4.2 The unallocated portion of the Area Visioning Capital Fund currently stands at £16,355.
- 4.3 A spreadsheet showing detailed spend to date of the Area Development budget is enclosed as Appendix 2.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Committee has delegated powers to administer funds from the budgets described.
- 5.2 There are no other legal implications pertinent to this report.

6. FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Members are asked to note the information detailed in Appendix 2 of the report, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for the current financial year 2006/07.

7. HUMAN RESOURCE AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no human resource and equalities implications pertinent to this report.

8. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS

- 8.1 Consultation with Members and the community has occurred in connection with the allocation of funds for Community Projects.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The Committee is asked to note the budgetary expenditure, balances and carry forwards from the Development Budgets and the allocated Visioning Budgets.
- 9.2 That the sum of £300 be awarded to the North Hertfordshire Book Festival Committee.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The allocation of funds will improve the services provided by local organisations and groups that are available and accessed by members of the community.

11. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 11.1 Not applicable.

12. APPENDICES

- 12.1 Appendix 1a – Grant application by the North Hertfordshire book festival.
Appendix 1b – Promotional leaflet relating to the book festival.
- 12.2 Appendix 2 – Spreadsheet of Committee Delegated Budgets 2006/07.

13. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 13.1 Tim Stephen
Community Development Manager
Telephone: 01462 474386
E Mail Tim.Stephen@north-herts.gov.uk
- 13.2 Jodie Penfold
Accounting assistant - Customer Services
Telephone: 01462 474566

Letchworth Budget 2006/07

<u>SUMMARY/ TOTALS</u>	<u>Funding</u>	<u>Allocated</u>	<u>Spent</u>	<u>Outstanding</u>	<u>Unallocated Budget</u>
<u>Revenue Visioning</u>	£70,060	£58,797	£35,812	£23,251	£11,263
<u>Capital Visioning</u>	£120,100	£103,745	£0	£103,745	£16,355
<u>Jackmans Improvement</u>	£2,828	£0	£0	£0	£2,828
<u>Other Allocated Funds</u>	£5,000	£5,000	£5,000	£0	£0
<u>Small Area Grants</u>	£18,470	£9,680	£9,680	£0	£8,790
<u>Discretionary</u>	£39,248	£27,890	£22,745	£5,287	£11,358
<u>General Town Centre</u>	£24,430	£22,500	£22,500	£0	£1,930
Total	£280,136	£227,612	£95,737	£132,283	£52,524

OTHER ALLOCATED FUNDS	Funding		Project	Allocated	Date	Spent	Outstanding	Unallocated	Comments
Pre allocated funds Brought Forward from 2005/06	£5,000		LGC Eagles Football Club	£5,000	10.12.03	£5,000	£0		Work in Progress
Total	£5,000			£5,000		£5,000	£0	£0	

DEVELOPMENT BUDGETS

SMALL AREA GRANTS	Funding		Project	Allocated	Date	Spent	Outstanding	Unallocated	Comments
Preallocated Budgets Brought Forward from 05/06	£5,000		Rap Aid Music Festival	£5,000	13.04.05	£5,000	£0		
Base Budget 06/07	£13,470		Royal Naval Association	£750	19.04.06	£750	£0		
			Letchworth Tennis Club	£300	19.04.06	£300	£0		
			Letchworth Lions Club	£200	19.04.06	£200	£0		
			Letchworth Festival	£2,500	19.04.06	£2,500	£0		Money Transferred to new Letchworth Festival Code (1416 014)
			Letchworth Outdoor Pool - additional opening hours	£930	24.05.06	930	£0		
Total	£18,470			£9,680		£9,680	£0	£8,790	

Discretionary Budgets	Funding		Project	Allocated	Date	Spent	Outstanding	Unallocated	Comments
Preallocated Funds Brought Forward from 05/06	£16,140		CCTV Temple Rec Ground	£5,500	25.05.05	£4,284	£1,216		
			Bench at Temple Gardens Recreation Ground	£630	14.12.05	£772	£0		Overspent by £142
			Speed Activated Sign in Willian	£1,000	08.03.06	£1,000	£0		
			Hanging Baskets/Planters	£9,010	08.03.06	£8,939	£71		
Base Budget 06/07	£23,250		Letchworth Festival	£2,500	19.04.06	£2,500	£0		Money Transferred to new Letchworth Festival Budget Code (1416 014)
Less Overspend - Bench at Temple Gardens	-£142		Letchworth Outdoor Pool - additional opening hours	£4,000	24.05.06	£4,000	£0		
			Tree Maintenance and additional Watering	£3,000	05.07.06	£0	£3,000		
			Grange Baptist Church	£1,250	02.10.06	£1,250	£0		
			Wednesday Drop -in Club	£1,000	13.12.06	£0	£1,000		
Total	£39,248			£27,890		£22,745	£5,287	£11,358	

GENERAL (TOWN CENTRE)	Funding		Project	Allocated	Date	Spent	Outstanding	Unallocated	Comments
Preallocated Funds Brought Forward from 05/06	£15,000		LGC Arts Partnership	£15,000	25.05.05	£15,000	£0		Money Transferred to LGC Arts Partnership Code (1416 013)
Base Budget 06/07	£9,430		Letchworth Festival	£7,500	19.04.06	£7,500	£0		Money transferred to new Letchworth Festival Budget Code (1416 014)

Letchworth Budget 2006/07

Total	£24,430		£22,500	£22,500	£0	£1,930	
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