

27 May 2008

Our ref: HD/Letchworth/May.08
Contact: Hilary Dineen
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To: Members of the Letchworth Committee of North Hertfordshire District Council (Councillors D. Levett (Chairman), Melissa Davey (Vice-Chairman), S. Bloxham, John Booth, J.M. Cunningham, Gary Grindal, T.W Hone, David Kearns, Lorna Kercher, Paul Marment, Elliot Needham, Mrs. L.A. Needham and Michael Paterson).

You are invited to attend a

MEETING OF THE LETCHWORTH COMMITTEE

to be held in

**COMMITTEE ROOM 1, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES,
GERNON ROAD, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY**

on

WEDNESDAY, 4 JUNE 2008

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 meeting of this Committee held on the 19 March 2008. | - |
| 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. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS Members are reminded that any declarations of interest in respect of any business set out in the agenda, should be declared as either a prejudicial or personal interest and are required to notify the Chairman of the nature of any interest declared at the commencement of the relevant item on the agenda. Members declaring a prejudicial interest should leave the room and not seek to influence the decision during that particular item. | - |
| 5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION Presentations from: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Westbury Action Group• Martin Fletcher – Town Centre Manager | 1 |
| 6. CHAMPION NEWS REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL SERVICES <i>A summary of the activities undertaken by the Community Development Officer for Letchworth Garden City since the meeting of the Committee held on 19 March 2008 and events taking place in the future.</i> | 3 |
| 7. LETCHWORTH COMMITTEE DEVELOPMENT & AREA VISIONING BUDGETS 2007/2008 REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & CULTURAL SERVICES <i>The report contains the current budget balances for the Committee, and applications for grants as follows:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Westbury Youth Provision▪ Wilbury Youth Provision▪ Jack Wilkinson Memorial Garden | 7 |

| | | |
|------------|--|-----------|
| 8. | LETCHWORTH YOUTH COUNCIL | 21 |
| | REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL SERVICES | |
| | To brief the Letchworth Area Committee on the progress of the Letchworth Youth Council and how the grant funding provided by the Committee is being spent. | |
| 9. | YOUTH INITIATIVES, SPRING ROAD SCOUT HUT | 25 |
| | REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL SERVICES | |
| | To brief Letchworth Area Committee on the background of the £5000 revenue funding for youth initiatives based at the Spring Road Scout Hut | |
| 10. | LETCHWORTH GATE AND JUNCTION 9 OF THE A1(M) | 29 |
| | Report as presented to JMP 21 April 2008: | |
| | <i>Chairman to lead a discussion on the report presented to JMP on 21.04.08</i> | |

The dates for Letchworth Area Committee Meetings in the Civic Year 2008/2009 will be as follows:

23 July 2008

24 September 2008

19 November 2008

14 January 2009

11 March 2009

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**LETCHWORTH AREA COMMITTEE
4 JUNE 2008**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

2

MINUTES

In addition to the published item 2

To take as read and approve as a true record the minutes of the special meeting of this Committee held on the 15 May 2008.

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**LETCHWORTH AREA COMMITTEE
4 JUNE 2008**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

5

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The following presentations are expected:

1. Westbury Action Group
2. Martin Fletcher – Town Centre Manager

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TITLE OF REPORT: CHAMPION NEWS - LETCHWORTH AREA COMMITTEE

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 Team has been involved.
- 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 Letchworth Youth Council

(Please see separate report attached)

3.2 Over 50s Seminar

In partnership with Herts County Council's 'Wellbeing for Over Fifties' project group, the 50+ Community Development Officer is coordinating the largest event aimed people between the age of 55 and 70 years, the district has ever staged. This project is being seen as pilot by HCC who are looking to roll out similar events countywide.

On Saturday June 14th at the Spirella Building in Letchworth, people from across the district will be invited to attend a community engagement exercise called 'Talking about My Generation'. In conjunction the Big F.A.B. (Fifty and Above) Event will take the form of an Information fair with Free Prize Draw, Health Checks, Complementary Therapies, Stalls provided by local community groups and organisations, as well as tours of the public areas of the Spirella building.

Using the information gained from the community engagement process the 'F.A.B. Development Plan - 2009 to 2012' will be drawn up to look at what activities and services will be required by the new generation of retired people in North Herts.

To be involved in the event or for more information contact Claire Morgan, 50+ Development Officer on 01462 474226.

3.3 **Wilbury Youth Issues**

Installation of a mobile CCTV camera outside the shops on a temporary basis has led to a significant reduction in the number of young people congregating and in the incidents of anti social behavior.

The multi-agency led Community Partnership Surgery has recently been reviewed and has agreed to run last Thursday of each month at St Thomas Church between 6.30 to 7.30pm, instead of 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month.

The surgery is attended by representatives from local Housing Associations, Council Officers, Neighbourhood Police, Crime Prevention Panel and Ward Councillors to discuss any issues that arise and take appropriate action.

3.4 **Grange Youth Provision**

Due to a considerable amount of vandalism to the exterior of the Youth Wing the youth club was shut for a number of weeks. All the glass on windows and doors are now replaced with tough polycarbonate sheet and the Youth Club re opened on Friday 11th April 2008.

Community Development Officer is assisting the group to obtain charitable status as well as towards developing a number of other policies e.g. Health & Safety, Complaint Policies & Procedures, Equal Opportunities, Child Protection Policies & Procedures etc in order for the group to secure external funding.

The group has recently applied for and successfully obtained external funding to purchase three computers with Internet connection and a digital camera. These equipment has already been installed and helps youth workers to offer young people a range of innovative projects.

In order to increase the revenue the group will be letting the centre 3 days a week to Adult Care Services with an option to increase to 5 days.

3.5 **Rap-Aid**

CDO is continuing to support the group with external funding applications with a view to develop Mrs Howard Hall as a focal point for young people with appropriate resources.

Rap-aid Festival:

The group has provisionally put together a plan subject to external funding being achieved, to promote a week long festival, which will take place from 26th July to 2nd August 2008. Activities will take place at Mrs Howard Hall, Howard Gardens and end with a live music festival at the Broadway Gardens.

3.6 **Westbury Action Group (WAG)**

The group continue to meet on a regular basis to discuss and develop community led provision / activities in the area.

The group has set up an on-line discussion forum for local residents. Address for the website is <http://westbury-lgc.no-ip.org>

3.7 **Dog waste bins:**

All three dog waste bins (2 in Westbury & 1 in Jackmans) have now been installed.

3.8 **Letchworth African Caribbean Harmony Group**

Is a new group established to mainly serve the needs of the African Caribbean elderly community. The group had a successful launch party on Saturday 29th March 2008 at the Jackmans Community Centre, with over a hundred people attending from all walks of life.

The group received a grant of £520 from the Letchworth Area Committee towards the launch event and has submitted the project evaluation form along with copies of receipts / invoices.

3.9 **Jack Wilkinson Memorial Garden**

Planting of the Jack Wilkinson Memorial Garden took place on Saturday 12th April. Around 20 adults and 20 children from the local community took part in planting 200 shrubs to create the new garden from a former piece of rough ground on Jackmans Central amenity area. The project was financed by NHDC with contributions from WREN, NHH and LGCC.

Sadly, within few days of planting, more than half the shrubs and trees were stolen. The incident was reported to the Police and a local resident was caught and extra shrubs were replanted to replenish those stolen.

3.10 **Service Level Agreements**

A review of the Council's Policies and Procedures for Financial Assistance to the Voluntary and Community Sector is currently underway, with a report scheduled to go to Cabinet in the near future. This review includes the arrangements for Service Level Agreements as well as the general grants that are awarded by Area Committees.

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.
- 5.2 That the Committee with consideration to the information provided at Appendix A provide to the Projects Officer – Planning Control or Letchworth Committee Administrator (preferably by email) any such schemes or projects that could be considered for joint matched funding with the JMP Discretionary Budget for 2008-2009.

6. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 6.1 Ashuk Ahmed, Community Development Officer - Letchworth x4225
e-mail ashuk.ahmed@north-herts.gov.uk
- 6.2 Stuart Izzard, Senior Community Development Officer, x4854
e-mail stuart.izzard@north-herts.gov.uk

**TITLE OF REPORT: LETCHWORTH AREA COMMITTEE DEVELOPMENT & AREA
VISIONING BUDGETS 2007/08**

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.
- 1.4 For the Committee to note the summary on Area Visioning expenditure that was submitted to the Scrutiny Committee on 1st April 2008.

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. HALL SUBSIDISED BUDGET

- 4.1 For the financial year 2008/09 the allocation of hall subsidised budget is £8,969.

This total solely relates to activities at the Brotherhood Hall and the funds allocated from 'in kind' expenditure for use of the hall by North Herts CVS and the LGC band.

Originally, the charge was based on an hourly rate for the time the groups actually used the hall.

However, the budget remains set at each year, and it is realised that if the true recharge was to be recalculated it would be in excess of the budget funds available.

5. PROVISION OF FUTURE ARTS AWARDS

- 5.1 The Community Development Officer has discussed the provision of future arts related initiatives with the manager of the Letchworth Arts Centre.

It has been agreed that groups seeking funding for future arts related projects / activities will be encouraged to discuss their project first with the Arts Centre Manager, with a view to exploring opportunities for further financial support and to bring about better co-ordination of arts related events / activities in the town.

6. LETCHWORTH SETTLEMENT

- 6.1 The Letchworth Area Committee at its meeting on 19th March 2008 approved a grant of £350 from the 2007/08 Discretionary Budget, to be awarded to the Letchworth Settlement to promote a Youth Drama Festival.

The Community Development Officer has recently received a letter from the Settlement, thanking the committee for the grant, but at the same time stating that unfortunately they will not be using the grant as they are unable to implement the project.

The funds will be returned to the Committee's Discretionary Budget for reallocation.

7. FUNDING DECISIONS TO BE MADE

- 7.1 A spreadsheet showing detailed spend to date of the Area Development budget is enclosed as Appendix 1.

- 7.2 Three grant requests have been made for the Area Committee to consider:

1. **Westbury Youth Provisions** – support funding for activities for young people 0-5 years, 5-13 years and 13+ on the estate (see separate report for fuller details).
2. **Wilbury Youth Provisions** – support funding for a range of youth provision, which includes football coaching sessions that will culminate in matches and club based activities within Mrs Howard Hall.
3. **Jack Wilkinson Memorial Garden** – support funding for the re-planting of shrubs and trees that were stolen.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

9. FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Members are asked to note the information detailed in Appendix 1 of the report, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for the current financial year 2008/09.
- 9.2 The spreadsheet also details the pre-allocations carried forward from the previous financial year 2007/08 to the current financial year 2008/09.
- 9.3 In addition, the spreadsheet includes the balances relating to allocated Visioning Budgets available within the Letchworth area.

10. HUMAN RESOURCE AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

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

11. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS

- 11.1 Consultation with Members has occurred in connection with the allocation of funds for Community Projects.
- 11.2 Consultation with the respective officers and external agencies/groups has taken place with regard to funding proposals for Area Committee Discretionary Development Funds.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 12.1 The Committee is asked to note the budgetary expenditure, balances and carry forwards from the Development Budgets and the Visioning Budgets.
- 12.2 That the Committee notes and acknowledges the amounts of uncommitted Development Discretionary Funds within each respective Budget and considers the allocation of those funds to projects and initiatives.
- 12.3 That the Committee allocates a grant of £5,000 as support funding associated with the Youth provision in Westbury Estate area.
- 12.4 That the Committee allocates a grant of £5,080 as support funding associated with the Wilbury Youth Provision.

- 12.5 That the Committee allocates a grant of £300 as support funding associated with the re-planting shrubs and trees that were stolen from the newly created Jack Wilkinson Memorial Garden.
- 12.6 That the Committee notes the response to the Scrutiny Committee as detailed in Appendix 4.

13. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

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

14. APPENDICES

- 14.1 Appendix 1 – Spreadsheet of Committee Delegated Budgets 2007/08.
- 14.2 Appendix 2 – Westbury Youth Provision Grant Form
- 14.3 Appendix 3 – Wilbury Youth Provision Grant Form
- 14.4 Appendix 4 - Response to Scrutiny Committee 1st April 2008 – Area Visioning.

15. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 15.1 Ashuk Ahmed
Community Development Officer
Telephone: 01462 474225
E Mail ashuk.ahmed@north-herts.gov.uk
- 15.2 Lois Stewart
Group Accountant
Telephone: 01462 474451
E Mail lois.stewart@north-herts.gov.u

Letchworth Budget 2008/2009

| <u>SUMMARY/ TOTALS</u> | <u>Funding</u> | <u>Allocated</u> | <u>Spent</u> | <u>Outstanding</u> | <u>Unallocated Budget</u> |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <u>Revenue Visioning</u> | #REF! | #REF! | #REF! | #REF! | #REF! |
| <u>Capital Visioning</u> | #REF! | #REF! | #REF! | #REF! | #REF! |
| <u>Small Area Grants</u> | #REF! | #REF! | #REF! | #REF! | #REF! |
| <u>Discretionary</u> | #REF! | #REF! | #REF! | #REF! | #REF! |
| <u>General Town Centre</u> | #REF! | #REF! | #REF! | #REF! | #REF! |
| Total | #REF! | #REF! | #REF! | #REF! | #REF! |

Letchworth Budget 2008/2009

1191

Code

| <u>REVENUE VISIONING</u> | <u>Funding</u> | <u>Year Allocated</u> | <u>Project</u> | <u>Allocated</u> | <u>Date</u> | <u>Spent</u> | <u>Outstanding</u> | <u>Unallocated</u> | <u>Comments</u> |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|---|------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Preallocated amount C/F from 2007/08 | £22,888 | 2004/2005 | Youth Council | £2,000 | 22.12.04 | £149 | £1,851 | | |
| | | 2006/2007 | Street Planting | £5,000 | 05.07.06 | £2,861 | £2,139 | | |
| | | 2006/2007 | Toddler & Youth Groups - Jackmans Library | £6,263 | 07.03.07 | £2,843 | £3,420 | | |
| | | 2007/2008 | 3 Dog Waste Bins | £795 | 23.01.08 | £598 | £197 | | |
| | | 2007/2008 | Wilbury Youth Diversionary Project | £8,830 | 19.03.08 | £0 | £8,830 | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | £22,888 | | | £22,888 | | £6,451 | £16,437 | £0 | |

5410 000

| <u>CAPITAL VISIONING</u> | <u>Funding</u> | <u>Year Allocated</u> | <u>Project</u> | <u>Allocated</u> | <u>Date</u> | <u>Spent</u> | <u>Outstanding</u> | <u>Unallocated</u> | <u>Comments</u> |
|--------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Capital Visioning | £92,100 | | Youth Facility - Jackmans Estate | £30,000 | 02.10.06 | £0 | £30,000 | | |
| | | | Grange Community Garden Project | £45,745 | 13.12.06 | £0 | £45,745 | | |
| | | | Norton Common Management Plan | £16,355 | 19.03.08 | £0 | £16,355 | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | £92,100 | | | £92,100 | | £0 | £92,100 | £0 | |

DEVELOPMENT BUDGETS

| SMALL AREA GRANTS | Funding | | Project | Allocated | Date | Spent | Outstanding | Unallocated | Comments |
|--------------------------|----------------|--|------------------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Base Budget 2008/09 | £13,470 | | Letchworth Arts Centre | £5,380 | 02.10.06 | £0 | £5,380 | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | £13,470 | | | £5,380 | | £0 | £5,380 | £8,090 | |

000 4784

| Discretionary Budgets | Funding | | Project | Allocated | Date | Spent | Outstanding | Unallocated | Comments |
|---|----------------|--|------------------------|------------------|-------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Preallocated Funds Brought Forward from 07/08 | £500 | | Haselfoot Lighting | £500 | 19.09.07 | £0 | £500 | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| Base Budget 2008/09 | £23,250 | | Letchworth Arts Centre | £11,750 | 02.10.06 | £11,750 | £0 | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | £23,750 | | | £12,250 | | £11,750 | £500 | £11,500 | |

101 6980

| GENERAL (TOWN CENTRE) | Funding | | Project | Allocated | Date | Spent | Outstanding | Unallocated | Comments |
|---|----------------|--|------------------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Preallocated Funds Brought Forward from 07/08 | £3,520 | | Hanging Baskets | £3,540 | 19.03.08 | £0 | £3,540 | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| Base Budget 2008/09 | £9,430 | | Letchworth Arts Centre | £5,370 | 02.10.06 | £0 | £5,370 | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| Total | £12,950 | | | £8,910 | | £0 | £8,910 | £4,040 | |

103 6980

Area Visioning

The Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 1st April 2008 resolved that the following answer on the Area Visioning budgets should be circulated to all Area Committees, for their information and to take any further actions as required.

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****MINUTES**

**Meeting held at the Council Offices, Gernon Road, Letchworth Garden City
on Tuesday, 1 April 2008 at 7.30p.m.**

92. QUESTIONS

The following question had been submitted by Councillor David Billing.

(H) Area Visioning

"Please could we be updated as to the continuance of the work of the various Visioning Groups. In particular, when did each of them last meet formally, when were their Action Plans last updated, how many of their intended projects which were due to be completed by December 2007 were completed and how many still are unfinished, what is the total (aggregated for all years to date) of the budgets (revenue and capital) for each which have been spent to date, and what budgets remain unspent?"

The following response had been provided by the Head of Community Development & Cultural Services:

1. Visioning Funding

The Area Visioning programme was time limited to four years April 2002 – March 2006. The budget allocation each year was £50,000 revenue, allocated on a pro-rata demographic basis. The capital allocation was £375,000. As of 30.01.08, the budget position is:

Revenue Budgets

| Area Committee | Allocation | Committed (not spent) | Spent | Unallocated |
|----------------|------------|--------------------------|--------|-------------|
| Letchworth | 55,570 | 11,354 | 39,867 | 4,410 |
| Hitchin | 59,850 | 3,010 | 56,840 | 0 |
| Baldock | 34,210 | 1,053 | 33,157 | 0 |
| Royston | 17,709 | 1,493 | 16,216 | 0 |
| S. Rural | 35,405 | 5,910 | 29,495 | 0 |

Capital Budgets

| Area Committee | Allocation | Committed (not spent) | Spent | Unallocated |
|----------------|------------|--------------------------|--------|-------------|
| Letchworth | 120,100 | 75,232 | 28,000 | 16,355 |
| Hitchin | 112,600 | 110,350 | 0 | 2,250 |
| Baldock | 75,000 | 75,000 | 75,000 | 0 |
| Royston | 62,700 | 62,700 | 0 | 0 |
| S. Rural | 79,600 | 41,900 | 5,000 | 32,700 |

2. Area Work Programmes

Each Area Committee did develop a three year work programme, based on the initial visioning consultation. These programmes were last formally reviewed during November to February 2005/6. Thereafter, all the outstanding projects that were deemed achievable were transferred to the Area Committee report / budget process.

Monitoring of progress on these issues is now carried out at Area Committee meetings, via the Champion News and Delegated Budget reports.

As part of the implementation of the new Sustainable Community Strategy, consideration is being given to refreshing the work programme approach for Area Committees.

3. Visioning Groups

Each Area Committee developed its own approach to visioning and not all set up specific visioning groups.

Baldock

The original visioning group became the Baldock Bypass Consultation Group which evolved into the Town Centre Stakeholder Consultation Group that meets periodically to address Town Centre Developments and the Town Partnership Group that meets monthly to look at initiatives of raising the Town's profile with regards to business and tourism.

Revenue commitments and expenditure:

Consultants for Land associated to By-Pass £23,400
 Streetscene Improvements (HH funding) £14,000
 Town Centre Conservation Area £1,275
 Tree Works £4,500

Capital commitments and expenditure:

Feasibility study for new railings £15,000
 Two CCTV cameras £60,000

Hitchin

Established 3 local visioning groups – Youth, Transport and Planning.

The last formal meeting of the Planning Group was in June 2006 and there remain a number of outstanding issues, eg: Churchgate.

The 2020 Transport Vision for Hitchin was presented to Hitchin Area Committee in March 2007 by the Visioning Transport Sub Committee.

The Youth Visioning Group became the Voice of Hitchin Youth and still meets on a regular basis.

Revenue commitments and expenditure:

Woodside Screening £10,544
Town Centre Strategy £927
Visioning Presentations £443
BMX Dirt Bike Track £1,372
Tree Planting Butts Close £1,500
Voice of Hitchin Youth £1,500
Churchgate Project £2,635
Community Centre leaflet £700
Cabbies Hut, Market Place £1,300
Community Centres Leaflet £700

Capital commitments and expenditure:

Refurbishment/rebuild of Bancroft Hall (£67,500) & improvements to Windmill Hill (£42,850).

Southern Rural

No specific visioning group has met. There were visioning representatives pre 2003 who fed in to the overarching Visioning document. To develop the Rural Strategy (2004/5), a Rural Members Group and multi-agency Strategic Rural Partnership Group were established, but these have not met since 2006.

All Parish Councils/Parish Meetings are consulted on many district wide issues/strategies and there is an annual Rural Parish and Town Council Conference.

Revenue commitments and expenditure:

Reduce vandalism in Breachwood Green, St Ippolyts and Kimpton £3,000
Drugs and alcohol project for young people £500
Anti fly tipping measures £2,000
Produce Village Halls booklet £1,350
Rural detached outreach youth provision £6,000

Capital commitment and expenditure:

SCooTS 2 Wheels Scheme £15,000.

Letchworth

The original visioning group was wound up as a result of the evolving a Town Council and the Letchworth Town Centre Partnership.

Revenue commitments & expenditure:

The Grange Improvement Forum £500
The Grange Youth Club £10,190
Jackman's Youth Initiatives £6,263
Street Tree Planting £5,000
Letchworth Youth Council £2,000

Capital commitments & expenditure:

New Youth Facility within the proposed Ivel Court development £30,000
The Grange Community Garden Project £45,745
Letchworth Open Air Pool – enhancement works £28,000

Royston

Set up one visioning group of about 11 people, ranging from 15 to 80 plus.

Revenue commitments and expenditure:

Young People's events £4,000
Bus stop seating £1,400
Royston Town Council – East of England £2,000
Youth Council £790

Capital commitments and expenditure:

£62,700 to transport related projects.

4. Outstanding Projects

Other than those listed below, all projects identified through visioning are either completed, ongoing or mainstreamed.

Baldock

The Area Committee committed the remaining revenue balances of the visioning programme to the future Town Centre enhancements £2,470 (this was area committee visioning, not main visioning)

Letchworth

Unallocated capital funds of £16,355 are being proposed for a range of projects associated with Norton Common .

Youth Activities Wilbury Area £5,000

Southern Rural

Revenue visioning - £1k project for volunteers yet to complete, £4,150 agreed (£3,368 yet to allocate) in support of Parish Plans, £990 underspend against Village Halls Networking events as project now completed. Awaiting re-allocated project

Capital visioning - £32,700 yet to allocate on other projects."

Following debate upon the response, it was

RESOLVED: That the answer provided by the Head of Community Development & Cultural Services be circulated to the Area Committees.

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Area Committees to make any further decisions required regarding the follow-up of outstanding projects and any under spends.

TITLE: LETCHWORTH YOUTH COUNCIL**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL SERVICES****1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 To brief the Committee on the progress of the Letchworth Youth Council and how the grant funding provided by the Committee is being spent.

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 In order to ensure that the Youth Council is developed with full supports of other agencies, the Community Development Officer set up a multi agency partnership and held a number of meetings leading up to the establishment of the Youth Council.

The Partnership includes NHDC, Heritage Foundation, Letchworth Garden City Council, Herts Integrated Youth Support Services, Herts Police, North Herts Homes and the Extended School Coordinators.

A questionnaire survey at Highfield, Fearnhill and St Christopher Schools was carried out. 97 young people returned completed questionnaires and expressed an interest to play a part on the Youth Council.

A meeting was held on 11th March 2008 at NHDC inviting all those young people who expressed an interest via the survey, as well as representatives from other local youth based agencies.

From the young people attending, a formal Youth Council Steering Committee was created. They also devised an action plan which included visiting different sites and venues in the town from where they may be able to base the Council and run their activities.

The Heritage Foundation provided a free mini bus and site visits took place on Wednesday, 9th April 2008 to visit Letchworth Garden City Council Offices, Mrs Howard Hall, Jackmans Youth Club & the Grange Youth Club.

After the site visits, the majority agreed that Mrs Howard Hall was their preferred venue, for the following reasons: central location, young people friendly and able to offer a lot more for young people.

Members of the Youth Council Steering Committee met again on Thursday 17th April 2008 at Mrs Howard Hall and a formally elected by secret ballot the officers of the committee (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary & Treasurer) through a secret ballot to form the first Letchworth Youth Council.

The Community Development Officer is continuing to support the Youth Council members with developing policies such as Terms of Reference, opening a bank account and developing future plans, which includes an official launch event later in the summer.

4. BUDGET

4.1 The Letchworth Area Committee at its meeting on 22 December 2004 allocated a grant of £2,000 for the development of a Youth Council.

4.2 Out of the Letchworth Area Committee's allocation of £2,000 the following expenditure has occurred:

| Description | £ |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| Initial printing / leaflets | 50.00 |
| Meeting room hires | 24.00 |
| Postage | 53.72 |
| Food/ refreshment (3 meetings) | 47.89 |

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 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 ?? of the report, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for the current financial year 2008/09.

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 has taken place with the respective agencies, organisations and ward members with regards to the activities and events in connection with the Youth Council.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

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

10. APPENDICES

None

11. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 11.1 Ashuk Ahmed, Community Development Officer - Letchworth x4225
e-mail ashuk.ahmed@north-herts.gov.uk
- 11.2 Stuart Izzard, Senior Community Development Officer, x4854
e-mail stuart.izzard@north-herts.gov.uk

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12.1 Advice for Local Councils on Creating a Youth Council.
- 12.2 Letchworth Youth Council Survey Response.

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TITLE: YOUTH INITIATIVES, SPRING ROAD SCOUT HUT

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL SERVICES

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 To brief the Committee on the background of the £5,000 revenue funding for youth initiatives based at the Spring Road Scout Hut..
- 1.2 To request the Committee for financial support for alternative activities / provision for young people in Westbury.

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 Letchworth Area Committee at its meeting on 7 March 2007 allocated £5,000 revenue funding for the proposed delivery of youth initiatives at the Spring Road Scout Hut.

The proposal included employment of two workers for one night a week, for 40 weeks and to provide a range of youth services from the Scout Hut.

At that time, it was anticipated that external agencies such as the Youth Service or Rap – Aid would be the suitable organisations to help deliver services from the Hut. However, the Youth Service was already extremely committed to existing projects on the Grange and Jackmans.

At the same time, Rap-Aid, as part of the Mrs Howard consortium group, had started to take on the management and formal hand over the Hall. They were also working on joint projects with the Council such as the coordination of the Youth Conference at Plinston Hall in July 2007, the Estate Based Soccer Training sessions running from Easter through to the Summer Soccer festival and the preparation and management of their own festival, also in July 2007.

During autumn 2007, the Letchworth School's review heightened community concerns that parts of the town may end up with very little community activity / focus and in the worst cases none at all.

It became evident that any activity delivered from the Spring Road Hut would be restricted , owing to the Scouts activities based there and the fact that any provision would be time limited and unsustainable in the long term, unlike the facilities on the Grange & Jackmans where there was stronger continuity..

Recently, there has been liaison between Community Development Officers and Ward Members and community groups to focus on what is thought to be the best possible route for activities for children and young people in the area. A range of positive initiatives, suggested by the Council's Children's Services Team, is set out below.

4. ISSUES – FUNDING DECISIONS TO BE MADE

- 4.1 The Children's Services team (CST) identified that there is a need for activities for 3 different age groups of children and young people on the Westbury estate and the following proposal for the re-allocation of the £5,000 is made:

0-5 years:

£500 for equipment to provide additional services for this age group during holiday periods. There are already resources available through the Children's Centre's toy library but these do not include any consumable resources such as paper, paint, play dough that has a time limited use.

5-13 years:

£2,200 for provision of a 2 hour holiday scheme operating Monday – Friday over the Easter and summer holiday periods, . The money would pay for the workers on site. The scheme could be located at the Westbury school, on the school field or elsewhere on the estate.

13+:

£2,300- the Children's Services Team will look to involve an agency to work with this age group. A suitable site has still to be identified.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Committee has the delegated powers to administer funds from the budget 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 ?? of the report, which relates to the Area Committee budget balances for the current financial year 2008/09.

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 The Community Development Officer has been advised by members to undertake investigations and propose alternative projects/ initiatives for young people that may benefit from this funding.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That the Committee re-allocate a grant of £5,000 for children and youth related projects in Westbury as detailed in Section 4.1 of the report.

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. APPENDICES

None

13. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 13.1 Ashuk Ahmed, Community Development Officer - Letchworth x4225
e-mail ashuk.ahmed@north-herts.gov.uk
- 13.2 Stuart Izzard, Senior Community Development Officer, x4854
e-mail stuart.izzard@north-herts.gov.uk

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***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

10

LETCHWORTH GATE AND JUNCTION 9 OF THE A1(M)

The Chairman to lead a discussion on the attached papers:

1. North Herts Highways – Joint Member Panel minute 51 of meeting of meeting held on 21 April 2008.
2. Letchworth Gate and Junction 9 Of A1(M)
Report of the Technical Standards & Programmes Manager, Hertfordshire Highways
As presented to the meeting of North Hertfordshire Highways – Joint Member Panel held on 21 April 2008.

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NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE HIGHWAYS PARTNERSHIP – JOINT MEMBER PANEL

Meeting held at the Council Offices, Gernon Road, Letchworth Garden City
at 7.30 p.m. on Monday, 21 April 2008

EXTRACT FROM DRAFT MINUTES

51. LETCHWORTH GATE AND JUNCTION 9 OF THE A1 (M)

District Councillor Julian Cunningham thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the JMP. Councillor Cunningham referred the JMP to an increased delay to traffic approaching Junction 9 of the A1 (M) from Letchworth Gate of up to 20 minutes which he considered was caused by works in Baldock Town Centre during regeneration work. Of major concern was the use of residential roads as an alternative 'rat run' e.g. Radburn Way which ran parallel to Letchworth Gate. Councillor Cunningham advised the JMP that he had made a request to Hertfordshire Highways for traffic and speed checks but as yet there had been no response. This build up of traffic had increased in the last two weeks and he sought the support of the JMP in addressing this problem.

Letchworth Town councillor D. Knappert thanked the Chairman for the opportunity to address the JMP and confirmed that many users of Junction 9 of whom a vast percentage were either residents or people working in Letchworth found the strictures of the current slip far too tight and that there would be a serious accident if the slip was not extended towards Letchworth Gate and parallel to the A505 together with a no left turn ban at the top of the Baldock slip lane.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Cunningham and Town Councillor Knappert for their presentations and the JMP expressed its support for the introduction of traffic speed checks in Radburn Way. The North Herts District Manager (NHM) advised the JMP that the temporary traffic control measures in Baldock Town Centre could have an adverse effect on traffic queues but recent studies of travel times between Letchworth and East Baldock using the A505 /Baldock bypass or the B656/A507 had not shown one route being any faster than the other.

The Hertfordshire Highways – Project Manager – Baldock Bypass (PMB) presented this report to the JMP which sought to advise the JMP on the performance of the improvement to Junction 9 of the A1(M) and current initiatives on its operation. The PMB provided a review of the study findings for the north bound slip and south bound slip roads to Junction 9 and advised the JMP that the primary objectives of the scheme had been met and that the minor alterations to the exit of the left hand turn dedicated northbound lane had improved the situation overall. The PMB detailed the minor improvements to Letchworth Gate that had been considered: additional traffic signals, widening of the exit to Letchworth Gate from the dedicated lane, widening the approach to Junction 9 from Letchworth Gate and a dedicated 3rd lane from Letchworth Gate to A1 (M) north. Major improvements to Letchworth Gate between Junction 9 and the gyratory, dualling of Letchworth Gate between the gyratory and St. Pauls roundabout. The PMB advised the JMP that the Highways Agency had vetoed any proposals to prevent a No Right Turn, and a Member confirmed that *de facto* all vehicles had to turn left upon entering a roundabout. In conclusion the PMB advised that if any improvements were made to Letchworth Gate there would be implications for the road network as traffic could be drawn to the A505 Hitchin to Letchworth corridor with a potential upgrade to a County Primary route which require consideration within the Hertfordshire Infrastructure Implementation Strategy Study.

The JMP acknowledged the detailed information provided on Letchworth Gate and the two main points of concern were traffic queues to Junction 9 from Letchworth and the exit 'left turn' northbound from the A1(M) and the problems caused by motorists turning left for Letchworth from the right hand lane turn to the Baldock bypass.

The PMB referred the JMP to Appendix 2 which detailed 8 options which had been

reviewed:

1. Investigate a traffic signal layout for signal control of the dedicated slip lane, with secondary signals on the exit from that lane into Letchworth Gate. This would prevent left turns from the right turning lane. Also investigate closing the dedicated lane leaving a 2 lane or a 3 lane signalised approach to the roundabout;
2. Extend the left turning lane towards Letchworth;
3. Dual Letchworth Gate. This option was reviewed several years ago and discounted on the grounds of possible objections from Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation, and costs of approximately £4 Million;
4. Provision of a second grade separation, taking right turns direct to the Baldock Bypass (similar to Stansted Airport) this was ruled out at the 1995 Public Inquiry;
5. Provide a left turn ban - 'No left turn' at the traffic signals for lane 2 (difficult to enforce);
6. Apply red anti-skid material to an area at the end of the current layout, which would tend to deflect vehicles towards a 90° angle at the 'Give Way' line;
7. Carry out permanent alterations to the line and angle of approach as per the 'trial layout', altering existing hatching, lining and anti-skid material;
8. Do nothing.

The PMB advised the JMP that Option 6 was considered to be the most appropriate action that would assist all users of Junction 9.

There ensued a debate on the way forward and it was concluded that the request for a 'no right turn' should be pursued again and that the PMB and the NHM should take note of the need to investigate further the possibility of 'dualling' the A505 between Junction 9 of the A1 (M) and the 'longabout' at Letchworth Gate.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That District Councillor Julian Cunningham be thanked for his presentation;
- (2) That Letchworth Town Councillor D. Knappert be thanked for his presentation;
- (3) That the update on traffic management issues concerning Junction 9 of the A1 (M) at Letchworth Gate and the eight options (Appendix 2) be noted;
- (2) That the JMP expressed its support for investigations to proceed for the dualling of the A505 between Junction 9 of the A1(M) and the Letchworth Gate 'longabout';
- (3) That the Hertfordshire Highways – North Herts District Manager in conjunction with the Hertfordshire Highways – Baldock Bypass Manager refer the request of the JMP for dualling of the A505 to the next meeting of the Hertfordshire County Council Highways and Transport Panel;
- (4) That the Hertfordshire Highways – North Herts District Manager in conjunction with the Hertfordshire Highways – Baldock Bypass Manager undertake further representations to the Highways Agency concerning the request for a 'no left turn' from the Baldock lane on the northbound slip of Junction 9 of the A1(M);
- (5) That the Hertfordshire Highways – North Herts District Manager in conjunction with the Hertfordshire Highways – Baldock Bypass Manager undertake traffic surveys in response to concerns of Members about excessive queuing at morning and evening peak hours on the A505 from Letchworth Gate to Junction 9 of the A1 (M) including the rat run of Radburn Way and report back to the next meeting of the JMP to be held on 23 June 2008;

REASON FOR DECISIONS

To allow the JMP express its views and concerns on the ongoing traffic management issues at Letchworth Gate – Junction 9 A1 (M).

Report as presented to North Hertfordshire Highways – Joint Member Panel on 21 April 2008

TITLE OF REPORT: LETCHWORTH GATE AND JUNCTION 9 OF A1(M)

REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL STANDARDS & PROGRAMMES MANAGER,
HERTFORDSHIRE HIGHWAYS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Panel on the performance of the improvement to junction 9 of the A1(M) (Letchworth Gate interchange), part of the Baldock bypass project, and to advise on current initiatives on its operation. To advise the Panel on the operation of Letchworth Gate, its influence on routing of traffic through Baldock town centre and on possibilities for improvement.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At the public inquiry into the bypass in 1995 a scheme was agreed between the Highways Agency (HA) and the County Council to ensure that the queues on the slip roads of junction 9 were no greater after the opening of the bypass than were experienced before. It was also anticipated that some traffic might transfer from the B197 through Graveley to the A1(M). The scheme involved the construction of dedicated south facing slip roads to and from the A1(M) within the existing highway/motorway boundary.
- 2.2 Development of the scheme started in late 2002 and continued until September 2005 when the HA gave approval to the scheme. Detail of the development of the scheme is given in Appendix 1.
- 2.3 The southbound slip was constructed over the period Dec 2005 to Apr 2006 as part of the main works. The works on the northbound off slip road started in June 2006 and in order to give safety benefits to the motorway and reduce traffic delays the dedicated slip road was opened as soon as it could be. This was in advance of the traffic signals controlling the vehicles on the circulatory carriageway causing some uncertainty. The signals became operational in December 2006 and with the westbound traffic on the roundabout stopped at the signals, this provided the opportunity for the traffic exiting the dedicated lane to enter Letchworth Gate more easily. In Oct 2007 work was completed on the traffic calming measures through Graveley and in Nov 2007 alterations to the signals at Coreys Mill were undertaken to help reduce queuing particularly on the s/b off slip to the A1(M).
- 2.4 A number of representations were received in the first few months of operation of the dedicated lane regarding the difficulty of seeing rear and side view oncoming traffic when moving towards and onto Letchworth Gate, along with the almost immediate transition into a single carriageway. These comments were considered by the safety auditors when they carried out the stage 3 (post completion) safety audit in December 2006 and January 2007. The report acknowledged the problem of the difficulty of seeing rear and side view oncoming traffic when moving towards and onto Letchworth

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Gate even though the design complied with HA standards. It was also noted that there were significant numbers of vehicles using the right turning lanes to enter the roundabout and turn left. These vehicles are difficult to see for drivers in the dedicated lane and impeded the exit for vehicles in that lane. Trial alterations to the layout to improve visibility were recommended.

3. REVIEW AND ALTERATIONS

- 3.1 Following the Stage 3 safety audit report a meeting was held in March 2007 between the designers and safety auditors to discuss the recommendation and review options. Arrangements to install a trial alteration were put in place as well as a video survey to assess driver behaviour before and during the trial. Further evaluation of signal/junction layouts was commissioned.
- 3.2 The trial was undertaken over a two week period in April 2007 using traffic cones to realign the route of drivers using the dedicated lane. Following an evaluation of the trial and a review of other options and consulting with the Hertfordshire police and the HA it was decided to carry out relatively minor alterations. The give way marking would be amended and red anti-skid surfacing placed at the end of the lane on the nearside kerb. The aim was to enable and encourage drivers to approach at a greater angle but allow those who were confident of merging to over-run the red surfacing. The alteration was implemented in the first week of August 2007. A complete report of the trial and options considered is included in Appendix 2.

4. STUDY FINDINGS

Northbound Off –slip Road

- 4.1 In October 2002 queues on the northbound off slip road extended back 250 metres in the am peak and as far as the main carriageway (500m) in the pm peak. In 2004 these had extended to 750 metres and in 2006 following the opening of the bypass the queues extended back some 1000 metres. During traffic counts in March 2008 it was observed that the two lanes at the signal onto the roundabout generally cleared on each green phase whilst on the dedicated lane queues extended at times to 12 vehicles but averaged around 6 vehicles .
- 4.2 From the Before and After traffic report on the bypass flows northbound on the B197 through Graveley in the pm peak have reduced by around 200 vehicles. There are also reductions in the southbound direction. These vehicles have transferred to the A1(M) and this can be attributed to the reduction in delay at junction 9. Following the Graveley traffic calming and the retiming of the traffic signals at Coreys Mill Stevenage, traffic counts show further reduction of flow on the B197 through Graveley with vehicles again transferring to the A1(M).
- 4.3 In Oct 2002 the number of vehicles accessing Letchworth Gate from the A1(M) northbound off slip road during the am and pm peak hour was 700 and 770 respectively and similar figures were observed at the start of 2007. In March 2008 the number of vehicles was recorded as 950 and 940 respectively. It is estimated that some 55% of traffic on the northbound off slip turns left into Letchworth Gate. During the am peak 314 vehicles are turning left from the right turn lanes with 93 vehicles in

the pm peak. It was noted that with the short queues it is sometimes quicker to turn left from here than use the dedicated left turn lane.

- 4.4 A Stage 4 Road Safety Audit shows that in the 3 years prior to the improvement there were 24 accidents on the northbound off slip road at or near its junction with the A505(A6141) Letchworth Gate roundabout. In the 12 months after 3 accidents occurred. One of the 3 accidents could be directly attributable to the new segregated slip lane. The audit recommends that a 36 month Stage 4 Road Safety Audit should be completed at this site to assess if the A1(M) northbound off slip road is in need of any further remedial measures to enable drivers to safely negotiate the measures already implemented.

Southbound On-slip Road

- 4.5 Prior to the bypass construction queues on the A6141 approach from Baldock to junction 9 of the A1(M) extended back some 200m during the am and pm peaks. During the construction of the bypass queue lengths varied considerably as work interfered with traffic flow sometimes reducing the available carriageway to one lane. The southbound dedicated slip road has reduced the queue approaching the circulatory carriageway of the roundabout to 10 vehicles with free flow on the dedicated lane. A Stage 4 Road Safety Audit shows that a total of 4 accidents occurred in the 3 year before period and no accidents in the 12 months after study period.

General Appraisal

- 4.6 The primary objectives of the scheme have been met and it has in many respects proved successful. The queues on the northbound off slip road from the A1(M) which at peak hours extended back for some 500m onto the motorway and created very dangerous conditions with vehicles travelling at high speed have been eradicated. Delays of 10-15 minutes were commonplace and are now only 1-2 minutes at most. Traffic on the A505 from Baldock now flows more freely reducing queues approaching junction 9 and access to the A1(M) southbound via the southbound dedicated slip lane has been improved. Traffic flows through Graveley have reduced in both directions throughout the day.
- 4.7 The minor alterations to the exit of the dedicated lane on the northbound off slip road have improved the situation overall with most drivers approaching the give way at a greater angle but allowing those confident of merging to over-run the red surfacing. However some drivers are continuing to experience problems exiting the dedicated lane and the situation is not helped by those drivers who choose to turn left from the signalled right turn lanes, either to avoid the give way or to jump any queue that develops on the dedicated lane. This action not only brings uncertainty and hesitation by drivers exiting the dedicated lane but also leads to the development of queues in the dedicated slip lane. From the options given in Appendix 2 the imposition of a left turn ban from the right turning lanes is being pursued. This measure has been requested by both members and the public, and the necessary statutory orders were being prepared. However the regulations require that the measure has the support of the Highways Agency and to date this has not been forthcoming. Options involving further signalisation are not recommended both on operational and safety grounds and that

queuing back down the slip road will increase. It is likely that on this latter ground that the HA would object to any alteration to the signal arrangement.

5. LETCHWORTH GATE IMPROVEMENT

General

- 5.1 Congestion along Letchworth Gate during the peak hours has been put forward as a reason for increased traffic through parts of Baldock town centre following the opening of the bypass. Alterations to improve capacity ranging from widening junctions to full dualling could help relieve any problem. A solution to the layout of the dedicated lane at Junction 9 would be to dual Letchworth Gate and bring the slip lane in on a long merge, or directly onto one of 2 lanes westbound.
- 5.2 A brief study of traffic patterns and conditions occurring along Letchworth Gate and a range of improvements together with the possible effects of such improvements has been undertaken and is summarised below.

Traffic conditions

- 5.3 Letchworth Gate is a single carriageway 9 metres wide but narrowed to 7.3 metres by centre hatching and a centre island. Counts in October 2007 show the road carrying over 26,000 vehicles/day, around 2300 vehicles in the peak hours. If considered a rural road the recommended upper level of traffic for a road of this standard is between 13,000 and 21,000 vehicles/day. If treated as an urban road the maximum peak hour flow is recommended as 2600 vehicles /hour. The actual situation lies somewhere between and it is considered that the road is operating around its maximum capacity.
- 5.4 The Baldock bypass Before and After traffic report found that post bypass opening, traffic levels decreased on Letchworth gate by an average 3%, with a greater reduction being measured at peak times. This was attributed to traffic previously seeking other routes between Letchworth and Baldock to avoid congestion on the old A505 may now find it easier to travel on the B656 between the towns. The October 2007 counts show a return to pre bypass levels.
- 5.5 Journey times taken between the St Paul's roundabout in Letchworth and the Firs interchange east of Baldock show that in the pm peak it is on average around 2 minutes slower to travel by the B656 than the new A505. Journey times taken between St Paul's roundabout and junction 10 of the A1(M) show that it is on average around 1.5 minutes slower via the B656 and A507 than the A505 Letchworth Gate and A1(M). Time taken on a journey will be only one factor in choosing a route and where the time savings are not significant, other factors may determine the choice. Queue lengths approaching junction 9 along Letchworth Gate in the pm peak average 58 vehicles but very slow moving queues are observed extending to 95 vehicles. Turning counts taken at the St Paul's roundabout indicate that traffic travelling north on Letchworth Gate in the am peak splits 13% to Hitchin 39% to Letchworth and 48% to Baldock whilst in the pm peak splits 12% to Hitchin 49% to Letchworth and 39% to Baldock. In the am peak traffic travelling east on A505 Baldock Road splits 33% to A505 Letchworth Gate 2% to Letchworth and 65% to Baldock whilst in the pm peak splits 30% to A505 Letchworth Gate 1% to Letchworth and 69% to Baldock.

- 5.6 On the evidence of the journey times it there does not appear to be any incentive to use Baldock town centre when travelling between St Paul's roundabout and the Firs interchange or between St Paul's and Junction 10 of the A1(M), the optimum route for both journeys would be made via junction 9 of the A1(M). However the increase in traffic on Hitchin Street post bypass indicates the drivers are finding the route through Baldock more attractive. The turning count information indicates that during the peak hours the predominant traffic movement at St Paul's roundabout is to and from Baldock the strategic route, the A505, taking a secondary role. The forthcoming traffic signal scheme at the junction of the B656 and Weston Way Baldock and the Baldock Town centre works should have the effect of making the route through Baldock less attractive than at present. Improvements to Letchworth Gate in particular on the approach to Junction 9 could increase the usage on this route. Only an origin and destination survey of those using the Baldock Town centre may reveal the reasons behind the increases on Hitchin Street. It would be prudent to await the implementation of the Weston Way, Baldock Town Centre Scheme and associated traffic management before considering whether further investigations is required.

Improvements

- 5.7 Minor improvements to Letchworth Gate have been considered as follows:
- Installation of additional signals at the dedicated lane. This is covered in paragraph 4.7 and Appendix 2 where a number of alterations were investigated but not recommended either on the grounds that queue lengths increased or additional safety risks were created, in some cases a combination of these problems.
 - *Widening the exit to Letchworth Gate from the dedicated lane.* Extending the merge of the dedicated slip has been put forward by a number of people/organisations. The problem remains that two lanes have to merge into one and there is the possibility of the vehicle in lane two being forced into the oncoming eastbound traffic. There is also the issue of the proximity of Willian Way with vehicles trying to turn left in to Willian Way conflicting with vehicles joining from the dedicated lane. Some 400 vehicles in the am peak and 200 vehicles in the pm peak make this left turn.
 - *Widening the approach to Junction 9 from Letchworth Gate.* There is a 2 lane approach existing albeit short, little would be gained by extending this.
 - *Dedicated (3rd) lane from Letchworth Gate to A1(M) north.* This would improve capacity but to be effective would need to be accompanied by the widening the approach to two lanes over some 100-150m. The volume of traffic making the turn from Letchworth Gate to the A1(M) northbound has reduced over the years possibly as a result of congestion. A dedicated lane could improve the attraction of this route. The improvement would require land purchase and the agreement of the HA. It would also require alterations to Baldock Lane.

5.8 Major improvements to Letchworth Gate have been considered as follows:

- *Dualling of Letchworth Gate between Junction 9 and the gyratory.* Providing 2 lanes in each direction over the section of Letchworth Gate between Junction 9 and the gyratory could improve conditions and reduce eastbound journey times. It would allow the widening of the exit of the dedicated slip into lane one as mentioned in para 5.7., although again the close proximity of Willian Way to the exit would make it difficult for traffic to turn left into Willian Way and closure of this road could be necessary. Dualling would also allow increased capacity on the approach to Junction 9 eastbound with the possibility of a dedicated slip lane onto the A1(M) northbound although this would involve additional land and awkward earthworks. Otherwise the dualling would not require land outside the existing highway boundary but the Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation may have an element of control over the roadside verge effects.
- *Dualling of Letchworth Gate between the gyratory and St Paul's roundabout.* There is little evidence of congestion causing delays along this stretch of road. However if the adjacent section is dualled the release from constraint of traffic travelling from Junction 9 through towards Letchworth may lead to queuing at St Paul's. There is also the issue of two lanes of traffic on the gyratory trying to access to a single lane towards St Paul's roundabout.

Route Hierarchy

5.9 There are implications for the road network should an improvement to Letchworth Gate be implemented as this could induce further traffic onto the A505 Hitchin to Letchworth corridor. The A505 from Royston to the A1(M) is classified as a County Primary route. The A505 to the west of the A1(M) is an "A" road whilst the A602 from junction 8 to the west (Hitchin) is a County Primary route and the strategic east west route would be A505/A1(M)/A602. Should the A505 Letchworth Gate be improved to dual carriageway the case could be made to improve the remainder of the A505 to Hitchin and upgrade this to County Primary route status.. Thus the strategic implications would need to be considered alongside a review of the relative hierarchy of the routes between the Baldock Bypass and A505 west of Hitchin. The Hertfordshire Infrastructure Implementation Strategy Study is the appropriate vehicle to consider this.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The implementation of a left turn ban at the top of the northbound off slip road would require a Traffic Regulation Order.
- 6.2 Any dualling or substantial improvement at Letchworth Gate could require planning permission and /or compulsory purchase orders together with side road and traffic regulation orders.

7. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Any minor works in the short term can be funded from the bypass budget.
- 7.2 Any long term major improvement would need to be prioritised for funding against other major schemes within the county and then accepted by the Eastern Region for funding within the Regional Funding Allocation.

8. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS

- 8.1 Details of the design alterations will be provided to the North Hertfordshire District Council and Letchworth Garden City Heritage Foundation.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 That the Panel notes the update information.

10. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 To assist the District Manager in providing information.

11. CONTACT OFFICERS

- 11.1 Barry Anderson, Team Leader, Hertfordshire Highways.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12.1 Minutes of meeting dated March 07.
- 12.2 Baldock bypass Before and After Study
- 12.3 Letchworth Gate Interchange Capacity report 1994 HCC
- 12.4 Letchworth Gate Junction 9 Review 2003 URS/Carillion for HA
- 12.5 Letchworth Gate Junction 9 Assessment 2005 MP for HCC
- 12.6 Highways Agency DRMB Advice junction design
- 12.7 Stage 4 Safety Audit
- 12.8 Letchworth Gate Improvement Traffic and Technical Detail

13. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Background to Design Development

Appendix 2 Review, Trial, and Alterations

Appendix 3 Scheme Plan

APPENDIX 1

A1(M) JUNCTION 9 LETCHWORTH GATE IMPROVEMENT BACKGROUND TO DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

- 1.1 The requirement of the Highways Agency (HA) for the Letchworth Gate improvements, made at the 1995 public inquiry, was to ensure that queuing on the northbound off slip road of the A1(M) did not increase as a result of the extra bypass traffic. A layout for the interchange agreed by the two highway authorities was put forward and recommended by the inspector. The principle of further grade separation was ruled out.
- 11.2 Following the approval given in 2002 to construct the Baldock bypass, the HA's consultants reviewed the original design in light of current highway design standards and traffic conditions. Traffic flows had increased in the years since the inquiry and peak hour queues stretched some 500 metres back onto the motorway resulting in delays of up to 15 minutes and creating injury accidents. Of the 54 injury accidents in 5 years at the whole Letchworth Gate junction and its approaches, 19 were at the top of the northbound off slip road. The reviews considered various layouts including partial and full signalisation and the conclusions were:
- The 1995 design would not meet current design standards.
 - Alterations to improve congestion could not be carried out within the existing boundaries.
 - A solution could not be found to meet all capacity, operational and safety objectives without the dualling of Letchworth Gate or further grade separation at the interchange – for which there were no statutory powers or funding.

As there could not be an ideal solution, primary objectives were set to improve the layout to cure the pre-existing slip road safety and queuing problems and to accommodate the extra bypass traffic. In 2004 the scheme was passed over to HCC to investigate further.

- 1.3 HCC's consultant, Mouchel, recommended an option using dedicated lanes to new standards published in late 2003 set out by the Highways Agency (HA) but with signals controlling the northbound off slip road. It concluded that this was the only layout that would reduce significantly the queues occurring and those predicted following the opening of the bypass, as required by the HA, without major alterations to the interchange and Letchworth Gate. The design was based on traffic using the dedicated lane having free access to Letchworth Gate except during the green signal phase on the westbound arm of the roundabout. Safety audits were carried out in conjunction with representatives of the HA and the police and the recommendations implemented. It should be noted that the design originally had a taper merge into Letchworth Gate and this was changed to the

current give way layout as a result of safety audit recommendations. The scheme was finally given approval by the HA in September 2005.

APPENDIX 2

A1(M) JUNCTION 9 LETCHWORTH GATE IMPROVEMENT REVIEW, TRIAL LAYOUT, AND ALTERATIONS TO NORTHBOUND DEDICATED LANE

- 2.1 The trial alterations to the layout to improve visibility were undertaken over a two week period in April 2007 using traffic management to realign the route of drivers using the dedicated lane. Video recording of the operation of the junction before and during the trial was taken (and this was augmented by observations by safety engineers.
- 2.2 The video survey revealed that before the temporary layout was in place there was very little queuing even in the peak hour on the dedicated lane, as drivers were able to merge relatively freely into the traffic flow although some uncertainty remained. This was considered an improvement on the situation observed during the safety audit 12 weeks earlier when greater uncertainty on the part of some drivers caused more disruption to flow. Visual monitoring of the trial was carried out by a safety engineer over several days, and his findings indicated that there was substantial queuing at various times of the day on the slip road, sometimes stretching back beyond the first ADS sign (in excess of 250 metres). Prior to the trial, 2 seconds were added to the red light time at the traffic signals for lanes 2 & 3, to deter vehicles turning left from lane 2. However it was observed that there was an increase in vehicles turning left from lane two during the trial period. This was assumed to have been due to the length of queues on the dedicated lane. Using the video recording it was evident that with the temporary layout the majority of drivers paused at the 'give way' line as the temporary layout positioned their vehicles more at a right angle to the traffic flow. Some drivers tried to negotiate the give way without pausing but were inhibited by the deflection imposed by the cones. A number of comments from drivers were made to the effect that they were changing from using their wing mirrors to looking to the right. The substantial queuing observed at various times of the day was considered mostly due to drivers pausing at the give way although the presence of the signs and traffic cones will have contributed and there was concern that the queuing could lead to rear end shunts on the dedicated lane.
- 2.3 The response from drivers using the junction during the trial was mixed. Those that found the slip road difficult to use responded positively to the alteration of the approach angle saying that they were better able to see traffic on the circulatory traffic. Others preferred the unaltered layout saying they were able to better judge the gaps using wing mirrors without having to pause or stop at the give way. It should be noted that there have been no reportable accidents on the slip road since it opened in November 2006 and none occurred during the trial. Several damage only accidents have been logged during November 2006 to March 2007.
- 2.4 As response to the trial had been mixed and from observation concerns regarding queuing and safety had been raised, a review of all options was carried out.
- 1) Investigate a traffic signal layout for signal control of the dedicated slip lane, with secondary signals on the exit from that lane into Letchworth Gate. This would prevent left turns from the right turning lane. Also investigate closing the

dedicated lane leaving a 2 lane or a 3 lane signalised approach to the roundabout.

- 2) Extend the left turning lane towards Letchworth.
- 3) Dual Letchworth Gate. This option was looked at several years ago and discounted on the grounds of possible objections from Letchworth Heritage, and costs of approximately £4million.
- 4) Provision of a second grade separation, taking right turners direct to the Baldock Bypass (similar to Stansted Airport) this was ruled out at the 1995 Public Inquiry.
- 5) Provide a left turn ban - 'No left turn' at the traffic signals for lane 2 (difficult to enforce).
- 6) Apply red anti-skid material to an area at the end of the current layout, which would tend to deflect vehicles towards a 90° angle at the 'Give Way' line.
- 7) Carry out permanent alterations to the line and angle of approach as per the 'trial layout', altering existing hatching, lining and anti-skid material
- 8) Do nothing.

- 2.5 Option 1 was evaluated using traffic data from the trial. The modelling showed that any variations to the current signal layout would increase queue lengths on the circulatory carriageway of the roundabout blocking the exit to the A1(M) south. Queues for left turning traffic into Letchworth Gate extended back down towards the motorway to varying degrees with the possibility of rear end shunts. Adjusting the green times to avoid the circulatory queues blocking the southbound on slip road would further increase queues on the northbound off slip road and with anticipated growth the situation would continue to deteriorate. Having a signalised three lane approach at the roundabout would again produce queues back on the slip road but would allow drivers to turn left from the centre lane. With only the circulatory and right turning traffic controlled by signals under the current layout there is reserve capacity allowing for further growth on these movements although some queuing might develop on the left turn dedicated lane. Closing the dedicated lane would result in queues back onto the motorway. It should be noted that around 55% of the traffic leaving the A1(M) northbound turns left into Letchworth Gate.
- 2.6 Option 2 was again ruled out on safety grounds due to the possibility of head on collisions as vehicles merge to one lane.
- 2.7 Options 3 & 4 were ruled out on cost and time basis, although with Letchworth Gate considered to be operating at capacity an additional lane into Letchworth may need to be considered in the mid term.
- 2.8 Option 5 was considered as a possibility and can be implemented independently from the other options. It may deter some drivers and indicate to the drivers the problems they cause by turning left across the exit of the dedicated lane. The Hertfordshire police have indicated they would not object to the implementation of the ban but would not support it due to the difficulty of tracking and prosecuting drivers. Without enforcement the ban will only have a limited effect

- 2.9 Option 6 was put forward as a low cost minimal alteration solution. The give way marking would be amended and red anti-skid surfacing placed at the end of the lane on the nearside kerb. The aim would be to enable and encourage drivers to approach at a greater angle but allow those who are confident of merging to over-run the red surfacing. The cost is estimated at £6,000 and would involve disruption over 3-4 days.
- 2.10 Option 7 would implement the layout used in the trial but is almost certain to result in much longer queues. The work required would involve laying new antiskid material over half the length of the dedicated lane together with new lane and give way markings. This is estimated to cost £30,000 and would involve some disruption over 10-15 days.
- 2.11 The consensus from the reviewing group including safety engineers responsible for the audits was that minimal alterations should be undertaken bearing in mind the improvement in operation of the junction since its implementation and in the knowledge that no injury accidents had been reported in that time. Option 6 was considered the most appropriate alteration to try to assist all users of the junction.

APPENDIX 3
A1(M) JUNCTION LAYOUT