
Stourbridge Area Committee – Grant allocations

15th October 2012

Report of the Area Liaison Officer

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the applications for Area Committee capital allocations.

Background

2. The Area Committee has an unallocated revenue budget of £69,845.14 for 2012/13. This is after those grants that have been approved by the Area Liaison Officer in consultation with members as detailed below.
3. The unallocated budget is also after £10,000 has been set aside in 2012/13 towards the cost of the repair of the gates at Mary Stevens Park. This was agreed at this meeting on 17th November 2008 and currently the total amount set aside is £50,000.
4. The Area Committee has previously agreed that contributions from the budget will be limited to £5,000 unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated. Spending proposals are invited from members of the Area Committee, the public, representative organisations and Council directorates, and each proposal is assessed against the following criteria:-
 - a. The allocation can be spent on revenue or capital schemes. Capital is defined by legislation, i.e. “one-off” type expenditure on acquisition, construction, enhancement of land, roads, buildings, equipment or vehicles, which may also include the making of grants or loans for capital expenditure by others;
 - b. For projects with a value of over £1,500 applications will only be approved if the applicant can demonstrate that they will secure at least 50% of the cost of the project either from their own resources or from some other funding.
 - c. The applicant has not been awarded an allocation by the Committee or a grant from the Stevens Trust within the preceding two years.

Except, in either point (b) or (c), in the opinion of the Area Committee, there are special circumstances which would warrant the approval of the application in the public interest.
 - d. Schemes should contribute to the Community Plan and should not conflict with existing Council policy;
 - e. Schemes should be for the general benefit of the wider community, i.e. not just for the benefit of individuals or specific groups, and should make a

difference in the local area;

- f. Schemes should not result in any ongoing revenue cost to the Council;
- g. Consideration should be given to schemes which might generate external funding (i.e. using the allocation as match-funding);
- h. Spending must be in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, and demonstrate Best Value; and
- i. Approved allocations must normally be claimed within six months.
- j. Application forms and supporting documents can be viewed by Members on request to the Area Liaison Officer

Applications

5. The United Church, Lye.

The applicant is a Methodist Church based in Upper High Street, Lye and currently has 55 members.

The premises are used as a place of worship and also by the community for many activities including, 2 luncheon clubs, dance school, arts classes, Girls and Boys Brigades.

A request is made for a grant of £5,000 towards a total project cost of £15,298 to replace an existing lift.

This lift is over 30 years old and repairs are becoming frequent and costly because parts have to be specially made due to its age. It is necessary for the elderly and disabled to reach the first floor to have access to the activities. It does not comply with current legislation regarding disability access and cannot be used by wheelchair users.

The accounts for the year to 31st August 2011 show a surplus £1,296.88 and balances held as cash or at the bank of £67,393.79. However it should be noted that this money is being held to undertake some necessary property repairs in the Autumn.

Due to the urgency of this request the Area Liaison Officer in consultation with the Chair, Vice Chair and Ward members authorised the request.

6. Smartfest

The group requested a grant of £3,991 towards a total project cost of £6,943 to allow free access to events during the Stourbridge Music Arts Rhythm and Theatre Festival. Due to the timing of the request the Area Liaison Officer in consultation with the members of the Committee agreed to use the urgency powers and awarded the grant.

7. Pedmore Senior Citizens Club

The applicant is a group based at St Peter's Centre, Pedmore Lane, Pedmore and

currently has 60 members. The objective of the group is to provide a social meeting for the elderly and lonely, where they can enjoy meals, entertainment and outings.

A grant of £445 is requested towards the running costs of the group which include monthly rent of the facilities and speaker/entertainers costs.

The group is funded by an entrance fee of £1.50 and other fund raising events.

The Council have contributed £475 in 2011 towards the cost of outings.

The accounts for the year to 31st December 2011 show cash and bank balances of £1,537.76.

The (Capital and Revenue Allocations) Working Group consider that this grant should be approved.

8. Age UK Dudley

The applicant provides support for people in the Borough of Dudley to make more of later life by providing high quality, innovative and responsive services that meet diverse needs. This enables older people to have greater choices and expands the involvement and participation of local older people in community life. Currently it supports 20,000 people within the borough each year.

An application for a grant was submitted to Central Dudley Area Committee Grants Working Group for £3,694.68 being the total cost of replacing and updating IT equipment at the Netherton Head Office to support the administration of the Age UK service within the Borough of Dudley. Members of this group felt that because it benefited the whole borough, each Area Committee should consider granting £740 from its resources.

The accounts submitted for the year ended 31st March 2011 show fixed assets (including investments) £233,559 and net current assets (mainly cash at bank) £86,301. Some of these funds are held for designated or restricted purposes, with £96,223 available for general use.

The (Capital and Revenue Allocations) Working Group consider that this grant should be approved.

9. Chawn Hill Church

The applicant is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee and requests a grant of £4,260 towards a total project cost of £8,520 to improve the centre building and install sports flooring.

The building is used for a number of activities including youth clubs, mums and tots groups and is also used by Dudley Rethink (A support group for carers), University of the 3rd Age (U3A), Zumba classes and parties.

The Church has supplied unaudited financial statements from 7th April 2010 to 30th April 2011 for the limited company which show no assets and no reserves during which period the company was dormant.

It has also supplied the unaudited financial statements for the charity which show £65,411 surplus of resources for the year ended 31st December 2010 and net current assets of £14,496. During the financial year the church was also able to repay the church mortgage which was £100,000.

The (Capital and Revenue Allocations) Working Group consider that this grant should be approved.

10. Pedmore Neighbourhood Watch

The Association aims to promote good citizenship and greater public participation in the prevention and solution of crime, and to provide an effective liaison between the police and public and meets at the St Peter's Centre, Pedmore.

A request is made for a grant of £325.18 to purchase a new printer along with replacement cartridges which will be used to produce quarterly newsletters, notices, agendas and minutes and accounts.

The applicant has supplied its constitution and accounts for the year to 31st March 2012 which show a small deficit with a bank balance of £512

The (Capital and Revenue Allocations) Working Group consider that this grant should be approved.

11. Caledonia Residents Association

The Association aims to improve the quality of life for residents of the area and to protect and improve the character, amenities and resources of the area.

A request is made for £5830 towards a total project cost of £6530 to excavate car park in Grosvenor Way and to replace with hardcore and tarmac.

The applicant has supplied its constitution, estimates for the work, accounts for the year to 30th June 2012 , and a copy bank statement which shows a balance of £1686.07 on 17th July 2012.

The (Capital and Revenue Allocations) Working Group consider that this grant should be approved on the basis of exceptional circumstances justifying a grant over £5,000.

Finance

12. The Area Committee's delegated budget allocation is funded by the Council's revenue resources. The current position with regard to available resources is set out in paragraph 2 of this report.

Law

13. Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000, enables the Council to do any thing which it considers is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well being of the Borough or any part of it.

Equality Impact

14. This report complies fully with the Council's policies on equality and diversity.

Recommendation

15. It is recommended that the Committee :
- a. note the grants awarded in paragraph 5 and 6 and
 - b. consider the applications as detailed in paragraph 7-11 of the report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane Porter', with a horizontal line underneath.

Area Liaison Officer

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