

**North Dudley Area Committee – 05<sup>th</sup> December 2007**

**Report of the Area Liaison Officer**

**Delegated Capital Budget**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To consider requests for funding from the Delegated Capital Budget.
2. To confirm that subject to (3) below, the Lead Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee and the Opposition spokesperson(s), be authorised to determine urgent applications for capital funding.
3. To confirm that, in the period between the Annual Council Meeting and the election of a Chair at the first meeting of the Area Committee in a municipal year, the Lead Officer, in consultation with the Leaders of all political groups represented on the Council, be authorised to determine urgent applications for capital funding.

**Background**

4. The criteria against which allocations from the delegated capital budget should be considered are set out in the Appendix. A copy of the applications referred to in this report is available to Members on request. The following applications have been received.
5. Sedgley Youth Centre

An application in the sum of £2,413.09, was received from the above to purchase recreational equipment for use at the Youth Centre in Tipton Road, Sedgley. This replaced a previous application, in the sum of £3,129.08, which had been deferred because some of the items within the application were of a revenue nature.

It was pointed out that, contained within the current application, was an item for £199.50 for the purchase of resource booklets, which could not be classed as capital items. With this amount deleted from the original amount, the application would in fact be for the sum of £2,213.59.

Following careful consideration by the Working Group, it was unanimously agreed that the Area Committee be recommended to approve the sum of £2,213.59 to purchase recreational equipment for use at the Youth Centre.

6. Turls Hill & Swanbrook Valley Residents Association

An application in the sum of £2,500, was received from the above, towards securing a further grant of £25,000 from a landfill Grant Company, as part of a gates and fencing project financed by the Liveability Fund in association with the Turls Hill and Swanbrook Valley Residents Association, and subject to a 10% contribution. This application had been deferred from the previous meeting, to allow further clarification to be sought. As at the date of the meeting, written further information was still being sought.

Following careful consideration of the application by the Working Group, it was unanimously agreed that the Area Committee be recommended to approve the grant of £2,500 (two thousand five hundred pounds), subject to written clarification of the proposed project and confirmation that the funds for the other parts of the project have been secured from alternative sources.

7. Friends Of Priors Mill Park

An application in the sum of £5,000, was received from the above, for the purchase and installation of four bins and two steel picnic benches. A previous application by the Friends for a grant of £5,000 towards a project costing £36,000, had been deferred to allow further information to be submitted.

Some Members expressed concern that the provision of bins on this small park could cause embarrassment to the Council, as there were other larger sized areas in the Borough, where bins would be desirable and perhaps the provision of bins on Mill Park could be seen to be setting a precedence.

Some Members expressed concerns as to the frequency of the emptying of the bins once they had been installed and as to who would be responsible for the cost.

The Working Group agreed that the Area Committee be recommended to approve the application from the above for £5,000 for the purchase and installation of four bins and two steel picnic benches, subject to confirmation from Leisure Services, as to the exact size of the said bins, the frequency of the emptying of the bins and who would be responsible for the cost of emptying the bins once installed.

8. Gornal Athletic Football Club

An application in the sum £3,000 was received from the above, towards the cost of replacing the current external security fencing around the Club.

On inspection of the photographs attached to the application, a number of concerns were expressed, including:

- a) the need for a detailed plan of the area to be fenced, including exact measurements of the perimeter fencing required.
- b) The specification of the fencing to be provided and whether it was damage resistant.
- c) Concern that the height of eight foot fencing might contravene planning regulations.
- d) What type of material the fence was to be made of, i.e. metal, concrete or wood, and if wood what type of wood.

- e) With reference to the final sentence in the penultimate paragraph on page 1 of the application, a Member expressed the need for clarification on this, as it appeared that there could be an increase in traffic, and originally the area referred to for use as a mini soccer pitch had been refused, due to its close proximity to existing properties on the left hand side of the land and the narrowness of the street.

Following careful consideration of the application by the Working Group, it was unanimously agreed to recommend to the Area Committee that the application for £3,000 towards the cost of replacing the current external security fencing around Gornal Athletic Football Club at Garden Walk, Lower Gornal be approved, subject to clarification / confirmation of the concerns listed a to e above.

#### 9. Sedgley Ward Members

An application in the sum of £2,400, was received from the above, towards the cost of purchasing and installing Christmas lights at Sedgley town centre.

Following careful consideration of the application by the Working Group, it was unanimously agreed to recommend to the Area Committee that approval be given to the application for £2,400 towards the purchase and installation of Christmas lights for Sedgley Town Centre.

### **Finance**

10. The grants referred to in this report can be funded within the overall allocations for the Area Committee.
11. The balance available for allocation in 2007/08 is £116,139 including the allocation for 2007/08 of £40,000.
12. The following table indicates the allocations approved to-date, and the budget remaining.

	Coseley East Ward	Upper Gornal and Woodsetton Ward	Gornal Ward	Sedgley Ward	Total
Balance available from 2006/07	<b><u>£14,704</u></b>	<b><u>£29,751</u></b>	<b><u>£25,876</u></b>	<b><u>£5,808</u></b>	<b><u>£76,139</u></b>
New allocation for 2007/08	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£10,000	£40,000
Allocations Paid in 2007/08	£1,117	£2,328	£10,343	£1,117	£14,905
Balance unallocated	<b><u>£23,587</u></b>	<b><u>£37,423</u></b>	<b><u>£25,533</u></b>	<b><u>£14,691</u></b>	<b><u>£101,234</u></b>

7. 13. An approved capital budget of £116,139 is available for 2007/08, including the allocation for the financial year of £40,000. Allocations totalling £14,905 have been approved in this financial year, leaving a balance of £101,234 to be allocated. The Working Group recommendations from the Meeting on 12 November 07 would reduce this balance by £15,114 (Sedgley Youth Centre £2,214, Turls Hill & Swanbrook Valley Residents Association £2,500, Friends of Priors Mill £5,000, Gornal Athletic Football Club £3,000 and Sedgley Ward Members £2,400) to £86,120 if approved.

### **Law**

14. The Committee may incur capital expenditure in respect of the various statutory functions of the Council.
15. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 empowers the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive to, or incidental to the discharge of its functions.

### **Equality Impact**

16. This report takes account of the Council's Policies on equality and diversity.

### **Recommendation**

17. It is recommended that the proposals set out at paragraphs 3 to be approved.



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NORTH DUDLEY AREA LIAISON OFFICER Contact Officer: John Freeman

### **CRITERIA FOR CAPITAL BIDS/ALLOCATIONS**

Spending proposals are invited from members of the Area Committee, the public, representative organisations and Council departments, and each proposal is assessed against the following criteria: -

- a) The allocation is to be spent on “capital” schemes as 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) Schemes should contribute to the Community Plan and should not conflict with existing Council policy;
- c) 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;
- d) Schemes should not result in any ongoing revenue cost to the Council;
- e) Consideration should be given to schemes which might generate external funding (i.e. using the allocation as match-funding); and
- f) Spending must be in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, and demonstrate Best Value.
- g) Approved allocations must normally be claimed within six months.