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**Halesowen Area Committee – 14th November 2007**

**Report of the Area Liaison Officer**

**Delegated Capital Budget**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To recommend grants from the Committee's Capital Budget Allocation and associated matters.

**Background**

2. The criteria against which allocations from the delegated capital budget should be considered are set out in the Appendix. The Area Committee has previously agreed that contributions from the budget will be limited to £5,000 unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated. A copy of the applications referred to in this report are available to Members on request.

**Dudley Children's Book Group**

3. Dudley Children's Book Group is a constituted body within the National Federation of Children's Book Groups, a registered charity. The aim of the Group is to encourage the love of books and reading amongst young people in the area. Many of the meetings and author visits take place at the Earls High School. All work for the book group is done on a voluntary basis and all funds are completely separate from school budgets.
4. The Group has requested funding amounting to £1,620 for items such as a camera, hot water flasks, display boards etc which would enable them to reach more young people and their families around the Borough and open up the enjoyment of reading to all.
5. I have consulted colleagues in the Directorate of Children's Services who support the application. I am, therefore, recommending a grant of £1,620 for the purchase of these items.

**Halesowen/Dudley Yemeni Community Association**

6. Halesowen/Dudley Yemeni Community Association is a registered charity with the general aims of advancing education, relief of poverty and provision of recreational facilities in the interest of social welfare with the object of improving the conditions of life for the inhabitants of Halesowen, Dudley and its surrounding area and in particular the Yemeni community, some 400 families. The Association meets at the Yemeni Community Centre in Highfield Lane, Halesowen.
7. The Association has requested funding for a P.A. system for the Centre, amounting to £1,064.00, so that presentations can be improved and recorded at the Centre.

8. I have consulted colleagues in the Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services who support the application. I am, therefore, recommending a grant of £1,064.00 for the purchase of the P.A. system.

#### 2nd Cradley (St. Peter's) Scout Group

9. A request has been received from the Group for funding to landscape the area around the Scout Headquarters. This would enable members of the Scout Group and other users of the building to carry out activities in a safe environment. The landscaping work would also improve the environment for local neighbours. The total cost of the landscaping work is approximately £6,500. The Group has applied for funding of £5,000 and could find the balance from their own funds.
10. The Committee has supported the Group previously. Funding of £2,000 was approved in June 2005 for security fencing around the site following extensive vandal attack and funding of £5,000 was approved in March 2006 towards the cost of renovating the interior of the building, including the provision of disabled toilets and cooking facilities, which would provide wider community benefit.
11. Having consulted appropriate colleagues, this is a request which seems worthy of the Committee's support and I am recommending the approval of a grant of £5,000.

#### Litterbin – Broome Close

12. Councillor Jill Nicholls has requested funding on behalf of the local residents/tenants for the installation of a new black litterbin for outside the flats in Broome Close. The area is noted for litter problems, broken glass etc. The cost of installing the bin is around £160.00 and once installed would be serviced and maintained by the caretaker responsible for the area.
13. I have, in consultation with the Chairman and Opposition Spokesperson, instructed our Environmental Management Team to arrange the installation as soon as possible.

#### St. Peter's Church, Cradley

14. An application for funding has been received from St. Peter's Church, Cradley amounting to £5,000.
15. The Church has experienced some significant and serious vandalism and theft in recent months and consequently, two-thirds of the building currently has no roof at all. The cost of replacing the roof with a modern rubberoid felting is in the region of £20,000.
16. They also wish to raise the height of the single-storey roof that is currently allowing access to the roof and more potential vandalism. The cost of this work amounts to £5,000.
17. The Church has raised a large amount of money themselves to pay for the work along with a contribution from their insurance company.
18. This is a request which seems worthy of support and I am recommending a grant of £5,000 be made available to the Church.

#### St. Paul's Blackheath Parish Church

19. A request for funding was received from the Church for funding to replace the Church Hall floor amounting to some £12,795.76. Several community groups as well as church members use the Hall and the uneven condition of the floor is giving rise to concerns for the health and safety of hall users.
20. The Church has also applied for a grant of £10,000 from Awards for All Scheme and have recently informed me that this funding has now been secured, leaving a balance of £2,796 to be found.
21. The Committee has supported the Church previously. Funding of £3,800 was approved in October 2003 towards the cost of installing disabled toilet facilities in the Church, with a similar amount funded from Rowley Regis Town Committee of Sandwell MBC.
22. This is a request which seems worthy of support and I am recommending a grant of £2,796 be made available to the Church.

### **Finance**

23. The total available for distribution in 2007/08 is £68,000. Recommendations in this report will result in the following allocations:-

	£	Ward
<b><u>Recommended for approval:-</u></b>		
Dudley Children's Book Group	1,620	Covers all Wards
Halesowen/Dudley Yemeni Community Association	1,064	Belle Vale
2nd Cradley (St Peter's) Scout Group	5,000	Hayley Green and Cradley South
St. Peter's Church, Cradley	5,000	Cradley and Foxcote
St. Paul's Blackheath Parish Church	2,796	Halesowen North
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>15,480</b>	
<b><u>Grants approved through delegated arrangements:-</u></b>		
Litterbin – Broome Close	160	Belle Vale
<b>Total</b>	<b>£15,640</b>	

### **Law**

24. The Committee may incur capital expenditure in respect of the various statutory functions of the Council.
25. 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**

26. This report complies fully with the Council's policies on equal opportunities and

diversity. Some of the applications include facilities which are available to children and young people.

### **Recommendations**

27. It is proposed that the Area Committee:-

- (a) approves a grant of £1,620 to the Dudley Children's Book Group for the purchase of equipment, such as a camera, display boards etc;
- (b) approves a grant of £1,064 to the Halesowen/Dudley Yemeni Community Association for the provision of a new P.A. system;
- (c) approves a grant of £5,000 to the 2nd Cradley (St. Peter's) Scout Group in order that the land around the site can be landscaped.
- (d) notes my action, in consultation with the Chairman and Opposition Spokesperson, in allocating a sum of £160 for a new litterbin to be installed in Broome Close;
- (e) approves a grant of £5,000 to St. Peter's Church, Cradley towards the cost of repairing the Church building roof;
- (f) approves a grant of £2,796 to St. Paul's Blackheath Parish Church towards the cost of replacing the uneven Hall floor.



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**Mike Williams**  
**Area Liaison Officer**

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### **Criteria for Bids/Allocations**

- a. The allocation 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 and Council Plans 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 on-going revenue costs.
- e. Consideration should be given to schemes that might generate external funding (*i.e. using these budgets as match funding*).