

**Halesowen Area Committee – 22nd January 2009**

**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.
3. **Friends of Huntingtree Park**  
Two sets of steps on the Park are now considered in a dangerous state of repair and this was highlighted during a recent public consultation. One set of steps are close to the community rooms, used by many people, including mothers and children from nearby Huntingtree School. The other set lead down to the bowling green from the main path on the Park and these do not currently conform to current health and safety standards. A request has, therefore, been submitted by the Group that funding be provided so that the present access to the bowling green be moved approximately 30 metres towards Huntingtree Road. The repositioning of the entrance would then allow the steps to be replaced by a more suitable path, which would then conform to the requirements highlighted by the Disability Access Group. The total cost of these alterations amounts to approximately £10,000 and the remaining funds would be matchfunded by Parks Development.

I am, therefore, recommending a grant of £5,000 be approved, which will be matchfunded by Parks Development.

4. 1st Halesowen Scout Group

The 1st Halesowen Scout Group aims to promote the development of young people in achieving their full potential physically, intellectually, socially and spiritually, as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their local, national and international communities, by providing an enjoyable and attractive scheme of progressive training, based on the Scout Promise and Law and guided by adult leadership. They currently have over 150 members.

The Scout Group have requested funding towards a replacement 17 seater minibus as their current vehicle is over 20 years old. The replacement vehicle is required to ensure the programme of activities planned for 2009 can go ahead.

The total cost of the replacement vehicle is £22,500 and they are requesting funding of £5,000 from the Committee.

I am recommending a grant of £5,000 be approved.

5. The Lighthouse Project - Over 50s Club

The Lighthouse Project has an over 50s Club, that brings together the elderly and lonely members of the area to provide a friendly and sociable meeting with entertainment of various types. They undertake 2/3 outings each year and attend theatres and pantomimes etc. They currently have just under 60 members.

They have requested funding from the Committee for 25 additional comfortable chairs amounting to just over £911.

I believe this grant is worthy of support and am recommending a grant of £911.02 be approved.

6. Howley Grange Scout Group

Howley Grange Scout Group are part of the Scout Association with the aim of contributing to the development of young people in achieving their full physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potentials, as individuals, as responsible citizens and as members of their local, national and international communities. They currently have over 180 members.

The Scout Group centre, over the last 18 months, has experienced a number of thefts and vandalism. They are seeking to improve the security around the scout hut to prevent further problems from occurring. They have recently installed a new security fence as part of these measures and are now seeking funding for the installation of security lights, shutters on the doors and windows and an extruder alarm system.

As the centre is used by other groups in the community, they are in the process of

renovating the Scout Hut to make disabled access easier, which includes a new disabled toilet and ramps, renovating the kitchen and the adjustment of light switches and sockets to comply with disabled requirements.

The total cost of all these works is £29,371 and they are requesting funding of £5,000 from the Committee.

I am, therefore, recommending a grant of £5,000 be approved.

7. Youth 4em in association with West Midlands Police

An application for funding has been received from Youth 4em via the West Midlands Police, for funding to purchase equipment, such as table tennis tables, so a weekly youth club can be established at Leasowes Community College. This equipment will help engage local youths and help build stronger relationships with the Police.

They have requested funding amounting to £350.00 and I am, therefore, recommending a grant of up to £350.00 be approved.

## Finance

8. The total available for distribution in 2008/09 is £60,000, with just under £32,500 being allocated this year to date. Recommendations in this report will result in the following allocations:-

|   | £             | Ward                         |
|---|---------------|------------------------------|
| <u>Grants approved through delegated arrangements:-</u> |               |                              |
| <u>Recommended for approval:-</u>                       |               |                              |
| Friends of Huntingtree Park                             | 5,000         | Hayley Green & Cradley South |
| 1st Halesowen Scout Group                               | 5,000         | Belle Vale                   |
| The Lighthouse Project Over 50s Club                    | 911           | All wards                    |
| Howley Grange Scout Group                               | 5,000         | Halesowen South              |
| Youth 4em   | 350           | Halesowen North & South      |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>16,261</b> |                              |

## Law

9. The Committee may incur capital expenditure in respect of the various statutory functions of the Council.

10. 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**

11. 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**

12. It is proposed that the Area Committee:-
- (a) approves a grant of £5,000 for the Friends of Huntingtree Park towards the cost of repositioning the present access to the bowling green and replace with more appropriate access via ramps and steps;
  - (b) approves a grant of £5,000 for the 1st Halesowen Scout Group towards the cost of a replacement minibus;
  - (c) approves a grant of £911.02 for The Lighthouse Project Over 50s Club for the purchase of 25 additional comfortable chairs for use by the Group;
  - (d) approves a grant of £5,000 to the Howley Grange Scout Group towards the cost of installing security lights, shutters and an extruder alarm system, following a number of thefts and vandalism around the site;
  - (e) approves a grant of up to £350.00 to Youth 4em towards the purchase of table tennis tables to help establish a weekly youth club.



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

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

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 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 cost to the Council.
- e. Consideration should be given to schemes that might generate external funding (i.e. using these budgets 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 allocation must normally be claimed within six months.