

Halesowen Area Committee – 14th September 2005

Report of the Area Liaison Officer

Delegated Capital Budget

Purpose of Report

1. To consider requests for funding from the Delegated Capital Budget.

Background

2. 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 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.
3. A copy of the applications referred to in this report are available to Members on request.

4. Halesowen Youth Centre – Youth Disco

The Youth Centre holds a monthly disco, to which in excess of 100 young people, aged 13 – 18 attend. Operation of this service has been provided by volunteer support and with the use of donation funded equipment.

They now wish to improve the quality of the facilities at the Centre to ensure continued success and have already raised £1,100 towards the cost of the equipment themselves. They have requested an allocation from Halesowen Area Committee.

Having consulted with colleagues on this matter, I have, in consultation with the Chairman and Opposition Spokesperson, approved a grant of £2,000.

5. Caslon Primary School – Caslon Community Partnership Group

The Group is a voluntary partnership, consisting of Beeches Youth Group for 9 – 14 year olds, the Yemen Voice, Fatherless Barn Evangelical Church, Caslon Primary School, Caslon PTFA and several local residents.

A request has been received for financial support towards the purchase of a microwave, replacement flooring of the Community Room and 2 fold-away tables, amounting to £1,204.95.

Having consulted with colleagues on this matter, I have, in consultation with the Chairman and Opposition Spokesperson, approved a grant of £1,204.95.

6. Caslon Primary School – Day Care Services

We have also received a request from Caslon School's Voluntary Management Committee for funding to purchase equipment for a Day Nursery Unit which is being established at the School. Before detailed consideration of the request, I have asked for further details of the governance and management arrangements for the Unit, what action, if any, has been taken to try and secure other capital funds and details of the business plan and how on-going revenue costs will be funded. A response is awaited and I will give a verbal update at the meeting.

7. Age Concern, Halesowen – Refurbishment of Premises

A request for funding was received from the Chairman of Halesowen Age Concern for a contribution towards the refurbishment of the facilities at the centre, the total cost of which has been estimated at £10,000.

I have consulted the Director of Social Services, who advises that revenue funding has been increased this year to cover the cost of maintenance of cleanliness in the day centre activity room and kitchen area, and would support the application for capital funds, as it would significantly assist the improvements in service delivery.

The Chairman and I visited the site in August to discuss the detailed requirements and Age Concern have subsequently submitted the following request for funding:-

	£
Internal repaint, including minor repairs	3,500
Supply and fit new curtains to main hallway	500
Supply and fit roller blinds	400
Supply and fit new Light Diffusers	420
Clean carpets and all chairs	390
Total	5,210

Although it has been the Committee's general policy to limit community and voluntary organisations grant to a maximum of £5,000, having visited the building and in the light of the advice from the Director of Social Services, I am recommending the Committee approves the request in full, i.e. £5,210.

8. Beech Tree Miners Welfare Institute

The Committee has twice considered, and deferred consideration of a retrospective request for funding of £5,000 towards the cost of dedicated disabled facilities at the Institute, pending further information. To try and assist, at the end of July I wrote to the applicant suggesting it might be helpful if the Institute would supply further details of its charitable status, clarification of the relationship between the Welfare Institute and the Social Club and more information about the community use of the premises. A reply is awaited and I will give a verbal update at the meeting.

Finance

13. The grants referred to in this report can be funded within the overall allocations for the Area Committee.

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 Equal Opportunities Policy.

Recommendation

17. It is recommended that the Area Committee:-

- (a) notes the actions I have taken, in consultation with the Chairman and Councillor Body in approving grants to the Halesowen Youth Centre and the Caslon Community Partnership Group;
- (b) approves a grant of £5,210 to Halesowen Age Concern for the items set out in paragraph 7;
- (c) notes the current position with the requests for funding from Beech Tree Miners Welfare Institute and the Caslon Day Nursery Unit.



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List of Background papers

Requests for funding