

Halesowen Area Committee – 9 March 2011

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. I have provided below details of the current financial position on uncommitted/unspent capital budget. Prior to the consideration of bids referred to in this report, the table below summarises that position:-

	£
Total allocations 2000/01 to 2010/11	550,000
Less:	
- Spent to date	(484,528)
- Allocated to bidders, but not yet spent (see Appendix 2)	(28,869)
- Earmarked for Town Centre enhancements	(17,000)
- Earmarked for Empty Shops Grant initiative (Cradley/Windmill Hill, Shell Corner and the Stag) (£790 each)	(2,370)
Add back:	
- Available from a review of unspent allocations (see Appendix 2)	472
Available to spend on new bids/earmarks	17,705

3. The criteria against which allocations from the delegated capital budget should be considered are set out in Appendix 1. 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.

4. Howley Grange Scout Group
An application has been received from the group for capital funding of up to £590.00 towards a cost of £1,090.40 for the purchase of Market Stall style shelters. This will enable the group to attend more fayres/events etc to help their fund raising efforts, even in adverse weather conditions as their goods will be protected.

5. Members may recall a grant of £3,600 was approved in 2010/11 towards the cost of developing community meeting rooms for further community use.

6. **I have in consultation with the Chairman and Opposition Spokesperson approved a grant of £590 for this purpose.**

7. The Church of God (Long Lane)
An application has been received from the Church for capital funding of up to £2,100 towards a cost of £2,643.82 for structural maintenance of the building. The building is used by Age Concern on three days per week as well as for the Church's own Women's and Youth sessions. The mortar between the bricks has perished thus causing damage to the structure of the building.

8. **This seems a worthwhile project and the Church will fund the remainder of the cost of the works. I am therefore recommending that members consider approving a grant of up to £2,100.**

9. Good Howley Gardeners
An application has been received from the group for capital funding of up to £5,000 towards a cost of £5,250 for the clearance of land behind their properties and the fencing off of such. They wish to turn this land into allotments and include the community and local school in the benefits of 'grow your own'.

10. This seems a worthwhile project and the group will fund the remainder of the cost of the works through their own contribution. I am therefore recommending that members consider approving a grant of up to £5,000.

11. Women's Awareness Association

An application has been received from the Association for capital funding for up to £5,000 towards a cost of £5,118 for the provision of ICT equipment, sewing equipment, toys and electronic dictionaries. The Association facilitate educational and training opportunities in order for people to integrate and to become active and participating members of the community. The latest application is to expand on the activities of the group, which have been supported by this Area Committee previously.

12. Members may recall a grant of £5,000 approved in 2009/10 for ICT equipment, microphones and speakers to support presentations and also develop members' IT skills, camera and camcorder to capture evidence of the activities held within the group, a printer/copier/scanner/fax facility to assist with the running of the group and sewing machines and over locker machines. In 2010/11 £550 was awarded by the Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services for running and travel expenses.

13. This seems a worthwhile project. I am therefore recommending that members consider a grant of up to £5,000.

14. Greenhill Youth Centre

An application has been received from Leasowes Community College, which manages the Greenhill Youth Centre. The application is for £5,000 towards a cost of £6,000 for ICT equipment for community use, replacement of recreational equipment, seating and materials for decoration.

The Youth Centre is used for a range of educational, sport and recreational activities for young people.

15. Members may recall a grant of £5,000 approved in 2006/07 towards the cost of refurbishment works to the kitchen area and computer room.

16. This seems a worthwhile project. I am therefore recommending that members consider a grant of up to £5,000.

Finance

17. The total available to spend on new bids in 2010/11 is £17,705. Recommendations up to the maximum level set out in this report, together with a grant pending approval under delegation, would result in the following allocations and would exceed the funds available by £375. Members will need to approve less than the maximum amount in some, or all the cases.

	£	Ward
<u>Recommended for approval:-</u>	<u>Up to:</u>	
The Church of God	2,100	Halesowen North
Good Howley Gardeners	5,000	Halesowen South
Women's Awareness Association	5,000	Belle Vale
Greenhill Youth Centre	5,000	Halesowen North
<u>Approved under Delegation-</u>	<u>Up to:</u>	
Howley Grange Scout Group	590	Halesowen South
<u>Pending Approval Under Delegation</u>		
Bethal Chapel	390	Cradley & Foxcote
Total	18,080	

Law

18. The Committee may incur capital expenditure in respect of the various statutory functions of the Council.
19. 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

20. 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

21. It is proposed that the Area Committee:

- (a) notes the grant of £590 to the Howley Grange Scout Group.
- (b) considers authorising a grant of up to £2,100 for The Church of God towards structural maintenance of the building;
- (c) considers authorising a grant of up to £5,000 for Good Howley Gardeners towards clearance of land behind their properties and the fencing off of such;
- (d) considers authorising a grant of up to £5,000 for Women's Awareness Association towards the purchase of ICT equipment, sewing equipment, toys and electronic dictionaries;
- (e) considers authorizing a grant of up to £5,000 for Greenhill Youth Centre towards the purchase of ICT equipment for community use, replacement of recreational equipment, seating and materials for decoration;
- (f) authorise the unspent allocations identified in Appendix 2 amounting to £472 to be brought back to the central capital pot for reallocation to other groups.



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Iain Newman –

Area Liaison Officer

Contact Officer: Iain Newman – Ext 4802

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).
- 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.