

North Dudley Area Committee – 23rd September 2009

Report of the Area Liaison Officer

Delegated Capital Budget

Purpose of Report

1. To consider applications for a capital allocation from the North Dudley Area Committee's delegated capital budget.

Background

2. At the meeting of the North Dudley Area Committee on 8th April 2009, Minute No. 83 (1 and 2) authorised that:
 - a. the Area Liaison Officer, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee and the Opposition spokesperson(s), be authorised to determine urgent applications for capital funding.
 - b. in the period between the Annual Council Meeting and the election of a Chairman 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.
3. 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.

Applications

4. **The Coseley School**

An application in the sum of £5,408.97 was received from the above to purchase health and fitness equipment in order to upgrade existing provision and provide members of the local community opportunities to engage in health enhancing physical activity. The full project cost is forecast to be in excess of £11,000; bids have been made to the Youth Opportunities Fund and the Criminal Justice Board for the balance of funding.

The equipment will be available for pupils from this and other local schools free of charge, both in lessons and as an extra curricular activity. The extended facility will be supported by school staff through organised weekly breakfast, lunchtime and after school clubs and, on evenings and weekends, will be available for community use. During school holidays, and with the support of the extended school partnership, young people from across the Borough will be able to access the equipment via play schemes.

It is anticipated that, through better access to health and fitness equipment, young people will have a positive activity to focus on and will reduce the risk of engaging in anti social behaviour. There is also a wider opportunity for all community members to learn about the importance of lifelong physical activity in terms of health and well being.

Following consideration by the Working Group it was agreed to recommend to the Area Committee that a contribution of £5000 be made to the Coseley School, subject to confirmation that the balance of funding has been identified. Contributions would be shared equally between Coseley East and Upper Gornal and Woodsetton wards.

5. Coseley Cricket Club

An application in the sum of £4,485 was received from the above to purchase a new artificial wicket.

Coseley Cricket Club foster and promote the sport of cricket at all levels within the community and within the sport, providing opportunity for recreation, coaching and competition. Membership of the club is open to any person.

The existing artificial wicket is approximately 15 years old and is in a state of disrepair and unsafe for use.

The artificial wicket is used for net practice for both adult and junior sections of the club and for junior matches. In order to attract more junior members it is considered essential that the wicket is replaced as soon as possible.

The Working Group considered the application and recommended that it be deferred to seek additional information about membership and funding arrangements.

6. Beacon Cricket Club

An application in the sum of £10,000 was received from the above to purchase various equipment including training aids, square covers for wicket protection and a new scoreboard. The total project cost is forecast to be up to £14,000.

The club provides cricket coaching and matches for members from across the local community, including senior teams, Sunday teams and youth teams. Membership of the club is open to any person wishing to play competitive cricket.

Their aim is to further develop the youth section in a safe and fun environment through quality coaching.

The Working Group considered the application and recommended that it be deferred to seek additional information about membership details particular to the North Dudley area.

7. Sedgley Youth

An application in the sum of between £5,250 and £7,495 was received from the above to purchase a 12/16 seater minibus (second hand) for the collection of its

youth and to provide transport to meet and engage with other youth organisations, participate in football / cricket matches and for its band to attend and play at venues across the Borough.

The organisation provide a safe, life enhancing venue and activities for young people (11-18 year old) including drama, music lessons and sports such as football and cricket. Their aim is to demonstrate to the youth of Sedgley a purpose for the betterment of local community.

The Working Group considered the application and recommended that it be deferred for further information about the organisations activities.

8. Lake Street Methodist Church

An application in the sum of £5,000 was received from the above to help fund the redevelopment of the Church Hall and main building, including improved disabled access and toilet facilities, a new link corridor and interior works to provide a more modern form of worship and to widen flexibility for other uses.

The Church focuses on worship, evangelism, discipleship, togetherness and community engagement. It has a particular concern for young people and wishes to develop the church as a Community Church Centre, providing various counselling services including debt management and drug abuse support.

The whole project cost is forecast to exceed £170,000 with the balance of funding from grants awarded and local fund raising efforts.

The Working Group considered the application and recommended that it be deferred for further information about the planned works and funding arrangements.

9. 1st Gornal Girls Brigade

An application in the sum of £425 was received from the above to purchase a photocopier to improve general administration and communications such as production of letters, activity sheets for badge work and publication of newsletters and promotional literature.

The Girls' Brigade is an international, Christian organisation working alongside girls and young women of all backgrounds to develop skills, friendship and citizenship through fun, interesting and challenging activities.

The Working Group supported the application and recommend that the Area Committee approve the sum of £425.

10. Summerhill Community Association

An application in the sum of £1,600 was received from the above for replacement windows to the front of premises (this is the first stage of a wider window replacement plan for the whole building)

The organisation promote and facilitate learning and social activities for all local inter generational groups. The venue is also used as a polling station, for ward

councillor meetings, neighbourhood watch meetings and is available for private function hire.

The Working Group considered the application and recommended that it be deferred for further information about the terms and conditions of the lease agreement with Dudley MBC.

11. Community Transport Dudley (CTD)

An application in the sum of £1,000 was received from the above to purchase a second hand minibus; the full cost of the purchase is estimated to be £5,000 with the balance of funding being sought from each of the other Area Committee allocations.

CTD is a not for profit organisation that helps vulnerable groups across the Borough access low cost transport solutions. It is a preferred DMBC partner in awarding contracts for children and adult services; groups such as Age Concern, Parkinsons Disease Society, Beacon Blind and many others from across all backgrounds currently benefit from the scheme.

The organisation is one of several Midland branches of a wider charity operating 11 projects throughout the country. CTD started in 1990 and has since developed considerably, partly due to a previous Council grant of £200,000 through the Local Transport Plan. The scheme also benefits annually from Council support in excess of £60,000 p.a. to assist the administration.

The service is hampered by its ageing vehicle fleet and high maintenance costs, and, in order to sustain the scheme and attract further contract work, need to update its fleet of minibuses. They estimate that to fully modernise their service would cost approximately £200,000.

Following consideration by the Working Group it was agreed to recommend to the Area Committee that the application be refused.

12. Sedgley Councillors

An application in the sum of £1,500 was received from the above to make provision for lighting 'switch' gear at Tenscore Playing Field.

This will provide improved local control of illumination, enabling lights to be turned off at certain times and discourage this particular location serving as a meeting place late at night.

It is anticipated that works would be undertaken by the Council's Directorate of Urban Environment.

The Working Group supported the application and recommend that the Area Committee approve the sum of £1,500.

13. Time Expired Grants

There are currently three capital allocations that have exceeded the agreed timeframe within which an organisation is expected to claim the grant:

- Off road parking (Dudley Road); awarded £12,075

- o Christmas Lights 2008 (Sedgley); awarded £5,000
- o Baggeridge Social Club; awarded £1,600

The Working Group considered each of the above awards and recommend that the Area Committee approve:

- o that payment to DUE is released as soon as possible on finalisation of off road parking, Dudley Road (works are believed to be near to completion)
- o that the grant for Christmas Lights 2008 is considered lapsed and £5,000 is returned to the capital allocations fund
- o that any decision re. Baggeridge Social Club is deferred for confirmation of status of works.

Finance

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

15. 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
Undistributed balance 09/10 brought forward	<u>25,437</u>	<u>33,775</u>	<u>20,805</u>	<u>11,788</u>	<u>91,805</u>
New allocation for 09/10	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	40,000
Awarded 09/10:					
April 09	(8,322)	(1,285)	(7,988)	(1,552)	(19,147)
June 09	(791)				(791)
Undistributed balance	<u>26,324</u>	<u>42,490</u>	<u>22,817</u>	<u>20,236</u>	<u>111,867</u>
Grants awarded but unpaid					<u>29,920</u>
Grants paid 09-10					<u>10,213</u>
Total					152,000
Authorised capital budget					152,000
For consideration at this meeting:					
Grants	(11,539)	(5,454)	(8,175)	(9,500)	(34,668)
Return – time expired etc		12,075	1,600	5,000	18,675

16. An approved capital budget of £152,000 is available for 2009/10

The undistributed balance is currently £111,867. The recommendations in this report would reduce the balance by £1,925 if approved being:

- o Award grants totalling £6,925
- o Return of £5,000 re lapsed awards for redistribution

Law


17. Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000, enables the Council to do anything which it considers is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well being of the Borough or any part of it.

Equality Impact

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

Recommendation

19. It is recommended that the proposals set out at paragraphs 4 to 13 be ratified.



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Appendix A

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.