

CENTRAL DUDLEY AREA COMMITTEE

CAPITAL ALLOCATIONS WORKING GROUP

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE AREA COMMITTEE – 24 January 2005

Summary of new Applications by Ward

CASTLE & PRIORY WARD

1. West Midlands Police - Dudley Office

The recommendation is that this agency be awarded a capital grant of **£1,200.00** to purchase 2 mountain bikes, safety equipment and protective clothing.

NETHERTON, WOODSIDE & ST ANDREW'S WARD

2. New Testament Welfare Association – Holly Hall

The recommendation is that this Association be awarded a capital grant of **£3760.00** to contribute to the refurbishment of the toilet facilities including the installation of disabled toilets.

ST THOMAS'S WARD

3. Black Carer's Group – Claughton Youth & Community Centre

The recommendation is that this Group be awarded a capital grant of **£2,000.00** to contribute to the purchase of new kitchen equipment for the Centre.

4. Oscar Dudley – St Thomas's Network

The recommendation is that this Group be awarded a capital grant of **£2,000.00** to contribute to the purchase of new computer equipment.

5. Friends of Green Park

The recommendation is that the application from this Group be deferred to the next meeting of the Working Group. Councillor John Davies who is the representative of St. Thomas's Ward also attends the meetings of the Friends of Green Park and therefore considered it inappropriate to discuss the matter.

6. Hellier Street Youth & Community Association

The recommendation is that this application be deferred until the necessary financial information, as has been requested, has been made available.

7. Re-Consideration of the Criteria for Capital Funding

- This particular criteria is the general policy of allowing £2,000 per organization per year, as a normal maximum amount. The Committee asked the Capital Allocations Working Group to re-consider this.
- The original object of this policy was to ensure widespread community benefit by enabling as many organizations as possible in a particular Ward to obtain capital grants, from the Ward funds available.
- This policy has been a guideline only and has never been slavishly followed. The £2,000 “maximum” has often been exceeded, as determined by the Members, since these capital grants are entirely at the discretion of the Committee.
- However, the policy has sometimes had a restrictive effect in Wards where there were few applications for capital funding, allowing that Ward’s capital budget to accumulate year on year, as the funds remained unused.

Recommendation:

The recommendation is that this policy be amended to take into account the fact that different Wards can often experience differences in the frequency and size of capital grant applications. Therefore a more flexible approach should be taken in determining whether or not the £2,000 maximum is appropriate in each circumstance.

That is, it becomes dependant upon the particular situation in any Ward at any one time.

NETHERTON, WOODSIDE & ST ANDREW’S

8. Netherton Woodside Partnership

- In re-considering the amount criteria, the Working Group agreed to re-consider the application from Netherton Woodside Partnership for an extra £12,000 in addition to the £8,000 already awarded, to fund a gardening and decorating project across the Ward.
- The Members expressed the view that Netherton, Woodside and St Andrew’s Ward could be treated as a special case, without any precedent being established. This was because few community or voluntary sector organizations operated within the Ward, with the result that demand for capital grants from the Committee funds was disproportionately low. In addition, social and economic deprivation in the area was high, meaning that capital investment into the Ward was particularly important.

- The Members also commented that if an additional allocation of funds were made, the organization would require significant ongoing revenue funds to maintain its operation. The full financial position of the Partnership was unclear at this time and if the revenue funding were insufficient, any additional capital funding could not be fully utilised.

Recommendation :

The recommendation is that, subject to the submission of satisfactory evidence showing that sufficient revenue funds are available to properly utilise the additional capital funding, a further allocation of **£12,000.00** be made to the Netherton Woodside Partnership.