
Halesowen Area Committee – 22nd November 2006

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 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. Lapal Scout Group

An application has been received from the Scout Group for funding towards the cost of replacing their minibus amounting to around £14,000.

Having consulted with colleagues who are supportive of the proposal, I am recommending a grant of £5,000 be approved in principle, subject to the Group being able to fund the remaining cost of the minibus of around £9,000.

4. Lighthouse Project – Over 50s Club

An application has been received from the Over 50s Club for funding towards the cost of providing comfortable chairs for use at the Centre and a 10 litre water boiler, amounting to just under £1,880. The general aims of the Club are to bring together elderly and lonely people in the Area in a friendly and sociable atmosphere to provide entertainment, social interaction and support. There are currently 52 members. This is a group which seems worthy of support, and I am recommending the Committee approve a grant in principle of up to £1,000, subject to confirmation that the chairs and water boiler would be for the sole use of the over 50s club.

5. Beeches Youth Group

A request for funding has been received from the Beeches Youth Group, a member of the Caslon Community Partnership for funding towards the purchase of resources for the Group in order that a variety of activities/events can be planned and undertaken. The sum requested amounts to just under £2,000.00 for items such as board games, craft equipment and other IT/electrical equipment (some of which is not capital expenditure).

During the summer holidays, some local volunteers began to organise events, mainly of an outdoor nature and the response was excellent. They are now seeking to maintain the momentum and would like to offer the youngsters a variety of indoor activities over the winter months. This will help to keep the youngsters off the streets, where they are supervised in a caring and safe environment and given interesting and challenging activities to participate in.

Having consulted with colleagues, who support the application, I am recommending a grant of £1,500.

6. Bench in Peckingham Street

The Town Centre Manager reports that several requests have been received from retailers and the public for a bench to be installed at the top of Peckingham Street. The cost of an appropriate bench, to compliment other street furniture in the area, would be just under £2,300. The Committee has previously earmarked funds for the Town Centre and the cost of the bench, which I am recommending should be funded, could be met from this allocation.

7. Lutley Mill

Some time ago I received a request for funding from the owners of Lutley Mill towards the cost of improving public access facilities at the Mill. Consideration of a planning application was pending and, following discussions with colleagues and the Chairman. I notified the owners that it would not be appropriate to consider their funding application until the planning application had been determined. This has now been agreed and officers can now give further consideration to the request of funding.

In view of the time until the next meeting, I am recommending the Committee authorise me, in consultation with the Chairman and Councillor Body, to consider the request from the owners of Lutley Mill up to a maximum of £5,000.

8. Halesowen Lighthouse Project

Since 2002 the Lighthouse Project has, in conjunction, with Halesowen College, run Information Technology training courses for local people. I was approached by the Lighthouse Project in late August to the effect that, because Learning and Skills Council Funding to the college had been reduced, the college had indicated they would no longer be able to support the Lighthouse Project. A subsequent written communication from the college suggested this would not apply to the services provided by the Halesowen Lighthouse.

However, I have now been contacted again by the Lighthouse to say that the college will no longer make available free education and training to all members of the community who come to the Lighthouse and to ask if the Area Committee would be able to help.

At the time of writing I have not been able to consider the detailed issues, including discussions with the college, and therefore need more time to frame a recommendation. In the circumstances, therefore, I am recommending the Committee authorise me, in consultation of the Chairman and Councillor Body, to consider this request and, if appropriate agree support up to a maximum of £5,000.

9. Halesowen Chamber of Trade

At the meeting on 12th September 2006, the Committee authorised me, in consultation with the Chairman and Councillor Body to consider the request for funding for Christmas lights. Following the receipt of further information I have agreed, in consultation with the Chairman and Councillor Body, a grant of £2,500.

Finance

10. The total available for distribution in 2006/07 was £83,700, with £40,707 worth of allocations being approved/earmarked to date this year and the recommendations in this report will result in the following allocations:-

	£
<u>Recommended for approval:-</u>	
Lapal Scout Group (in principle)	5,000
Over 50s Club – Lighthouse Project up to	1,000
Beeches Youth Group	1,500
Bench in Peckingham Street	2,300
<u>Grants approved through delegated arrangements:-</u>	
Halesowen Chamber of Trade	2,500
Lutley Mill	5,000
(subject to further consideration)	
Halesowen Lighthouse Project	5,000
(subject to further consideration)	
Total	22,300

leaving £20,693 available for the remainder of the year.

Law

11. The Committee may incur capital expenditure in respect of the various statutory functions of the Council.
12. 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

13. 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

14. It is proposed that the Area Committee:-
- (a) approves, in principle, a grant of £5,000 to the Lapal Scout Group towards a replacement minibus;

- (b) approves in principle a grant of up to £1,000 to the Over 50s Club at the Lighthouse Project, towards the cost of replacement chairs and water boiler, subject to confirmation that the items would be for the sole use of the over 50's club;
- (c) approves a grant of £1,500 to the Beeches Youth Group towards the cost of various resources in order that a variety of activities/events can be planned and implemented;
- (d) approves an allocation of £2,300 for the provision of a bench in Peckingham Street.
- (e) notes my action, in consultation with the Chairman and Councillor Body, in approving a grant of £2,500 to the Halesowen Chamber of Trade towards the cost of Christmas lights for the Town Centre;
- (f) authorises me in consultation with the Chairman and Councillor Body, to consider requests for funding from the owners of Lutley Mill and the Halesowen Lighthouse Project, in both cases up to maximum of £5,000



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Mike Williams

Area Liaison Officer

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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*).