

Halesowen Area Committee – 12th March 2008

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. 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.

Overend Methodist Mission – Youth Club

3. The Mission has applied for funding to buy equipment for a recently started Youth Club for young people aged 11 to 16 years, meeting on Friday evenings. The Club began in September and attendance has increased to a weekly average of around 24 young people.
4. The Group has requested funding amounting to £1,000 for various games and equipment, such as Table Football, Air Hockey.
5. Having consulted with colleagues, who support the application, I have, in consultation with the Chairman and Opposition Spokesperson, approved a grant of £1,000.00.

Time Out – Shortcross Methodist Church

6. An application has been received from "Time Out", a group who meet at Shortcross Methodist Church. The Group meets once a fortnight for a few hours and it gives housebound and lonely people a chance to meet with each other for a chat, play games and refreshments.

7. The Group has requested funding for new catering equipment amounting to £200.00. I have, therefore, in consultation with the Chairman and Opposition Spokesperson, approved a grant of £200.00.

Dudley Life Skills Partnership via Barnados Dudley Community ROUTES

8. With the active involvement from West Midlands Police via Police Community Support Officers and local youth provision, the Dudley Life Skills Partnership consist of delivering citizenship, leisure themed and group work activities in the Cradley area to divert young people from youth crime and anti-social behaviour.
9. The Partnership have requested funding towards sports equipment and IT educational software along with equipment suitable to enhance interactive groupwork activities, amounting to just over £1,912.
10. Young people participating in the activities will be engaged in an identified number of anti-social behaviour and youth crime prevention themed workshops organised by West Midlands Police, West Midlands Fire Service and youth advisory agencies to encourage positive citizenship and social responsibility, including highlighting the cause and consequences of their behaviour upon the community.
11. Having consulted with colleagues, who support their application, I am recommending a grant of £1,912 be approved.

Friends of Leasowes

12. A request for funding has been received from the Friends of the Leasowes Park to establish reed beds alongside the conservation area on Priors Pool for the benefit of water fowl and to prevent further erosion of the banks.
13. The Committee, in 2005/06, approved a grant to renovate and improve existing visitor facilities in the Park, which I understand is still progressing.
14. The amount requested is £5,000. Having consulted with colleagues, who support the application, I am recommending approval to the request.

Caslon Parent, Teacher and Friends Association – Allotment

15. An application has been received to make an area of the school field into an allotment, incorporating a polytunnel, metal shed for gardening equipment, raised beds for the growing of vegetables and fruits, a wormery, water butts and cold frame. They also wish to make the pathways wheelchair friendly on one level. Once set up, the Gardening Club would then be self sufficient with membership subscriptions and the sale of produce, for children and families associated with the school.

16. Having consulted with colleagues who fully support the application, which will support not only the curriculum, but also enhance the environment of the school and develop extended schools activity for the children concerned, I am recommending the Committee approve a grant of £4,900.

Age Concern

17. Age Concern have contacted me to advise that their mini-bus has recently been stolen. The mini bus is used for the transport of their clients to the centre and for excursions.
18. Their insurers have intimated a settlement of £5,000 and the Charity has now identified a newer, replacement vehicle costing £21,500. They are trying to raise funds towards this cost by charity concerts and the shortfall will be obtained by borrowing from within Age Concern Groups.
19. Under the circumstances, I am therefore recommending a grant of £5,000 be approved.

Finance

20. The total available for distribution in 2007/08 is £68,000. Recommendations in this report will result in the following allocations:-

	£	Ward
<u>Recommended for approval:-</u>		
Dudley Life Skills Partnership	1,912	Cradley & Foxcote and Cradley South
Friends of Leasowes	5,000	All Wards
Caslon PTFA	4,900	Hayley Green and Cradley South
Age Concern	5,000	All Wards
<u>Grants approved through delegated arrangements:-</u>		
Overend Methodist Mission	1,000	Belle Vale
"Time Out"	200	Belle Vale
Total	18,012	

Law

21. The Committee may incur capital expenditure in respect of the various statutory functions of the Council.
22. 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

23. 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

24. It is proposed that the Area Committee:-

- (a) notes the approval of a grant of £1,000 to Overend Methodist Mission for the purchase of new games and equipment for use by the newly formed Youth Club;
- (b) notes the approval of a grant of £200 to "Time Out" Group towards new catering equipment;
- (c) approves a grant of £1,912 to Dudley Life Skills Partnership towards new sports and IT equipment;
- (d) approves a grant of £5,000 to Friends of Leasowes for reed planting alongside Priory Pool for the benefit of water fowl and to prevent further erosion of the banks;
- (e) approves a grant of £4,900 to Caslon Parent, Teacher and Friends Association for funding to set up an area of the school field into an allotment;
- (f) approves a grant of £5,000 to Age Concern towards the cost of replacing their stolen mini bus.



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Mike Williams
Area Liaison Officer

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Criteria for Bids/Allocations

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 directorates and each proposal is assessed against the following criteria:-

- 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 cost to the Council.
- e. Consideration should be given to schemes that might generate external funding (i.e. using these budgets 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 allocation must normally be claimed within six months.