

Stourbridge Area Committee - 20th November 2006

Report of the Area Liaison Officer

Capital Allocations

Purpose of Report

1. To consider a number of applications for a capital allocation.

Background

2. The Area Committee has an unallocated capital budget of £25,264.41 for 2006/7.
3. 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 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.

4. A copy of the applications referred to in this report are available to Members on request.

Application by Black Country Boating Festivals Ltd

5. An application has been submitted by Black Country Boating Festivals Ltd, PO Box 3375, Stourbridge, in relation to the annual Black Country Boating Festival at Windmill End, Netherton. The applicant has some 10,000 members with 3,000 living in Stourbridge itself.
6. The objectives of the company include educating the public on the safe and enjoyable use of the inland waterways and organising and managing events including the annual Black Country Boating Festival. The Festival attracts visitors from the local area as well as charities from the community who bring stalls to raise money and the profile of the charities in the area.
7. The company is applying for a capital allocation of £5,000 towards the purchase of containers for storage; the provision of concrete bases for the containers; an alarm system for the containers; the purchase of tables and chairs; and the replacement of various items of equipment that do not comply with current regulations on health and safety. The total cost of the project is £9,712.50 with the balance being provided by donations and the reserves of the company. The Balance Sheet for the company as at the 28th February 2006 showed net current assets (i.e. cash at bank) of £6,594 and in the year 2005/6 the company made a net profit of £3,392.
8. The Committee is asked to consider whether this application satisfies the criteria set out in paragraph 3 above and, in particular, paragraph 3(c).

Application by Oldswinford St Mary's Cricket Club

9. An application has been submitted by Oldswinford St Mary's Cricket Club who are based at the Bigmoor Playing Fields, Albermarle Road, Norton. The Club currently has 128 members of whom 78 live in Stourbridge.
10. The Club is applying for a capital allocation of £5,000 towards the cost of realigning the net practice areas with new bases, providing side and overhead netting and new matting surfaces; providing new security rear doors for the pavilion; and the purchase of a new motor mower. The total cost of this project is £6,894.85 and the balance will be provided by the Club or its members.
11. The latest accounts for the Club to the 30th September 2005 show that in 2004/5 the Club made a net profit of £1,706 with net current assets of £5,591.
12. The application appears to satisfy the criteria set out paragraph 3 above.

Application by the Black Country Bowls Club

13. The Black Country Bowls Club and the Crystal Bowls Club are situated at Stevens Park in Wollescote. The aims of the organisation are to provide an organised focus for the pursuit and enjoyment of the game of flat green bowls,

both socially and competitively, for all ages and without discrimination of any description.

14. The application is for an allocation of £5,000 towards the cost of purchasing and installing an automatic water irrigation system for the bowling green in Stevens Park. At the present time there is no access to any kind of water supply and the existing water supply pressure to the park is too low and too costly to improve. The lack of a sprinkler system is adversely affecting the playability of the green and is in danger of damaging the playing surface but more importantly it could cause irreparable damage to the subsoil base. The proposal has the support of the Directorate of the Urban Environment.
15. The total cost of the work is in the region of £6,300 (excluding VAT) and the applicant has indicated that the balance would be payable from the Clubs' funds. The latest accounts for the Black Country Bowls Club shows Accumulated Funds at the 28th February 2006 of £12,630 whilst the accounts for the Crystal Bowls Club up to September 2005 show a cash balance of just under £6,000.
16. This application appears to satisfy the criteria set out in paragraph 3 above.
17. Application by Wollescote St Andrew's Scout Group

An application has been submitted by the Wollescote St Andrew's Scout Group who are situated off Queensway in Wollescote in the Pedmore and Stourbridge East ward.
18. The applicant's Scout Hut is a detached brick building that was built in 1982. The building is also used for community meetings. A project has been developed for the refurbishment and alteration of the building, re-equipping the kitchen and providing a disabled toilet.
19. The total cost for this project is £38,100 and the application is for an allocation of £5,000. The applicant has also submitted an application for a grant from the Stevens Trust which is elsewhere on this agenda, as well as Awards For All and the Big Lottery. The applicant will also make use of any available funds from their own budget. Their annual accounts for the year ending 31st December 2005 show a balance of £2,332 with a net deficit of income over expenditure for the year of £1,659.
20. This application appears to satisfy the criteria set out in paragraph 3 above but of course, any allocation approved would be subject to the usual condition that no allocation would be payable until we are satisfied that the balance of funding has been secured.

Finance

21. The Area Committee's delegated budget allocation is funded by the Council's mainstream capital resources. The current position with regard to available resources for 2006/7 is set out in paragraph 2.1 of this report.

Law

22. Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000, enables the Council to do any thing 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

23. This report complies fully with the Council's policies on equal opportunities and diversity. All of the applications involve facilities which are available to children and young people.

Recommendation

24. It is recommended that the Area Committee consider the applications submitted by the Black Country Boating Festivals Ltd, the Oldswinford St.Mary's Cricket Club, the Black Country and Crystal Bowls Clubs and the Wollescote St Andrew's Scout Group.

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List of Background Papers

1. Application submitted by Black Country Boating Festivals Ltd
2. Application submitted by Oldswinford St Mary's Cricket Club
3. Application submitted by the Black Country and Crystal Bowls Clubs
4. Application submitted by the Wollescote St Andrew's Scout Group