

GRANTS COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

25 January 2007

The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond, and Councillor Vic Tumilty.

Officers: Alison Mawson, Head of Community Safety and Protection
Joe Hogan, Crime and Disorder Coordinator
David Cosgrove, Principal Democratic Services Officer

15. Appointment of Chairman

In the absence of the Chair, Councillor Robbie Payne, Councillor Victor Tumilty was appointed Chair for this meeting.

16. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Robbie Payne.

17. Declarations of interest by members

None.

18. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2006

Confirmed.

19. Community Safety Capital Grants Allocations *(Head of Community Safety and Prevention)*

Type of decision

Non-key.

Purpose of report

The report advised Members of applications to the Community Safety Capital Fund and sought approval for the recommended grant awards.

Issue(s) for consideration by the Committee

The Council has decided that its capital budget for 2006/07 would include an allocation £150,000 to implement community safety projects, which are associated with and contribute to Safer Hartlepool Partnership's strategy covering crime, disorder and drugs. Following an overspend of £14,321 in 2005/06; this has been reduced by £135,679. There was slippage of £7,738 in 2005/06 into 2006/07; therefore, the capital budget is £143,417 for 2006/07. The Community Safety Capital Fund in total for 2006/2007 is £143,417. On 22 November 2006, the Grants Committee awarded grants to the total of £42,000 from the Community Safety Capital Fund. This left a total of £101,417 to allocate.

Four applications for grant were reported to Members.

North Cemetery

The cemetery has been highlighted as a problem hotspot for local residents and the local Neighbourhood Policing Team. It has been raised for attention as a priority through North Joint Action Group (JAG). Within the boundary walls of the cemetery is an electricity substation. This is sited several feet from the wall that divides the cemetery itself and Jesmond Mews.

The substation is situated away from the boundary wall allowing easy pedestrian access. This area is frequented by youths, who when accessing this area are out of view from the mews and the cemetery. Many individuals use this area to scale the wall and enter Jesmond Mews either for access or for other reasons. Reports from Police Officers, PCSO's and residents indicate that youths also gather behind the station where they partake in the underage consumption of alcohol and drug taking.

This application is to improve street lighting by providing 6 new lights, in ornate style, to match existing columns, plus fencing works to the electricity substation to make its area more secure. A contribution of £9,500 from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (Neighbourhood Element) (SSCF) has been approved for this project. The total cost of the project will be £19,000.

The running costs of the street lighting and the maintenance costs of the fence will be taken on board by the Council.

Browning Avenue Baptist Church

The application is to seek match funding to erect 1.8 metre high vertical railings to create a safe public space for the use of the local community, community / voluntary groups and church members etc. The installation of the

fence will improve the appearance of the area, as it will prevent vandalism, graffiti (criminal damage), anti-social behaviour (underage drinking and associated litter) and will also maximise the use of the open space. Advice has been sought from the Crime Prevention Officer with regard to the intended works and Planning Permission has been approved.

The Rift House/Burn Valley Forum welcomed an application from Browning Avenue Baptist Church and the Rift House/Burn Valley Forum has approved £4,000.00 towards the proposed work. Total cost of the work: £8,300.00 (Planning Permission has been obtained separately and funded by the organisation). £4000 has been contributed by the Rift House/Burn Valley Forum (NRF Residents Priorities Budget). An application for £300 has been submitted to the Community Safety Grants Pool. This application is to request £4,000 towards the installation of the fence. Browning Avenue Baptist Church will be responsible for the maintenance / upkeep of the fence.

Longhill CCTV Project

This project forms one part of a comprehensive package of projects identified in the ARUP Longhill/Sandgate Industrial Estates Improvement Strategy (Autumn 2002). The Strategy was commissioned by New Deal for Communities (NDC). The purpose of the strategy was to evaluate issues apparent in the Longhill/Sandgate Industrial Estates and make recommendations on how to address these issues. An estate wide CCTV system was recommended in order to combat the high crime rate suffered by the 200+ businesses on the estate.

A specialist feasibility study was subsequently commissioned by the Longhill NDC Management Group in order to investigate a suitable and effective CCTV system for the estate, this study was prepared by Optimum Security. The recommendations from this report underpinned the development of the project.

It is anticipated that a "trap protection" system will be installed which is likely to include up to 13 cameras covering all main vehicular and pedestrian routes in and out of the estate plus key problem areas. The cameras will be actively monitored, by a monitoring company selected through a competitive tender process, at set times (12hrs a day in the week and 24hrs a day at the weekends) and the images produced will be of sufficient quality to be used as evidence in court.

The total cost of the project will be £181,000. A bid for £149,800 to New Deal for Communities has been approved. A sum of £31,200 is being requested from the Community Safety Capital Fund. After the initial 2 years, if successful, the Business Improvement District will fund the continued revenue costs of the project.

Members were concerned that the scheme would have no effect on the Council's own CCTV monitoring facilities. The Head of Community Safety and Protection indicated that it was very clear that the Council has no responsibility for this CCTV scheme, the grant would be a contribution to the capital development costs only.

Milton Road/Tankerville Street CCTV

In 2002, the NDC CCTV project added eleven cameras to the town wide CCTV network. The purchase, installation, and monitoring and maintenance costs of the cameras have to date been completely funded by the NDC Partnership at a cost of £238,630. However an evaluation, and thorough review of the current CCTV system has revealed that in order to improve the effectiveness of the system some of the existing cameras need upgrading. The need for an additional camera at the junction of Milton Road and Tankerville Street has also been identified through consultation with the local community and Hartlepool Police.

This project will upgrade the current system, purchase and install a new camera at the Milton Road/Tankerville Street Junction, and pay for the ongoing monitoring and maintenance costs of all cameras within the system for the next two years.

The total cost of the project is £131,000. New Deal for Communities has contributed £76,000. A sum of £41,000 is being requested from the Community Safety Capital Fund. To complete the project, a further bid for £14,000 to Capital Fund will be submitted in the financial year 2007/08.

Members indicated that they were supportive of the upgrading element of the proposal but had concerns in relation to the new camera to be installed in Tankerville Street. Residents in the area had made it known that they did not feel there was need for the camera. Officers were asked to investigate further the requirement of the installation of the additional CCTV camera.

Decision

1. That the North Cemetery Scheme be supported and grant of £9,500 be approved.
2. That the Browning Avenue Baptist Church Scheme be approved and a grant of £4,000 be approved.
3. That the Longhill CCTV Project be supported and a grant of £31,200 be approved

4. That the upgrading element of the Milton Road/Tankerville Street Scheme be supported and a grant of up to £35,000 be approved.
5. That the proposed additional camera to be installed in Tankerville Street as part of the Milton Road/Tankerville Street Scheme be investigated further by officers, and a report prepared for a future meeting of Grants Committee.

J A BROWN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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