

CAPITAL GRANT APPLICATIONS

FINANCE & PROPERTY ADVISORY BOARD - 7 January 2009 COMMENTS IN RESPECT OF 'SPECIAL CASES'

Dear David

St. James Centre, East Malling

I have been asked to write concerning the above project in the light of the report to the Finance and Property Board Meeting on 7th January 2009.

The Parish Council fully appreciates the financial pressures facing the Borough Council and the decisions taken to withdraw funding for capital schemes for Parish Councils and others for the year 2009/10, except if there were special circumstances.

In respect of the St James Centre the Parish Council would ask that the £25,000 grant should be made in this particular case.

The Parish Council regards this as a very important scheme for East Malling and I confirm the Parish Council already has £5,000 for it set aside in its current 2008/09 Budget and has included £5,000 for 2009/10 to make a total contribution of £10,000.

The Parish Council supports the view expressed by the Community Partnerships Officer that the centre would provide a much needed local resource, and in its view would further the work supported by the Borough Council being carried out in East Malling.

The scheme includes the operation of a Childrens Centre for educational uses, and the £25,000 grant from the Borough plus the £10,000 from this Council would secure £50,000 from the County Council.

The Parish Council fears if the grant is not made the project may be still born after several years of work by all involved to get to this point where it is just about to be realised.

The Council therefore would ask that a special case should be made in this instance and would ask that the £25,000 grant be made.

Yours sincerely

Val Severn

Clerk to East Malling & Larkfield Parish Council

Dear Mr Hughes,

Special Works Grants

I understand the SWG will be considered next week and would like to offer the following comments.

In my view the application from St James Centre should take precedence over all others. I say this because the lack of grant from TMBC would mean the loss of the KCC funding, and also because alone of all the projects the St James Centre will provide facilities for the whole community, which, as your council will be aware, is one of the most deprived communities in the Borough.

The range of activities to be made available in the centre is targetted to address the issues of low skills, low aspirations and benefit dependency which are likely to be even more pronounced in a time of recession. Since the County Council has agreed to make the building available at nil cost and a strong Steering Group has been working for two years on plans to adapt the building to become self sufficient it would be a severe blow to the community if the project could not go ahead.

On the subject of WMPC's application, Cllrs Luker and Luck can be reassured that the cost of the project is indeed the result of a competitive tender. It is comparatively high because the equipment is intended for the use of older children and the existing equipment has already been removed as it was declared unsafe.

Yours sincerely

Trudy Dean

County Cllr Malling Central

Member Steering Group St James Centre

Chairman West Malling Parish Council