

# BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

North Area Council Meeting:  
15<sup>th</sup> May 2017

Agenda Item: 10

Report of North Area Council  
Manager

## Anti-Poverty Outreach Provision Contact – Decision to Tender

### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report provides the Area Council with an detailed specification of requirements for the North Area in relation to the Anti-Poverty Outreach Services ongoing provision.

### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1. **The Area Council is asked to approve the specification to enable procurement to take place during June and July to ensure seamless service delivery.**

### 3. Background

- 3.0 The Anti-Poverty Community Outreach Project commenced on the 14<sup>th</sup> September 2015. This is a one year (plus one year) contract valued at £149,000 over two years. Due to run until September 2017.
- 3.1 At the February 2017 Steering Group meeting with the provider explained that the outreach advisors are now at full capacity. The provision has been far more popular than anyone could have envisaged. In the first quarter of year two alone the outreach service has supported 245 clients and their outputs for service users are impressive.
- 3.2 The Area Council agreed in March to increase provision and vary the existing contract to accommodate a 5<sup>th</sup> outreach service each week for the remaining six months of the current contract. This is at a cost of approximately £13,968.
- 3.3 However the existing contract expires on the 13<sup>th</sup> September and the Area Council has indicated that it wishes to continue the service provision for the foreseeable future.
- 3.4 A revised specification has been drawn up to meet the current requirements and include the recommendations of the Steering Group.

### 4. Recommendation

- 4.1. The Steering Group have indicated that they wish the service to continue on the basis of one outreach session per week in each ward.

- 4.2. They have also identified that the service is not easily accessible for people who work regular office hours. The intention is to deliver the 5<sup>th</sup> outreach session as a twilight service.

## **5. Financial Implication**

- 5.1. The existing contract for four sessions per week is valued at approximately £72,500 per annum. The revised specification anticipates that running 5 sessions per week will increase the value of the contract to approximately £95,000 per annum.

## **6. Procurement Advice**

- 6.1. The Category Manager responsible for wellbeing procurement has advised that if a similar service is to continue to be available in the North Area beyond September 17, this should be go through full procurement in adequate time to tie in with the existing contract.
- 6.2. It is recommended that this contract should be let for 2 years with a 1 year extension.

## **7. Item for Decision**

- 7.1. Members are asked to consider the revised specification Appendix 1 and indicate if they are in agreement with the point 5 through 7.
- 7.2. The Area Council are asked to decide if they wish to procure a service that will deliver an outreach provision beyond September 2017. To offer 5 out reaches per week per annum would cost approximately £95,000.00 per annum. This could equate to £300,000.00 over three years.

## **8. Risks**

- 8.1. If the service is continued to for a further 3 years this would have meant that the Area Council will have funded the service for 5 years and this make lead to dependency both form the community and other services.
- 8.2. The North provision may become inundated as core BMBC services continue to be reduced. This will need to be closely monitored by the provider and Steering Group.

**Officer Contact:**  
Rosie Adams

**Tel. No:**  
01226 773583

**Date:**  
28<sup>th</sup> April 2017

## Appendix 1:

### SECTION 1

#### PROJECT OVERVIEW AND SCOPE OF SERVICE

##### 1. INTRODUCTION

The North Area Council (comprising of electoral wards Darton East, Darton West, Old Town and St. Helens) wants to recommission its highly successful and well used information and advice services, which have been delivered in a range of community venues across the North Area since September 2015.

Based on strong evidence of continuing local need, the provider/s will need to continue to offer the full range of welfare rights and advice services for local people as outlined in detail in Section 6. The appointed provider/s must demonstrate high levels of skill and experience in delivering the following face to face information and advice services to a universal locally based client group:

- Helping local people to maximise their income through claiming of the full range of in- work, out of work and disability related benefits and pensions
- Supporting local people with a range of issues including unmanageable debt, housing and homelessness, employment, legal and relationship problems
- Supporting local people to cope with the challenges of continuing welfare reform and the impacts of austerity
- Full referral and signposting to a range of specialist and/or other local services where appropriate
- Active ongoing promotion of the services offered to the wider community through networking with community groups and partner organisations and through the use of social media, particularly where certain groups are not using the service offered
- Provision of regular information briefings for practitioners and community groups regarding major changes in policy or welfare delivery – for example, the move to introduce Universal Credit for all new claimants.

For full details of the services required, please refer to point 6 within this section.

Working alongside the North Area Council Manager who will manage the contract, the provider/s will ensure that the services offered in the North Area fully align with and complement the borough-wide universal services offered by Barnsley Citizens Advice Bureau and the BMBC Welfare Rights Service, newly established Public Service Hubs and the other services commissioned by the North Area Council.

In developing and delivering this service, the providers should ensure that they are contributing to the Council's Corporate Priorities and outcome statements, as outlined in Section 1, Point 4 of this specification.

The service delivered will be required to demonstrate high levels of social value through contributing to building the resilience and self-reliance of individuals to manage their own lives and the challenges they are faced with, as outlined in Section 1, Point 5.

## 2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The initial need for locally based advice and information services was first identified by the North Area Council in 2014, when it became apparent from ward based data showed a huge increase in the demand for borough-wide welfare rights and citizen's advice amongst people living in the North Area. Further investigation showed that this was due to a number of changing factors, including:

- An increase in unemployment and under-employment across the Area leaving larger number of people reliant on particularly in-work benefits
- The migration of clients from Incapacity Benefit to Employment Support Allowance and from Disability Living Allowance to Personal Independence Payments.
- The introduction of the 'Bedroom Tax'
- The move to housing payments made monthly direct to tenants
- The need for those on Housing Benefit (80% of who are in low paid work nationally) to contribute towards their housing and Council Tax costs
- A massive increase in those having their benefits sanctioned

This has led to a number of issues, including:

- A growing number of housing related enquiries around the risk of homelessness.
- A continued growth in clients seeking help with unmanageable levels of debt,
- Increasing numbers of clients with poor money management skills combined with a lack of resources within support organisations to offer support early on to prevent people reaching crisis point
- The unknown impact of the introduction of Universal Credit and a move to all applications for in and out of work benefits (including pension related) to be completed online, as well as the continuing impact of direct housing payments to tenants.

### Evidence of issues within the North Area:

These national and borough-wide issues are heavily reflected in the statistics from the existing North Area Council contract delivered by Barnsley Citizen's Advice Bureau and DIAL Barnsley, which found that in the first years delivery period September 2015-2016:

- 1,058 client contacts were made
- 10 cases of homelessness were prevented
- Local people presented with over £239,700 of debt which they could no longer manage and which required the negotiation of a formal financial settlement
- Local people were supported to claim in excess of £1,442,000 benefits to which they did not know they were entitled
- Over 125 specialist referrals were required to help with the issues presented by local people, including solicitors, homeless organisations & housing providers, and a range of benefit agencies

The combined impact of these issues requires the delivery of specialist services which:

- Provide universal access to good quality welfare rights and advice support delivered in appropriate community venues.

The provider/s should be skilled and experienced in all areas of information and advice outlined in Sections 1 and 2 of this specification, but should be able to demonstrate particularly high levels of expertise in the following areas:

- Support to claim in-work benefits and associated benefits for those in low paid and/or part time work, including support to claim as a result of changes in personal circumstances
- Support to claim disability benefits and to manage the challenges presented by the reassessment processes associated with ESA, PIP etc.
- Support to those presenting with unmanageable debt and the negotiation of formal financial settlements with a range of creditors
- Support people to feel that they have choice over the decisions they make, and provides access to support with money management training and/or Credit Union facilities where needed
- Provide signposting and referral to a wide range of local and borough-wide support services, ranging from specialist advice (for example, Macmillan Advisers, SISWO support, Coalfield Regeneration or job search help) to other support provision (for example, Food Banks, support from local groups) where required
- To work collaboratively with the Community Shop based in Athersley to ensure the Community Hub provision is well utilised
- Help to identify gaps in provision and work actively with the North Area Council to look at ways to tackle this
- Provide information in a range of accessible formats, including online, face to face, printed information
- Offer a range of support from intensive face-to-face for the most vulnerable clients through to the encouragement of self-help or partial self-help for those able to help themselves

### 3. STRATEGIC VISION AND VALUES

In its Corporate Plan for 2017 – 20, Barnsley Council has identified its overall vision as:

“Working together for a brighter future, a better Barnsley”

As an organisation, our values are:

#### We're A Team:

- We work as “One Council” to do the best that we can for our customers
- We build partnerships and work with others to achieve the best for Barnsley
- We are understanding and supportive of others, respecting and valuing differences

#### We're Honest:

- We are open and honest about what we are able to achieve, the decisions we make and how well we are doing
- We are true to our word, reliable and fair
- We are responsible and accountable for our actions

#### We'll Be Excellent:

- We are committed to quality and value for money
- We learn from our successes and mistakes
- We are flexible, adaptable and respond positively to change

#### We're Proud:

- We are proud of the work we do and services we deliver
- We are proud to support our communities to make Barnsley a better place
- We are proud of our achievements

#### 4.0 COUNCIL PRIORITIES AND OUTCOME STATEMENTS

The advice services delivered should work to support the delivery of the BMBC Corporate Priorities outlined below. In addition, the services should contribute actively to the outcomes of the 2017/18 Stronger Communities Business Plan outlined at section 4.1.

<b>BMBC Corporate Priorities and outcome statements</b> <i>In developing and delivering this service, the provider should ensure that it is contributing to the Council's Corporate priorities and outcome statements as outlined below.</i>	
Thriving and Vibrant Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create more &amp; better jobs and good business growth</li><li>• Increase skills to get more people working</li><li>• Develop a vibrant town centre</li><li>• Strengthen our visitor economy</li><li>• Create more &amp; better housing</li></ul>
People Achieving Their Potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Every child attends a good school and is successful in learning &amp; work</li><li>• Reducing demand through improving access to early help</li><li>• Children &amp; adults are safe from harm</li><li>• People are healthier, happier, independent &amp; active</li></ul>

Strong & Resilient Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People volunteering &amp; contributing towards stronger communities</li> <li>• Protecting the borough for future generations</li> <li>• Customers can contact us more easily and use more services online</li> </ul>

4.1 The service should actively contribute to the following Stronger Communities Service outcomes:

<b>Stronger Communities Service outcomes for 2017/18</b>	
Thriving and Vibrant Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area Commissioning arrangements with strong social value principles</li> <li>• Aim to ensure the funding remains in Barnsley</li> <li>• Strengthening the voluntary and community sector to be able to attract more external funding</li> <li>• Commissioning initiatives specifically to support the economy</li> <li>• Recognising the financial value of volunteering &amp; the economic capital of volunteering</li> <li>• Leading the Principal Towns programme of investment</li> </ul>
People Achieving Their Potential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable community capacity building and a greater voice for citizens</li> <li>• Volunteering as a route to achieving individual potential</li> <li>• Parks and open spaces to provide a proven health benefit for individuals and communities</li> <li>• Providing training and support for our volunteers</li> </ul>
Strong & Resilient Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work together as partners with communities to share leadership for building stronger, more able &amp; more resilient communities</li> <li>• Work together alongside residents &amp; communities, recognising &amp; building on their strengths &amp; contributions, to inform as well as deliver our services</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play our part in seeking out &amp; developing new relationships, and working together to strengthen &amp; develop the sector</li> <li>• Work in partnership to manage &amp; maintain our green spaces and facilities</li> </ul>
--	--

## 5. SPECIFIC AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SERVICE

The North Area Council currently has four local priorities, against which it commissions a range of interventions and projects. These are:

- Opportunities for young people
- Health and Wellbeing
- Anti-Poverty
- Environmental Improvement
- Economic Regeneration

As part of its priorities around anti-poverty and economic regeneration, the Area Council chose to tackle the issues around debt and lack of financial support identified in Section 1 Point 2.

As such, this contract seeks a provider/s to contribute to:

- a) the reduction of poverty in the North Area and
- b) the increase in mental and physical wellbeing in the North Area by supporting people to:
  - Maximise the in and out of work benefits they are entitled to
  - Manage their debts more effectively
  - Access other specialist help they may need to manage the issues they have
  - Access help to find work and/or training
  - Access help around more effective money management, to avoid falling back into a spiral of repeated debt
  - Find out more about the help available to them locally and borough-wide
  - Learn how to help themselves and become more resilient in the future

Ensure that people in the North Area are getting the maximum usage from help and support available locally and borough-wide by:

- Referral and signposting to encourage people to take up all available help which will benefit their personal circumstances and increase their independence
- Working with local organisations and community groups (including the 4 North Ward Alliances) to ensure that the contracted information and advice services and its partner support organisations are appropriately and strongly promoted across the Area

## Social Value objectives:

Under this contract the provider/s will be required to actively contribute to the achievement of specific social value objectives. These include:

- Recruitment and deployment of volunteers where appropriate
- Promotion of employment, education & training opportunities within the Area
- Use of local VCS organisations and groups
- Contribution to the development of strong community networks
- The promotion of community and individual self-help and the growth of resilience
- Local spend wherever possible and contribution to the local economy

## 6. THE SERVICE/ACTIVITIES TO BE DELIVERED

The contracted service will use a range of local venues to provide the full range of advice and information outlined in this specification to local people across the North Area, by offering:

- The full range of Welfare Rights issues, including encouraging the full maximising of in and out of work benefit claims
- Information and advice around the impact of Welfare Reforms, including support and/or representation at appeals and tribunals
- Debt counselling and the agreement of formal financial settlements with creditors
- Issues related to health, employment, education, travel etc.
- Housing related issues, including support to avoid homelessness
- Financial, consumer/utilities and legal issues
- Signposting and referral to other specialist provision, including specialist support, training, employability/job-search, Credit Union & money management

This will require the employment of staff to continue to provide a fully qualified and experienced outreach team to be deployed across the North Area, offering a series of regular 'slots' of face-to-face advice delivered in easily accessible buildings across each ward.

The venues utilised for this provision in the North for the first two year of the contract have worked well and included Mapplewell Village Hall, The Darton Centre, Emmanuel Church and the Roundhouse Lifelong Learning Centre. The venues are not all BMBC managed, so **it is the responsibility of the provider to negotiate the hire of outreach provision space, including the costs associated with this requirement.**

The provider must deliver **at least one day per week face-to-face service to each ward** within the Area, although this may be altered during the lifetime of the contract in response to evidenced change in local need.

This delivery should comprise **at least one half day per week per ward of Welfare Rights advice and at least one half day per week per ward of Advice work. In addition at least one weekly twilight/evening session will be provided** to enable access to those in full time work, although this can be delivered in one of the wards only. The twilight session may be rotated between venues, although the provider is requested to give consideration to natural footfall and the health and safety of advisers.

The service should continue to be offered in the same venues and at the same times as delivered by the existing contract where possible (please refer to the schedule below) and provider/s will need to clearly state reasons for any alterations, since these sessions are already well known and widely promoted throughout the North Area.

Ward	Venue	Day	Time
Darton East	Mapplewell Library, Darton Lane	Wednesday	1pm-5pm
Darton East	(Commenced May 2017) Staincross Methodist Church, Blacker Road	Monday	9am-1pm
Darton West	The Darton Centre, Huddersfield Road, Darton	Thursday	9am-1pm
Old Town	Emmanuel Church, Huddersfield Road, Barnsley	Monday	9am-1pm
St Helens	Roundhouse Life Long Learning Centre, Athersley	Friday	12.30pm- 4.30pm

In addition to the required services listed above, the North Area Council would welcome the introduction of additional formats for work with clients (for example, webchat, use of social media, using volunteers, check and send methodologies) although this should not be offered as a replacement for the face-to-face service outlined above.

All staff used for the delivery of this contract should have a minimum of three years' paid experience in either welfare rights or advice related work which covers the range of issues listed above. They must also be provided with regular specialist supervision, which could be provided either by the employing organisation or 'bought in' by a suitable third party organisation where this is not possible.

## Target Groups

Residents of all ages who live within the Darton East, Darton West, Old Town and St Helen's wards who require the advice and support offered by this contract.

However, the evidence base suggests that although the service offered will be universal, the following target groups are disproportionately more likely to require the services offered:

- People in low paid and/or part time work who are reliant on in-work benefits
- People with mental and physical health problems and/or disabilities
- Older people who are dependent on a state pension but who often do not claim additional related benefits to which they are entitled
- People whose vulnerability would make it unlikely that they could resolve the issues they face without help

## Equality Impacts

The successful Provider will be required to ensure that the service is free from bias and acknowledges and respects gender, sexual orientation, age, race, religion, culture, lifestyle and values. If any needs are required as per the equalities act, such as language or disability, these needs will be provided for during the term of the contract.

## 7. PERFORMANCE MEASURES/OUTPUTS

<i>(Output)</i>	<i>Annual Target if set</i>
Number of unique individuals from North Area seen	900
Number of individual clients seen by ward	Minimum of 15% of clients seen from each of the 4 wards
Number of appeals and mandatory reconsiderations supported	TBC
Overall benefit gain in £	£850,000
Number of financial/debt settlements negotiated	50
Amount of debt managed in £	£250,000
Numbers referred to Credit Union and/or money management support	50
Numbers referred to other specialist provision & organisations used (please identify)	100
Number of clients where homelessness averted	20
Number of clients with declared mental health issues	N/A
Number of clients with declared physical health issues	N/A
Number of clients supported to avoid employment or other tribunal	N/A

Number of clients helped to claim: - In work benefits - Disability or health related benefits - Out of work benefits - Other	N/A
Number of clients enabled to self- help in order to reduce repeat demand	N/A
Number of clients enabled to partially self-help [for example, through a Check & Send service or similar approaches]	N/A
Number of community networking plans produced & implemented	1 joint plan to be produced per quarter
Number of organisations and groups networked with for referral, signposting or take up purposes	50
Client satisfaction survey undertaken	10% random sample of all clients seen
Local spend achieved	90%
<b>(Activity/Action)</b>	<b>(By When)</b>
Approval of tender specification by North Area Council	15/05/17
Tender specification advertised on Yortender	29/05/17 – 30/06/17
Contract awarded	30/06/17
Contract commences	14/09/17
Quarter 1 report Oct – Dec 17 submitted	12/01/18
Quarter 2 report Jan – Mar 18 submitted	12/04/18
Quarter 3 report April – June 18 submitted	12/07/18
Quarter 4 Jul – Sept 18 & end of year 1 report submitted	12/10/18
Quarter 5 report Oct – Dec 18 submitted	12/01/19
Quarter 6 report Jan – Mar 19 submitted	12/04/19
Quarter 7 report April – June 19 submitted	12/07/19
Quarter 8 July – September and end of year 2 report submitted	07/10/19

## 8. PROCUREMENT PROGRAMME (Outline)

The intended timetable is:

Tender approved by North Area Council	15 <sup>th</sup> May 2017
Tender advertised	29 <sup>th</sup> May 2017
Deadline for clarification questions	16 <sup>th</sup> June 2017
Tender applications to be returned	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2017
Evaluation	3 <sup>rd</sup> July – 14 <sup>th</sup> July
Contract awarded	21 <sup>st</sup> July 2017
Service contracts begin	14 <sup>th</sup> September 2017

## 12. CONTRACT VALUE AND CONTRACT DURATION

The estimated cost of this service is £190,000 over a 2 year period (£95,000 per annum) subject to the provider achieving the outputs and monitoring requirements outlined in Section 7. This will cover 5 outreach sessions including one twilight session.

The contract includes the option to extend for a third year of provision based on demand, performance, need and available funding.

This contract figure to be broken down in the pricing schedule:

- The employment of staff to provide service delivery exclusively to this contract. The staff team employed on this contract must be fully qualified and able to demonstrate skills in advice work and in generic welfare rights advice, as outlined in Section 5.
- Venues costs will need to be negotiated for a continuation of service provision and included in the pricing schedule. This should include the following venues:

Mapplewell Library (cost associated with one of the two rooms required)  
The Darton Centre  
Emmanuel Church, Wilthorpe (a charge applies)  
Roundhouse Lifelong Learning Centre

- Promotional costs to support the delivery of advice services. This is anticipated to be minimal because the service is currently well used.

### 13. CONTRACT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

A copy of the proposed Form of Contract for the service is included at Section 4. Please note that each service will be contracted on an individual basis but the Terms and Conditions will be the same.

### 14. CONTRACT MONITORING AND RECORDING REQUIREMENTS

The successful provider/s will be expected to demonstrate the effectiveness of the service in terms of delivering the agreed outcomes, outcome measures and outputs outlined in Point 7 of this section. There is a key requirement of the provider/s to:

- Collect, collate and report on a range of agreed indicators on a quarterly basis (see milestones) as part of a quarterly report. This should also include the submission of 2 case studies (group, individual or illustrating good practice/innovative work).
- Establish compatible systems to ensure effective management and performance management of the service. Information systems must comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act.
- Attend quarterly meetings with the Contract manager to discuss the quarterly report and provide additional information or clarification if required.
- An end of year report to be submitted at the end of the first year (see milestones in Section 1, Point 7)
- An end of Project report and lessons learned to be submitted within 2 months of the project's completion (see milestones in Section 1, Point 7)
- If the service is delivered by multiple providers working together, it is expected that the providers will work together to provide all monitoring information jointly.

15. QUALITY STANDARDS

- The provider of this service has a legal obligation to adhere to all equality legislation. The provider must produce their policy relating to race, gender, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation and age. This policy should include the reporting mechanism for any adverse events which would constitute a deviation. Any and all adverse events should be reported to the Area Service Manager.
- Robust Policies and procedures are to be put in place to ensure Safeguarding of all adults, data protection and Information Governance.

The provider will ensure that:

- All staff are equipped with appropriate training, staff development and supervision
- All staff employed or engaged by the Provider are informed and are aware of the standard of performance that they are required to provide and are able to meet that standard.
- All staff employed or engaged by the Provider must be registered with the appropriate professional body where applicable
- The adherence of the Provider's staff to such standards of performance is routinely monitored and that remedial action is promptly taken where such standards are not met.
- All staff employed or engaged by the Provider are subject to a DBS clearance, where required, and an acceptable outcome determined.
- For the avoidance of doubt, nothing in this specification is intended to prevent the Provider from setting higher quality standards than those laid down in the Contract.

Additionally:

- The provider will have a robust system for monitoring complaints and suggestions; feedback from service users will inform service delivery
- The provider will submit reports summarising any complaints, investigations and remedial actions