

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

South Area Council Meeting:

19th December 2014

Agenda Item: 6c

**Report of South Area Council
Manager.**

**South Area Council priorities & commissioning update
– proposed outline for projects to address the Opportunities for Young People
priority**

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To present to the South Area Council a number of options for progressing projects around its priority of supporting Opportunities for Young People; currently the only one of the four identified priorities which has not yet been tackled.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That the South Area Council receives the report and notes the progress made in terms of developing new projects which support the Opportunities for Young People priority.

2.2 That the South Area Council approves one of the options outlined in Section 5 to enable the development of further commissioning work to take place.

2.3 That the South Area Council approves in principle spending from the Area Council budget to cover the outline costs associated with the agreed option from Section 5.

3. Background

3.1 Since September 2013, the South Area Council has been working to commission projects from its Area Council budgets against the four priorities identified within its Area Plan:

1. Business and the Local Economy
2. Locally available information & guidance
3. Improving our local Environment
4. Opportunities for Young People

3.2 As a result, three projects are currently running & another is currently under development:

- Local business survey to identify support needs of local businesses, which is now completed & will inform further project development as identified in Paper B (to meet Priority 1)
- One Stop Shop Advice sessions (to meet Priority 2)

- Kingdom Enforcement contract (to meet Priority 3)
- Tidy Team contract (to meet primarily Priority 3, but with some impact on Priority 1 through its work with local businesses and the improvement of retail areas)

3.3 During January and February 2014, extensive research was conducted with a view to developing a young people's project to meet Priority 4. The initial plan to support additional apprenticeship provision for local young people was abandoned because the Area Council was advised that monies coming in through the Leeds and Sheffield City Regions would fulfil this need.

3.4 However, although this provision is now in place, the employer placements provided for potential apprentices are often going unfilled because employers are struggling to find young people of the right calibre from the 990 unemployed 18-24 year olds across the borough, with most citing issues with basic skills and/or employability skills. In addition to this, young people are required to demonstrate that they are able to reach a Level 2 in English and Maths in order to be eligible for the programme, which many are not able to do.

3.5 This is also causing problems for the South Area Council Tidy Team, whose contract requires them to recruit 5 apprentices, which the provider (Forge Community Partnership/Anvil CIC) is extremely keen to do. They have been advised by the organisations supporting apprenticeship delivery that they can have only one funded place and will have to pay a substantial proportion of wages costs of any further young people taken on. To compound the problem, they have been sent only one highly unsuitable candidate so far and have been told that it would be problematic for them to recruit their own candidates.

3.6 The above information would suggest that if the South Area Council wants to support the entry of young people into the labour market, it may need to return to its original idea of developing 'pre-apprenticeship' level support of some kind.

3.7 In order to tackle the issue of poor employability skills, the South Area Council may also wish to consider the highly successful Summer Internship Programme commissioned and delivered by North Area Council this year, which sought to tackle these issues before young people leave school. The evaluation report for this project is attached at Appendix 1.

3.8 In addition, if the South Area Council wishes to continue to help Forge Community Partnership/Anvil CIC to recruit and train young people as part of the Tidy Teams, it may be necessary to offer some further financial help from its contingency fund to contribute towards either apprenticeship or lower level training.

3.9 In summary, there are a number of different ways in which the issue of opportunities for young people could be funded, either singly or in combination. Section 5 lays out the options with broadly indicative costings where available.

4. South Area Council funding available:

4.1 In terms of available budgets, the South Area Council currently has £37,907.47 of funding still unallocated in its contingency fund from its 2014/15 funding of £400,000. In addition, because none of the commissioned projects began on April 1st 2014,

there is also £107,117.06 of slippage on the first year of funding (Tidy Team £50,000, Kingdom Enforcement £45,033.72 & One Stop Shop £12,083.34)

4.2 This makes a total of £145,024.53 which is available through either unallocated budgets (agreed contingency fund) or slippage from 2014/15 Area Council funding.

4.3 It should also be considered that any projects large enough to require formal commissioning would be unlikely to start during this financial year, since the Yortender process takes a minimum of four months to complete. This means that the Year 2 Area Council funding (2015/16) is also available. Of this £400,000 allocation, £222,500 has already been allocated for the second year of the Tidy Team and One Stop Shop contracts, leaving a potential £177,500 available for funding other projects.

4.4 Currently, the Kingdom Enforcement contract is funded until March 2015. If the South Area Council wishes to continue this contract for a second year at a cost of £135,000, this reduces the available budget next year to £42,500.

5. Potential options for development:

5.1 There are a number of possible options for development, which could work either singly or in combination. The options are:

Option 1

To commission a **Summer Internship Programme** to boost employability skills in young people leaving Y10 and about to enter Y11. The programme delivered for North Area Council by K&C Careers provided **60 places for 2 weeks of provision at a cost of £45,000**. This provider is keen to offer their services to other Area Councils, although a full tendering process open to all would have to take place if South Area Council wishes to commission this service.

Option 2

To look to fund the wage allowance for 4 apprenticeship or traineeship (for young people at a lower academic level) places to enable Forge Community Partnership/ Anvil CIC to recruit and train local young people on the Tidy Teams

The costs for apprenticeship wages would be approximately **£6,000 per person per year (£24,000 in total)** although it is likely that as a not-for-profit organisation, Forge/ Anvil may qualify for a £1500 subsidy per place, which would reduce the total costs to **£18,000**

The costs for traineeship wages (for a young person with lower academic skills) are still to be confirmed, but would be unlikely to be in excess of those quoted for apprentices and are likely to be cheaper.

Option 3

To look to commission a localised 'pre-apprenticeship' project for young people who would be unlikely to meet the requirements needed to gain an apprenticeship place. This could tie in with existing traineeship provision, which provides off-the-job training but which offers only a short employer placement of 8 weeks.

The costs of this are unknown and would require further investigation if this option is chosen by the South Area Council.

Option 4

There is also an option to agree to fund more than one, and possibly all of these options using the remaining available budget of £145,024.53 in 2013/14 which can be carried forward into next year and a minimum of £42,500 unallocated budget from 2015/16.

6. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Evaluation report for the North Area Council Summer Internship Programme

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