

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

North Area Council Meeting:
14th November 2022

Agenda Item: 5

Report of North Area Council
Manager

Environmental Priority - Future Direction

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To apprise Members of the discussions that took place at a recent workshop which reflected on the current Environmental commissioning and considered future direction of North Area commissioning.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. **Members note the current position, section 4.**
- 2.2. **Members take the opportunity to reflect on the discussion that took place at the workshop 8th November 2022.**
- 2.3. **Members confirm their decision to end the contract with the existing provider at the end of term, 31st March 2023. Reference Section 6**
- 2.4. **Members agree the recommendation that they wish to pursue a task-based schedule of works service and offer the opportunity for tender. Section 5.3**

3. Background

- 3.1. The North Area currently has 5 priorities: Anti-Poverty, Environment, Health and Wellbeing, Economic Regeneration, Young People; plus an overarching priority of Enabling Barnsley.
- 3.2. To address the Environment priority the North Area has historically commissioned a provider to work with the community. "Working in Partnership with Local People to Deliver a Cleaner, Greener North Area" and more latterly "Environmental Education Service".
- 3.3. Contract one was delivered by Forge Community Partnership commenced on the 14th September 2015. This had a two year duration.
- 3.4. The second environmental contract commenced on the 2nd October 2017 at a value of £85,000 per annum. The provider, Twiggs Grounds Maintenance Ltd,

commenced service delivery on the 2nd October 2017. On the 25th March 2019 the Area Council took the decision to utilise the contract extension clause and extend the contract until the end of September 2020.

- 3.5. The current contract was tendered in autumn 2020. Twiggs Grounds Maintenance Ltd secured a two-year contract with the opportunity for a final one-year extension. The contract commenced on 1st April 2021 and is now in it's second year of delivery.

4. Current Position

- 4.1. North Area Councillors have been increasingly frustrated with the current contract. Feeling that some of the detail that they took time to specify in the tender documentation is being overlooked by the provider.

- 4.2. As a result, they questioned: best fit and value for money. Councillors subsequently requested an opportunity to discuss the future options available.

5. Workshop Discussion – 8th November 2022

- 5.1. The workshop was attended by: Cllrs Crisp, Denton, Hunt, T. Cave, Lofts and Leech.

5.2. Reflections

Members were asked what they had appreciated most about the current service:

- Ability to deal with problem areas
- Solution to problems
- Access to resources
- Expertise and Equipment - that volunteers can't bring e.g. hedge cutting
- Horticultural Knowledge
- Support to plant more trees and supporting volunteers to do so
- Cleaning up litter
- Valuable work with SEND learners

- 5.3. Members stated that they wished to move away from a volunteer led model, favouring a defined schedule of works. They wish to define the schedules to add value to the work delivered by BMBC's core offer, Neighbourhood Services.

5.4. SWOC of Identified Future Direction

A discussion took place that assisted to populate a Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Challenges template for moving away from volunteer led to a scheduled programme of work.

Please refer to Appendix 1.

6. Decision to conclude current contract

- 6.1. Members are required to confirm that they wish to conclude the existing contract with the current provider at the end of term i.e. 31st March 2023.

7. A further Members workshop will be necessary to:

- 7.1. Refine the Environmental Priority
Considering Vision, Aims and Objectives
- What the Area Council wants to achieve?
 - What will change?
 - Who will the provision benefit?
 - How will success be measured?
 - How will success be reported and celebrated?
- 7.2. Agree what outcomes the North Area Council wants to achieve
- 7.3. Agree what activities will be monitored to ensure that success can be measured accurately.
- 7.4. Understand what the current Neighbourhood Services core offer is and where there is an opportunity to add value.
- 7.5. It is recommended that a PESTLE Analysis (Political, Economical, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental) is conducted as part of this process to consider the implications of a service which is based on a prescribed schedule of maintenance.
- 7.6. Ensure that the Area Council is contributing to the Barnsley 2030 Priorities.

8. Cost Implications

- 8.1. Historically the North Area have committed £85,000 per annum. At a challenging financial time, it will be necessary to consider the financial implications of continuing to invest in this priority area.
- 8.2. Once the schedule of works has been defined, it has been suggested that market research is conducted to establish realistic costings.

9. Recommended Next Steps

- 9.1. The Area Manager will arrange a further Members workshop with attendance from Neighbourhood Services and Procurement officers.

Officer Contact:

RosemarieAdams@barnsley.gov.uk

Date:

9th November 2022

Appendix 1.

SWOC Analysis of North Area Council's Intention to Move Away from a Volunteer Led Model to a Scheduled Maintenance Programme to address the Area's Environmental priority	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Defined schedule of works Continued improvement of public open spaces and green spaces Outputs are demonstrable, therefore easier to monitor and evaluate performance</p>	<p>Prescriptive offer with reduced flexibility Reduced opportunity for the community to influence delivery Reduced opportunity to contribute to environmental priorities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero Carbon • Biodiversity • Recycling & Sustainability • Incredible Edible / Food Growing Projects <p>Detrimental impact of the Area Councils ability to contribute initiatives including Barnsley / Yorkshire in Bloom</p>
Opportunities	Challenges
<p>Identify locations for a prescriptive planned maintenance Include a proportion of reactive work Schedule of works can be developed by Councillors with the support of Ward Alliance representatives</p>	<p>Need for clarity between BMBC core offer and the potential added value of procuring a maintenance service Risk that the new service could be used to fill gaps in the BMBC core service that result from austerity Detrimental Impact to Area Performance Indicators on Social Action (KPIs) – North Area will stand out Does not meet the 2030 priority – Enabling the Community New model will not 'double the money' – original challenge to Area Councils to maximise core budget through needs-based commissioning Erosion of volunteer capacity building Loss of opportunity to influence behaviour change and community guardianship Loss of educational opportunities Loss of input to schools e.g. Eco Council & growing projects Loss of green prescribing opportunities</p>