

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

South Area Council Meeting:
16th December 2022

Report of South Area Council
Manager

South Tidy Team contract and future direction

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide information on the current position regarding the South Tidy Team contract, funding, and contract timescales.
- 1.2 To reflect on the recent Members briefings which reviewed current environmental priorities and considered the future direction of South Area Council commissioning.
- 1.3 To provide a number of options for consideration and decision by the South Area Council in order to inform the future direction of South Area Commissioning budget.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. **That Members note the background information and current position in section 4 and 5 and consider the options outlined in section 6**
- 2.2. **That Members confirm their preferred options as set out in section 5.2 and indicated by Members at the briefing meetings as being:**
 - **Option 2) Issue notice to Twiggs Ground Maintenance Ltd to conclude the contract on 31st March 2023 and not take up the option for a further year.**
And
 - **Option 3) Develop a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with BMBC's Neighbourhood Services to provide a South environmental caretaker service to provide supplementary services over and above the provision of the wider Council services at a cost of £120,963 per annum for 1 year from monies already ringfenced from the Improving the Environment priority.**
And
 - **Option 4) Recruit a Community Development Officer (30 hours per week) to sit within the South Area Team at a cost of up to £34,804 per year for an initial period of 1 year from monies ringfenced from the Improving the Environment priority**
- 2.3. **That Members are asked to delegate authority to the Executive Director Public Health and Communities to agree the Service Level Agreement and recruitment of the Community Development Officer post as outlined in this report following consultation with Members of South Area Council.**

3. Background

- 3.1. The South Area Council currently has 6 priorities:
 - Improving access to local information and advice
 - Supporting young people
 - Improving the local economy
 - Improving health and wellbeing for all
 - Improving our environment
 - Changing the relationship between the Council and the Community
- 3.2. To address the 'Improving our environment' priority the South Area has historically commissioned a provider to work with the community to deliver the contract.
- 3.3. The South have contracted with two providers to date, the first provider was Anvil, through Forge Community partnership up to 31st March 2021 and Twiggs Ground Maintenance Ltd, who started the contract on 1st April 2021.
- 3.4. The current contract was tendered in 2020 to start in 2021. Twiggs Grounds Maintenance Ltd secured the two-year contract with the option of a final one-year extension. The contract commenced on 1st April 2021 and is now in its second year of delivery.
- 3.5. The South Area Council have held three dedicated Members briefings to discuss ongoing delivery regarding the contract. The briefings were held on the 2nd December 2021, 14th October 2022 and 21st November 2022. The discussions were raised with the provider in the contract management meetings.
- 3.6. The aim of the initial briefings was to bring members together as there had been some concerns raised and the briefings provided an opportunity to have 'one conversation' and to look at how through the contract management of the service, changes could be put in place to increase understanding of Members of the work being delivered and to improve the communications across all parties, along with providing clarity for the provider.
- 3.7. The briefing meetings concentrated on the following areas of the contract:
 - Monthly programme of events provided in advance of activities.
 - Steering groups meeting to engage Councillors and community representation.
 - Programme of events distributed across each of the four wards.
 - 30% of contract delivered without volunteers at priority hotspot areas.
 - Staffing and roles.
 - Promotion and marketing.
 - Creating diverse volunteering opportunities.
 - Improving communication.

4. Current Position

- 4.1. At the briefing meeting on the 14th October 2022, Members requested that changes to the ways of working be put in place. Members requested that the existing contract concentrate on a schedule of planned works which volunteers

can participate in but that the work is requested and directed by Ward Members. Monthly scheduling meetings between Ward Members and the provider would be set up to programme in the work.

- 4.2. Members also requested that the South Area Council Manager look at alternative options for future delivery be identified.
- 4.3. Twiggs Grounds Maintenance Ltd are currently in their second year of this contract with an end date of the second year of 31st March 2023. There is an option to take up a further year of delivery from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024.
- 4.4. Members are required to make a decision on their future intentions of this contract and whether the South Area Council wish to take up the option of the third year or issue notice.

5. Members briefing: 21st November 2022

- 5.1. At the Members briefing on the 21st November 22 the South Area Council Manager presented a number of options for Members to consider and discussed the advantages and disadvantage of the options.

Options	Details
1) Take up the option to extend the existing South Tidy Team contract with Twiggs Ground Maintenance Ltd for a further year from 1 st April 23 to 31 st March 24.	Twiggs Grounds Maintenance Ltd would be informed of this decision following the meeting. A monthly schedule of dates would be agreed for delivery from 1 st April 2023. There would be a continuation of service for a further year.
2) Issue notice to Twiggs Ground Maintenance Ltd to conclude the contract on 31 st March 2023 and not take up the option for a further year.	Notice would be issued in December 2022 as per the contract. The contract would cease delivery on 31 st March 2023. Potential gap in delivery.
3) Develop a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with BMBC's Neighbourhood Services to provide a South environmental caretaker service providing supplementary services over and above the provision of the wider Council services. The key aspect of the workload for the team would be to deliver a defined schedule of work focused on the improvement of maintenance standards associated with the local area.	An SLA would be developed by the South Area Council manager and Neighbourhood Services service manager. The SLA would aim to commence on 1 st April 2023 and finish 31 st March 2024. Neighbourhood services proposal costings = £120,963 to include: Team Leader (G6) Development and Demand Team (G4) Apprentice Vehicle, training, fuel, waste license, tools, and contingency budget.
4) Recruit a Community Development Officer (30 hours per week) to sit within the South Area Team with a focus on providing environmental support. The post would work alongside and support the Neighbourhood services SLA.	Permission to recruit would need to be sought. Grade 7 post including on costs: £31,918 to £34,804

5) Commission a new service from April 24 based on a new specification and as part of a competitive tendering exercise.	Specification tailored to the needs identified through a series of workshops and evidence presented. Current contracting arrangements would continue.
6) Develop a grant pot: small grants to community groups. Grant panel made up of Members. Grant allocation and priorities would need to be confirmed.	Individual grants to buy in professional expertise outside remit of scheduled work. Could include specific training on tools, purchase of tools / equipment, events budget
7) Reallocate budget to another priority or different area of work.	Option would be to give notice in December 22 which would free up the current committed budget of £181,721 to allocate from 1 st April 23 to another priority or allow the contract to run until March 24 and again look at reallocating to a different priority.
8) Skills, training and development programme	Potential to look at funding a programme of training and /or apprenticeship opportunities to support the voluntary and community sector in the South area.

5.2 Members are being asked to consider the options above and confirm their preferred options. The preferred options indicated by Members at the Members briefing are:

- **Option 2)** Issue notice to Twiggs Ground Maintenance Ltd to conclude the contract on 31st March 2023 and not take up the option for a further year.
And
- **Option 3)** Develop a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with BMBC's Neighbourhood Services to provide a South environmental caretaker service to provide supplementary services over and above the provision of the wider Council services
And
- **Option 4)** Recruit a Community Development Officer (30 hours per week) to sit within the South Area Team.

6. Cost Implications

- 6.1. The South Area Council currently have £181,721 committed to the South Tidy Team contract per annum.
- 6.2. If option 2 and 3 above are approved, Members are also being asked to confirm that a budget of £120,963 for a service level agreement with Neighbourhood Service is allocated and a further budget of up to £34,804 allocated for a Community Development Officer (30 hours) for an initial period of one year starting from 1st April 2023.

7. Recommended Next Steps

- 7.1. The South Area Manager to progress the preferred option with an update provided at the next South Area Council meeting.

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Date: 16th December 2022