

## BARNSLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

North Area Council Meeting:  
13<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Agenda Item: 8

Report of North Area Council  
Manager

### Commissioning, Project Development and Financial Update

#### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report provides the Area Council with a financial position and forecast for expenditure based on the projects that have been proposed.

#### 2. Recommendation

- 2.1. **The North Area Council should note the existing budget position the existing the funding commitments.**
- 2.2. **Councillors note the discussion recommendations regarding the Anti-Poverty Outreach Provision Service. Full details are available in Item 7 of the agenda.**
- 2.3. **Councillors note the update regarding the recruitment for the Housing and Cohesion Officer role.**
- 2.4. **Members agree to devolve £2,500 to each Ward Alliance to enable Cost of Living Support events / projects to be delivered during 2023/24.**
- 2.5. **Hold a North Area priority, budget and commissioning workshop.**
- 2.6. **Councillors are requested to note the updated projected spend, appendix 1.**

#### 3. Background highlighting all significant financial commitment

##### 3.0 The Anti-Poverty Community Outreach Project

Contract 1 commenced on the 14<sup>th</sup> September 2015. This is a one-year (plus one year) contract valued at £149,000 in total. The initial contract has now concluded.

Contract 2 commenced on the 14<sup>th</sup> September 2017 for a two-year term at a contract value of approximately £95,000 per annum. On the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019 the Area Council took the decision to utilise the contract extension clause and extend the contract until the 13<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

The Area Council agreed to continue to fund this project in September 2019. Due to procurement pressures during Covid-19 the decision was taken to submit a waiver in the summer of 2020 and extend the existing contract by 12 months until 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

*CURRENT POSITION: The Area Manager requested a contract extension to the existing waiver. This has been approved but only for 10 months at this stage until the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023. Value £79,033.*

***DECISION: Item 7 of this agenda gives Councillors the opportunity to select the preferred level of service provision. The highest value option has been included in Appendix 1, proposed expenditure.***

### 3.1 The Clean and Green Service

Contract one was delivered by Forge Community Partnership commenced on the 14<sup>th</sup> September 2015. Prior to the end of the contract the tender opportunity was advertised.

The second environmental contract commenced on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2017 at a value of £85,000 per annum. The provider, Twiggs Grounds Maintenance Ltd, commenced service delivery on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2017. On the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019 the Area Council took the decision to utilise the contract extension clause and extend the contract until the end of September 2020.

*CURRENT POSITION: 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 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 and is now in it's second year of delivery.*

*To help manage the expectations of this contract and tailor delivery to the needs of individual wards a steering group will meet on the 3rd Tuesday of the month to help programme delivery. Each ward prioritise two work streams for delivery:*

- *Working with existing voluntary group*
- *Generating new active volunteers*
- *Aiming to form new community groups*
- *Working with businesses*
- *Working with schools*

The Steering Group has devised a process for requesting work. All Twiggs work is now required to be considered at the Steering Group prior to inclusion in the calendar / work programme. All persons requesting work are requested to submit their request to the North Team for collation: [northteam@barnsley.gov.uk](mailto:northteam@barnsley.gov.uk)

***Update: At the North Area Council meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023, Councillors made the decision to change direction and work with BMBC Neighbourhood Service to develop a Community Caretaker model.***

***It has not been possible to recruit to new posts at this time. This will mean a gap in provision for this priority, rather than a break in service, due to the change in direction. Full details are included in Item 4.***

3.2 Housing and Cohesion Officer (Private Sector Housing) – At the November meeting 2017 it was agreed that the North Area would fund a private sector housing officer post at Grade 6 for 12 months fixed term. The successful candidate started on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2018 and proved to be a great asset to the area. The officer left the North Area council at the end of June 2019 for a promotion within BMBC.

The current Housing and Cohesion Officer started in post on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2020. The officer now has a permanent contract and the role forms part of the Safer Communities structure.

In addition to the salary fees the Area Council agreed to fund uniform, PPE including IT, phone and bodycam, plus a £5k annual working budget.

***N.B.: Contractually the position is covered by a permanent contract to ensure employment rights for individuals. If the Area Council agreed to cease funding the position a 6-month notice period will be required.***

***UPDATE: The position is currently vacant. Bradley Beatson the previous officer is assisting with urgent enquiries whilst there is a vacancy. The post has been advertised. The interview process conducted on the 22<sup>nd</sup> December proved to be unsatisfactory and the post has been readvertised. The post was readvertised in January, shortlisting has been conducted and interviews are scheduled for the 14<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> March.***

3.3 Health and Wellbeing – Connecting Communities Grant

At a series of workshops in 2021 the Area Council discussed the loneliness and isolation and the impact of Covid-19. In July 2021 it was agreed to fund a grant program for two years with a budget of £100,000 per annum.

The grant opportunity was advertised at the end of September 2021 and the final date for submission was the 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2021. A total of 9 applications were received before the deadline totalling £615,710.39.

Stage one moderation took place on the 1<sup>st</sup> November and 4 organisations were invited back to present their projects on the 8<sup>th</sup> November. 3 applications were recommended for funding. The total allocated amount for these 3 projects was £186,766.44.

Successful Projects:

- Age UK Barnsley – North Area Social Inclusion Service - £79,600.20
- DIAL Barnsley – Connection Hubs - £66,450.00
- Reds in the Community – Reds Connect - £40,716.24

***N.B.: £13,233.56 remained unallocated and has been recirculated into the main Area Council budget for forthcoming delivery allocation. If the grant is to be re-advertised for 2024/25 the opportunity will need to be agreed in September 2023 for advertising autumn 2023.***

### 3.4 Stronger Communities Grant 2022/23

The total funding allocated for 2022/23 is £40,000. Each grant has an upper limit of £10,000. A total of 4 applications were received, totalling £23,716.34.

At the Grant Panel on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2022, two projects were recommended for funding. Pending receipt of further information the applications have been approved.

Successful projects:

- Mother Runners – Stronger Mums – £9,950.00
- Mapplewell and Staincross Greenspace and Recreation Group – Mapplewell Park – Children’s Cycle Path – £8,761.00

### 3.5 Devolved Funding to Ward Alliances

The Area Council has profiled £20,000 to be devolved to Ward Alliances during 2022. This means a £5,000 allocation per ward where the end of year balance is less than £10,000.

**N.B. The decision was taken in 2020/21 that the funding devolved to Ward Alliances by the North Area Council would cease from 2022/23.**

**However, due to the unspent Housing and Cohesion allocation whilst the post has been vacant it is possible to reallocate this funding. It is recommended that each Ward Alliance receives £2,500 devolved funds in 2023/24 to enable Ward Alliances to deliver Cost of Living projects or events.**

### 3.6 Health and Wellbeing – focus on Young People

In November 2019 the North Area Council agreed to fund a project for up to three years. The project entitled ‘An Empowerment Programme Enabling Resilient Transitions for Children and Young People Aged 8-14 Years’ was advertised as a competitive grant in early 2020. The process was unsuccessful. It was agreed in on the 16<sup>th</sup> March that the opportunity should be chunked down to allow the VCS to respond.

N.B. This opportunity has been tailored to help address the fall out of COVID-19 lockdown and aid in the delivery of the COVID-19 Recovery Strategy. The grants went live on the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2020, delivered by YMCA and Ad Astra.

The Area Council has committed to fund this work for up to three years. Covid-19 Lockdown restrictions caused delays and for a time schools would not permit external partners into schools. The providers are now working within 5 schools.

The grant funding originally ran from November 2020 to October 2022.

**Current Position: At the March 2022 meeting the Area Council agree to fund the project for a further 2 years, until October 2024, at £90,000p.a. Providers received a 3% financial uplift which was feasible within the current financial envelope. This security will enabling the existing providers to support students adversely affected by Covid-19 and support them in their educational transitions, primarily the move to senior school.**

#### 4. Financial Position

- 4.1. At the end of 2021/22 there was a significant **underspend**. **The budget was varied considerably during Covid-19, period 2020/21-2021/22.**
- 4.2. **The forecast for 2022/23 shows that the underspend** (including underspend from previous years) **was profiled to reduce to £76,259**. This is because the in-year balance is projected to exceed the annual budget by approximately £27,653.

**However, this will not be the case due to the vacant Housing and Cohesion post.**

- 4.3. Outlined annual commitments from April 2022:

<b>Contract</b>	<b>Proposed Spend 2022/23</b>
Anti- Poverty – Community Outreach	£97,850
Creating a Cleaner, Greener Environment in Partnership with Local People	£85,000
Housing Cohesion Officer – Grade 6 (+laptop and phone)	<b>£33,000</b>
Stronger Communities Grant	£20,000
Children and Youth People Resilience Grant	£90,000
Devolved funds to Ward Alliances (£5k per WA)	£20,000
Connecting Communities Grant 2021-2024 £100,000 per annum for 2 years	£92,000
Summer Sports Van	£2,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£439,850</b>

- 4.4. Provided that the Area Council continues to commit funding as outlined in Appendix 1, the total spend profiled for 2022/23 is predicted to be £427,653.
- 4.5. The underspend at the end of 2022/23 is projected to be £76,259, including monies originally allocated to the Housing and Cohesion post for 2022/23.

## **5. Commissioning Programme from April 2023**

- 5.1. Appendix 1 lays out the proposed spend. The Area Council is asked to note the proposed spend for 2023/24 and 2024/25. The Area Manager has re-profiled due to the cost of living crisis. Ensuring that allowances are made due to inflation, for the current contracts at the point of renewal / retender.
- 5.2. **Please note only the agreed contract period, up to October 2024 has been projected for the Youth Resilience project. This would require a further 7 months funding to complete delivery in the financial year 2024/25, this is calculated at approximately £41,667.**
- 5.3. It is recommended that a priority workshop is held to ensure that Members are fully appraised of the current priorities and associated projects. Providing an opportunity to address any underspend.

## **6. Risks**

- 6.1. The proposed budget would take the Area Council approximately £37,850.00 over budget per annum for 2022/23. However taking into account the current under spend, the investment profiled in Appendix 1 has been feasible.

## **7. Next Steps**

- 7.1. Ensure that the Area Manager is alerted to any proposed commissioning profile variations so that feasibility considerations can be made at the earliest opportunity.
- 7.2. Hold a workshop to ensure that Members are fully committed to the 2023/24 and 2024/25 commissioning programme.

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**Date:**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023**

## Appendix 1: North Area Council - Proposed expenditure April 2022-March 2025

Project / Service	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Anti- Poverty – Community Outreach <i>Retender Anti- Poverty - Waiver in place Sept 2021 - June 2023 (9 Months)</i>	97,850.00	105,000.00	110,000.00
Creating a Cleaner, Greener Environment in Partnership with Local <i>People Contract Start - April 2021 (Retender Sept 2023)</i>	85,000.00	121,000.00	125,000.00
Housing and Cohesion Officer – Grade 6 (+laptop and phone)	33,000.00	33,000.00	35,000.00
Stronger Communities Grant Reduced to £20,000 in 2022/23	20,000.00	-	-
Youth Resilience Fund (November 2022 - October 2024 - YMCA & Ad Astra)	90,000.00	90,000.00	45,000.00
Connecting Communities Social Isolation Grant (£100,000 pa for 2 years)	92,000.00	82,500.00	100,000.00
Devolved funding to Ward Alliances ( <i>where March 2019 balance is less than £10,000</i> )	20,000.00	10,000.00	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	437,850.00	441,500.00	415,000.00