

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

North Area Council Meeting:
16th September 2019
Agenda Item: 4

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 and forecast for the funding commitments.**

- 2.2. **That Members note 3.2 regarding the Housing Migration Officer**

- 2.3. **Thank Members note the recommendation regarding the Youth Participation Officers.**

- 2.4. **Members should note the current financial position.**

- 2.5. **Member note the intention to hold a commissioning programme budget profile workshop.**

3. Background highlighting all significant financial commitment

- 3.0 The Anti-Poverty Community Outreach Project commenced on the 14th September 2015. This is a one year (plus one year) contract valued at £149,000 in total. The initial contract has now concluded.

The decision was taken to retender the opportunity for a further 2 years (+ 1 year) at a contract value of approximately £95,000 per annum. The provider commenced service delivery on the 14th September 2017. This contract will run until at least September 2019 provided the conditions of the contract are met. On the 25th March 2019 the Area Council took the decision to utilise the contract extension clause and extend the contract until the 13th September 2020.

N.B. In March 2020 the Area Council will need to agree if they wish to continue to fund this type of service provision and advertise the tender opportunity.

- 3.1 The Clean and Green Service commenced on the 14th September 2015. This was a one year (plus one year) contract valued at £150,000 per annum. The initial contract has now concluded.

The decision was taken to advertise an enhanced tender opportunity for a further 2 years (+ 1 year) at a contract value of approximately £85,000 per annum. The provider 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.

N.B. In March 2020 the Area Council will need to agree if they wish to continue to fund this type of service provision and advertise the tender opportunity.

- 3.2 Housing Migration Officer Private Sector Housing Officer – At the November meeting 2017 it was agreed that the North Area would offer a Housing Migration Officer post at Grade 6 for 12 months fixed term. The successful candidate started on the 22nd January 2018. 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.

Members have agreed at the September 2018 meeting to extend the post from 22nd January 2019 on a fixed term basis for a period of 12 months.

Please be aware that the Housing Migration Officer post is currently vacant. A the post was advertised in July however following a shortlisting process it was agree that none of the applicants were suitable for the position. The post is due to be advertised again, however the role profile is under review and will be amended to include relevant experience, rather than relying solely on qualifications. It is hope this will encourage applicants with extensive experience of conducting housing inspections. The Dearne Area position is also vacant at this time. Both vacancies with be advertised simultaneously.

- 3.3 Opportunities for Young People – Two 18hr Youth Participation Support Worker Grade 4 posts were advertised in May 2018. Interviews were conducted on 12th June 2018. References and DBS checks have been received. The officers started at the beginning of August. The posts are 12 months fixed term.

The funding for this project includes staff salaries and on-costs plus a mobile phone and laptop each. A working budget of £5,000 has also been agreed. The workers commenced their contract at the beginning August 2018.

At the Area Council meeting held on the 25th March Members agreed that they wished to extend the funding for the youth participation post(s) for a further 12 months. One of the posts became vacant at the end of March 2019 and the second officer left for further education at the end of the initial contract 31st July 2019.

To avoid duplication is recommended that these posts are not recruited until the bigger piece of work regarding the Health and Wellbeing of Young People is completed.

- 3.4 Health and Wellbeing – At the November 2017 meeting The North Area Council agreed to consider a Social Inclusion Project with a Prevention of Winter Deaths focus. This would complement the work of Housing and Energy Colleagues who are looking at developing a Housing and Energy Advice Hub with housing energy advice. Aligning a 3 year pilot in North Area would be a fantastic opportunity to combine resources and realise positive outcomes for residents in the North Area. A workshop took place on the 10th of April which informed the specification that was signed off at the 14th May meeting.

The procurement process for this project was conducted during June and July 2018. DIAL Barnsley was the preferred provider when the process concluded. This contract is valued at £75,000p.a. (with a ceiling of £85,000) for two years, with the option to extend a third year. The contract commenced on the 3rd September 2018. The contract will go live from 1st January 2019. The service will be called 'Warm Connections'. A soft launch took place on Thursday 31st January.

It has been recognised that the existing hOurbank project that DIAL deliver in the North Area would complement the Warm Connections Service. The North Area Council has agreed to contribute £10,000p.a. for the duration of the Warm Connections contract.

N.B. In March 2020 the Area Council will need to agree if they wish to extend the funding for the final year of the contract. This would enable service to continue until 2nd September 2021.

- 3.5 Stronger Communities Grant – The total funding available for 2019/20 is £99,359.05. This includes a total of £80,000 from the Area Council and Wellbeing Grant funding, of value £19,359.05 was also made available to address the Five Ways to Wellbeing. A total of 6 applications were received totalling £106,152.38. At the Grant Panel on Thursday 28th February all six projects were recommended for funding however one of the projects did not receive the full grant amount that they originally applied for. This will ensure that a broad range of services are delivered up until March 2020.

In November 2019 the North Area Council will need to confirm if they wish to run the grant funding opportunity in 2020/21.

- 3.6 Devolved Funding to Ward Alliances The Area Council has consistently devolved funding to Ward Alliances. This equates to £10,000 per ward, £40,000 in total. This money is only devolved down to Ward Alliances where the Ward Alliance budget is less £10,000 at the end of March of the last financial year.
- 3.7 Community Magazine – The Area Council funds the distribution costs of the North Area Magazine. This is a twice yearly distribution costing approximately £3,200 per issue.

The Area Council is currently reviewing the options available regarding Community Magazines. The North Area Council did not release a Summer 2019 edition.

3.8 Health and Wellbeing 2019 – focus on Young People

The North Area Council has been exploring the possibility of commissioning a new service to help address health and wellbeing inequalities across the North Area. Workshops have taken place throughout the first half of 2019/20 and it is highly likely that this will result in the design of a young people's health and wellbeing project.

For further information please refer to the paper which provides an update following the latest workshop held on the 12th September.

4. Financial Position

- 4.1. At the end of 2018/19 there was a significant **underspend of £189,028 (this includes underspend from previous years)**.
- 4.2. This is a significant excess caused by the decisions to stop the Positive Progressions project £55,000, the delay in recruiting to the Private Sector Housing Support Officer role, and recycled FPN income of £31,073 for 2017/18 now received.
- 4.3. **The forecast for 2019/20 shows that the underspend** (including underspend from previous years) **will be reduced to £106,079**. This is because the in-year balance exceeds the annual budget by approximately £82,949.
- 4.4. The Health and Wellbeing Group acknowledged that there is an underspend at the January 2019 meeting. The Area Council are keen to put the budget to good use and have held a workshop to explore project opportunities for the North Area. This may lead to a new young people's commission, recommended value £60,000p.a for two years.

4.5. Outlined annual commitments from April 2019:

Contract	Annual Value
Anti- Poverty – Community Outreach	£95,000
Creating a Cleaner, Greener Environment in Partnership with Local People	£85,000
Housing Migration Officer – Grade 6 (+laptop and phone)	£35,000
Stronger Communities Grant	£80,000
Magazine Delivery (Inc. x2 deliveries p.a.)	£7,200
Support Worker - Youth Participation Grade 4 – two officers working 18hours (+laptop and phone) (+participation budget)	£26,000 & £5,000
Social Isolation and Cold Homes Project (+ hOurbank)	£75,000 + £10,000
Devolved funding to Ward Alliances (<i>where March 2019 balance is less than £10,000</i>)	£40,000
TOTAL	£458,200

4.6. However, at the Area Council in July 2019 Members requested a budget workshop to take place after further development of the young people’s commission. It was indicated that this may result in a re-profiling of resources.

5. Risks

5.1. Members please note that the Area Council has benefited from £112,294.00 in recycled FPN income since 2014. This ceased in March 2018 following the decision to decommission the service.

5.2. The proposed budget would take the Area Council approximately £58,000 over budget pa for from 2019/20 – 2020/21. However taking into account the current under spend, the investment profiled in 4.4 would be feasible until 2020/21.

5.3. **The current vacant post of Housing Migration Officer and putting the recruitment of the Youth Participation Officers on hold will increase the underspend.**

5.4. **If the Area council decides to commission a new service to help address young people's health and wellbeing needs the Area Council will have to rationalise the services that are currently commissioned. This could also mean reducing the Stronger Communities Grant Funding pot and/or the monies devolved to Ward Alliances.**

6. Opportunities

6.1. The underspend associated with the Housing Migration Officer and the Youth Participation Officer vacancies offer opportunities to invest in other priorities.

This includes the young people's health and wellbeing project.

6.2. In addition Item 5 asks that the Area Council consider providing financial support to The Fleets Community Project.

7. Next Steps

7.1. The Area Manager is to arrange a budget workshop to ensure that the forward commissioning programme is feasible and understood by decision makers.

7.2. Ensure that the Area Manager is alerted to any proposed commissioning profile variations so that feasibility considerations can be made at the earliest opportunity.

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