

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

North Area Council Meeting:

16th March 2020

Agenda Item: 3

**Report of North Area Council
Manager**

North Area Council Stronger Communities Grant Update

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update members about the North Area Council Stronger Communities Grant application and allocation process.
- 1.2 To update members on the outcome of the grant panel meeting and the projects approved for funding.
- 1.3 The report also outlines the performance management and monitoring arrangements for successful projects.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- 2.1 Members note the NAC Stronger Communities Grant update.**
- 2.2 Members note the projects that have been approved for funding.**
- 2.3 Members agree the performance and monitoring arrangements outlined in Section 7.**

3. Background

Having noted the success of the Stronger Communities Grant funded projects which have been delivered throughout 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 it was agreed at the Area Council Meeting on the 18th November 2019 that the North Area would run the Stronger Communities Grant funding opportunity for the project delivery in 2020/21.

The NAC Stronger Communities Grant was established as a grants programme totalling £50,000 (2020/21) to address the identified North Area Council priorities. It is aimed at developing the capacity of community groups and organisations, social enterprises and not for profit organisations, with a view to enabling them to bid for future procurements.

The grant opportunity was advertised at the beginning of December 2019 and the final date for submission of applications was the 31st January 2020. A total of 7 applications were received before the deadline totalling £107,554.00.

The Grants Panel Member received their panel packs w/c 10th February. This included an information sheet, paper copies of all the applications and 'Scoring Matrix' top sheet for each application which needed to be completed prior to the panel meeting.

The Wards were represented by the following Councillors.

Darton East	Cllr Steve Hunt
Darton West	Cllr Sharon Howard
Old Town	Cllr Phil Lofts
St Helen's	Cllr Jenny Platts

4. Recommended Projects

The Members had an opportunity to independently score each application before meeting for the Evaluation Panel on Friday 28th February. The scoring matrix provided a robust qualitative and quantitative basis upon which to identify suitable applications. All applications required a majority recommendation from the panel in order to be successful. The panel was independently chaired by the North Area Council Manager and supported by the North Area's Senior Link Officer, Public Health Colleagues and the Area Team. The approval process can found as Appendix 1.

The panel also considered the Five Ways to Wellbeing as part of the scoring and moderation process.



4 applications were recommended for funding. At the time of writing the projects have yet to be submitted for approval by the Head of Stronger Communities. The total allocated amount for these 4 projects was £50,000.00

The recommended projects are as follows (they are in no particular order):

Emmanuel Methodist Church – Connections - £19,996.00

A project working with older people to help combat isolation. The project aims to promote and support the promotion of physical health; connections with others through various social groups and activities, specifically designed to stimulate the mental capacity of an aging generation. The project will also seek to network older people, provide transport through volunteers and maintain regular phone contact with those who are socially isolated or housebound.

Offering regular activities and one-off events to promote a holistic service to the local over 55+ population which will promote healthy eating, physical exercise and mental stimulation. These activities will include things like healthy cooking workshops, healthy exercises for the over 55's, chair fitness, craft groups, IT groups, afternoon teas, talks and demonstrations as well as other groups shaped by the steering group.

The project will include the development of a buddy system to maintain contact with isolated people and encourage volunteers to form a local network of support.

YMCA – YMCA Youthwork: £10,576.00

Extract from application form: Providing a regular weekly open access detached programme of community development youth work in Kexborough and Darton together with weekly centre-based provision as a feeder and entry platform into our more focused programmes.

Promoting family engagement, intergenerational and cultural activities, volunteering, arts, sports and games social play, environmental activities, low level bush craft and outdoors cooking. Building on the environmental aspects of our previous working with young people to develop open access events that seek to improve local green spaces, eg. litter picks, nature walks, low level bush craft and green crafts all within a wellbeing framework that seeks to improve emotional, mental and physical health. Creating opportunities and activities for participants where appropriate to share experiences and build more positive relationships and understanding between all ages of their community.

Making Space / Barnsley Dementia Gateway – Information, Advice and Wellbeing Café – £10,000.00

Application form extract: This project would provide a weekly Dementia Café, a Barnsley Dementia Gateway Wellbeing Café, at Barugh Green WMC. The wellbeing Café would be modelled on other successful cafes currently operating in Barnsley and outside Barnsley in Rotherham and North Yorkshire. The aim is not to clash with other cafes offered by BIADS, The Alzheimer's Society, Making Space, Butterflies Dementia Activities and Support Group and the Snap Tin in Goldthorpe. The intention is to plug a gap and offer more choice to people living with Dementia and their carers.

Although the planned café is for the aforementioned groups, other older people in the area would be most welcome. We know that 12.8% of people over 65 years live alone in the North Area and this resource could help some of these people be less socially isolated.

This café aims to be self-sustaining after the first year. Volunteer recruitment and development will be key to success.

Citizens Advice Bureaux – North Area Debt Advice Service - £9,428.00

This project will run as a 6-month pilot, providing a specialist debt worker to help people from the North Area to address financial difficulties caused by problem debt. The service will be delivered face-to-face, drop in advice, twice per week from accessible community venues.

5. Lessons Learned

- 5.1. The inclusion of the Five Ways to Wellbeing in the scoring criteria have helped the Panel understand how the North Area Funding contributes to the wider determinants of health and wellbeing.
- 5.2. The fund was heavily oversubscribed. Several of the organisations have been offered an allocation below the amount they applied for and have been asked to consider operational implications before accepting the grant. This presents considerable challenges for the organisations affected.
- 5.3. This situation shows the growth financial pressures that the voluntary and community sector are currently facing.

6. Project Development Work

The Area Manager will now meet with all the successful project leads to ensure that all the projects are robust: deliverable within the timescales, and outcomes/outcome indicators and targets developed.

In some cases the panel have attached conditions to the grant funding.

7. Grant Awards and Performance Monitoring/Management

Once approved, all organisations will be notified and asked to sign Grant Agreement which, together with the detailed Stage 2 application form, will form the basis of the contractual agreement between the Council and the organisation for the grant awarded.

Those projects under £10,000 will receive a one-off grant payment for the full amount and will be asked to submit their monitoring information at the end of the project.

Those projects over £10,000 have submitted a monitoring/performance framework and quarterly payment schedule as part of their application. Quarterly payments will only be released once the North Area Council Manager is satisfied that monitoring/performance targets for the previous quarter have been met, or if not met, a satisfactory reason is given as to why this is the case and revised targets for the following quarters agreed.

Progress on projects will be reported back to North Area Council on a regular basis and a full evaluation report about the NAC Stronger Communities Fund process and projects will be presented to North Area Council on completion of all projects, anticipated early 2020/21.

8. Next steps

8.1. Members are asked to note that this year's grant funding was over prescribed. This led to greater scrutiny of the applications in accordance with the scoring criteria. This pressure will be felt even more acutely in 2021/22 when the funding allocation is projected to reduce to £40,000, when maximum applications will be £10,000.

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Date:
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Appendix 1: North Area Council

Stronger Communities Grant 2017/18 onwards - Approval Process

