

BARNSLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

North Area Council Meeting:
20th July 2020

Agenda Item: 3

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. **That Members note 3.2 regarding the Housing Migration Officer**
- 2.3. **Members are asked to consider if they wish to defer the funding for the Stronger Communities Grant Funded Dementia Café until 2021/22, reference 3.4**
- 2.4. **Member are asked to note point 7.1 of this report (supporting older people) and consider this in respect to Item 5 of today's agenda.**
- 2.5. **Members are asked to note 7.2 of this report and consider if they wish to extend the grant agreement with CAB to help AID Covid-19 Recovery**

3. Background highlighting all significant financial commitment

3.0 The Anti-Poverty Community Outreach Project

Contract 1 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.

Contract 2 commenced on the 14th September 2017 for a two-year term at a contract value of approximately £95,000 per annum. 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. The Area Council have agreed to continue to fund this project. Due to procurement pressures during Covid-19 the decision was taken to submit a waiver and extend the existing contract by 12 months until 13th September 2021.

3.1 The Clean and Green Service

Contract one was delivered by Forge Community Partnership commenced on the 14th September 2015. The initial two-year contract has now concluded.

The second environmental contract commenced on the 2nd October 2017 at a value of £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. The Area Council agreed in March 2020 that they wish to continue with an Environmental Education commission. Due to procurement pressures during COVID-19 a waiver has been submitted to extend the contract by 6 months to allow for a full procurement exercise to commence in the autumn of 2020 for an April 2021 start date.

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 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.

Members agreed on the 27th June to commit to fund the post for at least 24 months (12 month contract, plus 12 months). It is hope that this will make the post more appealing to applicants. The delegated report has been approved.

*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 role profile was subsequently reviewed and amended to include relevant experience, rather than relying solely on qualifications. The post was re-advertised October, and closed for applications on the 25th October. There were 8 applicants, following shortlisting 3 applicants have been invited to attend interview on the 11th November. The recruitment process was unsuccessful. **The post was re-advertised on the 22nd November, shortlisting took place on the 9th December. Two candidates where be interviewed on the 17th January. A preferred candidate has been identified and is undergoing security vetting. The start date has been postponed due to home working arrangements for BMBC staff during Covid-19. Community Safety have offered reassurance that they are implementing a return to work rota, and this should allow for the preferred candidate to be inducted.***

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.

3.3 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 and the project went live from 1st January 2019. The service is be called 'Warm Connections'.

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. The Area Council have agreed to extend the funding for the final year of the contract. This would enable service to continue until 2nd September 2021. A decision if they wish to recommission the service will need to be made no later than March 2021.

3.4 Stronger Communities Grant –

The total funding available for 2020/21 is £50,000. A total of 7 applications were received, totalling £107,554.00

At the Grant Panel on Friday 28th February 2020, four projects were recommended for funding however only one of the projects received the full grant amount that they originally applied for.

Successful projects:

Emmanuel Methodist Church – Connections (postponed until September 2020 due to COVID-19)

YMCA – Youthwork

Making Space – Dementia Café (start date postponed)

Citizens Advice Bureaux – Specialist Debt Advice

N.B. Members are asked to consider if they wish to defer the funding for the Dementia Café until 2021/22 (only feasible if Making Space/ Dementia Gateway is funded in 2021/22)?

There is alternatively the option to support the Freephone Dementia Help Line and provide training for carers from October to March?

3.5 Devolved Funding to Ward Alliances

The Area Council has not devolved any additional funds to Ward Alliances during 2020/21.

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 16th March that the opportunity should be chunked down to allow the VCS to respond.

N.B. Please refer to Item 5 for a full update. Not that this opportunity will have to be tailored to help address the fall out of COVID-19 lockdown and aid in the delivery of the COVID-19 Recovery Strategy.

4. Financial Position

4.1. At the end of 2019/20 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 difficulty 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 £156,433.** This is because the in-year balance for 2020/21 exceeds the annual budget by approximately £32,595.

4.4. The Area Council acknowledged that although annual spend is above the annual budget there was still opportunity to develop and new project to address the area priorities. Keen to have a young people's specific project in place a project has been developed. £90,000 per annum has been allocated to this project for the next three financial years, 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23.

4.5. Outlined annual commitments from April 2020:

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	£50,000
Social Isolation and Cold Homes Project (+ hOurbank)	£75,000 + £10,000
Children and Youth People Resilience Grant	90,0000
Fleets Nature Park	20,000
TOTAL	£460,000

5. Commissioning programme from April 2020

- 5.1. A workshop took place on the 8th October 2019 attended by Cllr Leech, Cllr Spence, Cllr T Cave, Cllr Lofts and Cllr Platts. Members were asked to give review the existing budget commitments, and plan ahead.
- 5.2. Appendix 1 lays out the proposed spend. On the 18th November 2019 the North Area Council agreed to the forward plan for the next two years 2020/21 and 2021/22.

6. Risks

- 6.1. The proposed budget would take the Area Council approximately £60,000 over budget pa for from 2020/21 and 2021/22. However taking into account the current under spend, the investment profiled in Appendix 1 would be feasible.
- 6.2. **The current vacant post of Housing Migration Officer and the delay with the young people's project will increase the underspend.**

7. Opportunities

- 7.1. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a widespread impact on communities across the world. Barnsley is no exception. Older people in the community who are being asked to shield for far longer than the rest of the community are particularly susceptible to indirect consequences of the COVID-19 virus. Isolation has caused great instability, both emotionally and physically. It has been proposed in Item 6 that an older peoples grant is awarded on a temporary basis to aid the COVID recovery.
- 7.2. Citizen Advice Bureaux are currently funded until the end of September to deliver additional specialist debt advice through the Stronger Communities Grant. In light of COVID-19's wider inequality implications Member may wish to extend the funding until the end of the financial year.

8. Next Steps

- 8.1. Consider in the Area Council Redefine the specification for the Environmental Education contract at workshop in April 2020.
- 8.2. Ensure that the Area Manager is alerted to any proposed commissioning profile variations so that feasibility considerations can be made at the earliest opportunity.

Officer Contact:
Rosie Adams

Tel. No:
01226 773583

Date:
06/03/2020

Appendix 1: North Area Council Proposed expenditure April 2020-March 2023

Project / Service	Annual Value				
		2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Anti- Poverty – Community Outreach <i>Retender Anti- Poverty</i>	95,000.00	95,000.00	95,000.00	95,000.00	95,000.00
Creating a Cleaner, Greener Environment in Partnership with Local People	85,000.00	85,000.00	85,000.00	85,000.00	85,000.00
Housing Migration Officer – Grade 6 (+laptop and phone)	35,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00
Stronger Communities Grant	80,000.00	50,000.00	40,000.00	20,000.00	-
Social Isolation and Cold Homes Project (+ hOurbank) 2018-2020 (+1year) £75,000 + £10,000	85,000.00	85,000.00	85,000.00	85,000.00	85,000.00
Devolved funding to Ward Alliances <i>(where March 2019 balance is less than £10,000)</i>	40,000.00	-	20,000.00	20,000.00	-
Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing - Resilient Transitions	60,000.00	90,000.00	90,000.00	90,000.00	90,000.00
The Fleets - Nature Park	30,000.00	20,000.00	10,000.00	-	-
TOTAL		460,000.00	460,000.00	430,000.00	390,000.00