

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

North Area Council Meeting:
24th May 2021

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. **That Members confirm the extension of the Housing and Cohesion Officers post for a further 12 months, at £35,000p.a. from the 19th October 2021, reference 3.2.**
- 2.3. **Following the presentation of Agenda Item 5. Members should note point 3.3 of this item reference the development work currently underway for the Health and Wellbeing Priority. Members are asked to indicate if a commissioned service is required or if they wish to offer a grant opportunity.**
- 2.4. **The North Area Council submits a waiver application for the Youth Resilience Grant providers to continue to deliver the programme for a further 12 months, at a value of £90,000 p.a.**
- 2.5. **That underspend is used to re-profile contracts that are re-tendered in line with inflation, reference 4.4.**

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.

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 13th September 2021.

DECISION: The Area Council has asked the Area Manager to work with the Procurement Team to obtain waiver authorisation for this service. Conversations with the Procurement Team are underway.

Risk: The Area Manager is aware that the universal core offer of welfare advice is currently under-review and is subject to change. If the Area Council wishes to proceed it is recommended that any contract let is done so on a 12month basis.

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 is Twiggs Grounds Maintenance Ltd, who 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. Following a successful procurement process Twiggs Grounds Maintenance Ltd. Have secured the new contract. This is two years in duration with the opportunity for a final one-year extension. The new contract commenced on 1st April 2021.

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 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.

The new Housing and Cohesion Officer started in post on Monday 19th October 2020. The Area Council have committed to fund the post for at least 24 months.

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.

DECISION: The Area Council is required to confirm the renewal of the 12 month contract for the officer in post from 19th October 2021 for 12 months. This is a commitment of £35,000 per annum.

Risk: The Area Manager is aware that the universal core offer of housing support is currently under review within the Safer Communities Service. As such the Area Manager will keep the Area Council updated and ensure

that the funding of the post is managed in accordance with any changes in the structure of the Safer Communities Service.

- 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 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.

During the first two years of delivery the Warm Connections Service delivered the following key outputs:

123	<i>Individual needs assessments</i>
121	<i>Individual supported to feel less lonely and isolated</i>
176	<i>Individuals reported an improvement in their mental wellbeing</i>
131	<i>Home energy assessments were completed</i>
12	<i>Volunteers were trained to deliver home energy advice</i>
£25,812	<i>Saved as a result of energy switching</i>

N.B. The Area Council's Health and Wellbeing Priority Working Group has met for a workshop on the 23rd of March. It has recommended that the service commissioned for this service area places a strong emphasis on Social Isolation rather than Cold Homes and offers greater support to aid the recovery from Covid-19. This will require the development of a new specification. The budget allocated to this priority area is £85,000p.a.

- 3.4 Stronger Communities Grant – The total funding available for 202/221 is £50,000. Each grant has an upper limit of £10,000. A total of 6 applications were received, totalling £55,772.06. At the Grant Panel on Thursday 11th March 2021, five projects were recommended for funding.

Successful projects:

- North West Church – Reconnect Building Resilience and new confidence with older people - £10,000.00
- Ad Astra – 5 Star Well Being: Gender Based - £8640.00

- Reds in the Community – Transition with the Reds - £8,638.06
- Age UK Barnsley – Covid Recovery North Area - £10,000.00
- Butterflies Dementia Support and Activities Group – Barugh Green Social Club, weekly afternoon tea dance - £2,721.94

N.B. The Area Council is still expecting a final report for two projects that were postponed due to Covid-19: Reds in the Community – Adults and Darton Cricket Club’s Training Facility.

3.5 Covid-19 Recovery

- Age UK – Supporting Older People in the North Area
To support Covid-19 Recovery the Area Council have awarded additional grant funding of £10,000 to Age UK to support older people who have been adversely affected by lockdown. The award is intended to provide an enabling service that will assist the local community to return to normal actively when it is safe to do so.

N.B. At the September meeting the Area Council requested to extend this provision by a further 6 months. January – June 2021, this has been negotiated.

3.6 Devolved Funding to Ward Alliances

The Area Council has profiled £20,000 to be devolved to Ward Alliances during 2021/22.

N.B. Members confirmed this decision on 1st February 2021.

3.7 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. 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 1st November and two providers are in place.

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 4 schools.

DESCISION It is recommended that the two current providers are permitted to deliver a second year of the provision, provided this can be agreed via a waiver application. This would require a financial commitment of £90,000p.a.

4. Financial Position

- 4.1. At the end of 2020/21 there was a significant **underspend of £130,266 (includes underspend from previous years)**. The budget was vaired during the 2020/21 year due to Covid-19.
- 4.2. **The forecast for 2021/22 shows that the underspend** (including underspend from previous years) **will reduce to £62,266**. This is because the in-year balance exceeded the annual budget by approximately £68,000.
- 4.3. Outlined annual commitments from April 2021:

Contract	Proposed Spend 2021/22
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	£40,000
Social Isolation and Cold Homes Project (+hOurbank) – 6 months remaining on contract	£40,000
Health and Wellbeing Project (*Under development)	£45,000
Children and Youth People Resilience Grant	£90,0000
Devolved funds to Ward Alliances (£5k per WA)	£20,000
Fleets Nature Park	£10,000
Age UK Support for Older People	£,7,000
TOTAL	£467,000

- 4.4. **As a result of delays to project during 2020 the underspend will be reduced but not as much as originally intended. It is recommended that some of this funding is used to increase the value of longstanding contracts with considerations for inflation.**
- 4.5. Provided that the Area Council continues to commit funding as outlined in Appendix 1, the total spend profiled for 2021/22 is £467,000.

5. Commissioning programme from April 2021

5.1. Appendix 1 lays out the proposed spend. On the 23rd November 2020 the North Area Council agreed to the forward plan for years 2020/21 and 2021/22.

6. Risks

6.1. The proposed budget would take the Area Council approximately £68,000 over budget pa for 2021/22. However taking into account the current under spend, the investment profiled in Appendix 1 would be feasible.

7. Next Steps

7.1. **With regards to the Health and Wellbeing Priority: Social Isolation and Low-Level Mental Health project. Members are asked to indicate if a commissioned service is required or if they wish to offer a grant opportunity which would be more accessible to the voluntary and community sector.**

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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Date:
11/05/2021

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 Cohesion 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