

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Council Meeting:

4th April 2016

Agenda Item: 6

**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 To identify how unallocated funding for 2016/17 will be utilised.
- 1.4 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 outcome and learning from the evaluation and approval process and agree to an amendment to the approval process.**
- 2.3 Members note the projects that have been approved for funding.**
- 2.4 Members agree the performance and monitoring arrangements outlined in Section 7.**
- 2.5 That Members note the unallocated £29,766.00 and agree on how the remainder of the funding will be utilised.**
- 2.6 That Members agree to a revision of the guidance documentation both for applicants and the panel that provides clear instruction to applicants with regards to year on year applications from the same organisation.**

3. Background

Having noted the success of the Stronger Communities Grant funded projects which have been delivered throughout 2015/16 it was agreed at the Area Council Meeting on the 21st September 2015 that the North Area would run the Stronger Communities Grant funding opportunity for the project delivery in 2016/17.

The NAC Stronger Communities Grant was established as a grants programme totalling £100,000 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 was launched at the end of November 2015 and the final date for submission of applications was the 12th February 2016. 8 applications were received, totalling £137,440.00.

The Grants Panel Member received their panel packs on Thursday 18th February. This included a paper copy of all the applications and 'Scoring Matrix' top sheet for each application which needed to be completed.

Each ward was represented on the panel as follows:

Darton East	Cllr Harry Spence
Darton West	Cllr Sharon Howard
Old Town	Cllr Liz Grundy
St Helen's	Cllr Sarah Tattersall

4. Recommended Projects

The Members had an opportunity to independently score each application before meeting for the Evaluation Panel on Monday 29th 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's Lead Locality Officer. The approval process can found as Appendix 1.

4 applications were identified and submitted for approval by the Stronger Barnsley Locality Manager. The total allocated amount for these 4 projects was £70,234. This leaves £29,766.00 unallocated.

The recommended projects are as follows:

Ad Astra Barnsley CIC – Altering Perspectives: £19,940

The project consists of four strands: i) Living History which will involve working with school children and elderly residents to revisit the area industrial heritage. Considering how lifestyles have changed over the last 100 years. ii) Delivery of 80 personal health and social education sessions in North Area schools. iii) Run 15 engagement days, either family fun day or community days. iv) Family friendly volunteering with the young people already engaged with Ad Astra.

Emmanuel Methodist Church – Integrate: £19,908

The principle aim of the project is to provide a series of appropriate activities so that different ages in the local community can engage in and benefit from, a sense of community belonging and cohesion. There will be a range of activities provided, ranging from inter-generational IT workshops to craft workshops and one off events, designed for older people as well as children and young people, and, in particular, opportunities for different generations to be together. There are three outcomes: i) Activity groups which enable young people to meet with their peers in a safe environment engaging in structured activities. Inc. delivery of workshops focussing on well-being, especially self-esteem and aspiration. ii) Intergenerational activities iii) Provide activities and partnership opportunities to increase the awareness of environmental concerns

Reds in the Community: £10,593

The Fit Reds programme is delivered through a series of weekly sessions over the course of nine weeks. Through the Fit Reds programme, Fit Reds Health Trainers provide participants with information regarding diet, nutrition and healthy lifestyles along with vital one to one support. Fit Reds Physical Activity Coaches engage participants with physical activity suited to their individual needs. Using football and Barnsley Football Club as a hook, the programme supports men to make positive lifestyle changes and become more physically active. The programme will be available to 60 men across the North Area.

Royal Voluntary Service – Barnsley North Looking Out for Older People: £19,793

The project aims to tackle issues of health and wellbeing by working with older people to put together a package of support which will help find a way out of loneliness & isolation and to offer advice and signposting around other sources of help such as benefits entitlement, aids and adaptations etc. Their discussions will substantially be led by the older person themselves and will be used to put together a package of support aimed at reducing feelings of loneliness and isolation.

RVS will conduct at least 400 home visits to older people who have been identified as being at risk of loneliness and isolation.

RVS will create sustainability in 5 newly formed groups across the North Area.

RVS have stated as one of their outcomes that they will create 20 volunteering opportunities and recruit 5 volunteers by June 2016.

5. Lessons Learned

- i. The Panel noted that a significant time commitment is required to read and independently evaluate the applications.
- ii. It is vital that all Panel representatives score all the applications prior to the moderation meeting to enable a fair and efficient, transparent process to be conducted in a timely manner.
- iii. There needs to be a consensus decision from the Area Council regarding the eligibility of repeat applicants year on year. This would require an amendment to the guidance notes.
- iv. It was felt that for some of the applications The Panel had unresolved questions. It was recommended that for future years the recommendation and approval process should be in two parts: shortlisting and final moderation where the applicants are invited to attend a short interview to accommodate questions from The Panel.
- v. The Area Manager observed that the core purpose of the Stronger Communities Grant funding opportunity should be revisited prior to another round of the funding. This needs to be specifically linked to a projects ability to contribute to delivery of corporate and Area Council priorities.

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 grand funding.

7. Grant Awards and Performance Monitoring/Management

Once approved, all organisations will be notified and asked to sign an Award Agreement letter 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 2017/18.

8. Next steps

Members are asked to agree how the remainder of the funding will be utilised?
Two options have been identified:

- i. Advertise a second funding round for 2016/17. Making £29,766.00 available for projects.
- ii. Use the £29,766.00 to increase the size of the grant funding allocation for 2017/18 to £129,451.00, if the Area Council wish to run the grant funding opportunity for a third year.

Additionally, should the grant fund be available in 2016/17, the Area Council need to decide if repeat applications will be permissible provided they are contributing to corporate and North Area priorities. This may consider pilot projects which would be eligible to re-apply the following year if they are successful.

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Date:
02/03/2016

Appendix 1: North Area Council

Stronger Communities Grant 2016 - Approval Process

N.B. Suggested amendments in red.

