

BARNSLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

North Area Council Meeting:
29th November 2021

Agenda Item: 7

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. **Councillors are requested to note that final output figures for the Warm Connections Service delivered by DIAL Barnsley are included in the performance report. The service has concluded. (Full details Agenda Item 6)**
- 2.2. **Councillors are requested to note the ‘Connecting Communities’ grant panel has met and moderated all applications. (Full details Agenda Item 5)**
- 2.3. **The North Area Council should note the existing budget position the existing the funding commitments.**
- 2.4. **Councillors note the £20,000 Covid Recovery funding to support social inclusion and the recommendation to include this funding in the Stronger Communities Grant opportunity for 2022/23.**
- 2.5. **Councillors are requested to note the updated projected spend, appendix 1.**

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.

UPDATE: The Area Manager submitted as waivers as requested by the Area Council. This has been approved and new contract is in place for a further 12months delivery.

Risk: The Area Manager will update Members regarding the universal core offer of welfare advice is currently taking place. Any duplication will be highlighted at the earliest opportunity.

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. The current contract was tendered in autumn 2020. Twiggs Grounds Maintenance Ltd secured a two-year contract with the opportunity for a final one-year extension. The 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 current 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.

UPDATE: At the September 2021 meeting the Area Council committed to fund the post for the full 2 years. Enabling the Area Manager to extend the contract again until 18th October 2022.

ACTION REQUIRED: A review of performance will be necessary in the new year to establish if the Area Council wish to extend the contract for a further year from October 2022 – October 2023.

- 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. 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’.

At the March 2021 meeting of the Area Council the decision was made to review this priority area and hold a workshop to consider how this funding should be spent moving forwards.

UPDATE: This contract has now concluded. The Area Manager has included final outputs in the performance report – Agenda Item 6.

- 3.4 Health and Wellbeing – Connecting Communities Grant
At a series of workshops in 2021 the Area Council discussed the loneliness and isolation and the impact of Covid-19. In July 2021 it was agreed to fund a grant program for two years with a budget of £100,000 per annum.

The grant opportunity was advertised at the end of September 2021 and the final date for submission was the 22nd October 2021. A total of 9 applications were received before the deadline totalling £615,710.39.

Stage one moderation took place on the 1st November and 4 organisations were invited back to present their projects on the 8th November. 3 applications were recommended for funding. The total allocated amount for these 3 projects was £186,766.44.

Successful Projects:

- Age UK Barnsley – North Area Social Inclusion Service - £79,600.20
- DIAL Barnsley – Connection Hubs - £66,450.00
- Reds in the Community – Reds Connect - £40,716.24

Action: £13,233.56 remained unallocated and will be returned to the Area Council budget for forthcoming delivery.

- 3.5 Stronger Communities Grant –
The total funding available for 2021/22 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.

3.6 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 2020 meeting the Area Council requested to extend this provision by a further 6 months, January – June 2021. This work has continued with funding from the Stronger Communities grant 2021/22 and provision runs till November 2021.

3.7 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.

3.8 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, delivered by YMCA and Ad Astra.

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.

UPDATE: Grant agreements are in place with providers until October 2022. The Area Council will need to reach decision regarding the continuation of this project in March 2022.

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 varied during the 2020/21 year due to Covid-19 adjustments.
- 4.2. **The forecast for 2021/22 shows that the underspend** (including underspend from previous years) **was profiled to reduce to £66,781.00**. This is because the in-year balance exceeded the annual budget by approximately £34,500.00.
- 4.3. The Area Manager has identified additional funds totalling £20,000 which will be utilised to support the covid recovery and social isolation priority commitments of the Area Council. Hence the increase in underspend in the current budget projections.
- 4.4. 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 Cohesion 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
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
Connecting Communities Grant 2021-2024 £100,000 per annum for 2 years	£12,500
TOTAL	£434,500

- 4.5. Provided that the Area Council continues to commit funding as outlined in Appendix 1, the total spend profiled for 2021/22 is £434,500.00
- 4.6. **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 overall grant value for the Stronger Communities Grant from £20,000 to £40,000 over 2022-23.

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. This programme was varied at the April 2021 meeting.

6. Risks

- 6.1. The proposed budget would take the Area Council approximately £34,500.00 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. Future commissioning is on hold until the outcome of the welfare reform review is known. This will inform the commissioning budget and subsequent project development.
- 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:
16th November 2021

Appendix 1: North Area Council Proposed expenditure April 2021-March 2024

Project / Service				
	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Anti- Poverty – Community Outreach <i>Retender Anti- Poverty APRIL 2021 Contract Start - Sept 2021</i>	95,000.00	95,000.00	95,000.00	95,000.00
Creating a Cleaner, Greener Environment in Partnership with Local <i>People - Retender Oct 2020 Contract Start - April 2021</i>	85,000.00	85,000.00	85,000.00	85,000.00
Housing and Cohesion Officer – Grade 6 (+laptop and phone)	35,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00	35,000.00
Stronger Communities Grant	50,000.00	40,000.00	-	-
Youth Resilience Fund (November 2020 - Ocotber 2022 - YMCA & Ad Astra)	45,000.00	90,000.00	45,000.00	-
Social Isolation and Cold Homes Project (+ hOurbank) 2018-2020 (+1year) £75,000 + £10,000	85,000.00	40,000.00	-	-
Connecting Communities Social Isolation Grant (£100,000 pa for 2 years)	-	12,500.00	92,000.00	82,500.00
Devolved funding to Ward Alliances <i>(where March 2019 balance is less than £10,000)</i>	-	20,000.00	20,000.00	-
The Fleets - Nature Park	20,000.00	10,000.00	-	-
Covid - Age UK	10,000.00	7,000.00		
TOTAL	425,000.00	434,500.00	372,000.00	297,500.00