

BARNSLEY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

North Area Council Meeting:
14th March 2022

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. **The North Area Council should note the existing budget position the existing the funding commitments.**
- 2.2. **Councillors discuss the Anti-Poverty Outreach IAG provision in relation to the Welfare Advice Review; confirming if they wish to fund the IAG provision until the end of the calendar year 2022.**
- 2.3. **That Councillors note the progress with the 2022/23 Stronger Communities Grant opportunity. (Full details in Item 4).**
- 2.4. **Councillors are requested to confirm the commitment to extend the Youth Resilience Grant funding for the original 3 years. It is proposed that an additional 4th years funding be committed to the grant funding (Report reference 3.7)**
- 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, running until 13th September 2022.

Risk: The boroughwide review of welfare advice has been completed. It is currently recommended that the boroughwide core provision is increased and the offer is more equitable across the borough. The changes to provision will need to be agreed by Cabinet. It is proposed that the revised offer will be operational from January 2023.

These changes will mean that the offer in North will decline by nearly half the outreach provision if the North Area choose not to re-invest in this service.

Recommendation:

Short Term - That the North Area Council submit a waiver and obtain a minimum 3-month contract extension, value up to £26,000. To ensure provision is in place until 13th December 2022.

Long Term – The North Area Council discuss it they wish to supplement the boroughwide offer, by means of additional Information Advice and Guidance provision. This could take the form of additional hours or empowerment and confidence building

3.1 The Clean and Green Service

Contract one was delivered by Forge Community Partnership commenced on the 14th September 2015. Prior to the end of the contract the tender opportunity was advertised.

The second environmental contract commenced on the 2nd October 2017 at a value of £85,000 per annum. The provider, Twiggs Grounds Maintenance Ltd, 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 reaffirmed the commitment to fund the post for the full 2 year duration. Enabling the Area Manager to extend the contract until 18th October 2022.

ACTION REQUIRED: Contractually the position is covered by a permanent contract to ensure employment rights for individuals. If the Area Council agreed to cease funding the position a 6-month notice period will be required.

A review of performance will be necessary to establish if the Area Council wish to commit funding for a further year from October 2022 – October 2023.

3.3 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

N.B.: £13,233.56 remained unallocated and will remain in the Area Council budget for forthcoming delivery.

3.4 Stronger Communities Grant 2021/22 –

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

3.5 Stronger Communities Grant 2022/23

For a full update please refer to Item 4.

3.6 Devolved Funding to Ward Alliances

The Area Council has profiled £20,000 to be devolved to Ward Alliances during 2022. This means a £5,000 allocation per ward where the end of yeas balance is less than £10,000.

N.B. Members are confirmed at the January 2022 meeting that they wish to make this allocation in 2022/23.

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 2020, 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 5 schools.

UPDATE: Grant agreements are in place with providers until October 2022. It is recommended that this funding is extended to until October 2024. This included the third year originally agreed and an additional year’s funding, a commitment of £90,000p.a., enabling the existing providers to support students adversely affected by Covid-19 and support them in their educational transitions, primarily the move to senior school.

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 to £82,609.00.**
- 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 2020/21 the underspend was reduced but not as much as originally intended. Hence the decision to continue the Stronger Communities Grant during 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 to support Covid recovery.

6. Commissioning Programme from April 2022

6.1. Due to the re-organisation of boroughwide Welfare support the North Area Council is currently reviewing it's priorities and (at time of writing) intends to hold a workshop on the 10th March to review current spend.

6.2. The Area Council will need to decide if it wishes to fund supplementary Welfare Advice and Guidance Sessions in the North Area or if the funds will be invested in alternative provision from September 2022.

7. Risks

7.1. The proposed budget would take the Area Council approximately £34,500.00 over budget per annum for 2021/22. However taking into account the current under spend, the investment profiled in Appendix 1 would be feasible.

8. Next Steps

8.1. **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.**

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.

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**Date:
25th February 2022**

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>Contract End - Sept 2022</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 - October 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 year-end 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