



Author/Lead Officer of Report: Diane Owens,
South LAC Community Services Manager

Report of: Community Services Manager
Report to: South Local Area Committee
Date of Decision: 12th October 2023
Subject: South LAC Budget 2023-24

Has appropriate consultation been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? 2368				
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<i>“The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”</i>				

Purpose of Report:

Each Local Area Committee has a budget to address local priorities, this report:

- Describes the funding allocated to the South LAC for 2023/24 and sets out proposals and options for its allocation and current expenditure, in line with the updated South LAC Community Plan.
- Outlines the reallocation of £11,250 which was carried forward from the South LAC budget for 2022/23 and outlines agreed spend

Recommendations:

That the South Local Area Committee:

- Approves the updated South LAC Community Plan for 2023/24 (Appendix A)
- Agrees the use of the 2023/24 LAC budget of £25,000 per ward (totalling £100,000 per LAC) as described in the report.
- Notes the proposed and current expenditure against the 2023-24 budget to address local priorities in the South LAC Community Plan, as detailed in the report.
- Notes the reallocation of £11,250 carry forward from the 2022-23 budget, as outlined in the report.
- Considers proposals in relation to the 2023/24 South LAC Cost of Living budget of £59,610 and makes any agreed decisions in relation to spend, as outlined in the report.

Background Papers:

Lead Officer to complete:-	
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.
	Finance: Adrian Hart
	Legal: Petra Der Man
	Equalities: Bev Law
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	Head of Service who approved submission: Carl Mullooly
3	LAC Chair consulted: Cllr Simon Clement-Jones
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Decision Maker by the Head of Service indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.
	Lead Officer Name: Diane Owens
	Job Title: South LAC Community Services Manager
Date: 2/10/23	

1. PROPOSAL

1.1 Background

Local Area Committees (LACs) were established by Full Council in May 2021. Their Terms of Reference are set out in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution and include:

- To agree a Community Plan setting priorities for the area of the committee, monitor delivery of that plan and keep it under review; and
- To make decisions relating to funding as delegated from time to time by the Council to fit with the priorities set out in the Community Plan and following engagement with the community.

In 2021 each LAC was allocated an initial budget of £100,000 to be spent in line with their Community Plan. The South Lac Community Plan was agreed in March 2022 and the unspent portion of the £100,000 budget was carried forward into 2022/23.

An updated South LAC Community Plan has been produced for 2023/24 (appendix A). This includes specific actions in terms of providing support for local businesses and shopping districts and supporting communities in terms of the cost of living. The revised Community Plan will form the basis of ongoing LAC funding decisions.

To enable decisions to be taken quickly and to respond to emerging issues, in September 2021 the LAC granted delegated authority to the Community Services Manager to make decisions on expenditure from any budgets allocated to the Local Area Committee provided that:

- The decision is taken in consultation with the Local Area Committee Chair
- Spending is in line with any specific purposes of the allocated budget
- The decision may not approve expenditure of more than £5,000
- A report detailing the delegated spending decisions taken by the Community Services Manager is presented to the next Local Area Committee meeting.

1.2

2023/24 budget allocation

Full Council resolved at the Budget Meeting in March 2023 that *“additional spending amounting to £25,000 per ward, overseen by ward councillors and delivered through the Local Area Committees process, is provided as an additional spend for 2023/24”*. Though not the intention, the effect of this resolution was that these monies were designated Ward Pot budgets. The intention to create LAC budgets has now been put into effect by a decision of the Finance Committee on 11th September 2023 to agree a virement of the full £700,000 into the LAC budget, amounting to £100,000 per LAC. This budget will be spent on projects benefiting all the wards in the South LAC area.

In relation to this budget, the South LAC is proposing the following:

- To treat the overall LAC budget of £100,000 as four ward budgets of £25,000, to be spent in line with South LAC Community Plan priorities.
- To reallocate an underspend of £11,250 from the 2022-23 budget, which was originally allocated to a street art project, to enable it to be allocated on other priorities during 2023-24 under the delegated powers given to the LAC;s.

In terms of proposed spend from the budget of £25,000 per ward, current proposals are as follows:

Under the South LAC Community Plan theme “Employment, Skills and Business” and the related outcome and action, as outlined below:

Outcome: Increased support for local business / shopping districts to increase footfall and vibrancy

Action: We will explore ways to support local business and shopping districts to help them continue to recover following covid and during the current cost of living challenges. This will include linking to the second round of Economic Recovery Funding in Sheffield (ERF2).

Graves Park Ward is proposing to allocate its budget of £25,000 to the “This is Woodseats” project which was brought together by local businesses and community representatives as a submission to the Economic Recovery Fund Round 2. Unfortunately, in September 2023 the group were made aware that their bid for £200,000 of funding was not successful. Considering this, Graves Park Ward members would like to allocate £25,000 to enable some elements of the project to still be delivered, specifically public realm improvements, such as benching and flower planters and / or hanging baskets. The full details of the project will be worked up in agreement with the group.

Graves Park Ward Members are also exploring the possibility of providing a small amount of additional match funding through their allocation of CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy). This will be discussed further with the group.

Under the South LAC Community Plan priority “Communities” and the linked outcome and action below.

Outcome: Increase support for communities with the cost of living (COL)

Action: We will work with local community, faith and voluntary sector organisations, including foodbanks and Welcome Spaces to support communities in terms of the financial challenges people are experiencing due to the high cost of living, with a specific focus on the winter months

Beauchief and Greenhill Members have allocated funding to the following projects. This has been agreed under the LAC’s delegated powers.

- £1,000 Beauchief Baptist Church, Costs of Electricity and Heating, Publicity, Refreshments, Craft Materials/ New games to continue to continue their “Warm Welcome Space Project”
- £800, Grace Food Bank, fresh food for foodbank clients at Christmas time.
- £970, The Terminus Initiative, to run Lowedges Community Christmas Dinner for 85 people
- £500, Meadowhead Christian Fellowship, to support the Edge Centre with running costs.
- £430, Millhouses, Ecclesall and Carter Knowle [MECK] Community Group, Welcoming Space, to provide chair-aerobics, refreshments and social time and to promote well-being and keeping people well.

These projects were all approved under the LAC’s delegated powers in consultation with the Chair on 21st September 2023.

In terms of the allocation of £25,000 per ward, this means a current balance as follows:

Beauchief & Greenhill - £21,300
 Gleadless Valley - £25,000
 Graves Park - £0
 Nether Edge & Sharrow - £25,000

In addition, the following further items to note have been agreed under delegated powers since the last meeting.

From the reallocated 2022-23 underspend of £11,250 the South Local Area Committee have agreed the following:

- £2,500 Operations budget
- £3,500 Low Edges Fun Day
- £3,000 Mocams project, additional fund for high specification camera, relocations and repairs
- £1,500 Capacity building project, additional funding to enable 1:1 support for 3 further local voluntary, community and faith sector organisations

These projects were all approved under the LAC’s delegated powers in consultation with the Chair on 7th September 2023. This comes to a spend total of £10,500 leaving a balance of £750 still to allocate.

This funding was reallocated from the street art project as alternative funding has been confirmed to enable the street art project to go ahead.

1.3 Cost of Living

In its budget setting the Council agreed a sum of £400,000, allocated by

the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and Vulnerable Household Score for LACs to support Cost of Living related work. Of this amount £59,610 was allocated to the South LAC.

In terms of supporting people with the cost of living. A proposal from CAS (Citizen Advice Sheffield) for £200,000 to appoint a temporary team (12 months) of 5 telephone-based advice workers was submitted to Sheffield City Council. The proposal was shared with the 7 LAC Chairs with a request that each LAC consider allocating 50% of their cost-of-living funding to support the project. For the South LAC this would be a contribution of £29,805. It was agreed that this proposal would be put to each Local Area Committee for their consideration and a decision.

To inform its decision making in relation to the cost-of-living funding, the South Local Area Committee held two discussion sessions and several conversations with local voluntary community and faith sector organisations, including foodbanks.

In summary the main consistent issues and suggestions being raised were:

- Key issues - heating, clothing, food, transport. Heating is a particular concern over winter. Foodbanks also raised challenges in terms of buying baby formula and nappies.
- Finance and benefits support / advice – VCFS groups are seeing a big increase in demand for advice and support linked to the closure of CAS offices and increasing levels of need. Priority for 1:1 advice is finance, debt, and benefits.
- Income maximisation – this needs to be a priority to try and address the root causes of poverty and give people income and independence.
- Budgeting – seeing a lot of people who would benefit from some support to develop basic budgeting skills.
- In person support that builds trust – this approach is much more likely unpick the full picture and root causes. People need quality advice from a professional to be able to navigate the benefits and housing support systems. In person support is vital to help overcome accessibility barriers e.g., digital inclusion, disability, language, confidence etc.
- Earlier support – providing support earlier is key to try and prevent an escalation of people’s circumstances, budget and finance advice were seen as vital to this.

Linked to these conversations, some further options for the committee to consider in relation to the cost-of-living were agreed as follows.

Cost of Living, South LAC Dedicated Post

Pilot Project with SCC Cost of Living Support Hub, 12 months

- Drop-in sessions at community groups and existing advice sessions e.g. Foodbanks, libraries, TARA’s, community groups

- Finance and benefits support and advice with appointments in person or telephone based
- Attending community groups, schools, GP practices, to discuss cost of living and benefits maximisation.
- Support with coordinating Cost of Living related work

Cost: £40,426

Shared Prosperity Fund, Community Development Workers
 Small budget to enable each of the workers employed by Terminus Initiative and Heeley Trust to set up and support small projects and support individuals with small amounts of spend linked to cost of living.
 Cost: £5,000 (based on £2,500 per worker)

Grants for 3 foodbanks that cover priority areas in the South LAC, Gleadless Valley, Nether Edge & Sharrow and Lowedges, Batemoor and Jordanthorpe. To enable them to buy priority items as required e.g., additional food supplies, baby products or support with transport or heating costs. To ensure this geographical coverage, grants could be awarded to Grace Foodbank, Gleadless Valley Foodbank and Nether Edge and Sharrow Foodbank.

Cost: £tbc

These proposals / options are being put forward to the South Local Area Committee for their consideration and a decision.

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

- 2.1 Local Area Committees directly support Communities and Neighbourhoods and Our Council commitments in the 'Our Sheffield: One Year Plan' but to be effective they need to have the capability to respond quickly to emerging local issues.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 The Community Plan has been developed through community consultation that has comprised of an online survey through the Council's Citizenspace platform; a paper-based survey for those less digitally enabled and to target underrepresented groups and engagement activities with representative organisations and in-person meetings.

Partner organisations and Council departments that have been identified as offering potential solutions to some of the issues identified have also been consulted, to establish whether suggestions can be realistically implemented.

Members of the South LAC have further reviewed the Community Plan over the last few months, including reflecting on the diverse range of community feedback that members received during the election period and from speaking to voluntary. community and faith sector organisations as appropriate.

This has resulted in two key changes to the plan, the “Employment & Skills” theme has been amended to include business “Employment, Skills & Business” and an additional action has been included which relates to supporting local businesses and shopping districts.

Under the “Communities” theme an action has been added which links to supporting communities in terms of the financial challenges people are experiencing due to the cost of living, with a specific focus on the upcoming winter months.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality of Opportunity Implications

4.1.1 Decisions need to consider the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

This is the duty to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following groups as a protected characteristic: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.

The overall impact of the proposals and decisions outlined in this report is likely to be positive and not negatively disproportionate from an equality, diversity and inclusion perspective.

However, in order to ensure this approach takes into account people who share protected characteristics under the Public Sector Duties priority projects from the Local Area Committee Community Plan will be supported by and EIA and appropriate equality monitoring of budget.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA 2368) is underway. The EIA focusses on the current agreed and proposed projects that could be supported through the 2023-24 South LAC budget, which has a strong emphasis on the cost of living. The South LAC will not lead on delivery of these projects, its role is as a funder, facilitator or partner, the EIA reflects this position.

The EIA has identified a potential disproportionate and positive impact on the following groups: disabled people, older people, women, communities

of colour and the trans community. This is due to higher levels of deprivation experienced by these groups.

The EIA has identified several actions for the South LAC Team to follow up with lead organisations. These mainly relate to communications, engagement and accessibility and inclusion.

The EIA will remain a live document, and so as new projects are identified or agreed the EIA will be reviewed and updated.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 This report concerns expenditure of the LAC's allocated budgets. A reallocation of £11,250 which was carried forward from 2022/23, £100,000 for 2023-24 (based on £25,000 per ward) and £59,610 for cost-of-living activities in 2023/24. These budgets must not be exceeded.

Procurement of supplies and/or services and the awarding of grant aid will be carried out in line with the Council's Contracts Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

4.3 Legal Implications

- 4.3.1 The LAC must operate in accordance with its Terms of Reference, approved as part of the Council's updated Constitution, reflecting the committee system of governance, agreed by Members at its Annual Meeting on 18th May 2022. In accordance with the provisions of section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Constitution provides that a Committee may delegate to a Council Officer.

5. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 The LAC could choose not to review the priorities in the Community Plan, but this would risk the Plan being out of date.

The LAC could choose not to allocate budgets at this stage, but in particular in relation to the cost-of-living funding, this would delay support getting to communities.

6. **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 The South LAC is asked to note the use of funding under delegated powers and agree any further expenditure to address the identified local priorities.

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