

North Somerset Council Decision

DECISION OF: COUNCILLOR MARK CANNIFORD. THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR PLACEMAKING AND ECONOMY

WITH ADVICE FROM: DIRECTOR OF PLACE AND DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES (S151 OFFICER).



Decision No: 21/22 DP 95

Subject: Approval to bid for Community Renewal Funding

Key Decision: NO

Reason: Bids for funding are not considered key decisions. If successful any further authorities required will be made in line with the council's financial regulations and/or contract standing orders and may be considered key decisions.

Background:

As designated Lead Authority for the North Somerset area, North Somerset Council intends to apply to the Government's Community Renewal Fund. This Executive Member Decision is needed to approve submission for the funding of up to £3m of revenue.

The Community Renewal Fund support our communities to pilot programmes and new approaches ahead of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund supporting innovative responses to local challenges and local need across the UK, spanning urban, rural and coastal areas.

As per the Government's guidelines the Council has undertaken an open and transparent shortlisting process, inviting proposals from organisations interested in delivering projects which meet the national investment priorities of:

- investment in skills
- investment in local business
- investment in communities and place
- supporting people into employment

As well as the local priorities of:

- inclusion and equality and thriving towns
- villages and coastal communities

The final package of proposals is made up from a range of organisations working in collaboration which have been assessed by a range of NSC officers and independent experts to best deliver against the eligibility criteria. A summary of shortlisted projects has not been included with this decision as we have not yet informed project applicants of the outcome from the shortlisting. Once NSC have spoken with all project applicants a summary of proposals will be published on the website. The council can choose to not bid for CRF

funding at all or can submit a package of any value up to £3m. An initial review of the submitted applications shows it is likely that the submitted package will be very close to the maximum £3m package.

Decision:

To approve the North Somerset package of proposals for submission to the Community Renewal Fund.

Reasons:

To bid for funding which, if successful, will help to deliver the objectives Council's strategic recovery plans (The Economic Plan, The Employment and Skills Strategy and the Weston Placemaking Strategy)

Options Considered:

Not to apply – rejected due to the need to secure funding for economic recovery and deliver our strategic objectives.

Financial Implications:

This Executive Member Decision does not financially commit North Somerset Council to additional expenditure. If the package is successful in securing funding 2% costs from each project can be used to support internal management and administration going forward.

Costs:

None

Funding:

N/A

Legal Powers and Implications:

There is no statutory requirement to bid for this funding.

Climate Change and Environmental Implications:

As per the Government guidance Net Zero ambitions represent a key objective of the funding. Proposals have been asked to demonstrate the extent of contribution to net zero objectives or wider environmental considerations they can make. Projects should be based on low or zero carbon best practice, adopt and support innovative clean tech where possible and support the growing skills and supply chains in support of Net Zero where possible. As a minimum, investment under this fund should meet the clean growth principle and must not conflict with the UK's legal commitment to cut greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050.

Consultation:

The invitation to bid was published on the Council's corporate website and a free to attend workshop was held to provide applicants with information on the fund, an opportunity to ask questions and provide key contact points should they have further queries. The Economy Team's email address has been made available for ongoing enquiries about the funding.

Risk Management:

Risks of the decision:

- 1) Delivery timescales – the CRF has tight delivery timescales (award in July/ August 2021 with delivery by March 2022). There is a risk projects are unable to deliver within the stated timescale.
Mitigation: Projects are asked to consider this during application stage and responses will be reviewed, due diligence will be undertaken on the lead applicants and, if successful, a funding agreement will be set up between NSC and the lead applicants to ensure they remain accountable for the delivery of stipulated outputs.

Risks of not approving the proposed action

- 1) NSC is unable to secure alternative funding to deliver key elements of its economic recovery strategy
- 2) Reputational risk – as the Lead Authority this funding provides an opportunity for other organisations to secure investment to deliver their objectives. If we do not submit a proposal or consider their applications fairly this could create reputational damage with partners.

Equality Implications:

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? No, however each project is asked to consider the equalities impacts as part of their project proposals. As part of the national evaluation we will be expected to look at the equalities impact of the programme of activity.

Corporate Implications:

Human resources and Procurement - In order to prepare the Council for both delivering proposals (we are an applicant as well as providing the shortlisting function) as well as being ready to manage the funding we will need to undertake procurement and recruitment activity ahead of funding being awarded. This has been agreed via discussion with Corporate Leadership Team. Appointments will not be made unless funding is secured, but this gives us the best chance to deliver in the tight timescales required.

Appendices:

None

Background Papers:

None

Signatories:**Decision Maker(s):**

Signed:


Executive Member for Placemaking and Economy

Date: 22 June 2021

With Advice From:

Signed:  Director of Place

Date: 17 June 2021

Signed:  Director of Corporate Services (s151 Officer)

Date: 17 June 2021.