

Big Local Thurnscoe

Community Plan and Budget Forecast 2017/2018



Introduction

Following our partnership review and extensive discussions at BLT partnership meetings, we have produced a budgetary forecast in line with our slightly revised community plan for 2017/2018. What follows is a brief rationale of the budget headings of the plan to explain how we arrived at the figures, and how the summaries are broken down into sub-headings. We recognise that the proposed budget represents a significant increase in expenditure over the next 2 years, but feel this is in line with our capacity to manage bigger projects such as the housing and environmental proposals. We are also keen to gain approval for a 2 year period to allow the partnership a more sustained period to realise some of the more ambitious projects that we will be undertaking over the next 2 years. We are confident that what follows is in line with the original plan and guided by our 3 key priorities.

The plan has naturally changed in focus since it was originally written but retains most of the key projects with a few notable exceptions; plans for a shuttle bus has been overtaken by an excellent community transport service operating throughout South Yorkshire and the land earmarked for a market is private land that has now been sold for development. We have also dropped the idea of a Big Local shop front as not only are there no suitable properties in the village, but having our Development Worker based at Thurnscoe Library serves as a good point of contact for residents. It was felt at the review that plans for a warden service are also not required due to increased support now available to elderly residents, although we may target some support to elderly residents via our Small Grants fund or through our 3 smaller funding pots if we feel it is appropriate. Similarly, it is felt that plans to introduce a bespoke Credit Union service to Thurnscoe can be supported in this way, and may be part of wider plans in the future to support the economic regeneration of the area. On a practical level, the proposed calendar of events is now incorporated into our newsletter and through making use of our community notice board.

Some areas have been expanded to allow for greater flexibility; this includes money to move the play park which is now a much bigger pot to improve the stock of play and recreational leisure equipment across the village, and the fund for doing up houses for social benefit has been increased in line with more realistic costings, and moved through to years 4/5 due to the later start of this project.

Budget Headings

1. Development Worker

The partnership is committed to keeping a Development Worker for at least the next 2 years although this was not in the original Years 3 and 4 budgets. It is felt that the capacity of the partnership is strengthened by having a paid worker, and the revised costings submitted reflect the requirement to include an allowance for redundancy pay liable after 2 years continuous service, and any pay increments due in line with BCB employment procedures.

2. Social Housing Project

We are determined to get our housing project off the ground in 2017 and to do this we feel we need an initial injection of capital (150k) to purchase housing/ land and materials followed by regular 'maintenance' amounts of 50k for the next 3 quarters for refurbishment, trainee costs and selling fees required to get housing up to standard and available to residents. We would like to include an element of support for local traineeships as this has been successful in our neighbouring Big Local area of Goldthorpe and Bolton.

It is hoped that a percentage of any subsequent sales or rental income will be invested back into this budget heading via the arms length management company that will be set up to manage this project on our behalf. We will be taking advice from Local Trust and our LTO Barnsley Community Build to achieve this.

3. Environmental Projects

We have significantly increased the pot of money available to us for this budget heading following our review where we agreed that this was an area where we could have a considerable impact on the built environment and green space of Thurnscoe.

It was also felt that it is timely for us to invest capital monies in play equipment and street furniture as this will complement other work being carried out by partners including BMBC to promote the regeneration of Thurnscoe. We are confident that after the next 2 years we will have transformed the green space of the village and plan to enter national competitions to gain recognition for our work. In this way we will be raising the profile of Big Local and improving the quality of life for many more residents. We are also considering setting up our green space sub group as a constituted group so that we are eligible to apply for the many funding pots available for environmental work.

We have created 4 sub-headings to encompass the range of green space work that we have planned; Play Equipment, Floral Displays, Incredible Edible Thurnscoe and

Environmental Clean-ups. Play equipment will encompass all structural installation of recreational play and fitness equipment across at least 4 sites in the village. We will be working in partnership with BMBC parks department to ensure we comply fully with all regulations and where possible to maximise additional budgets available.

The Floral Displays that we established in 2016 have been so positively received that we plan to extend these across the village and also introduce hanging baskets that will be installed and maintained by a local company.

We are planning to re-launch Incredible Edible Thurnscoe in the spring of 2017 with a new site that will bring many new volunteering opportunities for BLT. We plan to replicate this work on a new site in 2018. This model will need more funding in the first 6 months of each year as we purchase raised beds and carry out hard landscaping of the site, followed by a smaller maintenance amount for planting.

We were asked to support environmental clean-ups in the village by our local Dearne Area Team and agreed that it is a further way that we can maximise our budget for the benefit of the wider community. We have allocated 1.5k every 6 months to ensure that we can reach every area of the village over the next 2 year period.

4. Community Events

As community events remains one of BLT's most successful ventures, we have retained the funding to cover the Spring Show, Beach Party and Winter Wonderland events and increased funding to include smaller events such as the Fishing Competition at the Reservoir, and other opportunities that may arise. We feel it remains a priority to encourage the community to access existing attractions and outdoor space in Thurnscoe as this not only promotes social cohesion but also contributes towards the health and wellbeing agenda. Over the next 2 years we will work towards making our flagship community events more sustainable by looking at income generation, additional funding streams and sponsorship.

5. Community Information

We have budgeted an initial 3k for the first half of 2017 to fund the development of a new website for the partnership as we feel the existing one is no longer fit for purpose. We are also committed to improving access in and around Thurnscoe by commissioning improved signage for the village. To achieve this we will be working alongside the Dearne Valley Landscape Partnership which has a wider remit across the Dearne; this will enable us to maximise the funding we have available.

The funding for our newsletter and publicity/ marketing remains consistent in line with existing spend and we are committed to retaining the high quality that we have established- this reflects the more professional approach that we now have.

6. Project Running Costs

This heading covers the cost of rental of office space for the Development Worker at the Dearne Electronic Community Village at Thurnscoe Library, and for incidental expenditure such as travel and mobile phone usage.

7. Small Grants

Following an acknowledgement from the partnership that this funding pot works hard to reach out to community groups in the village and support relatively small scale projects, we have decided to increase this to 2 rounds a year. There is also a commitment this year to support enterprise and entrepreneurship in the village and we will be looking to pilot this in 2017 using our small grants funding.

8. Getting and Keeping People Involved

We have found this to be a useful heading to cover a range of expenditure relating to engaging with residents. This may range from refreshments at consultation events to small signs to promote Big Local work in the community. We have spread the 4k allocation out evenly over the 2 years.

9. Making it Happen

Again this is a flexible funding pot that allows us to respond to opportunities as they arise over the year and so is invaluable in realising our priorities in a variety of ways. This also has a total of 4k spread out over 2 years.

10. Partnership Development

Whilst many members of the partnership feel that there is less of a need to attend training/ development opportunities we would like to retain an small amount of funding to cover the cost of any training that members would like to enable them to fulfil their roles more effectively. We have allowed up to 1k per year for this.

11. Contribution to costs

This remains a separate heading reflecting the work carried out on our behalf by our LTO.

Alison Vint: Big Local Thurnscoe Development Worker