

# **North Yorkshire Council**

## **Corporate and Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**5 June 2023**

### **Annual Review of Councillor Locality Budgets 2022/23**

#### **1. Purpose of the report**

- 1.1. To review the operation of Councillor Locality Budgets in the financial year 2022/23.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1. Locality Budgets enable Councillors to respond to local needs by recommending the allocation of small amounts of funding to support projects or activities that directly promote the social, economic or environmental wellbeing of the communities they represent.
- 2.2. The Locality Budgets scheme seeks to ensure that Councillors have a clear role in the allocation of funding in their Division within the criteria and process agreed by the Executive. This role includes actively promoting the scheme within their Division so that the money is allocated to meet appropriate local needs.
- 2.3. Because the allocation of funding is an executive decision, decisions are made by the Executive Member with responsibility for Locality Budgets, taking into account the information received and the recommendation of the relevant Councillor.
- 2.4. Transparency is a significant feature of the scheme:
- Councillors are required to declare all relevant interests when making a recommendation, including membership or other connections with organisations that will benefit from or manage a Locality Budget award
  - Awards are published on the Council website at <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/community-and-volunteering/county-councillor-locality-budgets>

#### **3. Summary of approved recommendations in 2022/23**

- 3.1. A summary of the Locality Budgets scheme operated by North Yorkshire County Council in 2022/23 is attached as appendix 1.
- 3.2. The first date for the receipt of recommendations was 13 June 2022 and the last date was 31 January 2023.
- 3.3. 623 recommendations were approved, an average of just under seven recommendations per County Councillor.
- 3.4. 597 projects and activities were supported in total. This is slightly less than the number of approved recommendations because the scheme allows more than one County Councillor to support a project or activity.

- 3.5. The funding committed in the year was £870,012 (96.67% of budget). The average recommendation was £1,396, the lowest £300 (the minimum allowed) and the maximum was £5,000 (the maximum allowed).
- 3.6. A list of all approved recommendations is attached as appendix 2 and a summary of committed funding by County Councillor is attached as appendix 3.
- 3.7. 58.42% of the funding was committed to projects and activities managed by not for profit organisations (including charities and voluntary organisations), 28.49% to parish and town councils, 7.11% to NYCC directorates for additional services over and above mainstream budgets and 5.98% to schools. A breakdown of committed funding by type of organisation is attached as appendix 4.
- 3.8. The funding was committed to a very broad range of types of projects and activities, with the largest amounts for projects and activities involving; Support for Vulnerable Adults (10.60%), Groups for Children & Young People (8.92%), Village & Community Hall Improvements (8.54%), Community Safety (8.06%), Public Space Improvements (7.26%) and Environmental Improvements - including in-bloom projects (6.53%). A breakdown of committed funding by type of project or activity is attached as appendix 5.

#### **4. Impact**

- 4.1. The aim of the scheme is to enable Councillors to respond to local needs by recommending the allocation of small amounts of funding to support projects or activities that directly promote the social, economic or environmental wellbeing of the communities they represent.
- 4.2. Measured against this aim, the scheme has had a positive impact. During 2022/23, the scheme supported 597 projects and activities that improved the social, economic or environmental wellbeing of local communities in North Yorkshire.
- 4.3. However, the very wide variety of projects and activities supported and the need to ensure that the costs of monitoring are not disproportionate makes it impossible to meaningfully measure or directly compare the impact of individual projects and activities.
- 4.4. Councillors are provided with a copy of completed monitoring forms in respect of their recommendations so that they are aware of the impact of each project or activity and can take this into account when making future recommendations. Monitoring forms and appropriate supporting evidence are also reviewed by officers. Any concerns about potential fraud or financial irregularity are dealt with in accordance with standard Council procedures.

#### **5. Equality**

- 5.1. An equality impact assessment was undertaken before the scheme was introduced and reviewed in 2017. No adverse impacts were anticipated, and none have any been identified since.
- 5.2. The scheme states that funding will not be approved for projects or activities that are contrary to the Council's equality, diversity and inclusion policy. Organisations also have to agree to meet all relevant legislation before receiving funding.

#### **6. Arrangements for 2023/24**

- 6.1. The budget allocation per Councillor for 2023/24 is £10,000.

- 6.2. Councillors have been able to make recommendations from 3 April 2023 and the last date for the receipt of recommendations will be 31 January 2024.
- 6.3. The Locality Budgets scheme for 2023/24 is attached as appendix 6.

**7. Recommendation**

- 7.1. That the Committee considers and comments on the operation of Councillor Locality Budgets during the 2022/23 financial year.

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Presented by –  
Rachel Joyce  
Assistant Chief Executive for Localities  
05 June 2023

Appendix 1 – North Yorkshire County Council Locality Budgets scheme 2022/23  
Appendix 2 – Approved recommendations in 2022/23  
Appendix 3 – Committed funding by County Councillor in 2022/23  
Appendix 4 – Committed funding by type of organisation in 2022/23  
Appendix 5 – Committed funding by type of project or activity in 2022/23  
Appendix 6 – North Yorkshire Council Locality Budgets scheme 2023/24