

# Delivering Big Local

This document sets out four different approaches that Big Local areas are taking to deliver Big Local plans, once these have been endorsed. These approaches were recorded during research carried out for us by the Community Development Foundation (CDF). You can read more about the research [here](#), together with some case studies.

## Introduction

Each Big Local partnership needs to work with its locally trusted organisation(s) to deliver Big Local, in line with the Big Local grant terms and conditions signed by your locally trusted organisation(s). This might mean that the partnership uses the delivery mechanisms already in place with the locally trusted organisation(s), rather than developing new ones or adapting existing ones.

Just as most Big Local partnerships work in various ways with their locally trusted organisation(s) to suit their area, priorities and plan, you can also use various approaches to deliver Big Local. Please make sure, though, that your locally trusted organisation(s) can use them too, within their own rules and governing documents.

The four different approaches identified by the CDF research are:

- **Co-working** – working in partnership with an existing organisation, usually based in the area and working in a way that meets Big Local priorities.
- **Co-creating** – developing a project to meet an agreed need in the area, with the involvement of a range of people and/or organisations.
- **Bidding** – having individuals/organisations apply for grant funding to deliver activities to contribute towards your Big Local vision and priorities.
- **Commissioning** an organisation to deliver a project, activity or service, tailored to the Big Local area.

## Co-working

A core part of Big Local is about building relationships with a wide range of people; community groups, charities, organisations, businesses and public agencies. You might find that some of them share your aspirations for the area and might already be delivering a project, activity or service that benefits it.

Big Local funding could be used to enhance what they already provide. An enhanced project, activity or service might reach more or different people, run for longer or bring added value. In this scenario, Big Local money is additional to the existing funding for the project, activity or service. For example: where access to fair finance and high levels of debt is a real local concern, if the credit union or housing association is providing general advice and support, Big Local funding could be used to enhance that service with one-to-one debt-advice sessions, or workshops on good money management.



You will need to think about:

- identifying suitable partners
- ensuring that the project, activity or service suits the area's needs
- the responsibilities and roles of those involved in making decisions – how are decisions made?
- how contracts or grants are managed, monitored and reported on.

The advantages of this approach are that it:

- draws on the skills, learning and experience of others
- helps you to build contacts and networks
- might contribute more to the area, including matching and in-kind funding.

## Co-creating

In a co-creating approach your Big Local partnership might work with a range of people, organisations and groups to create or design a new project, activity or service, using your combined resources. In this model, people who might be described as 'providers' and 'users' work together, pooling different kinds of knowledge and skills. For example, if activities for young people or children are a priority within your plan, the Big Local partnership might decide to involve young people, community groups, service providers and others to create a new service or activity.

If you use a co-create approach, you could:

1. Identify and involve relevant stakeholders, including people who:
  - will use the project, activity or service, now and in the future
  - have a contribution to make as well as people who are currently involved in Big Local
  - have a keen interest in the activity but are not necessarily involved in Big Local.
2. Build on existing resources:
  - identify your existing resources, including knowledge, experience, skills and abilities, influence and connections
  - look at what already exists and is working well.
3. Identify and agree what you are trying to achieve and develop solutions. This might include generating and testing ideas.

The advantages of this approach:

- it is tailored to your area's needs
- it may help you address more than one priority in your plan
- it could save money and resources
- it takes into account the existing skills and knowledge among people and organisations you already know and can work with.



The challenges of this approach:

- it may require more time to develop than other approaches
- you may need to identify new partners to support or deliver your plan.

## Bidding

Your Big Local plan will set out your priorities or themes, and these will guide how you use your funding over the next few years. But while you might have agreed the maximum funding for a particular priority or theme, you may not know exactly what and who you might fund. So you might want to use a bidding approach - to invite people and organisations to bid to you for funding to meet the priority or theme.

There are various ways you could decide what to fund: for example, by running an application or small-grant process, or through participatory budgeting or a 'dragon's den' style event. You can find more information on participatory budgeting here: <http://pbnetwork.org.uk/> and information on how to run a community grants scheme [here](#).

If you are considering a bidding process, think about setting up:

- a clear and suitable application form – keep it short
- a good monitoring and reporting procedure, to ensure activities or projects achieve what they set out to do
- funding agreements with the successful groups, organisations or individuals
- a feedback process for applications that were unsuccessful, that doesn't make people feel negative about Big Local.

The benefits of this approach:

- it allows you to grant fund a number of projects at the same time
- it increases visibility of Big Local
- it is a good opportunity to get a range of people involved in decisions about Big Local funding
- it may take less time, as other organisations and individuals deliver the project or activities for you.

## Commissioning

Commissioning is a decision-making process that usually involves the procurement (buying) of projects, activities or services by competitive tendering for contracts (not grants). It is commonly used by local authorities. An 'invitation to tender' is when organisations are told they can compete for work by submitting a proposal and a budget. This is often used by Big Local areas that know roughly what they want, but not who they might use to deliver it.

Your published invitation to tender might include the following:

1. The background to Big Local



2. Projects, activities, goods and/or services required: what the work will involve, and any technical specifications or details of what is needed, what will be delivered and what the results will be
3. Core requirements such as qualifications, experience, or any other needs that must be met
4. Your evaluation criteria: how you will assess the submissions
5. The content and format of submissions: how submissions should be presented, such as their length and format (word document, PDF, short film)
6. A deadline for submission: where and when it should be submitted, and what it must include, such as clear pricing information or a schedule, and contact details for enquiries.

If you use this approach, think about:

- how the project, activity, goods and/or service are tailored to the needs of your area
- your knowledge and understanding of what is required
- how contracts are managed and monitored
- communication between partners about responsibilities and roles
- factoring the cost of VAT into your budget.

The advantages of this approach are that:

- it can be managed by your locally trusted organisation
- it takes less time to commission an organisation or individual to deliver a project, activity, goods and/or service, because the partnership simply selects the supplier
- it builds knowledge of project management among members of the partnership
- it allows the partnership to build contacts and networks.

## Further advice

Big Local partnerships should always talk in advance with their locally trusted organisation(s) about how they want to deliver the projects, activities, and services in their plan, to see what is possible and what their locally trusted organisation can suggest as ways forward.

General guidance is available online to charities. Here are two resources you may find useful.

[Sayer Vincent](#) has a helpful document on the difference between grants, contracts and servicelevel agreements and on the locally trusted organisation's responsibility to use Big Local funding appropriately

[KnowHowNonProfit](#) is an online resource for nonprofit people to learn and share what they have learnt with others.



This document will be developed over time with input from the people using this material.

If you have thoughts on how this document can be made more useful for you, particularly if you live in one of the Big Local areas, please let us know.

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**If you need this document in other formats or a community language please get in touch with Local Trust and we will help you.**

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