

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD – 25TH JANUARY 2017

Report of the Budget Scrutiny Panel

ITEM 7 BUDGET SCRUTINY PANEL

Purpose of the Report

To report the findings and consider the recommendations of the Budget Scrutiny Panel.

Action Requested

1. That the Scrutiny Management Board considers the content and recommendations in the Budget Scrutiny Panel report, attached as an Annex, and, if satisfied with the report, submit it to the Cabinet.
2. That the Board considers the recommendations of the Panel in respect of the process for developing and scrutinising the Council's budget in future years at its meeting scheduled for 29th March 2017.

Background

In accordance with the decisions of the Scrutiny Management Board at its meeting on 23rd March 2016, a Budget Scrutiny Panel, chaired by Councillor Miah, has undertaken scrutiny of the Council's budget for 2017/18. The Panel's first meeting took place on 4th October 2016 and the Panel concluded its business in respect of the 2017/18 draft budget at its meeting on 3rd January 2017.

The Panel has made recommendations regarding the process for developing and scrutinising the Council's budget in future years (Panel recommendation 6 refers). The Board is due to consider the budget scrutiny process at its meeting on 29th March 2017. It is therefore recommended that the Board considers the Panel's recommendations and officer advice regarding those recommendations at that meeting.

Background Papers

As identified in the Panel's report, attached as an Annex.

Officer to Contact: Helen Tambini
Democratic Services Officer
(01509) 634969
helen.tambini@charnwood.gov.uk

REPORT OF THE BUDGET SCRUTINY PANEL – 2017/18 DRAFT BUDGET

1. Background

Following a decision of the Scrutiny Management Board at its meeting on 23rd March 2016, the Budget Scrutiny Panel has undertaken scrutiny of the Council's budget for 2017/18.

2. Panel Membership

Chair: Councillor Miah

Councillors Bebbington, Gerrard, Jukes, Parsons, Seaton and Smidowicz

3. Meetings and Terms of Reference

The Scrutiny Management Board agreed a budget scrutiny process for the Panel setting out the timing of its meetings and discussion topics as follows:

Panel Meeting 1

4th October 2016, following publication of the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

Panel discussion topics:

1. How the Medium Term Financial Strategy was constructed for 2017 to 2020.
2. Key assumptions and sensitivities within the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
3. Projected financing shortfall within the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
4. The proposed approach being adopted in constructing the draft 2017/18 budget (to be presented to Cabinet in December 2016).

Informal Meeting/Discussion (All members of the Panel)

6th December 2016, following publication of the Cabinet report setting out the draft budget for 2017/18.

Discussion topics:

1. Identify potential areas where the Panel might wish to focus its scrutiny of the draft budget 2017/18.

2. Agree invitees for the next formal meeting of the Panel (3rd January 2017) to ensure appropriate Directors and Heads of Service were in attendance.
3. Consider input from Loughborough Councillors in respect of the Loughborough Special Expenses element of draft budget 2017/18.

To assist with this item the notes of the informal meetings with Loughborough Councillors held on 20th July and 15th November 2016 in respect of the Loughborough Special Expenses were reviewed.

Panel Meeting 2

3rd January 2017

Panel discussion topics:

- General Fund service areas identified as being significantly impacted by draft budget proposals (with relevant Heads of Service and Directors in attendance).
- Housing Revenue Account – overview of budget.
- Any proposed uses of reserves (balances).
- Loughborough Special Expenses – overview of budget.
- Other matters identified in the course of the informal meeting of the Panel in December 2016.

Possible outcomes of Panel discussion:

- Recommendations to Cabinet regarding changes to the budget to be considered when the final version of the 2017/18 budget is submitted in February 2017 after consultation.
- Recommendations to Cabinet regarding changes to the process for developing the budget in future years.

In accordance with the above, the Budget Scrutiny Panel met formally on 4th October 2016 and 3rd January 2017 and informally on 6th December 2016.

4. Information and Officers

The Panel considered the following information in undertaking its scrutiny:

- Report of the Head of Finance and Property Services setting out the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2017 to 2020 which had been agreed by Cabinet on 22nd September 2016.

- Report of the Head of Finance and Property Services setting out the updated version of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017 to 2020 considered by the Cabinet on 17th November 2016 and considered by Council on 23rd January 2017.
- Report of the Head of Finance and Property Services setting out the draft General Fund and HRA Budgets 2017/18 considered by the Cabinet on 15th December 2016.
- Supplementary reports of the Head of Neighbourhood Services, providing information requested by the Panel at its informal meeting in respect of the work of the Voluntary and Community Sector Development Officer and Loughborough Community Grants.

All of above information is available at:

https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/committees/budget_scrutiny_panel_or
[http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/committees/cabinet.](http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/committees/cabinet)

At the meeting on 3rd January 2017, the following officers attended the meeting to assist the Panel in undertaking its scrutiny:

Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces
 Head of Landlord Services
 Head of Neighbourhood Services
 Neighbourhoods and Partnerships Manager

The Panel was supported by S. Jackson – Strategic Director of Corporate Services and C. Hodgson – Head of Finance and Property Services.

5. Summaries of Panel Meetings

The following summarises the matters considered at each meeting of the Panel:

A. 4th October 2016

The Panel noted its Terms of Reference. In particular, the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2017/18 to 2019/20 considered by Cabinet on 22nd September 2016 was discussed.

Outcome of Panel discussions

The Panel had no recommendations to submit to the Cabinet in respect of the draft MTFS or the preparation of the draft 2017/18 budget.

B. 6th December 2016 (informal meeting)

The Panel met to identify potential areas where it might wish to focus its scrutiny of the 2017/18 budget, and the officers it wished to invite to assist with that. To do so, the Panel considered the draft General Fund and HRA budgets 2017/18 report and the input from Loughborough Councillors in respect of the Loughborough Special Expenses as set out in the notes of the informal meetings held on 20th July and 15th November 2016.

Outcome of Panel discussions

The following issues were identified to be considered at the meeting of the Panel scheduled for 3rd January 2017 and the attendance of the identified officers and reports were requested:

Issue	Additional Officer attendance requested	Additional information requested
Voluntary and Community Sector Development Officer	Head of Neighbourhood Services	To provide details on the business case for extending the post and the work to be carried out
Community Grants Funding	Head of Neighbourhood Services	To provide further details and business case
Increase in support service charges in relation to open space contracts	Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces	Details of the grading of work carried out and why the service charges are increasing.
HRA Budget	Head of Landlord Services	To attend to answer any questions relating to the HRA budget

C. 3rd January 2017

The Panel scrutinised the identified issues relating to the draft 2017/18 General Fund and HRA Budgets and the process for developing and scrutinising the Council's budget before discussing and agreeing the conclusions and recommendations its report should include.

Outcome of Panel discussions

The Panel made the recommendations and observations relating to the draft 2017/18 General Fund and HRA Budgets and the process for developing and scrutinising the Council's budget set out in section 6 below.

More details of the matters considered and issues discussed at formal meetings of the Panel are set out in the minutes of those meetings, attached as appendices to this report.

6. Recommendations and Observations – Draft 2017/18 General Fund and HRA Budgets

Following its scrutiny work, the Panel agreed the following in respect of the draft 2017/18 General Fund and HRA Budgets:

Recommendations to the Cabinet

1. That ongoing funding for the Voluntary and Community Sector Development Officer post be included in the budget for 2017/18 and that the funding be split between Loughborough Special Expenses (75%) and the General Fund (25%).
2. That ongoing funding of an additional £20,000 for Loughborough Community Grants be included in the budget for 2017/18 to be funded from Loughborough Special Expenses.
3. That the following suggestions put forward by Loughborough councillors be included in the budget for 2017/18 to be funded from Loughborough Special Expenses:
 - Contribution to a Charnwood Forest Canal Heritage Plaque;
 - Funding for Heritage and Conservation via recruitment of additional staffing resources.

Reasons

1. The achievements of the post had met or exceeded the expectations and performance measures for what would be delivered and the Panel had received assurances that ongoing funding was affordable. To continue the split of funding for the post that operated currently and reflected the balance of the work that was carried out.
2. The additional funding provided valuable support to the community and voluntary sector in Loughborough at a time when applications exceeded the funding available.
3. The proposals provided a benefit to the Council and the community.

Recommendation to the Cabinet and the Scrutiny Management Board

That the process for developing the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the budget, and for their scrutiny be reviewed so that they began earlier and incorporated matters such as:

- what drove priorities other than the Corporate Plan and how different priorities were weighted;
- what alternative scenarios had been explored before they had been prepared and what the rationale behind those scenarios was;
- what the appetite for risk was in investing where this could produce positive benefits and/or generate income;
- how the cost benefit analysis of such potential activities was undertaken;

Reason

To ensure that the processes were timely and robust.

Observations

1. That the Cabinet be informed of the Panel's concerns that reserves could only be used once and that the Council would still have to make savings in years 2 and 3 of the period covered by the Medium Term Financial Strategy.
2. That the Cabinet be informed of the Panel's view that the Efficiency Plan that had been agreed needed to be used and monitored actively to ensure that appropriate savings are made at the earliest opportunity.

Reasons

1.& 2. To inform the Cabinet of the Panel's concerns.

7. Background Papers

No further papers to those already identified in/appended to this report.

8. Appendices

Appendix A – Minutes of the Budget Scrutiny Panel meeting held on the 4th October 2016.

Appendix B – Minutes of the Budget Scrutiny Panel meeting held on the 3rd January 2017.

**BUDGET SCRUTINY PANEL
4TH OCTOBER 2016**

PRESENT: The Chair (Councillor Miah)
Councillors Bebbington, Gerrard, Jukes, Parsons,
Seaton and Smidowicz

Strategic Director of Corporate Services
Head of Finance and Property Services
Democratic Services Manager

1. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY AND PERSONAL INTERESTS

No disclosures were made.

2. DECLARATIONS – THE PARTY WHIP

No declarations were made.

3. QUESTIONS UNDER OTHER COMMITTEE PROCEDURES 11.17

No questions had been submitted.

4. BUDGET SCRUTINY PROCESS/TERMS OF REFERENCE

A report was submitted setting out the budget scrutiny process and terms of reference for the Panel in respect of the 2017/18 budget, as agreed by the Scrutiny Management Board on 23rd March 2016 (item 5 on the agenda filed with these minutes). The process was the same as that adopted in 2015/16 for scrutiny of the 2016/17 budget.

RESOLVED that the budget scrutiny process and terms of reference for the Panel be noted.

Reason

It was necessary for the Panel to understand its terms of reference and the agreed budget scrutiny process so that its scrutiny was undertaken in accordance with that.

5. DRAFT MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2017-2020

A report of the Strategic Director of Corporate Services was submitted setting out the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2017-2020 which had been agreed by the Cabinet on 22nd September 2016 for consideration by the Panel (item 6 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The report was briefly outlined to the Panel by the Head of Finance and Property Services. In particular, reference was made to the use of

assumptions in developing the MTFs, the uncertainties around Government funding and changes to the arrangements for Business Rates retention and the preparation of an efficiency plan, which had been scrutinised by the Overview Scrutiny Group and would shortly be submitted to the Government. The efficiency plan reduced the deficit that was being projected, mainly through increasing income. In addition, the loss of £900,000 in income from dry recyclate credits as a result of a decision by Leicestershire County Council had been included in the calculations.

The process for scrutiny of the budget by the Panel, agreed by the Scrutiny Management Board, set out Panel discussion topics for this meeting and possible outcomes. Those were stated on the agenda for the Panel's assistance.

Councillor Seaton arrived at 6.10pm.

Summary of discussion:

- (i) More information about the levels of grant funding from the Government would be known after the Autumn Statement in November but the final figures would only be announced at the end of December.
- (ii) The MTFs proposed that some of the Council's reserves would be used in the short term until there was greater certainty regarding future funding. This would also provide longer to consider how to make further savings so that the Council's expenditure and income balanced in the longer term. However, reserves could only be used once.
- (iii) The draft MTFs did not set out which services would be cut, the approach to deciding which services should be cut or the reasons for why the use of a particular amount of reserves was deemed appropriate. That made scrutiny of the MTFs difficult. The MTFs was a high level document that informed the preparation of the more detailed annual budget. The Council's priorities were set out in the Corporate Plan. The Council had identified that its minimum reserve level should be £2mn but a higher level could be appropriate in times of uncertainty. The Panel could scrutinise whether the assumptions in the MTFs were realistic or suggest to the Cabinet that an alternative approach for the use of reserves should be used.
- (iv) It was unclear how the Council would be able to respond in the future to new demands and initiatives. If the Council did not have sufficient resources it could only be reactive and not proactive. The Council had a number of processes for dealing with such circumstances including those where a business case could be produced on an invest to save basis. There could be opportunities to improve productivity through the use of IT to increase efficiency and enable teams to work together better.

- (v) It would be helpful for the Panel to have information about the number of staff employed by the Council currently and over the last five years, the amount spent on agency staff since May 2015 and sickness levels since May 2015 as employing staff was a significant cost to the Council. It would also be helpful for the Panel to have information on the tasks currently being undertaken by the team that had previously been involved in leading the development of the Council's Core Strategy now that it had been adopted.
- (vi) The Council would have to make savings at some point and it might be beneficial to make an early start in doing so. Therefore it would be helpful for the Panel to receive information on the proposals for increasing charges for 2017/18 including how this would be achieved and the increases over 2016/17 that were being proposed, how much had been saved through making use of shared services in recent years and how much could be saved by stopping providing non-statutory services (taking account of any loss of income that those services generated). There could be risks if non-statutory services were stopped, including extra demand for statutory services. The Council could also make choices about the way in which it provided statutory services.

RESOLVED

1. that the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017-2020 be noted;
2. that the following information be provided to the Panel at its informal meeting on Tuesday, 6th December 2016:
 - the number of staff employed by the Council currently and over the last five years;
 - the amount spent on agency staff since May 2015;
 - staff sickness levels since May 2015;
 - details of the tasks currently being undertaken by the team that had previously been involved in leading the development of the Council's Core Strategy now that it had been adopted;
 - the proposals for increasing charges for 2017/18 including how this would be achieved and the increases over 2016/17 that were being proposed;
 - how much had been saved through making use of shared services in recent years;
 - how much could be saved by stopping providing non-statutory services (taking account of any loss of income that those services generated).

Reasons

1. The Panel was satisfied with the draft MTFs following its scrutiny of the matter and did not have sufficient information at this stage to make

recommendations to the Cabinet in respect of either the draft MTFS or the preparation of the draft 2017/18 budget.

2. To assist the Panel with its scrutiny of the Council's budget for 2017/18.

6. FURTHER PANEL MEETING DATES 2016/17

Further meetings of the Panel in 2016/17 (to accord with the process for scrutiny of the budget agreed by Scrutiny Management Board) had been scheduled and notifications sent to members of the Panel as follows:

- Tuesday, 6th December 2016 at 6.00pm (informal meeting);
- Tuesday, 3rd January 2017 at 6.00pm.

In addition there would be a second informal meeting with Loughborough councillors on Tuesday, 15th November 2016 to discuss the suggestions that had been made regarding the Loughborough Special Expenses for 2017/18.

**BUDGET SCRUTINY PANEL
3RD JANUARY 2017**

PRESENT: The Chair (Councillor Miah)
Councillors Bebbington, Gerrard, Jukes, Parsons and
Smidowicz

Strategic Director of Corporate Services
Head of Finance and Property Services
Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces
Head of Landlord Services
Head of Neighbourhood Services
Neighbourhoods and Partnerships Manager
Democratic Services Manager

APOLOGIES: Councillor Seaton

7. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th October 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed.

8. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY AND PERSONAL INTERESTS

No disclosures were made.

9. DECLARATIONS – THE PARTY WHIP

No declarations were made.

10. QUESTIONS UNDER SCRUTINY COMMITTEE PROCEDURE 11.17

No questions had been submitted.

11. BUDGET SCRUTINY PROCESS/TERMS OF REFERENCE

The budget scrutiny process and terms of reference for the Panel agreed by the Scrutiny Management Board at its meeting on 23rd March 2016 were submitted (item 6 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

RESOLVED that the budget scrutiny process and terms of reference for the Panel be noted.

Reason

To confirm the purpose of the meeting and the work of the Panel generally.

12. DRAFT GENERAL FUND AND HRA BUDGETS 2017/18

The purpose of the item was to consider the draft General Fund and HRA Budgets for 2017/18 submitted to the Cabinet meeting held on 15th December 2016. These had also been submitted to the Panel at its informal meeting held on 6th December 2016, at which specific issues to focus on had been identified. The Panel's report and recommendations would be submitted to the meeting of the Scrutiny Management Board to be held on 25th January 2017, prior to consideration by the Cabinet on 16th February 2017.

At its informal meeting the Panel was minded to support the following suggestions put forward by Loughborough councillors in respect of Loughborough Special Expenses:

- Contribution to a Charnwood Forest Canal Heritage Plaque
- Funding for Heritage and Conservation via recruitment of additional staffing resources.

Two supplementary reports of the Head of Neighbourhood Services, providing information requested by the Panel at its informal meeting in respect of the work of the Voluntary and Community Sector Development Officer and Loughborough Community Grants, were also considered (item 7 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Panel considered each of the issues identified in the submitted agenda papers, with the assistance of relevant officers invited to the meeting. The Strategic Director of Corporate Services and the Head of Finance and Property Services provided support to the Panel in its consideration of the item.

Voluntary and Community Sector Development Officer

The Head of Neighbourhood Services provided a supplementary report and attended the meeting with the Neighbourhoods and Partnerships Manager to provide details of the work of the Voluntary and Community Sector Development Officer.

In response to issues raised and questions, officers stated:

- (i) Ongoing funding for the post was not currently in the draft budget for 2017/18. The post was currently funded 75% from Loughborough Special Expenses and 25% from the General Fund and could be afforded on an ongoing basis.
- (ii) The work of the post had combined organisational support for groups, such as help with developing policies and procedures and business planning, as well as assistance with obtaining funding, and therefore helped with their sustainability.

- (iii) Groups that received funding from the Council were required to provide monitoring information on what the funding had been used for. Some groups were also visited.
- (iv) The number of people who benefitted from the grants that were received would vary from project to project as a range of groups and projects were supported which had different target groups and different funding requirements.

Loughborough Community Grants Funding

The Head of Neighbourhood Services provided a supplementary report and attended the meeting with the Neighbourhoods and Partnerships Manager to provide further details of the operation of the Loughborough Community Grants fund and the awards that had been made.

In response to issues raised and questions, officers clarified details of some of the grants awarded and stated:

- (i) The additional funding of £20,000 complemented the work of the Voluntary and Community Sector Development Officer who had been instrumental in new groups applying for funding.
- (ii) Both the Loughborough Community Grants fund and the Borough-wide Community Development and Engagement Grants fund had been oversubscribed in 2016/17.

Increase in support service charges in relation to open space contracts

The Head of Cleansing and Open Spaces attended the meeting to provide an explanation of the changes in the level of recharges.

In response to issues raised and questions, officers stated:

- (i) There had been no change in the grade of the officers involved in the work but there had been a reallocation of time between work charged to Loughborough Special Expenses and work charged to the General Fund. The changes reflected a more accurate apportionment of the work. The overall level of funding had not changed just the apportionment between the two budgets.
- (ii) The level of recharges to Loughborough Special Expenses proposed for 2017/18 was similar to that in 2015/16. There had been a reduction in the apportionment to Loughborough Special Expenses in 2016/17.
- (iii) Officers could provide details of the type of work that was covered by the recharges.

- (iv) Changes in net costs could also change as a result of increased income, as was the case with Loughborough Cemetery.

General Fund Budget

In response to issues raised and questions, officers stated:

- (i) The changes to the system for the retention of Business Rates would not be implemented until 2019 or 2020. The impact of the changes for the allocation of New Homes Bonus announced as part of the draft settlement had been as expected for 2017/18 but would reduce further in future years because the calculations would include an assumption of growth. The final settlement would be known in February.
- (ii) The Council had adopted an Efficiency Plan for three years. The Plan would be revisited before the preparation of the 2018/19 budgets and the Medium Term Financial Strategy was reviewed every year.
- (iii) Officers had undertaken work to reduce the level of underspends at the end of each financial year. Although it had not been possible to identify trends or patterns in the underspends it was expected that the level would be reduced in future years. Financial monitoring reports were considered by the Performance Scrutiny Panel and the Council's Senior Management Team.
- (iv) Currently out-turn figures were reported to the Cabinet in June and the Council's accounts were signed off in September. Those dates would be brought forward in the future. Sufficient, timely information was available for management purposes.

Members of the Panel expressed the following views:

- (i) The Council could take a more proactive approach to raising income and making innovative use of its land and other assets, which might require initial investment. This was an approach that had been adopted by other councils.
- (ii) The Council should consider a wider range of options as part of the process of preparing the budget, for example a referendum on a higher rise in Council Tax.
- (iii) Scrutiny of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the budget should incorporate matters such as:
- what drove priorities other than the Corporate Plan and how different priorities were weighted;
 - what alternative scenarios had been explored before they had been prepared and what the rationale behind those scenarios was;

- what the appetite for risk was in investing where this could produce positive benefits and/or generate income;
- how the cost benefit analysis of such potential activities was undertaken.

(iv) The difference between the budgeted figure for the working balance at the end of 2016.17 of £2.35million and the actual figure of £6.658million was very large.

HRA Budget

The Head of Landlord Services attended the meeting to answer any questions relating to the HRA budget.

In response to issues raised and questions, officers stated:

- (i) There had been changes in the way that depreciation had been calculated based on advice from the external auditors. This was a one-off change.
- (ii) The HRA Business Plan included funding for new builds and improvements to sheltered housing schemes. However there were ongoing reductions to rents and the Government would be introducing a scheme for the sale of high value voids. As a result some of the money identified for investment may not be available and there could be an impact on the Council's ability to pay off the HRA debt.
- (iii) As a result the Council had already taken steps to address these issues and spread the impact over a number of years. For example savings had been made and the HRA Financing Fund had been established. Once there was more certainty regarding the scheme for the sale of high value voids then the Business Plan would be reviewed.
- (iv) Bad debt provisions had been increased as it was expected that the continued roll-out of Universal Credit would lead to increased rent arrears as the benefit would be paid to tenants rather than directly to the Council.
- (v) The budget for income and mortgage interest received had been increased because there was a greater balance to gain interest from following the establishment of the HRA Financing Fund.

RESOLVED

1. **that it be recommended to the Cabinet** that ongoing funding for the Voluntary and Community Sector Development Officer post be included in the budget for 2017/18 and that the funding be split between Loughborough Special Expenses (75%) and the General Fund (25%);

2. **that it be recommended to the Cabinet** that ongoing funding of an additional £20,000 for Loughborough Community Grants be included in the budget for 2017/18 to be funded from Loughborough Special Expenses;
3. **that it be recommended to the Cabinet** that the following suggestions put forward by Loughborough councillors be included in the budget for 2017/18 to be funded from Loughborough Special Expenses:
 - Contribution to a Charnwood Forest Canal Heritage Plaque;
 - Funding for Heritage and Conservation via recruitment of additional staffing resources;
4. that the Cabinet be informed of the Panel's concerns that reserves could only be used once and that the Council would still have to make savings in years 2 and 3 of the period covered by the Medium Term Financial Strategy;
5. that the Cabinet be informed of the Panel's view that the Efficiency Plan that had been agreed needed to be used and monitored actively to ensure that appropriate savings are made at the earliest opportunity;
6. **that it be recommended to the Cabinet and the Scrutiny Management Board** that the process for developing the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the budget, and for their scrutiny be reviewed so that they began earlier and incorporated matters such as:
 - what drove priorities other than the Corporate Plan and how different priorities were weighted;
 - what alternative scenarios had been explored before they had been prepared and what the rationale behind those scenarios was;
 - what the appetite for risk was in investing where this could produce positive benefits and/or generate income;
 - how the cost benefit analysis of such potential activities was undertaken;
7. that details of the type of work that was covered by the recharges in relation to open spaces work in Loughborough be provided to members of the Panel.

Reasons

1. The achievements of the post had met or exceeded the expectations and performance measures for what would be delivered and the Panel had received assurances that ongoing funding was affordable. To continue the split of funding for the post that operated currently and reflected the balance of the work that was carried out.

2. The additional funding provided valuable support to the community and voluntary sector in Loughborough at a time when applications exceeded the funding available.
3. The proposals provided a benefit to the Council and the community.
4. To inform the Cabinet of the Panel's concerns.
5. To inform the Cabinet of the Panel's concerns.
6. To ensure that the processes were timely and robust.
7. To provide members of the Panel with further details in respect of the matter.