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OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

To: City Executive Board

Date: 9 February 2016

Report of: Finance Panel (Panel of the Scrutiny Committee)

Title of Report: Scrutiny Budget Review 2017/18

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To present the recommendations of the Finance Panel on the Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017-2021

Scrutiny Lead Member: Councillor Craig Simmons, Chair of Finance Panel

Executive Lead Member: Councillor Ed Turner, Board Member for Finance, Asset Management and Public Health

Recommendations: The Finance Panel to the City Executive Board:

That the City Executive Board states whether it agrees or disagrees with the 16 recommendations set out in the body of this report.

Contents

Introduction

Background

1. The Scrutiny Budget Review 2017/18 was undertaken by members of the Scrutiny Committee's Finance Panel; Councillors Simmons (Chair), Fooks, Fry and Taylor. Members of the Scrutiny Committee's Housing Panel joined the Finance Panel to scrutinise budget proposals relating to housing and the Housing Revenue Account, and their input was greatly appreciated.

2. The Finance Panel would like to thank the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and their supporting officers for attending meetings to present their proposals and answer questions. In particular the Panel would like to thank Nigel Kennedy, Head of Financial Services, Anna Winship, Management Accountancy Manager, and Andrew Brown, Scrutiny Officer, for their support and advice throughout the budget review process.

Aims

3. The Panel set out to scrutinise the budget and medium term financial plan and to test the robustness of assumptions and underlying principles used in formulating the proposals. This report is intended to provide a considered second opinion on the budget proposals with constructive commentary and suggestions.

Method

4. Evidence gathering took place between 8 December 2016 and 1 February 2017 and involved:
   a) An overview of the draft budget proposals by the Head of Financial Services;
   b) A thorough review of the budget paperwork that was approved for consultation by the City Executive Board on 15 December 2016;

c) Responses to written questions put to the Executive Directors and Head of Financial Services;
d) Discussions with the Chief Executive, Executive Directors, Head of Financial Services, and their supporting officers;
e) Additional information requested by the Panel including lists of monies held in reserves and balances;
f) The updated Budget Report presented to the City Executive Board on 9 February 2017.
g) A summary of consultation responses.

Summary and recommendations

5. The Panel's findings and recommendations are structured around the following themes:
   - Meeting the financial challenges
   - Maximising income
   - Managing risk
   - Ensuring best value
   - Priorities for further investment

Meeting the financial challenges

6. The City Council, in common with local government more generally, faces an increasingly challenging and uncertain financial situation but has a good record of meeting these challenges while maintaining services and delivering its corporate objectives. The proposals for the coming four years set out how the council will continue to build on this success.

External funding reductions

7. The council's main central government grant, the Revenue Support Grant (RSG), will reduce to zero in April 2019 (down from £8.2m in 2013/14) while Council Tax increases are limited to 1.99% per year. Future revenues from Business Rates are subject to the outcomes of national reviews and payments of New Homes Bonus are still uncertain going forwards. Changes announced after the draft budget was published in December resulted in a £494k budget pressure over the four years that needed to be (and was) addressed by February. The council has also been impacted by cuts to County Council budgets, including voluntary sector grants, the Supporting People fund, homelessness prevention and economic development. There are further uncertainties associated with Brexit, a possible devolution deal for Oxfordshire (which Scrutiny strongly supports), and the outcome of pay negotiations. This combination of factors has made medium term financial planning very difficult.

8. It seems likely that Business Rates will be the next source of council revenue to come under pressure as RSG reduces to zero. This is because government is likely to continue to want to redistribute local government resources across the country to boost poorer areas with relatively high need but relatively low levels of income from Council Tax and Business Rates. Indeed in year 3 a tariff adjustment is applied to the council's Settlement Funding Assessment (comprising the council's income from RSG and Business Rates), which

effectively amounts to a negative grant of £295k in 2019/20. The funding figures for years 1 to 3 are indicative but from April 2020 a new system of Business Rates retention will be introduced and it is unclear whether the tariff adjustments will continue to apply, so the settlement figure for year 4 represents a best guess at this stage.

Housing policy changes

9. In addition, the council has had to respond to national housing policy changes, including annual reductions to social rents and the expected impacts of proposed levy on Higher Value Council Homes, where the council will effectively have to compensate housing associations for their properties sold at a discount under the Right to Buy scheme. Over the last year the policy environment appears to have become slightly less unfavourable but nevertheless the need to plan for the national policies has resulted in a significant hit the council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA), constraining the council in its ambitions to build a world class city for everyone. There is no certainty about what will happen to rents in year 4 so it has been assumed that the previous policy of annual rent increases will resume.

A balanced budget

10. The Panel found that despite budgeting becoming tighter, the council's finances generally remain in good shape. The budget and medium term financial plan were found to be robust, balanced over 4 years and based on prudent assumptions. A slight note of caution is that the budgets for years 3 and 4 have been balanced by drawing down the General Fund working balance (which is being built up in years 1 and 2). In particular, the Panel would like to highlight the £800k transfer from the working balance that is planned in year 4. While the working balance does not drop below £3.5m (the level deemed to be prudent), it is possible that a budget gap would be carried forward beyond the 4 year planning period, depending on whether one-off revenue items are due to drop out in year 5. Any such gap would need to be identified and addressed in future budget rounds but would not be a major concern at this stage, particularly given the high degree of uncertainty in the latter years of the plan.

Maintaining services and capital investments

11. The proposals contain no reductions to public services while supporting a huge programme of spending on capital projects totalling some £218m over the four years (some of which will be funded by external borrowing). This includes significant new investments in homes, commercial properties and a waste transfer station. These and other investments, together with increased funding to maintain the council's estate in good condition, will all help to support future revenues and enable the council to achieve it aims. This success is attributable to a combination of factors including a legacy of sound decision making (e.g. decisions to retain the housing stock and a direct services workforce), prudent financial management, the delivery of planned efficiency savings and the achievement of additional income from trading services, commercial property rents and fees and charges. The council's good record of delivering efficiencies and overachieving against income targets without drawing on contingencies make it prudent to reduce the levels of contingencies moving forwards, which provides a one-off 'delivery bonus' in the coming year.

Efficiency savings

12. Most of the relatively easy and non-contentious efficiency savings have either already been delivered or are built into the £1.2m of efficiencies planned over the next four years, including savings from management structures, admin support, accommodation, customer services and process reviews. For this reason the council has recently embarked on a four-year programme of fundamentally reviewing the way all council services are delivered, which involves looking at best practice in other local authorities. This process has already started to identify savings (e.g. in Housing Services, HR and Procurement) but most reviews are yet to report and their outcomes will be built into future budgets. The delivery of services through a range of different delivery vehicles (e.g. companies and trusts) is likely to be a feature moving forwards.

Additional spending on priorities

13. Any new items of revenue expenditure contained in the proposals are either unavoidable or of a high priority for the council. The Panel welcome additional resources to bolster the planning service, funding to strengthen international links and moves to fund homelessness hostels, economic regeneration and city centre management, following the withdrawal of County Council funding. The Panel believe that over the coming years the council should continue to be ambitious about delivering better services more efficiently as this is the best route to managing further financial pressures while continuing to invest in priority areas.

Consultation

14. Given all of the above, the Panel were disappointed by the relatively low number of consultation responses received, both generally and specifically from Council tenants, and regret that the consultation was not more widely publicised, including in the local press. The low response rate may reflect the fact that the council is not proposing to reduce any services.

Putting the budget in context

15. The Panel suggest that it would be helpful in future budget reports to put the key budgetary figures in context by showing two or three years of past data alongside the forecasts and proposals for the coming four years, and by showing gross as well as net numbers to give a better sense of the underlying volume of activity, including that covered by fees and charges or specific grants, for example.

Recommendation 1 – That future budget reports should provide current and past data alongside figures for the coming four years, and gross as well as net figures, in order to present them in context.

Maximising income

16. As the council becomes more financially independent of central government it becomes increasingly reliant on maintaining and where possible growing revenues generated locally. The council has a very good record of growing revenues sustainably but planning based to a larger extent on future revenues that have not yet been secured will inherently increase risks.

Trading

17. The Panel found that the council's projected trading income for next year looks relatively secure and is supported by a favourable capital programme. Although the additional turnover should be treated as high risk, the council has a good track record of winning additional work, managing productivity and delivering within budget. The risks and uncertainties in future years are more apparent and the council's Direct Services operations are beginning to reach natural breaks in their ability to continue to expand within their existing organisational structures and accommodation.

Building services company

18. The Panel voiced support in principle for plans to establish an arms-length building services company in time for the start of the financial year, with initial revenue savings of £100k (rated as high risk) expected from 2018/19. This would symbolically represent a significant change and there is a need to work through a lot of detail and decide whether a company would take ownership of assets and employ staff directly, for example.

Fees and Charges

19. The Panel asked questions about the process for setting fees and charges and received assurances that discretionary fees and charges have been market tested. The Panel suggest that clarity should be provided in future years as to which fees and charges listed in the budget paperwork are discretionary (and can be set at a level that maximises income) and which fees and charges are limited to a cost-recovery position or are entirely outside of the council's control.

Recommendation 2 - That clarity is provided in future years as to which fees and charges are discretionary and which are restricted to a level based on cost recovery or set by other bodies.

20. The Panel questioned why unmet income targets linked to additional Street Trading Licences (£25k), expanding food hygiene courses provided by the council (£40k) and enforcement (£20k) had been removed, with these amounts being re-included in the base budget. The Panel heard that the removal of street trading pitches outside the Westgate Shopping Centre had had an impact because it had not always been possible to find alternative pitches. The council had also struggled to achieve expected additional income from selling food hygiene courses due to changes in the market and the availability of online alternatives. The Panel received assurances that the budget proposals were realistic and reflected what was currently thought to be achievable. The Panel noted that once the Westgate Shopping Centre reopens it may be possible to reinstate some of this additional income, for example by issuing more Street Trading Licences, and that this should be kept under review.

Recommendation 3 - That opportunities to generate additional revenue from discretionary fees and charges within the Planning and Regulatory Service (e.g. by issuing more Street Trading Licences) should be kept under review, given that unmet income targets have been rebased.

21. The Panel noted that annual Street Café Licences are set at £750 per premises (subject to approval by the General Purposes Licensing Committee) and commented that this approach may not be sensitive enough to maximise income if premises with a small number of outside tables seek to avoid paying. The Panel suggest that consideration should be given to charging a lower rate to smaller premises outside the city centre area.

Recommendation 4 - That consideration is given to charging a lower rate for Street Trading licences in areas outside the city centre, hence making compliance without the need for enforcement more likely and maximising income.

22. The Panel explored whether assumptions about additional income from off street parking were sufficiently robust. Plans to increase parking charges at park and ride sites from £2 to £3 in 2018/19 (raising £500k per year) are subject to political support from the city and county councils and officers are working with county colleagues to agree a cohesive parking policy. This will be expanded to include the Westgate Alliance who will, in consultation with the council and with regard to transport policies, set fees at the new Westgate car park. The Panel expressed some concern about the loss of control over car parking revenues.

23. The Panel heard that car parking income has generally stood up very well over recent years despite the redevelopment of the Westgate Shopping Centre. Oxford has fewer parking spaces per capita than most cities and the number of spaces has been gradually reducing, whereas total journey numbers are expected to significantly increase. The Panel note the opening of a new rail line into the city, which connects Oxford Station to London Marylebone via High Wycombe, as well as further planned direct rail links to Milton Keynes and Cambridge, may affect future parking revenues. The Panel suggest that additional income from off street car parking charges (£83k in 2017/18 rising to £221k per year from 2020/21) should be treated as high risk rather than medium risk due to the potential impact of the new rail connections on commuter and visitor journeys to the city.

Recommendation 5 - That additional income from car parking charges should be rated high risk (and therefore have a 30% contingency) given the significant increases in rail capacity in the city.

Investing to save

24. The Panel questioned why so few new 'invest to save' items have been included in the General Fund revenue budgets and heard that in many cases investments in capital projects were examples of council investments generating revenue savings. For example, homelessness property investments were expected to generate a 2% annual revenue return and the council would also own the assets, which may have rising values. The Panel suggest that attention is given to how invest to save items should be classified in future budgets in a way that gives better visibility to council investments that generate a revenue return.

Recommendation 6 - That consideration is given to how 'Invest to save' items are classified and presented in future budgets given that there are

few invest to save revenue items but numerous capital projects that generate revenue savings (e.g. homelessness property investments).

25. The Panel felt that officers could be encouraged to submit invest to save revenue ideas, even if the associated savings would need to be classified high risk. Initial outlays on invest to save items could be funded from a Business Transformation reserve, and although the amount added to this reserve each year is being halved from £300k per year to £150k per year, a significant sum is still available and unallocated. There may also be a case for funding specific invest to save schemes from borrowing.

Recommendation 7 - That officers are encouraged to submit invest to save ideas, even if the savings are likely to be high risk, given there is still a significant transformation reserve that can be drawn on to fund these (c.£750k).

Managing risk

26. The council has over recent years taken a prudent approach to mitigating financial risks, for example by holding significant contingencies against planned efficiency savings, additional income targets and other potential pressures, such as adverse Business Rates appeals and unexpected homelessness pressures.

Contingencies

27. The Panel noted that contingencies held against high risk efficiency savings and additional income are being reduced from 40% to 30% and those held against medium risk adjustments are reducing from 40% to zero. This means that total contingencies will cover some 9.6% of total cumulative savings over the plan period, down from 26% in 2014/15 and 17% in 2015/16. These changes reflect the council’s strong record of underspending against planned budgets by delivering efficiencies and overachieving against income targets.

28. The Panel heard that contingencies were originally introduced to encourage service areas to make bolder proposals in the knowledge that contingencies would mitigate the risks of the proposals out working out. Something like 90-95% of efficiencies had been delivered as originally planned but where it had become apparent during the year that planned savings would not be achieved, heads of service had been asked to make the savings in a different way. As a result, there had been no need to draw on any contingencies. At the end of the year these unused contingencies were, after allocation of approved one-off items, transferred to the Capital Financing Reserve.

29. The Panel considered whether the new contingency levels were about right and concluded that holding a 30% contingency against high risk additional income targets is prudent given that if targets were missed, the pressures would be hard to absorb. There is perhaps a case for looking again at the level of contingencies held against high risk efficiency savings in the next budget round, given that these can be covered in other ways or reported as pressures if necessary.

Recommendation 8 - That further consideration is given to the allocation of contingencies against high risk efficiency savings (which are reducing from

40% to 30%), given the council's recent record of not drawing on contingencies and the fact that unachieved efficiencies can be covered in other ways (e.g. by making alternative savings), or reported as pressures the following year.

New delivery vehicles

30. Three companies have already been set up by the council, which are all very different in nature and present different risks and opportunities. A new trust has also been established to support the redevelopment of the Museum of Oxford. The Panel note that business plans for the establishment of new delivery vehicles will need to be agreed by members but suggest that, separate to this, the Audit and Governance Committee should be asked to consider the longer term risks, controls and governance issues associated with the establishment of new delivery vehicles more generally.

Recommendation 9 – That the council's Audit and Governance Committee considers the long term risks, controls and governance issues associated with the establishment of fully or partly council-owned companies and other new delivery vehicles (e.g. trust models).

Ensuring best value

31. The Panel welcome the significant investments to acquire properties to house homeless families and make improvements to existing investment properties, social housing and a range of to community facilities across the city. These investments are sensible and prudent but are not without risks, for example from capital depreciation, tenants not paying and higher than expected maintenance or void costs.

Capital programme

32. The council's Capital Programme over the coming four years is very ambitious. The General Fund capital programme alone totals £144.8m, 57% of which will be funded by internal and external borrowing, although this proportion will be reduced if further capital receipts are received. The Panel welcome improvements the council has made in the last year or two at hitting capital spending targets and delivering projects with minimal slippage but note that capital spending profiles create somewhat artificial deadlines that are not necessarily integral to overall delivery. Once projects have been tendered they should be delivered on time and within budget but prior to that point the figures and spending profiles will be subject to change.

33. A key line of inquiry for the Panel was to examine whether the council has sufficient capacity and the right skills mix to support the delivery of its medium term financial strategy and ambitious capital programme. The Panel also looked at where the council may be able to extract better value from current spending to improve outcomes or reduce costs.

Supporting new delivery vehicles

34. A significant and increasing proportion of council activities are going to be delivered through new delivery vehicles such as the council-owned housing company. Oxford City Housing Limited is expected to take on responsibility for

purchasing new homes at Barton Park, estates regeneration and the development of various small council-owned sites. Including the Oxpens site, which is being developed by Oxford West End Development Limited (a partnership venture with Nuffield College), a total of some 1200-1500 new homes will be delivered across the city. Additional sites may also come forward for development in due course. The Panel heard that a significant proportion of district councils either already have a housing company or are looking to set one up. Government is thought to be broadly supportive of these structures but the council does have an exit route should it need one in future.

35. The budget proposals include provisions for a loan of £61m to the Housing Company over 4 years, with half of this amount expected to be transferred to the company in year two of the plan (2018/19). The Panel voiced support in principle for the loan and for the broad functions of the company but members did not have sight of a detailed business plan. The Panel heard that the housing company will largely be doing things the council had planned to do anyway, at least initially, but capacity to support the companies may become an issue if their activities are scaled up.

36. The Panel identified that a £40k high-risk saving in the Management Accountancy Team was being reversed due to the increased workloads associated with supporting the new companies and that £23k had been earmarked for an additional committee officer post (less income), for the same reason. The Panel suggest that the skills and resources available to the new companies should be kept under close review to ensure that the companies are well placed to succeed.

Recommendation 10 - That the council's capacity and skills to support the new companies should be closely monitored, the risk being that if these efforts are under-resourced then opportunities will not be maximised.

Property purchases

37. The Panel questioned whether the council is able to act with sufficient agility in the property market to purchase homelessness properties, citing an example of a missed opportunity to purchase a block of flats that had sold quickly for a reasonable price. This critique was broadly accepted, in part due to the scale of activity currently taking place. The Panel received assurances that the spending profile was realistic given the current market conditions and the council's ability to purchase properties over time. In terms of the mix of properties, there will be quotas based on bedroom numbers and restrictions on certain types of system built properties. The Panel suggest that employing a property agent could enable the council to move more quickly to maximise opportunities and secure best value in the property market. The Panel would envisage using an agent that has a real stake in helping the council to achieve its objectives.

Recommendation 11 - That consideration is given to using a property agent to improve the council's capacity and agility in the property market (e.g. for homelessness property purchases), as this could enable the council to move quickly to take better opportunities and potentially save money.

Council Tax Support Scheme

38. The Panel identified services that have not been looked at for savings because political decisions have been taken to preserve the current level of service. These include grants to the community and voluntary sectors, leisure concessions and the Council Tax Support Scheme. The Panel support in principle maintaining all of these things in their current forms but considered whether there may be a case for challenging assumptions and reviewing whether these priorities are delivering the best outcomes for the best value in practice.

39. The Panel note that as the RSG reduces to zero in April 2019, the direct cost to the council of maintaining the full Council Tax Support Scheme will increase to £1.6m per year. This pressure is already built into the medium term financial plan and the consultation results show that this scheme is generally supported by those who responded. The Panel note that there would be costs associated with offering a reduced scheme, for example the need to chase residents with limited means for relatively small amounts of Council Tax owed. To provide assurance that the scheme is as beneficial as assumed, the Panel suggest that it would be useful for the next annual review of the scheme to take account of what impacts the scheme is having on reducing poverty in the city and whether more or better outcomes could be delivered in a different way.

Recommendation 12 - That the next annual review of the Council Tax Support Scheme includes an assessment of the impacts of the scheme on reducing poverty in the city to provide assurance that this is the best way of targeting resources to improve outcomes.

Community Centres

40. Community centres were identified as being another area where it may be possible for the council to extract better value by taking a different approach, should it wish to do so in future. The Panel heard that there are challenges around getting people who run the centres (who generally do a very good job) to take on liabilities and seek to reduce operating costs in order to deliver the shared outcome of seeing the centres flourish.

41. The Panel welcomed reductions to room hire costs at Rose Hill Community Centre and heard that these changes would have the effect of maximising income and usage rates. The Panel noted concern about a budget pressure relating to the operating costs of Rose Hill Community Centre, which were higher than expected because it had been assumed that a health operator would share the running costs. The Panel suggest that there may be an opportunity for community centres to be used as venues for the delivery of more health services and potentially other services, particularly in light of changes to the provision of children’s centres and adult social care in the city.

Recommendation 13 - That further discussions are held with Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group to explore how community facilities can be incorporated into the provision of health care services.

Apprenticeships Levy

42. The Council questioned how the apprenticeships levy will work and found that it is essentially a tax on the council's overall wage bill, amounting to £175k per year. It is possible to claim back a fraction of this funding to pay for external training for council apprentices. The Panel suggest that the council's apprenticeships scheme should be reviewed with a view to maximising the amount of apprenticeships funding the council can access, as well as the number of people employed by the council who would benefit.

Recommendation 14 - That a review of council spending on apprenticeships is undertaken that includes identifying how to maximise opportunities to claim back part of the levy to fund external training for apprentices.

Leisure contract

43. The council's leisure contract has delivered a cumulative saving of some £11m over recent years and the annual subsidy paid to the council's leisure partner Fusion Lifestyle to run leisure centres will effectively reduce to zero in 2018/19, down from £2.2m per year at the start of the contract. The Panel heard that this is unlikely to become a negative subsidy beyond 2018/19 due to additional things the council asks of Fusion, for example concessions such as free swimming for under-17s and the payment of the Oxford Living Wage to Fusion staff.

44. The Panel questioned a £35k budget pressure in 2017/18 relating to leisure management and heard that the council effectively pays Fusion the difference between the rates of the national living wage and the Oxford Living Wage (OLW). This enables Fusion to pay leisure staff the higher OLW, which the council cannot insist on because the contract was agreed before the OLW came into effect. The Panel suggest that the costs of paying Fusion staff the OLW are remodelled given that the national living wage is expected to increase from £7.20 per hour for over 25s to the government's target level of £9 per hour by 2020. This is likely to bring the rate of the national living wage closer to the level of the OLW, which is currently £8.93 per hour and pegged to 95% of the London Living Wage rate.

Recommendation 15 - That costs arising from uplifts in the Oxford Living Wage (OLW) should take account of the expected convergence of the OLW and the National Living Wage (which will rise to £9 per hour by 2020 for over 25s), which may release some small savings over the plan period.

Priorities for further investment

45. Based on information provided by officers the Panel identified priorities for additional revenue spending in the event the extra resources become available, for example from savings identified through fundamental service reviews, letting spare capacity in the Town Hall and Horspath, or additional income from fees and charges or trading. The Panel note that the final budget paperwork includes some modest additional spending allocations on things like small cycle schemes and voluntary sector grants, which the Panel support in principle.

Fraud investigations

46. The Panel questioned whether the council was generating revenues from selling corporate services to other local authorities and found that there are a number of examples of this happening on a small scale, including HR advice, a legal pool arrangement, some training and procurement activities and fraud investigations. The Panel heard that officers were working on a business plan for expanding anti-fraud activities and the Panel supported this.

Disabled Facilities Grants

47. The Panel noted that £1m per year is being spent on Disabled Facilities Grants to fund adaptions to private sector dwellings. The Panel heard that there was a challenge in spending the whole amount due to a lack of referrals made by occupational therapists and that any unspent grant funding would be returned to government at the end of the year. The Panel suggest that the council considers directly employing an additional Occupational Therapist to work within existing governance structures to ensure this funding can be spent.

City archive

48. The Panel heard that the cessation of funding for an archivist to work on cataloguing the city archive in the Town Hall means that work on protecting the city archive will stop and improvements to the storage of archive documents will potentially be undermined due to a lack of oversight, for example if there is another flooding event in the Town Hall basement. The Panel regret the removal of this funding and suggest to consideration is given to whether one-off funding could be provided to protect documents from potential flood damage. Failing that, perhaps additional checks of the Town Hall basement could be undertaken to ensure that any flooding events are identified quickly.

Street cleansing

49. The Panel noted that £27k has been provided for one additional Streetscene Operative for statutory street cleansing of the additional public areas and high specification footpaths when the Westgate Shopping Centre reopens. Officers originally bid for two operatives and the Review Group would support funding the second post if sufficient additional resources become available.

Recommendation 16 - That the following areas should be priorities for further spending if additional revenue resources become available:

- ***a) The Fraud Team, given its potential to raise revenue;***
- ***b) An Occupational Therapist to work within existing governance structures, which could prevent unspent Disabled Facilities Grant funding being returned to Government;***
- ***c) One-off funding to protect archived documents in the Town Hall basement from flooding (e.g. waterproof filing systems);***
- ***d) An additional Streetscene operative;***

Further consideration

50. The Panel have referred the following issues to the Scrutiny Committee's Housing Panel for further consideration:

a) Support for people moving on from homelessness accommodation, including the impacts of the Rent Guarantee Scheme and good practice developed by the Welfare Reform Team.
b) Investments in estates improvements and regeneration.

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