

Template Scoping Document

Community Select Committee	
Scrutiny Review Title:	Local Community Budgets
Background issues to review – rationale for scrutinising this issue:	<p>Members have raised the issue of wanting to scrutinise LCB's for some time. During canvassing for scrutiny themes Members made the following comments:</p> <p><i>“LCB – Budgets –what should be considered value for money? A scrutiny of what LCB Budget money is spent on and where it may arise – to hold members to account on their decisions and ask recipients of LCB money what in fact the money has done to further their cause or how the community has benefitted. (possibly jointly with O&S Committee)”</i></p> <p>Community Select Committee Members have been informed by officers that the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Neighbourhoods (now Community Health & Older People) was undertaking a review of some aspects of the LCBs and advised that the results of the review could be included in, or supplement any subsequent reviews undertaken by the Committee. Therefore the review timing will need to fit in with the internal Portfolio Holders review.</p>
Is the issue highlighted as one of the Council's corporate aims and objectives of the Council's draft Corporate Strategy , – ‘Sharing the Dividends’? If so which one:	Within the Council's Corporate Strategy there are various commitments in the document that can be linked to the use of Local Community Budgets such as: “Shape our Community - Encourage Community Involvement” , “Create Sustainable Communities - Focus on neighbourhoods” , “Move towards Excellence” & “Use resources effectively”
Is this issue one that raises interest with the public via complaints or Members' surgeries?:	The Head of Business Strategy, Community and Customer Services has reported that there are no history of recorded complaints regarding LCBs
Focus of the review: (State what the review focus will be)	<i>To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting. Officers have suggested the following possible Options:</i>

Suggested areas to cover:

- *Establish the purpose and focus of LCBs*
- *Test the level of discretion and how budgets are used*
- *Look at alignment with corporate, local and town wide priorities and needs?*
- *Provide analysis of LCB allocations by project*
- *Consider Value for Money and use of resources*

Some questions that Members may wish to ask:

Establish the purpose and focus of LCBs -

- What criteria are applied to assess whether a bid is acceptable?
- What explanation and training is provided to new Members/refresher training/guidance for existing Members re LCBs?
- What level of discretion do Ward Members have in allocating LCBs?

Analysis of LCB allocations by project -

- Which groups have been helped by LCBs since the commencement of these funds?
- Is there a mechanism in place to spread around funding from the LCBs so that no particular groups or sections of the community receive disproportionately more than other areas? If not why not? How are they publicised?
- What level of monitoring is in place regarding the successful LCB bids? Look at the current analysis of random testing

Value for Money – use of resources –

- How much underspend is there each year?
- Is the LCB scheme a more cost effective way of allocating funds to community groups/projects than its predecessors Action Teams/Area Committees?
- Are some successful LCB bids more obviously benefiting the community over others?
– can a value judgement be made against bids? – *This is subjective but all bids should stand up to public scrutiny*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happens to partially funded bids, where the required value for the project is not met? • How secure are LCB funds for future years? Are Community Groups dependent on receiving these grants and what would happen to these groups if less money was available in future years? <p><u>LCB spend alignment with corporate, local and town wide needs -</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the LCB spend align with corporate priorities? • Is the award of LCB's making a difference to local communities? • How proactive are ward members in looking at local needs? Should the scheme encourage Ward Members to meet and jointly agree which bids to support that address local needs? • Town wide vs Local - Should there be a separate budget/process for town wide bids?
<p>Timing issues: Are there any timing constraints to when the review can be carried out?</p>	<p>Officers will advise at the meeting if there are any timing issues to consider. As stated above the review will need to co-ordinate with the Portfolio Holders internal review. The review will have to fit in with the timing of the other Select Committee review work programme items.</p>
<p>The Committee will meet on (provide dates if known):</p>	<p>Dates: Day/Month/Time/Venue 29 June 2015 – Discuss scoping with Members for LCB review 18 November 2015– agree draft scope & receive presentation 10 December 2015 – Interview witnesses</p> <p>Date to be agreed – agree recommendations & final report</p>
<p>SBC Leads (list the Executive Portfolio Holders and SD's Heads of Service who should appear as witnesses):</p>	<p><i>Officers have suggested the following people:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Executive Portfolio Holder(s) for Resources, Cllr Joan Lloyd; Community, Health and Older People, Cllr Jeannette Thomas, Neighbourhoods & Co-operative Council, Cllr Simon Speller</i> • <i>Strategic Director Community, Matt Partridge</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Head of Business Strategy, Community and Customer Services, Richard Protheroe</i> • <i>Community Development Officer, Fiona Rolfe</i> • <i>Ward Councillor(s) – (to be identified – at least one from each political group)</i>
<p>Any other witnesses (external persons/critical friend)?:</p>	<p>To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting. <i>Possible options identified by officers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A selection of LCB recipient groups – (a criteria for invitation would need to be agreed, but it should include both successful and non-successful bids if they are willing to attend/submit a response)</i> • <i>Critical Friend – Officers discussed how appropriate it would be to invite in an officer from another local authority to speak as a “critical friend”. HCC’s scheme is administered by a group of officers and is not directly comparable to SBC’s scheme and there is no other similar scheme running in neighbouring authorities. It is therefore suggested that in this instances it is not a suitable issue for a critical friend witness.</i> • <i>David Kissane – as a former Councillor, David would have a good understanding of the way the scheme is operated and would be able to provide his views on the scheme which could be helpful to the review</i>
<p>Allocation of lead Members on specific individual issues/questions:</p>	<p>To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting.</p> <p>Members will ask questions on the following areas XXXXX (list the issues to address during the interviews):</p> <p>Cllr will lead questioning on (suggested area - <u>purpose and focus of LCBs</u>)</p> <p>Cllr will lead questioning on (suggested area - <u>Analysis of LCB allocations by project</u>)</p> <p>Cllr will lead questioning on (suggested area - <u>Value for Money – use of resources</u>)</p> <p>Cllr will lead questioning on (suggested area - <u>LCB spend alignment with corporate,</u></p>

<p>Any other Questions Members wish to cover:</p>	<p><u>local and town wide needs)</u></p> <p>Cllr will lead questioning on <u>Equalities & Diversity Issues</u> – Are there any E&D issues to consider in this review? – a potential area could be how E&D characteristic groups access and receive funding compared with other community groups?</p>
<p><u>Site visits and evidence gathering in the Community</u></p>	<p>To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting 29 June 2015, but initial thoughts are that perhaps Members on the review could informally visit LCB recipients and look at the benefits derived from the funding (e.g. football equipment etc where the grant pays for equipment, less easy if it's for an event but groups could be asked for photos, written details etc).</p>
<p><u>Equalities and Diversity issues:</u> The review will consider what the relevant equalities and diversity issues are regarding the Scrutiny subject that is being scrutinised</p>	<p><i>To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting 29 June 2015</i></p> <p>One possible area of scrutiny could be to focus on how E&D characteristic groups access and receive funding compared with other community groups.</p>
<p><u>Constraints</u> (Issues that have been highlighted at the scoping stage but are too broad/detailed to be covered by the review):</p>	<p><i>To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting 29 June 2015 (These issues can be captured and dealt with via other means – Briefings/email/officer action etc)</i></p>
<p><u>Background Documents/data</u> that can be provided to the review</p>	<p><i>To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting 29 June 2015</i></p> <p><i>Possible options suggested by officers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Previous internal reviews into LCBs</i>
<p><u>Agreed Milestones and review sign off</u> -To be agreed by Members and officers</p>	<p><i>Formal response from Executive Portfolio Holder (Executives have a Statutory requirement to respond to Scrutiny review recommendations two months after receiving a final report and recommendations of a review: Date Executive Portfolio responses are expected (dependent on the final report & executive portfolio response template publishing date): DD MM YY</i></p> <p><i>Date for monitoring implementation of recommendations – final sign off (typically one year from completion of the review): DD MM YY</i> (Close to this date the Select Committee will receive a report at a Committee meeting to agree the final sign off of the review recommendations)</p>