

---

**MONITORING OF OUTCOMES FROM THE MTFP 2016/20**  
**GROUNDS MAINTENANCE**

---

**PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

---

**REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To consider a recommendation from Place Scrutiny Committee to reinvestigate the availability of resources to maintain, to a reasonable standard, roundabouts and provide further grass cutting to open spaces in Darlington.

**Summary**

2. At a meeting of Place Scrutiny Committee held on 21 June 2017 Members received a presentation outlining the outcomes from the Medium Term Financial Plan 2016-20 in relation to Grounds Maintenance.
3. Place Scrutiny Committee gave due consideration to the effect of the £380k budget reduction on the Grounds Maintenance Service and raised concerns in relation to the appearance of the roundabouts and open spaces in Darlington following that budget reduction.
4. Place Scrutiny Committee considers there is a business case to seek resources to maintain roundabouts and open spaces to ensure businesses are encouraged to come to Darlington.

**Recommendation**

5. It is recommended that Cabinet consider the request to reinvestigate the availability of resources for the Grounds Maintenance Service.

**Reasons**

6. The recommendation is supported to ensure businesses are attracted to Darlington and aid Darlington's economy.

**Councillor Bob Carson**  
**Chair of Place Scrutiny Committee**

## Background Papers

### Draft Minute P9/Jun/17 of Place Scrutiny Committee

Karen Graves : Extension 5801

S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no specific implications for Crime and Disorder
Health and Well Being	There are no specific implications for Health and Well Bring
Carbon Impact	There are no carbon impact implications in this report
Diversity	There are no specific diversity issues in this report.
Wards Affected	There are no specific Wards which are affected by this report.
Groups Affected	All.
Budget and Policy Framework	There are implications for the budget.
Key Decision	This report does not constitute a Key Decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not considered an urgent decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	This report supports more businesses and more jobs
Efficiency	The outcome of this report does not impact on the Council efficiency agenda.

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

- Place Scrutiny Committee considered outcomes of the MTFP on Grounds Maintenance at its meeting on 21 June 2017.
- Draft Minute P9/Jun/17 is attached at **Appendix 1** and Cabinet are asked to note that this is subject to approval by Place Scrutiny Committee at its next ordinary meeting scheduled for 24 August 2017.

### Financial Implications

- If the decision was revisited and overturned there would be an on-going pressure of £380k in the MTFP. Whilst the MTFP can be reviewed at any point, the 2018/19 MTFP will be considered later this year and it may be appropriate to revisit this decision then in the context of any other requests or service pressures.

### Director's Comments

- The Council agreed an MTFP that was based on a Core Offer Budget plus some investments from a Futures Fund that took services beyond the risk assessed minimum service levels. One of the investments members agreed was in grounds

maintenance however the investment was less than the pre MTFP service level so there is are significant service reductions. The Council will be reviewing the MTFP later this year and agreeing any revisions in February next year, it would therefore appear appropriate to review any requests for additional resources at that time as opposed to making individual spending decisions.

11. On the question of a business case to increase Grounds Maintenance budgets whilst theoretically a link can be seen between a well maintained Borough and inward investment there is no specific evidence to support such a case.