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**OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY PROTECTION PORTFOLIO**

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1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work undertaken under my Community Protection Portfolio :-
  - (a) **Monumental Masons Registration Scheme** – Cabinet approved the adoption of a Monumental Masons Registration Scheme which will maintain uniform standards of workmanship and working practice where memorials are erected in the Council’s cemeteries. The scheme will come into operation on 1st August, 2004 and will improve standards for the erection and safety of memorials.
  - (b) **Revision of the North, East and West Cemeteries and Darlington Crematorium Regulations** – Cabinet reviewed the regulations made to govern the use of the Borough’s Cemeteries and Crematorium and made revisions thereon to reflect current social and technical conditions and improve public choice. The revised Regulations will come into effect on 1st August, 2004 and will replace the regulations currently in place which were originally made in 1975.
  - (c) **Advertising and Sale of Tobacco to Children under the Age of 16** – Cabinet have approved a continuing programme of enforcement for the period April, 2004 to March 2005, to be taken by the Trading Standards Section, in relation to the sale of tobacco to children under the age of 16 and under the Tobacco Advertising and Promotion Act 2002. We also noted the programme of enforcement carried out from April 2003 to March 2004.
  - (d) **Drinkfield Civic Amenity Site Improvements – Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Award** – I am very pleased to report that the bid made to the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to enlarge and make improvements at the Drinkfield Civic Amenity Site has been successful. Cabinet has given approval to the project of improvement and additional revenue resources of £120,000 from the Council’s Medium Term Financial Plan from 2006/07. The release of the Capital Grant from DEFRA in the sum of £606,184 to finance the capital work has also been approved. It is anticipated that works will be carried out over a 6 to 8 week period in March/April 2005, but ensuring that the site is open during the busy Easter period and officers are examining opportunities to set up temporary facilities during the period of closure.
  - (e) **CCTV** – Darlington’s closed circuit television system reached a significant milestone when the system’s 100th camera was installed recently in North Lodge Park. The

camera cost £25,000 to install and came at the start of a programme to refurbish the park of which the camera will watch over the works. The introduction of CCTV cameras in parks will improve safety and help to reduce anti-social behaviour. South Park and Alderman Crooks Park will also have cameras installed by the end of August.

- (f) **Data Protection Fraud Warning** – Trading Standards Officers in Darlington are warning local businesses about a fraud based on the Data Protection Act. The warning comes after a spate of complaints about collectors’ letters requesting payment for registration. All companies are being urged, especially when staff levels might be low at this time of year due to holidays, to be doubly vigilant, and if in doubt, contact the local trading standards service for advice.
- (g) **Recycling** – Darlington is the region’s top recycler according to figures released last month by the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DeFRA). We recycled 13 per cent of household waste, which includes paper, compost, glass, plastic bottles and tin cans. The introduction of the kerbside recycling service last September has boosted our performance and we are now recycling 17 per cent of household waste. This figure puts us well on target to meet the 18 per cent goal we have been set by the Government.
- (h) **WRAP Regional Bid**  
Durham County, Durham Districts and Darlington submitted a joint bid to the Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP) for funding for communications work to promote existing recycling schemes, the objective being to increase take up and recycling levels. The bid has been approved to the value of £450,000 and Durham County Council (DCC) will lead on the delivery.
- The project will provide the following:
- Seven canvassers plus one supervisor will be employed for three years
  - The canvassers will door knock in selected areas in each of the partner authorities to promote existing recycling schemes
  - The partner authorities will be able to determine which streets are visited and provide local promotional literature.
  - Darlington will receive one eighth of the total resource over the three year period.
- (i) **Litter** – Uniformed wardens have been patrolling the parks throughout the summer on the lookout for people dropping litter and hundreds of extra bins have been located in parks and streets throughout the Borough with the quick response team dealing with dozens of calls from residents. 247 fines and over 59 formal warnings for litter have been issued since April this year.
- (j) **Zonal Cleansing** – Trials for a new method of street cleaning have been taken place in the Bank Top area. This involves cleaning an area or zone as opposed to using a variety of different cleaning schedules for different types of roads and pavements and using a dedicated team of cleaning staff for each area. The success of the scheme is currently being assessed and the trial is continuing while an assessment of resources

required for zones and the best means for extending this trial across the Borough. The scheme when fully implemented will see the Borough divided into five zones each with its own team and team leader responsible for keeping streets and parks clean, tidy and litter free.

- (k) **Crematorium** – I can report that the representatives of the Federation of Cremation Authorities carried out a visit and inspection of the Crematorium. Their report has now been received and gave an excellent report on the Crematorium, staff and the level of service.

**Councillor Chris McEwan**  
**Community Protection Portfolio**