
**OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC PROTECTION AND COMMUNITY
PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

1. Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Public Protection and Community Partnerships Scrutiny Committee has undertaken :-
 - (a) **Work Programme** – We considered the Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2004/05 and examined Cabinet’s Forward Plan for particular areas of interest and concern and are constantly examining areas for undertaking Task and Finish Review Groups and this Committee’s next major Review.
 - (b) **Task and Finish Review** – Kerbside Recycling Scheme – A further door knocking exercise was undertaken on Monday, 16th August, 2004 to complete the streets to be surveyed and work can now commence on the final findings of the Group.
 - (c) **Best Value Review of Regulatory Services** – Work is continuing on the Review the final report of the Review will now be presented at the October meeting of this Scrutiny. The Out of Hours Working Group presented their final report and their recommendations to the meeting of this Scrutiny in August and their findings will be included in the overall final report of the Review.
 - (d) **Civil Contingency Bill** – We received a presentation from Patrick Cunningham, Chief Emergency Planning Officer on the emergency planning arrangements as they now stand and also on the forthcoming new requirements on the Council following the introduction of the Civil Contingency Bill expected to receive Royal Assent November, 2004. It was emphasised that under the new Bill there will be a change in culture to emergency planning and performance will be more closely scrutinised. Following discussion and questions by this Committee it was agreed that there will be an opportunity for this Scrutiny Committee by way of a Review Group to examine how the other local responders and this Council are preparing for the new Act. Patrick Cunningham will attend a future meeting of this Scrutiny Committee once he receives the guidance on the Act.
 - (e) **Drinkfield Civic Amenity Improvements** – We were very pleased to be informed that the bid to the Department of Environment for Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) for the proposed improvements to the Drinkfield Civic Amenity Site had been successful to the sum of £730,314 and work on the site is expected to be completed by the end of the financial year.

- (f) **Community Partnership Service Plan** – This Scrutiny Committee gave consideration to the Community Partnership Service for 2004/05 and monitored progress against key outcomes.
- (g) **Fairtrade** – Following a referral from the Darlington Environmental Forum, we gave consideration to the Fairtrade initiative and ways to develop Darlington as a Fairtrade Town. It was agreed by Members of this Committee to support the development of Darlington as a Fairtrade Town and to recommend to Cabinet that the principles of Fairtrade be adopted by the Council.
- (h) **Provision of Youth Pods Review Group** – One year on from when the Review Group presented their final report, we received an update on the progress made on our findings and recommendations. Unfortunately, the Review Group Members did not feel that the progress was satisfactory and have agreed to meet again to discuss further. The date of this meeting is to be arranged as soon as possible.

Councillor Doris Jones
Chair of Public Protection and Community Partnerships Scrutiny Committee