
GROUNDWORK NORTH EAST

Responsible Cabinet Member - Councillor Stephen Harker, Health and Leisure Portfolio

Responsible Director - Cliff Brown, Director of Community Services

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. It is proposed that Darlington Borough Council becomes a member of Groundwork North East.

Summary

2. In the last six to 12 months, the Groundwork groups in the region have been working together to form Groundwork North East.
3. Groundwork West Durham and Darlington, Groundwork South Tees, Groundwork East Durham and Groundwork Northumberland have now all merged to form Groundwork North East.
4. To enable Darlington to continue to play an active part with Groundwork, locally in particular regionally, it is necessary for the Council to become a member of the new Groundwork North East.

Recommendation

5. It is recommended that :-
 - (a) Darlington Borough Council becomes a member of Groundwork North East.
 - (b) The Cabinet Member for Health & Leisure represents the Council on the Sub Regional Board and the North East Board of Groundwork. The Cabinet Member for Communities and Engagement will be the second member on the Tees Valley Sub Regional Board.

Reasons

6. The recommendations are supported to enable Darlington Borough Council to play an active part in the development and leadership of Groundwork North East

Cliff Brown
Director of Community Services

Background Papers

No Background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

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CLD

S17 Crime and Disorder	Through some of the work carried out by Groundwork with regard to environmental improvements and engagement with young people, there can be a positive impact on crime and disorder.
Health and Well Being	A number of the programmes that are delivered by Groundwork are specifically aimed at improving health and well being for residents.
Sustainability	A range of projects are specifically targeted towards improving the sustainability and biodiversity of areas within the Borough.
Diversity	The impact of this report has no negative effect on any one individual.
Wards Affected	All Wards in the Borough will be affected.
Groups Affected	All groups in the Borough will be affected.
Budget and Policy Framework	There is no impact on the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	Groundwork work across a range of objectives that can assist in delivering programmes/projects across all themes in the SCS. Groundwork are involved in the LSP and chair the Greener theme group.
Efficiency	There is no impact on the efficiency agenda, however part of the role of Groundwork will be to assist the Council in obtaining external funding to deliver projects.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

7. Groundwork is a federation of trusts in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, each working with their partners to improve the quality of the local environment, the lives of local people and success of local business in areas in need of investment and support. The particular strength of the Groundwork approach is working closely with local communities to develop, design and implement projects. The Groundwork Trust is a partnership between the public, private and voluntary sectors with its own Board of Trustees. The work of the trusts is supported by the national office of Groundwork UK and by Groundwork Wales.
8. Members will recall that Darlington Borough Council started formally working with Groundwork West Durham and Darlington in April 2006. Since then a significant amount of work has taken place in partnership to deliver a range of projects and improvements across the Borough, in particular, through Local Area Agreement and more recently, Playbuilders and Heritage Lottery Application for the Denes.
9. In the last 12 months, the Groundwork trusts in the region have been working together to form Groundwork North East.
10. Groundwork West Durham and Darlington, Groundwork South Tees, Groundwork East Durham and Groundwork Northumberland have now all merged to form Groundwork North East.
11. To enable Darlington to continue to play an active part with Groundwork, locally in particular regionally, it is necessary for the Council to become a member of the new Groundwork North East.
12. This will enable the Portfolio Holder for Health and Leisure to play an active part in Groundwork North East, helping set the vision and direction of the organisation by being a Board Member on the Sub Regional Tees Valley Board and also, if selected, the North East Board. In addition, Darlington will also be represented on the Sub-Regional Board and importantly at local level in Darlington. By becoming a member of Groundwork North East, the Council:
 - (a) Guarantees that it will contribute a sum of not exceeding £1 towards the assets of the company if it was wound up while being a member or within one year thereafter, and
 - (b) Observe and be bound by the company's Memorandum of Articles of Association (attached as **Appendix 1**).
13. The structure of the new Groundwork North East will be:
 - (a) A Regional Board with representation from each of the sub regions. Darlington would initially be represented on the Regional Board for the first two months, and then, subject to selection by the Tees Valley Sub-Regional Board, the Council's representative will be the Portfolio Holder for Health and Leisure.

- (b) Sub-Regional Board to guide the work within the region. Darlington would have two representatives on this Board.
- (c) Local Steering Group, which would include Members, representatives from community/voluntary sector, business and Council officers. This group already exists in Darlington and has support from Groundwork West Durham and Darlington.

Outcome of Consultation

14. Consultation has taken place with the Portfolio Holder with regard to the content of this report.