

PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

25th October, 2012

PRESENT – Councillor Long (in the Chair); Councillors Carson, Cossins, Grundy, Harman, L. Hughes, Lawton, Lewis, E.A. Richmond and Wright. (10)

APOLOGIES – Councillor Baldwin. (1)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE -

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Steve Petch, Head of Strategy and Commissioning, Timothy Crawshaw, Principal Officer and Karen Graves, Democratic Officer.

P16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

P17. MINUTES – Submitted - The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 6th September, 2012.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

P18. SCRUTINY – WORK PROGRAMME 2012/13 – The Director of Resources submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to the work programme items scheduled to be considered by this Scrutiny Committee during the current Municipal Year.

The submitted report outlined those areas where this Scrutiny Committee had previously identified it would like to focus its work over the next Municipal Year namely, Civil Parking Enforcement, Town Centre Fringe, Local Development Framework, Housing Strategy and Economic Strategy.

It was also emphasised that the work programme was a rolling programme and any Member of this Scrutiny could request an item to be included provided that a Quad of Aims had been submitted to the Scrutiny Committee prior to ensure that it contributed to the strategic aims of the Council.

The submitted report outlined the original Work Programme and requested Members to reconsider the Work Programme to accommodate further issues that need to be included.

Discussion ensued on a special meeting to consider the Local Plan (formerly LDF) and the need to arrange a meeting of the Wheeled Bins Task and Finish Review Group. With regard to the Car Parking Strategy Members were advised that following Cabinet considering an options paper in December, Scrutiny would consider the Draft Strategy in the New Year.

With regard to Arriva Members were advised to forward any issues to the relevant Officer, there was a consensus that a complaints log should exist so that the service

could be monitored and that it would be useful to liaise with other Tees Valley local authorities to get their views of the service.

References were made to the emerging Digital Strategy and potential digital exclusion and social impact on many people, carbon management and the civic amenity site.

Members were keen to invite Stephen Wiper, Creative Darlington Manager, to the next ordinary meeting of Scrutiny Committee with a view to resurrecting the Cultural Provision Review Group

RESOLVED – (a) That the current status of the Work Programme be noted.

(b) That the Work Programme be updated to reflect the decisions of this Scrutiny Committee.

(c) That Stephen Wiper, Creative Darlington Manager be invited to the next ordinary meeting of this Scrutiny Committee.

P19. TOWN CENTRE FRINGE – Pursuant to Minute P22/Mar/12, the Director of Place submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting Members to comment on the consultation process, its outcomes and to make recommendations for further consultation work prior to adoption of the Town Centre Fringe Masterplan in early 2013. A PowerPoint presentation accompanied the report.

The submitted report stated that following consultation with this Scrutiny Committee a number of transport related resolutions were made. Further consultation events were held in the specific targeted areas of Northgate, Central and Park East Wards with residents, businesses, statutory bodies, developers, schools and colleges also being consulted.

Following residents' concerns Eastmount Park the re-drafted Plan would not show the Park as being available for development.

It was also stated that due to the historic environment in the area the Railway Heritage Enquiry Group was working as a partnership of the community, Council, industry experts and specialists groups to capitalise on and celebrate Darlington's Railway Heritage.

Discussions ensued on the responsibility of debris removal during flooding, the Homes and community Strategy, the views of young people within the eastern area of Darlington being sought, the timescale for completion of the works and the estimated costs involved.

It was also stated that Darlington needed a Unique Selling Point (USP) and that it was encouraging to see that there would be more live/work opportunities around the Town Centre. Members were pleased to note that businesses within the Town Centre Fringe were willing to move to more suitable premises in order to allow for the development of live/work areas.

RESOLVED – (a) That continuous engagement, within the resources available, be encouraged

(b) That the consultation undertaken be applauded.

(c) That Darlington College be approached to host an exhibition as part of the on-going formal discussions with young people.

(d) That the acknowledgement of Darlington's Heritage be welcomed.
