

**PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
12TH JANUARY, 2012**

**MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN TASK AND FINISH REVIEW GROUP – FINAL
REPORT**

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To present the outcome and findings of the Task and Finish Review Group established by Place Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise those saving proposals contained within the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) which were under the remit of that Committee.

Summary

2. Members will be aware that Cabinet have published the proposals in relation to the MTFP 2012/13 – 2015/16 as a basis for public consultation. As in previous years, all Scrutiny Committees have been requested to undertake a piece of work in relation to the savings proposals within their individual remits and report back thereon.
3. A Task and Finish Review Group was therefore established by the Place Scrutiny Committee and all Members were invited to participate.
4. The Task and Finish Review Group has met on three occasions with Officers and its final report is attached (**Appendix 1**).

Recommendation

5. It is recommended that Members formulate recommendations for submission to Special Resources Scrutiny Committee to be held on 26th January, 2012.

**Paul Wildsmith
Director of Resources**

Background Papers

Medium Term Financial Plan 2012/13 to 2015/16

Karen Graves : Ext: 2291

S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has no implications for Crime and Disorder.
Health and Well Being	This report has implications to address Health and Well Being for the residents of Darlington.
Sustainability	There are no issues relating to Sustainability which this report needs to address.
Diversity	There are no issues relating to diversity which this report needs to address.
Wards Affected	This report does not impact on a particular Ward, but Darlington as a whole.
Groups Affected	This report does not impact on a particular Group, but Darlington residents as a whole.
Budget and Policy Framework	The MTFP, Budget and Council tax must all be agreed by full Council.
Key Decision	This is not a Key Decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an Urgent Decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The report contributes to the Sustainable Community Strategy in a number of ways through the involvement of Members in contributing to the delivery of the five themes.
Efficiency	This report does not identify specific efficiency savings.

MAIN REPORT

Introduction

1. This is the final report of the Place Scrutiny Medium Term Financial Plan Task and Finish Review Group which was established by the Place Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise the relevant saving proposals contained within the Cabinet report on the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) which were under the remit of Place Scrutiny Committee.

Background Information

2. Members will be aware that Cabinet have published the proposals in relation to the MTFP 2012/13 – 2015/16 as a basis for public consultation.
3. As in previous years, all Scrutiny Committees have been requested to undertake a piece of work in relation to the savings proposals within their individual remits and report back thereon.
4. A Task and Finish Review Group was therefore established by the Place Scrutiny Committee.
5. Since then, the Task and Finish Review Group have met on four occasions and this report outlines the outcome of the findings.

Membership of the Review Group

6. All Members of this Scrutiny Committee and other members were invited to attend the meetings of this Group.

Acknowledgements

7. The Review Group acknowledges the support and assistance provided in the course of their investigation and would like to place on record their thanks to the following :-

Mr. Richard Alty, Director of Place;
Mrs. Elizabeth Davison, Assistant Director – Finance;
Mr. Ian Thompson, Assistant Director, Community Services;
Mr. Dave Winstanley, Assistant Director, Highways, Design and Projects;
Mr. John Anderson, Assistant Director, Policy and Regeneration;
Mr. Mike Crawshaw, Cultural Services Manager;
Mr. Steve Petch, Head of Strategy and Commissioning; and
Mrs. Karen Graves, Democratic Officer,

Methods of Investigation

8. The Review Group met on 1st, 9th and 14th December, 2011 and 12th January, 2012 with Officers and the notes are attached as **Appendix A**.

9. At the first meeting, Members agreed the Terms of Reference of the Review (attached as **Appendix B**), received an overview of the budget proposals which fell within the Committee's remit and scoped the relevant section of the Cabinet report on the MTFP under the remit of Place Scrutiny to ascertain which areas the Review Group wanted further information on.
10. At the second meeting, Members gave consideration to the issues raised following the scoping of the MTFP on 1st December 2011 by this Review Group and discussed in more details the proposals within this Committee's remit.
11. At the third meeting Members gave consideration to the Vision for the Arts.

Conclusion

12. Members welcomed the opportunity to discuss each proposal thoroughly with Officers to enable them to understand the reasoning behind each one.
13. Members understand the financial difficulty that this Council is facing to achieve the enforced budget savings.
14. From the work the Group have undertaken, we are satisfied that we have thoroughly scrutinised the proposals contained the Scrutiny Committee's remit and that no further work is required.

Recommendation

15. It is recommended :-
 - (a) That the Officers be thanked for the attendance at meetings;
 - (b) That the recommendations as detailed in the notes of the Review Group meetings held on 1st, 9th and 14th December, 2011 be approved and forwarded to Resources Scrutiny Committee.

Task and Finish Review Group

