

PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

18th April, 2013

PRESENT – Councillor Long (in the Chair); Councillors Carson, Cossins, Harman, Lawton, Lewis and E.A. Richmond. (7)

APOLOGIES – Councillors Baldwin, Grundy, L. Hughes, and Wright. (4)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE – Councillor D.A. Lyonette. (1)

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Steve Petch, Head of Strategy and Commissioning, John Anderson, Assistant Director, Policy and Regeneration, Doug McDougal; Policy Officer (Transport) and Karen Graves, Democratic Officer.

P32. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST –. Councillors Long and Carson, declared an interest as holders of residents parking permits, Councillor Harman declared an interest as a holder of a residents parking permit and a resident of Victoria Embankment and Councillor Cossins declared an interest as a resident of Cockerton.

P33. MINUTES – Submitted - The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 14th February, 2013.

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

P34. 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 the addition of Performance Indicators within service levels for Place Scrutiny and members raised concerns at the range of the Committee's remit, the progress being made by the Refuse Collection Review Group, a report on Carbon Management Programme being submitted to this Committee in June, and the need for both an inaugural meeting of the Town's Markets Review Group and a Special Meeting to discuss the Local Plan.

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.

P35. CAR PARKING STRATEGY – The Director of Place submitted a report (previously circulated) giving Members the opportunity to comment on the emerging draft parking strategy for Darlington. A PowerPoint presentation accompanied the report.

The submitted report stated that following production of the Car Parking Strategy in 2009 there had been several changes affecting parking, including the identification of sites in Darlington as potential development sites, the introduction of civil parking enforcement in 2010 and the down turn in the economy.

The draft strategy would be presented to Cabinet on 4th June 2013 followed by further consultation and adoption in Autumn 2013.

Committee were advised that an up to date strategy, a key input to the emerging Local Plan, was required to address all aspects of parking in Darlington but with a focus on maintaining the vitality of the town centre. Members gave consideration to various aspects of the Strategy including parking supply and charges, payment methods, security and safety, residents parking zones (RPZ's), disabled parking, traffic management and district centres.

Discussion ensued on a flexible approach to car parking charges and the need to strike a balance between the needs of town centre businesses, motorists and town centre residents, the possible use of trial areas and pilot schemes and the potential of free parking being made available occasionally in association with specific events or promotions.

RESOLVED – (a) That the report be noted.

(b) That the comments of this Committee be taken into consideration when finalising the Strategy.

P36. CARBON MANAGEMENT PLAN - CLIMATE LOCAL CONFERENCE – Submitted -- The notes of a Local Government conference attended by the Chair on 11th March 2013

Discussion ensued on all service areas tackling carbon management with a view to achieving better efficiency and savings to the budget..

RESOLVED – That the note be received.
