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**OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY PROTECTION PORTFOLIO**

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1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work undertaken under my Community Protection Portfolio :-
  - (a) **Provision of Youth Pods Review Group** – We noted the recommendations of the Public Protection and Community Partnerships Scrutiny Committee in relation to the provision of Youth Pods and the comments of the Director of Social Services in respect of the Review.
  - (b) **2004 Litter Initiative Plan** – We received an update on the work undertaken following the launch of the Litter Initiative in November, 2002, and approved the 2004/05 Litter Initiative Action Plan which will further develop the Litter Initiative to improve the quality of the local environment in Darlington.
  - (c) **Fast Food Initiative** - This month saw the launch of a fast food litter campaign as part of the on-going anti-litter initiative and proprietors will be urged to take responsibility for their rubbish and enforcement action will be taken against the worst offenders. The Council will write to all outlets to advise them of the Fast Food Voluntary Code of Practice which details the outlets' responsibilities for dealing with litter including having sufficient bins for waste and keeping shop fronts clean. Traders will also be asked to agree a verbal contract for dealing with litter.
  - (d) **Regulation of Cosmetic Piercing and Skin-Colouring Businesses** – We gave approval for the Council to carry out necessary procedures to follow the byelaws to effectively regulate activities relating to skin piercing and semi-permanent skin-colouring.
  - (e) **Best Value Review of Regulatory Services** – Progress is being maintained on the Review, Officers are continuing to further investigate issues identified in Stage 1, looking at procurement options and preparing Stage 2 and Stage 3 reports.
  - (f) **Honeypot Lane Caravan Site** – I am pleased to report that the Council has been successful in a bid for Gypsy Sites Refurbishment Grant 2004/05. A bid was made to complete the provision of amenity blocks on the site and a total of £312,210.86 has been awarded which is 75% of the bid of £416,281, the remainder being contributed by Sure Start Darlington and Darlington Primary Care Trust. This will complete the improvement of Honeypot Lane. Work is currently proceeding on Stage 1 which involves the provision of new water and electricity supplies and amenity blocks, together with a 10 pitch transit site.

- (g) **Tobacco Products Advertising** – Following an approach from the Department of Health, Trading Standards Officers will enforce the provisions of the Tobacco Products Advertising Regulations which control the advertising of tobacco products at retail outlets.
  - (h) **Recycling** – Recycling rates now average 88 tonne/week and work continues to increase participation rate and tonnage.
  - (i) **Kerbside Recycling Scheme** – I am pleased to report that a survey, carried out by environmental campaigners Friends of the Earth has named this Council's kerbside recycling scheme in it list of ten of the best doorstep collections in England. As the scheme has only been operational for seven months, this recognition is quite an achievement.
  - (j) **Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003** – Several of the provisions of the Act came into effect and are being enforced:
    - (a) Prohibition on sale of aerosol paints to under 18's;
    - (b) New Fixed Penalty offences of fly posting and graffiti; and
    - (c) New provisions to deal with fly tipping – additional powers to stop, search and impound vehicles.
  - (k) **Citizenship Ceremony** – I was proud, along with the Mayor and Mayoress, High Sheriff and Officers of the Council, to attend Darlington's First Citizenship Ceremony at Central House on 12th May, 2004. The Ceremony, which is very dignified, is the final step in the process of becoming a British Citizen and formally welcomes applicants to our nation and community.
2. I have attended the following meeting in respect of my Community Protection Portfolio :-
- (a) **Public Protection Forum** – I Chaired the Public Protection Forum held on 6th April, 2004 at which reports were submitted on the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003; the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy for England; Adoption of a Taxi Charter; and the 2004 Litter Initiative Action Plan.

**Councillor Chris McEwan**  
**Community Protection Portfolio**