
LEADER'S OVERVIEW

1. In submitting my report, I also give details of the other commitments I have undertaken as Leader :-
 - (a) **Darlington Town Centre 'Pedestrian Heart'** – Following extensive consultation revised arrangements for the 'Pedestrian Heart' of Darlington Town Centre were approved by Cabinet. The revisions to the scheme were proposed in order to bring further benefits to the Town Centre in comparison with the previously approved scheme in order to ensure that the economic well-being, environmental quality and ease of use of the Town Centre were enhanced. Those benefits included the creation of new space at the frontage of the indoor market, substantially reducing the split between the north and south of the town, the reduction of bus and pedestrian conflict on Northgate and Crown Street and greater flexibility and penetration in respect of bus routing options. Further consultation will take place on the draft designs prior to them being re-considered by Cabinet.
 - (b) **Combined Corporate Plan and Best Value Performance Plan 2004/05** – The arrangements for the production of this years' combined Corporate Plan and Best Value Performance Plan to meet revised Government guidance and to comply with related planning requirements were considered and approved by Cabinet at its meeting held on 30th March, 2004. The completed draft document will be submitted to a special meeting of Council scheduled for 22nd June, 2004.
 - (c) **Service Planning 2004/05** – The five departmental plans, along with the Chief Executive's Office Plan were adopted in accordance with the Service Planning timetable approved by Cabinet at its meeting held on 2nd March, 2004. The adoption of the Plans will ensure continued implementation of the Corporate Plan, leading to further service improvement. A successful corporate approach to service planning will be a vital component of the corporate assessment due later in the year.
 - (d) **Capital Programme 2004/05 – Release of Funds** – The capital monies of all corporately funded capital schemes approved in the 2004/05 capital programme was released by Cabinet. Those schemes included the reconfiguration of the Learning Disability Day Service, the Faverdale East Business Park, West Cemetery Wall Replacement, the establishment of a contact and call centre and the proposed works for the Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor.
 - (e) **Representation on Other Bodies** – Two appointments were made by Cabinet to Other Bodies on which this Council is represented. Firstly, Councillor Hughes, in her capacity as Chair of the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny, was appointed to serve on a Steering Group, established by the North East Regional Employers Organisation, to

develop a more structured and accessible approach to Member development in the region. Councillor A.J. Scott, was appointed to serve on the Alternative Centre for Education (ACE) Advisory and Steering Group, as Vice-Chair of the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee.

- (f) **Calendar of Council and Committee Meetings 2004/05** – A Calendar of Council and Committee Meetings for the forthcoming Municipal Year was approved by Cabinet at its meeting held on 27th April, 2004.

Councillor John Williams
Councillor John Williams, Leader

Appendix 1

1. Wednesday, 14th April, 2004 – Attended a Members’ training event on planning.
2. Friday, 16th April, 2004 – Carried out the Chief Executive’s Appraisal.
3. Wednesday, 21st April, 2004 – Attended Association of North East Council (ANEC) Choosing Health Seminar in Newcastle.
4. Thursday, 22nd April, 2004 – Attended Government Office North East (GONE) Regional Hearing in Middlesbrough.
5. Tuesday, 27th April, 2004 – Speaker at Common Purpose Event in Middlesbrough.
6. Thursday, 29th April, 2004 – Chaired Darlington Anti Social Behaviour Conference.
7. Friday, 30th April, 2004 – Attended North East Assembly Executive Committee in Newcastle.
8. Wednesday, 5th May, 2004 – Attended Planning Applications Committee.
9. Friday 7th May, 2004 – Photocall at the Education Village, Haughton.
10. Wednesday, 12th May, 2004 – Attended the Darlington Partnership Board Meeting.
11. Thursday, 13th May, 2004 – Chaired Town Centre Board Meeting.
12. Monday, 17th May, 2004 – Attended Teesside Airport Board Meeting.
13. Tuesday, 18th May, 2004 – Attended SHINE Event in Middlesbrough.
14. Monday, 24th May, 2004 – Attended Chief Constable’s Presentation on Policing Plan to Council Members.