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**OVERVIEW OF REGENERATION AND PLANNING PORTFOLIO**

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1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work that have been undertaken under the Regeneration and Planning Portfolio :-
  - (a) **Tees Valley Works** – We endorsed the Tees Valley Works Project which is to run from September 2005 to August 2007 and in doing so gave consideration to entering into a Service Level Agreement with the other Tees Valley Authorities, with Hartlepool Borough Council being the lead and accountable body for the initiative. The Project has two elements, the first being to provide local people with a holistic range of personal development and customised training relating to existing and emerging skill needs and will be delivered throughout the Tees Valley utilising the extensive expertise of voluntary groups and local facilities. The second element aims to encourage the social and economic inclusion of women by widening Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) services, training and employment opportunities and improving their access to local mainstream provision during school holidays with childcare facilities being provided.
  - (b) **Administering High Hedge Complaints** – Following the introduction of the law giving Local Councils the powers to deal with complaints about high hedges (Part 8 of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003) on 1st June, 2005, Cabinet gave approval to the level of fees to cover its administration costs and also to the Director of Development and Environment being granted delegated authority to decide High Hedges Complaints under Part 8 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003. The Act makes provision for Local Councils to determine complaints by the owners/occupiers of domestic property adversely affected by evergreen hedges over 2 metres high.
  - (c) **New Approaches to Public Procurement** – Cabinet were given an update on the work undertaken to identify the legal and policy frameworks for use by the Council's Planning, Estates, Procurement and Economic Regeneration activities in order to target employment and training opportunities that arise from Council expenditure and wider regeneration projects. Consideration was also given to the adoption of statements and procedures to facilitate the implementation of various Council policies through New Approaches to Public Procurement (NAPP) an approach being adopted by all Tees Valley Councils in a consistent way, to ensure that both the benefits and the implications for developers are no different across the sub-region.
  - (d) **Northern Way : Tees Valley City Region Development Programme** – Cabinet considered the progress being made in relation to the development of the Northern Way Growth Strategy with particular emphasis on the Tees Valley City Region Development Programme contained within it, which had recently been submitted to One NorthEast. The programme is designed to develop the economic assets of the Tees Valley and

remove the barriers to economic growth and performance. The process and timetable for production of the City Region Development Programme has been set by the Office for the Deputy Prime Minister and the tight deadline has now allowed sufficient time for individual local authorities to gain approval for the programme, prior to its submission to One NorthEast.

- (e) **Piercebridge Conservation Area Character Appraisal** – Approval was given by Cabinet at its meeting held on 30th August, 2005, to the Character Appraisal for the Piercebridge Conservation Area as a basis for consultation. Consideration was also given to the process for future conservation area appraisals.

Piercebridge is the first in a programme of 16 Conservation Area character appraisals to be undertaken over the next few years. The publication of these appraisals will assist in countering threats to the conservation area through in appropriate development and set the context for the type and scope of acceptable proposals.

- (f) **Faverdale East Business Park – completion of infrastructure** – The infrastructure is now complete releasing 10.8 hectares for development. Final works to the site in terms of environmental mitigation and landscaping will take place over the winter planting season. The scheme has been funded by One NorthEast through the Single Programme, the European Regional Development Fund, and the Council.

- (g) **Launch of BAT Legacy** - The BAT Legacy Fund was formally launched on 8 September 2005 at the Morton Palms Business Park. The Legacy has funded a new “Darlington- Where Quality Comes to Life” CD-ROM. The CD Rom will be used to attract new business investment opportunities, as well as to attract tourists and new retailers to the Borough.

The BAT Legacy Fund is supporting 36 companies develop e-commerce solutions to improve trading. In addition four seminars will be held on e-commerce related subjects, these are free and open to all businesses. The first seminar on export and public sector procurement was held on 2 September 2005. Additional funding has been secured from the Single Regeneration Budget.

The BAT Legacy is supporting the Council’s Skills For Success programme, an initiative to support workforce development and the Falchion Fund, a joint low cost loan scheme to businesses administered by the Council and HSBC.

**Councillor David Lyonette**  
**Regeneration and Planning Portfolio**