

---

**OVERVIEW OF CONSUMER AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO**

---

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work undertaken under my Consumer and Environmental Services Portfolio:
  - (a) **Pandemic Influenza Plan** – We approved a plan to enable this Council to respond to an outbreak of Pandemic Influenza. In the event of Pandemic Influenza the Council is likely to suffer a period when staff are unable to work. The plan therefore prioritises Council services in varying degrees of importance, allow less critical services to be withdrawn, but ensuring that key services are maintained. The Primary Care Trust is leading the development of plans to deal with the health impacts on the community and this Council is participating as a partner and also working with other key partners such as the Health Protection Agency.
  - (b) **Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles** – We considered the Council’s draft policy document “Gambling Act 2005 – Statement of Principles” and agreed to refer this to Council for approval and also considered the delegation of powers to set fees for licences and permits in respect of the Gambling Act 2005, which will also be referred for consideration at this Council meeting.
  - (c) **Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Fee Review** – We have commenced the annual review of fees by publicising provisional fees and inviting the taxi trade to comment on them prior to submitting a report to Cabinet in January next year.
  - (d) **Speciality Markets** – A very successful French market was held in the town centre on the weekend of 20 October. The market used a newly completed section of the Pedestrian Heart in Northgate. Informal feedback indicated that the location was popular with both traders and shoppers and work is now underway to attract further continental markets to Darlington.
  
2. I have attended the following meetings in respect of my Consumer and Environmental Services Portfolio:
  - (a) Darlington Environmental Forum meeting 25th September, 2006 and a Special Darlington Environmental Forum on 23rd October 2006.
  - (b) Audit Committee meeting on 11th October, 2006.
  - (c) Public Protection Forum meeting 10th October, 2006.
  - (d) Steering Group for Groundwork, Darlington on 12th October, 2006.
  - (e) Community Partnerships Steering Group on 17th October, 2006.
  - (f) Darlington Transport Forum on 30th October, 2006.
  - (g) Visit to new Register Office to inspect progress of building work.
  - (h) Briefing meetings with various Directors and Assistant Directors.

**Councillor Steve Harker**  
**Consumer and Environmental Services Portfolio**