
OVERVIEW OF REGENERATION AND PLANNING PORTFOLIO

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) **Central Park** – We have agreed the relocation of some of the Hundens Lane allotments to Arnold Road, as a capital project for this Council on behalf of Tees Valley Regeneration together with the release of the requisite funding received from Tees Valley Partnership and/or Tees Valley Regeneration for this purpose. The allotments need to be relocated in order to progress the Central Park development between Yarm Road and Haughton Road
 - (b) **Darlington Local Development Framework – Local Development Scheme** - We gave consideration to updating the Council’s Local Development Scheme, a three year project plan for the production of the Local Development Framework documents which will progressively replace the existing Development Plans for the Borough together with the timetable for the preparation of the Local Development Framework Core Strategy and consequential or other changes. The Council’s current Local Development Scheme came into effect on 24th August 2006 and covers the three year period 2006 to 2009 in detail and outlines expected progress for the following two years.
 - (c) **Darlington Local Development Framework : Saving of Existing Development Plan Policies** – Consideration was also given to the implications of legislative provisions whereby existing structure and local plan policies will automatically expire in September 2007 unless their life is extended by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. The assessment of the continuing applications of various planning policy documents which comprise the current statutory development plan for the Borough and extending the life of the policies in the Tees Valley Structure Plan, the Borough of Darlington Local Plan and the Minerals and Waste Local Plans inherited from Durham County Council.
 - (d) **Confirmation of Article 4(2) Direction for Northgate Conservation Area** – In order to protect the character and appearance of the Northgate Conservation Area and the investment made by the Council and English Heritage in reintroducing and restoring features Cabinet confirmed the Article 4(2) Direction, introduced on 24th November, 2006. Article 4(2) Direction is a provision of Planning legislation removing the ‘permitted development rights’ of owners living in a conservation area.
 - (e) **BAT Legacy Fund Three Year Programme** – We agreed to the release of £251,000 revenue expenditure from the British American Tobacco (BAT) Legacy Fund for year three in order to support job creation and economic development. The BAT Legacy Fund has, so far, supported several projects including Darlington Advantage, The D2E

e-commerce project, Skills for Success, Falchion Fund , Inward Investment and Retail Project

- (f) **Skills for Success** - The Skills for Success project came to a close in March, a three and a half year scheme that started in September 2003. Unfortunately it has had to end because we have been unable to access further funding. With most of its funding coming from the Tees Valley Partnership's Single Programme and boosted by the British American Tobacco Legacy and Council, its aim was to encourage local businesses to take up training for their staff. It has certainly achieved its aim with over 300 businesses accessing the project for help, support and grants and over 1300 staff receiving some form of training or development with the help of the project.
- (g) **New Interpretation Site and Countryside Events Outdoor Theatre to be built at Skerningham Community Woodland** - This new feature is being built to help new groups to enjoy the community woodland at Low Skerningham. Set in a really lovely location, this new facility will give people a focus for community walks as well as allow a whole series of Countryside events to take place. It will also be the site of a community arts project which will be aimed at exploring the historical significance of the Ketton Ox, important for this area in particular and for Darlington as a whole.
- (h) **Castelbeck** - the national health care provider for adults with learning difficulties staged the official launch of their create initiative in the north east at Maidendale Nature Reserve last Tuesday. This initiative helps residents of the scheme to enjoy the huge benefits that come with being outside in natural surroundings and the nature reserve has been a big beneficiary of their hard work. Over 30 residents now visit the site weekly and carry out various tasks including litter picking, making bird boxes and doing design workshops.

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Regeneration and Planning Portfolio