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**OVERVIEW OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

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1. Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Committee has undertaken :-
  - (a) **Work Programme** – We considered our draft Work Programme and particular reference was made to the change of remit and discussed review topics for the Municipal Year 2007/08. We also examined Cabinet’s Forward Plan for particular areas of interest and concern to be included within our Work Programme and also further areas for undertaking Task and Finish Review Group. With regard to the recent changes to the remit of this Scrutiny Committee, our Members are keen to get involved with Housing issues and Pauline Mitchell will be giving a presentation to our next meeting scheduled for 30th October, 2007.
  - (b) **Review /Task and Finish Groups** – The Task and Finish Review Group on Flooding have now set their terms of reference and met on a number of occasions, interviewed various officers, viewed the CCTV footage of the recent flooding in the Town Centre during June and visited Hundens Depot to talk to the operatives and see the Gully Flusher. It is anticipated that the Group will be able to present their findings and recommendations to the Scrutiny meeting scheduled for 30th October, 2007.
  - (c) **Climate Change** – At our recent Scrutiny Meeting we gave consideration to suggested areas relevant to our Scrutiny in relation to Climate Change with a view to feeding in our findings to the Action Plan on Climate Change for Darlington and Tees Valley Climate Change Strategies. After discussions, Members agreed that they would be interested in carrying out a Task and Finish Review to look at the reduction of fuel poverty by ensuring that people have access to affordable warmth through efficient housing systems and appliances and will propose that this is done jointly with the Health and Well Being Scrutiny Committee.
  - (d) **Customer Services** – With our new Scrutiny remit in mind, Members were keen to receive an overview of the Customer Services Section and the handling of calls particularly in relation to Housing Services, Council Tax Benefit, Local Taxation and Street Scene. Lynda Bosanko, the Head of Customer Services attended our meeting and presented her report and answered Members’ questions on the service. Members were keen to visit the Call Centre and this will be undertaken in the near future.

**Councillor Doris Jones**  
**Chair of Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Committee**