
OVERVIEW OF ECONOMY AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1. Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee has undertaken :-
 - (a) **Work Programme 2008/09** – We have agreed our Work Programme for the 2008/09 Municipal Year and will continue to update and add to our Work Programme throughout the year. 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 Groups.
 - (b) **Local Development Framework Design of New Development Supplementary Planning Document** – We received a report and presentation on the Design of New Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which is an important policy document in the Council’s Local Development Framework (LDF). It will provide general and detailed design guidance to address a range of design matters that may not have been considered previously and also set out specific sustainable building standards, biodiversity standards and the new maximum car parking standards for the Tees Valley. Subject to Cabinet’s agreement on 2nd December, 2008, community and stakeholder consultation will take place from January to mid-February 2009. The consultation responses will then be considered and the SPD revised accordingly. It is hoped that the Council will adopt the SPD by mid 2009.
 - (c) **Darlington Town Centre Fringe** – We were advised of the progress made in taking forward the work on the Town Centre Fringe which would promote further economic growth in Darlington, take forward the original Darlington Gateway work and informed the development of the Tees Valley City Region Business Case. Effective consultation and participation will be critical to the success of the project as all sections of the community with an interest in development in the area need to be involved. It is also imperative that the work on the Town Centre Fringe takes into account the Local Development Framework, related transport studies and is anticipated as being a key contributor to the housing growth targets in the Tees Valley Housing Growth Point bid. We look forward to receiving further reports on the progress of this work.
 - (d) **Review of Darlington’s Development Control Procedures by External Consultants** – During February 2008 we suspended the work on the Planning Function Review Group until Trevor Roberts Associates (TRA) had completed their Review of Development Control and we were pleased to learn that TRA had now submitted their findings to the Council. We were given a brief breakdown of some of the recommendations of TRA and as a result Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee have decided to reconvene its Task and Finish Review Group in order to give greater consideration to those findings. I look forward to reporting the Group’s findings in the near future.

- (e) **Policy Review - Minimisation Review Group** – The meeting, to which outside bodies with an interest in waste minimisation were invited, on 8th October was a very useful exercise for the Group. Several outside bodies were represented and following a Power Point presentation by the Waste Minimisation and Street Scene Officers, their views and concerns were given careful consideration and will help the Group to form some recommendations for Cabinet’s consideration. A further meeting to which Town Centre Traders have been invited to air their views is currently being organised.
- (f) **Pedestrian Heart** – I am pleased to advise that Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee had a Stall at the Talking Together Event held in the Dolphin Centre on 6th November, 2008 which had been organised to give consideration to Cycling in the Pedestrian Heart. The event was very well attended with good reasoned arguments and comments from people and organisations both for and against cycling in the Pedestrian Heart. On 7th November, Scrutiny held a special meeting to consider the event and make recommendations to Cabinet.

2. Since the last meeting of Council, the Chair of the Committee has attended the following meetings:-

- Various briefings with Officers.
- Monitoring and Co-ordination Group
- A Conference in London about new ways of working for Scrutiny.

Chair of Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee