
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 2009/10** – We have considered our Work Programme for the 2009/10 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) **Regeneration, Economy and Unemployment** – As the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee we were delighted to receive a PowerPoint presentation on the current state of the economy, with particular emphasis on Darlington and this Council’s response to economic and worklessness issues.
 - (c) **Traffic Management Act 2004 – Network Management Plan** – At Cabinet on 3rd February, 2009 a number of Sections of the Traffic Management Plan were approved with further sections currently being developed and it was recommended that Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee monitor development of that Plan. In that regard we received a progress report which summarised various actions, performance tasks and intervention criteria which required monitoring and implementation.
 - (d) **Cycling Through the Town Centre** - As part of Scrutiny Monitoring we received an update report on Cycling Activities through the Darlington Town Centre for the period 1st July, 2009 to 30th November, 2009. The data was collected by various methods including accident data compiled by the Police, telephone calls, e-mails and letters logged with the Transport Policy Team. The data collected suggests that cycling continues to increase across Darlington and at high levels through the Town Centre. It also shows that no personal injury accidents have been recorded by the Police and incidents reported to the Transport Policy Team do not show any collisions between a cyclist and a pedestrian.
 - (e) **2nd Quarter Performance Report 2009/10** – We are responsible for the monitoring of four service plans i.e. Highways, Environmental Services (Street Scene), Regeneration and Culture. Along with the service plans this Scrutiny also has responsibility to scrutinise elements of the Sustainable Community Strategy : One Darlington : Perfectly Placed and the Local Area Agreement to note overall performance, reasons for underperformance and to undertake Task and Finish Reviews into areas of service where Committee feel it is necessary to examine more closely.
 - (f) **Greener Darlington Theme Group** – Scrutiny Committee welcomed the opportunity to be informed of the current work of the Greener Darlington Theme Group

- (g) **Prosperous Theme Group** – Scrutiny Committee welcomed the opportunity to be informed of the current work of the Prosperous Theme Group.
 - (h) **Policy Review - Arts Task and Finish Review Group** – The first meeting of the Review Group was held on 1st December and Members were mindful to not duplicate the work of CMT and Cabinet but to offer support and contribution to the overall task of efficiency savings and aid the process rather than replace the strategic thinking. The next meeting will be held on 14th January and Members were keen to receive further information on the responsibilities of Officers, links to external bodies, explanation of what the ‘arts’ are in Darlington and specific project funding opportunities and grants available.
2. Since the last meeting of Council, the Chair of the Committee has attended the following meetings :-
- (a) Various briefings with Officers.
 - (b) Greener Theme Group on 30th November, 2009.
 - (c) Prosperous Theme Group on 17th December, 2009.
 - (d) Visit to Northwood School on 14th December along with other Members of the Committee to examine the design of the building with particular emphasis on the energy saving and other environmental features.
 - (e) Attended the launch of the film ‘Beauty and the Bike’ on 9th December, 2009 at the Arts Centre.
 - (f) Attended the film ‘The Age of Stupid’ at the invitation of the Darlington Branch of Friends of the Earth at the Friends Meeting House on 1st December, 2009.

Councillor Dorothy Long
Chair of Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee