
OVERVIEW OF PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1. Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Place Scrutiny Committee has undertaken.

Work Programme 2012/13

2. We have given consideration to the Work Programme for this Committee for the Municipal Year 2012/13 and possible review topics and in doing so, we have taken into account the reduced resources available within the Authority and ensured that, in recommending our work programme to Monitoring and Co-ordination Group, that any work we undertake will have demonstrable outcomes and contribute to the work of the Council and its strategic aims and objectives. Following discussion Scrutiny Committee agreed to add the Local Transport Plan 3 and the Remodelling of Stonebridge to its Work Programme. Members were also keen to commence the Town Markets Review Group agreed in October which will be programmed at our next full Scrutiny meeting. Members are also keen to undertake a walkabout in the Town Centre and the ring road to look at street furniture. Members were also advised that as Digital Inclusion was considered a wider topic than originally envisaged with the involvement of businesses and outside agencies it was suggested that this Review Group be not pursued. There is the possibility that Scrutiny would be able to contribute to this wider piece of work at a later date and that this matter be referred back to Monitoring and Co-ordination.

Household Waste Recycling Changes

3. We received a report detailing the changes implemented at the Household Waste Recycling Centre which had so far achieved a financial saving of £74,771.05. We were advised of the restrictions that had been imposed and the comments received by residents of the Borough. We noted that fly tipping had increased slightly from the past year and that there had been a 41 per cent reduction in waste at the Household Waste Recycling Centre. It was also noticeable that household waste collected through the weekly refuse collection service had overall seen a reduction. Scrutiny was also advised of the 'Pay as You Throw' service for small amounts of non-household waste that residents transported in their cars. The contractor makes no profit from this charge which is to cover haulage and disposal. We were delighted to learn that it is expected that overall a saving of £100,000 could be achieved.

Cultural Provision in the Borough

4. Stephen Wiper, Creative Darlington Manager attended Scrutiny and advised on the current situation with Cultural Provision in the Borough. Details were provided of the excellent work done by staff to re-locate the organisations from the Arts Centre and the occupiers of The Bridge supporting each other in their new location. We were also advised of the work of the Creative Darlington Board and its forthcoming Business Plan. Scrutiny have agreed to hold a meeting of the Cultural Review Group in order to investigate further the issue of cultural provision in the Borough.

Waste Management (Wheeled Bins) Review Group

5. We have had a further meeting of the Group and have resolved to forward our findings and interim recommendations to Cabinet. We will however continue to thoroughly investigate the introduction of Wheeled Bins in the Borough and advise Cabinet of the outcome of our final recommendation and findings in due course.
6. Since the last meeting of Council, I have attended :-
 - (a) Various meetings with Officers;
 - (b) Joint briefings with officers and Portfolio Holders.

**Councillor Dorothy Long
Chair of Place Scrutiny Committee**