

## **PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

5th November, 2011

**PRESENT** – Councillors Carson, Cossins, Coultas, Harman, L. Hughes, Lawton, Long and E.A. Richmond. (8)

**APOLOGIES** – Councillors Baldwin, Lewis and Wright. (3)

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE** –

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE** – Steve Petch, Head of Place, Strategy and Commissioning and Karen Graves, Democratic Officer.

**P1. CHAIR – RESOLVED** – That Councillor Long be appointed Chair of this Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2011/12.

**P2. VICE-CHAIR – RESOLVED** – That Councillor Cossins be appointed Vice-Chair of this Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2011/12.

**P3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

**P4. MINUTES** – Submitted - The Minutes (previously circulated) of meetings of the former Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee held on 8th and 30th September, 2011.

**RESOLVED** – That the Minutes be approved as correct records.

**P5. SCRUTINY – WORK PROGRAMME 2011/12** – The Director of Resources submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to the work programme items scheduled to be considered by this Scrutiny Committee during the current Municipal Year and to the development of terms of reference (also previously circulated) for those topics.

The submitted report outlined those areas where this Scrutiny Committee had previously identified it would like to focus its work over the next Municipal Year namely, Civil Parking Enforcement, Economic Strategy, Local Development Framework and Transformation Projects and draft Terms of Reference which identified how, when and why the work would be undertaken were appended to the submitted report.

Discussion ensued on the new Scrutiny Process, alternative ways of obtaining information and the need for Scrutiny to do value added, focussed work. A Member requested that the remit of this Scrutiny Committee be circulated to all Members.

**RESOLVED** – (a) That the draft terms of reference for all of the topics identified be approved.

(b) That the remit of Place Scrutiny Committee be forwarded to Members.

(c) That an explanation be given by officers of the new scrutiny process at the next meeting.

**P6. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK** - Submitted - The Notes (previously circulated) of an all Member Briefing held on 20th October, 2011. The Head of Place, Strategy and Commissioning gave a brief outline of the role of Scrutiny in the development of the LDF.

Discussion ensued on the implementation of the Economic Strategy in the development of the Making Places and Accommodating Growth DPD, processes for promoting opportunities within Darlington including the role of Enquiry Groups recently established to investigate areas and business sectors.

References were also made to opportunities for the creation of employment uses within existing residential areas, the housing market conditions in the current economic climate and the Council's responsibility for education following academy status.

**RESOLVED** – (a) That, with thanks to the Planning Team, the notes of the Members Briefing held on 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2011 be received.

(b) That the following comments be submitted to Officers for consideration as part of the LDF preparation process :-

- (i) with regard to Note 2- Planning Obligations SPD this Scrutiny Committee notes the LDF Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and endorses, in particular, the proposal to review the Projects List on an annual basis and the proposal to update the costs of infrastructure proposals annually, believing that this will result in greater efficiency for the Council and fairness and transparency for developers;
  - (ii) with regard to Appendix 1 of Note 2 this Scrutiny Committee endorses the approach with regard to planning obligation priorities taking into account the site specific needs.
  - (iii) bullet point No. 1 be amended to read 'sport, recreation and arts provision and enhancement.' to reflect that public art provision can be integral to architecture and design and is not wholly to be delivered in the form of infrastructure projects;
  - (iv) with regard to Note 3 – Planning for New Housing this Scrutiny Committee endorses the approach outlined in paragraphs 4.3 and 4.4 to identify a portfolio of site allocations 'in the appropriate sequence';
  - (v) a further briefing on the Making Places and Accommodating Growth Preferred Options document be welcomed;
  - (vi) with regard to Note 4 – Identifying Limits to Development this Scrutiny Committee endorses the approach to identifying Limits to Development and looks forward to considering details of proposed changes to the Limits as part of the Preferred Options document;
  - (vii) with regard to Note 5 - Provision of Sites for Gypsies and Travellers this Scrutiny Committee looks forward to receiving an update on precise needs and numbers of pitches considered necessary after further discussion with Tees Valley partners and the Gypsy and Traveller Working Group;
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- (viii) the Draft Criteria in relation to the identification of sites be welcomed;
- (ix) that a Training session be arranged for all members to aid awareness of legislation surrounding the duties of local authorities in relation to Gypsies and Travellers; and
- (x) that this Scrutiny Committee be made aware of any new legislation with regard to the Local Development Framework.

**P7. SPEED MANAGEMENT WITHIN THE BOROUGH TASK AND FINISH REVIEW GROUP** – The Director of Resources submitted a report (previously circulated) on progress to date of this Scrutiny Committee’s Task and Finish Review Group on the Speed Management within the Borough.

Discussion ensued on several points raised by Members which would require an Officer response and the need to do what was best for Darlington.

**RESOLVED** – That the Transport and Highway Team be requested to comment on the issues raised by Members.

**P8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS** – The Chair updated members of Scrutiny Committee on the issues recently discussed at the Prosperous Theme Group.