

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES TASK AND FINISH REVIEW GROUP

4 May, 2016

PRESENT – Councillor Carson (in the Chair); Councillors L Hughes and Lyonette.

The Chair sought clarification on various aspects of the MTFP proposals and in doing to updated the Group on a conversation he had had recently with the Assistant Director – Law and Governance in relation to the covenant in respect of the libraries service (LLE2). The Group was advised that the original covenant had been mislaid in 1974, it was still possible to sell the building in Crown Street with a covenant and that impact and needs assessments were being prepared on all three library services i.e. Crown Street, Cockerton and the mobile library.

Group were advised that no solution had been found for storage of the Archives and an Art Gallery location was still to be confirmed.

The Chair confirmed that he would speak to The Mayor in relation to any Town Twinning (W21) issues arising from the MTFP.

It was confirmed that the offer was being maintained for Creative Darlington (W9) and the Darlington Markets had recently been considered by Cabinet.

Members were keen to retain Christmas lights (MC10) in the Town and suggested that sponsorship options be explored along with BID involvement.

In relation to Concessionary Fares (W15) the Group noted that a saving of £200k could be achieved by removing the concessionary fare for a disabled person's companion and noted the view of Darlington Association on Disability.

In relation to Child Pedestrian Training (W17) it was suggested that this proposals could be absorbed by schools.

In relation to Blue Badge Parking (W20) Members were keen for the assessment, currently being undertaken by the Assistant Director – Regulatory Services, to be completed.

ES1. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES OVERVIEW – The Group met to consider the effect of the MTFP proposals on Environmental Services and the implications of those proposals.

The Assistant Director – Community Services gave an overview of the current service, explained the proposals for each of these areas going forward and the rationale behind those proposals.

Group was advised that there had been interest for more allotments (LLE8) to be self-managed and there was currently a demand for plots.

Members had significant concerns surrounding the proposals for Street Cleansing (LLE14) which included proposals to delete 40 per cent of current resources. The Group believed that health issues could arise and flooding could be more prevalent as leaves would not be cleared resulting in blocked drains.

It was reiterated that the service was now at statutory level and residents had to take responsibility for litter and ensuring streets were kept litter-free. The service would focus on main arterials and the Town Centre to ensure investment and economy. Group was advised that although there were volunteers around to undertake litter picking it was difficult ask people to maintain large areas all of the time.

IT WAS AGREED – That the information provided at this stage be noted.