
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 2010/11** – We have given consideration to the Work Programme for the next Municipal Year and will continue to update and add to our Work Programme throughout the Year. We also examined Cabinet’s Forward Plan, in order to identify areas of particular interest or concern to be included within our Work Programme and gave consideration to topics/subjects that we may wish to review/scrutinise during the Municipal Year 2010/2011.
 - (b) **Review of Performance Indicators** – We were pleased to receive a report which enabled us to scrutinise the performance for a number of indicators within the Cultural, Environmental, Highways and Regeneration service plans and consider further work to address any issues identified. Performance data was submitted for a number of indicators and it highlighted that a limited amount of interpretation was included within the report and that it was important that context was provided by service managers and accountable officers.
 - (c) **Third Local Transport Plan (LTP3)** – We were informed that Darlington’s Third LTP would comprise a Transport Strategy covering the period 2011 to 2026 with a rolling 3 to 5 year Implementation Plan, subject to the planning guidelines announced by the Department for Transport and that the Tees Valley Transport Strategy was being developed in parallel.. We were further advised that five outcomes had been developed for LTP3 in the context of national guidance and a number of challenges had been identified. Government Office North East (GONE) have already advised that LTP funding would be reduced by 30 to 50 percent due to the economic situation.
 - (d) **Winter Maintenance Arrangements 2009/2010** – Following Scrutiny Committee’s concerns we were pleased receive a report which detailed the Winter Maintenance Service for 2009/10. We were told that the winter of 2009/10 had been the worst for 30 years with a total of 6,418 tonnes of salt being used to grit 320 kilometres of highway network on 173 occasions, resulting in the highway network throughout the Borough being passable at all times. However, following the thaw there were signs of deterioration to both the roads and pavements and a remedial programme has since been agreed by Cabinet and is currently being programmed for delivery.
 - (e) **Greener Darlington Theme Group** – Scrutiny Committee welcomed the opportunity to be informed of the current work of the Greener Darlington Theme Group
 - (f) **Policy Review - Arts Task and Finish Review Group** – The Review Group are progressing with this Review with further meetings being held during this month.

- (g) **Healthier Lives for Children and Young People Living in County Durham and Darlington** – At a special meeting of Scrutiny held on 25th June, 2010 we gave consideration to the elements of the Director of Public Health's Annual Report which related to this Committee. The suggested area for Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee was the impact of worklessness on the health of families especially children. There is a strong evidence base that being in work is generally good for health and well being as the beneficial effects of work outweigh the risks of work and are greater than the harmful effects of long term unemployment or prolonged sickness. It is clear that children and young people are a vulnerable group and the impact of any economic downturn on the lives of children and young people can be seen both in the short term through the direct impact on household budgets, but also in the long term. Our findings were submitted to the Health and Well Being Scrutiny Committee for inclusion in the response to the Director of Public Health's Annual report.

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 25th May, 2010; and
- (c) Prosperous Theme Group on 17th June, 2010.

Councillor Dorothy Long
Chair of Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee