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OVERVIEW OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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1. Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Committee has undertaken :-

- (a) **Work Programme 2010/11** – The Committee considered the Work Programme for the 2010/11 Municipal Year and we 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) **Street Scene Update** – We continue to monitor the services provided by Street Scene and we have been informed of the new performance framework that has been developed which was based around the key areas provided by Street Scene and broken down into each of the five areas. It was pleasing to note that, over a three month period, 2,617 requests for service had been received and that Street Scene’s performance in relation to visiting and maintaining gullies had significantly improved and would be continually monitored to ensure the standards expected are delivered.

We were pleased to note that the overall performance of Street Scene has continued to move in a positive direction from both residents satisfaction with services and actual performance on the ground.

We have agreed to establish two Task and Finish Review Groups to examine Weed Killing and Assisted Refuse Collection and I will update you on the progress of these reviews in my next report to Council.

- (c) **Chewing Gum Removal Update** – Scrutiny Committee requested an update report on chewing gum removal within the Town Centre and we were pleased with the progress to date on the areas that have already been serviced, which included Blackwellgate, High and Low Row, Bondgate, Tubwell Row and Northgate and that it was envisaged that all of the Town Centre would be serviced by the end of the summer.

Committee have requested a further report to be brought back to our next meeting in September with the cost and timings that it takes for chewing gum to be removed.

- (d) **Community Safety Plan 2008/11 Performance January – March 2010** – As part of our continuing monitoring role, we received a report on the delivery of the Borough’s Community Safety Plan 2008/11 and the targets contained within Darlington’s Local Area Agreement. It was pleasing to note that there was a nine per cent reduction compared to the same period in 2008/09 in the number of crimes that had been recorded by the Police in Darlington and for the rolling twelve months up to the 31st March, 2010 crime had reduced by two per cent compared to the same period in

2008/09, however, Domestic Burglary and Robbery remained key challenges for the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership.

- (e) **Relocation of the Substance Misuse Centre** – At my request, we received a report on the relocation of the substance misuse centre and the Officers gave us an overview of related community safety issues.
- (f) **Greener Theme Group** – Scrutiny Committee welcomed the opportunity to be informed of the outcome of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Greener Theme Group meeting held on 24th May, 2010. Topics given consideration included the Local Transport Plan 3, Local Strategic Partnership – Perfectly Placed analysis update, Green Network, Cycle and Bus Challenge, Cycle Festival and Future Events.
- (g) **Safer Darlington Theme Group** - Scrutiny Committee welcomed the opportunity to be informed of the outcome of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Safer Theme Group meeting held on 22nd April, 2010. Topics given consideration included the ‘No Cold Calling Zones’, Performance, the Delivery Plan progress, funding and communication.
- (h) **Healthier Lives for Children and Young People Living in County Durham and Darlington** - We have approved the final report of the Healthier Lives for Children and Young People Living in County Durham and Darlington Task and Finish Review Group. The work of the Review Group has been extremely interesting and worthwhile and, in conclusion, the Group fully support the proposed actions to improve the delivery of Targeted Youth Support in Darlington and we are confident that the work undertaken will assist young people and their families dealing with alcohol and substance misuse and will have a subsequent impact on crime and disorder and anti-social behaviour at a neighbourhood level. This piece of work is part of a number of pieces of work being undertaken by all Scrutiny Committees in relation to the Director of Public Health’s report entitled ‘Healthier Lives for Children and Young People Living in County Durham and Darlington and the outcomes will be presented to the Director of Public Health at a special meeting of the Health and Well Being Scrutiny Committee being held on the 6<sup>th</sup> July, 2010.

We would like to review the impact of the new initiative in six month’s time.

**Councillor Doris Jones**  
**Chair of Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Committee**