
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 2015/16

2. We have given consideration to the Work Programme for this Committee for the Municipal Year 2015/16 and possible review topics. Any work we undertake will have demonstrable outcomes and contribute to the work of the Council and its strategic aims and objectives.

Management of Change Programme – Quarter 1

3. We were provided with the Change Programme Status report as at August 2015. The report provided a brief summary of work progressing under the developing change programme aiming to provide assurance in terms of progress as well as an indication of the future timetable of approvals.
4. Members were informed that the programme was based around both the Medium Term Financial Plan and the Community Strategy and that a detailed report on individual projects could be provided if necessary.
5. Members requested the information be submitted to each ordinary meeting as a standard item and noted that some of the items were already on Place Scrutiny Committee Work Programme.

Performance Management

6. Members received a further presentation from the Head of Organisational Planning on the Performance Management Framework which included statistical data around the key performance indicators that were relevant to this Scrutiny Committee.
7. Scrutiny noted that Darlington's overall employment rate had declined and was now under the England average and in relation to Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) Claimants, Darlington is the same as the rest of the North East and maps the England rate and, whilst there are still gaps between all Wards, all Wards have actually fallen.
8. We were pleased to note that 125 apprenticeships for Council residents had been achieved during 2014/15 and that Darlington Partnership was looking to include other service industries for 2015/16.

Creative Darlington

9. Scrutiny noted the Minutes of Creative Darlington Board held 20 April 2015 which provided updates on organisational development of Creative Darlington, developing finance for Arts activity in Darlington 2015/16, Darlington Arts Festival 2015 and Festival of Thrift 2015.
10. The Creative Darlington Manager gave Scrutiny an update on the restoration of the Civic Theatre, which will be closed from June 2016 to Autumn 2017, and Hullaballoon (children's theatre) which will offer a rich programme of performances and family-focused activities with an emphasis on opportunities for younger children.
11. Further information was also provided in relation to promoting Darlington through development of major cultural programmes and festivals and through engagement in appropriate campaigns such as the Tees Valley Capital of Culture 2025 Proposal.

Councillor Bob Carson
Chair of Place Scrutiny Committee