

Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee Agenda



**9.30 am Thursday, 1 April
2021**

Via Microsoft Teams

**In accordance with Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, this meeting will be held on a virtual basis. Members of the Public can view a live stream of the meeting at:
<https://www.darlington.gov.uk/livemeetings> Members of the public wanting to make representations at the meeting can do so by e-mailing shirley.wright@darlington.gov.uk 24 hours before the meeting begins**

1. Introductions/Attendance at Meeting
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes –
To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 4 February, 2021
(Pages 3 - 6)
4. Performance Indicators Quarter 3 2020/21 –
Report of the Managing Director
(Pages 7 - 14)
5. Re-opening of Town Centre Businesses –
Verbal Update by the Assistant Director Economic Growth
6. Covid-19 - Business Support Grants Update –
Report of the Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services
(Pages 15 - 16)
7. Towns Fund - Update –
Verbal Update by the Towns Fund Manager

8. Broadband Infrastructure in Darlington - Update –
Report of the Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services
(Pages 17 - 18)
9. Work Programme –
Report of the Managing Director
(Pages 19 - 30)
10. SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS (if any) which in the opinion of the Chair of this
Committee are of an urgent nature and can be discussed at this meeting
11. Questions



Luke Swinhoe
Assistant Director Law and Governance

Wednesday, 24 March 2021

Town Hall
Darlington.

Membership

Councillors Bartch, Boddy, Crudass, Durham, Harker, L Hughes, Mrs D Jones, McEwan, Paley, Renton and Tait

If you need this information in a different language or format or you have any other queries on this agenda please contact Shirley Wright, Democratic Manager, Resources Group, during normal office hours 8.30 a.m. to 4.45 p.m. Mondays to Thursdays and 8.30 a.m. to 4.15 p.m. Fridays E-mail: shirley.wright@darlington.gov.uk or telephone 01325 405998

ECONOMY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 4 February 2021

PRESENT – Councillors Durham (Chair), Crudass, Harker, L Hughes, Mrs D Jones, McEwan, Renton and Tait

APOLOGIES – Councillor Paley

ABSENT – Councillors Bartch and Boddy

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE – Councillor Johnson

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Elizabeth Davison (Assistant Director Resources), Dave Winstanley (Assistant Director Transport and Capital Projects), Andrew Perkin (Business Growth and Investment Manager), Brian Robson (Head of Capital Projects) and Shirley Wright (Democratic Manager)

ER20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

ER21 MINUTES

Submitted – The Minutes (previously circulated) of meetings of this Scrutiny Committee held on 6 and 19 January, 2021.

In relation to the Minutes of 19 January, 2021, the Chair referred to a letter which he had received from the Chair of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee, asking for this Scrutiny Committee to note a misunderstanding which had occurred at the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee when considering its response to the consultation on the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP). It was confirmed that the misunderstanding would be highlighted at Cabinet as part of the overall Scrutiny response on the MTFP.

RESOLVED - That the Minutes be approved as correct records.

ER22 BUSINESS GRANTS

The Business Growth and Investment Manager gave an update on the Government's various funding schemes to support local businesses during the Covid-19 pandemic.

It was reported that, since the last update in January, the government had announced a further two new schemes which had been launched making eight different types of schemes available for businesses to apply for across a range of different sectors and over different time periods.

As requested at the last meeting, Officers provided the Scrutiny Committee with quantitative information on the number of applications which had been received up to 1 February, 2021 under the various schemes, together with the number of those applications which had been approved and declined and those still awaiting a

decision and it was confirmed that information was also available on the reasons why those applications which had been declined were unsuccessful.

Following questions by Members, it was reported that applications were continuing to be received and funding awarded and that work was on-going to identify those businesses who had not applied for some of the grants for which they might be eligible to ensure all schemes were maximised prior to their closure.

Discussion ensued on the Additional Restrictions Grant, a grant provided to the Local Authority to provide discretionary support to businesses; the criteria which had been put in place to help priority sectors in Darlington in relation to that scheme, which was currently being reviewed to enable the scope and scale of the businesses reached to be extended and to the need, as much as possible, to synchronise the criteria for the discretionary grants with neighbouring authorities to ensure that there was some consistency on the criteria which was being applied within different areas.

Particular reference was also made to the continual work which was being undertaken to help and support businesses to ensure that they applied for the correct scheme and to the signposting to any national support measures which they might be entitled to such as Universal Credit, self-employment income support scheme etc.

Members were concerned that there were a lot of businesses who were currently without support as they were not eligible to receive financial support through the various schemes and were not eligible for the self-employed income support initiative and Officers confirmed that lobbying of Government was taking place in relation to this.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted and the Officers be thanked for all the work they are doing.

ER23 PROJECT POSITION STATEMENT AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING - QUARTER 3

The Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report (previously circulated) together with a report (also previously circulated) which was being considered by Cabinet at its meeting to be held on 9 February 2021, giving a summary of the latest capital resource and commitment position to inform monitoring of the affordability and funding of the Council's capital programme, together with an update on the current status of all the significant construction projects which were currently being undertaken by the Council.

It was reported that the Council had a substantial annual construction programme of work which was delivering a wide range of improvements to the Council's assets and more critically to Council services and that there were currently 40 live projects currently being managed with an overall projected outturn value of £127.405 million with the majority of those projects running to time, cost and quality expectations with no foreseeable issues.

Officers highlighted a time delay on the Ingenium Park project which was due to the need to undertake drainage works at a certain point in the year for ecological

reasons.

Attached to the report was a project position statement which was required to be completed by all project managers for all projects over £75,000 and which brought together details of the current live construction projects by delivery area and provided details on the numbers, the current status position on each project with regards to budget and completion and any comments on current issues.

Reference was also made to the new electronic capital project reporting system which was currently being rolled out.

RESOLVED – That the position be noted.

ER24 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING - QUARTER 3

The Managing Director submitted a report (previously circulated) together with the quarter 3 revenue budget outturn report (also previously circulated) which was due to be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 9 February 2021.

It was reported that the Council's projected reserves at the end of 2020/21 were £22.306 million, £2,943 million higher than the initial 2020-24 MTFP position and included a brought forward amount of £0.274 million from 2019/20 and the rebasing exercise of £0.897 million.

The Assistant Director Resources reported that, of the £22.306 million projected reserves, there was a risk reserve balance of £4.350 million and a commitment to use £11.330 million to support years two to four of the current MTFP, leaving a surplus of £6.626 million to assist with any unknown future pressures and Covid-19 impacts.

In addition, it was also reported that, since the quarter 2 report, further Covid-19 funding had been announced by the Government in relation to the collection fund and £1 million had been received from the Arts Council England to subsidise the Hippodrome from October to March and that it was planned to set up an earmarked reserve for Covid-19 which could be drawn on going forward

RESOLVED – That the report be received.

ER25 WORK PROGRAMME

The Managing Director submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to the work programme of this Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2020/21.

The Chair reported that he had had discussions with the Chair of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on the possibility of undertaking a piece of work in relation to youth unemployment as a result of the current pandemic and that that Scrutiny Chair had advised that, once it had completed the piece of work it was already undertaking in relation to the impact of COVID-19 on families and young people, it would set out a plan to look specifically at youth unemployment, with the support of this Scrutiny Committee.

It was also reported that it was intended to undertake a piece of work to look at the performance indicators which were reported to this Scrutiny Committee in relation to the economy to agree which ones the Committee would like to scrutinise on a regular basis to give an indication as to how the Council was performing in supporting business and the economy going forward.

ECONOMY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
1 APRIL 2021

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS QTR 3 2020/21

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide Members with performance data against key performance indicators for 2020/21 at Quarter 3.

Performance Summary

2. This report provides performance information in line with an indicator set and scrutiny committee distribution agreed by Monitoring and Coordination Group on 4 June 2018, and subsequently by scrutiny committee chairs.
3. The indicators included in this report are aligned with key priorities. Other indicators may be referenced when appropriate in narrative provided by the relevant assistant directors, when providing the committee with performance updates.
4. The indicators are measured against targets and compared to previous years however it must be noted that this has been a very different year. The coronavirus pandemic has had an impact on normal business activities across the Council and whilst the response to the pandemic has been extremely positive there has been an impact on some performance measures which need to be taken into account.
5. Twenty-two indicators are reported to the committee, seventeen of them on a six-monthly basis and five annually.
6. One indicator cannot be reported due to an alternative system being introduced to record the information.

CUL 080	Town Centre footfall trend from the previous year
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7. Performance of the sixteen indicators reported at 9 months:
 - a) Of the sixteen indicators reported four have a target to be compared against.
 - b) All four of the indicators show performance is better than their target.

HBS 002	Amount in £s of Council Tax arrears collected
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HBS 003	Amount in £s of Housing Benefit overpayments recovered
HBS 009	% of Council Tax collected in year
HBS 010	% of Business Rates collected in-year

c) Of the sixteen indicators reported quarterly all can be compared against their data at Quarter 3 2019/20.

d) Six indicators are showing performance better than at this time last year.

FHR 001	Number of FTE working days lost due to sickness (excluding schools)
FHR 003	Number of reportable employee accidents / ill health
FHR 008	Number of complaints upheld by the Local Government Ombudsman/Housing Ombudsman
FHR 019	Staff turnover - Voluntary Leavers
HBS 010	% of Business Rates collected in-year
REG 312a	% of noise complaints investigated and completed within 6 weeks of the date of receipt (except where diary sheet returned)

e) Nine indicators are showing performance lower than at this time last year:

ECI 104	% of major planning applications decided within 13 weeks or within agreed time (EoT)
ECI 105	% of non-major planning development decisions within 8 weeks or within agreed time (EoT)
ECI 106	24 months to date % of non-major planning development decisions within 8 weeks or within agreed time (EoT)
ECI 321	Monthly unemployed claimant count
ECI 401	New homes delivered against annual target
HBS 002	Amount in £s of Council Tax arrears collected
HBS 003	Amount in £s of Housing Benefit overpayments recovered
HBS 009	% of Council Tax collected in year
LGP 008	Contracted spend as a % of total non-salary spend

f) One indicator is showing performance the same as at this time last year:

FHR 009	Staff turnover – Voluntary leavers
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8. A detailed performance scorecard is attached at **Appendix 1**.

Recommendations

9. It is recommended:

- a) that performance information provided in this report is reviewed and noted, and relevant queries raised with appropriate Assistant Directors.

Paul Wildsmith
Managing Director

Background Papers

Background papers were not used in the preparation of this report.

S17 Crime and Disorder	This report supports the Councils Crime and Disorder responsibilities
Health and Well Being	This report supports performance improvement relating to improving the health and wellbeing of residents
Sustainability	This report supports the Council's sustainability responsibilities
Diversity	This report supports the promotion of diversity
Wards Affected	This report supports performance improvement across all Wards
Groups Affected	This report supports performance improvement which benefits all groups
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	This report contributes to the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) by involving Members in the scrutiny of performance relating to the delivery of key outcomes
Efficiency	Scrutiny of performance is integral to optimising outcomes.

Main Report

Revenue Collection

Council Tax and Business Rates

10. Despite the challenges of covid-19 the collection of Council Tax arrears (HBS 002) is slightly above target for quarter 3. Darlington Borough Council is one of the top performers in terms of Council Tax arrears collection. The total arrears collected as a percentage of arrears outstanding was 27.85% for 2019-20, compared to 19.76% nationally despite the challenges of Covid-19.
11. In-year collection of Council Tax (HBS 009) remains on target, despite the challenges of Covid-19 and the inability to take court action to enforce Council Tax debts.
12. It is also pleasing to note the in-year collection of Business Rates (HBS 010) remains on target, despite the challenges of Covid-19 and the inability to take court action to enforce Business Rates debts.

Housing Benefits

13. Recovery of Housing Benefit overpayments (HBS 003) is slightly below target for quarter 3. This is because the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) suspended recovery of overpayments from Universal Credit during the initial Covid-19 lockdown. The number of overpayments being identified is also gradually reducing due to the continued migration of Housing Benefit claims to Universal Credit.

Governance

Human Resources

14. Sickness absence (FHR 001) is 1.52 F.T.E. days lower than the same period last year with 75% relating to long term absence which is being closely managed.
15. Whilst absence rates have reduced overall, stress remains the highest absence reason equating to 46% of all absences, and 26% of this was deemed work related. Officers are increasing efforts in terms of stress risk assessment awareness and absence management relating to stress, and we are continuing to raise awareness of mental health via the Mental Health for Managers programme. The introduction of 14 Mental Health first aiders alongside the Mental Health Mentors launched last year have provided invaluable support to employees particularly through this pandemic with very positive feedback received.

16. Staff turnover - Voluntary Leavers (FHR 019) - Of the 104 voluntary leavers 48 were from Children & Adults, 47 from Economic Growth & Neighbourhood Services and 9 from Resources.

Health & Safety

17. It is pleasing to report that the number of reportable employee accidents / ill health (FHR 003) has halved from the same period last year and stands at 2. Both have been investigated and any learning has been put into place.

Complaints

18. Complaints upheld by the Local Government Ombudsman/Housing Ombudsman (FHR 008) have reduced from twelve in 2018/19 to six in 2019/2020. The Ombudsman had upheld three complaints at the end of quarter 3, 2020/2021. While the reduction between 2018/19 and 2019/20 was as a result of learning from complaints, the most recent reduction is likely to be, in part, as a result of COVID-19.

Procurement

19. Contracted spend (LGP 008) improved from 2018/19 to 2019/2020 and this improvement is also reflected in the first three quarters of 2020/2021 and is remaining above the target (80%). Officers are continuing to monitor non-contracted spend and where there is a need frameworks are identified and tendered.

Economy

Culture

20. An alternative system for the Town Centre footfall counters was installed in March 2020. The indicator CUL 080a has been included in Appendix 1 as a proxy indicator showing the weekly average footfall recorded since the installation of the new system has been affected due to the periods of lockdown.

Employment

21. Covid-19 has had an impact on the unemployed claimant count nationally (ECI 321). Darlington's December figure of 6.9% is less than the North East average of 7.1% and higher than the England average of 6.3%. When compared to Dec 1999 Darlington's percentage increase figure of 46.8% (4.7% to 6.9%) is less than both the North East average whose figure is 61.4% (4.4% to 7.1%) and England average whose is 117.2% (2.9% to 6.3%).

Planning Policy

22. Covid-19 has had an impact on the unemployed claimant count nationally (ECI 321). Darlington's December figure of 6.9% is less than the North East average of 7.1% and higher than the England average of 6.3%. When compared to Dec 1999 Darlington's percentage increase figure of 46.8% (4.7% to 6.9%) is less than both the North East average whose figure is 61.4% (4.4% to 7.1%) and England average whose is 117.2% (2.9% to 6.3%).
23. Whilst we expected Covid-19 to have a dramatic impact on housing delivery as construction sites shut down on 23rd March 2020 and we initially estimated no housing completions in the first quarter of the financial year 2020/2021 (ECI 401). The reality is by the end of the third quarter we had 440 completions, which in comparison is against 476 the previous year, so despite the pandemic we were only 36 units behind the previous non-pandemic year. The monitoring also shows in the third quarter we had 124 residential starts which compares with 111 in the previous year. We are therefore despite the pandemic expected to exceed our targets for the year.

Planning Development Management

24. The indicators for the ECI 105 AND ECI 106 are broadly consistent with the previous 2 quarters including the corresponding 3rd quarter last year.
25. Indicator ECI 104 which measures the determination of Major Planning applications within 13 weeks has shown that there has been an 8% drop in performance since the last quarter and a 20% drop since the corresponding 3rd quarter last year. This can be explained by the fact that as the Council receives relatively small amount major applications as a proportion of the applications it received in the round. The figure can be affected positively or negatively by the time taken by a single application, or where an applicant has refused to agree to an extension of time [E of T] to enable the Council to determine an application within agreed time limits.

SCRUTINY - ECONOMY & RESOURCES 2020/21 QUARTER 3

Appendix 1

Indicator	Title	Reported	What is best	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020	2020/21 - Q1	2020/21 - Q2	2020/21 - Q3	Qtr 3 compared to Qtr 2	Qtr 3 target	Qtr 3 compared to target	2019/20 Qtr 3	Qtr 3 2020/21 compared to 2019/20
CUL 080	Town centre footfall trend from previous year	Monthly	Higher	0.9%	-4.1%		No comparative data, alternative system introduced March 2020							
CUL 080a	Town centre footfall weekly average for the month	Monthly	Higher	No data, alternative system introduced March 2020			98,486	224,602	192,541	↓				
ECI 104	% of major planning applications decided within 13 weeks or within agreed time (EoT)	Quarterly	Higher	65.7%	93.6%	87.1%	85.7%	80.0%	72.2%	↓			91.3%	↓
ECI 105	% of non major planning development decisions within 8 weeks or within agreed time (EoT)	Quarterly	Higher	86.4%	86.8%	87.4%	90.5%	87.6%	85.9%	↓			89.3%	↓
ECI 106	24 months to date % of non major planning development decisions within 8 weeks or within agreed time (EoT)	Quarterly	Higher	77.5%	86.6%	88.8%	88.9%	87.8%	87.2%	↓			89.6%	↓
ECI 321	Monthly unemployed claimant count	Monthly	Lower	3.6%	4.2%	4.9%	7.3%	7.1%	6.9%	↑			4.7%	↓
ECI 327	Employment rate – all people economically active	Annually	Higher	74.4%	75.6%	81.5%	Annual indicators no data to report for these quarters							
ECI 329	Average annual income - Darlington residents	Annually	Higher	£27,797	£26,198	£22,814								
ECI 330	Average annual income - Darlington employees	Annually	Higher	£25,712	£26,054	£26,780								
ECI 401	New homes delivered against annual target	Quarterly	Higher	488	627	537	78	227	440				475	↓
FHR 001	Number of FTE working days lost due to sickness (excluding schools)	Monthly	Lower	9.22	8.34	8.71	1.63	3.30	4.89				6.41	↑
FHR 003	Number of reportable employee accidents / ill health	Quarterly	Lower	9	8	4	2	2	2				4	↑
FHR 008	Number of complaints upheld by the Local Government Ombudsman/Housing Ombudsman	Quarterly	Lower	6	12	6	0	2	3				6	↑
FHR 009	Number of complaints upheld by the Information Commissioners Office	Quarterly	Lower	3	1	2	0	1	1				1	↔
FHR 019	Staff turnover - Voluntary Leavers	Quarterly	Lower	7.3%	7.3%	7.1%	0.9%	3.2%	5.2%				5.4%	↑
HBS 002	Amount in £s of Council Tax arrears collected	Monthly	Higher	£1,477,347	£1,463,946	£1,243,505	£20,961	£526,908	£928,995		£750,000	↑	£992,035	↓
HBS 003	Amount in £s of Housing Benefit overpayments recovered	Quarterly	Higher	£1,106,519	£1,129,882	£939,792	£163,997	£310,083	£477,059		£525,000	↑	£717,198	↓
HBS 009	% of Council Tax collected in year	Monthly	Higher	95.6%	96.0%	96.2%	26.8%	52.7%	78.6%		78.5%	↑	79.2%	↓
HBS 010	% of Business Rates collected in-year	Monthly	Higher	98.9%	97.7%	99.4%	30.5%	58.1%	83.3%		78.5%	↑	80.8%	↑
LGP 008	Contracted spend as a % of total non-salary spend	Quarterly	Higher	78.7%	75.7%	86.7%	88.9%	87.4%	85.0%	↓			87.2%	↓

SCRUTINY - ECONOMY & RESOURCES 2020/21 QUARTER 3

Appendix 1

Indicator	Title	Reported	What is best	2017 / 2018	2018 / 2019	2019 / 2020	2020/21 - Q1	2020/21 - Q2	2020/21 - Q3	Qtr 3 compared to Qtr 2	Qtr 3 target	Qtr 3 compared to target	2019/20 Qtr 3	Qtr 3 2020/21 compared to 2019/20
REG 301	Environmental Health : % of food premises which are inspected within the financial year in which they are due	Annually	Higher	92.8%	92.6%	94.4%	Annual indicators no data to report for these quarters							
REG 308	Environmental Health: % of premises broadly compliant for food hygiene	Annually	Higher	94.9%	97.6%	96.1%								
REG 312a	% of noise complaints investigated and completed within 6 weeks of the date of receipt (except where diary sheet returned)	Quarterly	Higher	90.4%	94.4%	95.5%	98.8%	97.3%	98.1%	↑			95.6%	↑
									Better than =	↑			Not as good as =	↓

ECONOMY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1 APRIL 2021

COVID-19 BUSINESS SUPPORT GRANTS UPDATE

1. The Government has provided funding for local authorities to support local businesses adversely affected by the Covid-19 restrictions. The business support schemes are as follows:
 - (a) Local Restrictions Support Grant (Open) - running from 14 October to 4 November 2020.
 - (b) Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed Addendum) - running from 5 November 2020 to 2 December 2020.
 - (c) Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed) – Tier 3 restrictions – running from 2 December 2020 to 30 December 2020.
 - (d) Local Restrictions Support Grant (Closed Addendum) – Tier 4 restrictions – running from 31 December 2020 & Closed Business Lockdown Payments running from 5 January 2021
 - (e) Additional Restrictions Grant.
 - (f) Christmas Support Payment for wet-led pubs. (scheme now closed)
2. So far, £11,272,736.81 has been awarded to Darlington businesses from these schemes. The breakdown is as follows (status at 15 March 2021):

	Applications	Approved	Declined	Awaiting Decision	Amount Paid
LRSO Open	360	218	140	2	£192,075.40
LRSO (Closed Addendum) National Lockdown	1,074	848	219	7	£1,292,116.00
LRSO Tier 3	446	260	185	1	£418,262.43
Christmas Support Payment for Pubs	77	51	26	0	£51,000.00
LRSO Tier 4/National Lockdown	1,202	859	335	8	£2,148,818.36
Closed Business Lockdown Payment					£3,841,285.71
LRSO Tier 4/National Lockdown Second Payment Cycle	856	856			£2,008,305.00
Additional Restrictions Grant	854	430	341	89	£1,320,873.91
TOTAL:	4,869				£11,272,736.81

3. As can be seen, the Government has introduced various grant schemes while restrictions have been ongoing. The headline Local Restrictions Support Grant was initially designed to support businesses suffering reduced demand or forced to close under the 'tier' system, but was subsequently updated to cover national "lockdown" restrictions too.
4. As part of the March 2021 Budget, the Government set out a new wave of support measure for the small businesses, including £5 billion in Restart Grants to support local economies as they emerge from the pandemic and lockdown restrictions and commence a path of recovery.
5. The restart grant scheme will offer those businesses forced to close during lockdown one off financial support. The grants are worth up to £6,000 for non-essential retail, and up to £18,000 for hospitality, leisure, personal care and accommodation businesses. As previously, these grants will be administered locally by local authorities and will commence at the beginning of April 2021.
6. The existing range of local restrictions support grants will be superseded by the restart grants (with the exception of Additional restrictions Grant).
7. Other business support measures announced in the Budget include:
 - (a) Extension of the furlough scheme until the end of September 2021.
 - (b) Self-Employed Income Support Scheme will continue until September 2021
 - (c) Newly self-employed that have filed a tax return can now access the SEISS grant.
 - (d) The 100% business rates holiday will continue until the end of June 2021. For the remaining nine months, they will be discounted by two-thirds.
 - (e) 5% reduced rate of VAT extended until 30 September 2021. It will then be 12.5% for a further six months, returning the standard rate in April 2022.

Ian Williams
Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

ECONOMY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1 APRIL 2021

BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE IN DARLINGTON – UPDATE

Current Broadband Infrastructure rollout and upgrades

1. Current Broadband Infrastructure Rollout and Upgrades to gigabit enabled speeds on a Fibre to the premise (FTTP) basis in Darlington are taking place on three different routes.
 - (a) Commercial Rollout by Broadband Infrastructure Providers (Virgin Media / Openreach) based on new built residential Estates
 - (b) Publicly Funded via Dept Media Culture and Sport (DCMS) through Building Digital UK (BDUK) and TVCA funding via Digital Durham / Openreach in the Digital Durham Phase 2 programme for premises identified by Openreach by June 2021
 - (c) For the rural western villages of Darlington via the current Rural Gigabit Voucher Scheme of BDUK (until March 21) through provider Quickline by Summer 2021 covering Killerby, Summerhouse, and Denton via Fibre to the Premise and surrounding areas via gigabit enabled mobile technology.

Future enablement and upgrades of Broadband:

Project Gigabit

2. Future Broadband enablement projects are currently under consultation with partners such as TVCA & Digital Durham and the Government for the Project Gigabit Programme of BDUK which offers 5bn investment for the most marginal rural areas in England.
3. Currently an Open Market Review by Digital Durham is taking place which is also on the Darlington BC website www.darlington.gov.uk/consultations to identify the areas of most need and where infrastructure is planned by the broadband infrastructure providers.
4. The Digital Durham led procurement area for the new Project Gigabit programme which includes Northumberland, County Durham, Gateshead, Sunderland, South Tyneside and the Tees Valley Local Authorities including Darlington BC has been announced 19th March 2021 as a 1st rollout area for the new BDUK programme.
5. That means the procurement process led by Digital Durham will start May 2021 this year and could deliver first upgrades in mostly rural areas of the procurement region by 2022.

New Rural Gigabit Vouchers Scheme 2021

6. The Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme has also being relaunched in April 2021 with up to £210 million to give people in eligible rural areas immediate financial help to get gigabit speeds. Darlington BC has been in contact with numerous commercial rural providers such as Voneus Netomnia and Quickline to evaluate how further rural gaps can be closed in Darlington via this scheme.

Commercial rollout and retrofitting by broadband providers:

7. Providers will be providing upgrades in the next years to their current infrastructure and are eager to retrofit areas which have had in the last decade speed under 100mb per second installed. UK Government now wants commercial infrastructure provider to reach gigabit enabled infrastructure in the UK by end of the decade.
8. The areas are chosen by the providers themselves on a commercial basis and local authorities can only lobby with those providers to be included in future.
9. The Council has opened up in recent months conversations with a third large gigabit infrastructure provider - Cityfibre.
10. Further work with TVCA is continuing to upgrade digital infrastructure for its residents and businesses to the highest standard.

Ian Williams

Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services

ECONOMY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 1 April 2021

ECONOMY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – WORK PROGRAMME

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider the work programme items scheduled to be considered by this Scrutiny Committee during the next Municipal Year and to consider any additional areas which Members would like to suggest should be included.

Summary

2. Members are requested to consider the attached draft work programme (**Appendix 1**) for the next Municipal Year which has been prepared based on Officers recommendations and recommendations previously agreed by this Scrutiny Committee.
3. Once the work programme has been approved by this Scrutiny Committee, any additional areas of work which Members wish to add to the agreed work programme will require the completion of a quad of aims in accordance with the previously approved procedure.

Recommendation

4. Members are requested to consider and approve the attached draft work programme as the agreed work programme and consider any additional items which they might wish to include.

**Paul Wildsmith
Managing Director**

Background Papers

There were no background papers used in the preparation of this report.

Shirley Wright: Extension 5998

S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has no implications for Crime and Disorder
Health and Well Being	This report has no direct implications to the Health and Well Being of residents of Darlington.
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	There are no issues which this report needs to address.
Diversity	There are no issues relating to diversity which this report needs to address
Wards Affected	The impact of the report on any individual Ward is considered to be minimal.
Groups Affected	The impact of the report on any individual Group is considered to be minimal.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The report contributes to the Sustainable Community Strategy in a number of ways through the involvement of Members in contributing to the delivery of the five themes.
Efficiency	The Work Programmes are integral to scrutinising and monitoring services efficiently (and effectively), however this report does not identify specific efficiency savings.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

5. The format of the proposed work programme has been reviewed to enable Members of this Scrutiny Committee to provide a rigorous and informed challenge to the areas for discussion.
6. Each topic links to the outcomes and the conditions in the Sustainable Community Strategy – One Darlington Perfectly Placed :-

SCS Outcomes :	Three Conditions :
Children with the Best Start in Life	Build Strong Communities
More Businesses more jobs	Grow the Economy
A safe and caring community	Spend Every Pound Wisely
More people caring for our environment	
More people active and involved	
Enough support for People when needed	
More people healthy and independent	
A place designed to thrive	

7. In addition, each topic links to performance indicators from the Performance Management Framework (PMF) to provide robust and accurate data for Members to use when considering topics and the work they wish to undertake.

Forward Plan and Additional Items

8. Once the Work Programme has been agreed by this Scrutiny Committee, any Member seeking to add a new item to the work programme will need to complete a quad of aims. A revised process for adding an item to a previously approved work programme, has been agreed by the Monitoring and Co-ordination Group.
9. Details of the items included on the Forward Plan has been attached at **Appendix 2** for information.

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APPENDIX 1

ECONOMY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer	SCS Outcome	Darlington Conditions	Scrutiny's Role
Performance Management Framework	Six monthly reports to be submitted to meetings of this Scrutiny Committee Item elsewhere on this agenda	Relevant Assistant Directors	A place designed to thrive	Spend Every Pound Wisely	To provide Members with an update regarding the Performance Management Framework.
Towns Fund	All Member briefing held Updates given 5 November 2020 6 January 2021 Item elsewhere on this agenda	Mark Ladyman	A place designed to thrive	Grow the economy	To update Scrutiny on the investment plan
Business Grant Scheme – Additional Restrictions Grant	Item elsewhere on this agenda	Mark Ladyman	A place designed to thrive	Grow the economy	To update Members on the scheme
COVID - 19 – Re-opening of Businesses	Item elsewhere on this agenda	Mark Ladyman	A place designed to thrive	Grow the economy	To update Members

Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer	SCS Outcome	Darlington Conditions	Scrutiny's Role
Broadband Infrastructure in Darlington 2012-20	Item elsewhere on this agenda	Jochen Werres	A place designed to thrive	Grow the economy	To scrutinise progress of the Broadband Delivery (BDUK) and Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN) programmes
Climate Change	To be considered Summer 2021	Cabinet Member	A safe and caring community More people caring for our environment	More People Caring for our Environment	To update on the work of the Review Group
Economic Strategy	To be considered autumn 2021	David Hand	More businesses, more jobs	Grow the economy	To scrutinise progress of the Strategy Action Plan against outcomes and understand relationship with Tees Valley SEP and Local Plan.
Housing Strategy	To be considered autumn 2021	David Hand	A safe and caring community A place designed to thrive	Build strong communities Spend every pound wisely Grow the economy	To scrutinise progress of the Strategy Action Plan against outcomes.

FHR 001	DBC number of FTE working days lost due to sickness (excluding schools)
FHR 003	Number of reportable employee accidents / ill health
FHR 008	Number of complaints upheld by the Local Government Ombudsman/Housing Ombudsman
FHR 009	Number of complaints upheld by the Information Commissioner's Office
FHR 019	Staff turnover - Voluntary Leavers
HBS 002	Amount in £'s of Council Tax arrears collected

HBS 003	Amount in £'s of Housing Benefit overpayments recovered
HBS 009	% of Council Tax collected in year
HBS 010	% of Business Rates collected in-year
LGP 008	Contracted spend as a % of total non-salary spend
ECI 108	S.106 - Number entered into within current financial year
ECI 114	Total amount of S106 funding secured since 2010
ECI 115	S106 - Amount received [affordable housing/infrastructure/green space etc] since 2010
ECI 116	S106 - Total Amount outstanding [affordable housing/infrastructure/green space etc.] since 2010
ECI 117	S106 - Amount spent since 2010
ECI 130	% of Section 106 agreements signed within target time.

ARCHIVED ITEMS

Topic	Timescale	Lead Officer	SCS Outcome	Darlington Conditions	Link to PMF (Metrics)	Scrutiny's Role
Sickness Absence Year-end out-turn	Report circulated to Members (July 2020)	Helen Whiting	One Darlington Perfectly Placed	Spend Every Pound Wisely	FHR 001	To consider the year-end figures
Health and Safety Year end out-turn	Report circulated to Members (July 2020)	Joanne Skelton	One Darlington Perfectly Placed	Spend Every Pound Wisely	FHR 003	To consider the year-end figures
Complaints, Compliments and Comments - Annual Report 2019/20	Report considered 10 September 2020	Lee Downey	A place designed to thrive			To consider the 2019/20 Complaints, Compliments and Comments Annual Report and forward any view to Cabinet
Complaints Made to Local Government Ombudsman	Report considered 10 September 2020 Update report circulated to Members (November 2020)	Lee Downey	A place designed to thrive			To consider the outcome of cases which have been determined by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) and the Housing Ombudsman (HO) and forward any view to Cabinet

Allocation of Section 106 Monies	All Member briefing held arranged Updates given to Planning Applications Committee	Dave Coates	A place designed to thrive	Spend every pound wisely	To look at the information currently available in relation to Section 106 Agreements
Investment Fund	Report considered 10 September 2020	Elizabeth Davison	A place designed to thrive	Grow the Economy	To consider progress against the agreed investments being funded through the Investment Fund.
Business Week 2020	Report considered 5 November 2020	Mark Ladyman	A place designed to thrive	Grow the economy	To update Scrutiny
Write off of Irrecoverable Debt	Report considered 5 November 2020	Anthony Sandys	One Darlington Perfectly Placed	Spend Every Pound Wisely	To look at the process
Medium-Term Financial Plan	December - January Report considered 6 January – Responses considered and forwarded to Cabinet 21 January –	Elizabeth Davison	One Darlington Perfectly Placed	Spend Every Pound Wisely	To provide a response to Cabinet on the proposals in relation to the Medium-Term Financial Plan
Greater Faverdale (Burtree Garden Village) - Design Code	Reports considered 10 September 2020 and 6 January 2021	Mark Ladyman	A place designed to thrive	Build strong communities Spend every pound wisely	To consider the Greater Faverdale (Burtree Garden Village) – Design Code for the Masterplan Area of Greater

				Grow the economy	Faverdale and forward any view to Cabinet
Central Park – Hybrid Innovations Centre and Landscaping Works	Report considered 6 January 2021	Mark Ladyman	A place designed to thrive	Build strong communities Spend every pound wisely Grow the economy	
Towns Fund	All Member briefing held Updates given 5 November 2020 6 January 2021	Mark Ladyman	A place designed to thrive	Grow the economy	To update Scrutiny on the investment plan
Medium-Term Financial Plan - Monitoring	Quarterly monitoring reports to be submitted to meetings of this Scrutiny Committee	Elizabeth Davison	A place designed to thrive	Spend Every Pound Wisely	To contribute and challenge the Medium Term Financial Plan and assist with the implementation and development of the required savings
Capital Programme and project Position Statement	Quarterly monitoring reports to be submitted to meetings of this Scrutiny Committee	Brian Robson	A place designed to thrive	Spend Every Pound Wisely	To look at the position

DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN

3 March to 31 July 2021

Title	Decision Maker and Date
Darlington Crematorium Refurbishment – Cost Update	Cabinet 9 Mar 2021
Local Transport Plan	Cabinet 9 Mar 2021
Regulatory Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA)	Cabinet 9 Mar 2021
Schedule of Transactions	Cabinet 9 Mar 2021
Supporting the Childhood Health Weight Plan for Darlington	Cabinet 9 Mar 2021
Annual Procurement Plan 2021/22	Cabinet 13 Apr 2021
Proposed Waiting Restrictions George Stephenson Drive - Objections	Cabinet 13 Apr 2021
Release of Capital Allocation in the MTFP - Capitalised Repairs in Corporate Buildings	Cabinet 13 Apr 2021
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Capital Projects	Cabinet 13 Apr 2021
Stronger Communities Fund	Cabinet 13 Apr 2021
Customer Engagement Strategy 2021/24	Cabinet 4 May 2021
School Term Dates 2022/23	Cabinet 1 Jun 2021
Partnership Working in Darlington	Cabinet 1 Jun 2021
Complaints, Compliments and Comments Annual Reports 2019/20	Cabinet 6 Jul 2021
Project Position Statement and Capital Programme Monitoring Outturn 2020/21	Cabinet 6 Jul 2021
Project Position Statement and Capital Programme Monitoring - Quarter One	Cabinet 6 Jul 2021
Representation on Other Bodies 2021/22	Cabinet 6 Jul 2021
Revenue Budget Outturn 2020/21	Cabinet 6 Jul 2021
Revenue Budget Monitoring - Quarter 1	Cabinet 6 Jul 2021
Xentrall Shared Services Annual Report	Cabinet 6 Jul 2021
Climate Change - Update	Cabinet

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