

COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
5 MARCH 2026

WORK PROGRAMME 2025-2026

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider the work programme items scheduled to be considered by this Scrutiny Committee during the 2025/26 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 work programme (**Appendix 1**) for the remainder of the Municipal Year, which has been prepared based on Officers recommendations and discussions held at the Communities and Local Services Scrutiny Committee Annual Briefing which took place on 29 May 2025.
3. 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 (**Appendix 2**).

Recommendations

4. It is recommended that Members note the current status of the Work Programme and consider any additional areas of work they would like to include.

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Assistant Director Law and Governance

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

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Council Plan	The report contributes to the Council Plan in a number of ways through the involvement of Members in contributing to the delivery of the Plan. The Work Programme contains items which enable Members to scrutinise those areas that contribute the priority of 'Communities' - working together for safer, healthier and more engaged communities and 'Local Environment' – A well-connected, clean and sustainable borough.
Addressing inequalities	There are no issues relating to diversity which this report needs to address.
Tackling Climate Change	There are no issues which this report needs to address.
Efficient and effective use of resources	This report has no impact on the Council's Efficiency Programme.
Health and Wellbeing	This report has no direct implications to the Health and Well Being of residents of Darlington.
S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has no implications for Crime and Disorder.
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
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. The Council Plan was adopted on 18 July 2024, and outlines Darlington Borough Council's long-term ambitions for Darlington and priorities for action over the next three years. It gives strategic direction to the Council and Council services, defining priorities, identifying key actions, and shaping delivery.
7. The Council Plan identifies six priorities, including 'Communities', which states that our communities are the heart of our Borough and play an important role in shaping our health and wellbeing; and 'Local Environment', which states that Darlington is a thriving borough known for our railway heritage and our mix of urban and rural communities. These priorities are both supported by six key deliverables.

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.
9. A copy of the index of the Forward Plan has been attached at **Appendix 3** for information.