

# ECONOMIC REGENERATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2012/13

Strategic Objective 'PROSPERITY' – ‘

**Chair :**

Councillor Liz Monk

**Members:**

Councillor Tony Harrison  
Councillor Mathew Isherwood  
Councillor Marcus Johnstone  
Councillor Anne Kelly  
Councillor Tracy Kennedy  
Councillor Arif Khan  
Councillor Peter McCann  
Councillor Lian Pate (Vice  
Chair)

Introduction

The Economic Regeneration Scrutiny Committee primarily scrutinises work that falls within the Economic Regeneration Directorate. This includes Facilities Management, Housing and Development Control and Regeneration and Planning Policy.

The Committee's remit spans the vast majority of the portfolio of the the Executive Member for Regeneration and Economic Development and the Executive Member for Housing and Environment and part of the Executive Member for Resources relating to Markets.

In 2012/13 the Committee focused on the following **Activities**;

**Monitored** Burnley's performance by receiving at each meeting an overview of the state of the local economy which showed the emerging trends at the local, regional and national level in respect of unemployment, worklessness, job vacancies and business 'births and deaths'.

Carried out **Policy Development** by requesting to be a consultee to the Executive prior to decisions being made on the Homelessness Prevention Strategy. Member received a presentation on homelessness and have been updated on the progress with the Strategy. Once the consultants involved in producing evidence for the foundations of a strategy, scrutiny will be involved in discussions on how the priorities should be structured within it.

Carried out **Policy review/implementation** by looking at progress of the Burnley Branding Strategy which is in its fourth year and is a key thread in the Economic Strategy to promote the area in such a way as to attract businesses and residents.

Commenced a **review** on looking at business rates and the changes to how local government was to be financed from 2013/14 to consider if there were any risks to the council and whether there might be opportunities to enable stimulus for economic growth and employment opportunities. The review group found that the formula grant was to be increasingly funded from business rates with the removal of revenue support grant and that the Government's aim was to incentivise councils to encourage economic growth and regeneration in their areas. Following further investigations the review was put on hold until more information was released from the Government and the Executive had developed a strategy for implementation.

### **Outcomes making a difference**

In support of the Council's strategic objective PR5 – to improve the skills, qualifications and employability of the Borough's workforce – a **Literacy and Numeracy Review Group** was established and will continue to explore the barriers to employment caused by a lack of literacy and numeracy skills. Questionnaires were sent out to providers of basic skills delivery in Burnley to ascertain the numbers of people receiving training and whether there were any gaps in provision. A questionnaire was also sent to the Job Centre Plus and this was followed up by a visit to find out what the customer experience was like and how the Job Centre procured the services of other agencies for basic skills delivery. Timescales have meant that this review will be carried over into the next municipal year and the outcomes potentially reported to the Executive.

### **Forward Plan**

Looking to the 2013/14 municipal year members will complete the review into literacy and numeracy and report their findings to the Executive. Members will be involved in setting the priorities within the Homelessness Prevention Programme. Members also intend to visit Padiham to look at the town centre management programme as part of their intention to support businesses in town centres.