

**21<sup>ST</sup> June 2012**

**REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**Determining the Area Committee's Priorities for 2012/13**

**1.0 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To determine the Area Committee's key areas of priority for the year ahead, which will form the basis of the Committee's Local Area Plan for 2012/13.

**2.0 Background**

- 2.1 In 2011 the City Council agreed to refresh the Sunderland Strategy and identify ways in which to strengthen the strategy, both in its delivery and measurement of performance. One of the agreed improvements is the introduction of the City Council's Corporate Outcomes Framework. The Framework identifies how the City Council intends to support the delivery of the city outcomes and specifically focuses on the City Council's unique contribution to delivering those outcomes.
- 2.2 The review of the Local Area Plans and the Area Committees' priorities for 2012/13 is integral to ensuring the delivery of those outcomes at a local level.
- 2.3 At the workshop held in May 2012, Members of the Area Committee considered data relevant to the area circumstances in the context of those emerging Corporate Outcomes. Members also brought to the discussions their own unique understanding of their communities which focused around:-
  - (a) Where the Area Committee could influence how services are delivered at a local level;
  - (b) How the Area Committee could impact upon the delivery of Corporate Outcomes at a local level; and
  - (c) To review the current activity delivered by the Area Committee and to determine whether it remained an area of priority to continue.
- 2.4 The priorities that began to emerge from the workshop were shared with residents at the State of the Area Debate and with Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) partners through the Area Voluntary Community Sector Network (AVCSN). The results of the consultation are outlined later within this report.

**3.0 Emerging Priorities**

3.1 **Annex 1** identifies the proposed Local Area Plan and Area Priorities for the Area Committee's consideration identifying where the Area Committee proposed it could both influence and have impact on and as such what its priorities for funding might be for the year ahead.

3.2 In summary, proposed priorities for 2012/13 are:-

1. To help local young people to access opportunities for employment, education and attainment.
2. To maintain key partnerships and collaboration for a safe and secure Washington.
3. To ensure investment in high quality built and natural environments of Washington.
4. To support community inclusion and resilience and ensure the right mix of services and facilities for the area through involving and supporting the VCS.

#### **4.0 Consultation Outcomes**

4.1 At the State of the Area Debate on 31<sup>st</sup> May, residents were asked to identify their main priorities for action in the forthcoming year, considering the emerging priorities or whether there were more important issues mattered to them at a local level. Additionally the VCS networks were asked for their views in helping the Area Committee to set their priorities for the coming year.

4.2 The event was an opportunity for residents to engage in discussion with officers, Members and partners about the issues facing them and their area. Washington's State of the Area event was well attended and residents identified a number of key issues:

- A number of concerns were raised with regards to the implementation and development of the Bus Links, pot holes and the condition of roads, speeding and dangerous driving, signage for Oxclose from the main highways, and parking/dropping off at schools.
- Rising costs for community groups to hire room and venues.
- Improvements and refurbishment of Washington Village Cemetery plus the need to identify a site for a new cemetery in Washington.
- Enforcement with regard to litter and dog fouling, need for more litter bins, joint approach by the city and Gentoo with regards to grounds maintenance and grass cutting, and travellers and illegal camping in James Steel Park.
- Land development issues including plans for Ayton Primary School land, and delays re proposals for new supermarkets.

- Local provision of sexual health clinics and advice for young people
- Co-ordination of information for residents and community voluntary sector including a social/event calendar for groups, database of associations, groups etc. to promote, information share and network, and opportunities for partnership working between groups.
- Involving and engaging with older residents, networking and the co-ordination of services for older people and the most vulnerable to address social isolation
- Impact of welfare reform, cuts and women's access to education
- Ensure services, facilities and projects for young people are maintained

4.3 In addition residents and stakeholders identified a Safe and Secure Washington and an Attractive Neighbourhood as the top two key priorities for 2012/13. Members are requested to consider the information above when agreeing the priorities and work plan for 2012/13.

4.4 The Washington AVCSN met on May 31<sup>st</sup> to consider and comment on the emerging priorities. The main issues and comments raised were;

- Better use of local intelligence and interpretation, utilising the VCS and partners to inform, influence and impact on local service delivery. Also, a need to recognise and value the qualitative work of the sector and understand the impact on services if the VCS is not supported and sustained
- Need to recognise the need for early interventions at a local level particularly for health services. The VCS in Washington plays a major role in service delivery and intervention.
- In response to education, attainment and employment, the VCS highlighted the need to focus on upskilling and retraining to support the family and to ensure volunteering is valued and linked to skills development and employment opportunities. Social enterprise, entrepreneurship and self employment also needs support in Washington
- Mental health and emotional well being, especially for young people and needs of young carers was highlighted. Young people in particular often need transitional support to re-enter the world of work, build self esteem and experience positive life changes.
- The network also asked Area Committee to note that the provision of Information, Advice and Guidance Services (IAG) on line only and utilising a 'self service' approach is not always appropriate for some sectors of the community.

4.5 The Area Committee is asked to note the information outlined in paragraphs 4.2 to 4.4 and consider those issues raised, when determining the priorities for the year ahead and the Local Area Plan.

## **5.0 Next steps**

5.1 Following agreement of the priorities at tonight's meeting, the Area Committee will then be requested to determine the detail of the Local Area Plan's work plan for 2012/13. It is anticipated a further workshop will be held with all Members of the Committee to confirm activity and actions to be referred to the relevant Place and People Boards as part of the strengthened area governance arrangements. Area Committee will also consider whether the Committee wishes to ring fence funding to support agreed priorities, actions and activity.

## **6.0 Recommendations**

5.1 The Committee is requested to:-

(a) Consider the issues raised by residents at the State of the Area Debate and the VCS Network and agree the priorities for 2012/13 year ahead, which will form the basis of their Local Area Plan and

(b) Agree to hold a further workshop to determine the detailed Washington Area Committee LAP work plan for 2012/13, as referred to in paragraph 5.1.

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