

Performance Report Quarter 3 (April – December 2009)**Report of the Deputy Chief Executive****1.0 Purpose of the report**

The purpose of the report is to provide Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee with a performance update relating to the period April – December 2009. This quarter the report includes:

- Progress in relation to the LAA targets and other national indicators
- Progress in relation to A Place to Play Policy Review Recommendations
- Results of the annual budget consultation which took place during October / November 2009.

2.0 Background

Members will recall that a new national performance framework was implemented during 2008/2009. This includes 198 new National Indicators which replaces previous national performance frameworks. As part of this new framework 49 national indicators have been identified as key priorities to be included in the Local Area Agreement (LAA). Performance against priorities identified in the LAA and associated improvement targets have been reported to Scrutiny Committee throughout 2009 as part of the quarterly performance monitoring arrangements. The LAA priorities are a key consideration in CAA in terms of the extent to which the partnership is improving outcomes for local people.

CAA was introduced in April 2009 to provide an independent assessment of how local public services are working in partnership to deliver outcomes for an area. The first results were reported on the Oneplace website (www.oneplace.direct.gov.uk) on 9 December 2009. Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee considered the findings of the draft area assessment report in January 2010.

Members will recall from previous performance reports that the CAA lead plans to adopt a Risk Assessment Matrix which will be the primary tool against which the Sunderland Partnership will be assessed. The Matrix will incorporate those issues that were identified in the first year of the CAA area assessment as having the most potential to become red flags and green flags. Once the Risk Assessment Matrix has been agreed, the CAA Lead will use it to monitor progress against the agreed performance trajectory (up until the end of September 2010) for each issue to arrive at his final area assessment judgement for 2010. Progress will be monitored through the Council and the Sunderland Partnership's performance management and reporting arrangements.

As part of ongoing improvement planning the Sunderland Partnership's Delivery Plans have refreshed to ensure that the work programme is targeting

the right issues, and outcomes can be demonstrated, minimising the risk of areas for improvement becoming red flags in 2010. These Delivery Plans were presented to Scrutiny Committees in February 2010.

The annual budget consultation took place during October / November 2009. The consultation took the form of a survey followed by participatory workshops which were held across Sunderland with Community Spirit panel members and representatives from the voluntary and community sector. The purpose of the workshops was to prioritise approaches to addressing the budget priorities that had been drawn from the survey results and also provide attendees with:

- A better understanding of the issues that have to be addressed in the budget setting process and information about the budget priorities
- An opportunity to hear the viewpoints of others when making judgements about budget priorities

The findings helped to inform the Council Revenue Budget for 2010/2011 which was approved on 3 March at a meeting of the full Council. A summary of how resources will be directed to the top priorities identified in relation to sustainable communities can be found in section 3.

As part of the development of Scrutiny particularly in terms of strengthening performance management arrangements, Policy Review recommendations have been incorporated into the quarterly performance report on a pilot basis. The aim is to identify achievements and outcomes that have been delivered in the context of overall performance management arrangements to enhance and develop Scrutiny's focus on delivering better outcomes both as part of CAA requirements and future partnership working. Progress in relation to the Place to Play Policy Review is attached at **Appendix 1**.

Appendix 2 provides an overview of the position for relevant national indicators and also any local performance indicators that have been retained to supplement areas in the performance framework that are not well covered by the new national indicator set.

3.0 Findings

3.1 Performance

- 3.1.1 In relation to Sustainable Communities no issues have been identified in the first year of the CAA area assessment as having potential to become red flags.
- 3.1.2 In relation to Sustainable Communities three national indicators are priorities identified in the LAA. An update is available in relation to 1 NI in relation to the period April to December 2009. An overview of performance can be found in the following table.

Ref	Description	2008/09 Outturn	Latest Update	Trend	Target 2009/10	On Target
NI 1	% of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together	67.2%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
NI 4	% of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality	26.3%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
NI 154	Net additional homes provided	299	339	▲	90	✓

3.1.3 The number of net additional homes provided to the end of December 2009 was 339 well above the LAA target of 90 additional homes provided.

3.1.4 There are no key risks in relation to the LAA at this stage. In terms of other national indicators the following performance is of note

3.1.5 Reducing Homelessness

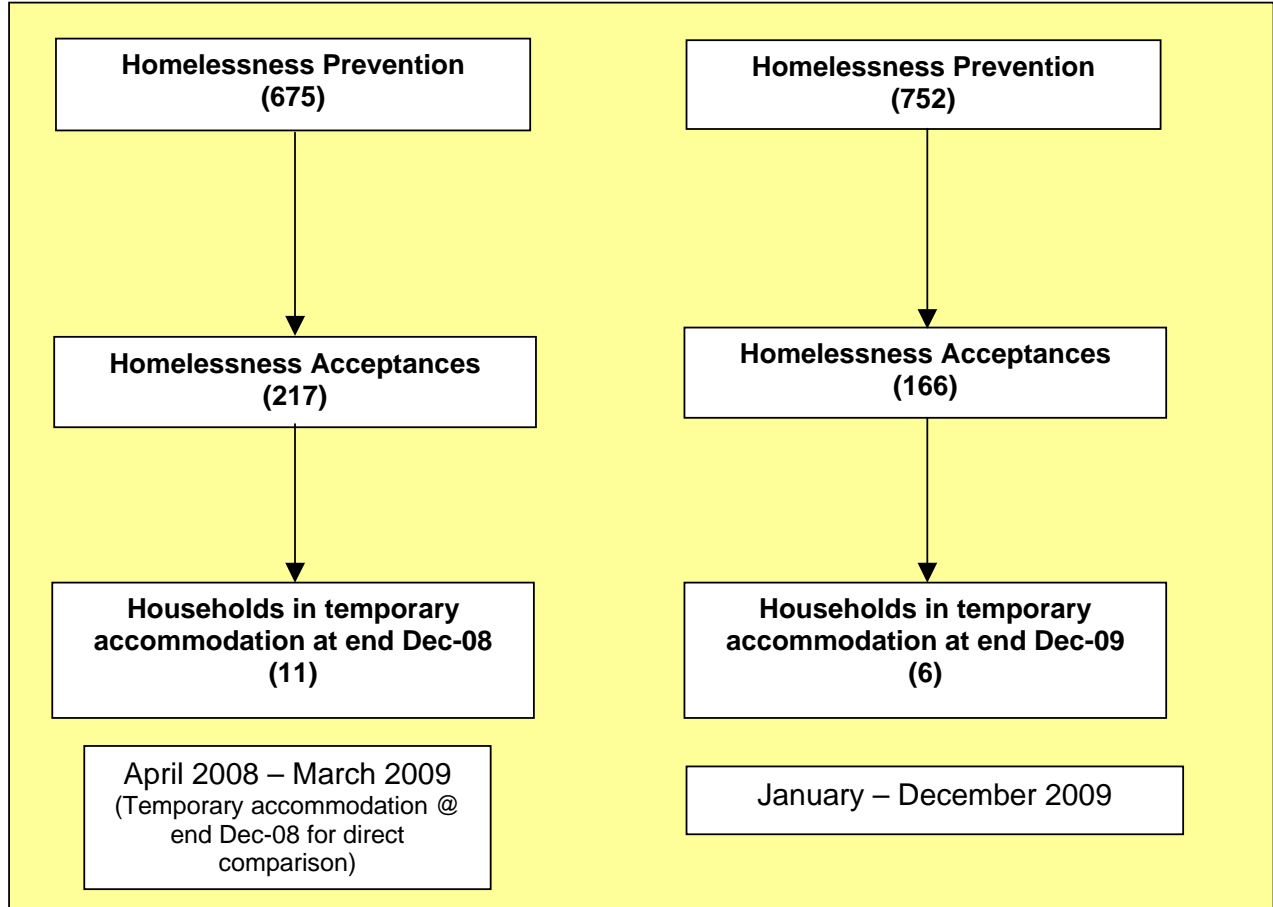
3.1.6 As Members will recall, the Council's and city's approach to homelessness is divided into 3 areas:

- *"Homelessness Prevention"*: Providing appropriate information, advice and support to households earlier to reduce their risk of homelessness;
- *"Statutory Homelessness Acceptance"*: i.e. relating to those households to which the Council has statutory responsibilities within Housing Acts;
- *"Utilising Temporary Accommodation"*: i.e. relating to those statutory homelessness acceptance households needing provision of temporary accommodation and then supported to identify and move to more permanent accommodation solutions in the city.

3.1.7 Reducing the risk of homelessness remains a high priority for the Council and city. The key objective of the Council in this area is a focus on more preventative solutions earlier (i.e. in advice and information) than more complex interventions later (such as statutory powers, including temporary accommodation). To support this approach, the Council made a significant investment in more preventative advice services for people with housing and financial problems, as well as practical support for people in their current tenancies, e.g. officers providing home visits to those at risk of homelessness and work with private landlords to support individuals' tenancies.

3.1.8 Figure 1 shows progress in achieving this move towards a greater degree of prevention diagrammatically. As it shows, the number of preventative cases increased between the 12 month periods ending March and December 2009, with a decrease in the number of people statutorily accepted as homeless over the same two periods. This continues a long-term trend underpinned by the successful implementation of a more preventative approach to homelessness. Both these indicators are on course to exceed 2009/10 targets by the financial year end.

Figure 1 – Comparison of Homelessness Performance Outcomes
(Figures in brackets are number of cases)



3.1.9 Figure 1 shows the Council improved its already strong performance in reducing the number of households in temporary accommodation at the end of December (NI 156) towards its target is no more than 6 households in this accommodation for the end of 2009/10, in line with its original CLG target. However, it should be noted that the number of people who present at risk of homelessness (and who may then require temporary accommodation) shows some seasonal variation with fewer such cases presenting in December. This has meant historically that the number of households in temporary accommodation declined in December, before increasing early the following calendar year as more cases present. This seasonal trend continued in 2009/10, but nonetheless, the number of households in such accommodation continues to be lower than the corresponding position the previous year, as Figure 1 shows, with fewer individuals in bed & breakfast accommodation (often the least favourable type of accommodation).

3.1.10 It's to further build on good progress thus far, and to support pressures placed on households as a result of the economic downturn, that one of the Council's Business Improvement Projects relates to reducing the risk of homelessness through a more holistic approach to supporting individuals.

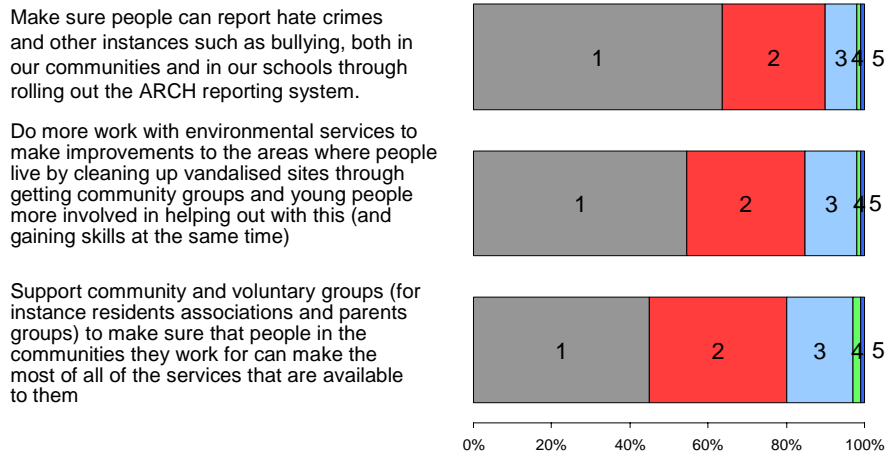
- 3.1.11 Private sector vacant dwellings that are returned into occupation or demolished as a direct result of action by the local authority
- 3.1.12 Performance against the local indicator for this objective, measures the number of such dwellings returned to occupation/demolished. This figure improved to 261 between April – December 2009 (or 367 in total in 2009), broadly in-line with the target for 2009/10 (375) as result of the Council accelerating progress against this measure in the latter months of 2009. To help ensure the Council can intervene earlier in locations which seem to have an increasing number of empty dwellings (which can be an early indication of decline), it is developing an Empty Properties Action Plan that will seek to “segment” the issues and risks associated with vacant properties (e.g. geographically poor fit between available households and demand, market forces, including landlords unable to let etc.) and identify appropriate actions, based on extensive research already undertaken. One of the key issues will be to explore more preventative approach with partners to ensure that longer-term vacant properties become less of an issue in the first place – the majority of Area Committees have highlighted empty properties as an area to tackle.
- 3.1.13 The importance of this issue has been recognised and money has been provided to increase the numbers of Empty Property Officers from the current number of two to five.

3.2 Budget Consultation

- 3.2.1 As part of the budget consultation a survey questionnaire was completed by 1075 Community Spirit panel members (a response rate of 67%). Of those who expressed an opinion, the majority of respondents who expressed an opinion (77%) think that the way in which people get along together in their local area has stayed the same over the last 12 months. A further 15% believe it has got worse and 8% think it has got better.
- 3.2.2 The majority of respondents considered all of the approaches to improving the way in which people get along together to be high priority (ranked them as 1 or 2) as shown below. The most favoured approach relatively was in terms of the ARCH reporting system for hate crimes and bullying.

Getting along with each other

% of respondents where 1 is high priority and 5 is low priority



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- 3.2.3 To explore the issues raised by the survey a series of workshops were held where participants were to prioritise a range of approaches to addressing the budget priorities that emerged from the survey results. The priority identified during the consultation in relation to sustainable communities was around getting along with each other.
- 3.2.4 Sunderland ARCH is a reporting system which allows people to report racist incidents that have happened to them or that they have witnessed in Sunderland. An important priority in terms of helping communities get along together was the roll out of the system across the city and into schools.
- 3.2.5 In 2010-2011 the ARCH system will be further developed, meaning that people can report other hate crimes such as homophobic incidents, disability incidents and instances of bullying. An ARCH Development Officer has been appointed who will be responsible for this work. This will involve work with schools and other organisations such as housing groups and the police to train people about how the system works, to encourage reporting onto the system and to ensure that the information on the system is used to do something to address problems, including ensuring that the victim is supported.
- 3.2.6 The roll out in schools will start with a pilot in 5 Sunderland schools in summer term 2010. Training will be given to teachers and pupils around the importance of reporting racist incidents. ARCH will also work with youth projects in Sunderland so that young people are able to report racist incidents outside school times. Finally ARCH is also linking with the Anti-Bullying Strategy Group to look at using ARCH to record all bullying incidents in schools.

3.2.7 The government has allocated a grant of £164,000 to support the 'Prevent;' Strategy. Sunderland's approach to the 'Prevent' agenda focuses on ensuring that we thoroughly understand our communities and work with them to address any problems they might encounter with regard to people who hold extremist and violent views and who thereby pose a threat both to their community, to the wider communities around them, and the country as a whole. Some practical examples include collaborative working with the Sunderland BME Network, as well as providing small budgets to the area based Community Cohesion networks (both practitioner and strategic) to provide some immediate financial assistance in order that low cost local solutions can be delivered to any identified areas or 'hot spots' highlighted. Funding to support this provision is being allocated through the Area Based Grant.

3.3 Policy Review Recommendations

3.3.1 The recommendations agreed to improve A Place to Play in Sunderland as part of the committee Policy Review will deliver a range of improvement activity. A full overview of progress is attached as appendix 2, the table below provides a summary of the number and percentage of each policy reviews recommendations that have been achieved, are on schedule to be achieved or are not on schedule to be achieved.

Policy Review	Rag Key		
	★ Green (Recommendation achieved)	● Amber (On schedule)	▲ Red (Not on schedule)
A Place to Play	1 (5%)	13 (65%)	6 (30%)

3.3.2 Recommendations achieved to date include; research undertaken with regard to the management and maintenance of poster sites, comparing models in a range of town centres across the country. The Arts Centre Washington continues to develop new initiatives in music for young people. Music programme developed and enhanced throughout 2009 and continues into 2010.

4.0 Recommendation

That the committee considers the continued good progress made by the council and the Sunderland Partnership and those areas requiring further development to ensure that performance in actively managed.

5.0 Background Papers