

# **ENVIRONMENT AND ATTRACTIVE CITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

17 JANUARY 2011

## **SUNDERLAND 'THE PLACE' POLICY REVIEW 2010/11: REPUTATION AND INFLUENCING PROGRAMME**

### **REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**Strategic Priority: SP5 - Attractive and Inclusive City**

**Corporate Priorities: CI01, CI02, CI03**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform members of a presentation to be delivered to the Scrutiny Committee. The presentation will give an overview of the Reputation and Influencing Programme in the context of the Scrutiny Committee's Policy Review for 2010/11; Sunderland 'the Place'.
- 1.2 The presentation will inform/contribute to the Scrutiny Committee's policy review for 2010/11 into Sunderland 'the Place'.

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 At its meeting on 17 June 2010 the Scrutiny Committee agreed to focus on Sunderland 'the Place' as the Policy Review for 2010/11 and agreed the aim of the review and terms of reference at its meeting on 12 July 2010.
- 2.2 At its meeting on 18 October 2010 members of the Scrutiny Committee agreed the proposed approach to the policy review. The evidence gathering was to include information regarding the City Council's Reputation and Influencing Programme.
- 2.3 The Reputation and Influencing Programme is one of the 'Sunderland Way of Working' Corporate Improvement Programmes, sitting alongside the Business Transformation Programme, Community Leadership Programme and the Economic Development Programme.
- 2.4 Ahead of the launch of the Economic Masterplan the council embarked on the first year of a Public Affairs programme in December 2009 to start raising the profile and influence of the city at Westminster and Whitehall.

- 2.5 In respect of the Economic Masterplan to have an ambitious inward investment strategy to bring new private sector led investment to the city. To deliver this the council requires a high-level council wide programme to create the best possible conditions for continued economic growth and the development of the city.
- 2.6 The Reputation and Influencing programme will support the future development of the city by raising the profile of Sunderland; increasing reach and influence; and encouraging business and investors to “do business” in the city. The programme comprises three strands of work (Public Affairs, Investment Marketing, International Economic Relations) which, collectively, address the priority audiences of: Government (Westminster and Whitehall); opinion formers; influencers; think tanks; investors, developers; and businesses (UK and overseas).
- 2.7 The key drivers for establishment of the programme are:
- The comparatively low profile of the city with parliamentarians/opinion formers when compared with other cities of a similar size, the need to improve perceptions to support economic growth and opportunity within the city;
  - The development and launch of the Economic Masterplan – the need to deliver the inward investment necessary to help fund economic growth;
  - The increasingly competitive environment between cities seeking to attract investment at a global level: the need to ensure the council’s international economically based partnerships contribute to the overall inward investment strategy for the city;
  - The significant reduction in public service spending and the need to create the best possible environment for private sector led growth, the delivery of effective/efficient public services and to secure future opportunity for the city;
  - The current and emerging public policy environment - the need to ensure the council is recognised as being innovative and leading the change in how the public sector operates; and
  - The opportunities that exist for a forward thinking council to ensure the continued delivery of priority services even within the context of reduced public expenditure.
- 2.8 The Director of Communications will give a presentation to the Scrutiny Committee detailing the progress of the Programme and forthcoming plans.
- 2.9 The presentation will contribute principally to the following terms of reference for the Policy Review;

- (b) To gain an understanding of the current activity being undertaken within the City Council and across partner organisations with regard to developing a sense of economic place;
- (c) To examine the role and responsibilities of the City Council and partners in developing and implementing a strong sense of economic place for the city;
- (d) To understand Sunderland's 'story', where the city is positioned now and the economic image and identity the City Council and partners are aspiring to and working towards;

### **3. CONCLUSION**

- 3.1 Members are asked to receive the presentation from Deborah Lewin, Director of Communications.

### **4. RECOMMENDATION**

- 4.1 That members consider and comment on the information provided.

### **5. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Minutes of the Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee – 12 July and 18 October 2010.

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