

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 17TH APRIL 2012

PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 3 (OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2011)

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1.0 Purpose of the report

The purpose of this report is to provide Sustainable Scrutiny Committee with a performance update for the period October to December 2011.

2.0 Background

Performance reports provided to Scrutiny Committee prior to March 2011 were based on performance indicators from the previous government's national indicator list, with a particular focus on those prioritised within the Local Area Agreement. In October 2010 the Coalition Government announced the deletion of the National Indicator set and also announced that from April 2011 there would no longer be a requirement for council's to produce an LAA. Both announcements signalled a move towards self regulation and improvement with more flexibility to report against local priorities using a set of locally determined measures.

For 2011/12 and beyond the Council's aim is that performance reporting should be focused on the key priorities for the people, place and economy of Sunderland. This new approach will be reflected in the performance reports and evolve and develop over 2011/12. Performance reports will include former national performance indicators reported to scrutiny committee adopted into the local performance framework for 2011 – 2012 (and those that continue to provide performance reporting relevant to the key issues and priorities for Sunderland will continue be part of the reporting framework for 2012 – 2013). In addition as part of the Council's annual planning arrangements, consideration is also being given to identifying new localised performance measures which will also be needed to support a robust performance framework tailored to local needs. These will be reported to the relevant scrutiny committee as appropriate and some of these new measures will be reported in 2011/12, where information is available and adds value to the review of performance. Members should also be aware there are also some former national indicators that are no longer available and have therefore been removed from the performance framework.

Attached at Appendix 1 is an extract of the basket of indicators that the Council has identified within the self-regulation performance framework for 2011-2012 that demonstrate progress against priorities that fall within the remit of this committee.

3.0 Performance

The following section contains a summary of performance across the key performance areas of: Equalities, Housing, Culture, Sport and Leisure and Sustainability.

3.1 Equalities

The Council's new Equality Scheme was agreed by Cabinet on 14th March 2012. This scheme replaces the previous Corporate Equality Scheme and the separate race, gender and disability equality schemes. This new version sets out how we will achieve our aspirations and meet our legal responsibilities relating to the Equality Act 2010 and the associated Public Sector Equality Duty. The scheme makes it clear to the people of Sunderland how we intend to meet their needs and how we have taken on their views. It includes a number of high level equality objectives that are aligned to the Council's emerging Corporate Outcomes Framework and other key areas of development. In order to meet our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 Specific Duties, an action plan will be published by the 6th April to show how we intend to make progress against the Equality Objectives.

By the end of Quarter 3, 1.4% of employees were from an minority ethnic community representing a marginal decrease from the 1.41% reported at the end of Quarter 2, but an increase on the 1.24% reported at the end of Quarter 3 2010/11. There remains some under-representation of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) staff across the Council compared to the BME population in Sunderland of 2.1% (2001 Census). The number of black and minority ethnic staff is unlikely to increase in the near future as the Council is not recruiting externally (except in schools).

3.2 Housing

In relation to housing two of the overarching priorities for Sunderland are:

- To develop and deliver new homes that meet aspirations and needs of existing and potential residents in line with the Economic Masterplan and the developing Local Development Framework and Core Strategy.
- Meeting the accommodation needs of all vulnerable and socially excluded people.

The supply of new housing and the prevention of homelessness are therefore key to achieving the City's housing priorities.

3.2.1 Housing supply

The number of net additional dwellings built in England has been reducing on an annual basis since 2008/9, on average 16% fewer additional dwellings built per year. In contrast, Sunderland has seen an increase in the number of net additional dwellings in the same time period. Between 2008/9 and 2010/11 there was an average annual increase of 28.4%, from 190 net additional dwellings in 2008/9 to 380 in 2010/11.

The scrutiny report for quarter 2 (July to September 2011) highlighted to scrutiny members a change in this trend and identified two factors, namely an increase in demolitions and a reduction in the number of new dwellings being built.

A high number of demolitions in the first two quarters of 2011/12 has resulted in the number of net additional dwellings falling to 104 properties, a 73% reduction compared to the previous year. This is due to several large regeneration sites across the city being demolished, particularly in the Doxford Park (50 demolitions), Broom Hill (38 demolitions), Castletown (34 demolitions) and Downhill (40 demolitions) parts of the city.

In addition, the number of dwellings completed has fallen from 536 in the first three quarters of 2010/11 to 358 in 2011/12. Scrutiny has previously been advised that historically the number of dwellings in Sunderland has been sustained by previous government affordable homes policies. In recent years private developers have not been able to develop and deliver private schemes the principle factor being the lack of mortgage availability as opposed to the lack of available land sites that are ready for housing development.

3.2.2 Homelessness

In terms of homelessness prevention, activities across the council cover the provision of information, advice and support to individuals and families early to reduce their risk of homelessness before these individuals become "accepted" as homeless, placing a statutory duty upon the council to re-house the household. These are particularly important services due to the challenging economic conditions impacting nationally and locally.

A key measure of performance is the total number of homelessness cases prevented. Performance has continued to improve in the third quarter of 2011/12. At the end of December 2011, 550 households were prevented from becoming homeless. 89 more households have been prevented from becoming homeless in 2011/12 compared to the same period last year.

Statutory Homeless activities across the council cover housing advice and housing allocations to those individuals and families to which the council has statutory responsibilities for homelessness. A key measure of this is for the total number of homelessness acceptances. Again performance has continued to improve into the third quarter of 2011/12. At the end of December 2011, 79 fewer households have been accepted as homeless in 2011/12 compared to the same

period last year. Since 2005 the Access to Housing Team has embraced and implemented the national homeless prevention agenda that has seen the number of households being accepted as homeless reduce both nationally and locally.

Support and activities across the council cover the statutory homelessness acceptance of families and individuals that need to access temporary accommodation and are then supported to identify and move to more permanent solutions in the city. With the ongoing success of the homeless prevention agenda the number of households placed in temporary accommodation has continued to fall. The latest performance remains consistent with the previous quarter at five families but is lower than the same period in the previous year when there were 6 families in temporary accommodation. The lack of suitable move-on accommodation, however, means that some households are remaining in temporary accommodation for longer periods.

3.3 Culture

The number of visits to/usages of the city's museums (at 1,221 per 1,000 population) is slightly above performance seen this time last year (at 1,201 per 1,000 population), however, the number of visits made in person (at 989 per 1,000 population) is slightly below performance for this time last year (at 1,041). Actions include the opening of the new wagon shed and sidings area at Monkwearmouth Station Museum in October which has seen its visitor numbers increase every month as compared to the same time last year. Also, elements of the 'Truth About Faeries' exhibition at the Museum and Winter Gardens changed with the seasons in order to provide something new for visitors during the exhibition's long run. This year the [Sunderland Museum and Winter Gardens](#) were closed for two weeks over Christmas (closed from 5pm Friday 23 December and re-opening at 10am Saturday 7 January). [This has previously been agreed as part of the budget setting processes for 2011/12.](#) It was agreed that this period has traditionally seen very low visitor numbers, an expensive time of year in terms of utilities and the museum is already closed for some days due to Bank Holidays and therefore was seen as an opportunity to have a maximum impact on saving money but a minimum impact on visitors.

The number of pupils visiting museums in organised school groups (at 6,575 pupils) has shown a decline in performance when compared to the same period last year (at 9,210 pupils) and is below the target for the end of quarter 3. In the last quarter it was reported that a number of initiatives and strategies had been developed across TWAM (Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums) to promote schools use of museums including:

- a pilot to streamline the booking processes for schools and ensure that certain workshops are offered in increased numbers at times of the year when they have been found to be in demand has proved successful and is being rolled out across TWAM;
- a leaflet 'Explore your World' which lists all the schools workshops on offer including an 'at a glance' table with Key Stage and curriculum links was distributed in the autumn; and
- a Transition Project demonstrating the relevance of using museums during the year 6 transition year has been launched.

In addition to TWAM's (Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums) latest offer to schools further initiatives seen in the latest quarter (October to December 2011) include offering CPD (continuous professional development) sessions for teachers have been organised. The aim of these being to give teachers a better understanding of what is on offer at the museums which they can bring their children to and also to give them extra skills that they can take back to the classroom in terms of how to teach particular topics. The annual programme of assemblies for schools are also being offered in the Spring term (January to March 2012) as well as new storytelling sessions at both venues.

3.4 Sport and Leisure

Adult participation in sport and leisure is measured through the *Active People Survey* (coordinated by Sport England) The Active People Survey shows how many adults in Sunderland are active in sport and physical activity, whether this takes place in a private gym, a school, on the beach, in a park, on a sports field, or in a public leisure centre. The survey undertaken by MORI provides the largest sample size ever established for an adult (16+) sport and recreation survey. The survey is undertaken annually and the latest results for 2011 have recently been released.

The percentage of the adult population in Sunderland participating in at least 30 minutes of sport and active recreation of at least moderate intensity on at least 3 days a week, has decreased from 22.50% in 2010 to 21.30% in 2011. Sunderland's participation levels still remain higher than average scores for Tyne & Wear, the North East.

However, since the Active People Survey (APS) commenced in 2005, Sunderland has improved the percentage of adults participating in sport and physical activity, rising from 20.3% to 21.3% in 2011.

Sport volunteering in the city is also measured through the national Active People Survey. The latest results for 2011 show that participation in Sunderland (at 3.7%) fell below the national average of 7.3%.

Sport England, have confirmed that there are a number of reasons why participation levels in sport have reduced nationally and these include, cost of activities, lack of time to participate and significantly less money being spent on sport and cultural activities. The Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2012 will be an opportunity and potential catalyst, against the challenges of the current economic climate, to improve participation and volunteering levels and create a lasting legacy in sport.

Attendance at the city's leisure complexes shows a decline in performance for both wet and dry visits compared to the same period in 2010/11. The number of visits (swims and other visits) to Sunderland leisure centres from October to December 2012 was 1,634,688 compared to October to December 2011 when the number of visits was 1,659,366 (24,678 less visits). The free swimming initiative inflated performance in 2010/11. This

programme has now ended and together with the economic downturn, this is having an impact on the figures seen so far in 2011/12. Performance however continues to be ahead of target (total number of visits ahead by 39,690, swims ahead by 8,627 and other visits ahead by 31,063). It should be noted however, that targets have been set lower than compared to last year due to the cancellation of the Free Swimming Programme, the economic downturn and the implementation of new facility operating models at Crowtree, Community North and Silksworth Sports Complex.

3.5 Sustainability

An updated position in terms of the percentage CO2 reduction from Local authority operations (NI185) and percentage CO2 reductions across an agreed set of sectors (housing, road transport and business) (NI186) against the 2005 baseline will be reported to scrutiny committee at the end of this financial year. The previous performance report highlighted improved performance against both performance indicators and both were on target. There is a 2 year time lag on the data, with latest data relating to 2008.

Employers in Sunderland account for 40% of the 2.1 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emitted from Sunderland each year. Sunderland has set a target to cut the city's carbon emissions by 29% by the year 2020. Through the low carbon city campaign, the Sunderland Partnership aims to register over half of all emissions from Sunderland's employers to the campaign, and ask each one to commit to reducing their emissions by at least 10% in 10 years or sooner.

An update against our level of preparedness to adapt to climate change (NI 188) will be available in March 2012. The last performance update to scrutiny for the year end 2010/11 reported that performance against this indicator was consistent with performance for the previous year.

4. 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 is actively managed.

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