

3 NOVEMBER 2010

**REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**COMMUNITY ACTION IN COALFIELD – PROGRESS REVIEW**

**Workplan 2009/2010, Workplan 2010/11 and Task Group Updates.**

**1. Why has it come to Committee?**

The report provides an update of outstanding issues from the 2009/10 work plan and shows progress against agreed actions in the current year's (2010/11) work plan (**Annex 1**).

**2 Progress report on 2010/11 priority: Bulb Planting and Landscaping**

The Coalfield in Bloom project has two elements to it – machine planting and community planting. During week commencing 11 October the machine planting took place at 35 locations across the Coalfield area, as previously agreed by Area Committee. A schedule for the community planting has been developed. Over 40 local community and voluntary groups (including schools and residents' groups) will take part in the planting which will take place during October and early November and discussions are underway to develop the project to include Christmas and spring planting. The Coalfield Community Co-ordinator in partnership with the VCS Network and Gentoo will develop the project further. This will be a key project in the development of community engagement activity for the Coalfield area.

**3 Progress report on 2010/11 priority: Local Shopping Centres**

A Task and Result group was established to take this issue forward. Membership of the group is:

Councillor Dennis Richardson  
Councillor Kath Rolph  
Councillor Sheila Ellis  
Councillor Anne Hall  
Andrew Perkin – Lead Agent  
Brad Shields – Property Services, Sunderland City Council  
Les Clark – City Services, Sunderland City Council  
Pauline Hopper – Coalfield Area Officer

Terms of reference have been established and the group have proposed a way forward which was agreed at the September meeting of Area Committee. A series of proposed projects will be explored by the group in further detail. The first step agreed was to undertake an audit costing approximately £5,000, to include:

- What have we got? (audit of existing businesses by type, size etc)
- What do we want? (what is required by existing traders, existing and potential shoppers)
- Explore examples of best practice from other parts of the country
- Explore current and future opportunities from strategic/mainstream Council budgets
- Consider the Retail Needs Assessment and Economic Masterplan to examine the strategic fit of the Coalfield area

**Recommendation**

Committee are requested to agree to fund phase 1 of the proposed plan by approving £5,000 from the SIB allocation (subject to a fully appraised project application).

#### **4 Progress report on 2010/11 Priority: Heritage**

A Task and Result group was established to take this issue forward. Membership of the group is:

Councillor Dennis Richardson  
Councillor Kath Rolph  
Councillor Sheila Ellis  
Councillor Bob Heron  
Vicki Medhurst – Lead Agent  
Juliana Heron – Area Committee partner  
John Price – Hetton Town Council  
John Ford – Gentoo Living  
Keith Hamilton – Planning Implementation, Sunderland City Council  
Ian Coburn – Parks Development Manager, Sunderland City Council  
Bob Moody, Easington Lane Community Access Point (ELCAP)  
Janet Robinson - Cultural Co-ordinator, Sunderland City Council  
Mike Low – Conservation Officer, Sunderland City Council  
Susan Brown – Coalfield Community Co-ordinator  
Pauline Hopper – Coalfield Area Officer

Terms of reference have been established and the group have proposed a way forward which was agreed by Area Committee at the September meeting. It was agreed that £10,000 SIB would be provided to carry out a heritage audit. The Lead Agent has drafted a brief outlining exactly what is required. The Task and Result group has nominated a small steering group to ensure effective delivery of the brief and to monitor performance. Once the audit is complete the Task & Result group will consider the findings to inform the next steps.

#### **5 Progress report on 2010/11 Priority: Unadopted Roads**

A significant amount of work has been carried out to determine a baseline position in regard to private streets. An extensive desktop study together with on site photography exercise to identifying all the unadopted streets in the Coalfield Area and across the city has been undertaken.

To date information has been gathered which identifies the following attributes:

- Street Name/Locality/Ward
- Commercial or Residential
- No of Property Frontages
- Extent of Council interest
- Street Lighting provision
- Gated
- Length and Area
- Photographic record

Further work is required to determine the costs associated with making up the streets to adoptable standards and it is intended to bring to the next Area Committee a detailed report.

Annex 1: Community Action: Review Progress

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**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CITY SERVICES****PRIORITY: RESPONSIVE LOCAL SERVICES (RLS)**

RLS is a method of area working designed to:

- Increase levels of resident satisfaction through providing services that are responsive to community needs and effectively communicating improvements
- Tailor services in recognition of differing area/locality circumstances either through local problem solving or adapting service standards
- Recognise and enhance the community leadership role of elected members.

The current scope of RLS covers the service areas of Litter, Graffiti, Refuse, Grass Cutting and Dog Fouling. It also provides the opportunity for a wider range of issues to be considered within a context of local problem solving.

**Service Requests**

The tables below provide a view of the volume of service requests for the services in scope for August and September 2010.

<b>Service Area – August 2010</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>West</b>	<b>Washington</b>	<b>Coalfield</b>
Animal Fouling	14	14	13	5	8
Grass Cutting	1	0	6	2	4
Graffiti	3	5	6	12	9
Rubbish and Litter	93	81	94	98	68
Refuse and recycling	184	223	157	197	170

<b>Service Area – Sept 2010</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>West</b>	<b>Washington</b>	<b>Coalfield</b>
Animal Fouling	17	6	4	1	14
Grass Cutting	1	2	0	1	8
Graffiti	3	6	8	7	13
Rubbish and Litter	48	37	48	79	79
Refuse and recycling	116	189	129	102	98

**What does the analysis tell us?**

- The most significant numbers of requests relate to both 'refuse and recycling' and 'rubbish and litter' which is reflected across all areas. This pattern is consistent with previous months and although the numbers regarding refuse are higher than others, when represented as a percentage of total bins collected (less than 0.01%), the service standard is being consistently applied.
- The analysis regarding rubbish and litter relates to individual service requests. A further analysis has been undertaken to identify any specific areas to consider. In this respect two areas have been identified – Easington Lane High Street and Barnwell Play Area in Penshaw both of which are being addressed by the Street Scene service.
- The volume of requests has reduced in the highlighted areas from August to September. In respect of refuse this relates to the introduction of the blue bin scheme and the expected increase in customer queries during the transitional period. The high levels of garden refuse

have also impacted upon service requests although this is a seasonal issue with an expected decrease in requests.

- It is also clear that from the requests received a high percentage of the requests are staff reported, demonstrating that our frontline staff are reporting and addressing these key issues before they become a problem for residents.

**Extending The RLS Service Scope**

An analysis of all service requests and staff reported intelligence, not limited to the scope of RLS, has shown that service requests for enforcement (dumping of waste), noise and street lighting are also relatively high – refer to the tables below. In this respect it is recommended the scope of RLS be widened to include the three additional service areas.

<b>Service Area – August 2010</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>West</b>	<b>Washington</b>	<b>Coalfield</b>
Dumping of Waste	170	173	108	111	80
Noise	38	27	27	27	31
Street Lighting	18	34	10	20	28

<b>Service Area – Sept 2010</b>	<b>North</b>	<b>East</b>	<b>West</b>	<b>Washington</b>	<b>Coalfield</b>
Dumping of Waste	58	58	34	101	26
Noise	17	38	20	23	21
Street Lighting	27	25	13	19	32

The highlighted areas of the analysis are demonstrating a trend showing a reduction in service requests for the ‘dumping of waste’ from August – September. Although this is a positive trend the reasons for it occurring are not immediately apparent and further analysis is being undertaken in this respect.

Some specific examples of enforcement activity in the Coalfield area to address the dumping of waste are detailed below:

**Fly-tip, Hazard Lane.** Police involved and an arrest carried out. Relevant partners working to prepare a case Case for fly tipping currently being compiled.

**Wear Street – Hetton.** Waste in yard. Sec 92(a) Clearance Notice served 11<sup>th</sup> June but waste is still present. Fixed Penalty Notice has been issued for breach of notice and a prosecution file is currently pending.

**James Terrace – Easington Lane** – numerous fly-tips on land. – Land ownership established and responsibility for clearance currently being negotiated due to an ongoing Rights of Way query.

**Intelligence Group**

A partnership group has been established to share information and intelligence relative to each area committee’s geographical boundaries with a view to identify any service issues and interventions. The group consists of representatives from the Council, the Police and Gentoo who will meet prior to each area committee cycle. The first meeting of the group occurred in early October and some of the issues regarding the ‘dumping of waste’ are highlighted above.

Any significant issues identified by the group will be brought forward to area committees in a report that will explain the issue/s and also provide options for a service response. Members can then debate options and provide recommendations. The main issues relating to the Coalfield Area, as discussed at the October Intelligence Group were focused upon dumping of waste and littering. Data relating to customer requests for these services is currently being reviewed and a discussion

paper will be presented at the Area committee meeting on 3 November 2010 to agree a way forward.

**City Services – Area Response Managers** The new structure for Streetscene includes six Area Response Managers, one for each area of the City and one for the City Centre. It is anticipated that these will be appointed by December 2010.

These Area Response Managers will lead locality based teams delivering Responsive Local Services that are aligned to local conditions and priorities. The Area Response Managers will work with the Area Committees, Area Regeneration Officers, partners and residents to identify and tackle key issues.

### **Recognition For Action**

There is now a dedicated section on the council's intranet to enable staff to post good news stories which can be publicised to demonstrate that the council and partners are addressing local issues. The RLS intranet URL is below.

<http://cityweb/directorates/chief-executive/corporate-communications/responsivelocalservices/default.shtm>

There is also a dedicated email address which is [responsivelocalservices@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:responsivelocalservices@sunderland.gov.uk), enabling staff to post stories for the media team to respond too and publicise as appropriate.

The Staff Reporting Line is also being used to report good news stories and the Communications Team are collating the stories to share with the media and include within the Community Newsletters.

### **Winter Maintenance**

Following the severe weather experienced during the winter of 2009/2010 all area committees requested some additional information to be made available, for residents and members, regarding the approach to winter maintenance.

In response additional information has been prepared and is now available on the Sunderland.gov website via a dedicated 'Winter Maintenance' page which highlights the gritting routes and the location of salt/grit bins.

In addition an article on Winter Maintenance will be included within the November issue of Sunrise.

Also additional training has been delivered to employees working in the Contact Centre in relation to winter maintenance services enquiries and the Street Scene winter maintenance teams are now able to communicate more effectively via mobile phones to coordinate activity and report any service issues.

#### **Recommendation**

Members are requested to note the report and receive further updates regarding any issues arising from the intelligence group.