

Report of the Chief Executive

Performance Report – April to December 2008 (Progress in Implementing the Local Area Agreement and New National Indicator Set)

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide members of the Policy and Coordination Review Committee with a summary position statement in relation to the first nine months of the Local Area Agreement (LAA), implementation of the new National Indicator set during 2008/09 and also the council's plans to address findings from the annual MORI survey and provisional results of the biennial Place Survey.

2. Background

- 2.1 Members will recall that a new national performance framework is being implemented during 2008/2009. This includes 198 new National Indicators which replaces the Best Value Performance Indicators and Performance Assessment Framework Performance Indicators. As a consequence 2008/09 is a transition year as we develop baselines for the new indicators and ensure any corrective action will be effective in the new framework.
- 2.2 As part of this new framework 49 national indicators have been identified as key priorities to be included in the Local Area Agreement. Targets have been agreed for these indicators through a process of negotiation with partners and government.
- 2.3 This is the third quarter corporate performance report relating to 2008/2009 performance information. The report follows a standard format and is risk based with its key focus on both potential and current performance issues in relation to the delivery of the Local Area Agreement (LAA). It also provides an overview of the position for other national indicators and 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.
- 2.4 In addition to performance indicators, information in relation to resident's perceptions is also available during this reporting period. Since 1995 Sunderland City Council has commissioned an annual survey to monitor residents' satisfaction with, and perceptions of, the council and the services it provides. The latest survey was conducted in Autumn 2008 and comprised 1260 interviews with residents across the city in addition to a 'booster' sample of residents from black and minority ethnic (BME) groups. Cabinet received a copy of the findings from the 2008 survey on 11 March 2009.
- 2.5 In addition to the annual MORI survey during 2008 the council has also undertaken the Place Survey. This is a statutory survey which takes place every two years. The results from the Place Survey are used as the basis to calculate a number of new national indicators some of which are included in

the LAA. This report contains provisional results for those performance indicators and also planned improvement activity to address any areas of varying perspectives from the MORI survey. (Improvement activity will also be identified in relation to the Place Survey when provisional results are finalised and supporting datasets become available).

3. Current Position

3.1 In relation to the LAA *appendix 1* provides an overview of each of the specified outcomes and a traffic light assessment for each performance indicator and target that are relevant for this committee. The traffic light assessment has three elements and includes:

- Trend analysis – detailing whether the indicator is improving or declining year on year a performance update for the data available at this point of 2008/09
- Target analysis – detailing whether the indicator is on schedule to meet the targets that have been set
- Control over the indicator – extent to which improvement activity will influence the performance that the indicator measures e.g., indicators from the Place survey will be high risk as improvement activity may not always impact and we can't always control improvements in performance

4 Positive Performance and Current Risks

4.1 Performance against the priorities identified in the LAA and associated improvement targets will be a key consideration in the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) in terms of the extent to which the partnership is improving outcomes for local people. In addition the number of targets that are met during the course of the LAA will influence the amount of Performance Reward Grant paid to the partnership at the end of the three year agreement. Government Office has stated that the authority have made good progress with developing and bedding down of delivery arrangements across the majority of designated targets. There is a strong performance culture in place and evidence of innovative practice.

4.2 In relation to the period April to December 2008 there are no key risks to the achievement of targets for services within the Policy and Co-ordination Review committees remit. However it is important to note that the economic conditions and associated forecasts have deteriorated significantly against projections earlier this year. As a consequence, it is highly probable that the partnership will struggle to achieve the stretching economic growth related targets that were set in more positive economic conditions i.e. NI 152 (Working age people on out of work benefits), NI 153 (Working age people on out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods). The harsh economic conditions over the next two to three years are likely to result in higher than expected numbers of people flowing onto the benefits register. The overall outcome is likely to be a lower than projected reduction in the number of benefit claimants overall. A detailed overview of LAA performance is attached as *appendix 1*.

4.3 There are a number of areas of positive performance at the 3rd quarter stage (December 2008) these are as follows:

4.3.1 Adults will be offered learning opportunities that meet their individual needs and the needs of employers with the same focus upon appropriate curriculum, sufficient support and accessible places to learn

NI 163 Working age population qualified to at least Level 2 or higher

The working age population qualified to at least level 2 or higher has improved from 61% to 68.6% exceeding the 2008/09 LAA target of 63%

NI 165 Working age population qualified to at least level 4 or higher

The working age population qualified to at least level 4 or higher has improved from 21.1% baseline to 23.8% at the end of December 2007 (latest available information)

4.3.2 By 2021 we aim to provide 15000 new homes in the right place at the right price that people can afford through an affordable housing policy enabling everyone to access the housing market

BVPI 78a Average time for processing new claims (Housing and Council Tax benefit)

The average time taken for processing new claims has improved from 28.4 days during 2007/08 to 18.37 days at the 3rd quarter stage. An improvement of over 10 days. This indicator is currently exceeding the target set and is therefore expected to achieve the target of 21 days.

BVPI 78b Speed of processing change of circumstances

The speed of processing change of circumstances has improved from 13.4 days in 2007/08 to 6.14 days at the end of December 2008 and currently on schedule to well exceed the 2008/09 target of 9 days.

4.3.3 Efficient and effective council

BVPI 8 Percentage of undisputed invoices paid on time

The latest performance data (December 2008) is 97.21% against a target of 97%. This is an improvement in performance on 2007/08 when 96.81% of undisputed invoices were paid on time. Based on this current performance it is expected that this indicator will achieve the target set.

4.4 In relation to the complete national indicator set **appendix 2** provides an overview of our current position in relation to each indicator and also the local performance indicators that are either being retained or introduced in

2008/09 to supplement the new national framework. This will ensure we have a complete picture of service delivery and related improvements. We have mechanisms in place to measure all the national indicators required for reporting purposes during 2008/09. To ensure we can measure our progress towards delivering the strategic outcomes the partnership has committed to (in the Sunderland Strategy and the council's Corporate Improvement Objectives) the indicators have been categorised in this order.

- 4.5 During the first year of the implementation of the new national performance framework we are only required by government to set targets for those performance indicators we have chosen to form part of the Local Area Agreement. However to ensure we maintain a robust commitment to service improvement across the partnership in Sunderland both directorates and partners have, where possible, set targets for the other national and local performance indicators for 2008/09. This cannot be done for all indicators as this is the first year of collection for a number of the new national indicator set and 2008/09 needs to be used as a base lining year against which we can target future improvement. It is also important to note that in relation to many of the new National Indicator set data is available at different points of the year and will not always readily follow the quarterly monitoring cycle.
- 4.6 The LAA has been subject to an annual review to identify and address any issues around delivery and to assess and benchmark progress over the three years of the agreement. In addition, the government describe the review as an opportunity to revise particular targets to reflect changes in local circumstances.
- 4.7 The absence of targets in previous reports was due largely to the unavailability of data from which baselines could be calculated during the first implementation year of the national indicator set and national changes to the definitions for the indicators from 2009/10. Cabinet approved delegated authority to the Chief Executive to finalise any amendments to the agreement in February 2009. As a consequence renegotiation to address the issues in this report has been undertaken to inform a refreshment of the agreement. All national indicators which have been included now have targets allocated for the three year period of the agreement. The refreshed agreement was signed off with government in March 2009. There are also an additional 16 statutory attainment targets which take effect from the 2008/09 academic year (2009/10 reporting year).
- 4.8 In relation to residents perceptions there are a number of performance indicators that are derived from the Place Survey. The provisional results for Sunderland can be found in the table below in addition to the comparative Tyne and Wear average. Final confirmed results and additional benchmarks will be available in April 2009. Further analysis will be undertaken at this point.

Table 1 Provisional Place Survey Results

Ref	Description of indicator	LAA	S/land 2008	Tyne / Wear average	S/Land BVPI Survey 2006
NI1	% of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area	Yes	65.2	72.96	72.6
NI2	% of people who feel they belong to their neighbourhood		63.7	59.5	
NI3	Civic participation in the local area		7.8	10.06	
NI4	% of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality	Yes	26.1	28.9	31.6
NI5	Overall general satisfaction with local area		77.3	78.3	66.2
NI6	Participation in regular volunteering		14.2	16.2	
NI17	Perceptions of anti-social behaviour	Yes	23.3	20.8	30
NI23	Perceptions that people in the area treat one another with respect and consideration		40.2	36.4	
NI27	Understanding of local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police		28.8	30.8	
NI37	Awareness of civil protection arrangements in the local area		14.8	16.6	
NI140	Fair treatment by local services		73.4	74.2	

- 4.9 It is increasingly important that the council understands the needs and requirements of its communities, and in particular the most marginalised and vulnerable groups to ensure that policies and services are designed to meet them. The Annual Residents' Survey is an important starting point in developing this understanding since it enables the council to measure satisfaction with the council, council services and local area and monitor trends over time. It also provides the opportunity to conduct more detailed analysis of how perspectives vary amongst different groups of the population, for example by geographical area, age, gender, disability and ethnicity.
- 4.10 It is crucial that the council actively uses this information to help inform this understanding and in future engagement, service planning and improvement. It was therefore agreed that the key issues arising from the 2008 survey should be identified and for the council to consider how to respond to them. It should however be recognised that there is still a need for directorates to consider the wider results in more detail and across subgroups, looking at not only areas where improvement is needed but also where progress has been made and in relation to interventions in the previous year.

4.11 The 2008 survey presents a largely positive set of results although there are some issues to consider in order to improve performance further. **Appendix 3** outlines the key issues and the existing and planned interventions that are designed to respond to them. The sections are organised by key themes although some actions may cut across more than one theme. Similarly to the approach taken with the MORI survey when the finalised Place Survey results are available interventions will be identified to respond to any emerging issues across both the council and partnership.

Background Papers

Local Area Agreement
Sunderland Strategy
Ipsos MORI survey report 2008