

**30<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2012****REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CITY SERVICES****COMMUNITY ACTION: REVIEWING PROGRESS AND AGREEING NEXT STEPS****CLEANER AND GREENER STREETS****Walk and Talk Programme: City Centre and Sunderland East Area****1.0 Why has it come to Committee?**

- 1.1 The report provides an update of progress against agreed actions in the current year's (2011/12) Work Plan, see annex 1.

**2.0 Background**

- 2.1 Key service requests identified for the East area, including the City Centre, are: rubbish and litter lying around; refuse collection; noise pollution; graffiti; animal fouling; street lighting; road and pavement repairs and the lack of greenery in certain areas and better use of land. The aim of the priority is to improve the appearance of neighbourhoods. It was agreed to deliver a Walk and Talk programme, which discusses and finds ways of enhancing the environment within the neighbourhood, resulting in an improved quality of life for all residents.
- 2.2 This priority has an allocated budget of £36,000 (£6,000 allocated to the City Centre specifically). There is no Task and Finish Group established for this priority, however elected members for each ward and the City Centre work closely with the Area Response Managers (ARMs), to deliver the programme.

**3.0 Work Plan: Action 2 - Progress Update**

- 3.1 The City Centre Walk and Talk Programme is progressing positively with two walk and talks held, as per the agreed programme (21.7.11 and 2.11.11). Each walk and talk covered a geographical area of the City Centre - July East of the City Centre and November West of the City Centre. The following partners were represented during the walk and talks - Police, Fire, Environmental Enforcement, Environmental Health and Licensing, Traders Association representatives, Community Development, local ward councillors, Empty Property Officer, Business Investment Team, local traders - Bunker and the Independent, Area Response Manager for City Centre.
- 3.2 During both walks, action lists were produced and funding allocated. The most common issues' raised so far relate to improving the appearance of commercial priorities in the City Centre; Litter clearance from shrub beds; Painting and repairing pedestrian barriers; Graffiti removal from high profile, hard to reach locations and incorporating more colour and greenery into the City Centre.
- 3.3 As well as the walk and talk activity, the Area Response Manager continues to undertake weekly City Centre inspections and coordinate activities with local community groups and traders to deliver the Love where you live campaign. The City Centre Traders Associations are also planning their own walk and talk programme, as a result of their involvement with the East Area Committee programme.

- 3.4 Within the wider East area, the Walk and Talk programme is progressing well with two ward walks occurring in Hendon, Millfield, Doxford, and Ryhope Ward and one Ward Walk taking place in St Michaels. Further walks are planned for February and March within all wards, bringing the total number of Ward walks to 14 and 123 issues raised to date.
- 3.5 As with the City Centre, all issues are logged and all updates tracked. Each Ward has raised individual issues and concerns with no common theme occurring across the East.
- 3.6 Funding to date is largely unspent although funding allocation has been made to various projects including St Marks Church improvements, Burns Park Improvements, Sea View landscaping and Sans Street Walk Way improvements.

#### **4.0 Love Where You Live Campaign**

4.1 The national campaign continues to be championed by Responsive Local Services and activities to-date include:

- Litter picking at Argyle Square and Argyle Street involving residents and landlords;
- Activity held with St Anthony's School to discuss Love where you live campaign, organised bulb planting, litter picking and school children currently designing a poster to be inserted into the advertising litter bins in the City Centre to promote Love where you live campaign.
- Bulbs planted by the Responsive Local Services City Centre team at Borough Road; Sans Street; Opp. Empire Theatre: Corner of The Esplanade/Stockton Road; Commercial Road and Hylton Road to bring colour to the City in the spring.
- Wild flower seeding to the entrance to Ryhope beach steps and to Toll Bar Road verge to encourage wildlife and provide spring and summer colour to otherwise plain areas
- New plants inserted into planters on High Street West to bring colour to the street during winter.
- Christmas planters placed on pedestrian barriers to bring greenery to the City Centre during winter.
- Gum Removal machine reinstated to remove chewing gum from high foot fall areas - simultaneously training the Environmental Apprentices to use the equipment.

#### **4.0 Recommendation(s)**

Committee are requested to:

- i. Note the updates for Cleaner and Greener priority.
- ii. Discuss and consider the benefits of both the walk and talk programme and the Love Where You Live campaign and how they can continue to complement the work plan.

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Annex 1:                      Sunderland East Area Committee: Work Plan 2011-2012