

At a meeting of the ENVIRONMENT AND ATTRACTIVE CITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on MONDAY, 16th NOVEMBER, 2009 at 6.00 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Miller in the Chair

Councillors Ball, E. Gibson, Howe, Stephenson, Vardy, Wakefield, Whalen and Wood

Also Present:-

Councillor Tate, Chair of Management Scrutiny Committee

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Tye.

Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee held on 19th October, 2009

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Declarations of Interest

Item 4 – Progress on Public Transport Nexus Update
Item 5 – Review of Accessible Bus Network - Consultation

Councillor Wood declared a personal interest as a member of the Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority

Change in the Order of Business

It was agreed that Item 4 – Progress on Public Transport Nexus Update and Item 5 – Review of Accessible Bus Network – Consultation be considered as one item.

Progress on Public Transport Nexus Update and Review of Accessible Bus Network – Consultation

The Chief Executive and the Director General of Nexus submitted reports (copies circulated) which allowed Members to receive a progress report from Nexus on the public transport system and a review of the accessible bus network in Sunderland.

(For copy reports – see original minutes)

Mr Bernard Garner, Nexus Director General, and Mr Tobyn Hughes presented the reports. Mr Garner advised that the Local Transport Act had become legislation in the last year and there were 4 themes involved in the Act. These were:

- The Integrated Transport Authority (ITA) which was responsible for delivering the local transport strategy.
- Influence and partnership. Improving the bus services by working with the operators to develop Partnerships; Statutory Quality Partnerships; or Quality Contracts.
- Governance review which would make sure that the ITA was fit for purpose.
- Road User Charging, there had been very little enthusiasm for this and as such it was currently not being progressed.

There was a Bus Network Design Exercise underway which included the Bus Strategy which would be looking at the development of the bus services. This would also involve the further development of alternate services such as community transport, provided by Compass, and Taxi Buses.

Metro performance had been very good. The number of services to South Hylton had been doubled and this had led to a 40 percent growth in passenger numbers.

Mr Hughes then advised that the Bus Strategy would ensure that the network was designed to meet the needs of the users. The Local Transport Act would also develop systems for receiving feedback on the network design.

Mr Hughes then referred to the accessibility targets and the timelines for meeting the targets. There would be detailed consultation taking place in the first six months of 2010 prior to the accessible bus network being delivered. There were limited resources but he was confident that existing services could be significantly improved.

Councillor Wakefield then commented that large parts of Houghton and Hetton bordered County Durham, people in these areas often travelled into County Durham rather than into Sunderland. He asked whether there were any plans for partnership arrangements between the different areas.

Mr Hughes stated that it was recognised that people travelled across political boundaries and there were partnerships in place. However there were no targets in place to help deliver joined up services for improving services in County Durham as it was beyond the remit of the review of the accessible bus network.

Councillor Wood commented on the targets set out in the report; he felt that the target for access to local centres during the day was good but the other targets were less encouraging. He was concerned over the target of 50 percent for access to the Royal Hospital in the evening; he felt that there should be access to the hospital from across the city. He accepted that there would be different types of services and felt that it was appropriate to ensure that the services were responsive to peoples needs.

Mr Garner advised that in the evening there were services to all facilities however they may not provide access to the key destinations within 30 minutes. It needed to be recognised that there would not just be the conventional bus and metro services and that alternative forms of public transport could be used to satisfy demand.

Mr Hughes added that over 50 percent of the funding available to ensure the provision of essential services was used to provide evening services. The targets were 'Door to Door' targets, they included walking to the stop and waiting for the bus.

Councillor Wood commented that during the day there were four Metro's an hour to Newcastle Airport from Millfield while all of the other stations had five trains an hour. He wanted to know when there would be a full service at Millfield station.

Mr Garner advised that the line through Sunderland and Pelaw was very busy; when the frequency of the services had been doubled there had been a need to fit the services into the gaps between other services using the line. In order for all of the trains to travel through the junction at Pelaw there had been a need for one of the Metro services each hour to arrive at the junction one minute earlier, this had been achieved by removing the stop at Millfield. This stop had been chosen as it was the station with the lowest patronage. The network was reviewed annually and this issue would be raised to see if there was a way it could be addressed.

Councillor Vardy commented on the bus services at Doxford Park. He advised that there were people who started work at 8am however the bus did not arrive until 8:15am; there was a need to look at the workplaces and the bus schedule. He then stated that the Nexus website was solely public transport based and that there were people who drove to the Metro stations. He asked

whether there were any plans to integrate cars into the public transport system by using Park and Ride schemes.

Mr Garner advised that Park and Ride schemes were critical, there were some bids for park and ride enhancement and any opportunities would be exploited. Reliability and punctuality were important for the bus services. There was communication with employers and it was disappointing to hear that there were problems; he asked that Councillor Vardy provide him with the details of the services which had problems.

Mr Hughes added that the consultation would help to resolve issues such as these.

Councillor E. Gibson advised the committee of a success story. Previously there had not been a service through Silksworth to the Royal Hospital in the evening however now the number 35 had been redirected to run through the centre of Silksworth and past the Royal Hospital and Sainsbury's on Silksworth Lane.

Councillor Howe expressed concerns over the reliability of services along Dykelands Road to Morrison's in Seaburn; he had spoken to Robin Knight however had not yet had a response. There were infrastructure problems around Seaburn Metro station as there were high kerbs and the new buses would have problems.

Mr Garner advised that he would contact Mr Knight to obtain a response. The new buses were the low floor easy access buses which were already in operation however by 2015 it was a requirement that all buses had low floors. The infrastructure could be designed to allow the low floor buses to operate.

Mr Hughes agreed to look into the details fully. He advised that traffic calming, on occasions, could cause problems.

In response to a query from the Chairman regarding the cost of fitting CCTV at bus stops, Mr Garner advised that it was a pilot project and there would be cameras fitted at six locations in each district. This would allow the impact of the cameras to be monitored and would show how people would respond to the installation of the cameras.

Councillor Vardy commented that he had been involved with a Task and Finish Working Group which had looked at fear of crime. This has discovered that there was a higher level of fear of crime on the way to the bus stop and at the bus stop than there was on the bus itself. Sunderland had a higher level of fear of crime than many other authorities in the region. If the pilot was successful would there be more CCTV cameras installed.

Mr Garner stated that he understood people's concerns and that perceptions of fear of crime were higher than actual crime levels. There were a range of actions planned and there would be a partnership with the police and the community to improve the physical environment to help reduce fear of crime.

The Chairman asked whether Statutory Quality Partnerships were preferable to Quality Contracts.

Mr Garner advised that the Quality Contracts were part of an untested piece of legislation; it could be time consuming to develop the contract. If the necessary level of quality could be achieved using a partnership then this would be preferable to using a contract.

The Chairman then asked what was happening with the extension of the Metro system.

Mr Garner advised that Nexus was close to receiving a capital commitment from the government which would be used to reinvigorate the network. This would allow improvements to be delivered and would be an opportunity to plan for the future and take forward possible future extension.

2. RESOLVED that the reports be received and noted and consideration be given to the evidence provided.

Policy Development and Review 2009/10 – Evidence Gathering

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which allowed Members to consider evidence from Hazel Walton, Road Safety Officer, in relation to the study into Traffic Issues and Network Management.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Hazel Walton, Road Safety Officer, presented the report and provided the Members with evidence regarding the problems around schools. She advised that:

- There was a need to educate parents to change their attitudes to driving near schools and make them think about where they park their vehicles.
- Engineering measures could be implemented but they would not be fully effective without a change in driver attitudes.
- Some schools had 'safety zones' around them which warned drivers that they were near a school
- There would be a report issued soon regarding 20mph zones around schools.

The Chairman invited Councillor E. Gibson to provide the committee with feedback from the Traffic Issues Task and Finish Working Group.

Councillor E. Gibson advised that 20mph zones and parking around school gates had been discussed. It could be possible to extend 20mph speed limits however there would be a significant cost involved due to the signage required. Enforcement officers had been in attendance at schools. There had

been a large number of schools had implemented travel plans however there was still a lot of schools had not.

Ms Walton clarified the figures for the school travel plans. There were 50 schools with finalised plans in place; 24 schools with draft plans and a further 40 schools which were working on the development of draft plans. All of the travel plans needed to be in place by the deadline of March 2010.

Councillor E. Gibson then advised that walking buses had been trialled. The Washington Area Committee had given its support to the implementation of a 20mph zone in Sulgrave.

Councillor Howe stated that there had been two major incidents recently. There had been a death and a near miss. Highways had been informed that at the site of the near miss the road markings were faded; however they had advised that there were no plans in place for the replacement of the markings. He did not understand why there was a reluctance to replace these markings. He felt that the parking enforcement officers were largely ineffective around schools, there had been a traffic warden 500m away from the school and no one had been caught as people were in such a rush that they had driven away before a ticket could be issued. He had spoken to people who were stopped on the zigzag markings and had received verbal abuse.

Ms Walton advised that the parking section had a schedule of visits for the parking enforcement officers; this ensured that the officers attended the schools at different times. There were problems outside of every school; Redby Primary School which was where the near miss incident had occurred had an established travel plan in place. However St. Benet's school which was adjacent did not. She agreed to find out whether there was anything that could be done to improve the poor quality zigzag markings. It would be difficult to put safety measures in place at the scene of the fatal accident until after the full details of the cause of the accident had been released.

Councillor Wood commented that school travel plans were important. He was concerned that the need for them had been recognised for years however with only a few months left until the deadline only 50 schools in Sunderland had implemented the plans.

Ms Walton advised that good progress had been made but that mid way through the project, the Government had changed their criteria which had resulted in much of the work needing to be redone. There was evidence that needed to be provided by the schools and getting this evidence was time consuming and the plans were highly detailed. It had also previously been difficult to recruit specialist staff as there were no specialists on school travel plans; the Council now employed a Safer Routes to School Technician who was involved in developing the school travel plans. It was hoped that a large percentage of the school travel plans would be completed by the deadline. There was no incentive for private schools to develop travel plans as they would not receive any funding for creating the plans.

The Chairman commented that he knew that the plans were the responsibility of the schools and it was important that the Council provided assistance to ensure that they were produced.

Ms Walton advised that there had been meetings with Children's Services in order to identify what support the schools needed. The main feedback from schools was that they were not traffic experts and that they were not given enough support.

Councillor Wood asked for a feedback report to be delivered to the Committee in the New Year.

The Chairman agreed with this request and asked that if there were any issues they were brought back to the Committee.

Councillor Wakefield commented that it would not be easy to educate drivers. He also stated that enforcement was sometimes difficult and that the police needed to prevent parking on the zigzag lines.

Ms Walton stated that school "keep clear" zigzag markings were enforceable by the council if there was a traffic regulation order preventing stopping in place. There were efforts being made to ensure that all of the zigzag markings were covered by traffic regulation orders.

Councillor Howe asked whether tickets could be given for stopping on zigzag markings when the driver was still in the car.

Ms Walton advised that this was the case as the offence was stopping on the zigzag markings.

Councillor Vardy commented that the same people were parking on the zigzags every day. If there were a 20mph zone introduced these people would not obey the speed restriction. He asked whether parking was allowed on the pavements behind the zigzag markings.

Ms Walton advised that the traffic regulation order covered from the centre of the road to the far side of the pavement so even if the vehicles were not directly on the markings then the offence would still have been committed.

Councillor Vardy then stated that he had identified a location where there were parking bays behind the zigzag markings. It was agreed that he would provide the information to Ms Walton so that she could investigate this location.

The Chairman stated that the parking enforcement officers received unbelievable amounts of abuse from parents. It was rare to get above 20mph in urban areas apart from on arterial routes. In Europe the speed limit in towns was normally 30kph which was roughly 20mph.

3. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted, consideration be given to the evidence received as part of the committee's study and a further report be received in the New Year in relation to the progress on school travel plans.

Request for Inclusion of an Item on the Agenda

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which allowed Members to consider a request from Councillor Wood for an item to be included on the agenda of a future meeting of the committee.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

The Chairman asked Councillor Wood to introduce the report.

Councillor Wood advised that concerns had been raised regarding the condition of Fawcett Street at the Planning and Highways Committee and the East Area Committee. This was a main thoroughfare and an important street however the buildings were in a dilapidated condition and there was traffic congestion. He asked that a presentation or report be brought to a future meeting of the committee.

Keith Lowes, Head of Planning and Environment, advised that there was a strategy in place for Fawcett Street as part of the Sunnyside Planning Framework and the Sunnyside Conservation Area. He would provide Members with a report showing the baseline position and would then meet with the Members to find out what they wanted including in the report to the committee.

The Chairman suggested that a scoping session be held with the Members once the baseline had been completed. He asked what the timescales would be.

Mr Lowes advised that the baseline position would be completed by January 2010 and the scoping exercise would then be able to take place in February or March 2010.

4. RESOLVED that a scoping meeting be arranged for Members in February or March 2010.

Forward Plan – Key Decisions for the Period 1 November 2009 to 28 February 2010

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided Members with an opportunity to consider the Forward Plan for the period 1st November, 2009 to 28th February, 2010.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

The Chairman presented the report and advised that since the agenda had been produced there had been a new forward plan published which covered the period 1st December, 2009 to 31st March, 2009. This new plan had been circulated to Members.

5. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

(Signed) G. MILLER,
Chairman.

**ENVIRONMENT AND ATTRACTIVE CITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
14 DECEMBER 2009**

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & REVIEW 2009/10 – EVIDENCE GATHERING

Report of the Chief Executive

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: SP5: Attractive and Inclusive City

CORPORATE PRIORITIES: CIO1: Delivering Customer Focused Services, CIO4: Improving Partnership Working to Deliver 'One City'.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider a report from Richard Hibbert, a Director of Jacobs on their review of national implementation of 20mph zones in residential areas.
- 1.2 Sgt Emmerson, Northumbria Police will update the Committee on the approach of the police to 20mph limits and the issue of their enforcement.
- 1.3 To receive an update report on the work of the Committee's Task and Finish Group.

2. Background

- 2.1 On 18 June 2009, the Committee agreed to undertake a policy review on issues relating to traffic issues and network management in the city.
- 2.2 The Committee also agreed to establish a Task and Finish Group on this issue to help undertake research. The Group comprises Councillor E Gibson (Chair), Councillor John Kelly and Councillor Peter Woods. An initial meeting of the Group will be held on 8 October 2009. The Group will provide regular progress reports on their work in order that it can feed into the final report of the Committee.
- 2.3 At the meeting, Members agreed to consider the following themes:-
 - (a) issues relating to road safety including the Northumbria Safer Roads Initiative and 20mph speed limit zones outside schools and in residential areas;
 - (b) car parking problems around schools and other hotspot locations and potential solutions;
 - (c) traffic flows through the city on major routes such as the Southern Radial Route, A19 Corridor and Chester Road.
- 2.4 In examining these themes the Committee will be required to consider the following issues:-

- ❑ national legislative framework governing speed restrictions and parking around schools and residential areas;
- ❑ review the current position of the Council with regard to the introduction of 20mph zones;
- ❑ consider the implications for road safety of introducing 20mph zones and the advantages and disadvantages;
- ❑ link with the national strategy for improving road safety and casualty reduction
- ❑ consider the existing position with regard to the enforcement of speed limit and parking zones around schools;
- ❑ establish what traffic calming measures are already in place outside of schools;
- ❑ consider the approach of enforcement and the balance between enforcement, education and engineering solutions
- ❑ seek the views of users and potential users;
- ❑ compare good practice of neighbouring local authorities in relation to determining the appropriateness of enforcing 20mph speed limit zones outside of schools;
- ❑ consider traffic flows through the city on major routes such as the Southern Radial Route, A19 Corridor and Chester Road.

3 Current Position

- 3.1 As part of the evidence gathering process, Richard Hibbert, from Jacobs Consultants will be in attendance to discuss a report that has been commissioned by the Council on the national implementation of 20mph zones.
- 3.2 A paper prepared by Jacobs will be circulated in advance of the meeting.
- 3.3 Sgt Emmerson, Northumbria Police has been also been invited to the meeting to discuss the implications of 20mph limits and the question of their enforcement.

4 Task and Finish Group

- 4.1 Councillor E Gibson, Chair of the Task and Finish Group will provide an update on the work of the Group.
- 4.2 The Group has so far met on three occasions. At its first meeting, the Group received a report from the Head of Transport and Engineering on the baseline position. The Group was keen to focus the direction of its work in order to ensure that it could have a meaningful and positive impact. The Group therefore agreed to focus on the issue of 20mph limits or zones around schools and other priority areas of the city and the issue of parking in the vicinity of schools.
- 4.3 The Group has received a presentation from a representative from Jacobs Consultants on the latest DfT guidance, recent policy developments and the experiences of other local authorities in implementing 20 mph zones. The Group discussed the pros and cons of introducing speed limits or zones and the options available for introducing pilot areas. Based on this presentation, the Group requested that a representative from Jacobs should be asked to attend a full meeting of the Committee to discuss the implications of their report setting out the national

implementation of 20 mph zones in residential areas. The Group also agreed to undertake a visit to North Tyneside Council in order to view at first hand the operation of 20mph zones at a neighbouring authority. Feedback from the visit will be reported to the Committee.

- 4.4 The Group has also received reports from Earl Belshaw (Parking Services Manager) and Hazel Walton (Road Safety Officer) on the operation of parking enforcement around schools and the work being undertaken within schools to improve the parking situation, including the implementation of School Travel Plans. The Group discussed the various options available for improving the enforcement of parking around schools while recognising the practical difficulties involved.

5. Recommendation

- 5.1 Members are recommended to consider the evidence provided as part of their study.

Background Papers

Local Transport Plan 2006-11
Sunderland City Council Parking Strategy

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ENVIRONMENT AND ATTRACTIVE CITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

FLOOD PLANNING – IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SCRUTINY FUNCTION

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

14 December 2009

1. Why has this report come to the Committee?

- 1.1 This report considers the implications of the Pitt Review and the future role of scrutiny in relation to flood planning.
- 1.2 To recommend that flood planning be formally included within the remit of the Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Pitt Review into the floods of summer 2007 was published in June 2008.
- 2.2 The review was a comprehensive appraisal of all aspects of flood risk management in England. The review contained 92 recommendations addressed to the Government, local authorities, Local Resilience Forums, providers of essential services and the general public.
- 2.3 The review considered the measures for reducing the risk and the impact of flooding, improving the emergency response and better preparing of the public. The report highlighted the need for strong and effective leadership at the local and national level and a clear commitment to improve the resilience of the UK to flooding.
- 2.4 The Government has since published its response to Sir Michael Pitt's review and have accepted all of the recommendations. Key recommendations include:-
 - A 25 year plan to address the issue of flooding, along with the creation of a dedicated Cabinet Committee;
 - Local authorities will be responsible for managing the risk of surface water flooding and compile a register of local water assets. Local authorities will be expected to assess and if necessary enhance their technical capacity to deliver flood risk;
 - Stronger planning and building controls for construction and refurbishment in flood risk areas;

- A joint nerve centre run by the Met Office and the Environment Agency to produce more accurate flood warnings based on pooled information;
- Definitive electronic maps of all drainage ditches and streams, making clear who is responsible for maintaining them – these to be drawn up by local authorities, which must take a stronger overall lead on flooding in their area;
- More investment by utility companies to protect key infrastructure sites such as electricity sub station – companies must be more involved in flood defence planning in order to build greater resilience into the system to cope with times of crises;
- Greater openness in the property market to ensure that buyers have a clear understanding of the risks of buying in a flood prone area;
- Better preparation of the public with at risk households receiving support and assistance.

2.5 Overall, the recommendations mean a more strategic leadership role for local authorities on flooding will be seen as being best placed to understand the risks to communities and their concerns.

2.6 The Council's Emergency Planning Manager is coordinating the full implications for the Council. However, it is important to bear in mind that the recommendations will impact on a wide range of services provided by the Council and not just Emergency Planning and Response.

3 Implications for Scrutiny Function

3.1 Of the 92 recommendations contained in the Pitt Review, there are two recommendations that have particular implications for the Council's scrutiny function. These are:-

- i. "All upper tier local authorities should establish Oversight and Scrutiny Committee to review work by public sector bodies and essential service providers in order to manage flood risk, underpinned by a legal requirement to cooperate and share information.
- ii. Each Oversight and Scrutiny Committee should undertake an annual summary of action taken locally to manage flood risk and implement this review and these reports should be public and reviewed by Government Offices and the Environment Agency".

3.2 Clearly, the nature of the recommendations reflects the increased role for scrutiny set out in the Local Government and Public Involvement Act and the potential of scrutiny to provide community leadership on this issue.

- 3.3 It is intended that scrutiny committees will provide a means of helping to improve accountability at a local level, raise the priority of flood risk management within local authorities and amongst partners and ensure good practice in reducing flood risk.
- 3.4 This should lead to greater transparency for the public, including a better understanding of local maintenance regimes, risk and options for managing risk.
- 3.5 It will also be important to obtain the active cooperation of partner organisations including the Environment Agency and the local water company.
- 3.6 The recommendations will represent a significant workload though it is recognised that most authorities will not choose to review flood risk management every year through a full scale scrutiny exercise and that for many authorities a large scale exercise followed by a light annual review would suffice.

4 Next Steps

- 4.1 It is suggested that given its existing remit, the Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee would be the most appropriate Scrutiny Committee to take on the responsibility for flood planning. This will require an amendment to the remit of the Committee in order to include flood planning. This will require the approval of Council.
- 4.2 Further details of the way in which the Committee will actually undertake the scrutiny of flood planning will be developed over the coming months. Clearly, this will involve the Committee undertaking an annual summary of action taken locally to manage flood risk and the approach to be taken will be subject to a further report to this Committee.

5.0 Recommendation

- 5.1 That the Council be requested to amend the remit of the Committee to include the function of flood planning;
- 5.2 that a further report be submitted to the Committee on the measures to be taken to scrutinise flood planning as part of the work programme for 2010/11.

6.0 Background Papers

Pitt Report 2008

Contact Officer:

**SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK:
ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2008/09**

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Strategic Priorities: Attractive and Inclusive City
Corporate Improvement Objectives: CI01, CI04

1. Why has this report come to the Committee?

- 1.1 To consider the attached report of the Deputy Chief Executive that was considered by Cabinet on 2 December 2009.
- 1.2 The report seeks approval of the Council's Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for 2008/09 and also approval for submitting the AMR to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

2. Background

- 2.1 At the meeting on 2 December, the Cabinet agreed to:-
 - i. Agree and endorse the Annual Monitoring Report;
 - ii. Authorise officers to make appropriate arrangements for submitting the Annual Monitoring Report to Government Office North East (GO-NE) acting on behalf of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, within the deadline of 31 December 2009.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 The Committee is requested to consider and note the report.

4. Background Papers

- 4.1 Cabinet Agenda, 2 December, 2009.

Contact Officer: Jim Diamond
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CABINET – 2 DECEMBER 2009

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK:
ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2008/ 2009

Author:

Deputy Chief Executive

Purpose of Report:

This report seeks approval of the council's Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for 2008/09 and seeks approval for submitting the AMR to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

Description of Decision:

Cabinet is requested to:

- i) Agree and endorse the Annual Monitoring Report;
- ii) Authorise officers to make appropriate arrangements for submitting the Annual Monitoring Report to Government Office for the North East (GO-NE) acting on behalf of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, within the deadline of 31 December 2009.

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/ Policy Framework? Yes

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/ Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

To comply with the statutory requirement to prepare an Annual Monitoring Report and submit it to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

The City Council has a statutory duty to monitor the Local Development Framework and prepare an Annual Monitoring Report; consequently no alternative options can be recommended.

Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution?

No

Relevant Scrutiny Committee:

Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee

Is it included in the Forward Plan?

No

Planning and Highways Committee

**SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK:
ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 2008/09****REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE****1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval of the council's Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for 2008/09 and seeks approval for submitting the AMR to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

2.0 Description of Decision

- 2.1 Cabinet is requested to:
- i) Agree and endorse the Annual Monitoring Report;
 - ii) Authorise officers to make appropriate arrangements for submitting the Annual Monitoring Report to Government Office for the North East (GO-NE) acting on behalf of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (CLG), within the deadline of 31 December 2009.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the City Council is required to prepare a Local Development Framework (LDF). The LDF will replace the current Unitary Development Plan which was adopted in 1998. As the statutory development plan for the city, the LDF will be the starting point in the consideration of planning applications for the development or use of land. Furthermore, it will be a fundamental document in delivering the key spatial objectives of the Sunderland Strategy and the emerging Economic Masterplan.
- 3.2 As part of the LDF the City Council is required to prepare an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). The Planning Regulations require the AMR to contain the following information:
- Progress of the preparation of development plan documents against the timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme (the LDF project plan), including any that have been adopted in that year;
 - Any local development orders adopted or revoked (not applicable to this Authority);
 - Adopted policies that are to be rescinded and why (not applicable to this Authority);
 - The annual number of net housing completions.
- 3.3 Planning Policy Statement 12 "Local Spatial Planning" (2008) and supplementary AMR guidance also suggests (but does not require) that further monitoring may also be carried out regarding the performance of planning policies. In particular, guidance was published by CLG in July 2008 which outlined a range of 22 Core Output Indicators that Local Authorities should monitor. The requirements of both the Regulations and supplementary guidance have been fully reflected in the AMR's previously submitted by the Council.

3.4 The Annual Monitoring Report forms part of the LDF and must be submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government by 31st December each year. This is the fifth AMR to be prepared and covers the period from 1st April 2008 to 31st March 2009.

4.0 The format of the 2008/09 AMR

4.1 The content and timely submission of AMR's previously secured Planning Delivery Grant from Central Government. There is no longer any financial reward for the AMR under the new system of Housing and Planning Delivery Grant.

4.2 This has now presented the opportunity to review the way in which future AMR's are to be prepared. Presently, consideration is being given to both the future content matter of AMR's but also the timing of its submission to both Cabinet and to Government.

4.3 Because AMR's are normally submitted at the end of December, the information presented (based on the previous financial year's performance) is nine months out of date. This obviously diminishes the real value of the report for Members and Officers alike.

4.4 It is therefore proposed that from 2010, the AMR will be completed so as to allow for a summer submission. This would be to the advantage of the Council from both an operational perspective but also as an information tool :-

- The Council would be one of the first in the Region to meet its statutory obligation in submitting the AMR ;
- Information would be more up to date and relevant to Members;
- It would condense demands for other monitoring returns undertaken at the end of the financial year into a single period;
- There is potential to align the AMR with other Corporate monitoring e.g. the Sunderland Strategy. This would need further consideration, but could provide even closer synergy between the LDF and the Sunderland Strategy.

4.5 Given the above, the 2008/09 AMR attached to this Report differs from those previously submitted in so far as it reports on those statutory monitoring requirements that are relevant to this Council i.e. LDF progress and housing building performance. It also goes further by reporting on the 22 Core Output Indicators requested by CLG.

4.6 A more comprehensive AMR will be prepared for submission over the Summer 2010 which would fully report on the 2009/10 period. This will be presented to Cabinet for endorsement at the earliest juncture.

5.0 Progress on Development Plan Documents (DPD's)

5.1 The Council's Local Development Scheme (LDS) provides a timetable for document preparation. The current LDS was approved by Cabinet in March 2009. The LDS addresses the preparation of three local development documents. Progress on these has been as follows:-

- **Core Strategy** – As part of the initial stage of preparing the Core Strategy, public consultation on a range of spatial alternatives took place between 15 September and 6 November this year (in accordance with the LDS). These set out four broad approaches to the overall distribution of new development across the City and propose ten Strategic Sites which are considered key to the success of the City. Consultation responses are now being considered and these will inform the identification of a “Preferred Option” for the Core Strategy which will establish a pattern for development in the City and underpin all subsequent LDF documents. The Preferred Option will be the subject of public consultation in spring 2010 (a key Milestone in plan preparation);
- **Allocations Development Plan Document** – This DPD will identify site-specific allocations for housing, employment, retail, community facilities and open space, areas of nature conservation and transport routes. Work on this will start in 2010, its preparation aligned to reflect the emerging Core Strategy;
- **Hetton Downs Area Action Plan** – Centring on the Hetton Downs/ Eppleton area this plan will provide the development framework for the area’s long-term sustainable improvement and regeneration. The need to reflect emerging considerations of local school place planning has impacted upon the timetable for progressing this document.

5.2 In addition a **Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report** was prepared which sets out the scope of information to be considered in subsequent Sustainability Appraisals (SA) of local development documents. The SA process is fundamental to ensuring that the City’s commitment to securing sustainable development through the LDF process is maintained. The preparation and consultation on the SA Scoping Report met a key Milestone in accordance with the LDS.

5.3 Full details of document preparation is contained in the AMR.

6.0 Policy Monitoring

6.1 The 2008/09 AMR focuses on the Core Output Indicators prescribed by CLG. Over the course of 2008/09 the following significant developments emerged:-

- **Business Development and Town Centres** – The proportion of Sunderland’s ‘working age in full-time employment’ decreased slightly by 0.2% to 76.6% during 2008/09; this figure is marginally above the national (76.2%) and regional (76.1%) averages. The year’s most significant business completion was the 40,200m² office unit at Rainton Bridge South, while a 1,484 m² general industrial unit was also completed at Monument Park, Pattinson North. Two significant retail developments occurred this year: in Washington the Galleries Retail Park was completed (eleven units totalling 9,600 m²) and at the Peel Centre a JJB Sports health and fitness unit and sports retail outlet was constructed (5,110 m²);
- **Housing** – The number of new houses built in 2008/09 was the third highest in the past 10 years, with 843 new homes completed in the city through either newbuild completions or changes to properties

which created additional homes. However whilst this figure remained high in comparison to previous years, it was offset by 544 demolitions and changes out of residential use so that in net terms only 299 additional dwellings were gained. 97% of new dwellings were on previously developed land. The city is exceeding both the national 60% target and also the 80% target set for Tyne and Wear by the Regional Spatial Strategy;

- **Waste** – During 2008/09 26% of the city's municipal waste was recovered via recycling or composting, a 2% increase on last year's figure;
- **Renewable Energy** – During 2008/09 a further two turbines were installed at the Nissan site, each 660KW capacity. This brings the total on site to ten turbines, providing a cumulative total installed-capacity of approximately 6.6MW. In total, 1.46MW of renewable energy capacity was installed in 2008/09, taking the total installed capacity existing in the city to 7.4MW. These developments will make a significant contribution to achieving the regional target, set by the RSS of 22MW by 2010 (it should be noted that at the end of 2008/09 the Council had approved applications with a potential total renewable energy capacity of 19.0MW - nearly the entire Tyne and Wear target of 22MW).

7.0 Reason for decision

- 7.1 To comply with the statutory requirement to prepare an Annual Monitoring Report and submit it to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government by 31 December 2009.

8.0 Alternative options

- 8.1 The City Council has a statutory duty to monitor the Local Development Framework and prepare an Annual Monitoring Report; consequently no alternative options can be recommended.

9.0 Relevant consultations/ considerations

- a) **Financial Implications** – Outside of the costs associated with document production and printing there are no direct costs arising from the Annual Monitoring Report. Costs will arise from developing the evidence base and from the examinations of the various development plan documents (the examination of the Hetton Area Action Plan DPD is scheduled for winter 2010). Funding for any additional costs to the council will be met from earmarked contingencies. The Chief Finance Officer has been consulted and his comments incorporated into this report.
- b) **Legal Implications** – The AMR has been prepared in accordance with the appropriate Planning Regulations. The Chief Solicitor has been consulted and his views incorporated into the body of this report.
- c) **Policy Implications** - The AMR will provide an important measure of how the policies in the LDF are performing in terms of both their implementation and effectiveness.

10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Sunderland City Council Local Development Scheme March 2009
Regional Spatial Strategy and Local Development Framework: Core
Output Indicators - Update 2/ 2008 DCLG July 2008
PPS12: Spatial Planning DCLG June 2008
Sunderland City Council Annual Monitoring Report December 2007
Sunderland City Council Local Development Scheme March 2007
Sunderland City Council Annual Monitoring Report December 2006
Sunderland City Council Annual Monitoring Report December 2005
Sunderland City Council Local Development Scheme March 2005
LDF Monitoring: A Good Practice Guide ODPM March 2005
PPS12: Companion Guide ODPM November 2004
PPS12: Local Development Frameworks ODPM September 2004
Correspondence on file P1S held in the Development and Regeneration
Directorate

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ENVIRONMENT AND ATTRACTIVE CITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS FOR THE PERIOD 1 DECEMBER 2009 – 31 MARCH 2010

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

14 DECEMBER 2009

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide Members with an opportunity to consider the Executive's Forward Plan for the period 1 December, 2009 – 31 March, 2010.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council's Forward Plan contains matters which are likely to be the subject of a key decision to be taken by the Executive. The Plan covers a four month period and is prepared and updated on a monthly basis.
- 2.2 Holding the Executive to account is one of the main functions of Scrutiny. One of the ways that this can be achieved is by considering the forthcoming decisions of the Executive (as outlined in the Forward Plan) and deciding whether Scrutiny can add value in advance of the decision being made. This does not negate Non-Executive Members ability to call-in a decision after it has been made.
- 2.3 The Forward Plan for the period 1 December, 2009 – 31 March, 2010 is attached marked **Appendix 1**. As requested by members at the last meeting, only those items which are under the remit of the Committee have been included. The remit of the Committee covers the following themes:-

Building Control, Unitary Development Plan, Place Shaping, Local Transport Plan, Coast Protection, Cemeteries and Crematorium, Grounds Maintenance, Management and Highways Services, Allotments.

2.4 In the event of Members having any queries that cannot be dealt with directly in the meeting, a response will be sought from the relevant Directorate.

3. Recommendations

3.1 To consider the Executive's Forward Plan for the period 1 December, 2009 – 31 March, 2010.

4. Background Papers

None

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Forward Plan: Key Decisions for the next four months from - 01/Dec/2009 to 31/Mar/2010

Items which fall within the remit of the Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee

No.	Description of Decision	Decision Taker	Anticipated Date of Decision	Principal Consultees	Means of Consultation	When and how to make representations and appropriate Scrutiny Committee	Documents to be considered	Contact Officer	Tel No
01337	To approve the 2008/09 based LDF Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)	Cabinet	02/Dec/2009	Chief Solicitor, Director of Financial Services	Circulation of draft Cabinet papers	Via Contact Officer by 20 November 2009 - Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee	Draft AMR	Neil Cole	5611574
01293	Agree St Peter's Riverside & Bonnersfield Planning Framework draft Supplementary Planning Document for public consultation.	Cabinet	13/Jan/2010	Strategic partners, Portfolio Holders and Chief Officers	Meetings, briefings and email	Via Contact Officer by 21 December 2009 - Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet report and St Peters Riverside and Bonnersfield Planning Framework: draft Supplementary Planning document.	David Giblin	5611540
01292	To approve proposals for Phase 3 of the Tyne and Wear Bus Corridor Improvement Programme.	Cabinet	03/Feb/2010	Portfolio Holder, Nexus, Director of Financial Resources, Chief Solicitor	Briefings, meetings, emails	Via Contact Officer by 20 January 2010 - Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet Report	Bob Donaldson	5611517
01326	To adopt the Seafront Regeneration Strategy and Marine Walk Masterplan.	Cabinet	03/Feb/2010	Statutory consultees, people who live in, work in and visit Sunderland, Chief Officers, Members and Portfolio Holders.	Meetings, briefings, letters and memos, drop in sessions, workshops, exhibitions, sunderland.gov.uk	Via Contact Officer by 20 January 2010 - Environment and Attractive Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet report, Seafront Regeneration Strategy and Marine Walk Masterplan	Dave Giblin	5611540
01090	Approve submission document & sustainability appraisal for development in the Hetton Downs area to form part of the Council's Local Development Framework.	Cabinet	10/Mar/2010	Local residents, stakeholders, service providers, community reference group, Members	Meetings, briefings, letters, email, public exhibition, sunderland.gov.uk	Via Contact Officer by the 19 February 2010 - Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet report, report on preferred option consultation responses, submission document for Hetton Downs Area Action Plan, formal sustainability report.	Dave Giblin	5531564