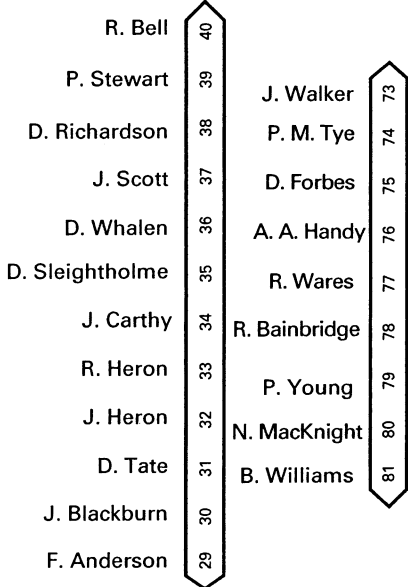
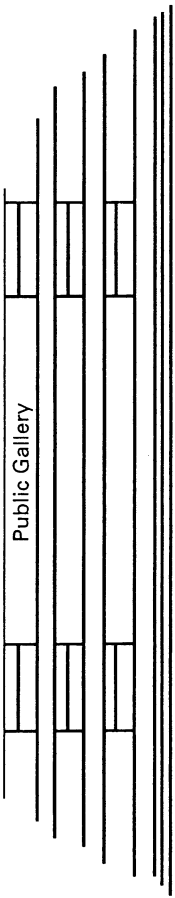
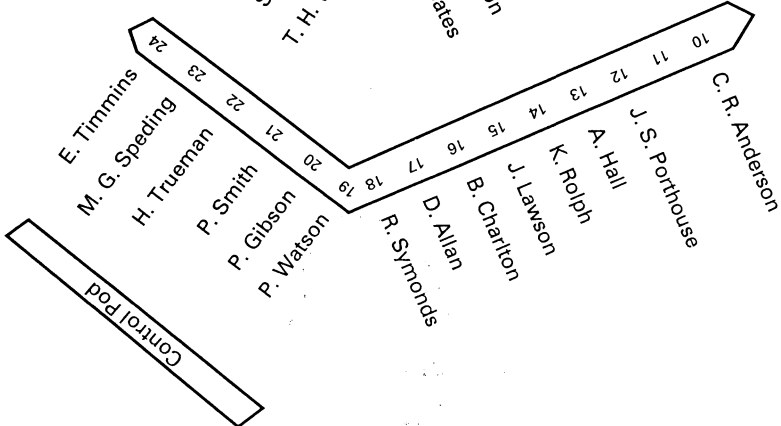


Exec. Serv. Team Leader  
Democratic Services Manager

Deputy Mayor  
Councillor  
L. Scott  
Chief Executive  
G. Fitzgerald  
Mayor Councillor  
T. Foster  
City Solicitor  
R. C. Rayner



CIVIC CENTRE,  
SUNDERLAND  
19th September 2006

**TO THE MEMBERS OF SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL**

**YOU ARE SUMMONED TO ATTEND A MEETING** of Sunderland City Council to be held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Sunderland, on **WEDNESDAY, 27th September 2006 at 6.00 p.m.**, at which it is proposed to consider and transact the following business, viz:-

- 1. To read the Notice convening the meeting.**
- 2. To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 28th June 2006 (copy herewith),**
- 3. Receipt of Declarations of Interest (if any).**
- 4. Announcements (if any) under Rule 2(iv).**
- 5. Reception of Petitions.**
- 6. Apologies.**
- 7. Report of the Cabinet.**
- 8. Written Questions (if any) under Rule 8.2.**

**9. To receive a report on action taken on petitions.**

**10. To consider the attached motions.**

**11. To consider the undermentioned reports:-**

- (i) Quarterly Report on Special Urgency Decisions – report of the Leader of the Council, and
- (ii) Appointments To Committees And Outside Bodies – Review Of Political Balance On Committees And Reallocation Of Seats On Committees And Outside Bodies – Allocation Of “Top-Up” Seat On Association Of North East Councils’ (Anec) And Two Seats On The Great North Forest Partnership Steering Group – report of the City Solicitor

*Seo Ingeew*

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE.**

# *Minutes*



## Sunderland City Council

At a Meeting of SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL held in the CIVIC CENTRE,  
SUNDERLAND on WEDNESDAY, 28<sup>TH</sup> JUNE, 2006 at 6.00 p.m.

**Present:** - The Mayor (Councillor T Foster) in the Chair

Councillor	Allan	M. Forbes	Miller	Tate
	Ambrose	E. Gibson	Oliver	Timmins
	C.R. Anderson	P. Gibson	Richardson	Tye
	F. Anderson	Gofton	Rolph	J. Walker
	Bainbridge	Grey	J.B. Scott	P. Walker
	Bates	A. Hall	J. Scott	Wares
	Bell	Handy	Sidaway	P. Watson
	Blackburn	Higgins	Sleightholme	S. Watson
	Blyth	Howe	M. Smith	Whalen
	Bohill	Lawson	P. Smith	L. Williams
	Carthy	Leadbitter	Speding	Wilson
	Charlton	MacKnight	J. Stephenson	N. Wright
	Dixon	Paul Maddison	W. Stephenson	T.H. Wright
	Fletcher	Peter Maddison	Stewart	Young
	D. Forbes	T. Martin	Symonds	

### Notice

The Notice convening the Meeting was read.

### Minutes

RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2006 (copy circulated) be confirmed and signed as a correct record;
- (ii) the minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2006 (copy circulated) be confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to the inclusion of Councillor E. Gibson, Councillor J. Stephenson and Councillor W. Stephenson on the list of attendees; and
- (iii) the minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2006 (copy tabled) be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

## Declarations of Interest

The following Councillors declared personal interests in the following items in the Cabinet Report in respect of the interests indicated:-

Item 7 (i) – The Children and Young People’s Plan (CYPP)	Councillor Symonds	Member of the Children’s Trust
	Councillors Blyth, S. Watson and P. Watson	Members of the Teaching Primary Care Trust
	Councillors E. Gibson and M. Smith	Family members employed by Teaching Primary Care Trust
	Councillor P. Smith	Member of Connexions and Children’s Centre (Silksworth)
	Councillors P Smith and L. Williams	Members of the Early Years and Childcare Strategic Partnership
Item 7 (ii) Preparing for Inspection: Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) Corporate Assessment Road Map, Use of Resources Action Plan & CPA Milestones 2006/7	Councillor Blyth, S. Watson and P. Watson	Members of the Teaching Primary Care Trust
	Councillors Bohill, J. Scott, P Walker, S, Watson and L Williams	Members of the Empire Theatre Trust
	Councillor L. Williams	School Governor and Member of the BSF Project
	Councillors E. Gibson and	Family members

	M. Smith	employed by Teaching Primary Care Trust
	Councillors P Smith and L. Williams	Members of the Early Years and Childcare Strategic Partnership
Item 7 (ii) - Preparing for Inspection: Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) Corporate Assessment Road Map, Use of Resources Action Plan & CPA Milestones 2006/7 and (iv) – Hetton Downs Area Action Plan.	Councillors Bates, D. Forbes, P. Gibson, Grey, A. Hall, Higgins, W.F. Stephenson, J. Walker, Wares.	Members of the Sunderland Housing Group
	Councillors E Gibson and J. Stephenson	Husbands are Members of Sunderland Housing Group
	Councillor P. Walker	Sunderland Housing Group Employee
	Councillor A. Wilson	Member of St. Luke's Neighbourhood Project
Item 7 (iii) – Report of Sunderland Youth Justice Plan 2006-07	Councillor Symonds	Safer Sunderland Partnership.

### **Mayor's Announcements**

#### **(i) Mr. Roland Boyes Deceased**

The Mayor advised the Council of the recent death of the former MP for Houghton and Washington Mr. Roland Boyes.

Members and Officers joined the Mayor to stand in silence for a minute as a mark of respect.

**(ii) Washington DC – Friendship Agreement**

The Leader of the Council presented the Mayor with a crystal globe given by the Mayor of Washington DC following the Agreement of Friendship between the City of Sunderland and Washington DC signed by the Mayor of Washington DC (Anthony Williams) and the Leader of the Council on Tuesday, 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2006.

**(iii) Washington DC – George Washington**

Councillor Speding presented the Mayor with a copy of the transcript of George Washington's last Will and Testament which had been prepared to mark the signing of the Friendship Agreement by the Office of Public Records, District of Columbia.

**(iv) Bill Crawford OBE**

The Mayor invited Members and Officers to join him in congratulating the Council's Elections Officer, Mr. Bill Crawford, in being awarded an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Awards.

**Reception of Petitions**

RESOLVED that the undermentioned petitions submitted by the Councillors respectively named be received and referred for consideration as indicated:-

- (i) Councillor F. Anderson – petition requesting the consideration of traffic calming options for Wordsworth Avenue and South View, Easington Lane – Director of Development and Regeneration; and
- (ii) Councillor MacKnight – petition requesting an investigation into the speed cushions on Biddick Lane, Fatfield, Washington due to the noise and vibrations the properties in the vicinity suffered when large vehicles used the road - Director of Development and Regeneration.

**Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Arnott, Mrs. J. Heron, R. Heron, Mann, Morrissey, Porthouse, L. Scott, Tansey, Trueman, J. Walton, Mrs. L. Walton, Wood and B. Williams.

**The Cabinet reported as follows:-**

**1. The Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP)**

That they had given consideration to a report of the Director of Children's Services (copy circulated) presenting the final draft of the Children and Young People's Plan 2006-2009.

They had also referred the report to the Children's Services Review Committee for advice and consideration and it had been agreed to endorse the Children and Young People's Plan. It was also noted that a Statutory Instrument to be made in March 2006 would require the Plan to be approved by Council as well as the Executive in due course.

Accordingly the Cabinet recommended that the Children and Young People's Plan be approved by Council.

**2. Preparing for Inspection : Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) Corporate Assessment Road Map, Use of Resources Action Plan and CPA Key Milestones 2006/07**

That they had given consideration to a joint report of the Deputy Chief Executive and the City Treasurer (copy circulated) outlining how the Council, through its performance management framework was taking action to secure improvement and maintain its 4 star (previously 'Excellent') status and direction of travel judgement in respect of which the Council was currently judged as "improving well".

The report had also requested approval for the CPA Corporate Assessment Road Map and Use of Resources Action Plan (including the updated Value for Money Framework entitled 'Driving Service Improvement and Value for Money') and outlined the Key CPA Milestones during 2006/07 that would contribute to the Council's CPA Rating in 2006 and 2007 (including inspection activity, self-assessments, and the submission of performance information).

The report had been referred to the Policy and Co-ordination Review Committee for advice and consideration. The Review Committee had noted the Performance Management Framework to secure and maintain the Council's 4-star status and direction of travel judgement, and the CPA Corporate Assessment Road Map and Use of Resources Action Plan, including the updated Value for Money Framework.

Accordingly the Cabinet recommended the Council to approve the CPA Corporate Assessment Road Map, as detailed in Appendix A, and Use of

Resources Action Plan, as detailed in Appendix B, including the updated Value for Money Framework 'Driving Service Improvement and Value for Money', which would contribute to the Council securing improvements in those themes and issues identified in the Summary CPA Road Map.

### **3. Sunderland Youth Justice Plan**

That they had given consideration to a report of the Director of Children's Services (copy circulated) to:-

- (a) advise on the performance of Sunderland Youth Offending Service during the last year,
- (b) seek the approval of the business plan for 2006-07, in particular the delivery plan against key performance indicators, and
- (c) advise of the YOS inspection in November 2006 and the links to the Joint Area Review and the Council's CPA rating.

They had also referred the report to the Children's Services Review Committee for further advice and consideration. The Review Committee had noted the report.

Accordingly the Cabinet recommended the Council to:-

- (i) endorse the excellent performance of the YOS in 2005-06, both for its key performance and its grading by the Youth Justice Board against its breadth of performance,
- (ii) endorse the innovation and positive engagement with the local media resulting in a significant number of positive news stories,
- (iii) approve the financial planning for 2006-07,
- (iv) approve the delivery plan for 2006-07, and
- (v) approve the priorities determined by the YOS management board.

### **4. Hetton Downs Area Action Plan : Report on Options and Issues for Consultation**

That they had given consideration to a report of the Director of Development and Regeneration (copy circulated) on the consultants' Report on Options and Issues for Development in the Hetton Downs area and had sought that the report on Options and Issues be approved as the basis of public consultation to identify a

preferred option to be taken forward in the preparation of an Area Action Plan for the area.

A report on the matter had also been considered by the Environmental and Planning Review Committee and the Cabinet had referred the report to the Regeneration and Community Review Committee and the Planning and Highways Committee for further advice and consideration. The Environmental and Planning Review Committee had felt that it was important that the public were consulted at all times and were aware of any developments that were happening. The Review Committee then noted the report.

Accordingly the Cabinet recommended to Council that the Report on Options and Issues be approved as the basis for public consultation.

RESOLVED that the report of the Cabinet, together with the views of the Review Committees be approved and adopted.

### **Written Questions**

Pursuant to Rule 8.2 of the Council Rules of Procedure Members of the Council asked questions of the Leader and Members of the Executive.

### **Action Taken on Petitions**

The Council received the undermentioned reports on action taken in relation to petitions which had been presented to the Council:-

- (i) **Petition to erect 'No Ball Games Allowed' signs on six sites in the Farringdon area. Presented by Councillor S. Porthouse on 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2005**

The Director of Development and Regeneration had forwarded the petition to the Sunderland Housing Group who had decided not to erect the 'No Ball Games Allowed' signs as the grassed areas detailed in the petitions served a useful purpose in providing essential safe playing areas to the children living in Farringdon. The lead petitioner had been notified of the decision.

- (ii) **Petition from the residents of Lakeside Village to protest against the changes to bus services. Presented by Councillor Porthouse on 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2005**

The Passenger Transport Authority had considered the petition and decided that with the continued availability of commercial services, albeit including changing buses in a few cases, to meet residents travel requirements, there was no

justification for any action to be taken by NEXUS to secure any additional service. The lead petitioner had been notified of the decision.

### **Review Committees – End of Year Reports 2005/2006**

The City Solicitor submitted End of Year Reports (copies circulated) for the year 2005/2006 in respect of the following Committees:-

- (i) Culture and Leisure Review Committee
- (ii) Children's Services Review Committee
- (iii) Environmental and Planning Review Committee
- (iv) Policy and Co-ordination Review Committee
- (v) Regeneration and Community Review Committee
- (vi) Health and Well-Being Review Committee

(For copy reports – see original minutes).

RESOLVED that the End of Year Reports be received and noted.

### **Quarterly Report on Special Urgency Decisions**

The Leader of the Council submitted a quarterly report (copy circulated) on executive decisions which had been taken under Rule 16 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

(Signed) T. FOSTER,  
Mayor.



# ***Report of the Cabinet***

**THE CABINET reports as follows:-**

**1. Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2006/2007**

That they have given consideration to a report of the Director of Community and Cultural Services (copy attached) on the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2006/2007.

They also referred the report to the Regeneration and Community Review Committee for advice and consideration. The Review Committee welcomed the report and agreed that it be received and noted.

Accordingly the Cabinet recommends that the Council approve the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan.

**2. Revenue Budget and Trading Services Outturn 2005/2006**

That they have given consideration to a report of the City Treasurer on the Revenue Budget and Trading Services Outturn for 2005/2006.

They also referred the report to the Policy and Co-ordination Review Committee, for advice and consideration, on the virement of funds above the 1% limit, namely:-

	Transfer (from) £000	Transfer to £000
General Balances – 2005/2006	4,940	
Potential Equal Pay Liabilities		3,000
Revenue Funding – Capital Programme 2006/2007		1,000
Earmarked Reserve for Service Pressures and Trading Reviews		240
Single Status Implementation Costs		700
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,940</b>	<b>4,940</b>

Accordingly, the Cabinet recommends the Council to approve the virement of funds, as detailed above, which were above the 1% limit in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

**3. Revenue Budget and Trading Services First Review 2006/2007**

That they have given consideration to a report of the City Treasurer on the outcome of the Revenue Budget and Trading Services First Review for 2006/2007.

They also referred the report to the Policy and Co-ordination Review Committee, for advice and consideration, on the virement of funds in respect of the Adult Services Portfolio (copy extract attached). The Review Committee noted the proposed virement of funds.

Accordingly, the Cabinet recommends the Council to approve the virements in respect of the Adult Services portfolio, as detailed in the extract attached, where the 1% limit had been exceeded in respect of 2006/2007.

#### **4. Capital Programme 2006/2007 – First Quarterly Capital Review**

That they have given consideration to a report of the City Treasurer on the outcome of the First Capital Review for 2006/2007 taking account of the Capital Outturn for 2005/2006 and changes made to the Capital Programme 2006/2007 since its approval.

They also referred the report to the Policy and Co-ordination Review Committee, for advice and consideration, in the context of the inclusion of additional schemes for 2006/2007 (copy extract attached). The Review Committee accepted the proposed additional schemes and revisions to scheme costs for 2006/2007.

Accordingly, the Cabinet recommends the Council to approve the variations in the original Capital Programme 2006/2007, detailed in the attached extract, which had arisen since its approval in March, 2006.

#### **5. City of Sunderland Housing Strategy 2006-2011**

That they have given consideration to a report of the Director of Development and Regeneration (copy attached) on a new Housing Strategy for the City for the 5-year period 2006-2011.

Accordingly, the Cabinet recommends the Council to agree the Housing Strategy for Sunderland, 2006-2011, and authorise the Director of Development and Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Public Health, to make any minor amendments, prior to submission of the document to the Government Office for the North East.

They also referred the report to the Regeneration and Community Review Committee for further consideration. The comments of the Review Committee will be reported to the meeting.

**FOOD LAW SERVICE PLAN 2006/07**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL SERVICES**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To advise Cabinet of the Service's Food Law Service Plan for 2006/07 and seek approval of the plan.

**2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE DECISION (RECOMMENDATIONS)**

- 2.1 That Council be recommended to approve the Food Law Service Plan for 2006/07 and to refer it to the Regeneration and Community Review Committee for further advice and consideration.

**3.0 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Food Standards Agency is an independent food safety watchdog set up by an Act of Parliament in 2000 to protect the public's health and consumer interests in relation to food.

- 3.2 The White Paper "The Food Standards Agency – A Force for Change" identified the Food Standards Agency as having a key role overseeing local authority enforcement activities. The Agency therefore is proactive in setting and monitoring standards and auditing local authorities enforcement activities to ensure that they are effective and undertaken on a more consistent basis.

- 3.3 Food Service Plans are seen to be an important part of the process to ensure national priorities and standards are addressed and delivered locally. It was recognised by both central and local government that central guidance on the contents of local service plans for food enforcement work would be helpful to local authorities.

- 3.4 The Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement has been developed in close partnership with the Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) and the Local Government Association. They have recommended a format for food enforcement service plans and given detailed guidance on the content of the plan. They have also requested that the plan produced should be submitted to the relevant member forum for approval to ensure local transparency and accountability.

**4.0 FOOD LAW SERVICE PLAN 2006 - 2007**

- 4.1 The Food Law Service Plan 2006/07 (attached at Appendix I) has been formulated to comply with the recommendations of the Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement. It would be necessary to produce this plan in the event of this local authority being subject to an audit from the Agency.

**5.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

There are no practical alternative options.

**6.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS USED**

Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement

**City of Sunderland**  
**Community & Cultural Services**  
**Environmental Health and Trading Standards**

**Food Law Service Plan 2006/7**

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## FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2004/5

### **1. SERVICE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

#### **1.1 Aims and Objectives**

The Department's aim is to protect the health of all persons within the City in relation to food safety matters.

Our objectives are to proactively inspect food businesses within the City on a risk-based programme. Alternative strategies for enforcing standards in lower-risk premises are being adopted in accordance with the new code of practice from the Food Standards Agency. We will undertake a programme of food sampling, both microbiological and compositional. We will also respond appropriately to all food complaints, food alerts and food poisoning incidents. We will undertake to educate and advise the public and the food trade in matters of food hygiene and safety. The inspection of ships visiting the Port will be undertaken by officers from the Food team in accordance with current guidance.

#### **1.2 Links To Corporate Objectives And Plans**

The Sunderland Strategy for the years 2004-2007 identifies key issues facing Sunderland. Of the eight strategic objectives, the priorities upon which the Environmental Health section will impact in relation to Food are;

- Improving Health and Social care
- Creating a prosperous City,
- Developing an attractive and accessible City,
- Raising standards and improving access and participation in learning.

##### The Corporate Improvement Plan

The Environmental Health reference in the Corporate Improvement Plan is likely to include the following statements;

“The fundamental aims of Environmental Health services are to protect, promote and enhance the health, safety and well being of both residents and visitors to the City as well as securing legal and proper business practices. These will be achieved through:

- Implementing effective and targeted enforcement activities and educational initiatives.
- Protecting the interests of consumers through a programme of risk based inspections, investigating areas of trade that prompt concern and prosecuting offenders where appropriate.”



## **2. BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Profile of the Local Authority**

Sunderland City Council covers an area of 138 sq. kilometres and contains a declining population of about 279,000. It is the largest City between Leeds and Edinburgh. The area is largely urban ("metropolitan") but contains a great diversity of settlements including the City Centre, Washington and former coalmining communities such as Houghton le Spring and Hetton le Hole.

### **2.2 Organisational Structure**

The Council through a Leader, Cabinet and a total of 75 Councillors covering 25 wards, has an annual estimated budget of approximately £224 million for 2006/7. The Council employs 14,283 different individuals working full and part time across the City in a wide variety of jobs. The most recent estimate of the number of Council staff (Full Time Equivalents) currently employed is 108,63.36.

#### **Current Structure;**

Chief Executive + 5 Major Directorates; Community and Cultural Services, Corporate Services, Development and Regeneration, Children's Services, and Adult Services.

#### **Structure of Community and Cultural Services;**

Community and Cultural Services have three main service areas, Environmental Services, Culture and Tourism and Community Services.

Environmental Services includes the Environmental Health, Licensing and the Trading Standards division as well as Cemeteries and Crematorium, Building Maintenance (Education and Civic Buildings), Drainage, Grounds Maintenance, Highways and Winter Maintenance, Refuse Collection and Street Cleaning, and Transport.

Within the Environmental Health division, the Commercial Food and Area Office team are involved in food related matters and Trading Standards are involved in feedingstuffs control.

With regard to the line of Management for food matters, the Director of Community and Cultural Services is the Chief Officer and the Assistant Head of Environmental Services heads the Environmental Health, Licensing and Trading Standards division. There is an Environmental Health Manager for Commercial sections and Area Office, and a Principal Environmental Health Officer responsible for food matters. The Assistant Head of Environmental Services is also line manager to the City Trading Standards Officer.

## 2.3 Scope of the Food Service

The activities relating to food in the City are undertaken between the Commercial Food team, Area Office staff and the Health Promotion team.

The Commercial Food team carry out a programme of food hygiene and food standards inspection duties as well as responding to requests for service and infectious disease notifications. Sampling of foodstuffs, both microbiological and compositional, is also undertaken. Health and safety at work in most food premises is enforced by the team.

A Trading Standards Officer within the Department specialises in the animal feedingstuffs response.

The services of Health Protection Agency laboratories and the County Analyst, Durham complement the work of the two teams.

The Health Promotion team provide Basic and Intermediate Food Hygiene Training Courses. Advanced Food Hygiene training can be made available on request. Officers organise campaigns and undertake visits to educational establishments in connection with food hygiene. The Heartbeat award and Healthy Home Award schemes are promoted and managed by the team.

The food service operates from the Civic Centre and currently the Houghton Offices, which are open to the public in normal working hours throughout the week, 8.30am to 5.15pm (4.45pm Friday), although officers work in a flexi-time scheme. There is an evening and weekend service arrangement for out-of-hours emergencies.

The Council website [www.sunderland.gov.uk](http://www.sunderland.gov.uk) encourages the public to communicate with the Department by email and makes information constantly available. Letters from the Department to customers / companies encourage the use of email. The facility to contact the Department and individual Officers by direct telephone lines is also promoted.

The Authority has a very limited rural community, principally arable with a very limited number of livestock holdings. The Trading Standards Division carries out the enforcement of feedingstuffs legislation and advice to farmers/retailers.

## 2.4 Demands on the food service

- There are 2145 food premises currently operating and recorded on the premises database.

Food Premises in the City of which;	No.	Food Hygiene High Risk (a)	Food Hygiene Medium Risk (b-d)	Food Hygiene Low risk (e-f)	Unrated / to be classified / unclassified
Primary producers / manufacturers / processors	49	1	47	0	1
Packers / Importers / Exporters / distributors, etc	37	1	26	8	2
Retailers	697	5	603	43	46
Restaurant / Other Caterers	1362	0	1241	36	85
Contact Materials and articles	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Food Premises</b>	<b>2145</b>	<b>7 (0.3%)</b>	<b>1917 (89.3%)</b>	<b>87 (4.1%)</b>	<b>134 (6.3%)</b>

- The majority are classified in the Restaurant / catering outlet group (1362) whilst there are 697 food retailers.
- Approximately 0.3% of food businesses are rated Risk Category A, and 12.9% Risk Category B. The greater number of food premises (1186) come within the category C Risk Category (55.3%).
- The Stadium of Light can accommodate over 40,000 spectators, with significant catering from the outlets within the stadium. International events are also hosted at the site.
- There are a significantly increasing number of outdoor events held regularly each year (e.g. Air Show, Kite Festival, Mela) which are attended by up to 1.5 million visitors, with various mobile caterers and food businesses from around the region and beyond visiting the Authority to cater at the events.
- The additional element of work due to FSA / Government policy regarding port health inspections which requires increased administration and inspections of food hygiene and standards on board vessels coming

into the port was minimised due to the number, type and previous destinations of vessels arriving in the Port. Nevertheless it is important for Officers to be trained and able to respond in the event of any alert relating to the port.

- Increased vigilance continues to be expected regarding the inland enforcement of imported food legislation in an effort to prevent the spread of disease in food animals. This could significantly impact on the workload of the team should circumstances arise..
- The Freedom of Information Act continues to impact significantly on the workload of the teams due to the administration of requests and time spent recovering the information. Press and other enquiries to Local Authorities in the region continue to request specific information regarding comparative businesses in each Local Authority. Whilst there is a legal duty to respond, this can place a burden on resources which would otherwise be productively used in providing the service.
- The transfer of licensing to the Local Authority from the Magistrates during last year impacted on the workload as many of the premises are inspected for health and safety by officers in conjunction with their food hygiene and food standards visits. Again this was additional workload to be absorbed by existing resources.

There is some potential for any large outbreak of food poisoning or illness, or a serious accident at a food premises, to impact significantly on the routine service operated by the Authority. There were no major outbreaks within the City attributable to a specific food premises, although the Norovirus ("Winter Vomiting disease") continued to affect many residential establishments in the City and regionally. Officers work closely with the Health Protection Agency to limit the spread of this infection environmentally and ensure an appropriate response is made commensurate with the necessity to identify the infection and limit the impact.

There are no other likely major impacts e.g. significant food imports, seasonal variations or high numbers of food manufacturing businesses other than local catering businesses. Where food alerts necessitate a significant response, this can impact on other areas of the service.

There has been a continued increase in food alerts over the last year, totalling 88 plus updates in 2005/6. They have included hazards associated with high levels of benzene in soft drinks, incorrect labelling, presence of dioxins in certain foods, incorrect date coding of products, high aflatoxin levels, E coli and mould contamination and risk of extraneous material e.g. bristles, metal, glass and plastic fragments. Warnings regarding products possibly contaminated with nuts have been received which are particularly hazardous to those persons suffering specific allergies.

## **2.5 Enforcement Policy**

The Department has a documented Enforcement Policy, which has due regard to the Tyne and Wear Food Enforcement Policy. The Authority works in accordance with the principles of the Enforcement Concordat which has been formally adopted, and in line with the requirements of BV166 (Best Value). The Policy was reviewed in 2003 and we undertook consultation on the revised policy.

The Code of Practice requires that any breaches of food law that may be detected in premises where the Authority is itself the proprietor of a food business should be brought to the attention of the Chief Executive, without undue delay.

## **3. SERVICE DELIVERY**

### **3.1 Food Control**

#### **3.1.1 Food Premises Inspections**

Whilst It has been the Department's ongoing annual target to inspect all food premises at a risk rated frequency in accordance with guidance from the Code of Practice, which was revised in the winter of 2004, the FSA are encouraging Authorities to spend more time at targeted businesses rather than spread over the whole range in future. Alternative strategies for the lower risk premises will be considered, whilst mid range risk categories of small medium businesses will receive specific assistance to comply. Highest risk premises which require specific approval will receive more frequent interventions than in previous years.

All premises due for inspection during the last 12 month period received programmed inspections as previously required. The Department has again achieved extremely high rates on inspection of all food premises and in 2005/6 inspected proactively 1359 premises, achieving 100% of programmed food hygiene inspections due in the year for all risk categories. A total of 1924 visits were made including inspections, response to complaints, revisits and sampling.

Of the 2145 registered food businesses in the City, the estimated number of inspections programmed for the year 2006/7 at the time of preparation of this report is 1386 plus any new businesses commencing within the year. These inspections will have been strictly programmed using the current risk based system published by the Food Standards Agency. We aim to inspect all premises within one month of the due date for inspection, the only exceptions being those businesses that operate seasonally. It is possible that during the year some of the lowest risk premises may be subject to alternative enforcement strategies in accordance with Food Standards Agency guidance.

Secondary inspections (including revisits) to premises are carried out as necessary in order to ensure that material defects are rectified. The database system encourages scheduling of such visits. It is expected that all visits will be made as necessary in accordance with the Code of Practice.

There are no immediate plans to change to the commercial database software preferred corporately, and the in-house software continues to operate in a more advanced manner, which enables effective management of the service. The changes in priority and Approved premises will necessitate some changes to the system.

The Butchers Licensing Scheme ceased to be a requirement in law. This Authority has promoted the survey of Butchers premises throughout the region to identify any trends in compliance and standards of formerly licensed butchers in the City.

The recent changes to the Code of Practice requirements confirm the impact on the service by requiring additional visits to approved registered premises under Product – Specific legislation. Examples of these are the additional visits to business producing meat products, the dairy product establishment and the Fish Quay.

Participation with neighbouring Authorities in sampling and other food related matters ensures that the Authority works in a co-ordinated and compatible way.

The Department has created close links with the Health Protection Agency as a partner in tackling ill health. Regular meetings to discuss various matters relating to food poisoning cases and sampling programmes take place. The County Analyst and Health Protection Agency (ex-Public Health Laboratory Service) are contracted to assist with expertise where any additional problems arise. Networks exist within the region, nationally and with the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and the Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS).

### 3.1.2 Food Complaints

The Authority is committed to investigating all food complaints, the extent of the investigation depending on the merits of the complaint. This can range from re-assuring the complainant to the more formal process, including reference to home or originating Authorities in accordance with the Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) guidance and the Code of Practice.

In 2005/6, 299 requests for service in connection with food / food premises were made, including 106 food complaints and 9 requests relating to suspected food poisoning. The staff resources required to deal with these requests are drawn from existing Commercial Food team, although Administration staff have received training to effectively handle initial enquiries relating to food complaints. It is estimated that the time expended on food complaints in 2006/7 will be equivalent to 0.25 officers (full time equivalent).

## **3.2 Feedingstuffs Control**

### **3.2.1 Feedingstuffs Premises Inspection**

The Trading Standards Section of the Department have the delegated duty to enforce legislation in relation to animal feedingstuffs. This involves inspection of premises and sampling of products at farms, manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers.

The Feed Hygiene Regulations came into effect in January 2006, though LACORS has acknowledged a need for a transitional period. It applies to businesses that make, use or market animal feeds. This includes most livestock farms, arable farms that grow, use or sell crops for feed use, and also fish farms. It replaces existing legislation on approval and registration under the Feeding Stuffs (Establishments and Intermediaries) Regulations 1999, which applies to farmers that mix feeds containing additives.

This new legislation applies to premises not previously inspected by the Council. It is proposed that a survey of all agricultural premises is undertaken to assess the level of inspection required.

### **3.2.2 Feedingstuffs Complaints**

Due to the relatively few number of feedingstuffs establishments, it is not anticipated that there will be a significant number of complaints received by the Authority. All complaints will be investigated in line with Departmental procedures. The Authority in the past has received very few complaints, which usually relate to pet food and not feedingstuffs for animals intended for human consumption.

## **3.3 Home Authority Principle**

The Authority is committed to the Home Authority principle, promoted by the Code of Practice. Whilst there are no Companies currently linked in a formal agreement with this Authority, there is a close working relationship with some "manufacturing" companies, where advice is given and they have been contacted regularly over many years.

The Department acts as an originating Authority where other Authorities request information regarding businesses operating within this area.

Officers investigating complaints about foods originating from outside the City boundary are required to contact Home / Originating Authorities as appropriate.

The Authority is not responsible for any premises which produce feedingstuffs to be supplied to premises outside the Authority's Area.

### **3.4 Advice to Business**

The Authority seeks to assist local businesses as part of the City / Community Strategy. The Authority is committed to the new Food Standards Agency (FSA) project "Safer Food, Better Business", (SFBB) which is aligned to supporting certain food businesses in complying with the food safety management principles. The five Tyne and Wear Authorities are working in partnership to produce a substantial bid for an FSA grant to employ a specialist contractor to train, advise and coach food businesses to implement the SFBB system. The Local Authorities would have a substantial role in monitoring the effectiveness of the contractor's work.

In correspondence to food businesses, a standard invitation is given to them to seek advice from the Department.

Larger manufacturing businesses and small-medium enterprises have both expressed their approval of the department's dealings with their business and readiness to assist with advice, a policy of the Department for many years. A previous Chartermark assessor expressed particular pleasure at the excellent relationship that officers had with Companies despite their enforcement role.

In routine inspections and visits to businesses, Officers pay special attention to advising and explaining matters appropriate to the situation.

Close links have been made with many business organisations in the City and informal agreement reached to cooperate more fully with businesses through these contacts.

### **3.5 Food and Feedingstuffs Inspection and Sampling**

#### **3.5.1 Food Inspection and Sampling**

The Department is committed to sampling foods for compositional standards, bacteriological standards and food standards compliance. Sampling is undertaken proactively involving imported and locally produced foods, as well as participating in national and regional surveys with Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) and Health Protection Agency Laboratory Service.

The Department undertakes local sampling surveys from its own intelligence and from liaison with the Health Protection Agency.

As a consequence of "demand" i.e. complaints, food alerts, food poisoning outbreaks, etc. further samples will be taken.

An estimated 660 samples will be taken for bacteriological examination / compositional analysis in the year 2006/7, including 64 water samples.

Formal agreements with the Durham County Analyst exist and with the Health Protection Agency Laboratory Service in Newcastle. Close liaison exists with the laboratories management and neighbouring Authorities to ensure the most effective and coordinated programme with flexibility for local peculiarities.



### 3.5.2 Feedingstuffs Inspection and Sampling

The Authority will undertake a programme of sampling annually based upon the risk assessment of the relevant premises. The Authority has appointed the analyst of Durham County Council as the Agricultural Analyst for the Authority.

### 3.6 Control and Investigation of Outbreaks and Food Related Infectious Disease

The Department, with the Health Protection Agency, operates under the updated "Guidelines – Preventing person-to-person spread following gastrointestinal infections"

A local Consultant for Communicable Disease Control is employed by the Health Protection Agency. Dr Kirsty Foster is available to the Department for any advice regarding specific problems relating to infectious disease.

The Department has the power to exclude persons from work in accordance with Health Protection Agency and agreed local policy based on national guidelines. On the rare occasion where such exclusion is necessary the Department will undertake such measures.

Advice on food poisoning is available on the Sunderland.gov.uk website by inserting "food poisoning" in the search box on the home page and following the links.

Statistics of cases investigated over recent years

Year to March 31 <sup>st</sup>	Campylobacter	Salmonella	Cryptosporidia	Food poisoning & suspected FP	Shigella	Esch. Coli	Other miscellaneous organisms	Totals
2006	346	86	25	35	1	3	1	497
2005	287	100	9	30	1	7	6	440
2004	253	109	47	28	4	2	4	447
2003	241	56	19	6	2	1	0	325

Year to March 31 <sup>st</sup>	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Totals
2006	42	35	46	54	53	69	49	38	30	18	33	30	497
2005	20	38	47	48	70	41	47	32	22	27	30	18	440
2004	18	8	75	42	49	96	41	24	16	33	23	22	447
2003	24	44	30	25	36	27	29	35	14	28	15	19	326

The Authority is committed to the investigation of all cases and outbreaks notified. The scale of the investigation and response will be measured and as appropriate to the causative organism and potential for further spread. Many cases appear to be the result of foreign travel or home acquired, and some infections may be acquired from the environment rather than from a food source within the City. It is noticeable that the reports of the incidence of Campylobacter infections continue to rise.

Another illness commonly called Winter Vomiting Disease continues to impact on residents both locally and nationally. This is an illness of rapid onset but short duration caused by a virus and is commonly spread environmentally from person to person rather than being food-borne.

### **3.7 Food Safety Incidents**

The Authority is committed to responding appropriately to all Food Alerts issued by the Food Standards Agency in accordance with the Code of Practice on this subject. The level of response is determined by the category of response required and individual circumstances of the incident / local impact. Information is often made to the public through Press releases and on the Council website having due regard to the information published by the Food Standards Agency. The cooperation of the Council's media team is again acknowledged.

### **3.8 Liaising with other organisations**

The Authority joins with the four other Authorities in the Tyne & Wear Food Liaison Group and the Tyne and Wear Sampling Group and Health Protection Agency / Local Authority Liaison group, which includes representatives from the relevant analytical and bacteriological laboratories and Communicable disease specialists. The Authority continues to be represented on the User Group for the National Food Sampling database.

Trading Standards Officers meet frequently at North East Trading Standards Association (NETSA) meetings when any topical subjects can be considered. In the course of a year, the attendance at such meetings is equivalent to seven full working days.

Relevant Building Control and Planning Applications are referred to the Department for consideration and comment.

There is frequent liaison with other Departments and sections in connection with food matters, including Facilities Management (One- Call/ Catering Services), School Meals, City Purchasing, Adult Services and regarding premises licences. Potential conflicts of interest are being considered and the enforcement policy will be amended appropriately at the next review in accordance with the Code of Practice.

The section has positive liaison with the local office of the Health Protection Agency, Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust, City Hospitals Sunderland, the Business Enterprise Network, local food federations and guilds. There is co-operation with ethnic communities, the voluntary sector and schools and colleges.

### **3.9 Food Safety and Standards Promotion**

Whilst Officers in the course of inspections and other visits give advice and information, the Health Promotion Team offer Food Hygiene training at Foundation level and the Intermediate Certificate in Food Safety, and undertake campaigns during the year on food related topics. In 2005/6 72 training events were provided. The Heartbeat Award has been running in Sunderland since 1990. The Healthy Home award commenced in this Authority in 1997. Each of these award schemes have food hygiene related elements. A total of 103 Heartbeat awards and 15 Healthy Home awards were given in 2005/6. During they year 17 courses for the Foundation Certificate in food hygiene were run for 191 delegates, 12 food hygiene awareness sessions for 162 delegates as well as 3 courses of the RSPH Foundation Certificate in Nutrition for a total of 47 delegates.

The Health Promotion team also responded to requests from schools and other educational and community organisations for information and talks on subjects pertaining to food. Talks and presentations were given to 14 schools and 2 community groups.

Basic food hygiene information for consumers is available on the Council Website. Similarly advice is also available on food poisoning organisms and what to do in the event of suspecting that you are ill from consuming contaminated food.

## **4. RESOURCES**

### **4.1 Financial Allocation**

For 2006-7 the budget for food control (CC2090) is £432,168. (This includes a proportion of env health support charges, budget is £319,403 without .) The sampling budget of £14,671 (£12,923 analyst fees & £1,748 test purchases). Health Promotion has a general budget of £73,657 including anticipated income of £42,433, partly from food hygiene training.

It is estimated that about £475,000 of the Department's total budget will be used in relation to food safety.

### **4.2 Staffing Allocation**

Staffing resources allocated to Food work are as follows;

#### Food Team

- 1 Principal Environmental Health Officer / Team Leader (Full Time)
- 3 Environmental Health Officers (Full time)

- 2 Environmental Health Officers (Job share / part time)
- 1 Technical Officer (Full time – Higher Certificate) – post vacant
- Clerical Support

#### Area Office

- 1 Principal Environmental Health Officer / Team Leader post vacant subject to review.
- 2 Environmental Health Officers (Part time food)
- 1 Technical Officer (Part time food - Ordinary Certificate)
- Clerical Support

#### Health Promotion

- 1 Principal Environmental Health Officer / Team Leader (Part time on food matters)
- 2 Health Promotion Assistants (Part time on food matters)

All of the full-time Environmental Health Officers and all of the part time officers currently employed have over 2 years experience in food matters.

#### Trading Standards

- 1 Trading Standards Officer (Part time fertiliser and feedingstuffs)

Total Full-time equivalent = 8 Officers on the establishment.

### **4.3 Staff Development Plan**

Staff Appraisals are undertaken annually and the findings form the basis of individual staff development and training plans.

Individuals are sent to specific training where appropriate and all Environmental Health Officers are required to maintain a training log in order to comply with Continuing Professional Development.

Training days and training sessions on subjects are programmed as necessary.

Any members of staff "new" to food hygiene will be supervised and receive training commensurate with the Code of Practice. (During the last year one Senior E.H.O. from Health and Safety Team was successfully seconded for a period into the food team to cover for an officer on long term sabbatical.) Environmental Health Officers in other sections also receive update training in food matters.

### **5. QUALITY ASSESSMENT**

The Department has achieved Investing In People (I.I.P) accreditation and is consistently working toward maintaining and improving the standard achieved.

Charter Mark status was reviewed in May 2006 and was awarded to a high standard.

Peer review is organised regularly and undertaken regionally between the Tyne & Wear Authorities with full support of this Authority. The Tyne and Wear Authorities plan to undertake a project in the coming year on this subject.

The recording of monitored inspections within the food premises database will continue to be undertaken during this year.

An Inter-Authority Audit is also planned during the latter part of the financial year.

## **6. REVIEW / PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

### **6.1 Review against Service Plan**

A formal review against the service plan is undertaken mid-year with submission of achievements against targets submitted via the Director to the Chief Executive.

In the interim periods, line management monitors progress, including utilising the excellent in-house database software.

Monthly targets are set and teams of officers are expected to achieve the required inspection rate to reach annual service level targets.

The Corporate Improvement Plan and an Annual Report is produced to define achievements made during the previous year.

The Service Plan and Annual Report are submitted to the Chief Executive for consideration by the Council as part of the Director's Performance Agreement.

### **6.2 Identification of any variance from the Service Plan**

The food control teams performed extremely well against the Service Plan for 2005 / 2006 in all areas of Service Delivery.

The comprehensive review of procedure and policy documents is on-going.

### **6.3 Areas for Improvement**

- Promote the use of Safer Food Better Business (SFBB) to appropriate food businesses in the City.
- Participate in the Tyne & Wear bid for funding from the Food Standards Agency for SFBB partnership project
- Participate in the training exercise re the new Food Hygiene legislation and standardisation of application for staff.

- Undertake peer review, Inter Authority Audit and internal monitoring exercise between Tyne & Wear LAs.
- Consider and implement as appropriate an alternative enforcement strategy for low risk businesses
- Provide further appropriate training for staff on the subject of “Safer Food, Better Business”, new legislation including animal feedstuffs.

END



## Revenue Budget and Trading Services First Review 2006/2007

## Virement over £55,000 for the First Quarter 2006/2007

	Increased Provision 2006/2007	Decreased Provision 2006/2007
	£000	£000
<b>Adult Services</b>		
Older Persons Service - Meals at Home	120	
Older Persons Service - Residential and Nursing		(197)
Older Persons Service - Day Care	135	
Independent Sector - Day Care	57	
Older Persons Service - Assessment and Fieldwork	87	
Direct Payments	80	
Home Care Service	184	
Community Alarm Service		(180)
Home and Day Care Services		(100)
Long Term Conditions - Residential and Nursing Care		(100)
Long Term Conditions - Day Centres		(138)
Long Term Conditions - Fieldwork and Assessment	90	
Community Equipment Service - Pooled Budget	130	
Learning Disabilities - Residential and Nursing	150	
Mental Health - Residential and Nursing	181	
Mental Health - Fieldwork and Assessment		(90)
Social Services Internal Contingency		(500)
Accessible Homes Team	50	
Learning Disabilities - Assessment and Fieldwork		(30)
Mental Health - Assessment and Fieldwork		(40)
ICT Maintenance	40	
Previous Year Overspend C/fwd	71	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,495</b>	<b>(1,495)</b>



**Adult Services**  
**Virement over £55,000 for the First Quarter 2006/2007 - Further Details**

	<b>Under or (Over) Spend £000</b>	<b>Impact into 2007/2008 £000</b>
<b>Older Persons Over 65</b>		
Meals at Home: Review of timescales for effective implementation of new arrangements following transfer to CCS.	(120)	20
Residential and Nursing Older People: Budget savings to reflect implementation of elderly persons strategy.	197	397
Direct Services - Day Care: Budget amended to reflect revised assessment of the transfer of service to alternative provision and to reflect a review of contracts to reflect actual demand.	(192)	(192)
Assessment and Fieldwork: Review of staffing budgets to reflect service needs and actual turnover.	(87)	(77)
Direct Payments: Review of direct payments budget to reflect actual take up.	(80)	(80)
<b>Home Care:</b> Impact of revised timescale for the transfer to the Independent Sector and management of the provision through verification of existing and new packages of care.	(184)	66
Community Alarm Service: Impact of revised assumptions for staff turnover and service review during 2006/2007 - to be used to deliver the Telecare Strategy in 2006/2007.	180	0
Home and Day Charges: Impact of increased income collection of new debt recovery team.	100	100
Residential and Nursing Placements - Independent Sector: Reflects anticipated demand for each year	100	(50)

(continued)

**Adult Services**  
**Virement over £55,000 for the First Quarter 2006/2007 - Further Details**

	Under or (Over) Spend £000	Impact into 2007/2008 £000
Day Centres: Reflects future need for alternative day centre provision.	138	150
Fieldwork and Assessment: Review to reflect realistic staff turnover levels .	(90)	(90)
Community Equipment Service: Reflects service need as referred to in paragraph 6.2.1.	(130)	(50)
Accessible Home Team: Reflects reduced fee income.	(50)	(50)
Residential and Nursing: Reflects increased numbers and higher costs for Special Needs Placements after taking into account a number of management actions.	(150)	(300)
Other net underspendings and use of one off funding	30	60
<b>Community Mental Health</b>		
Residential Nursing Homes: An overspend is forecast. However an action plan is in place to address this in part in 2006/2007 to mitigate the overspending in year resulting in a saving of £45,000 in 2006/2007 and £138,000 in a full year.	(345)	(252)
Fieldwork and Assessment: Reflects the outcome of a review of staffing needs.	40	80
Other: Review of income streams from TPCT and other minor savings	90	95
<b>Performance and Development</b>		
Social Services Internal Contingency	500	500
Other Variations	164	0
SWIFT / Other ICT Maintenance.	(40)	(40)
2005/2006 overspend carry forward into 2006/2007	(375)	
2006/2007 overspend carry forward into 2007/2008		(304)
<b>FORECAST OUTTURN POSITION FOR 2006/2007 AND 2007/2008</b>	<b>(304)</b>	<b>(17)</b>



**Capital Programme 2006/2007 – First quarterly Capital Review**

**Cabinet Meeting –12<sup>th</sup> July 2006**

**Variations from those reported in the Original 2006/2007 Programme**

	£000
<b>Additional Schemes since Original Programme was Approved</b>	
<b>Children's Services</b>	
City Learning Centres	300
Port Regeneration Study	297
Port Review Consultancy Stages 1 and 2	295
<b>Adult Services</b>	
ICT Infrastructure for Social Care – Transfer to the Corporate Network	371
<b>Regeneration and Community Cohesion</b>	
Farringdon Row Phase 2 Site Preparation Works	1,027
Sunniside Partnership – Commercial Grants Scheme Phase 2	338
Sunniside Gardens	543



**Report of the Director of Development and Regeneration****A Housing Strategy for Sunderland – 2006 - 2011****1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to propose a new Housing Strategy for Sunderland for the 5-year period 2006 – 2011.

**2.0 Description of Decision**

- 2.1 The Council be recommended to agree the Council's Housing Strategy for Sunderland – 2006 - 2011, and authorise the Director of Development and Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Public Health, to make any minor amendments, prior to submission of the document to the Government Office for the North East.

**3.0 Background**

- 3.1 The City's previous Housing Strategy covered the period 2002 – 2005, and officers have now prepared a proposed new Housing Strategy for the period 2006 – 2011.
- 3.2 The purpose of the new Housing Strategy is to set out a strategic vision for housing in the City across all tenures.
- 3.3 Government guidance advises that the Housing Strategy should identify need, establish clear priorities and develop a clear action plan to deliver the priorities.
- 3.4 The Audit Commission introduced Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE's) for Housing Inspections with the aim of trying to achieve greater transparency and consistency in the process of inspection. KLOE's consist of a set of questions or judgment specific issues around services to provide consistent criteria for assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of housing services. Therefore, this strategy has been developed in accordance with the KLOE for 'Strategy and Enabling'.
- 3.5 The Housing Strategy will be assessed by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), through the Government Office for the North East (GONE). GONE have been involved at various intervals throughout the development of the Strategy, and will, on its completion, seek to ensure that the Strategy meets the Government's 'Fit for Purpose' (FFP) criteria. The FFP criteria sets out the requirements that must be met in order to ensure the production of an effective and forward looking Housing Strategy for the City.
- 3.6 The structure and content of the Housing Strategy 2006-2011 has been developed to address comments received from GONE on the previous Housing Strategy (2002 – 2005), which are aimed at assuring we fulfil the requirements of the Audit Commission's 'Key Lines of Enquiry' and the DCLG's 'Fit for Purpose' criteria.

#### **4.0 Current Position**

- 4.1 The previous Housing Strategy 2002 – 2005 has now expired and there is a need to compile and agree a new strategy for 2006 – 2011.
- 4.2 The Housing Strategy is a key document that reviews housing-related issues in Sunderland and sets out the vision, aims, priorities and actions for housing and related services in the City.
- 4.3 Housing is a key priority within the Sunderland Strategy for the City and a key factor in ensuring that the Sunderland Partnership's vision is realised. Cabinet will be aware that this vision is "Sunderland – a City for everyone to be proud of. Sunderland will be a prosperous City. A desirable, safe and healthy place to live, work, learn and visit, where all people can reach their full potential".
- 4.4 This strategy has three major aspirations for the City linked specifically to housing: -
- Improved choice of type, location and price to meet 21st Century aspirations and demands, which will reverse the trend of outward migration
  - Improved quality and standards of housing in well managed sustainable communities
  - Accommodation and support appropriate to the needs of Sunderland's large and diverse population
- 4.5 Subject to Council approval the document will be submitted to GONE to ensure that the Housing Strategy 2006 – 2011 achieves 'Fit for Purpose' criteria. Once this is achieved the document will be published and made accessible via the City Council's website.

#### **5.0 Reasons for the decision**

- 5.1 The Housing Strategy 2006 – 2011 replaces the previous Housing Strategy and is a culmination of extensive partnership working and consultation. The strategy sets out a vision for housing in the City of Sunderland over the next five years.

#### **6.0 Alternative Options**

- 6.1 No alternative options are proposed.

#### **7.0 Relevant Consultations**

- 7.1 Extensive consultation has been conducted in accordance with KLOE and FFP criteria.
- 7.2 The Regeneration and Community Review Committee has had a significant input into the formulation of the new Housing Strategy. This culminated in that committee's final study report being agreed on Wednesday 5 July 2006, the

results of which have been encapsulated within the overall Housing Strategy, such as;

- i) reduction in the number of priorities from 19 to 10 to ensure close monitoring on the delivery of the Housing Strategy for Sunderland
- ii) Monitoring the housing market and investigating the need for 'Affordable Housing' in Sunderland
- iii) Tackling issues within the 'Private Rented Sector' such as returning empty properties into residential use
- iv) Working with Registered Social Landlords to achieve the Decent Homes Standard
- v) That the research on the BME Community in Sunderland be reported back to the committee upon completion.

### **7.3 Risk Analysis**

The following risks have been identified:

- (i) The risk on delivering the Housing Strategy currently rests with the Council but needs to be delivered by working in partnership with the Government Office North East, Housing Corporation, Regional Housing Board, North East Assembly, Tyne and Wear Strategic Housing Partnership, Sunderland Strategic Housing Partnership, Social Registered Landlords and Private Sector Landlords.
- (ii) Funding to ensure that the Housing Strategy is delivered in the short term has been identified as a risk due to the allocation of funding by the Housing Corporation and Regional Housing Board being lower than bid for by the Council and its Registered Social Landlord partners for the period 2006-2008.
- (iii) The Government is about to commence detailed work that will result in the publication of the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 and the potential funding that will be allocated to the Housing Sector from 2008 onwards, will influence the ability to deliver the Strategy in the medium to longer term.
- (iv) Sub-regional working is crucial to the delivery of the Housing Strategy, especially in respect to the Housing Market Assessment for the Tyne and Wear City region that is currently being undertaken that will affect the patterns and levels of investment in the sub-region from 2008 onwards.
- (v) The North East Regional Housing Board's imminent move to come under the auspices of the North East Assembly has been identified as a potential risk in relation to the priority which may be given to Housing.
- (vi) The implementation of a Local Housing Assessment is crucial for the successful delivery of the Housing Strategy, as the assessment would provide baseline information on housing need in the City and ties into Planning Policy requirements. Funding options are being explored including the potential to access the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.
- (vii) Meeting the Decent Homes Standard by 2010 in the Social Rented Sector and by 2013 in the Private Sector will need close monitoring as to ensure



that central Government targets are met. The introduction of action plans and the implementation of the 2004 Housing Act mitigate the chances of not ensuring compliance with the standard.

- (viii) Vulnerable people living in the City or wanting to live in the City need to be provided with the accommodation and support necessary to their needs as to ensure settled lives in the local community and more work will be required in relation to Homelessness and the Supporting People Programme which are intrinsic elements of the Housing Strategy.

## **8.0 List of Appendices**

The latest draft of the Housing Strategy is included as part of this cabinet report.

## **9.0 Background Papers**

Sunderland Strategy 2004 – 2007  
Housing Strategy 2002 – 2005  
Supporting People 5-Year Strategy and Annual Plan 2005  
Safer Sunderland Strategy 2005 – 2008  
Interim Strategy for Housing Land November 2005

**VERSION 5 - 24 August 2006**

*"Housing for the Future"*

*A Housing Strategy for  
Sunderland*

*2006 - 2011*

# DRAFT HOUSING STRATEGY

## Introduction

Everyone in Sunderland and those wanting to come to Sunderland should have the opportunity of a decent home at a price they can afford in a place they want to live. This strategy sets out how the city will enable this through a range of initiatives and partnerships.

Housing is the cornerstone of any sustainable community and this strategy sets the overall direction for improving the quality, choice and range of housing in Sunderland. The strategy is set within the national housing policy perspective, aligns itself with regional priorities and emphasises the strong inter-agency working which is now in existence in the Tyne & Wear region.

This strategy is also part of the city's mission to redefine its role and image in the region and across the Country. It is an integral part of the Council's dynamic approach that is designed to capitalise on the City's stunning attributes and ensure the highest quality of life for residents.

We want to help create a city that is: -

- prosperous
- thriving
- inclusive
- dynamic and to;
- develop sustainable communities for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and beyond, where people want to live and work and have a higher quality of life.

At a local level the Housing Strategy will ensure that the housing needs and aspirations of people are identified and resources are spent on meeting local objectives.

Addressing housing cannot be done in isolation, it has to be part of creating sustainable communities. The key to Sunderland's future will be to successfully stabilise and diversify its business base and reposition itself economically. This strategy will supplement the City's Economic Prosperity policies and initiatives to ensure they complement housing investment and contribute to ensuring safer and stronger communities

## VISION

Sunderland City Council and its partners want to deliver the City's vision for the future

**“Sunderland – a City for everyone to be proud of. Sunderland will be a prosperous City. A desirable, safe and healthy place to live, work, learn and visit, where all people can reach their full potential.”**

The Council remains committed to improving its housing services and housing provision within the City for the benefit of its customers and all Sunderland residents as part of the delivery of this vision.

The Council will also aim to ensure that the City offers the highest quality housing in respect of: -

- Design
- Condition
- Choice
- Value for money and affordability
- Management

This strategy has been drawn up following a full consultation exercise. The views of as many stakeholders as possible have been included in the strategy – including the general public, service users, elected members and officers of the Council and its partners.

# DRAFT HOUSING STRATEGY

## Partnership Working

The Housing Strategy 2006 – 2011 is a locally owned and locally determined strategy that is informed by central and regional priorities together with locally identified need. It has been endorsed by all of the strategic partners and stakeholders – including the Tyne & Wear Housing Partnership, Sunderland's Strategic Housing Partnership and the Sunderland Partnership. A true joint working approach has been taken in developing the strategy, and partnerships are a key element of its implementation. This approach will ensure that shared outcomes around Health, Social Care, Education, Community Safety and the Economy are achieved. Research carried out by the Regeneration and Community Review Committee is also reflected in the overall strategy and action plan and their report is included as appendix 1.

## Our Housing Future

Sunderland has achieved much in relation to housing. We must however continue to improve our understanding of how the local housing market in Sunderland has developed and works. The key issues at the moment being

- a 98% increase in house prices over the past 2 years.
- a perceived lack of affordable housing
- poor quality and obsolete housing in certain parts of the City
- a mismatch between the housing available and the aspirations of those that live in the City or are considering moving here
- the environment – drawing upon the findings of housing need and migration studies

## Our aspirations

This strategy has three major aspirations for the City: -

1. Improve the choice of type, location and price of housing to meet 21st Century aspirations and demands, and reverse the trend of outward migration

2. Improve the quality and standard of housing and ensure that sustainable communities are created
3. Provide housing and accommodation with support options that reflect and meet the needs and aspirations of Sunderland's large and diverse population

## How will we achieve our aspirations?

We have developed ten housing priorities to reflect national, regional and local concerns. By addressing these we will contribute to the development of Sunderland as a prosperous City and a desirable, safe and healthy place to live. We will ensure the Housing Strategy is in line with Sunderland Partnership's vision for the City and make common ground with other relevant strategic plans.

### Priority 1

*Make the case for the City.*

The Council will aim to 'make the case for the city'. This encompasses highlighting the city as a very desirable place to live and providing the mechanisms to enable our communities to be sustainable.

We will also engage with regional and national decision-makers to highlight housing issues in the City and secure investment to tackle the City's problems. We will ensure that the housing case for the City is integrated with the key social, economic and environmental priorities.

We will work with partners to ensure the voice of the region is heard at a national level.

### Priority 2

*Monitor local housing markets*

We want to understand the effects of people buying, selling, investing or renting housing in the City, and to better understand the factors that influence people leaving and coming into the City. This will help us to

# DRAFT HOUSING STRATEGY

identify areas, which are sustainable, and those in risk of decline and the reasons why.

We will work with stakeholders, through a housing market assessment, to develop housing policies that take a holistic view of the housing in the City and what housing is required for the future. This is a Housing Market Assessment

*Priority 3*

*Intervene in areas showing symptoms of decline.*

The Council wants to ensure the housing market is stable, demand is strong and properties are of the highest quality. Where a neighbourhood is showing symptoms of decline the Council will seek to work with residents to determine the future of the area.

We will, as a priority, aim to prevent unmanaged market failure wherever possible.

*Priority 4*

*Improve access to affordable housing in the city.*

We aim to ensure that housing across all tenures is as accessible as possible. Affordability is a key housing issue in the City. We will develop an affordable housing policy that will detail our plans to ensure that local people can get a foot on the housing ladder. We will place special emphasis on developing a single citywide access scheme for all providers of rented housing in the City.

Once established we will work with partners to introduce such a scheme for rented providers sub-regionally.

*Priority 5*

*Make sure all housing in the city is decent*

Within the social rented sector the Council is implementing an action plan that will ensure all social rented properties meet the decent homes standard by 2010. The figure is currently 97.3%. In the private

rented sector 70% of vulnerable people need to be in a decent home by 2013.

Research has also demonstrated that poor housing conditions contribute to ill health so the Council is aiming to reduce the number of vulnerable people who live in poor private sector homes.

*Priority 6*

*Identify and tackle poor standards of management in the private sector*

The Council will use its enforcement powers to ensure that private sector property is improved where necessary. Together with this we will extend our accreditation scheme to ensure that only responsible landlords rent houses in areas of housing stress.

In the private sector we will work with accredited landlords to ensure their properties are well managed, that tenants successfully maintain their tenancies and work in partnership to tackle anti-social behaviour

*Priority 7*

*Improve planning and design of the City's housing environment.*

The Council will ensure that all new developments have enhanced design standards, proper methods of construction and have energy efficiency measures. This will be achieved by integrated working within the Council, especially through the use of planning powers.

In terms of existing stock the Council is aiming to provide a range of options to assist residents to implement energy saving measures. This will include an Energy Efficiency Scheme for residents of the City that will run for two years.

We aim to provide sensitive environmental features that harness existing features and improve the environmental character of the entire City.

# DRAFT HOUSING STRATEGY

Priority 8

*Improve the way we deal with vulnerable people*

Sunderland is a large City with a diverse population and the Council and its partners will identify and evidence the housing and supported accommodation options required to reflect the needs of all vulnerable people. Identified gaps in provision will be prioritised through various funding mechanisms including the Supporting People Programme which has three thematic groups within that, consisting of Social Exclusion, independent Living and Care and Support.

We will work with partners to ensure that housing and related issues of the White paper 'Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services' are delivered.

Homelessness has increased in Sunderland in recent years. The Council and its partners will continue to aim to reduce homelessness and the use of temporary accommodation such as Bed and Breakfast for homeless people.

The Council will also aim to reduce the number of homeless people across the city through the use of housing advice and prevention methods. The City will also carry out an assessment of need for gypsies and travellers.

Two of the most pressing projects for the City are to develop a Home Improvement Agency and develop the Extra Care programme. This will be of special benefit to the increasing number of older people living in the City.

Priority 9

*Partnership working*

The key to ensuring that the Housing Strategy is delivered is through partnership working with the Sunderland Partnership, the Tyne and Wear Housing Partnership, Sunderland's Strategic Housing

Partnership, Private Sector Forums and the Registered Social Landlords Forum.

These partnerships have a responsibility to ensure that all priorities are tackled and addressed and that the strategy is monitored and evaluated.

Priority 10

*Respect*

This Housing Strategy will embrace the Government's 'Respect Agenda'. Through this we will tackle crime and anti-social behaviour in neighbourhoods throughout the City, optimising the contribution that Anti Social Behaviour initiatives can make to creating more sustainable communities. We will encourage landlords to sign up to the Respect standard.

We will also work with families that have been excluded from accommodation, to address the issues that prevent them from maintaining a stable home.

**Resources 2006/07 & 2007/08 - An Overview**

Funding Stream – Capital	Amount 2006/07 (£ million)	Amount 2007/08 (£ million)
Housing Corporation – NAHP	6.1	0.94
SHIP2	2.3	3.1
English Partnerships	0.976	0
New Deal for Communities	0.100	0
ODPM	0.692	0.735
Primary Care Trust	0.020	0.020
Neighbourhood Renewal Fund	0.557	0.464
*note see below re NRF		
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>£10.745</b>	<b>£5.259</b>
Funding Stream - Revenue	Amount 2006/07 (£ million)	Amount 2007/08 (£ million)
Council Resources (Contingencies)	0.060	0.060
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>0.060</b>	<b>0.060</b>

Sunderland City Council has stretching aspirations for housing in the City but the funding it receives severely limits what the Council and its housing partners can achieve on behalf of all residents.

We aim to highlight the lack of funding that is currently available for new housing and adapting old housing in the City to regional and national decision makers.

**Monitoring of Progress**

The purpose of monitoring the Housing Strategy is to ensure that an annual update occurs and that progress on the action plan can be monitored and updated on a regular basis. All of this will be undertaken by the Housing Strategy Team and the mechanisms for monitoring the strategy will be: -

- Quarterly updates to the Strategic Housing Partnership Committee
- Annual update at the Regeneration and Community Review annual basis via the Consultation Programme

The City Council and the strategic partners involved in the implementation and development of the housing agenda recognise the importance of monitoring the delivery of the 5-year strategy and the associated actions and outcomes contained within it.

NRF funding. I have taken the figures from the cabinet report of 12 April 06 requesting endorsement of the full NRF prog for 2006/07 . Note this is subject to satisfactory project appraisal. It may be worth adding a note to this effect.

## Action Plan

**Aim 1 – Improve the choice of type, location and price to meet 21<sup>st</sup> Century aspirations and demands, which will reverse the trend of outward migration**

Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
Make the case for the City	Assist in re-establishing and contribute to the North East Housing Forum	On-going	Housing Strategy Team Housing Renewal Team	A co-ordinated voice for housing for the whole of the north east region	Head of Housing
	Submit evidence on behalf of the City into the Comprehensive Spending Review process	November 2007	Housing Strategy Team Housing Renewal Team Housing Options Section Supporting People Team	Aim to increase the amount of central government housing investment in the City	Head of Service Tyne & Wear Housing Partnership North East Housing Forum Northern Consortium of Housing Authorities



Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	Ensure that elected members are fully engaged in developing the housing agenda	On-going	Housing Strategy Team Housing Renewal Team Housing Options Section Supporting People Team Councillors Portfolio Holder	Awareness of housing issues in the City, and policy and direction formulation	Executive Director Head of Housing

Monitor local housing markets	Develop monitoring tools to manage the local housing market	March 2007	Housing Strategy Team	Highlight areas of perceived low demand and incorrect supply together with issues of sustainability	Housing Strategy Manager
	Review the outcome of the sub-regional Housing Market Assessment and investigate opportunities for more joint working	January 2007	Housing Strategy Team	Highlight areas of market weakness in the Tyne and Wear sub-region linked to Sunderland housing market issues	Housing Strategy Manager Tyne & Wear Housing Partnership

Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	Undertake a City wide Local Housing Assessment as prescribed by PPG3 and PPS3 (draft)	April 2007	Housing Strategy Team	Identify current and future housing needs and trends across all housing tenures and stock types	Head of Housing Strategy Manager Head of Planning
	Review policy in light of evidence on the City's housing market	Quarterly on-going	Housing Strategy Team	Monitoring and updating of outputs from the housing market assessment	Head of Housing Strategy Manager Strategic Housing Partnership
Intervene in areas showing symptoms of decline	Support the work of the New Deal for Communities – 'Back on the Map' programme	On-going	Housing Strategy Team Housing Renewal Team NRF	Co-ordinate the working on the planned Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment as to examine the most appropriate course of action for housing in the area	Housing Strategy Manager Housing Renewal Manager Planning Policy Manager Planning Implementation Manager
	Develop a set of indicators to measure the viability of areas and look at where targeted intervention should be considered before the need for 'major' environmental, social or economic intervention is required	March 2007	Planning Policy Team Housing Renewal Team Housing Strategy Team	Identify areas of market failure to best utilise available resources	Housing Strategy Manager

Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	Ensure that RSL's are encouraged to develop affordable social housing in the City	On-going	Housing Strategy Team Housing Renewal Team NAHP SHIP2	Build the most appropriate type of housing in the required locations as to meet housing need	Housing Strategy Manager Strategic Housing Partnership
	Continue with the Area Renewal Programme	Ongoing	Housing Strategy Team New Deal for Communities Housing Renewal Team Planning Policy Team NLP SHIP English Partnerships	Eradicating the worst housing conditions by developing options and housing programmes to deliver housing renewal	Housing Renewal Manager
	Introduce licensing for houses in multiple occupation	Ongoing	Housing Renewal Team	To regulate and ensure safe housing conditions in appropriate properties and comply with the provisions of the Housing Act 2004	Housing Renewal Manager

Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	Implement the Empty Homes Strategy	Ongoing	Housing Renewal Team	Reduce the number of long term empty properties by 30-40 per annum which blight neighbourhoods	Housing Renewal Manager
	Utilise clearance where it is deemed to be the optimum solution	N/A	Housing Renewal Team	Remove the worst private sector housing to enable sustainable communities to develop	Housing Renewal Manager
Co-ordinate response to affordable housing issues in the City	Develop affordable housing policy which will assist the delivery of housing on new developments using Section 106 agreements	Sept 2007	Housing Strategy Team Housing Options Section Planning Policy Manager	Ability to enforce developers to build affordable housing on new build sites through the use of Section 106 agreements	Head of Adult Services Housing Strategy Manager Housing Options Manager Planning Policy Manager Housing Renewal Manager Supporting People Manager

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Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	Develop and implement a range of revised Planning Policies through the emerging Local Development Frameworks Core Strategy and Housing Development Plan Documents (DPD). This is especially in respect of affordable housing and special needs housing	March 2007 preparation and consultation on emerging policies with final adoption may 2009 (Core Strategy Development Plan Document) and December 2009 (Housing Development Plan Document)	Planning Policy Manager	Improved planning framework for the provision of affordable and special needs housing	Head of Housing Head of Planning Housing Strategy Manager
	Investigate the potential for a simple common housing application form, register and waiting list	March 2008	Housing Options Section	Simplify application process for housing	Housing Options Manager
	Establish indicators to monitor effectiveness of an affordable housing supply (if a need has first been identified by the Local Housing Assessment)	On-going. (Submitted to GO-NE annually in December as part of a statutory Annual Monitoring Report)	Housing Strategy Team Planning Policy Team	Ensure the supply of affordable housing by type and tenure is matched to a geographically identified need	Housing Strategy Manager

Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	Promote mixed housing developments in sustainable communities	On-going	Housing Strategy Team Planning Policy Team Planning Implementation Section	Provide quality, choice and range of housing in sustainable communities	Head of Housing Head of Planning
	Ensure that sufficient land for new homes is allocated in the right location and is of the right type in the Local Development Framework to meet the needs and aspirations of the City's existing and future residents	Alteration No.2 (adoption February 2007) Core Strategy Development Plan Document (adoption May 2009) Housing Development Plan Document (adoption December 2009)	Development Control Section Planning Policy Team	To comply with the development strategy of the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy towards redressing the trends of net out migration from the City	Head of Planning



Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	Investigate the need for new social housing requirements as identified through the Local Housing Assessment	On-going	Housing Strategy Team Housing Renewal Team Supporting People Team Housing Options Section Planning Policy Team Adult Services Planning Policy Team	Sufficient affordable housing in the City is available	Housing Strategy Manager
	Balance the amount of new build against population changes	On-going		Aid to redress the trend of net outward population migration	Head of Planning Head of Housing

Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	<p>Ensure that the Local Development Framework identifies the most sustainable options locations for new housing in terms of accessibility to jobs, services, facilities and public transport and are built at densities which maximise the efficient use of land without compromising the quality of the layout and design</p>	<p>Alteration No 2 (adoption February 2007)            Core Strategy Development Plan Document (adoption May 2009)            Housing Development Plan Document (adoption December 2009)</p>	<p>Planning Policy Team</p>	<p>To continue both in promoting the sustainable communities objective and in exceeding the minimum of 60% target of new build housing on brown field sites. To ensure that policies set out in the interim Housing Strategy are brought forward through the statutory development plans process (unless material changes in circumstance indicate otherwise</p>	<p>Head of Planning</p>



**Aim 2 – Improve the quality and standard of housing and ensure that sustainable communities are created**

<b>Priority</b>	<b>What we will do</b>	<b>Timescales</b>	<b>Resources</b>	<b>What will it achieve</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Make sure all housing in the City is decent	Work with Registered Social Landlords to meet the Decent Homes Standard	March 2010	Housing Strategy Team Housing Renewal Team NRF SHIP2 NDC Funding	Ensure compliance with the Government Standard by 2010	Housing Strategy Manager Housing Renewal Manager
	Develop a Private Sector Housing Strategy	September 2006	Housing Strategy Team Housing Renewal Team	Provide the City Council and its partners with the strategic direction to deliver optimum private sector housing	Housing Strategy Manager Housing Renewal Manager
	Reduce by 70% the number of vulnerable households in unfit private rented sector dwellings	March 2013	Housing Strategy Team Housing Renewal Team NRF SHIP2 NDC Funding	Ensure compliance with the Government Standard by 2013	Housing Strategy Manager Housing Renewal Manager

Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	Produce a Private Sector Stock Condition Survey	April 2007	Housing Strategy Team Housing Renewal Team NRF	Understand and take informed policy decisions on the condition of private sector housing	Housing Strategy Manager Housing Renewal Manager
Identify and tackle poor standards of management in the private sector	Increase the number of Private Sector Landlords on the voluntary landlords accreditation scheme, and promote good management standards	On-going Continuous Programme	Housing Renewal Team	Greater Partnership working. Improved management and condition of Private Rented Sector. Reduction of ASB	Housing Renewal Manager
	Implement the 2004 Housing Act – HIMO licensing provisions	Achieved	Housing Renewal Team	Assist in the stability and sustainability of declining areas.	Housing Renewal Manager
	Consider the implementation of a Selective Licensing Scheme	November 2007	Housing Renewal Team	Greater control over HIMO tenure	Housing Renewal Manager
	Implement management orders when licensing is not possible	On-going	Housing Renewal Team	Control of mis-managed and empty properties	Housing Renewal Manager

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Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	Investigate the potential of a Rent Deposit Scheme)	November 2007	Housing Renewal Team City Homelessness and Advice Team	Improve management and sustainability in Private Sector  Will assist in protecting tenants	Housing Options Manager
Improve planning and design of the City's housing environment	As a replacement to the adopted Unitary Development Plan, ensure the Local Development Framework continues to provide the firm policy basis to promote good design in all future housing developments	Alteration No. 2 (adoption February 2007) Core Strategy Development Plan Document (adoption May 2009) Housing Development Plan Document (adoption December 2009)	Planning Policy Team Planning Implementation Team Housing Strategy Team Development Control Team	Ensure residential environments are safe, of good design and layout, are sustainable in construction terms, and are of the appropriate density	Planning Implementation Manager Interim Development Control Manager Planning Policy Manager Housing Strategy Manager
	Ensure the processes to deliver Area Action Plans (or other appropriate Local Development Documents) are in place where the need for intervention has been identified	On-going	Planning Policy Section	Formal steps are met to deliver the Local Development Document through the Council's statutory Local Development Scheme	Head of Planning

Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	Continue to work with the Housing Corporation and Registered Social Landlords and private sector developers to ensure design standards are complied with	On-going	Planning Implementation Team Development Control Team	To ensure at the earliest stage of the development process, all of the necessary planning requirements are met	Housing Strategy Manager
	Prepare and adopt a "Residential Estate Design"	Autumn 2006	Planning Implementation Section	Provide additional guidance to all developers of the standards required within new residential developments	Head of Planning
	The Sustainable Development and Construction Guidance to be used for planning advice	On-going	Planning Implementation Section	Provide guidance to all those involved in house building and ensure housing schemes incorporate sustainable construction techniques and methods	Head of Planning

Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	Ensure the Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report contains the appropriate monitoring mechanisms to ensure that planning policies are appropriate to achieving housing targets	Annually (December)	Planning Policy Team	Provide a formal mechanism to trigger where necessary review(s) to the relevant development plan policies	Head of Planning

**Aim 3 – Provide accommodation and support which meets the needs of Sunderland’s large and diverse population**

Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
<p>Improve the way we deal with vulnerable people</p>	<p>Update and revise the Supporting People strategy to reflect the changes in the National Supporting People Strategy with regards to the 3 thematic groups with subset client groups in order to determine priority need</p>	<p>March 2007 then annually thereafter</p>	<p>Supporting People Team                      Housing Strategy Team                      Housing Options Team                      Housing Renewal Team                      Supporting People Strategic Partnership                      Commissioning Body</p>	<p>The alignment of the decision making process for the development of schemes linked to identified need, strategic priorities and available revenue and capital where appropriate</p>	<p>Supporting People Manager</p>

Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	Continue to identify the accommodation and support needs of all vulnerable people living in the City and those wishing to return to the City	March 2007 then annually thereafter	Supporting People Team Housing Options Team Housing Strategy Team Supporting People Strategic Partnership	A continuum of prioritised need on an annual cycle based on current data and trends	Supporting People Manager Housing Strategy Manager
	Prioritise gaps in unmet need as agreed by the Supporting People Commissioning Body	March 2007 then quarterly thereafter	Supporting People Team Supporting People Strategic Body Supporting People Commissioning Body	A transparent approach to commissioning intentions	Supporting People Manager

Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	<p>Create a needs analysis methodology by Developing a model of datasets for collecting needs data</p>	<p>March 2007 then annual thereafter</p>	<p>Supporting People Team Housing Options Team Supporting People Strategic Partnership</p>	<p>It will provide a robust and equitable data source from which appropriate commissioning decisions can be made</p>	<p>Supporting People Manager</p>
	<p>Update the client group Strategies. Link the Client group strategies to the Supporting People Strategy and the 3 thematic groups and ensure a consistent approach for collecting needs data and analyse the data to produce a model of needs</p>	<p>March 2007</p>	<p>Supporting People Team Housing Options team Housing Strategy team</p>	<p>Identification of the type of schemes we require based on the evidence collected</p>	<p>Supporting People Manager</p>
	<p>Implement a strategic review of the type of services we have to meet the needs of youth homelessness by undertaking a comprehensive review of how the sector meets the advice and support needs of young people facing homelessness</p>	<p>April 2007</p>	<p>Supporting People Team Housing Options Team</p>	<p>It will create a sector fit for purpose based on the needs of the client group</p>	<p>Supporting People Manager Housing Options Manager</p>



Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	Create greater access to supported accommodation for BME clients by facilitating and monitoring access to accommodation with support options for BME people in line with the findings of the BME research	March 2009	Supporting People Team	Raise the number of BME service users accessing supported accommodation	Supporting People Manager Housing Strategy Manager Housing Options Manager
	Keep rough sleeping low	2011	Housing Options Team Supporting People	Rough sleepers halved to 1 person per night	Head of Adult Services Head of Land and Property Housing 21 Three Rivers Housing Association
	Reduce the number of homeless people through active prevention	March 2008	Housing Options Section	37% reduction in homeless acceptances through prevention	Endeavour Housing Association Centre point
	Reduce the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation	March 2008	Housing Options Section	Halve the use of B&B for homeless families	Housing Options Manager Supporting People Manager
	Investigate how to meet the needs of people as identified through the implementation of the White Paper 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say'	As detailed in white-paper	Local Authority Health Authority Other Partners	Compliance with the White Paper	Housing Renewal Manager Housing Strategy Manager Safer Communities Manager

Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	Ensure temporary accommodation of appropriate standard is available	March 2008	Housing Option Section Supporting People Team	Reduced rough sleeping and the use of B&B's for homeless people	
	Increase the amount of direct / immediate access accommodation for young people at risk by 15 units, 3 of which will be move on	April 2007	Supporting People Team  Supporting People revenue funding	A first stage assessment centre from where appropriate referral to the sector can be made in order to meet the service users needs	
	Development of new scheme of accommodation for people at risk of domestic violence	April 2008	Supporting People Team NAHP SHIP2 Supporting People funding	Increase the number of supported accommodation units to meet the target of 1 unit per 10000 head of the population	
	Carry out an assessment of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers	April 2007	Housing Strategy Team  Planning Policy Team  Chief Executive's  Housing Options Section	Understand the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and comply with Housing Act 2004	

Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	Support the implementation and actions of the substance misuse Housing Strategy	April 2007	Safer Sunderland Partnership Supporting People Team Housing Strategy Team Housing Options Team Treatment Providers	Improve effectiveness of treatments linked to supported housing options	
	Continue to use and monitor Housing and Returning Prisoners Protocol	On-going	Housing Options Section Probation Prison Service Supporting People Team	Good practice tool to provide support and guidance to offenders looking to be re-homed	

Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	Development a City-wide Home Improvement Agency	January 2007	Adult Services Supporting People Team Housing Strategy Team Housing Renewal Team Chief Executive's	To enable those in need of support to maintain their independence in their chosen home for the foreseeable future. This may include older people, people on low incomes, disabled people and other groups determined by local need and circumstances	Head of Housing Housing Strategy Manager Housing Renewal Manager
	Develop the Extra Care programme	First scheme – March 2007	Adult Services Supporting People Team	To enable a minimum of 200 units to be developed through re-modelling or new build	Head of Housing Head of Adult Services
	New Build	Autumn 2007	Housing Strategy Team		
	Re-modelling	Summer 2007	Land and Property Housing 21 Adult Services		
	Ensure best use of Disabled Facilities Grant Funding	September 2006		To ensure that resources required for Disabled Facilities Grants are reflected in RHB Funding	Head of Housing Head of Adult Services

Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	Review and expand the role of the existing Private Sector Homelessness scheme	December 2006	Housing Renewal Team Supporting People Team Housing Options Team	Allow it to act as a managing agent within the private rented sector, investigate its expansion and facilitate other agencies to make use of its access to accredited private landlords properties	Housing Renewal Manager
	Develop schemes in line with the priorities agreed by the Supporting People Commissioning Body	Ongoing	Supporting People Team	To meet the agreed priorities of the city	Supporting People Manager
	Include assistive technology in properties where appropriate	April 2008	Adult Services	Enabling people to remain in their own homes	Head of Adult Services Housing Strategy Manager
	Undertake a study on the Accommodation and support needs of the BME community	June 2006	Housing Strategy Team Supporting People Team Chief Executive's Banks of the Wear Project	Highlight the accommodation and support needs of the BME community	Housing Strategy Manager Supporting People Manager

Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	Publish the findings of the BME research programme for consideration within the Supporting People Strategy	August 2006	Supporting People Team	Raise awareness of the needs of the BME communities and create opportunities for service development	Housing Options Manager Supporting People Manager
	Ensure allocations policy meets the needs of vulnerable people	March 2007	Housing Strategy Team Housing Options Service	Ensure vulnerable people have equal access to properties allocated in the City	Housing Options Manager Supporting People Manager
Partnership working	Continue to work closely with the Sunderland Partnership and all its thematic partnerships	On-going	Tyne and Wear Housing Partnership Housing Strategy Team Strategic Housing Partnership Private Sector Landlords and Developers Registered Social Landlords	Ensure that Housing is reflected in the work of the Sunderland Partnership	Head of Housing Housing Strategy Manager Housing Renewal Manager

Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	Ensure Sunderland is an active partner in the Tyne and Wear Housing Partnership, and fully supports its development	On-going	Housing Strategy Team	Aim to increase funding into the City by ensuring a robust housing partnership for the Tyne and Wear City-region that can influence the Regional Housing Board	Housing Strategy Manager Head of Housing
	Continually develop the Strategic Housing Partnership into a dynamic and robust partnership supported by all housing agencies in the City	On-going	<p>Housing Strategy Team</p> <p>Sunderland Partnership</p> <p>Registered Social Landlords</p> <p>Private Sector Landlords</p> <p>Private Sector Developers</p> <p>Community and Voluntary Sector</p> <p>Sunderland residents</p>	Ensure that Housing is linked into the Sunderland Partnership and that all outputs of the Housing Strategy are evaluated and monitored	Housing Strategy Manager Head of Housing

Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	Support and work with the Registered Social Landlords Forum	On-going	Housing Strategy Team Registered Social Landlords	Registered Social Landlords have up to date information and are at the forefront of the developing housing agenda	Housing Strategy Manager
	Support and work with the Private Sector Forums	On-going	Housing Renewal Team Private Sector Landlords Private Sector Developers	Improved private sector stock condition. Better management in private rented sector Provide accommodation at an affordable price that meets aspirations of the residents of Sunderland	Housing Renewal Manager
Respect	Ensure housing services are of the highest standard	On-going	Supporting People Team Housing Strategy Team Housing Renewal Team Housing Options Section	People are treated equally and that all their needs are taken on-board	Supporting People Manager Housing Strategy Manager Housing Renewal Manager Housing Options Manager



Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	Ensure communication with service users respects their needs	On-going	Supporting People Team Housing Strategy Team Housing Renewal Team Housing Options Section	Ensure inclusive communication across all sections of the City's large and diverse population	Housing Renewal Manager Housing Strategy Manager Housing Options Manager Supporting People Manager
	Provide information in accessible formats	On-going	Supporting People Team Housing Strategy Team Housing Renewal Team Housing Options Section	All information is available in a format suitable to the needs of service users	Housing Renewal Manager Housing Strategy Manager Housing Options Manager Supporting People Manager

Priority	What we will do	Timescales	Resources	What will it achieve	Responsibility
	Continue the work of the Anti-Social Behaviour Team	On-going	Supporting People Team Housing Strategy Team Housing Renewal Team Housing Options Section	Creating balanced, safer and stronger sustainable communities and ensure the law abiding majority are put back in charge of their local communities	Housing Renewal Manager

## Housing Strategy Contact details

The Housing Strategy is a citywide document that has been created and continues to be developed by utilising the skills and knowledge of an officer 'Core Working Group' supported by a range of Council officers – the primary City Council contacts are listed in table 1 below.

Directorate	Position	Contact Name	Contact Details	Email address
Development and Regeneration	Director	Phil Barrett	0191 553 1501	phil.barrett@sunderland.gov.uk
Development and Regeneration	Head of Service - Housing	Alan Caddick	0191 553 1551	Alan.caddick@sunderland.gov.uk
Development and Regeneration	Head of Planning and Environment	Keith Lowes	0191 553 1564	keith.lowes@sunderland.gov.uk
Development and Regeneration	Planning Policy Manager	Neil Cole	0191 553 1574	neil.cole@sunderland.gov.uk
Development and Regeneration	Deputy Planning Policy Officer	Barry Luccock	0191 553 1577	barry.luccock@sunderland.gov.uk
Development and Regeneration	Housing Strategy Manager	David Smith	0191 553 1585	david.smith@sunderland.gov.uk
Development and Regeneration	Housing Renewal Manager	Derek Welsh	0191 553 1652	derek.welsh@sunderland.gov.uk
Development and Regeneration	Performance and Development Manager	Steve Hanratty	0191 553 7808	steve.hanratty@sunderland.gov.uk
Development and Regeneration	Housing Options Manager	John Fisher	0191 553 1640	john.fisher@sunderland.gov.uk
Development and Regeneration	Supporting People Manager	Gavin Elliott	0191 566 1711	gavin.elliott@ssd.sunderland.gov.uk
Adult Services	Head of Adult Services	John Fisher	0191 566 1876	john.fisher@ssd.sunderland.gov.uk
Chief Executive	Head of Performance Improvement	Sarah Reed	0191 553 1347	sarah.reed@sunderland.gov.uk
Chief Executive	Head of Corporate Policy	Graeme Farnworth	0191 553 1146	graeme.farnworth@sunderland.gov.uk
Chief Executive	Senior Policy Officer	Jon Beaney	0191 553 1132	jon.beaney@sunderland.gov.uk

## Key Documents

The Housing Strategy 2006 – 2011 has been built upon with information contained within the publications listed in table 2 below. This is not an exclusive or exhaustive list and will be built upon during the lifetime of the Housing Strategy. However, by taking this methodical approach it clearly demonstrates the 'Platinum Thread' methodology being undertaken in developing the Housing Strategy thus ensuring that any key sub-regional and local priorities are reflected in the Strategy, which, in turn reflects and is aligned with the over-arching national policy framework for Housing based upon the local prevailing situation.

All of these documents can either be accessed through the City of Sunderland website [www.sunderland.gov.uk](http://www.sunderland.gov.uk) or by contacting the Housing Strategy Team On 0191 553 1488 or via David Smith, Housing Strategy Manager. The Housing Strategy 2006 – 2011 can also be made available in Braille, large print, cd rom, audio tape and translated if requested.

Title	Published by	Publication Date
Quality and Choice : A Decent Home for All	Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions	April 2000
A New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal : The National Strategy Action Plan	Department for Communities and Local Government	January 2001
Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future	Department for Communities and Local Government	February 2003
Barker Review of Housing Supply Final Report (Delivering Stability : Securing Our Future Housing Needs)	Her Majesty's Treasury	March 2004
Northern Way Growth Strategy	Department for Communities and Local Government	September 2004
Sustainable Communities : Homes for All	Department for Communities and Local Government	January 2005
Sustainable Communities: People, Places and Prosperity	Department for Communities and Local Government	January 2005
Planning for Housing Provision	Department for Communities and Local Government	July 2005

Creating Sustainable Communities : Supporting Independence	Department for Communities and Local Government	November 2005
Consultation on a Strategy for the Supporting People Programme		
Consultation Paper on a New Policy Planning Statement 3 : Housing	Department for Communities and Local Government	December 2005
(PPS 3)		
View - Shaping the North East (Regional Spatial Strategy)	North East Regional Assembly	June 2005
North East Regional Housing Strategy	North East Housing Board	July 2005
Leading the Way (Regional Economic Strategy)	One North East	November 2005
Housing Strategy 2002 - 2005	Sunderland City Council	March 2002
Housing Needs and Migration Study	Sunderland City Council	April 2003
Private Sector Stock Condition Survey	Sunderland City Council	April 2003
Homelessness Strategy	Sunderland City Council	July 2003
Sunderland Strategy 2004 – 2007 “A Bright Future for Sunderland “	Sunderland City Council	September 2004
Older Persons Housing Strategy	Sunderland City Council	January 2005 (Updated and Revised - January 2006)
Extra Care Housing Strategy	Sunderland City Council	January 2005 (Updated and Revised - January 2006)
Interim Supported Housing Needs Statement	Sunderland City Council	February 2005
Corporate Improvement Plan 2005 - 2006	Sunderland City Council	March 2005
Safer Sunderland Strategy 2005 - 2008	Sunderland City Council	March 2005
Supporting People 5-Year Strategy and Annual Plan	Sunderland City Council	March 2005
Interim Strategy for Housing Land	Sunderland City Council	November 2005
Sunderland Housing Market Research	Sunderland City Council	January 2006
Mental Health Housing Strategy	Sunderland City Council	March 2006 (Draft)

Substance Misuse Housing Strategy	Sunderland City Council	June 2006 (Draft)
Supporting People – Needs analysis and recommendations for Black and Minority Ethnic Communities	Sunderland City Council	May 2006
Capital Strategy	Sunderland City Council	May 2006

## Glossary of Terms

### Housing acronyms

DFG	Disabled Facilities Grant
HC	Housing Corporation
HIA	Home Improvement Agency
HIP	Housing Investment Programme
HRA	Housing Revenue Account
LASHG	Local Authority Social Housing Grant
NAHP	National Affordable Housing Programme
RHB	Regional Housing Board
RSL	Registered Social Landlord
SHG	Social Housing Grant
SHMG	Supported Housing Management Grant
SHP	Strategic Housing Partnership
SHIP	Single Housing Investment Programme

<b>AA</b>	Administering Authority for the Supporting People programme – In Sunderland this is the City Council
<b>ARF</b>	Area Regeneration Frameworks - The City of Sunderland is divided into 6 area Regeneration Frameworks that provide a clear and comprehensive summary of the Council's regeneration priorities and activities for that area.
<b>BME</b>	Black and Minority Ethnic Communities
<b>Brownfield Site</b>	Previously developed site that could be re-used for housing development
<b>Business Plan</b>	A plan, which sets out what, an organisation has formally agreed and will be enacted over the next few years – usually 5 years.
<b>BV</b>	Best Value - A duty on local authorities to review the services they provide for local people and improve them by the best means available ensuring service quality and cost-effectiveness

<b>BVPP</b>	Best Value Performance Plan - The Council's plans to improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of all its activities for the public measured using Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI's).
<b>Choice Based Letting</b>	A way of allocating social housing
<b>Commissioning</b>	The framework for delivering how agreed services will be provided
<b>Commissioning Body</b>	The Commissioning Body is a partnership between the local authority, Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust and the National Probation Service, Northumbria and is responsible for the Supporting People programme
<b>Community Spirit</b>	The Citizens Panel present in Sunderland that has been consulted on as part of the development of the Housing Strategy 2006 - 2009
<b>CoSP</b>	City of Sunderland Partnership - The City of Sunderland Partnership is Sunderland's Local Strategic Partnership. Its role is to promote the vision for the City and drive initiatives and programmes to achieve that vision
<b>CSP</b>	Community Safety Partnership - Multi Agency Partnership including Northumbria Police and the City Council taking practical steps to ensure community safety across the City
<b>CS</b>	Community Strategy - A strategy for improvements to all services within the City, developed by the City of Sunderland Partnership in Sunderland this is called "A Bright Future for Sunderland"
<b>CPA</b>	Comprehensive Performance Assessment - CPA assesses Council performance in two dimensions, the quality of the current service and the council's current capacity to improve those services. Under the new structure of CPA the Council will be assessed as either 4 stars (reflecting the highest category of performance), 3 stars, 2 stars, 1 star, 0 stars, the assessment is undertaken by the Audit Commission.
<b>DAT</b>	Drug Action Teams - Local multi-agency coordinating groups set up under the UK Government's strategy for England, 'Tackling Drugs Together'



<b>DCLG</b>	Department for Communities and Local Government – A new central government Department was created on 5 May 2006 with a remit to promote community cohesion and equality, as well as responsibility for housing, urban regeneration, planning and local government.
<b>Decent Homes Standard</b>	A decent home is one which meets the current statutory minimum standard, is in a reasonable state of repair; has reasonably modern facilities and services and provides a reasonable level of thermal comfort
<b>DFG</b>	Disabled Facilities Grant – a mandatory means tested grant for owner-occupiers and tenants from the Local Authority. The grant covers the cost of adaptations to allow disabled people to remain in their own homes.
<b>DH</b>	Department of Health - The Department's role is to help improve the health and well being of the population of England. The Department provides strategic leadership to the NHS and social care organisations in England.
<b>DWP</b>	Department of Work and Pensions - The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is there to promote opportunity and independence for all, help individuals achieve their potential through employment and work to end poverty in all its forms.
<b>GIS</b>	Geographic Information System – computer tools enabling meaningful data analysis.
<b>GONE</b>	Government Office for the North East – the regional Government office which administers funding in the region on behalf of central government.
<b>HIA</b>	Home Improvement Agency - they are small, locally based not-for-profit organisations. They help homeowners and private sector tenants who are older, disabled or on low income to repair, improve, maintain or adapt their homes. They provide people-centred, cost effective assistance, and help to tackle poor or unsuitable housing, enabling clients to remain in their own home, safe, secure, warm and independent.
<b>HIP</b>	Housing Investment Programme - Funding mechanism, which gives approval to local authorities to meet their capital expenditure.
<b>HC</b>	Housing Corporation - Government agency created to register, fund, promote, inspect and supervise the RSL movement.
<b>LA</b>	Local Authority – a statutory body that aims to look after the best interests of the administrative area that it covers.

- LPS** Local Planning Structures - A range of structures for planning services.
- LSP** Local Strategic Partnership - A public/private partnership involving local business leaders, statutory and voluntary agencies and local community representatives working together to promote social, economic and environmental well being and ensure co-ordination of regeneration and neighbourhood renewal.
- MAPPVA** Multi-Agency Protection Panel for Vulnerable Adults - a multi-agency panel for the protection of vulnerable adults (MAPPVA) which establishes policies and procedures to respond to suspicions or allegations of abuse of a vulnerable adult.
- NAHP** National Affordable Housing Programme - The bidding mechanism used by the Housing Corporation to allocate capital funding on a local basis. It is the Housing Corporations mainstream investment programme.
- NASS** National Asylum Support Service – National organisation responsible for the support of asylum seekers.
- NECARS** North East Consortium for Asylum & Refugee Service – a consortium made up of local authorities, statutory agencies and voluntary groups tasked with supporting the Government's dispersal programme.
- NDC** New Deal for Communities – a Government initiative aimed at regenerating areas of deprivation, and in Sunderland this is 'Back on the Map' and is based in the Hendon area.
- NRF** Neighbourhood Renewal Fund – A top up fund to improve the delivery of services to the most deprived wards and neighbourhoods in England. The relevant targets for improvement are set within the Public Service Agreements (PSA).
- NSF** National Health Service's, National Service Frameworks e.g. an NSF for older people.
- PPS3** Policy Planning Statement 3 (Housing) - The new PPS3 will set out the national planning policies for housing, which regional planning bodies and local authorities should take into account in developing regional spatial strategies and local development frameworks.
- RES** Regional Economic Strategy (North East) - The Regional Economic Strategy (RES) sets out how the Regional Development Agency (RDA) is going to deliver greater and sustainable prosperity to all of the people of the North East over the period to 2016.

- RHS** Regional Housing Strategy (North East) - This document sets out the North East Housing Board's strategic aims and priorities for all housing in the region. It provides a framework that encourages the development of appropriate housing solutions at regional, sub-regional and local levels. It seeks to influence private and public sector investment decisions and sets the strategic context within which housing providers should operate. The strategy covers the period 2005-2021 but it will be subject to regular updates.
- RSL** Registered Social Landlord – usually a Housing Association but not exclusively and a term introduced by the 1996 Housing Act applying to housing associations registered with the Housing Corporation. RSL's have access to Social Housing Grant – public funding for the capital costs of providing housing.
- RSS** Regional Spatial Strategy (North East) - It is a vision for a better North East and for this to be achieved a planning framework is needed to deliver improvements and change. As the planning body for the region, the North East Assembly has taken the lead to progress this framework. '**VIEW: Shaping the North East**' is the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East Submission Draft. The North East Assembly in partnership with a number of regional bodies and local authorities to develop key policy recommendations has produced it.
- Safer Sunderland Strategy** Document containing key targets and performance indicators that will help fulfil its aim to reduce crime and disorder and the fear of crime to help create a safer environment.
- SP** Supporting People - General term used to cover the programme of reform of funding for housing related support services for vulnerable people as to improve their quality of life and independence. Existing funding streams for these support services were brought together and placed into a specified grant paid by Central Government from 1 April 2003.
- SP Grant** Supporting People Grant paid by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to the local authority to pay for the costs of providing housing related support services since April 2003.
- UDP** Unitary Development Plan – a single development plan, which is framework for development across the City to guide the development of land and to set out policies, and proposals that will help to achieve the plan's objectives
- YOS** Youth Offending Service - Service to prevent offending by children and young people. Social Services, the Police, local Youth and Crown Courts and the National Probation Service may refer children

**Youth Parliament** Young People's Forum for those aged 11 – 18 living in the City, where their views are expressed and can become involved in all local issues

DRAFT

### **Appendix 1 – Regeneration and Community Review Committee**

The Regeneration and Community Review Committee has overseen the development of the Housing Strategy 2006 – 2011 from the onset of the process, and the committee has provided detailed comments and feedback as it has reviewed drafts of the strategy. The committee has also ensured that a range of expert witnesses in 'Housing' have attended committee meetings during 2005 – 2006 to provide significant input into the development of the City's Housing Strategy. This significant study work is reflected in the overall production of the strategy and action plan. The key elements being the production of a precise strategy with fewer priorities enabling a clearer outcome focus within the strategy to be adopted.

# REPORT OF THE REGENERATION AND COMMUNITY REVIEW COMMITTEE

## INVESTIGATION INTO HOUSING STRATEGY WITHIN THE CITY OF SUNDERLAND

**SUBJECT** Investigation Into Housing Strategy Within The City  
of Sunderland

**DATE OF REPORT** July 2006

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### *Role of the Regeneration and Community Review Committee*

- 1.1 The Regeneration and Community Review Committee is an all-party committee which, amongst its range of responsibilities, is empowered to undertake studies into specific areas of policy and where appropriate make recommendations to the Cabinet.

### *Reason for Choice of Study*

- 1.2 At the beginning of the municipal year, the Review Committee agreed to undertake a study into the City's Housing Strategy.
- 1.3 The Committee considered that this was an opportune time to undertake such a study given that the Council and its partners are currently preparing a new Housing Strategy for the period 2006/09. The study has therefore provided an opportunity for members of the Committee to influence the future direction of the Housing Strategy within the city.
- 1.4 In choosing this topic, the Committee also recognised the increasing prominence of housing issues at both a national, regional and local level. The provision of high quality housing is a key element in securing the social, economic and environmental well being of the area. The availability of good quality, appropriate and desirable homes is a key feature of successful and sustainable neighbourhoods and communities.
- 1.5 The study therefore contributes to a key strategic objective of the Community Strategy; namely improving the quality, choice and range of housing in the city. In so doing, it has also contributed to the following key targets of the Strategy:-
- work toward the Government's decent homes target;
  - improve the quality and widen the choice of housing available to meet demand;
  - ensure we are progressing the housing support needs of vulnerable people in the city.

### *Remit of Study*

- 1.6 At the outset, the Committee agreed a remit for its study. This was to ensure that there was an agreed basis for the study and that a structured approach could be taken to the evidence gathering process.
- 1.7 The Committee agreed the following remit: -

"To consider the main issues relating to housing across the City of Sunderland and contribute to the preparation of the Council's Housing Strategy 2006/09".

1.8 In meeting the remit the Committee was mindful of the need to fulfil a number of key objectives:

- To consider the national, regional and sub regional context of housing in Sunderland;
- To consider the role of housing in the regeneration of the city and promoting its attractiveness as a place to live and work, stemming housing related migration and providing new desirable homes that attract new residents;
- To consider the social and economic forces shaping the local housing market;
- To consider the progress made in implementing the Council's Housing Strategy 2002/05
- To consider the priority areas to be addressed in the Housing Strategy 2006/09



## 2 APPROACH OF THE STUDY

2.1 In order to obtain a broad range of views and opinions we have collected evidence from a number of sources and through a variety of means. These include:-

- Background evidence from planning and housing officers from within the Council's Directorate of Development and Regeneration including Phil Spooner, Head of Regeneration and Housing, Keith Lowes, Head of Planning and Environment, Mushtaq Khan, Interim Head of Housing and David Smith, Housing Strategy Manager;
- Sharon Kane, Domestic Violence Policy Coordinator;
- Judith Morton, Neighbourhood Relations Team Leader;
- Claire Philipson and Anita Lord from Wearside Women In Need;
- Joanne Cholerton, Safer Communities Manager;
- An evidence gathering session involving local Registered Social Landlords including Ms Jenny Allinson, Home Housing, Mr Ian Heginbottom (Assistant Director of Development) Nomad Housing, Ms Andrea Malcom (Operations Manager) Cheviot Housing, Mr Peter Walls (Chief Executive) and David Crawford (Chairman) from Sunderland Housing Group;
- Malcom Thorpe, Private Landlords Forum
- David Walker, Operations Manager, Sunderland ARC
- Paul Airey, Paul Airey Surveyors and Estate Agency
- Michael O'Doherty, (Housing Strategy Manager) Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council;
- Monica Burns, (North East Regional Manager) National Housing Federation;
- Consultation with residents representatives from Sunderland Housing Group Washington area, including Dorothy Mordue, John Mordue, James Falade and Ron Maddison.

2.2 The Committee also undertook two major visits of housing services and developments within the city.

2.3 The first visit looked at the range of housing provision within the city for vulnerable people, including Sunderland YMCA (Toward Road), Salvation Army Centre (Swan Lodge), Lewis Crescent Teenage Parents Project (Hendon) and St Clements Court.

2.4 The second visit involved an overview of a number of major housing developments taking place within or adjacent to the city. These included: -

- Riverview, Low Street Apartment Development in Hendon
- Doxford Park Way, Saint Court, Doxford Park
- The Broadway, Grindon
- General's Wood, Washington
- Easington Lane Strategic Site
- East Shore Village, Seaham

- Aylesford Mews, former Wearside College Site, Sea View Road, Sunderland.
- 2.5 The Review Committee also sponsored a Housing Summit on 9 December 2005 held in the Stadium of Light and attended by around 85 representatives from the voluntary and statutory sectors, Registered Social Landlords and Residents Groups. The event launched the city's Housing Green Paper and provided an opportunity for consultation on the future direction of housing for the next 15 years. Guest speakers included Adrian Hadden (Head of Housing), Government Office North East and Aiden Oswell (Director), Tyne and Wear Housing Partnership.
- 2.6 During the year, members of the Committee attended two major conferences organised by the Local Government Association in relation to the study: - "A New Future for Local Housing Strategies" and "Planning for Housing: Addressing the Responsiveness of Housing Supply".
- 2.7 It is recognised that this year's study has dealt with a range of complex and demanding issues. In producing our report we hope that our findings will make a positive contribution to the development of housing and regeneration in the city.
- 2.8 Finally, the Committee would like to place on record its thanks to all those, both within and outside the Council, who contributed to the study.

### **3 HOUSING STRATEGY AND THE ROLE OF THE LOCAL HOUSING AUTHORITY**

- 3.1 In reviewing the Council's Housing Strategy 2002/05 and considering the priorities for 2006/09, it is important to be clear on what actually constitutes the role of the Council in relation to housing within the city.
- 3.2 During recent years, the Government has increasingly emphasised the importance of the strategic role which makes local authorities responsible for the overall housing needs of the whole community.
- 3.3 Based on the recently published document "Visionary Leadership in Housing: A New Future for Local Housing Strategy" (Local Government Association/Chartered Institute of Housing) and evidence provided by internal and external witnesses, we feel the role of local strategic housing authority can be summarised to include the following:-
- Provide leadership and long term vision
  - Address the overall housing need of the whole community across housing tenures
  - Provide a framework and direction for local action
  - Assess the current and future balance of housing supply and demand
  - Analyse the workings of the housing market
  - Coordinate and ensure effective joint working with others in the social, voluntary and private sectors
  - Tackle difficult cross cutting issues in the local area and link in with wider agendas such as sustainable communities, community cohesion, health, economic development, regeneration and community well being.
  - Engage with and act as a champion for residents
  - Enforce and raise standards
  - Help to achieve performance standards and better value for money
- 3.4 It is important that the new Housing Strategy incorporates these roles and responsibilities and reflects the central role of the Council in developing housing strategy within the city.
- 3.5 The Committee considers that the success of the Local Housing Strategy will be determined by how far it can influence the behaviour and actions of partners. Visionary Leadership in Housing refers to the value of Housing Strategies "having teeth" and the potential benefits of local authorities exerting greater control over the housing resources provided locally. The Committee would support this view.
- 3.6 In terms of content, the Committee would also suggest that the new Housing Strategy 2006/09 should include fewer, more focused priorities than in the past. This should help the document to be clearer and allow for resources to be better targeted.

- 3.7 The Strategy should also make clear links to other Council services and strategies such as planning, transport, education and leisure facilities.

#### **4 NATIONAL AND REGIONAL POLICY CONTEXT**

- 4.1 The Local Housing Strategy is part of a wider structure of strategies, policies and plans located at a national and regional level.
- 4.2 Any Local Housing Strategy therefore needs to accord with the national and regional policy framework set out in documents such as the Sustainable Communities: Homes for All, Regional Housing Strategy, Regional Economic Strategy and Regional Spatial Strategy.
- 4.3 The development of Regional Housing and Economic Strategies and the establishment of the North East Regional Housing Board (RHB) has led to a significant change in policymaking and grant distribution for housing in the area. In effect, housing investment is now distributed according to priorities set by the RHB. There is also greater competition for funds from bodies such as the Housing Corporation and resources are likely to remain scarce.
- 4.4 In the future, the Council will only be able to deliver its housing strategy as part of a region and in partnership with other regional bodies. It is therefore important that the Council works with, develops links and seeks to influence at a regional level.
- 4.5 However, at the same time, it is vital that local authorities should retain a central role in setting housing strategy and have the power to say what is required in their area within the parameters set at the regional level. Regional strategies need to reflect and take account of the particular needs and circumstances of a local area in order that the relationship between the local and regional level remains two-way and not top down.
- 4.6 As “Visionary Leadership in Housing” points out, local authorities are:-  
“Well placed to articulate the needs and potential of their area, to define priorities, to identify opportunities, to broker partnerships and to link housing action with other programmes in order to tackle deprivation, support economic development and promote sustainable neighbourhoods, They can ensure that housing strategy remains focused on achieving better outcomes for individuals living in their area”
- 4.7 It suggests that RHB’s may need to work more closely with individual authorities and sub regional groups on a regular basis in order for local authorities to have real input and influence over Regional Strategies.
- 4.8 By way of example, during the period of the Committee’s study into Housing Strategy, details were submitted on the draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and the response of both Sunderland City Council and the joint response of the five Tyne and Wear Districts.

- 4.9 The Committee supports the arguments contained in the response and agreed that while the RSS's focus was on regeneration of the conurbations, this was not reflected in the sub-regional housing allocations. It is important that new housing developments maximise the use of brownfield land and that greenfield site development is restricted in areas of Durham and Northumberland. It is also felt that the reference to Hetton and Houghton being not suitable for sustainable indigenous growth is unacceptable and that these areas should share in any emerging business and employment opportunities.
- 4.10 Clearly the policies contained in the draft RSS will have major implications for the out-migration of population from the city. It is therefore important that the views of the Council should be given weight and influence the content of the final version of the RSS.

## **5 UNDERSTANDING THE LOCAL HOUSING MARKET**

- 5.1 The Review Committee received evidence on the operation of the local and regional housing market from both officers of the Council and external witnesses including Adrian Haddon (GONE), Aiden Oswell (Tyne and Wear Partnership) and Michael O' Doherty (Knowsley MBC).
- 5.2 All referred to the value of housing market evidence and analysis in understanding of the dynamics of the housing market. Better market intelligence on the type, location and price of housing in the city can help us to monitor trends and identify areas of need and increasing demand.
- 5.3 Since 2002, the Council has made good progress in developing its knowledge of the housing market including: -
- Housing Needs Migration Research
  - Private Sector Stock Surveys
  - Empty Properties Strategy
- 5.4 However, more work needs to be done to identify the major features influencing housing supply and demand in order to assess existing and future housing requirements.
- 5.5 As part of a developing understanding of the housing market, it is important for the Council to work with other local authorities and other stakeholders such as RSL's, Estate Agents, Housebuilders and Developers.
- 5.6 The Tyne and Wear Partnership is currently undertaking a Sub Regional Housing Market Assessment. This is important in that housing markets do not follow local authority boundaries.
- 5.7 The Committee also referred to the considerable potential of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) to display large quantities of diverse information spatially. GIS has the potential to help us monitor and track trends and

analyse information at a variety of levels (super output area, ward, local authority, regional).

## **6 HOUSING IN SUNDERLAND**

6.1 In order to examine the housing situation in Sunderland, the Committee took evidence from a wide range of sources including officers from the planning and housing functions, representatives from Local Registered Social Landlords (RSL's) operating in the area, Paul Airey (Estate Agent), Malcom Thorpe (Private Landlords), David Walker (Sunderland ARC) and a representative from the National Housing Federation. The Committee also undertook a visit to view at first hand a number of the major housing developments currently taking place within and adjacent to the city.

6.2 Based on these discussions, a number of key issues have emerged, including:-

- declining population and out migration
- effects and consequences of low demand
- development of new build within the city
- balance of housing type and tenure
- need for affordable housing
- mix of housing type and tenure

### *Declining Population and Out Migration*

6.3 A major objective underpinning housing strategy in Sunderland is the need to stem out-migration. The reversal of this trend is seen as being essential to the continued regeneration and long term economic prosperity of the city.

6.4 The scale of the challenge facing the city can be seen from the following statistics contained in the Council's Interim Housing Land Strategy:-

- Between 1991 and 2001 the City's population declined by 11,300 to 284,6000. Mid year estimates indicate that this trend is continuing.
- The population could decline by a further 6,000 by 2011 (ODPM Census – based projection)
- Present out migration, coupled more recently with fewer births than deaths in the city have been the main factors in the population decline
- Approximately 45% of people who leave the city migrate out of the North East, mainly for economic reasons. Of the 55% who move to other parts of the region, a large proportion do so for a better home or environment.
- The decline of average household size is expected to continue largely due to the fragmentation of families but also due to a lower birth rate.

- 6.5 It is essential that the Council seeks to turn around this decline in population and stabilise the city's population at its 2001 level by 2016 and thereafter experience growth.
- 6.6 In terms of the effect on housing supply, it is estimated that approximately 5,450 new dwellings will be required between 2004 and 2021. A further 3,300 will be needed between 2011 and 2016 and 3,500 between 2016 and 2021.

#### *Areas of Low Demand*

- 6.7 The city needs to address areas of low demand, particularly where there is an oversupply of a particular housing type, such as areas with a disproportionate number of obsolete 19<sup>th</sup> century housing or unpopular housing stock.
- 6.8 In areas of market failure, this has led to people moving out of particular areas often leading to pockets of multiple deprivation and social problems.
- 6.9 There is also a need to retain and refurbish existing stock whilst clearing that which is unfit or obsolete stock and replacing it with better standard of housing.
- 6.10 The Council's Interim Housing Land Strategy estimates that approximately 5,100 houses will need to be cleared between now and 2011 and 6,700 between now and 2016. In all about 5,300 of these dwellings will be replaced on the cleared sites.
- 6.11 Malcom Thorpe and Paul Airey highlighted the way in which several areas of previously low demand have experienced a growth in popularity and a corresponding increase in house prices. It is therefore important that such changes in the local housing markets are closely monitored to anticipate any future trends and that housing policy is tailored to the circumstances of a particular area rather than adopt a blanket approach.

#### *New House Build*

- 6.12 Within the city there is land currently identified for nearly 11,000 additional dwellings; enough to meet identified need until after 2016.
- 6.13 The total level of new house building needed to both increase the stock and replace those to be cleared is 10,000 dwellings by 2011 and 14,600 by 2016. This will require an average yearly completion rate of over 1,000 houses compared with a present rate of about 700 per annum.
- 6.14 Such a level of new build will represent a significant increase over the numbers previously delivered and therefore constitutes a major challenge for the city.
- 6.15 As part of its research, the Review Committee visited a range of housing developments within the city. These included examples of inner-city apartments and major mixed development at Doxford Park and Aylesford

Mews, the former Wearside College site. The Committee was impressed by the progress being made on both the schemes. In relation to Aylesford Mews, the Committee referred to the very high quality of housing on offer at the site. It was also suggested that a further visit take place to Doxford Park Way later in the year to monitor the progress on the site.

6.16 The Interim Housing Land Strategy identifies the following strategic sites earmarked for housing development. The development of these sites is a major priority in term of regeneration and redevelopment: -

- Southwick/Carley Hill
- Sunderland Arc area
- Ryhope
- Chapelgarth (executive only)
- Shiney Row/Houghton
- Easington Lane

6.17 The Committee visited the Easington Lane Strategic site which covers over 40 acres and has the potential to deliver around 400 homes. The Committee commented on the great potential of the site and the planned scale of the housing development.

6.18 During discussions with the RSL's reference was made to the importance of speeding up the process for the approval of planning applications in order that speedy progress can be made in building new homes for the city.

#### *Housing Quality*

6.19 The city's housing stock shows a marked imbalance in quality, with a larger proportion of low value housing and a shortage of high value houses as compared to both the national and regional average.

6.20 This is illustrated below in a table showing the national, regional and local proportion of dwellings in each of the Council Tax bands:-

Area	A/B%	C/D%	E/F%	G/H%
England	46	36	14	4
North East	74	20	5	1
Sunderland	80	17	3	0

6.21 It is estimated that the shortfall of high value or executive housing (Council tax band G/H) in Sunderland is in the region of 700 dwellings. The provision of such dwellings is seen as essential to reverse the out migration of population from the city and enhance its long term economic prosperity.

6.22 There is a need to restructure housing stock to make sure we have enough housing of the right type and quality to accommodate people who want to live in the area.



- 6.23 While it is necessary to satisfy demand for executive homes, it is also important to meet increasing demand for affordable housing. The city needs more good quality family housing to reduce the current levels of out migration and to meet the rising aspirations of local people.
- 6.24 In term of the quality of the housing stock, Adrian Hadden (GONE) at the Housing Summit made the important point that at the current level of demolition and housebuilding in the region, homes will be required to last for 573 years. Therefore there will need to be a growing emphasis on retaining and refurbishing existing stock.

#### Case Study

Former Wearside College Site, Sea View Road, Sunderland

The former Wearside College site is owned by Bellway Homes (North East) and will comprise 111 houses and 30 apartments. The development will be a mix of detached properties, three story town houses and apartments.

Members referred to the very high standard of housing on offer.

#### *Affordable Housing*

- 6.25 During the past decade or more we have become accustomed to generally regard the South East and some other regions of the country as suffering from a shortage of affordable housing, while areas such as the North East have been characterized by low demand and in some cases excess supply.
- 6.26 During the last few years that perception has changed. Increasing house prices, long waiting lists of people seeking a home and high levels of homelessness would indicate that there is a lack of affordable homes in the North and this is replicated in the city.
- 6.27 A common theme during the evidence gathering process was the way it appears that low income households are being priced out of the housing market due to the widening gap between house prices and income. At current price levels many people may not be in a position to own a property even in the long term.
- 6.28 During our discussions with RSL's, reference was made to the need to secure an adequate supply of social rented housing in the city.
- 6.29 They referred to the continuing value of social subsidised and rented housing, arguing that rented and social accommodation should again become a tenure of choice. To achieve this, it was necessary to change the perception of social and rented accommodation and make it once again an attractive option.

- 6.30 The RSL's also referred to the importance of flexibility of tenure to allow people to move between owner occupation, part share ownership or rented depending individual need. While recognizing the attractiveness and value of shared ownership schemes in many cases, they noted that for many people shared ownership would be beyond their income levels for the foreseeable future. What was important was to focus available resources on need and on achieving ways of best helping people to have access to a home.
- 6.31 In conclusion, it is clear that more information is required on the level of need for affordable housing in the city in order to make an accurate assessment of the future demand. Too much affordable could bring with it the danger of oversupply and a decline in demand in those areas the Council are seeking to regenerate. Indeed there are now signs that the housing boom of the last 5-6 years has ended and that we may be entering a period of long term price stability.

#### *Mix of Housing Type and Tenure*

- 6.32 Evidence provided by both internal and external witnesses has pointed to the importance of promoting mixed developments of housing in terms of type, size and tenure/ mix of rented and private homeowners.
- 6.33 Such developments can ensure a balanced mix of housing containing diverse populations and different income groups, These can help avoid problems segregation, social exclusion and the polarisation of communities or groups.
- 6.34 During the evidence gathering process, the Committee received a range of views on the optimum balance between the provision of city centre apartments as against what could be termed family style homes. It is important that the Council in developing the city's housing strategy should look at these issues in terms of the city wide context and the need to provide for a suitable balance and mix of homes that best meets housing need.
- 6.35 Those giving evidence to the Committee also highlighted the growing issue of "buy to let" in the city. This had had the effect of forcing up house prices and rents in the city and could potentially make it more difficult to achieve stable, sustainable communities. It was noted that the Council could exert little control over the growth of buy to let in the city but it is important that the situation and its effect on the housing market be monitored and that the issue was tackled at a regional and national level.

#### *Role of the Planning and Housing Functions*

- 6.36 The strategic housing role of the planning and housing functions must reflect the new focus of the local authority role to look at the whole of the city's housing stock rather than the traditional split between new housing development and estate management.
- 6.37 It is important that the planning and housing functions work closely together in order to maximise the skills each can bring to the strategic housing role.

6.38 During the course of the study there has been clear evidence of effective joint working between the Planning and Housing functions. It is suggested that the current close working relationship between the Planning and Housing functions should continue.

## **7 IMPROVING THE STANDARD OF SOCIAL HOUSING**

7.1 The Local Housing Strategy provides a framework for the policies and actions of RSL's.

7.2 There are currently around 20 registered social landlords operating within the city. Based on our evidence gathering session with the RSL's, there is already a good deal of joint working and cooperation between the RSL's themselves and also between the RSL's and the Council.

7.3 This degree of joint working will be important in ensuring that the RSL's within the city meet the Decent Homes Standard by 2010. At the present time around half of RSL's meet the standard. Most have less than 5% failing. However three RSL's have over 30% failing.

7.4 The Council therefore has an important role in working with RSL's to develop an action plan for the attainment of the Decent Homes Standard.

7.5 The Council also has an important role as broker between Housing Associations, through regular meetings and partnership joint working.

7.6 We would therefore recommend that the Council work with the relevant RSL's to develop an Action Plan for meeting the Decent Homes Standard.

7.7 The Council also has an important role in enabling new social housing development in the city. This involves ensuring that the Council supports RSL's if they wish to develop appropriate housing in the city.

## **8 PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

8.1 A common theme running through the evidence provided to the Committee has been the importance of partnership working at all levels. It is pleasing that representatives from both RSL's and private landlords operating in the city referred to the positive relationships being developed with the Council and the extent of partnership working.

8.2 Partnership working is increasingly important in allowing the Council to make the most of the available resources and maximise the overall contribution to housing in the city. It is particularly important that the Council and its partners work together to maximise access to funding available through bodies such as the Regional Housing Board and the Housing Corporation.

- 8.3 The main body for partnership working on housing within the city is the Strategic Housing Partnership. This is made up of a range of stakeholders including estate agents, housebuilders, developers, RSL's etc.
- 8.4 Most new housing in the city has been and will be developed by the private sector. Therefore it is important that we also work closely with this sector in order to guide and influence the direction of housing in the city.
- 8.5 A key issue for the life of the Strategy will be the need to reinvigorate and nurture existing partnerships in order that they continue to make a meaningful and far reaching impact.

## **9 IMPROVING PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING**

- 9.1 A reoccurring theme of the Housing Summit was the increasing emphasis on private sector housing and ensuring progress towards meeting the Decent Homes Standard in that sector.
- 9.2 This will be a major challenge requiring a long term strategy. The private sector stock issue is potentially a bigger problem than that of social housing because of the limited powers local authorities have over implementation.
- 9.3 The Council's stock condition survey provides some indication of the scale of the problem with: -
- 80,999 private properties in Sunderland
  - 2,580 unfit dwellings
  - 1 in 5 of all rented properties are unfit
  - in some wards, one in three of all properties are unfit
  - 6,282 dwellings in poor repair
  - The total estimated bill for repair is estimated at a minimum of £36million
- 9.4 However, a lot has already been achieved:-
- The ongoing renewal of Eppleton and Castletown areas. This work will continue and expand to include the New Deal for Communities area of Hendon (Back on the Map).
  - The development of a Housing Renewal and Financial Assistance policy to target those in the worst housing and the greatest housing need.
  - The establishment of the Landlord Forum and Voluntary Accreditation Scheme with almost 200 Accredited Landlords and the operation of a successful Landlords Forum.
  - 105 Homes of Multiple Occupation inspected and hazard rated.
  - 188 properties made fit by grant and enforcement.
  - The Council has had great success with the Anti Social Behavior including the work of the Trailblazers scheme and work with private landlords.

- 9.5 The Review Committee referred to the need for the Council to be more proactive in identifying and taking action to reduce the number of empty homes in the private sector. The Council must seek to make full use of the powers that will be made available in the Housing Act 2004. The Committee looks forward to receiving a future report on the implications of implementing the Housing Act at a future date.
- 9.6 The Committee also looks forward to the forthcoming update of the Private Stock Condition Survey and the Private Sector Renewal Strategy.
- 9.7 In terms of the private rented sector, Malcom Thorpe referred to the increasing demand for private rented housing in the city. He referred to the potential benefits of the Council and private sector landlords working in partnership to bring currently empty properties back into the housing stock.

## **10 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

- 10.1 A major research study into the housing needs of BME communities is currently being undertaken by Banks of the Wear. It is expected to report back in March 2006. This study should provide the baseline information that the Council requires to better understand housing needs within the BME communities.
- 10.2 The Committee looks forward to the publication of the report and receiving details of its findings.

## **11 SUPPORTING VULNERABLE GROUPS**

- 11.1 The issue of supported housing for vulnerable groups will be a major priority for the Council during the lifetime of the Strategy.
- 11.2 In order to view at first hand the range of housing provision available to vulnerable groups, the Review Committee visited a number of establishments including: -
- ❑ Sunderland YMCA
  - ❑ Salvation Army Centre, Swan Lodge
  - ❑ Lewis Crescent Teenage Project, Hendon
  - ❑ St Clement Court

### **Case Study**

#### **Lewis Crescent Teenage Project, Hendon**

This new project provides temporary supported accommodation to 8 teenage parents and is provided by Tees Valley Housing Group

Members were greatly impressed with the high quality of accommodation and support on offer to teenage parents and the way in which the development has been

integrated into the local community. Members referred to the benefits of more such centre in other parts of the city

- 11.3 The visit highlighted the range of positive new initiatives being developed for vulnerable people in the city. Housing Corporation funding has been used creatively to refurbish premises and develop facilities to very high standard. Each of the initiatives were well integrated into their local area.
- 11.4 A major issue raised during the visit was the difficulty being experienced by projects in securing permanent accommodation for clients ready to leave an establishment. These delays were tying up much needed accommodation and potentially increasing the danger of clients becoming institutionalized.
- 11.5 As a result of the visit the Committee also highlighted:-
- the value of a common city or region wide waiting list to save on resources and simplify the application process.
  - that the YMCA project for homeless young people should be recommended to use only accredited landlords when referring young people on to permanent accommodation.

## **12 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

- 12.1 The Review Committee considers domestic violence to be one of the key priorities for new Housing Strategy.
- 12.2 In order to obtain a picture of the current position, Sharon Kane provided an update on the work of the Wearside Domestic Violence Forum.
- 12.3 It was noted that there had been 5,921 incidents of recorded in Sunderland in 2003/04 though it was estimated that the unrecorded figure ran at around three times this figure. This represented a 6.7% increase on the previous year.
- 12.4 There was a clear link between domestic violence and homelessness. In 2003/4 around 20% (177) of homeless people in Sunderland were as a direct result of domestic violence. This was the second highest cause of homelessness in the city.
- 12.5 The priorities for funding for the year ahead included: -
- Developing a sanctuary scheme
  - Promoting the Intervention Team
  - Providing on going multi agency training
  - Developing work with perpetrators and reducing repeat offending.
  - Extending the use of domestic violence teaching aids to all schools

- 12.6 In order to obtain evidence on the kind of work being developed on the ground, Claire Philipson and Anita Lord from Wearside Women In Need also submitted evidence to the Committee.
- 12.7 This included the findings of research undertaken on the development of a domestic violence sanctuary in Sunderland. The report was based on consultation with local victims of domestic violence. The scheme aims to give the victims of domestic violence the choice of staying in their own homes with a range of security measures rather than leaving and making use of local refuges and homelessness services
- 12.8 The conclusions found that such a scheme was largely untested and that many of the women questioned had serious reservations about their safety if remaining in their homes. The Committee considered that this evidence should inform any decision regarding the proposed development of a sanctuary scheme within the city.
- 12.9 The Committee supports the call for a city wide publication campaign aimed at encouraging neighbours and family members to seek support for the victims of domestic violence
- 12.10 It was also suggested that the Education Review Committee be requested to encourage the use of the Domestic Violence Education pack in schools.

### **13 HOMELESSNESS**

- 13.1 The Homelessness Strategy was agreed by the Cabinet in July 2003 and runs until the end of 2006. The Homelessness Strategy is also currently being reviewed and the Committee received an update report on the achievements and challenges faced by the service.
- 13.2 In April 2005, delivery of the Homelessness and Housing Advice Service returned to Council having previously been undertaken by Sunderland Housing Group.
- 13.3 The level of homelessness within the city has been a major issue of concern with a range of initiatives being developed to reduce the overall level. This has now been achieved through an increased focus on prevention and improved advice and information services.
- 13.4 However, there has also been a growth in the use of temporary accommodation, largely due to a lack of "move on" accommodation.
- 13.5 It is recognized that the supply of good quality temporary accommodation needs to be urgently increased. The Review Committee supports the efforts of the Council to seek additional provision for homeless families to prevent the use of bed and breakfast accommodation and the provision of a young peoples immediate access project for the city. An additional priority is the provision of further domestic violence refuge places.

- 13.6 A major review of the service has been undertaken by a consultant from the "Housing Quality Network". The consultants report has highlighted many positive aspects of the service with areas of improvement including the supply of temporary accommodation, improved performance measures and written and publicity materials.

#### Case study

##### Salvation Army Centre Swan Lodge

The Centre provides temporary accommodation to some of the most vulnerable homeless people in the city. The centre was only recently refurbished using funding from the Housing Corporation to provide 65 modern rooms and a stable environment. Members referred to the very high modern standard of accommodation available and the range of facilities on offer.

Staff at the Centre referred to the importance of preventing institutionalization among residents and ensuring that support was given to promote independent living.

Reference was made to the complexity of completing applications for different housing providers in a number of different areas and the advantages of developing a single shared waiting list covering the region

## 14 CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

- 14.1 The Review Committee has looked at the issue of consultation and communication from two approaches.
- 14.2 Firstly, the level of consultation involved in the actual preparation of the Strategy.
- 14.3 Secondly, the issue of communication in housing services generally, including arrangements for the involvement of tenants and residents.

### *Housing Strategy*

- 14.4 Based on the evidence submitted to the Committee there has clearly been a wide range of consultation undertaken as part of the preparation of the Housing Strategy.
- 14.5 This has included the holding of a major Housing Summit at the Stadium of Light, sponsored by this Committee to which over 80 participants attended covering a broad range of social, private sector and tenant representatives,
- 14.6 Methods of consultation have also included consultation with Area Committees, Housing Strategy road shows within the community, use of the MORI Survey etc.



- 14.7 The emphasis has been to put the views of local people at the core of the city's Housing Strategy.
- 14.8 It should be noted that the Housing Strategy itself is part of process for communication with partners and stakeholder. A well-structured Strategy can play an important role in promoting dialogue and influencing their views and actions.
- 14.9 During the evidence gathering process, the Committee received a range of views on balance between the respective demand for city centre apartments and what could be termed family style homes. It is important that the Council in developing the city's housing strategy should look at these issues in terms of the city wide context and the need to provide for a suitable balance and mix of homes that best meets housing need. It was apparent during the evidence gathering session, that each of the RSL's felt that they had been consulted on the preparation of the Strategy and that they had had the opportunity to influence and input into the document.

#### *Housing Services*

- 14.10 In order to find out more about the methods and techniques used to consult with tenants and residents, the Review Committee took evidence from Carla Keegans, Customer Involvement Coordinator with Sunderland Housing Group.
- 14.11 A number of themes emerged during the session:-
- Emphasis was placed on putting the views of residents at the heart of housing policy. This was achieved by a high level of community involvement with homeowners and private rented tenants also being involved in the process;
  - The involvement of tenants was seen as an important motor for service improvement;
  - Tenant satisfaction surveys showed a high level of tenant satisfaction;
  - For the future, the Group was seeking to increase the level of diversity of those involved in the consultation process and improve training and support to those involved. It was hoped to achieve a more bottom up approach to the development of the housing service;
- 14.12 The Committee also visited the Washington offices of the Sunderland Housing Group in order to discuss with tenants their views on consultation and housing development. The main issues raised at this event included:-
- that the Group had developed a broad range of methods for undertaking tenant consultation including Tenant Board members, Citizen Focus Groups, Local Citizen Panels and Tenant and Resident Associations;

- All of the tenants felt that they had something important to contribute to the housing service by way of their particular skills, knowledge and expertise
- Tenants felt that their view and suggestions were listened to and that they had real influence on the provision of housing services within the area. It was felt that the decision making process was transparent and tenants referred to a number of decisions that had been changed or were in direct response to the wishes of local people;
- Joint working with the Council was considered good though there were felt to be occasions where it was unclear who was responsible for a particular service. It was noted that this largely reflected the complexity of the stock transfer;
- It was suggested that the Council may wish to consider the possibility of piloting a Neighbourhood Agreement for the Washington area in line with the Government's forthcoming White paper;
- It was felt that the Councillor SHG Board members had an important role in feeding back issues to the Council;

14.13 The Committee referred to the great commitment and enthusiasm of the tenants who had attended the meeting and the ground breaking work being undertaken by Sunderland Housing Group in the field of tenant involvement and consultation.

## **15 ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

15.1 A major issue that has emerged during the study is the role of the planning system in helping to shape and direct housing.

15.2 The Planning function can exercise considerable influence over a range of issues:

- control over the release of land and influence over the location of housing and type and mix;
- use of the planning system to attract affordable housing;
- use of predominately brownfield sites;
- areas where growth should be constrained.

15.3 The planning function has also a growing influence over the quality of new builds and encouraging high urban design standards that are environmentally friendly and sustainable.

15.4 It is important to identify higher density housing developments on sites with good public transport.

15.5 The layout of housing developments should promote social inclusion and community cohesion and prevent social segregation and polarisation.

- 15.6 In considering housing in the city, it is important not just to concentrate on the physical condition of the stock. Adequate infrastructure should be in place to sustain new housing developments in terms of community facilities, transport, schools, health and leisure facilities.
- 15.7 During the evidence gathering sessions RSL's concern was expressed at the implications of the draft Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 3 that seeks to impose minimum building densities. It was considered that there was a danger in pursuing a blanket response to problems in other parts of the country which may well be inappropriate to the needs of Sunderland.
- 15.8 The planning function can also work to minimise carbon emissions and promote environmental sustainability and help move towards an increase the average energy efficiency of dwellings in the city by at least 30% by 2010. Of increasing importance will be the need to reduce fuel poverty to ensure that no households are spending more than 10% of their income on fuel.

## **16 MONITORING OF THE STRATEGY**

- 16.1 It is important that the Council regularly monitors and evaluates the effect of the Housing Strategy within the city.
- 16.2 This will be best achieved if the Strategy contains a clear targeted action plan by which to assess progress, with targets that are clear, focused and achievable. It is therefore suggested that the Directorate may wish to consider reducing the number of priorities set out in the draft Strategy.
- 16.3 It is also suggested that this Committee receive an annual update on the progress being made in relation to the Housing Strategy.

## 17 CONCLUSIONS

- 17.1 Based on the evidence gathered during the review of Housing Strategy within the City of Sunderland, the Committee has come to the following conclusions:
- 17.2 The Strategic Housing role is one of the Council's most important functions. There would appear to be benefits in developing the community leadership role to include greater powers and influence over housing providers in the city.
- 17.3 The Council can only deliver its Housing Strategy as part of a region and in partnership with other regional bodies. It is vital, given that local authorities are democratically accountable and sensitive to the needs of their local area, that they should have a real input into the development of regional housing policy.
- 17.4 Better market intelligence is required to understand the operation of the local and regional housing markets and determine levels of housing need in the area. There exists great potential in the further development of GIS within the Council.
- 17.5 A key objective of the Housing Strategy will be to stem and reverse the outmigration of population through a more balanced housing market and through the provision of more executive type homes.
- 17.6 There needs to be more research into the amount of additional affordable required in the city.
- 17.7 It is important that the planning and housing functions work closely in order to maximise the skills each can bring to the Strategic Housing role.
- 17.8 The Council has an important role in working with RSL's in the area to help them achieve the Decent Homes Standard.
- 17.9 A key priority for the lifetime of the Housing Strategy will be to make progress on the Decent Homes Standard in the private housing sector. The Council needs to make full use of its powers under the Housing Act 2004 to tackle the problem of empty properties and unfit houses. Good progress has already been made in the Eppleton and Castletown areas and this work will be rolled out into the New Deal for Communities area of Hendon.
- 17.10 More information is needed on the housing needs of minority communities in Sunderland. The Committee looks forward to the publication of research being undertaken on this issue by Banks of the Wear.
- 17.11 The Committee notes the good progress being made on the issue of domestic violence. The Committee welcomes the research undertaken by Wearside Women In Need on the proposed sanctuary scheme and hopes it will inform any decision on the further development of the scheme.

- 17.12 There is a need for a supply of good quality temporary accommodation for homeless people in the city. The Committee supports the efforts of the Council to seek additional provision for homeless families and the provision of a young peoples immediate access point in the city.
- 17.13 The Committee welcomes the new and innovative approaches being taken to consultation with residents and tenants within the city.
- 17.14 The Committee suggests that the Council consider the possibility of piloting a Neighbourhood Agreement in Washington area in the light of the Governments forthcoming White Paper.
- 17.15 It is important that the Council regularly monitors the implementation of the Housing Strategy. The Strategy should seek to contain targets that are clear, focused and achievable.

## 18 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 18.1 The Committee makes the following recommendations:-
- 18.2 That the new Housing Strategy 2006/09 include fewer priorities than in the past order to promote greater clarity and focus.
- 18.3 That more research be undertaken into the amount of land for affordable housing required by the city and a strategy developed to meet identified needs and to secure an optimum balance between different housing types and tenures, including apartments and family homes, shared equity schemes and social and private rented housing.
- 18.4 That the Council investigate the potential of using the provisions of the Housing Act 2004 to tackle the problem of empty properties and unfit houses in the private sector.
- 18.5 That the Council work with Registered Social Landlords and private sector landlords in the city to assist them in meeting the Decent Homes Standard.
- 18.6 That the Council investigates the potential for the further development of GIS in relation to mapping and monitoring the housing market within the city.
- 18.7 That the Council investigate the feasibility of establishing a common city or region wide waiting list.
- 18.8 That the identification of land to accommodate higher value housing be supported.
- 18.9 that the Children's Services Review Committee be requested to look into and encourage the take up of the Domestic Violence Pack in schools in the city.
- 18.10 That the YMCA be requested to make use of only accredited landlords when referring young people to permanent accommodation
- 18.11 That the Masterplan developed for the regeneration of Eppleton and Castletown be adopted as a model of good practice in the city. The current close working relationship between the Planning and Housing functions should continue.
- 18.12 That a further visit be arranged to monitor the progress being made at Doxford Park.
- 18.13 That the outcome of research being undertaken by Bank of the Wear into the housing needs of the minority community be reported to this Committee on its completion.
- 18.14 That the Council seeks to develop a hostel for perpetrators of domestic violence dependant on the availability of funding

- 18.15 That the Council considers the possibility of piloting a Neighbourhood Agreement in the Washington area in light of the Governments forthcoming White Paper.
- 18.16 That the Housing Strategy 2006/09 be reviewed by this Committee on an annual basis.

# ***Action on Petitions***



**ACTION TAKEN ON PETITIONS**

Council Members are asked to note the action taken in relation to the under-mentioned petitions which were presented to Council:-

- (i) **Petition from residents in the vicinity of Taylor's Public House objecting to the granting of a variation in their Premises License was presented by Councillor J. Howe on 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2006.**

The Director of Community and Cultural Services sent signatories of the petition a notice on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2006 inviting them to attend a Licensing Sub-Committee on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2006.

The petition was reported to the Licensing Sub-Committee who resolved to grant the variation in part i.e. they allowed later sales of alcohol on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays and authorised regulated entertainment.

Councillor J. Walton and petitioners were notified in writing of the decision.

- (i) **Petition from residents in the vicinity of Martino's Bar and Restaurant objecting to the granting of a Premises License to permit regulated entertainment and the retail sale of alcohol was presented by Councillor J. Walton on 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2006**

The Director of Community and Cultural Services sent signatories of the petition a notice on 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2006 inviting them to attend a Licensing Sub-Committee on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2006.

The petition was reported to the Licensing Sub-Committee who resolved to grant the application.

Councillor J. Walton and petitioners were notified in writing of the decision.



# *Notices of Motion*

**NOTICE OF MOTION**

Council Members are asked to consider the undermentioned Motion:-

**(i) Notice of Motion – Bus Regulation**

Sunderland City Council notes that October 26<sup>th</sup> 2006 will be the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the deregulation of bus services in the UK outside of London. We believe that in this period the interest of bus users has not been served well, furthermore bus patronage has reduced significantly, fares have increased substantially, many key bus services have been cut back drastically and some have been withdrawn totally. We believe that in the light of Sunderland's negative experience of bus service provision that the time is now right for a more robust form of bus regulation to be introduced and calls upon the Secretary of State for Transport to bring forward primary legislation to meet this end.

J. Hall  
C. Gofton  
J.E. Fletcher  
P. Tye

**(ii) Notice of Motion – Staff Green Travel Plan**

This Council recognises the need for all of us to try and reduce the number of journeys we make by car to both reduce congestion and our carbon footprint.

We also accept that we have a responsibility to take a lead and ensure that all Council policies actively promote alternatives to the car.

Therefore, this Council resolves to instruct the Chief Executive to bring forward proposals for a Staff Green Travel Plan which includes an enhanced package of green travel incentives for all Council employees and facilitates the phasing out of the Council's Car Leasing Scheme.

L. Martin  
P. Wood



# *Reports*

COUNCIL

27<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2006**Quarterly Report on Special Urgency Decisions****Report of the Leader**

The Council's Constitution requires that a quarterly report be submitted to Council on executive decisions which have been taken under Rule 16 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000.

This is the special urgency provision under which key decisions may be taken by the executive notwithstanding that the item was not contained in the Forward Plan and compliance with Regulation 15 (the general exception) was impracticable.

One such decision has been made at Cabinet since the last quarterly report, the details of which are as follows:-

<b>Decision Taker</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Description of Decision</b>
Cabinet	12/07/06	To authorise the Council to enter into a development agreement with the Developer, CTP, for the Farrington Row Redevelopment Scheme

**Recommendation**

That the Council notes the content of this report.





**APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES – REVIEW OF POLITICAL BALANCE ON COMMITTEES AND REALLOCATION OF SEATS ON COMMITTEES AND OUTSIDE BODIES – ALLOCATION OF “TOP-UP” SEAT ON ASSOCIATION OF NORTH EAST COUNCILS’ (ANEC) AND TWO SEATS ON THE GREAT NORTH FOREST PARTNERSHIP STEERING GROUP**

**Report of the City Solicitor**

**1. Introduction**

As a result of the new political balance it is necessary to review the allocation of seats on the Council’s committees and sub-committees. The Council is also asked to consider various nominations from political groups and the nomination of Members to sit on a newly established “top-up” seat on ANEC and two seats on the Great North Forest Partnership Steering Group.

**2. Review of Political Balance on the Council’s Committees and Sub-Committees**

The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 provides that where at any time the representation of different political groups on the Council falls to be reviewed it shall be the duty of the Council, as soon as practicable after the review, to determine the allocation to the different political groups into which the Members of the Council are divided of all the seats which fall to be filled by appointments made from time to time by the Council.

Recent changes in the membership of the Council’s Political Groups have resulted in the political balance of the Council changing to 58 Labour : 13 Conservative : 3 Independent : 1 Liberal/Democrat and it is necessary for the current allocation of seats to be reviewed.

Arising from the new political balance it will be necessary to transfer the following seats to the new Independent Group:-

**One seat on:**

Personnel Committee  
 Children's Services Review Committee  
 Health and Wellbeing Review Committee  
 Environment and Planning Review Committee  
 Regeneration and Community Review Committee  
 Planning and Highways Committee  
 Licensing Committee  
 Regulatory Committee  
 Development Control (South) Sub Committee  
 Development Control (Hetton & Houghton) Sub Committee

**From:**

Labour Group  
 Labour Group  
 Former Lib/Dem Group  
 Former Lib/Dem Group  
 Former Lib/Dem Group  
 Former Lib/Dem Group  
 Former Lib/Dem Group  
 Former Lib/Dem Group  
 Former Lib/Dem Group  
 Former Lib/Dem Group

Although the Standards Committee is not politically balanced, the constitution requires that at least one Councillor from each political group other than the Leader is represented so it will also be necessary to transfer the former Liberal Democrats Group's seat to the new Independent Group.

A nomination has been received from the Sunderland TPCT for the vacant, non-voting, co opted TPCT seat on the Children's Services Review Committee. The Council is asked to consider endorsing the nomination of a TPCT Non-Executive Director, Gwilym Lloyd-Williams of 125 Western Moor, Washington.

The Leader of the Council has indicated that the Labour Group wish to move a nomination of a new Vice-Chairman for the South Sunderland Area Committee, a nomination of a replacement Member on the Health and Wellbeing Review Committee and nominations of two replacement Members on the Gradings Appeals Panel.

The Leader of the Conservative Group has indicated that his group may wish to take the opportunity to move changes to its distribution of seats to group members.

Nominations in respect of the changes above and for the review of the Conservative Group (if any) will be submitted to the meeting.

### **3. Review of Seats On Outside Bodies**

The Leader of the Council has indicated that the Labour Group wish to nominate a replacement Member to sit on The Box Youth Project and a replacement Member to sit on the Thorney Close Action and Enterprise Centre Management Board.

### **4. Allocation of ANEC "Top-Up" Seat and Two Seats on the Great North Forest Partnership Steering Group**

The Council has been advised that an additional four plenary seats have been established on ANEC for Tyne and Wear. Following discussions the Leader of South Tyneside Council agreed that the four seats could be allocated to Sunderland, Newcastle, Gateshead and North Tyneside Councils. This seat is additional to the six seats currently allocated to Sunderland. The Council is therefore invited to nominate a Member to serve on ANEC.

The Council currently holds one seat on the Board of North East Community Forests Limited and has now been invited to nominate two Members to sit on the newly established Great North Forest Partnership Steering Group. The Council is therefore invited to nominate two Members to serve on the Great North Forest Partnership Steering Group.

## 5. Recommendations

The Council is recommended to consider: -

- (i) identifying one seat on each of the Personnel and Children's Services Review Committees to be vacated,
- (ii) the transfer of one seat on each of the under mentioned Committees to the Independent Group and the Independent Group's nominations thereto: -
  - Personnel Committee
  - Children's Services Review Committee
  - Health and Wellbeing Review Committee
  - Environment and Planning Review Committee
  - Regeneration and Community Review Committee
  - Planning and Highways Committee
  - Licensing Committee
  - Regulatory Committee
  - Development Control (South) Sub Committee
  - Development Control (Hetton & Houghton) Sub Committee,
- (iii) the Independent Group's nomination in respect of the former Liberal Democrats seat on the Standards Committee,
- (iv) the TPCT's nomination to the Children's Services Review Committee,
- (v) the nomination of a new Vice-Chairman for the South Sunderland Area Committee,
- (vi) the Majority Group's nominations of a replacement Member on the Health and Wellbeing Review Committee,
- (vii) the Majority Group's nominations of two replacement Members on the Gradings Appeals Panel,
- (viii) the Majority Group's nominations of one replacement Member on the Box Youth Project and one on the Thorney Close Action and Enterprise Centre Management Board,
- (ix) the nominations (if any) of the Leader of the Conservative Group,
- (x) the nomination of a Member to the additional plenary seat on ANEC, and
- (xi) the nomination of two Members to the Great North Forest Partnership Steering Group

