

ENVIRONMENT AND ATTRACTIVE CITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 12 SEPTEMBER 2011

RESPONSE FROM CABINET – 22 JUNE 2011

POLICY REVIEW 2010/11 – SUNDERLAND ‘THE PLACE’

JOINT REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CITY SERVICES AND THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR SAFER CITY AND CULTURE

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide feedback from the Cabinet meeting held on 22 June 2011, which considered the Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee’s Policy Review into Sunderland ‘the Place’.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The investigation into the introduction of Sunderland ‘the Place’ conducted by the Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee falls primarily under the remit of the City Services and Office of the Chief Executive Directorates and the Safer City and Culture Portfolio Holder’s responsibilities.
- 2.2 On 22 June 2011, Cabinet considered the Final Report of the Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee into Sunderland ‘the Place’. This report provides feedback from the Portfolio Holder following the Cabinet’s consideration of, and decisions in relation to this Committee’s recommendations.
- 2.3 Following on from this report, progress towards completion of the actions will be monitored through the Action Plan, with six monthly monitoring reports to be presented to the Committee.

3. RESPONSE FROM CABINET TO THE POLICY REVIEW

- 3.1 Following consideration of the Final Report, Cabinet approved the recommendations in their entirety. Details of each recommendation and proposed actions to be taken following approval by Cabinet are provided in the Action Plan attached at **Appendix A**.
- 3.2 Cabinet thanked the Committee and its officers for their hard work in undertaking the policy review and additional work.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That Members note the proposed actions detailed within the Action Plan, appended to this report (**Appendix A**) and seek clarification on its content where felt appropriate.

5. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 5.1 The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:-

(i) Cabinet Agenda, 22 June 2011.

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Appendix A

Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee Sunderland 'the Place': Policy Review recommendations 2010/11

Ref	Recommendation	Action	Owner	Due Date	Progress Commentary
(a)	That there is a clear understanding of what the council and partners wish to achieve for Sunderland the Place and all activity should contribute to the core values of the council and the strategic objectives of People/Place/Economy	To refresh the existing Sunderland Strategy and partnership arrangements, taking into full consideration the findings of the review and ensuring that "place" is fully embedded	Assistant Chief Executive (SR)	April 2012	Work has already commenced to refresh the existing overarching strategy with consideration being given to the values and the themes of People, Place and Economy.
(b)	That work continues across the council and partners to give the residents of the city opportunity to tell the story of Sunderland and its unique heritage, communities and natural assets	To seek opportunities to tell the story of Sunderland through community and cultural activities including festivals and events, heritage and tourism projects and library programme	Head of Culture and Tourism (CDA)	May 2012	A lot of related work is ongoing through cultural activity and day to day delivery. A recently formed group 'Heritage in Sunderland' (Sunderland Stories) has been established to consider how heritage can influence at a more strategic level.
(c)	That the findings from the review regarding signage for the University of Sunderland be considered by the Signage Group as part of a wider signage review for the city, referring to previous findings of the Legible City review	Consider signage for University of Sunderland in the wider review of City Centre signage. This work will endeavour to find a workable and affordable 'look and feel' for City Centre signage	External Communications Manager (JP)	December 2011	Reading through Legible City recommendations. Small delivery group has met and an initial scoping document is being prepared.

(d)	That residents, community groups and historical societies be involved in the development of the City Villages concept as articulated in the Economic Masterplan	Process for consideration of city village concept as a practical tool to involve residents, community groups and historical societies in developing and testing	SPPM	September 2011	A project was started in Spring 2011 to develop an approach to building community resilience based upon the City Villages concept. Initial work is focusing on defining the desirable characteristics of a City Village and then testing these with local residents and groups as proposed.
(e)	That work be undertaken by the council and partners to identify forecasted future demand for hotel accommodation in the city in order to identify any capacity issues in hosting visitors to the city	To review the current information collected re accommodation capacity and take-up across the city and implement an improved and sustained working relationship with local businesses	Head of Culture and Tourism (CDA)	May 2012	Activity still on going. Economic downturn has seriously affected developers interest. Working relationships are through tourism development and further work to be done on supporting tourism related businesses
(f)	That the council's communications be developed to explore innovative and effective methods of promoting positive outcomes for the city, locally, nationally and internationally	<p>Communications is looking at new strategic communications models, as well exploring tactical delivery opportunities, such as new technologies</p> <p>In addition a strategic international Investment Marketing campaign is being developed now as part of the Reputation and Influencing Programme</p>	<p>External Communications Manager (JP)</p> <p>Director of Communications and Corporate Affairs (DL)</p>	<p>November 2011</p> <p>September 2011</p>	<p>Positively promoting Sunderland as a distinctive city locally, nationally and internationally remains a priority for Communications. Specific projects planned for the autumn include updating the visitor website and developing new web platforms and communications for residents and visitors.</p> <p>The international economic development work phase 1 will be completed by December 2011.</p>

(g)	That the city's Ambassador Programme be further developed with a structured role definition and programme of work, and residents, businesses, council staff and high profile persons originating from Sunderland be invited to join	The city's ambassador programme is currently being reviewed as part of the Reputation and Influencing programme, with a view to developing a more structured approach and annual programme of events for both business and community ambassadors	Director of Communications and Corporate Affairs (DL)	December 2011	A review of the current ambassadors is underway. This involves consulting with members to gather feedback on how they would like to become involved in order to strengthen and broaden the Ambassadors Programme.
(h)	That the impact of efforts made to raise the profile of the city be continually monitored to ensure tangible economic benefits to the city are achieved	To review the existing data collection (STEAM / Visitor Surveys) to establish a baseline against which to monitor the economic benefits of an enhanced tourism and visitor profile	Head of Culture and Tourism (CDA)	Sept 2011	Baselines have now been set and targets drawn up in order to measure the economic benefits.