

## CABINET MEETING – 29<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2009

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET

**Title of Report:**

Community Leadership Programme

**Author(s):**

Joint Report of the Chief Executive and City Solicitor

**Purposes of Report:**

The purpose of this report is to:

- i. Request Cabinet approval of proposals designed to enable continued effective implementation of the Community Leadership Programme.
- ii. Request that Cabinet recommends to Council that the Constitution is amended as set out in this report.

**Description of Decision:**

That Cabinet approve next steps proposals relating to continued development and implementation of the Community Leadership Programme as set out in section 6 of this report to take effect from Annual Council (13<sup>th</sup> May 2009)

That Council be recommended to approve the changes to the Constitution which are set out in section 6 of this report to take effect from Annual Council (13<sup>th</sup> May 2009).

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

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

**Suggested reason(s) for Decision:**

The Community Leadership Programme is at a crucial stage in its development. In its drive to achieve sustainable improvements to the way that key elements of the City's governance structure work together, it will, where necessary, inevitably identify the need for changes to current policy and practice. Changes proposed within this report are considered necessary in order to enable the Programme to proceed in a way which will maximise chances of achieving Programme objectives and outcomes in a timely and effective manner. Importantly, the changes proposed will also help to embed changes by rooting them in the Constitution.

Proposed changes to Cabinet Portfolio responsibilities are designed to promote a direct alignment of Cabinet Portfolios with the five strategic objectives of the Sunderland Strategy, with revised remits for Review Committees and to emphasise both the inward and outward-facing nature of Cabinet as a principal focus of Community Leadership within the City. Proposals also reflect the main strategic and other issues facing the Council and Sunderland at the present time.

**Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:**  
No other alternative options are proposed. The proposals identified in this report have been identified as the Programme has developed and are considered necessary to enable timely and effective implementation of the Programme to proceed.

**Is this a “Key Decision” as defined in the Constitution?**

No

**Is it included within the Forward Plan?**

No

**Relevant Review Committee:**

Policy and Coordination

**COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME**

**Joint Report of the Chief Executive and City Solicitor**

**1.0 Purposes of the Report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

Request Cabinet approval of proposals designed to enable effective implementation of the Community Leadership Programme.

Request that Cabinet recommends to Council that the Constitution is amended as set out in this report.

**2.0 Description of Decision**

2.1 That Cabinet approve next steps proposals relating to continued development and implementation of the Community Leadership Programme as set out in section 6 of this report to take effect from Annual Council (13<sup>th</sup> May 2009).

2.2 That Council be recommended to approve the changes to the Constitution which are set out in section 6 of this report to take effect from Annual Council (13<sup>th</sup> May 2009).

**3.0 Background**

3.1 For several months Members have been engaged in development of the Community Leadership Programme. The Community Leadership Programme (CLP) aims to accelerate development and embedding of the 'One Council, One Sunderland' approach which is necessary to meet community leadership challenges involved in successful delivery of the Sunderland Strategy. Successful implementation will impact not only upon actual quality of life within the City, but also upon perceptions of the Council as an efficient, effective community leader.

3.2 The Programme is based upon an analysis of the capacity of current partnership arrangements in Sunderland to deliver the Sunderland Strategy. It is also based upon an extensive review of the operational experiences of Members and upon their capacity to play leading community leadership roles at all levels of the LSP and sub-regional and regional governance as champions of performance improvement, problem solving and 'getting things done.'

3.2 The Programme is also a direct and positive response to an increasingly strong policy and legislative framework featuring the Local Government Act, Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act and Sustainable Communities Act which all serve to emphasise the clear, central Community

Leadership role of Councils with visible, active and effective Councillors at their heart.

#### **4.0 Current Position**

4.1 The initial phase of the Programme has concentrated upon gathering views, opinions and proposals for improvement from Members. This has been achieved through individual discussions, workshops (in October, December and March), other events, group discussions at Area Committee meetings and through ongoing engagement with Cabinet, Area Chairs and the Member Quality Assurance Group set up as a task and finish group by Policy and Coordination Review committee.

4.2 Feedback from Members has been used to develop a range of initiatives and 'products' which support the achievement of Programme objectives and outcomes. These have included

- Fundamental review of Area Committees, their number, boundaries, priorities, method of operation and agenda balance
- Ongoing review of the Local Strategic Partnership, its structures, business processes, membership and the effectiveness of both its engagement with the Council and the Council's engagement with it
- Supporting the Review of Scrutiny to achieve Community Leadership Programme outcomes
- Fundamental review of customer service to Members. This has resulted in the agreement of a role definition for Community Leadership Councillors, the identification of key support requirements, Member's 'top ten issues,' the recently launched Service Directory, Member Satisfaction Survey and the identification and training of key Front Line Support and other Officers
- Proposals for the development of a more locally-relevant, proactive 'Recognition for Action' campaign to promote action taken by the Council more, speedily and effectively
- Development of new systems and processes (such as performance management and problem-solving), which will promote clearer, more effective decision making and accountability
- A review of how the Council can improve the degree to which its services and those of its partners are targeted, customised and responsive to local circumstances and customer feedback

4.3 In overall terms the intention has been to put as much of the essential governance 'infrastructure' for the Programme into place as possible in time or the start of the 2009/10 Municipal Year. This has involved changes to Area, Scrutiny and LSP structures, agreement on agenda content, key protocols, role definitions and the establishment of Project Boards to drive action on each of currently seven projects within the Programme. At the same time, however, much important developmental work on Member support, partner engagement, systems and processes has also been undertaken. This means that the Council is well placed to move towards further 'roll out' of the Programme at the earliest opportunity in the new Municipal Year.

## 5.0 Future Development of the Programme

5.1 During the next Municipal Year it is planned to develop and implement the Programme not only on an urgent basis but in a way which continues to engage Members as fully as possible in the design, development and review of improvement actions. In broad terms it is envisaged that the Programme will develop as follows:

End May/ Early June

Area Committee structures in place, new agenda operating, new budget management procedures operating, pilot problem solving exercises being undertaken, agreement reached on proposals and timescales for partner engagement in Area arrangements

Area Committees consider 'state of the Area' analyses as the basis for ongoing improvements in the targeting of efforts and in developing most appropriate methods and approaches to service delivery

Scrutiny review recommendations agreed. New Overview and Scrutiny Committee structures in place, all operating protocols in final draft form

Revised LSP structures largely in place, clear proposals for senior Member engagement with all elements of the LSP structure agreed

Service Directory in finalised form, feedback from Member Satisfaction Survey used to confirm priorities for next steps activity on improving customer service for Members. Officer and Member development proceeding

Initial discussions with Members on proposals for the first phase of the Recognition for Action Campaign. Initial action proceeding

July/August	New Performance Management System being rolled out. Member awareness and training underway
September	Proposals for the first wave of 'Responsive Local Services' project activity agreed. Implementation proceeding
	Monitoring of front line service quality by Area Committees intensifies
	Main launch of Recognition for Action campaign
December	Second wave of Responsive Local Services Project activity agreed; implementation proceeds

- 5.2 In order to enable Programme development and implementation to proceed in an effective and timely manner it is considered important to review, refresh and update key elements of the current policy framework as set down, in this case, in the Constitution. Proposals will therefore require consideration by full Council.

## **6.0 Proposals for Cabinet and Council Consideration**

- 6.1 Cabinet is requested to consider and recommend to Council the following changes to the Constitution:

1. To change relevant sections of the Constitution in order to confirm new Portfolio responsibilities as detailed in Annex 1 (to follow).
2. To change relevant sections of the Constitution to incorporate changes relating to the Council's Scrutiny functions as detailed in Annex 2 (to follow). These take in revisions to the Committee names and terms of reference previously approved by Cabinet in the light of the proposed revisions to Portfolio responsibilities.

- 6.2 Cabinet will note that the Constitution will also be revised to incorporate necessary non-substantive amendments to reflect these changes, together with those changes in the number and nature of Area Committees approved by Council in November 2008.

- a. remove references to six Area Committees and replace with references to five Area Committees.
- b. remove references to Area Regeneration Frameworks and replace with references to 'Local Area Plans.'

- 6.3 Cabinet is also requested to agree to receive a future report which will focus upon policy or constitutional implications of changes to Area Committee operation, which are currently being discussed with Members, and which will request consideration of final draft Local Area Plans.

## **7.0 Reasons for the Decision**

- 7.1 The Community Leadership Programme is at a crucial stage in its development. In its drive to achieve sustainable improvements to the way that key elements of the City's governance structure work together, it will, where necessary, inevitably identify the need for changes to current policy and practice. Changes proposed within this report are considered necessary in order to enable the Programme to proceed in a way which will maximise chances of achieving Programme objectives and outcomes in a timely and effective manner. Importantly, the changes proposed will also help to embed changes by rooting them in the Constitution.
- 7.2 Proposed changes to Cabinet Portfolio responsibilities are designed to promote a direct alignment of Cabinet Portfolios with the five strategic objectives of the Sunderland Strategy, with revised remits for Review Committees and to emphasise both the inward and outward-facing nature of Cabinet as a principal focus of Community Leadership within the City. Proposals also reflect the main strategic and other issues facing the Council and Sunderland at the present time.

## **8.0 Alternative Options**

- 8.1 No other alternative options are proposed. The proposals identified in this report have been identified as the Programme has developed and are considered necessary to enable timely and effective implementation of the Programme to proceed.

## **9.0 Relevant Considerations or Consultations**

- (a) **Legal Implications**  
Proposals for amendment to the Constitution require the approval of full Council.
- (b) **Policy Implications**  
Proposals will form the basis for next steps planning and action on a key priority of the Council and are therefore considered to be aligned with the policy framework and Corporate Improvement Priorities.

## **10.0 Background Papers**

Community Leadership Programme documentation  
Notes of project board meetings  
Summary notes of Member Workshops and Quality Assurance Group

