

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE – 2009/10

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1 Why has the report come to the Committee

- 1.1 To seek the views of members on a report setting out the operation and achievements of the Committee over the last year.
- 1.2 The report, together with the comments of members, will be submitted to the Management Scrutiny Committee on 29 April 2010. The report will then be incorporated into an Annual Scrutiny Report which is being prepared for the service as a whole.

2 Background

- 2.1 In June 2009, the members of the Scrutiny Committee agreed their annual work programme for the municipal year 2009/10. The Work Programme brought together the issues raised by members as the major priorities and challenges facing the city for the year ahead.
- 2.2 In drawing up the work programme, every effort was made to retain a degree of flexibility in the workload in order to allow the Committee to deal with issues of immediate concern.
- 2.3 The following section sets out the suggested content of the annual report of the Committee:-

3 Annual Report of the Committee

- 3.1 When the Committee was considering which issues to include in its work programme we agree to focus on the introduction of 20 mph zones; the provision of allotments and the quality of the city's public transport system. This reflected a conscious attempt to build on the work of last years Committee and focus on a number of key priorities for the city.

The Committee set up a Task and Finish Group to look at the implications of introducing 20mph zones in the city involving discussions with Council officers, the Police, Northumbria Safer Roads Initiative and a visit to view the operation of such zones at North Tyneside Council. A report was also commissioned from Jacobs Consultants on the practical implications of introducing 20mph zones in the city.

The report has come up with a number of recommendations that we all feel will make a significant improvement to the quality of life of people living in the city. We have suggested that 20mph zones and traffic calming should be

adopted as an integral part of the Council's approach to road safety in the city. We have also identified 15 pilot project areas in order to evaluate the impact of 20mph zones. We also recommend that we should look deliver 20mph zones through the development planning process by encouraging developers to build these treatments into development plans.

The Committee also set up a Task and Finish Group on the provision of allotments in the city. This involved visiting a range of sites and speaking directly to allotment users. The Group also requested an audit into the condition of every allotment site in the city and this proved invaluable in shaping our final recommendations.

Again, we feel that the Group has developed a number of recommendations that will improve the service delivered to the public. These include the introduction of a rolling programme to bring the Council's existing allotment sites up to an acceptable and consistent standard and exploring the practicalities of raising revenue through the land sale of unlettable allotments. We consider that there should be a fair yearly rental charge which will bring charges more in line with neighbouring authorities. We also encourage the take up of self managed and leased sites and provides appropriate training and support.

Other major issues tackled by the Committee during the year include discussions with Nexus on their proposals for a Bus Network Redesign; consideration of proposals for the future provision of public toilets and an ongoing review of the condition of buildings and streetscene on Fawcett Street.

All in all, this has been another busy and productive year for the Committee. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking my colleagues for all their hard work and enthusiasm and feel sure that we the progress we have made can be built upon in the coming year.

4 Recommendation

- 4.1 Members are asked to consider and comment on the draft end of year report of the Committee;
- 4.2 The report, together with the comments of members, will be submitted to the Management Scrutiny Committee on 29 April 2010.

Background Papers

Scrutiny Committee Agenda 2009/10
CPA Action Plan
City of Sunderland Corporate Assessment

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