

West Sunderland Area Committee

24 February 2010

Report of the Chief Executive

West: A Prosperous Area Summary

1. Why has it come to Committee?

1.1 At its July meeting, the committee agreed its work plan for the 2009/10 municipal year and the Prosperous priority is the fifth to come to committee for discussion and consideration.

2. Description of Decision

2.1 Area Committee is asked to note the reports and the following **actions** identified in Annex 1a and 1b:

- Receive regular updates on measures to increase employment opportunities;
- Review of learning provision;
- Identify and support new learning providers;
- Continue the development of an holistic approach to raising aspirations;
- Promote more the development of more Voluntary and Community Sector learning providers;
- Support long term grass roots employability services and community based first rung learning opportunities;
- Results from the 'Visible Workspace' project to be provided, once available;
- Sunderland arc to provide progress reports/further information to Area Committee regarding current and future activities when available.

3. Background

3.1 Across West Sunderland unemployment levels are lowest in Barnes ward at 5.9% and highest in Pallion ward at 13%. The City average is 8%. Sandhill (11.6%) and St Anne's (10.5%) are also higher than the City average. The level for Silksworth and St Chad's (7.5%) is lower.

There are a number of factors that impact on residents' ability to work; more residents are economically inactive (which means they aren't looking to work e.g. residents looking after a home, retired, students etc.) and

levels are higher in Pallion (45%), Sandhill (44.5%), St Anne's (43.5%) and St Chad's (43.5%) than the City average of 39.4%. Contributory factors are the higher rates of permanently sick and disabled residents in these wards. The percentage of benefit claimants in West Sunderland is 22.4%, which is slightly higher than the City average of 20.2%. All wards are above the City average with the exception of Barnes with a 12.9% claimant rate. The percentage of incapacity benefit claimants is higher than the City average of 10.9% across all wards with the exception of Barnes at 5.8% of its population.

In West Sunderland job prospects are identified by residents as the tenth most important thing in making somewhere a place to live (from a range of 20 options). This is slightly lower than the City average.

3.2 Following the extensive programme of consultation with members, partners, community stakeholders and the wider community, the agreed priorities for this theme are:

- Provide comprehensive support in order to increase employment opportunities;
- Provide access to educational activities for all adults;
- Focus on community based and informal learning;
- Develop an holistic approach to raising the skills and aspirations of adults, in relation to employability;
- Promote social inclusion, engagement and well being to encourage participation in employment training;
- Ensure a strong economic infrastructure.

3.3 Who has been involved?

- Business Investment Team;
- Strategic Economic Development Team;
- Corporate Policy Team;
- Sunderland arc;
- Area Co-ordination Team.

3.4 Key Dates

- Aug 09: Initial meeting held with key partners to discuss priorities, what services are being currently delivered, any gaps, and general comments;
- 15.02.10 : Report deadline for Area Committee
- **24.02.10 : Area Committee, discuss and agreed recommendations**
- 29.03.10 : Feedback deadline
- 07.04.10 : Area Committee: Feedback presented
- 29.03.10 : Deadline for End of year report for Area Committee
- 07.04.10 : Area Committee End of Year report presented

4. Prosperous Theme Area Summary

4.1 Attached as Annex 1a is the area summary for the Prosperous theme.

The annex covers:

- Priorities agreed at Area Committee
- Background/Key Issues
- Current activity
- Any gaps, identified needs or general comments
- Actions and Proposals with lead organisations identified

5. Background papers

- Sunderland Strategy Delivery Plans
- Local Area Agreements Delivery Plans
- Sunderland West Local Area Plan
- Information provided by partners and officers at a Prosperous workshop event August 2009 and one to one meetings

6. Contact Officer: Richard Parry, Area Officer
Tel: 0191 561 1217 e-mail:
richard.parry@sunderland.gov.uk

Annex 1a: Sunderland West Prosperous Area Summary

Annex 1b: Developing an Economic Masterplan for Sunderland