

SUNDERLAND WEST AREA COMMITTEE

16th NOVEMBER 2011

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

COMMUNITY ACTION IN SUNDERLAND WEST – PROGRESS REVIEW

Work Plan 2011/12: Environmental and Street Scene Improvements, including Shopping Centres

1. Why has it come to Committee?

1.1 The report provides an update of outstanding issues from the 2010/11 work plan and progress against agreed actions in the current year's (2011/12) work plan; **Annex 1**.

2. Work Plan 2011/11: Environmental and Street Scene Improvements, including Shopping Centres

2.1 At its last meeting, the committee received an update detailing progress in developing options and actions for it to consider, in relation to delivering environmental improvements in the West. Committee agreed the continuation of the 'Task and Finish' group to develop further project proposals.

2.2 The Environmental Task and Finish group met on 29th September 2011 and discussed a number of proposals presented by the West Area Response Manager. The Task and Finish Group were asked to consider initial proposals to identify:

- Those options that should be explored in more detail and potentially seek future funding support from Area Committee;
- Those options that required no further investigation/would not proceed.

2.3 Attached at **Annex 5** is a report from the Executive Director of City Services, which proposes a number of projects for consideration by the committee. Notes of the Task and Finish group have previously been circulated to members.

2.4 In addition, the Green Space Infrastructure Strategy is due to be finalised at the end of this year. The strategy identifies the quality of green space in the West, particularly from the perspective of 'value to the community'.

2.5 The strategy will guide the committee in its environment priority, identifies those areas with high and low quality of green space, and will assist in identifying priorities for improvement.

2.6 Once the strategy is finalised, it is proposed to bring a report to the next committee meeting on 1st February 2012.

2.7 In addition, Tunstall Hills is an identified site of geological and botanical importance and its Limestone Landscapes are unique within the UK. Whilst

funding has been secured from the Heritage Lottery Fund to enhance the habitat, the Friends of Tunstall Hills group has requested the use of a redundant changing room facility to provide a community and educational facility.

- 2.8 Meetings have been held with Property Services and Parks regarding the refurbishment and use of this building by the Group. It has been agreed in principle that the building can be used by the Friends Group and leased from the Council, however, negotiations will need to be formally undertaken with Land and Property and the Friends Group to fulfil the legal requirements including the lease agreement and revenue costs.
- 2.9 The facility requires some renovation works to bring it up to a usable condition for the 'Friends' group and for visiting school and community groups. The renovation works to bring the facility back into use has been costed at £34,500.
- 2.10 Bringing the building back into use will add value to young people's provision and educational experience. Committee is requested to consider allocating £34,500 of SIB, subject to the legal requirements being fulfilled, a full SIB application, consultation and appraisal.

3. Recommendations

i) Note the options contained within **Annex 5**.

ii) Agree the allocation, subject to full application, consultation and appraisal the following schemes identified by the Task and Finish Group:

- £2000 SIP for the Humbledon tree bays;
- £5,310 SIB for the Essen Way railing improvements;
- £36,000 SIB for a 'Walk and Talk' improvement programme.

iii) Note the progress on the Green Space Infrastructure Strategy and agree to receive a further report.

iv) Agree the allocation of £34,500 to the Friends of Tunstall Hill Group to renovate the redundant building, subject to fulfilling full application, consultation and appraisal.

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