

**SUNDERLAND 'THE PLACE' POLICY REVIEW
2010/11: DRAFT SCOPING REPORT**

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: SP5: ATTRACTIVE AND INCLUSIVE CITY

CORPORATE PRIORITIES: C101: Delivering Customer Focussed Services, C102: Being 'One Council', C103: Efficient and Effective Council, C104: Improving partnership working to deliver 'One City'

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to put forward proposals and seek agreement from members in relation to the forthcoming policy review into Sunderland 'the Place'.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Annual Scrutiny Conference was held at the Marriott Hotel on 20 May 2010. During the Scrutiny Café sessions a number of viable policy reviews were formulated for discussion by members of the Committee. At the meeting on 17 June 2010, following discussions regarding the Annual Work Programme and Policy Review, the Committee agreed to focus on Sunderland 'the Place' as its Policy Review for 2010/11.
- 2.2 Members agreed that the study should focus on a number of key themes including; understanding the identity, image and brand of the city; exploring current activity taking place across the city in positioning and branding Sunderland; identifying what local residents see as the identity of the city; and understanding the position of Sunderland as a place, both regionally and nationally.
- 2.4 The concept of place identity deals with the interaction between the question of who we are and where we are, and how our local environment, including geographical location, ethnic traditions, family heritage, and educational background influence our lives.
- 2.5 In order for a city to be a good brand, it must possess defining and distinctive characteristics that can be readily identified. These are functional as well as non-functional qualities including; the city's appearance; people's experience of the city; people's belief in the city; what the city stands for; and what kind of people inhabit the city.
- 2.6 The shared vision set out in the Sunderland Strategy 2008-2025 states that by 2025:

Sunderland will be a welcoming, internationally recognised city where people have the opportunity to fulfil their aspirations for a healthy, safe and prosperous future.

Place shaping is a vital part of achieving the vision set out for the city and incorporates many elements of activity across the city including; the Legible City agenda; Street Scene, the behaviours of customers and residents, the, retail offer, facilities, marketing, advertising and the role of the media.

3. The Scrutiny Review Process

3.1 Scrutiny reviews will carry out a number of stages in undertaking and completing a review. The stages broadly are:

Stage 1 Scope The initial stage of the review identifies the background, issues, potential outcomes and timetable for the review.

Stage 2 Investigate The Committee gathers evidence using a variety of tools and techniques and arranges visits where appropriate.

Stage 3 Analyse The key trends and issues are highlighted from the evidence gathered by the Committee.

Stage 4 Clarify The Committee discusses and identifies the principal messages of the review from the work undertaken.

Stage 5 Recommend The Committee formulates and agrees realistic recommendations.

Stage 6 Report Draft and final reports are prepared based on the evidence, findings and recommendations.

Stage 7 Monitor The Committee monitors recommendations on a regularly agreed basis.

4. Overall Aim of the Scrutiny Policy Review

4.1 To understand the concept of Sunderland 'the Place' and the associated issues around its identity and image, as well as the perceptions people have of Sunderland.

5. Proposed Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Policy Review

- 5.1 The draft Terms of Reference for the policy review are proposed:-
- (a) To explore what it means to have a strong sense of place, how important this is for Sunderland, and what benefits this may bring;
 - (b) To gain an understanding of the current activity being undertaken within the City Council and across partner organisations with regard to developing a sense of place;
 - (c) To examine the role and responsibilities of the City Council and partners in developing and implementing a strong sense of place for the city;
 - (d) To understand Sunderland's 'story', where the city is positioned now and the image and identity the City Council and partners are aspiring to and working towards;
 - (e) To investigate how people who live, work and study in the city view Sunderland, the place;
 - (f) To investigate the approaches taken by other local authorities where there is evidence of success and progress; and
 - (g) To gain an understanding of Sunderland's position both regionally and nationally, and ensure that the city is being represented appropriately by external bodies including the media

6. Potential Areas of Enquiry and Sources of Evidence

- 6.1 The Scrutiny Committee can invite a variety of people, key stakeholders and interested parties to provide written or oral evidence in order that a balanced and focused range of recommendations can be formulated. A list of potential witnesses, though not exhaustive, is included for Members information:
- (a) Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Holders;
 - (b) Director of Communications and Marketing;
 - (c) Head of Culture and Tourism;
 - (d) Other local authorities with evidence of best practice and success;
 - (e) Chair of the Sunderland Partnership
 - (f) Key stakeholders and representatives on the City Marketing Board (eg. Sunderland SAFC, Sunderland University and City of Sunderland College)
 - (g) People who live, work and study in the city;

- (h) Representatives of minority communities of interest;
- (i) Ward Councillors;
- (j) Local MPs;
- (k) External media bodies (e.g. the BBC, ITV and the Sunderland Echo); and
- (l) Organisations from the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)

6.2 This year the Scrutiny Committees' Policy Reviews are looking at cross-cutting issues and opportunities may arise to undertake joint working as endorsed by the Chairs of the relevant Committees.

6.2 Community engagement plays a crucial role in the scrutiny process. Consideration will be given to how involvement can be structured in a way that the Committee encourages those views. If felt appropriate the Committee is able to co-opt an additional member to the Committee for the duration of the policy review. Regulations with regard to the co-opting of additional members can be found in the Overview and Scrutiny Handbook, Protocol 6: Protocol for the Appointment of Co-opted Members to Scrutiny Committees.

6.3 In addition, diversity issues have been considered in the background research for this enquiry under the Equality Standards for Local Government. As such the views of local diversity groups will be sought throughout the inquiry where felt appropriate and time allows. Consequently, consideration has been given as to how the views of people from minority communities of interest or heritage, which may not be gathered through the usual community engagement routes, can be included over the course of the inquiry.

7. Funding from the Dedicated Overview and Scrutiny Budget

7.1 Consideration has been given, through the background research for this scoping report of the need to use funding from the Committee's dedicated Overview and Scrutiny budget to aid Members in their enquiry.

7.2 At this stage it is suggested that funding may be necessary to support the following activities:

- (a) Key witnesses;
- (b) Engagement with voluntary and statutory organisations;
- (c) Engagement with the public, possibly through the use of the City Council's Community Spirit Panel;
- (d) General publicity;
- (e) Visits (as necessary) to deliver effective scrutiny; and
- (f) Task and Finish activities.

8. Proposed Timetable of the Scrutiny Investigation

- 8.1 The following scheduled meetings will include evidence gathering for the study:

Setting the Scene - September 2010

Evidence Gathering - October 2010 to February 2011

Consideration of Draft Final Report - March 2011

Consideration of Final Report by the Scrutiny Committee - April 2011

Consideration of Final Report by the Cabinet/Council- June 2011

(tentative date)

- 8.2 Additional working group meetings are likely to be necessary to complete the evidence gathering.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 Members are recommended to discuss and agree the scope of the Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee's policy review for 2010/11 as outlined in the report.
- 9.2 Members are also asked to decide upon the membership of any Task and Finish Group deemed necessary to focus on specific work within the review that lends itself to that way of working.

Background Papers

Sunderland Strategy 2008-2025

http://environmentpsychology.com/place_identity.htm

Overview and Scrutiny Handbook

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