

**Report of the Chief Executive (Designate) and Director of Community and Cultural Services**

**Performance Report – April to Sept 2008 (Progress in Implementing the Local Area Agreement and New National Indicator Set)**

**1. Why has the report gone to committee?**

- 1.1 To provide members with a position statement in relation to the first six months of the Local Area Agreement (LAA) and implementation of the new National Indicator set during 2008/09 for cultural services.

**2. Description of the Decision**

- 2.1 Committee is recommended to note the performance of the Council against key performance measures as part of the Council's quarterly monitoring arrangements.

**3. Background**

- 3.1 A new national performance framework is being implemented during 2008/2009 which replaces the Best Value Performance Indicators and Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) Performance Indicators. As a consequence 2008/2009 is a transition year as we develop baselines for the new indicators and ensure any corrective action will be effective in the new framework.
- 3.2 This is the first corporate performance report relating to 2008/2009 performance information. The report provides an overview of the position for national indicators and also local performance indicators that have been retained to supplement areas in the performance framework that are not well covered by the new national indicator set.

**4. Current Position**

- 4.1 It is important to note that a large proportion of the new national indicator set has an outcome focus. Whilst the revised outcome focus of the new National Indicators is to be welcomed, Members should also be aware that a number of the Indicators are based upon residents' perceptions of services and support provided within the city. This will clearly be invaluable in measuring individuals' perceptions of their circumstances, environment and city services, and will be vital to drive service improvement shaped around resident needs and preferences. However, this focus on perceptions can mean that citywide partners may not always be able to directly influence these perceptions – and therefore the underlying indicators' performance – within the city, as this may be based upon, for example, personal factors more pertinent to the individual than statutory support from the Council or other partners.
- 4.2 This report recognises these issues and provides preventative action to ensure we can demonstrate the full impact of improvement activity that will influence progress within the Local Area Agreement and against the indicators

more generally. For example, understanding and improving resident perceptions by working in partnership with communities to improve local areas will be a key element of the new Comprehensive Area Arrangements.

- 4.3 In relation to the national indicator set an overview of our current position in relation to each indicator has been included (**Appendix 1**) which also includes local performance indicators that are either being retained or introduced in 2008/09 to supplement the new national framework. This will ensure we have a complete picture of service delivery and related improvements. Many of these local performance indicators are based on former Best Value indicators, as a consequence, members will have some familiarity with these measures
- 4.4 We have mechanisms in place to measure all the national indicators required for reporting purposes during 2008/09. To ensure we can measure our progress towards delivering the strategic outcomes the partnership has committed to in the Sunderland Strategy and the council's Corporate Improvement Objectives the indicators have been categorised in this order.
- 4.5 During the first year of the implementation of the new national performance framework we are only required by government to set targets for those performance indicators we have chosen to form part of the Local Area Agreement. There are no national indicators in relation to cultural services included in the agreement at this point in time. However to ensure we maintain a robust commitment to service improvement across the partnership in Sunderland both directorates and partners have, where possible, set targets for the other national and local performance indicators for 2008/09.
- 4.6 Targets cannot be set for all indicators, as 2008/09 is the first year of collection for a number of new indicators. Therefore 2008/09 will be seen as a baseline year on which we can target future improvement. It is also important to note that in relation to many of the new National Indicator set, data is available at different points of the year and will not always readily follow the quarterly monitoring cycle.

## **5. Progress / Key Issues 2008/09**

### **Libraries**

- 5.1 A key focus for libraries for 2008/09 is increasing active participation in reading and reading based activities. The focus for April to September has been the National Year of Reading 2008. Linked to local, regional and national themes a wide range of activities and promotions have been delivered across the city both in libraries and at partner sites. Activities have included National Join a Library Day (April), monthly recommended reading lists and author and illustrator sessions for all ages, Team Reads (children's summer activity programme) and promotional outreach work across the city including the Sunderland International Friendship Festival and the Sunderland International Airshow. Development and consultation is now underway to create a reading strategy for the city to continue the success of the National Year of Reading 2008 into future planning and service development.
- 5.2 Further priorities for 2008/2009 are the continued refurbishments of libraries at Washington Town Centre to create a new Library/Customer Service Centre,

and at Silksworth where a replacement library is being built in partnership with Adult Services as part of a new extra care housing scheme. Both libraries are due to open in spring 2009 and will provide enhanced and extended services.

- 5.3 Libraries continue to deliver a wide programme of activities in support of all Sunderland Partnership key priorities. A varied learning programme is delivered across all libraries led by the library service in partnership with a range of statutory, voluntary and community agencies. This provides a range of courses and opportunities targeted at learners especially those not currently participating in formal learning.
- 5.4 The successful Community Health Information project continues to provide targeted support to substance misuse clients and the Social Inclusion Librarian continues to seek new opportunities to develop services and links to under represented groups. All activities are designed to support the key library service priority to provide accessible library services which meet the needs of all citizens and to encourage cultural participation by all individuals.

### **Museums**

- 5.5 Data gathered for Sunderland by the Active People Survey (2008) indicates a baseline figure of 51.3% for NI10.

DCMS results give the following national figures for NI10: Visits to Museum and Galleries:

Lowest	36.6%
Average	53.8%
Highest	81.8%

- 5.6 Highlights at Sunderland Museum & Winter Gardens this year have included *Family Album*, a major exhibition curated by Tyne & Wear Museums of portraits from the National Portrait Gallery. This exhibition provided a rich resource for work with families, young people and schools. For example young people worked with a photographer to explore themes of image and identity, and families from Southwick Children's Centre took part in a photography project, choosing their favourite portraits from the *Family Album* exhibition and recreating the poses in photographs of their own families: these photographs were displayed in the central activity area of the exhibition.

### **Tourism**

- 5.7 Work is continuing through the Area Tourism Partnership to further develop an Area Tourism Management Plan.

### **Sport and Leisure**

- 5.8 The council's Sport and Leisure service are working towards the delivery of a universal 'core offer' to all residents. All residents will have the opportunity to participate in four core areas of physical activity. This 'core offer' comprises of:
- Sport
  - Wellness
  - Aquatics

- Play

- 5.9 The primary aim of the service is to work towards increasing participation by 1% each year in line with national performance indicators. Over a five year period, that equates to 14,250 more people taking part in regular sport and physical activity in the city.
- 5.10 Data gathered from the 2008 Active People Survey indicates that Sunderland has 18.7% of its population actively involved in 30mins of moderately intensive exercise three time per week, against the national average of 21.0% (NI8 Adult participation in sport and active recreation)
- 5.10 The Council has embarked on a significant investment and modernisation programme of its facilities to support continuous improvement in the manner in which services are delivered to reach participation targets.
- 5.11 To support the need to drive up levels of participation in sport and physical activity, Sunderland has prioritise the following:
- Opening of the Sunderland Aquatic Centre
  - Preparations in progress for free swimming for over 60's and under 16's
  - Operating 6 Wellness Centres, with a dedicated GP Exercise Referral Programme and 9 Community Wellness venues
  - Implementation of an affordable access framework for those residents on low incomes
  - 30 new or refurbished play areas since 2004.
- 5.12 The Council will continue to invest in facilities and deliver ambitious, but achievable plans for the future:
- Two new 25m swimming pools at Hetton and Silksworth
  - Opportunities for further sport provision at Stadium Park (Phase 2)
  - £5 million committed investment into children's play facilities through Play Pathfinder, including a city adventure centre
  - Leisure centre and a football investment programme
  - Develop plans for the 2012 Olympic Games
  - Deliver Sport England funded initiatives to increase participation in sport
- 5.13 Members will receive a comprehensive update report regarding Sport and Leisure at Culture and Leisure Review Committee in February 2009.

## **Background papers**

Local Area Agreement  
Sunderland Strategy