

# PROSPERITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

27 JULY  
2011

## UNIVERSITY CITY POLICY REVIEW 2011/12: DRAFT SCOPING REPORT

### REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

#### STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: SP3: PROSPEROUS 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 its forthcoming policy review into Aim 1 of the Economic Masterplan – A New Kind of University City.

### 2. Background

- 2.1 The Annual Scrutiny Conference was held on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2011. During the Scrutiny Café sessions a number of viable policy reviews were formulated for discussion by members of the Committee. At the meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2011, following discussions regarding the work programme, the Committee agreed to review Aim 1 of the Economic Masterplan – A New Kind of University City.
- 2.2 Members chose this area in view its potential impact on the economic prosperity of the city.

### 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.

<b>Stage 4 Clarify</b>	The Committee discusses and identifies the principal messages of the review from the work undertaken.
<b>Stage 5 Recommend</b>	The Committee formulates and agrees realistic recommendations.
<b>Stage 6 Report</b>	Draft and final reports are prepared based on the evidence, findings and recommendations.
<b>Stage 7 Monitor</b>	The Committee monitors recommendations on a regularly agreed basis.

#### **4. Overall Aim of the Scrutiny Policy Review**

- 4.1 To investigate the plans the city has under Aim 1 of the Economic Masterplan to create "a new kind of university city" and consider what the Council and its partners should be doing to support the drive and focus on developing and supporting enterprise, with the University of Sunderland at its heart".

#### **5. Proposed Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Policy Review**

- 5.1 Discussions are continuing with the University on the detailed arrangements for the policy review.
- 5.2 At this stage the draft Terms of Reference for the policy review are proposed:-
- i. To consider what the Council and its partners should be doing to support the development of a new kind of University City;
  - ii. To gain an understanding of the influence that the University has on the city's economy at the present time and the potential for this to be increased.
  - iii. To look into the way in which the University of Sunderland can be more fully integrated into the city's economy, including business start up and growth;
  - iv. To investigate the development of workforce skills through education and graduate retention;
  - v. To investigate the potential for research to support business growth through innovation, graduate placement and management and staff development;

- vi. To investigate the experiences of a similar University and the role it plays in its own city's economy.

## **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) Representatives of the University;
- (c) Councillor officers;
- (d) Key Stakeholders and partner organisations);
- (f) Local Enterprise Partnership
- (g) Chamber of Commerce
- (h) Major local employers eg Nissan
- (i) Creative Industries and Software City
- (j) Business in the Community (Bic)
- (k) Local Students
- (l) Community and Voluntary sector
- (m) Local residents;
- (n) Representatives of minority communities of interest;
- (o) Ward Councillors;
- (p) Local MPs;
- (q) Examples of good practice from other local authorities.

6.2 As well as gathering information and evidence by the methods outlined above the Committee may, if it feels it appropriate, co-opt an additional member to the Committee for the duration of the policy review in accordance with the protocols set out in the Scrutiny Handbook.

6.3 Community engagement plays a crucial role in the scrutiny process. Consideration will be given as to how involvement can best be structured in a way that the Committee encourages those views.

6.4 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 (for example, people with disabilities, people with learning disabilities, people with mental health problems, black and minority ethnic people, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people), 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) Delegates for expert jury, or a public event;
- (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 – July 2011

Evidence Gathering – September 2011 to February 2012

Consideration of Draft Final Report - March 2012

Consideration of Final Report by the Scrutiny Committee - April 2012

Consideration of Final Report by the Cabinet/Council - June 2012

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 Prosperity and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee's policy review for 2011/12 as outlined in the report.

## **10. Background Papers**

Sunderland Economic Masterplan

---

Contact Officer : James Diamond 0191 561 1396  
[james.diamond@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:james.diamond@sunderland.gov.uk)