

**At a Meeting of the COALFIELD AREA COMMITTEE held at EASINGTON LANE COMMUNITY ACCESS POINT, THE BRICKGARTH, EASINGTON LANE on WEDNESDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2010 at 6.00 p.m.**

**Present:-**

Councillor J. Scott in the Chair

Councillors Anderson, Blackburn, Ellis, A. Hall, Heron, D. Richardson, Rolph, Tate, D. Smith, Speding and Wakefield.

**Also in Attendance:-**

Susan Brown	-	Area Community Co-ordinator, Sunderland Council
John Chapman	-	Head of Neighbourhoods, Gentoo
Jim Daly	-	Senior Planner, Sunderland Council
Steve Dodds	-	District Bus Manager, Nexus
Graham Finlay	-	Inspector, Northumbria Police
Julie Heathcote	-	Communications Officer, Sunderland Council
Cllr. Juliana Heron	-	Hetton Town Council
Emma Hindmarsh	-	Democratic Services Officer, Sunderland Council
Pauline Hopper	-	Area Officer, Sunderland Council
Jill Laverick	-	Communications Officer, Sunderland Council
Pam Lee	-	Public Health Specialist, Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust
Liz St.Louis	-	Head of Customer Service & Development, Sunderland Council
Helen Paterson	-	Strategic Director of Transformation and Area Lead Executive, Sunderland Council
Lee Wardle	-	Area Voluntary Community Services Representative
Jeff Wilkinson	-	Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service

**Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Juliette Johnson (Voluntary and Community Representative), Ann Owen (Voluntary and Community Representative) and Mike Shepherd, Houghton Kepier School.

## **Welcome and Introductions**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked all those present to introduce themselves.

## **Minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> March, 2010**

- i) With regard to the 3G camera system, Ms. Pauline Hopper, Area Officer, advised that following discussions with LMAPS a proposed review of the current system had been taken to the CCTV Steering Group with the proposal for the Coalfield Area to have the use of an additional camera. This would result in 4 fixed cameras and 1 floating camera if the Committee were agreeable to receive an application for £5,500 from SIB for a three year maintenance programme.

- ii) The Chairman advised that he had written to the Environment Agency with regard to the quality of the water supply pertaining to the landfill site at Houghton. The Chairman had received a response from the Environment Agency that day and proceeded to read an extract from the letter to the Committee which stated:-

“The BIFFA Annual Report, to which you refer, rightly makes reference to a localised water pollution issue at Houghton Quarry Landfill Site. Whilst we have some evidence that groundwater immediately adjacent to the site has become contaminated we are still in the process of investigating the possible sources and extent of this contamination. Until we have this additional information it would be inappropriate for us to comment further at this stage.

Meanwhile, action is being taken to remove the pollution and additional monitoring is in place to check that this is effective.

I appreciate the concerns being expressed in respect of potential risks to the local aquifer. I see that you have received direct reassurance from Northumbrian Water about the continuing high quality of their water supply to the public. We agree with their position that the water supply to homes in the area is not at risk from the site.

We would be pleased to update your committee on this matter and will be in touch again shortly to agree an appropriate time.”

The Chairman advised that he intended to invite the Environment Agency to a future committee meeting to provide an update on progress.

- (iii) Referring to the fifth paragraph on page 4 of the minutes, Councillor Rolph advised that she had specifically referred to the 71 and 35 bus services and not all early and late buses as was implied.

- (iv) Councillor J. Heron, Hetton Town Council advised that the minutes state that Hetton Downs would not be provided with a bus service, on the contrary Hetton Downs was well served, but the rest of Hetton was not.
  - (v) Ms. Hopper advised that she had met with Andrew Perkin to progress the support for local shopping areas priority.
  - (vi) With regard to Councillor Rolph's request for an update on plans for unadopted roads, Ms. Hopper advised that she had passed the Committee's concerns on to Dave Smith, Chief Executive and was awaiting a response from Mr. Odunaiya, Executive Director of City Services.
  - (vii) Ms. Hopper would contact Simon Smart, Restorative Justice Manager for a progress update on Herrington Burn litter removal. It was her understanding that the site was currently undergoing a health and safety risk assessment.
  - (viii) Councillor Speding congratulated the members of staff for the expediency with which the work had been carried out with regard to the improvement works in Shiney Row funded from SIP money.
1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> March, 2010 (copy circulated) be confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to the above amendments.

### **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **Coalfield Annual Report 2009/10**

The Chief Executive submitted the Committee's annual report (copy circulated) providing for Members a focussed summary outlining the achievements delivered and influenced by the Area Committee under each of the thematic headings, as well as details of the meetings and governance of the Committee and a breakdown of how finances had been allocated throughout the year.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Ms. Pauline Hopper, Area Co-ordinator, presented the report, reminding Members that this was the seventh and final meeting of the Committee this municipal year and that this report had been produced to allow the committee to reflect upon the work they had undertaken.

Councillor Ellis stated that Houghton was a town not a village. She advised that she would forward further comments on the report directly to Ms. Hopper.

Councillor A. Hall stated that the report revealed the amount of work the Committee had undertaken during the year. She was disappointed that the Committee had not fulfilled the commitment to hold the meetings in venues across the entire Coalfield area.

The Chairman advised that every effort would be made to hold meetings in venues across the area however some community venues had proved difficult to book in the past due to neighbourhood events taking place on an evening.

Councillor Rolph stated that the size of the Coalfields Area should be outlined on the introductory page and services should be considered on a geographical and not a population basis. She also advised that there was no mention of unadopted roads and the Prosperous theme did not mention support for local shopping areas.

Councillor Speding reiterated comments he had made at previous meetings that the report did not acknowledge that some children crossed ward boundaries to attend schools, for example, Houghton Kepier and Biddick and there needed to a way of gauging how these statistics could be broken down accordingly. It would be useful to ascertain how well Coalfield children were performing in one school compared to the other.

Ms. Hopper reminded the committee that Linda Brown had sent Members statistics relating to the above, however it was acknowledged that the information could be 'cut' differently to compare different pathways. Dr. Paterson, Area Executive Lead advised that this information could be provided in future.

Ms. Hopper also informed the Committee that it would be beneficial if Members could decide the type of statistics they would want to be presented with from the outset. She advised that it was difficult to obtain statistics from some departments.

Councillor Anderson queried the disappointing figures in Hetton for burglary dwelling contained within the report as it was her understanding that the figures had improved recently.

Inspector Finlay commented that he thought the figures made available to Ms. Hopper may be out of date as there had been a reduction in burglary this year.

Referring to the statistics in the report relating to attainment levels of 11 and 16 year olds across the wards, Councillor Rolph commented that the gender gap was hidden within them.

The Chairman having thanked Ms. Hopper for her report, it was:-

2. RESOLVED that the Annual Report be received and noted and that the information be used to analyse and reflect on the work that has taken place throughout the past year and help to inform the June meeting as the Committee moves towards a new work plan.

### **Coalfield: Towards a New Work Plan**

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which would begin the process of identifying work streams for the 2010/2011 year.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Hopper advised that the workstreams identified by the Committee would be finalised into a new work plan for the coming year. She explained that the June meeting of the Committee would run as a workshop to decide on the work plan for the year and allow more focussed priorities to be set with very clear outcomes and objectives identified.

Councillor Rolph requested that heritage is included in the refreshed Local Area Plans.

In response to a question from Councillor Rolph regarding who had suggested 'Drugs Education and Enforcement' as a priority, Ms. Hopper advised that it was a result of consultation with partner organisations. Inspector Finlay informed the Committee that drugs were a significant problem in the Coalfield area and as such it may be an issue the committee choose to focus on.

Councillor Rolph felt that caution needed to be exercised in the use of Task and Finish Groups as people could end up being excluded from important pieces of work if they were unable to attend.

Members expressed concerns regarding paragraph 6.2 of the report which stated 'Recommendations in reports will be replaced with a list of options, along with key strengths and weaknesses against each option. Committee will be asked to discuss options, with all members (including partners and officers) asking questions, informing debate and agreeing the preferred option to implement.' This appeared to infer that elected members decision making authority would be diluted.

Ms. Hopper advised that the intention was to encourage discussion and not affect decision making powers.

Councillor Ellis advised that she had submitted a Councillor Call for Action request thirteen months ago which still had not been considered by the Committee.

Councillor Ellis stated that the effects of the Landfill site on health was an important consideration and the PCT should be invited to a future committee to speak on this issue.

The Chairman having thanked Ms. Hopper for her report, it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the Committee agree to:-

- Examine the Local Area Plan priorities and focus the efforts of the Committee on areas where they can make a real difference;
- The principle of a limited number of priorities (suggest up to six), to include Responsive Local Services, to form the 2010/2011 work plan, which will be agreed at the June work plan meeting; and
- Examine the governance processes to ensure they can deliver the Committee's programme and priorities.

### **Financial Statement and Funding Requests**

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) in respect of the above matter which sought Committee approval for the following recommendations:-

- i) to reject SIB funding for Hylton Castle Battle Re-enactment;
- ii) to note the financial statement for Area Committee funding for 2009/10;

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Ms. Hopper presented the report and advised that the Hylton Castle Battle Re-enactment proposal had been recommended for rejection purely because it did not fit the Coalfield priorities.

Discussion ensued in relation to the application.

Councillor Anderson felt that the project was excellent and it afforded the Coalfield area the opportunity to have a stake in an event celebrating the history of the City.

Councillor Rolph stated that citywide projects needed to explain the benefits to all areas. The Hylton Castle project needed a broader scope and should describe a wider event programme based on heritage that would directly impact on other areas in the City. Accordingly she did not feel that the project fulfilled the agreed criteria.

Councillor Hall endorsed the recommendation to reject.

It was moved by Councillor Anderson and duly seconded to approve the application contrary to the recommendation as set out in the report.

With 9 Members voting in favour and 3 against, the motion was carried.

Ms. Hopper then proceeded to read out a letter from St. Aidan's Community Group who had previously been awarded £500 Community Chest funding as a contribution towards the lease agreement. With the agreement of the Committee, the Group were now requesting that the money is used as a contribution towards a planning permission application.

6. RESOLVED that:-

- i) the financial statement for 2009/10 be received and noted;
- ii) The following proposal for SIB funding is approved:-
  - Hylton Castle Battle Re-enactment, £3,000 with the condition that the Coalfield Area is considered as a location if the re-enactment is held next year.
- iii) Community Chest funding of £500 awarded to St Aidan's Community Group in November 2009 is now used as a contribution towards planning permission application.

The Chairman then closed the meeting having thanked everyone for their attendance.

(Signed) J. Scott,  
Chairman.

# **Coalfield Area Committee**

**16 June 2010**

## **Report of the Chief Executive**

### **Coalfield: Establishing a new work plan 2010-11**

#### **1.0 Why has it come to Committee?**

**1.1** At its meeting in April 2010, the Committee agreed the report: 'Towards a new work plan' for the year 2010/11, which discussed and agreed the principle of six priorities, to include Responsive Local Services, to form the 2010-11 work plan.

**1.2** In addition, it was agreed that Committee will receive information that will build a picture of key facts and current services relating to the priorities listed, together with options, see Annex 1, to inform the process of decision making.

**1.3** The options outlined in the annex have arisen through the collection of information throughout the year via the 'Thematic Reports', 'Area Action Plan' developments, issues raised through the Leader's Ward visits, feedback from members and partners and recent policy initiatives, with each option being agreed as a viable way forward.

## **2. Description of Decision (Recommendations)**

### **2.1 Area Committee is recommended to:**

- Agree to focus the efforts of the Area Committee on the Local Area Plan priorities where they can make a real difference;
- Agree to a maximum of six priorities, to include Responsive Local Services, to form the 2010/11 work plan. Potential options, as per part 1.3 and contained in Annex 1 are:
  - Family, Adult and Community Learning
  - Health Inequalities
  - Responsive Local Services
  - Bulb planting and landscaping
  - Allotment Sites
  - Heritage
  - Local Shopping Centres
  - Enterprise and Entrepreneurship
  - Play Provision
  - Anti Social Behaviour
  - Drugs Education and Support
  - Unadopted Roads
  - Community Engagement
  - Child Poverty
- Identify and agree a Lead Agent for each priority action
- Agree to establish a 'Local Task and Finish' group per priority, where relevant, to include elected Members and partners, to support the Lead Agent in delivering against the priority
- Agree to receive regular updates on progress in implementing all the priorities identified in the Coalfield Local Area Plan

## **3. Background**

**3.1** The Committee will recall that the priorities contained within the Coalfield Local Area Plan (LAP) were the result of an extensive consultation process, culminating in the formal adoption of the Committee's key priorities in July 2009. The Local Area Plan is in place for two years, when it will be subject to a comprehensive review.

**3.2** The adoption of the Committee's priorities was the result of a comprehensive programme of consultation and involvement, which began in November 2008 with an initial workshop with Councillors. This work shop identified Councillors' initial priorities and was followed by a joint workshop with Councillors and partners to formulate, develop and jointly agree priorities. A third workshop, led by the Leader, was then held with the local voluntary and community



organisations. This event, which was attended by over 60 local residents, discussed and agreed the local priorities.

**3.3** During this period, and running alongside of the process described above, a major public consultation exercise was carried out across the city, involving 65 public meetings, including the five 'YouthInc' road shows, and a series of road shows at major shopping centres. This involved in excess of 2,000 responses and contributions, which informed the development of priorities.

**3.4** Following this, the priorities were agreed at a meeting of Councillors and officers in May 2009 and ratified as the Committee's work plan at its June meeting.

#### **4. 0 Existing operations**

**4.1** Throughout the previous municipal year, the Committee was presented with 'Thematic Reports' highlighting work being undertaken to address a priority area, and proposals to enhance and add value to existing work for the benefit of the area.

**4.2** As reported at the last Committee meeting to consider the Annual Report, there have been a number of major achievements. However, it has become increasingly clear that changing some of the ways the Committee operates will lead to greater alignment with priorities and a clearer focus on delivery.

#### **5.0 Delivering the Local Area Plan**

**5.1** To ensure the committee has a focus on delivering key LAP priorities and influencing those not directly within its remit, the actions, contained in Annex 1, are proposed as options for discussion, with a view to choosing a maximum of six to form the Committee's work plan for 2010/11. It should be stressed that the options in Annex 1 are suggestions that have arisen as a means to focus the LAP and the committee may wish to agree a number of other priorities.

**5.2** It should be noted that all LAP priorities will be progressed and reported to Committee. The 'Local Task and Finish' groups will enable delivery of key priorities and will ensure the Committee is making clear and tangible improvements for the benefit of local residents.

**5.3** The 'Local Task and Finish' groups should include elected Members and partners and will support the Lead Agent through a problem solving approach that will deliver against the priority. This will ensure services are reviewed, actions allocated and measurable and are monitored and fed back into the Area Committee. This process will have a link with the Area Officer, ensuring a central point for the collection of information.

#### **6. Process**

**6.1** As agreed at April's meeting, governance processes will be reviewed to ensure they are 'fit for purpose' to deliver the Committee's programme and priorities. This will be the subject of a further work shop, with the outcomes being reported to a future meeting of this Committee.

#### **7. Background papers**

- Sunderland Strategy Delivery Plans
- Local Area Agreement Delivery Plans
- Coalfield Local Area Plan

**8. Contact Officer:** Pauline Hopper, Coalfield Area Officer  
Tel: 0191 561 7912. E-mail: [pauline.hopper@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:pauline.hopper@sunderland.gov.uk)

Annex 1: Background papers: prioritising your priorities (preparation for Area Committee)

## **Provide Family, Adult and Community Learning (FACL) appropriate to the needs of the Coalfield area residents**

### **Background**

Family, Adult and Community Learning works in partnership with a wide range of agencies to develop and deliver projects aimed at improving access to learning and improving the skills of adults and families. Family Learning offers parents, grandparents, guardians and carers a chance to learn alongside their children in a fun and friendly way. Adult Learning courses can provide opportunities to build confidence learn for fun and enjoyment or offer routes to further learning and developing skills for employment. Skills for Life, Skills for Work, Skills for Independent Living courses that help adults brush up their English and Maths skills to support children at school, assist with job search and help with training at work.

There are gaps in service, both in terms of subject matter and location. The current programme often does not meet the needs of the community with barriers such as childcare and transport preventing take up. The commissioning arrangements can exclude smaller, community organisations who are sometimes best placed to work with residents in their own community. Smaller organisations often do not have paid staff and lack the capacity to develop tenders to deliver work. The procurement arrangements are being reviewed and it is to be recommended that the Coalfield area is selected to pilot a new way of working during 2010/11 for implementation across the City 2011/12.

### **Key Facts**

- Some courses, including Family Learning, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Skills for Life (maths and English) are free
- Courses are also free if you are in receipt of income-based benefits
- A reduction of 50% is offered to anyone aged 60 or over
- Informal and community learning is often a first step to more formal, accredited learning
- Family learning such as healthy cooking and growing vegetables can contribute to the increase in healthy lifestyle activities
- Area Committee have requested a review of current provision which is now being undertaken

### **Current Interventions**

- The current service has three funding streams: Wider Family Learning (WFL); Family Literacy, Language and Numeracy (FLLN) and Personal Community Learning (PCD) and a development fund; First Steps
- Courses are currently delivered at the Hetton Centre, Easington Lane Community Access Point (ELCAP), Houghton Library, Shiney Row CA, Kepier Hall and Eppleton Primary School
- Most courses are delivered in the day time. There is limited evening and weekend provision

### **Options**

- A** Lead Agent: Sandra Kenny, Children's Services. Area Committee establish a Local Task & Finish group with key members from the Committee to support the development of a more locally responsive community learning programme and develop the pilot for the City.
- B** Lead Agent: Sunderland Learning Partnership. Area Committee receive information and updates via the e-bulletin and take part in consultation regarding the review of the Citywide programme.

## **Tackle Health Inequalities**

### **Background**

The recent Health thematic report for Coalfields highlighted three key issues which can be supported at a local level in order to reduce health inequalities in the area. Smoking, Obesity and Risk Taking Behaviour (Teenage Conception and Alcohol use) have been identified by Public Health Specialists from the Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust (STPCT) as the key priorities to address in order to increase healthy lifestyle choices. There are a small number of STPCT funded health programmes delivered within the community. However, due to staffing and capacity within some local voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations to compete for funding, the local service delivery can be limited.

### **Key Facts**

- Sunderland has high levels of smoking during pregnancy and at time of delivery, impacting on infant mortality, childhood illness and low birth weight
- There are high levels of smoking amongst people diagnosed with a chronic disease and in particular wards which contributes to health inequalities and the life expectancy gap
- Sunderland has high usage of illicit tobacco which provides opportunities for children and young people to smoke and contributes to childhood poverty and health inequalities
- Obesity is the second most common preventable cause of death after smoking
- Obese people have an increased risk of dying prematurely or developing diseases such as cancer, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease
- 10.3% of reception, and 21.2% of year 6 pupils in Sunderland are obese
- Children born to teenage mothers have 60% higher rates of infant mortality and are at increased risk of low birth-weight, which has an impact on the child's long term health
- Teenage mothers are 3 times more likely to suffer from post natal depression and experience poor mental health for up to 3 years after the birth
- Teenage parents and their children are at increased risk of living in poverty

### **Current Interventions**

- There is a Smoking in Pregnancy Pathway service which is offered on an 'opt out' basis, rather than an 'opt in'
- Sunderland is a pilot for the 'Reducing Health Inequalities through Tackling Illicit Tobacco' programme
- Sunderland TPCT have committed over £1m per annum to support a wide range of 'high impact' interventions to reduce obesity
- An adult weight management programme has been developed and the NHS South of Tyne and Wear Obesity Strategy identifies a number of priorities which must be addressed at a local level in order to be effective
- Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) Training is available for all STPCT providers who work with young people
- Sunderland City Council Youth Information Staff provide sexual health advice and support in a range of young people settings

### **Options**

- A** Lead Agent: Pam Lee, Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust. Area Committee set up a Local Task & Finish group to include the Tobacco Alliance, Sunderland Obesity Partnership and Teenage Pregnancy Management Team, which will support the identification of local issues and explore opportunities to add value to existing provision.
- B** Lead Agent: Pam Lee, Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust. Area Committee receive updates and information regarding actions and progress within the area (in relation to smoking, obesity and teenage conception) via the e-bulletin.

## **Deliver Responsive Local Services**

### **Background**

The Community Leadership Programme, which commenced in September 2008, is based upon the need to accelerate delivery of quality of life improvements for the people of Sunderland and to improve their satisfaction levels with the way the Council and its partners perform. The Responsive Local Services (RLS) project is designed to satisfy the service delivery element of the programme ensuring that, in delivering its day to day services, the Council is more responsive to the needs and expectations of its customers and engages with citizens more effectively. In summary RLS is a 'method of area working' that was established via Cabinet to:

- Increase levels of resident satisfaction through providing services that are responsive to community needs and effectively communicating improvements
- Tailor services in recognition of differing area/locality circumstances either through local problem solving or adapting service standards
- Recognise and enhance the community leadership role of elected members.

### **Key Facts**

- There are currently five services that fall within the scope of the RLS remit these are: Litter Removal, Refuse Collection, Grass Cutting, Graffiti and Dog Fouling
- The services included in the first wave have been chosen according to their relative importance and the ability to measure performance against the current service standards.
- It is necessary, in this respect, to publish the associated service standards to enable residents and Members to engage in service delivery performance updates, via Area Committees. This will enable Area Committees and residents to consider local priorities and service performance when tailoring service standards to match local need or to undertake local problem solving.
- The service scope of each subsequent wave of the Project is defined upon the basis of customer feedback through the Customer Services Network, feedback from Residents' Surveys, Area Committees, Ward visits and the analysis of service requests via staff reports.

### **Current Interventions**

- Performance reports produced and presented to each Area Committee. Reports were presented in January and March 2010 and will be presented to each area committee as required.
- An RLS Issues Log is established and working to track local problem solving issues arising from Area Committee discussions and the service interventions to address the issues raised.
- Communication activity is underway to ensure the Council and local members receive recognition for the improved services. The communication is also designed to encourage residents to engage with Area Committees regarding local issues.
- Partnership working is underway particularly in respect of Gentoo in order to align neighbourhood activity and service standards where possible.
- Work is underway to identify the next wave of services to be included within the project.
- Any resource implications are in the first instance managed within existing budget provision or as part of the Medium term Financial Planning Process. Area Committees are also able to call upon their Strategic Investment Plan allocations to respond to local issues arising from service demand or, as was the case for the previous cycle, to address any issues coming forward from ward visits and the staff reporting line.

### **Options**

- A** Lead Agent: Mike Poulter City Services. A Local Task and Finish Group (including partners as required) is set up to consider local problem solving as required.
- B** Lead Agent: Mike Poulter, City Services. Area Committee to continue to receive performance reports and information updates via the e-bulletin. Task and finish groups (including partners as required) set up to consider local problem solving as required

## **Develop a Bulb Planting and Soft Landscaping Project**

### **Background**

The Coalfield area has large areas of open greenspace/grassed areas which could be made more attractive and increase pride in the area. Some estates and residential areas are visually unattractive and would benefit from work to improve appearance. The provision of shrubs, bulb planting, for instance, provides a more attractive place to live. There is a need to engage with communities effectively to encourage involvement and reduce negative perceptions of area. This is one area where Area Committee could make a real difference to the whole area and create a sense of pride amongst residents

### **Key Facts**

- In relation to their homes as a place to live, satisfaction levels of Coalfield residents are lower than the City average

### **Current Interventions**

- City Services are undertaking a Citywide audit of all green space. The audit will look at a wide range of issues such as ownership and use of space
- Gentoo have a maintenance programme and work with residents to improve residential areas. This includes environmental schemes, such as planting, painting etc..
- The Local Development Framework Core Strategy is being developed and will set out the overarching strategic planning framework for the development of the City up to 2026. The Core Strategy identifies improvements to public realm along major roads and local district centres within the Coalfield area.

### **Options**

- A** Lead Agent: Les Clark, Head of Street Scene. Area Committee set up a Local Task & Finish group to develop a Coalfield-wide environmental scheme to include a large scale bulb planting programme.
- B** Lead Agent: Les Clark, Head of Street Scene. Area Committee receive information and updates regarding environmental programmes delivered by mainstream budgets within the area (soft landscaping, planting schemes etc...) via the e-bulletin.

## **Improve Allotment Sites**

### **Background**

Many allotment sites across the Coalfield Area are in an unkempt and unsightly condition so much so that they can't be offered to potential tenants even though there is a waiting list. This view is supported by the Police who regularly receive reports about illegal and anti social activity at some of the less well managed allotment sites. The Local Multi Agency Problem Solving group (LMAPS), chaired by Inspector Graham Finlay, has addressed issues regarding a number of allotment sites during the past year.

### **Key Facts**

- There are 94 allotment sites in the City with a total of 2755 individual plots
- There is one Allotment Officer for the City and a maintenance budget of £30,000 per year
- There are 36 allotment sites within the Coalfield area
- The total number of people on the waiting list for an allotment on a site within the Coalfield area is 384

### **Current Interventions**

- The Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee is developing options for improvement of allotment provision across the City.

### **Options**

- A** Lead Agent: Les Clark, City Services. Area Committee to consider the outcomes of the option development work (when available) in a local context.
- B** Lead Agent: Les Clark, City Services. Area Committee receive regular updates and feedback regarding the work of Scrutiny via the e-bulletin and take part in consultation where appropriate.

## Promote and Celebrate Heritage

### Background

Heritage is an area of continuing growth both across the region and for the City of Sunderland. Sunderland has a distinct heritage, of which there is a strong sense of pride across the City. The Coalfield area offers a variety of attractions, events and places of interest such as Hillside Cemetery, Houghton Feast, Rainton Meadows, Stephenson Trail, Heritage Open Days and Hetton Lyons Country Park. The area's heritage is important to local people and the Coalfield area also has a dedicated community and voluntary sector consisting of many local people who have a vast knowledge of the area and its heritage, including Friends of Copt Hill, Houghton and District Local History Group, Hetton Local History Group, Shiney Row Local History Group and Friends of Hillside Cemetery.

### Key Facts

- The Coalfield is home to a number of important attractions such as Alice Well, Cox Green, Copt Hill and Seven Sisters Nature Reserve, Kepier Hall, St Michael and All Angels Church and Penshaw Monument

### Current Interventions

- The City Council recognises the need to deliver a city wide heritage strategy which would identify the priorities for the City, raise the profile of heritage and influence future developments. Officers are currently investigating options in order to take this forward.
- A nomination is currently being developed for World Heritage Status for Sunderland, which would allow the City to become a cultural heritage landmark as one of three World Heritage Sites across the region and 27 sites across the UK, allowing the City to prosper in areas such as economic development and tourism.
- Heritage for the City is managed and delivered through City Services, with two part time heritage officers working to deliver the Heritage agenda, this involves: providing co-ordination and overview of relevant events and activity across the City, assisting with heritage projects as appropriate, supporting the voluntary sector as appropriate, promoting heritage and developing partnership working.
- Responsibility for the conservation of built heritage lies within the Planning and Conservation sector within the Office of the Chief Executive.
- Houghton, Hetton, Shiney Row, Fence Houses and Easington Lane libraries all offer access to a range of Local Studies material including bookstock and PC access websites
- The Local Development Framework Core Strategy highlights the potential of culture and tourism development within the area due to historic industrial heritage and transformed natural environment

### Options

- A** Lead: Chris Alexander, City Services. Area Committee establish a Local Task and Finish group and select key members, including partners from Committee to support Lead Agent in the development of a Heritage programme for the Coalfield area.
- B** Lead Agent: Chris Alexander, City Services – Review the situation when selecting priorities in 2011/12 following confirmation of funding to allow for a Heritage Strategy and consider local projects and a joined up approach to the heritage offer in the Coalfields.

## **Improve Local Shopping Centres**

### **Background**

Local shopping centres in the Coalfield area have suffered due to lack of economic activity. Some streets have empty shops creating an unattractive environment and a negative impression of the area. Area Committee have identified a need to support local shopping centres, both in terms of their aesthetic and environmental appearance and their economic activity. Houghton le Spring is the administrative centre of the Coalfields and would benefit from improved facilities to attract local people and visitors to shop in the town.

### **Key Facts**

- The Local Development Framework Core Strategy notes that Houghton currently has a limited convenience and comparison retail sector which means expenditure flows out of the area into other town centres. However, Houghton town centre has an important non-retail function and the role and function of the town centre should be developed.

### **Current Interventions**

- A Retail Needs Assessment has been carried out and a 'performance analysis' (commonly referred to as a 'health check') undertaken on the strategic and local shopping centres across Sunderland. The Final Report was published in September 2009 and included findings on Houghton Town Centre, Hetton Town Centre, Shiney Row shopping centre, Market Street, Hetton, Fence Houses and Easington Lane. The study is to form part of the evidence base for the retail policies and proposals in the emerging Local Development Framework (LDF)
- A Green Space Audit is being undertaken. It will highlight the quality and quantity of green space across the city and will be broken down into areas. The strategy will show deficiencies in open space – parks, allotments, play areas, recreational space.
- The City Council currently runs a maintenance programme for streets and grounds including shopping areas.
- A Markets Feasibility Study is being carried out to research the potential to hold markets across Sunderland, including Houghton, Shiney Row and Hetton.

### **Options**

- A** Lead Agent: Les Clark, City Services. Area Committee establish a Local Task and Finish group and select key members, including partners from Committee to support Lead Agent in the development of an action plan to support local shopping centres.
- B** Lead Agent: Attractive and Inclusive Delivery Board. Area Committee to be consulted with, and receive information and updates on, the Green Space Audit and the Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy and action plan once finalised. Area Committee to review this when selecting future priorities.



## **Increase Enterprise and Entrepreneurship**

### **Background**

It has been recognised under the 'Prosperous' theme that there are opportunities to reduce unemployment and increase economic activity by encouraging enterprise and entrepreneurship. The Council is currently finalising its Economic Masterplan that will provide for the growth and development of Sunderland's economy over the next decade and beyond.

### **Key Facts**

- The Business Investment Team is dedicated to delivering the Sunderland Strategy's Strategic Priority Prosperous City: "To create an enterprising and productive global city with a strong and diverse economy providing jobs and careers for generations to come." The primary aim of the Business Investment Team is to ensure improvements in economic prosperity in the City through encouraging business growth, development and investment.
- Between April 2009 and January 2010, 21 businesses in the Coalfield Area successfully applied for financial assistance from the Business Investment Team to implement business growth plans, creating a potential 195 new jobs. It is expected that these investments will generate an additional £1,753,000 in company turnover.

### **Current Interventions**

- Through Working Neighbourhoods funding, talent scouts and business advisors are working to target new potential entrepreneurs and support them on the route to setting up in business. This is backed up by a small and larger grant fund to help new businesses develop and existing businesses grow
- The City is one of the world's most Information Technology (IT) Intelligent Cities and a Beacon for Digital Inclusion and has been awarded £10 million worth of Microsoft Training Vouchers which can be accessed by anyone living or working in Sunderland.
- Business Link provides a range start up and support services to new businesses.
- The WNF programme has brought significant resources to develop and support employment and enterprise to the City, including £14m for Assisting People Into Work activities, £3m Boosting Enterprise Programme, £4m Promoting Visible Workspaces.
- A Markets Feasibility Study is being carried out to research the potential to hold markets across Sunderland, including Houghton, Shiney Row and Hetton.
- The 'Visible Workspace' project, through Working Neighbourhoods Funding (WNF) is a demand survey being carried out to look at all opportunities to develop workspace across the City. Results will inform further work to match up the supply and demand for premises/workspace at specific locations

### **Options**

- A** Lead Agent: Andrew Perkin, Business and Investment Team. Area Committee set up a Local Task & Finish group to explore opportunities to further develop enterprise opportunities in the Coalfield area.
- B** Lead Agent: Economic Prosperity Delivery Board. Area Committee to be consulted with, and receive information and updates on, the current support available and the development of the Economic Masterplan in relation to issues local to the Coalfield area. Committee review the situation once the Economic Masterplan has been finalised.

## **Improve Play Provision**

### **Background**

Youth provision is defined as targeting 13-19 year olds in informal activities delivered outside of statutory core curriculum. Play provision is defined as targeting under 13s – this may cover community play parks and extended schools. The current youth provision has been reviewed and developed to better suit the needs of young people in the Coalfields, including weekend mobile youth villages and ward based contracts with youth providers. However, it has been identified that the provision for those under 13 years is an area which would benefit from a review with a view to developing further provision.

### **Key Facts**

- Sunderland City Council secured a £2.1million Government grant named Play Pathfinder to get more children playing outside. Play areas included Keir Hardie, Rectory Park, Barnwell, Grangewood and Easington Lane Flatts.

### **Current Interventions**

- Children's Services and City Services have recently requested funding to complete a scoping document on all services delivered to children, young people and families across the City. If awarded, the scoping document will cover all sectors and will be complete by September 2010.
- The Children's Trust Strategic partnership has recently formed a locality based integrated working group for the Coalfields to develop partnership working to support outcomes for children, young people and their families and consider how local service delivery is meeting their needs.

### **Options**

- A** Lead Agent: Julie Gray, City Services. Area Committee set up a Local Task & Finish group to explore opportunities to further develop play provision in the Coalfield area.
- B** Lead Agent: Judith Hay, Children's Services/Julie Gray, City Services. Area Committee to be consulted with, and receive information and updates, on the scoping document (if funding is awarded). Committee review the situation once the results of the scoping document have been presented.

## **Reduce Antisocial Behaviour**

### **Background**

The Crime and Disorder act 1998 defines Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) as acting "In a manner that caused or was likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to one or more persons not of the same household". Examples of Anti Social Behaviour can include: rowdy, noisy behaviour; vandalism, graffiti and fly-posting; dealing or buying drugs on the street; fly-tipping rubbish and street drinking.

### **Key Facts**

- The total crime rate (per 1000 population) for April 2009 – March 2010 for Sunderland as a whole was 72.8. Copt Hill (50), Houghton (55.4) and Shiney Row (47.9) wards were all well below the Sunderland figure, with Hetton (72.5) being equal to.
- The rate of recorded Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) for the City was 92 per 1000 population. Copt Hill (63.5) and Shiney Row (59.8) being well below the City rate and Hetton (100.3) and Houghton (95) above.

### **Current Interventions**

- The Neighbourhood Policing Team is led by Inspector Graham Finlay and has two sergeants – one for the Hetton area and one for the Houghton area. The number of officers has increased and there are named PCs and CSOs for each area. The teams have first hand knowledge of the area, and have a base in a number of community venues making them more accessible and responsive to the local community.
- Sunderland City Council has a dedicated team to investigate and resolve cases of ASB across all housing tenures, their main focus relates to owner occupied and private rented sectors.
- Gentoo Sunderland employs a team of Neighbourhood Enforcement Officers and Witness & Victim Support Officers who are specially trained to be expert in resolving anti social behaviour and preventing it from happening.
- Northumbria Police lead on a Local Multi Agency Problem Solving Group (LMAPS) who meet every five weeks to effectively address issues, including Anti Social Behaviour (ASB).
- Community and Safer City Scrutiny Committee completed a policy review on ASB during 2009-10

### **Options**

- A** Lead Agent: Inspector Graham Finlay. Utilise the current infrastructure of LMAPS to continue to reduce ASB across the Coalfield area. The priority already exists within the Coalfield Safe Thematic Action Plan for 2009/10. Area Committee to continue to monitor, receive information and updates, as available, from LMAPS from Northumbria Police, Elected Member representative and Area Officer, via the e-bulletin
- B** Lead Agent: Safer City Scrutiny Committee which completed a policy review on ASB during 2009-10. Area Committee to receive information updates, as available, via e-bulletin.

## **Increase Locally Delivered Drugs Education and Support and Increase Take up of Treatment Services**

### **Background**

The Police have identified that there is a need at a very local level to provide a more focused approach to drugs education and service provision to prevent young people from getting involved in drug use and to support local people who wish to change their drug use. There is a lack of knowledge and understanding about drug issues and what services are available locally.

### **Key Facts**

- There are pockets of high drug use and low numbers of people accessing treatment services in the Coalfield area. Examples of this are Easington Lane and Peat Carr.
- The Safer Sunderland Partnership in conjunction with Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust (STPCT) have carried out an analysis and identified Brick Garth, Easington Lane as an area with one of the most hard to reach communities with regard to drug services in the City.
- A Safer Communities Survey measures public confidence in community safety issues and is carried out quarterly by Northumbria Police. The March 2010 survey has shown that drug use ranks in the top five issues raised by residents in the Coalfield area.
- During the period April 2009 to March 2010, drug related ASB incidents in the Hetton ward were the 4<sup>th</sup> highest of all wards in Sunderland at 2.8 per 1000 population, compared to 1.6 for the City as a whole. The other wards in the Coalfield area were all below the City average.

### **Current Interventions**

- The Safer Sunderland Partnership was formed following the merger of Sunderland's Drug Action Team and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. The Partnership includes the City Council, Police, Fire Authority, Primary Care Trust and a range of organisations from the voluntary, community and business sectors. The aim is to tackle, crime, disorder and the misuse of drugs
- As part of South of the Tyne and Wear NHS's social marketing of drug services, materials have been produced by ex-service users to be distributed in areas which had been identified as isolated from mainstream drug and alcohol service provision and where engagement links are low, drug litter finds had been made and reports from users/carers regarding unmet needs had been received
- In Shiney Row, Gentoo have agreed to circulate leaflets with their mailing lists which will be followed up by recovery advocates and Lifeline to engage users, friends and carers in drug treatment services including confidential health checks, help with housing and debt and information about rehabilitation and detoxification

### **Options**

- A** Lead Agent: Stuart Douglass, Safer Communities Team. Area Committee set up a Local Task & Finish group which will support the identification of local issues and explore opportunities to add value to existing provision.
- B** Lead Agent: LMAPS. LMAPS take forward and identify solutions to the issues raised. Area Committee receive updates and information via the e-bulletin and take part in consultation where appropriate.

## **Explore Opportunities to Improve Unadopted Roads**

### **Background**

There is a high level of unadopted roads/streets in the Coalfield area compared with other parts of the City. Many of the roads are in bad repair and cause problems for residents. A referral from Environment and Planning review committee to Cabinet in 2007 concluded that 'the Council undertaking and funding the making up of private streets in the City cannot be accommodated within budgetary constraints and cannot therefore be recommended'. However, Council policy stipulates that where residents can contribute their costs of making-up a private road, the Council will consider exercising its powers to make-up and adopt the road.

The procedure outlined in a Cabinet report of January 2007 was adopted as policy. This issue has been raised again throughout 2009 during ward visits and Coalfield Area Committee meetings as many of the roads in the Coalfield area are deteriorating.

### **Key Facts**

- There are estimated to be approximately 260 private streets in the City and the responsibility for their maintenance or cost of making up the street rests with the street managers, who are usually the frontage owners. The cost of making up the private streets in the City was estimated to be in the order of £26m at January 2006 prices.
- In 2007 a report stated 'for example a 150m long street, consisting 30 terraced properties either side, could cost in the order of £200,000 to make up. The apportionment to individual properties would be in the order of £3,000 and the Council's contribution (relating to street ends) would amount to approximately £15,000'.
- There are no grants or other central government sources of funding specifically for the making up of private streets.

### **Current Interventions**

- The Executive Director of City Services has requested that an in-depth survey on all unadopted roads is undertaken. The results of this survey will be considered in relation to the current policy and will be complete in late 2010.

### **Way Forward**

Lead Agent: Graham Carr, City Services. Area Committee receive regular updates and feedback regarding the survey via the e-bulletin and take part in consultation where appropriate. Once the final results are available Area Committee will be informed.

## **Increase Community Engagement**

### **Background**

The Coalfield Area Committee has developed its workplan to address issues which are important to local residents and communities in the area. It is important to increase input from local residents, and Area Committee has encouraged attendance and questions from the public at Area Committee meetings. However, this has been progressed slowly and there needs to be more communication and engagement with the community to ensure their views are incorporated to influence decision making. The Coalfield area has a proactive and dedicated community and voluntary sector consisting of many local people who have a vast knowledge of the area.

We can use the National Indicators detailed below to monitor cohesion as well as local intelligence through Community Cohesion Networks, Local Multi Agency Partnerships, and city wide hate incident reporting system (ARCH) statistics

1. How far people agree or disagree that in their local area people from different backgrounds get on well together
2. How far people feel that they belong to their neighbourhood
3. Civic participation in the local area
4. How far people agree or disagree that they can, though their own actions, influence decisions in their local area

### **Key Facts**

- In comparison with the City as a whole, fewer residents in the Coalfield area feel that they can influence decisions.
- The percentage of residents who would like to be more involved in decisions that affect the local area is slightly higher than the City average.

### **Current Interventions**

- The area is soon to establish community cohesion groups; the Coalfield Area Rapid Response group (the practitioners network) and a strategic group to oversee their work, co-ordinated by the Diversity and Inclusion team
- Local ward councillors represent the views of their ward and the wider area via ward surgeries, ward visits and informal contact with local residents
- The Coalfield Area Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Network has been established to represent the views of the local voluntary and community sector and three representatives from the network are members of the Area Committee
- An Area Newsletter is produced four times a year to promote and give information on events, projects and activity within the Coalfield area. The newsletter is delivered to all households in the Copt Hill, Hetton, Houghton and Shiney Row wards.
- Sunderland City Council has established a Corporate Communities Group in order to review its activity in relation to Inclusive Communities ensuring a fully joined up approach in this regard. Its approach includes establishing a clear definition and description of Inclusive Communities, and developing corporate policy and aims/objectives for the Council in order to incorporate processes and embed throughout the organisation the Sunderland Way of Working Programme.

### **Way Forward**

The Coalfield Area Committee will continue to address community engagement in all aspects of the Committee work, rather than having it as a separate priority/issue. Each priority taken forward by Area Committee will consider how the community should be/will be engaged/involved/informed. Committee will receive information and reports on the work of the Corporate Communities Group as appropriate via the e-bulletin.

## Reduce Child Poverty

### Background

The levels of child poverty in Sunderland are unacceptably high. 51% of children are living in relative poverty (44% in the North East, 42% Nationally) as defined by Government. National research by the Child Poverty Action Group tells us that children who grow up in poverty are less likely to succeed at school, more likely to suffer from poor health and less likely to secure a good job as an adult.

The Sunderland Partnership has agreed to take a lead to reduce this level and the emerging Sunderland Child Poverty Strategy will provide a framework for partners to work together with a shared vision.

### Key Facts

- The Local Area Agreement LAA includes NI116 - Proportion of Children in Poverty. This is currently being refreshed.
- There is no current single indicator available to determine the exact level of child poverty in Sunderland. A useful indicator commonly being used is the number of children living in workless families and in families who are claiming the maximum working tax credit. Adding these two groups together gives a total of **children in low income families**.
- The draft strategy is based on building blocks of Education, Health & Family, Employment and Adult Skills, Financial Support and Housing & Neighbourhoods.

### Current Interventions

- A three month consultation programme for the draft Child Poverty Strategy will begin during May/June 2010.
- A detailed needs assessment will be carried out over a six month period from June 2010. This will identify areas for more targeted service delivery, focused on community needs.
- A locality based integrated working group for the Coalfields has been formed to develop partnership working to support outcomes for children, young people and their families.

### Options

- A** Lead Agent, Raj Singh, Children's Services. Area Committee receive updates and progress reports from the Child Poverty Board and take part in the consultation regarding the Child Poverty Strategy at the July or September Area Committee meeting
- B** Lead Agent, Raj Singh, Children's Services. Area Committee review this issue when selecting priorities in 2011/12