

**THE CABINET reports as follows:-**

**1. Audit Commission Annual Audit and Inspection Letter**

That they submit for consideration a joint report of the Chief Executive and the City Treasurer (copy attached) on the Audit Commission Annual Audit and Inspection Letter covering the year 2006/2007 together with a copy of the Audit Letter which provided an overall evaluation of the Council's progress having regard to the Council's core performance assessment, its financial and service performance and a consideration of its strength and areas for development.

**2. Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) Scorecard 2007**

That they submit for consideration a report of the Chief Executive (copy attached) on the Comprehensive Performance Assessment informing that the Council had continued to achieve the maximum four star rating in the latest CPA results and was judged to be 'improving well' by the Audit Commission.

**3. Sunderland Strategy 2008-25**

That they have given consideration to a report of the Chief Executive (copy attached) on the refreshed Sunderland Strategy to provide a framework to articulate a vision, aims and strategic priorities to make the Vision for the City a reality.

The Cabinet recommends the Council to approve and adopt the Sunderland Strategy 2008-2025.

They also referred the report to the Policy and Co-ordination Review Committee for further advice and consideration. The comments of the Committee will be reported to the meeting.

**N.B. Members are requested to note that a copy of the draft Sunderland Strategy is available for inspection in Members' Services or alternatively the document can be viewed on-line at:-**  
<http://www.sunderland.gov.uk/public/editable/themes/citycouncil/committee-minutes/Cabinet/agenda/08.03.12pdf>

**4. The Safer Sunderland Strategy 2008-2023**

That they have given consideration to a report of the Director of Development and Regeneration (copy attached) seeking support for the Safer Sunderland Partnership's Safer Sunderland Strategy 2008-2023.

The Cabinet recommends the Council to:-

- (i) adopt the Safer Sunderland Partnership's Safer Sunderland Strategy 2008-2023, and
- (ii) authorise the Director of Development and Regeneration to take all necessary action to publish the Strategy including the making of any necessary amendments of a non-substantive nature.

They also referred the report to the Regeneration and Community Review Committee for further advice and consideration. The comments of the Committee will be reported to the meeting.

**N.B. Members are requested to note that a copy of The Safer Sunderland Strategy 2008-2023 is available for inspection in Members' Services or alternatively the document can be viewed on-line at:-**

**<http://www.sunderland.gov.uk/public/editable/themes/citycouncil/committee-minutes/Cabinet/agenda/08.03.12pdf>**

**ADDENDUM REPORT OF THE CABINET**

The Mayor has agreed to exercise his discretion to permit this item of urgent business, which is outside the Council's Budget Framework, to be considered at this meeting for the efficient discharge of the Council's business.

**THE CABINET reports as follows:-**

**5. Strategic Investment Plan**

That they have given consideration to a joint report of the Chief Executive and the City Treasurer (copy attached) providing details of the proposed Strategic Investment Plan as a delivery mechanism for achieving the long term ambitions of the city in order to improve the quality of life for residents and communities as encapsulated within the Sunderland Strategy, the Local Area Agreement and the Corporate Improvement Plan.

That Cabinet recommends the Council to approve the overall Strategic Investment Plan and agree to the individual projects, subject to consultation as appropriate, being further developed.

**REPORT OF THE CABINET**

The following matters were referred to the Committees as indicated below for advice and consideration. The Committees accordingly report and recommend as follows:-

**POLICY AND CO-ORDINATION REVIEW COMMITTEE – 20<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2008**

Cabinet Report No. 3	Matter
Sunderland Strategy 2008-25	The Review Committee endorsed the Sunderland Strategy 2008-2025 and recommended that it be submitted to the Council for adoption.

**REGENERATION AND COMMUNITY REVIEW COMMITTEE - 19<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2008**

Cabinet Report No. 4	Matter
The Safer Sunderland Strategy 2008-23	The Chairman having welcomed the strategy and suggested that the Committee continue to monitor its progress, the Review Committee agreed to endorse and fully support the document.

## **CABINET – 12 MARCH 2008**

### **AUDIT COMMISSION ANNUAL AUDIT AND INSPECTION LETTER**

#### **Report of the Chief Executive and City Treasurer**

#### **1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 This report details the Audit Commission's Annual Audit and Inspection Letter covering the year 2006/2007. This letter provides an overall evaluation of the Council's progress having regard to the Council's core performance assessment, its financial and service performance and a consideration of its strengths and areas for development.
- 1.2 The District Auditor and Relationship Manager, Ms Lynne Snowball, will attend Cabinet to provide a summary of the Audit Commission's findings and address any questions Members may have.

#### **2. Description of Decision**

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to:
  - note the contents of the Audit Commission's Annual Audit and Inspection Letter and receive a presentation from the Audit Commission on its contents;
  - refer this report to Council for its consideration.

#### **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Audit Commission, under the direction of the District Auditor, prepares an annual statement which provides an overall summary of the Audit Commission's assessment of the Council, drawing on audit, inspection and performance assessment work. The statement also summarises the findings and conclusions from the statutory audit. The Annual Audit and Inspection Letter covers the period from April 2006 to March 2007.
- 3.2 The Annual Audit and Inspection Letter focuses on the outcomes from the Council's Comprehensive Performance Assessment, the strength of its direction of travel, the outcomes of other inspections and regulatory activity and on the Council's performance management. In making these comments the Audit Commission outlines the Council's progress compared with previous years and comments on the degree of robustness within the Council's organisation and delivery of services.

#### **4. Current Position**

- 4.1 The Annual Audit and Inspection Letter confirms the outcomes of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment framework; that Sunderland has maintained its rating as a Four Star Council, the highest rating, placing the

Council in the top 37% nationally and is “improving well”. Specific improvements this year have been:

- to the local environment with public spaces cleaner, crime rates lower, and local people worrying less about crime;
- the quality of planning services and the speed of processing applications are much improved and this has been externally recognised; and,
- a range of ICT based projects and programmes are underway to improve performance management and ensure more customer focus.

4.2 This years Corporate Assessment assessed the Council as performing well, providing very good community leadership and working well with partners to achieve its goals. Overall the Council engages well with local communities.

4.3 Good value for money is delivered as a result of strong financial management resulting once again in the maximum score in the use of resources judgement and notable practice has been identified in a number of areas.

4.4 Unqualified opinions have been issued on the 2006/2007 accounts and value for money arrangements and on the Best Value Performance Plan.

4.5 The Annual Audit and Inspection Letter draws attention to the need to continue to develop the following areas:

- Economic prosperity and health inequalities are two key areas where the North East of England lags behind other regions in the country. Partnerships need to continue to work together with a clear focus on achieving improvements in these areas.
- Whilst the vision for Sunderland is challenging and aspirational the Council should develop concrete, long-term targets and milestones to give local people a clear idea of the change they can expect to see over time. Internal strategies and plans will need to be up to date and link coherently to the vision and priorities for the city.
- The Council should establish more effective links with marginal and vulnerable groups in the city so that it meets the specific needs and aspirations of its growing and increasingly diverse population.
- The Council also needs to provide stronger leadership of the sustainability agenda including improved performance in recycling to support the success of the image strategy.

4.6 An action plan is being drawn together to address the areas for development. These actions will be incorporated into the Council’s improvement planning arrangements to ensure coordinated action and integrated monitoring arrangements.

## **5. Reasons for Decision**

5.1 To ensure that the Council acknowledges the continued good progress made as described in the Audit Commission’s Annual Audit and Inspection Letter and takes appropriate action on those areas requiring further development.

5.2 Consideration of the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter by Members is a statutory requirement.

## **6. Alternative Options**

6.1 There is no alternative option recommended at this stage.

## **7. Conclusion**

7.1 The District Auditor and Relationship Manager, Ms Lynne Snowball, will also be reporting to the Policy and Co-ordination Review Committee. Government Regulations require the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter to be published. In addition to its publication as part of the Cabinet, Policy and Co-ordination Review Committee and Council Agendas, it is proposed to place the full report on the Council's website.

## **8. Background Papers**

- Annual Audit and Inspection Letter – Appendix A





Annual Audit and Inspection Letter

February 2008



# **Annual Audit and Inspection Letter**

**Sunderland City Council**

**Audit 2006/07**

External audit is an essential element in the process of accountability for public money and makes an important contribution to the stewardship of public resources and the corporate governance of public services.

Audit in the public sector is underpinned by three fundamental principles:

- auditors are appointed independently from the bodies being audited;
- the scope of auditors' work is extended to cover not only the audit of financial statements but also value for money and the conduct of public business; and
- auditors may report aspects of their work widely to the public and other key stakeholders.

The duties and powers of auditors appointed by the Audit Commission are set out in the Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Local Government Act 1999 and the Commission's statutory Code of Audit Practice. Under the Code of Audit Practice, appointed auditors are also required to comply with the current professional standards issued by the independent Auditing Practices Board.

Appointed auditors act quite separately from the Commission and in meeting their statutory responsibilities are required to exercise their professional judgement independently of both the Commission and the audited body.

### **Status of our reports**

This report provides an overall summary of the Audit Commission's assessment of the Council, drawing on audit, inspection and performance assessment work and is prepared by your Relationship Manager.

In this report, the Commission summarises findings and conclusions from the statutory audit, which have previously been reported to you by your appointed auditor. Appointed auditors act separately from the Commission and, in meeting their statutory responsibilities, are required to exercise their professional judgement independently of the Commission (and the audited body). The findings and conclusions therefore remain those of the appointed auditor and should be considered within the context of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies issued by the Audit Commission.

Reports prepared by appointed auditors are:

- prepared in the context of the Statement of Responsibilities of Auditors and Audited Bodies issued by the Audit Commission; and
- addressed to members or officers and prepared for the sole use of the audited body; no responsibility is taken by auditors to any member or officer in their individual capacity, or to any third party.

### **Copies of this report**

If you require further copies of this report, or a copy in large print, in Braille, on tape, or in a language other than English, please call 0844 798 7070.

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## Key messages

- 1 Sunderland City Council is improving well, and we have assessed the Council as "four star" in its current level of performance and the direction of travel as "improving well". Specific improvements this year have been:
  - the local environment - public spaces are cleaner, crime rates are low, and local people are worrying less about crime;
  - the quality of planning services and the speed of processing applications, are much improved; and
  - a range of ICT based projects and programmes are underway to improve performance management and ensure that the Council becomes more customer focused.
- 2 This year's Corporate Assessment assessed the Council as performing well, providing very good community leadership and working well with partners to achieve its goals. The Council engages with local communities well, overall.
- 3 The Council delivers good value for money as a result of strong financial management, and once again achieved the maximum overall score in our use of resources judgement. Notable practice has been identified in a number of areas.
- 4 We issued unqualified opinions on the 2006/07 accounts and value for money arrangements, and on the Best Value Performance Plan.

## Action needed by the Council

- 5 Economic prosperity and health inequalities are two key areas where the North East of England lags behind other regions in the country. The Council works well with partners and needs to continue to do so, with a clear focus on achieving improvements in these areas.
- 6 The vision for Sunderland is challenging and aspirational. The Council and its partners should develop concrete, long-term targets and milestones which will give a clear view of the change they can expect to see over time. Officers also need to ensure that all of the internal strategies and plans are up to date and link coherently to the vision and priorities for the city.
- 7 The Council generally engages well with local communities but needs to meet the specific needs and aspirations of a growing and increasingly diverse population. Links with some marginal and vulnerable groups have been established but should be extended, and used more effectively.
- 8 The Council also needs to provide stronger leadership of the sustainability agenda, including improved performance in recycling. This is important for the success of the image strategy, projecting Sunderland as an attractive place to live, work, and study.

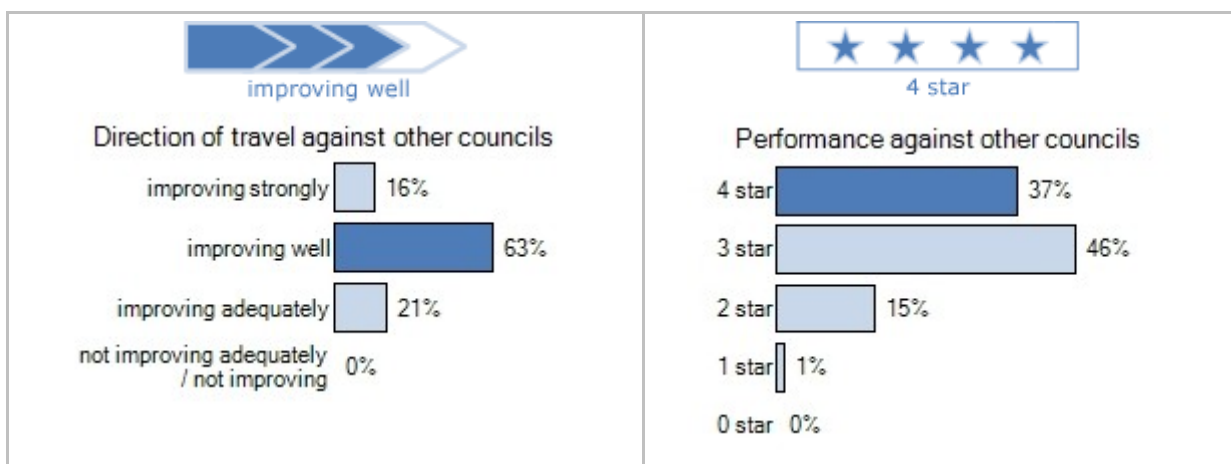
## Purpose, responsibilities and scope

- 9 This report provides an overall summary of the Audit Commission's assessment of Sunderland City Council. It draws on the most recent Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA), the findings and conclusions from the audit of the Council for 2006/07 and from any inspections undertaken since the last Annual Audit and Inspection Letter. It also includes the results of the most recent corporate assessment and joint area review (CA/JAR).
- 10 We have addressed this letter to members as it is the responsibility of the Council to ensure that proper arrangements are in place for the conduct of its business and that it safeguards and properly accounts for public money. We have made recommendations to assist the Council in meeting its responsibilities, and to help support future improvement.
- 11 This letter also communicates the significant issues to key external stakeholders, including members of the public. We will publish this letter on the Audit Commission website at [www.audit-commission.gov.uk](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk). The Council is also planning to publish the letter on its own website.
- 12 As your appointed auditor I am responsible for planning and carrying out an audit that meets the requirements of the Audit Commission's Code of Audit Practice (the Code). Under the Code, I review and report on:
  - the Council's accounts;
  - whether the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources (value for money conclusion); and
  - whether the Council's best value performance plan has been prepared and published in line with legislation and statutory guidance.
- 13 This letter includes the latest assessment on the Council's performance under the CPA framework, including our Direction of Travel report and the results of inspections carried out by the Audit Commission under section 10 of the Local Government Act 1999. It summarises the key issues arising from the CPA and inspections. Inspection reports are issued in accordance with the Audit Commission's duty under section 13 of the 1999 Act.
- 14 We have listed the reports issued to the Council relating to 2006/07 audit and inspection work at the end of this letter.

## How is Sunderland City Council performing?

- 15 The Audit Commission’s overall judgement is that Sunderland City Council is improving well, and we have classified the Council as four star in its current level of performance under the Comprehensive Performance Assessment. These assessments have been completed in all single tier and county councils with the following results.

**Figure 1 2007 CPA**



Source: Audit Commission

*Councils with a CPA star rating under review or with a direction of travel judgement that is subject to review are excluded from this analysis.*

- 16 The detailed assessment for Sunderland City Council is as follows.

## Our overall assessment - the CPA scorecard

**Table 1 CPA scorecard**

Element	Assessment
Direction of Travel judgement	Improving well
Overall	4 star
Corporate assessment/capacity to improve	3 out of 4
Previous corporate assessment/capacity to improve, as included in overall CPA judgement in 2007	4 out of 4
<b>Current performance</b>	
Children and young people*	3 out of 4
Social care (adults)*	4 out of 4
Use of resources*	4 out of 4
Housing	3 out of 4
Environment	3 out of 4
Culture	3 out of 4
Benefits	4 out of 4

(Note: \* these aspects have a greater influence on the overall CPA score)  
(1 = lowest, 4 = highest)

- 17 The Council is improving services in its priority areas. The local environment is improving: less waste is being sent to landfill, more is recycled or composted and public spaces are cleaner. Crime reduction targets have been exceeded, crime rates are low and mostly improving, and local people are worrying less about crime. Children's educational attainment rates are improving, at key stages three and four, although key stage two results for English remain poor. Adult social care in the area is excellent, with good services and systems to enable people to live independently.
- 18 The Council has invested in priority and underperforming services whilst maintaining relatively low levels of council tax and good value for money. These investments, supported by good performance management, have delivered improvements over the last year. A range of projects and programmes are ensuring that the Council is becoming more customer focused. Capacity is good and is being strengthened appropriately to deliver priorities, but the Council performs poorly in some aspects of the diversity of its workforce and sickness rates remain high, and deteriorated during 2006/07.

## Improvement since last year - our Direction of Travel report

### What evidence is there of the council improving outcomes?

- 19 Overall the Council is continuing to improve its performance. The Council and partners are making progress on priority areas and delivering improved outcomes for the community. The rate of improvement across a range of performance indicators for 2006/07 was average compared to similar authorities, although in some cases from a relatively high base.
- 20 Creating a **prosperous city** is a key challenge, and the Council has made progress this year in relation to physical regeneration, encouraging business development and economic activity. New jobs have been created and the employment rate is rising, although overall rates remain below the national average. The Council and partners have succeeded in reducing unemployment and sustaining employment amongst some of the priority groups. The speed at which planning applications are determined is good and has significantly improved.
- 21 The Council and partners have extended **cultural opportunities** and recent investments have widened the range of opportunities and increased take-up, not only from traditional user groups but also from people with a wide range of backgrounds, including some of those whose participation is usually low. The Council has achieved Beacon status for its work to reach groups through culture and sport.
- 22 Social **housing** in the city is of a good quality and development and modernisation of social and private housing across the city continues to improve quality, choice and range available to residents. Action is being taken to address the deterioration in performance in relation to aspects of preventing homelessness.

A strategic approach, good partnership working and investment in facilities, support and technology are enabling more Sunderland residents to **live healthily** and live at home. For example investments in new technology have contributed to a reduction of ten per cent of the number of people in care and a reduction of two per cent in the number of emergency hospital admissions. CSCI rated the Council's adult social care services as excellent in 2007, with improvements to services in a number of areas.

- 23 There has been significant progress this year in improving the **environment and access** for existing residents, businesses, and people who work in the city. A further part of the Southern Radial route is now open and partnership working on community transport initiatives has enabled significant numbers of people, who would otherwise have been excluded through lack of transport, to access services. Environment services improved, including in targeted areas such as waste reduction, recycling and composting. However whilst the Council improved, the rest of the country continues to improve at a faster rate.



- 24 Crime rates** continue to fall as action is taken to address risks. For example the introduction of CCTV and a multi-agency problem solving approach in Hendon coincided with a 31 per cent reduction in crime locally between April and September 2007 and contributed to a decrease in recorded crime across the city. Local measures suggest that there has been a significant reduction in the proportion of people worrying about crime. Communities are now safer for local people. The council was top performing in relation to the percentage reduction in the number of people killed and seriously injured in road accidents; taking action following racial incidents; and having few looked after children receiving warnings, reprimands, cautions or convictions.
- 25** Overall, services for **children and young people** are good. In 2007, there was a four per cent increase to 59 per cent of the percentage of pupils achieving five or more A\* - C grades at GCSE, representing a significant improvement. However, Key Stage 2 attainment levels for English, which were already poorly performing, deteriorated in 2006/07.
- 26** To help the Council become more customer focused, it has established seven independent advisory groups to act as consultees on policy developments. This will help the Council better determine needs of people more likely to have very specific and different needs to those of the wider community. This, along with a range of other work relating to diversity, equalities and cohesion enhances the Council's ability to create **inclusive communities** and complements the Council's focus on improving the customer experience and journey. The Council and its partners have also secured £3.5 million of digital challenge funding to improve opportunities and access for citizens. However, more action is needed on all aspects of equality and the Council should seek to ensure that its workforce is fully representative of the communities it serves.
- 27** Additionally, improvements to communications are helping to project a more positive image of the Council and the city. This is important not only in encouraging resident participation and service take-up, but also in terms of raising the profile of the city as a place to live, work, study and invest.
- 28** Value for money (VFM) and quality of services is good and improving. The Council has maintained relatively low overall council tax levels whilst investing in and improving some of its priority and poorer performing services. It has realised significant savings and exceeded government targets for savings a year early.

### **Progress being made to sustain improvement**

- 29** The Council generally has robust plans and strategies for improvement. The current vision and strategic priorities of the Sunderland Strategy are being revised to focus on the five key priorities of prosperous city, healthy city, safe city, learning city and attractive and inclusive city. The current Sunderland Strategy lacks overall long term outcome measures but the Council plans to address this in the revised strategy. This strategy will be underpinned by the Local Area Agreement, agreed with partners. The Council's medium term financial strategy is good. The Council lacks an overarching regeneration strategy but is developing its 'Regeneration Blueprint.' Long term plans for waste management solutions, in collaboration with neighbouring authorities, are being progressed.

- 30 The Council is increasing its focus on outcomes and the citizen's experience as it refreshes its policy setting, planning and reporting arrangements. The business improvement programme, which is now underway, aims to ensure that there is a robust, customer focused approach to improvement by considering the customer experience in its entirety, irrespective of whether services are delivered by the Council or partners. Progress is being made on detailed business cases for delivery of service enhancements and enabling projects to help drive improvement.
- 31 The Council has good performance management arrangements in place but some areas of underperformance remain. Reporting arrangements have improved the use of integrated financial and performance information, performance clinics are helping to increase focus on performance matters and scrutiny is being developed to provide a more proactive role. These all enable a more holistic challenge.
- 32 The Council has the necessary capacity to deliver its plans and it is working to enhance capacity. It has a strong financial position and has strong management processes in place to support delivery of priorities and deliver VFM. The restructured diversity and inclusion team enhances capacity to enable the Council to better meet the needs of diverse communities. Good procurement practice, generally effective staff development and very strong risk management enhances the Council's capacity to deliver its priorities. The Council has a new and well researched approach to reducing the high level of sickness, but, despite some positive early indications, it is too soon to identify any real impact on capacity.
- 33 Capacity to deliver on the key priority relating to a prosperous city is being enhanced, with improved co-ordination, focus and drive to ensure it is well placed to deal with the challenges of regeneration and also to maximise the opportunities. It is re-structuring with the aim of ensuring strong strategic leadership for regeneration within the Council. The Council and City Region partners have started to increase capacity to support a broader regeneration agenda.

## Corporate assessment and joint area review

### Corporate assessment

- 34 The purpose of a corporate assessment is to assess how well the Council engages with and leads its communities, delivers community priorities in partnership with others, and ensures continuous improvement across the range of Council activities. Corporate assessments are normally aligned with a joint area review of services for children and young people, lead by CSCI.

- 35 In overall terms Sunderland City Council has been assessed as performing well across all assessment themes, as set out below.

## Table 2- Corporate Assessment

Headline questions	Theme	Score*
What is the Council, together with its partners, trying to achieve?	Ambition	3
	Prioritisation	3
What is the capacity of the Council, including its work with partners, to deliver what it is trying to achieve?	Capacity	3
	Performance management	3
What has been achieved?	Achievement	3
<b>Overall corporate assessment score**</b>		<b>3</b>

(Note: 1 = lowest, 4 = highest)

- 36 The detailed report on the Corporate Assessment is available on the Audit Commission website at [www.audit-commission.gov.uk](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk). The report noted good leadership within the Council and the shared vision for Sunderland created by the Council and its partners. The Council engages with local communities well, overall. It has a strong financial position and delivers value for money as a result of good financial and performance management. Key areas for improvement have been summarised below to inform the Council's continuing improvement.
- The vision for Sunderland is both challenging and aspirational but its impact as a driver for change is inhibited by a lack of definition of outcomes for local people. To focus on the rate and extent of change required, the Council and its partners should develop concrete, long-term targets and milestones in each key area of its ambition for the community.
  - The Council also needs to ensure that internal plans and strategies are updated and link coherently to the vision and priorities for the city.
  - The Council needs to improve the role of scrutiny as an effective and consistent challenge mechanism.
  - The Council generally engages well with local communities but needs to meet the specific needs and aspirations of a growing and increasingly diverse population. Links with some marginal and vulnerable groups have been established but should also be extended, and used more effectively.
  - The Council also needs to engage more effectively in the sustainability agenda. This is an important contribution to the success of the image strategy projecting Sunderland as an attractive place to live, work and study.

### Joint area review

37 An important aspect of the role of the Relationship Manager is to work with other inspectorates and regulators who also review and report on the Council's performance. Relationship Managers share information and seek to provide 'joined up' regulation.

38 During the last year Sunderland City Council has received a joint area inspection of services for children and young people, lead by CSCI as part of the integrated CA/JAR. The following assessment is an extract from that report:

*"The Council's performance in this area is good overall with individual services varying from adequate to good. Outcomes for children and young people are good overall. The capacity to improve is good. Most children and young people appear safe. Children and young people report that they feel safe, although some black and ethnic minority children do not feel safe in some areas of the city. The work of all local services in keeping children and young people safe is adequate with some good features but some weaknesses exist for some of the most vulnerable children. The Youth Offending Service is performing well"*

39 Scored assessments from other agencies have been incorporated into the CPA scorecard above.

## The audit of the accounts and value for money

### Overall conclusion

- 40** As your appointed auditor, we have reported separately to the Audit and Governance Committee on the issues arising from our 2006/07 audit. On 28 September 2007 we issued:
- our audit report, providing an unqualified opinion on your accounts;
  - a conclusion on the Council's value for money arrangements, concluding that these arrangements met the 12 specified criteria during the year ended 31 March 2007, and;
  - our report on the Best Value Performance Plan, confirming that the Plan has been audited and published in accordance with statutory requirements.
- 41** There were no significant matters arising from this work to bring to members' attention. Following recommendations made in previous years we are pleased to note improvements made to data quality and the accuracy of published performance indicators this year.

### National Fraud Initiative

- 42** The National Fraud Initiative is a computerised data matching exercise led by the Audit Commission. It is designed to identify overpayments to suppliers and benefit claimants and to detect fraud perpetrated on public bodies.
- 43** Referrals from the current exercise were released to participating bodies in January 2007, and appropriate action has been taken by Internal Audit to follow up data matches in respect of payroll, pensions, benefits and creditor payments. Benefit frauds totalling £27,140 have been identified through this process and are being pursued.

### Review of Internal Audit

- 44** Local authorities must maintain an internal audit function, and conduct an annual review of its effectiveness. As external auditors, part of our assessment of the Council's control environment requires us to consider whether Internal Audit arrangements are adequate in principle, and properly applied in practice.

**14** Annual Audit and Inspection Letter | The audit of the accounts and value for money

- 45** Professional standards for Internal Audit are contained in the CIPFA Code of Practice for Internal Audit in Local Government. Our review has focused on a review of Internal Audit's "Quality System" against the professional and statutory requirements contained within the Code, coupled with a sample review of their files. This work confirmed that Internal Audit is meeting its professional and statutory duties. Processes in place are driven by an effective, and externally accredited, Quality System.

## Use of Resources judgement

- 46** The findings of the auditor are an important component of the CPA framework described earlier in the letter. In particular the Use of Resources score is derived from the assessments made by the auditor in the following areas.
- Financial reporting (the preparation of the accounts of the Council and the way these are presented to the public).
  - Financial management (how financial management is integrated with strategy to support council priorities).
  - Financial standing (the strength of the Council's financial position).
  - Internal control (how effectively the Council maintains proper stewardship and control of its finances).
  - Value for money (an assessment of how well the Council balances the costs and quality of its services).
- 47** For the purposes of the CPA we have assessed the Council's arrangements for use of resources, scoring on a scale of 1 to 4, in these five areas as follows, with the Council once again achieving the highest level of overall score.

**Table 3 Use of resources judgements 2007**

<b>Element</b>	<b>2007 Assessment</b>	<b>2006 Assessment</b>
Financial reporting	3	3
Financial management	4	3
Financial standing	4	4
Internal control	4	4
Value for money	3	3
Overall assessment of the Audit Commission	4	4

*(Note: 1 = lowest, 4 = highest)*

- 48** The Council's performance demonstrates that it is committed to continuing improvement. Scores have increased from our 2006 assessment in five of the eleven sub-themes and in one theme overall, namely financial management. In particular:
- improvements to financial management made last year have now become embedded in terms of both strategic financial management and budgetary control;

- corporate arrangements for managing, delivering, and improving value for money have been enhanced; and
- the Council has demonstrated high standards of ethical governance and robust probity arrangements.

49 This represents significant improvement against an already high level of performance. Notable practice has also been recognised in a number of more specific areas, including risk management, partnership governance and the quality of the Council's 2006/07 annual report.

50 Areas for further improvement are to:

- achieve "best practice" in producing the Council's annual financial statements and working papers;
- develop the corporate approach to asset management in order to support the Council in maximising asset use and disposal of surplus assets;
- take effective action to address high levels of sickness absence; and
- ensure that service reviews and the business improvement programme effectively tackle poorer performance on performance indicators.

## Local risk-based work

51 During the year we undertake work in specific areas of the Council's activities. This is done to inform our overall use of resources and value for money assessments; and in response to audit risks identified locally or nationally. Our local audit work this year has focused on ICT arrangements.

52 A key component of the Audit Commission's national strategy for improving the impact of local audit work and delivering strategic regulation is to carry out integrated reviews which cut across a number of public bodies and help improve the quality of life for local people. Work has been included in audit and inspection plans across the North East for 2006/07 on two key cross-cutting themes, economic development; and health inequalities.

## Economic development within the Tyne Wear city region

53 Economic regeneration is key challenge across Tyne and Wear. There has been progress, with employment and jobs growth in some areas of Tyne and Wear and economic growth in Tyneside and Sunderland at levels greater than the national average since 2000. However, the city region economy is still less productive than the rest of the country. The unemployment rate is 6.48 per cent compared with 5 per cent nationally, which represents some 9,000 more unemployed residents than if Tyne and Wear matched the national rate. The long-term growth in employment is also weak and average incomes are below the national average. There are lower levels of self employment than nationally and less than half the national level of business start ups.



- 54 Individual councils are taking forward local economic strategies, but the achievement of their targets combined will not meet the regional aspirations for economic growth. A range of national and regional studies have demonstrated the importance of city regions for economic growth. The five Councils in Tyne and Wear, together with Northumberland and Durham County Councils have agreed ambitious plans to work together at a city region level in response to Government policy direction. This builds on previous successful joint working in areas such as the Employment Consortium.
- 55 Our review took a strategic view of economic development in Tyne and Wear, and focused on the developing city region, at a time of increased momentum in its development, including the appointment of a City Region Director. Our recommendations, aimed at supporting continuing development of the City Region, stressed the importance of strong leadership, good project management, and an integrated approach in driving this agenda forward. Specifically:
- there needs to be project plan to deliver the City Region Business Case with timescales to accelerate the pace of development, clearly identifying capacity requirements and how these will be met;
  - the need to build a strong analytical capacity and the development of an economic strategy and investment plan based on robust economic analysis, which identifies and prioritises major investments that deliver significant improvement in the City Region economy;
  - the city region's economic strategy and investment plan should be aligned to the Regional Economic Strategy Action Plan, Multi-Area Agreements and established local regeneration partnerships; and
  - a strong and effective communications policy is needed to promote the benefits of the city region within authorities, with partners and the public.

### **Health inequalities**

- 56 Partnership working is helping to improve the North East's health outcomes but more needs to be done to close the gap between the North East and the rest of England. Life expectancy is lower, rates for sickness and disability are twice the national average, and smoking mortality rates are among the highest in England. There is also a high prevalence of obesity, increasing sexual health infection rates and serious alcohol and substance misuse issues.
- 57 Tackling health inequalities is a high priority for the Government, which has been increasingly encouraging health trusts to work in partnership with local public bodies and the voluntary sector to improve health and reduce inequalities through a number of initiatives, targets and legislation. The factors causing health inequalities are complex and can best be addressed through agencies working together.

- 58 The Audit Commission, Deloitte and PricewaterhouseCoopers have reviewed how organisations across the North East are working together to address health inequalities, culminating in a workshop in October 2007 for 200 representatives from the NHS, local government and the many voluntary sector agencies involved in tackling health inequalities, where we identified seven key challenges.
- Challenge 1: Develop arrangements to evaluate projects and ensure continued funding of those that deliver tangible outcomes, and to embed this learning in project planning and performance management systems.
  - Challenge 2: Gather intelligence on where gaps in services exist and a profile of those accessing services. Target services at those areas and individuals where there is unmet need and develop strategies to target hard to reach groups.
  - Challenge 3: Ensure local area agreements contain a breadth of targets to reduce health inequalities, across all sectors and ensure health and wellbeing strategies are translated into local delivery plans that contain sufficient detail and local targets to monitor progress.
  - Challenge 4: Spread awareness of priorities and services on offer and provide networking opportunities and information sharing systems to improve the links between service planners and service providers. Cascade messages and targets to front line workers such as teachers, health professionals and social workers.
  - Challenge 5: Use the Regional Health and Wellbeing Strategy to provide direction for the North East and link national, regional and local policies. Develop networking opportunities and support to share good practice to achieve the aim of transforming the North East into the healthiest region in the country within a generation.
  - Challenge 6: Give community and voluntary sector organisations increased certainty over funding with agreed delivery targets and simplify commissioning arrangements to make it easier for them to bid for the provision of services.
  - Challenge 7: Systematically seek community views to influence how and where services are provided.
- 59 A report summarising the work to date was distributed widely to inform future development and improvement. We will be building on this work in the coming year, focusing in on specific areas, identifying good practice and helping to identify and overcome barriers to improving health outcomes in the North East.

## ICT arrangements

- 60 ICT services underpin production of the accounts, performance management and systems of internal control. Sunderland City Council has embarked upon a major project to enhance ICT processes, and the objectives of our work this year have been to:
- highlight strengths and weaknesses of the existing ICT service, measuring present levels of service against nationally recognised standards; and
  - review arrangements put in place to secure future improvement.
- 61 The Council has also participated in the Audit Commission's national web-based "YourBusiness@Risk" survey, which focuses on ICT security and arrangements for appropriate use of IT.
- 62 There has been considerable progress in improving ICT provision in the Council over the last few years. Our work indicates that a majority of service users have access to the computing facilities they need and that these are both reliable and fast enough for their requirements. Responses to the "YourBusiness@Risk" survey also confirmed a good understanding of IT risks and security arrangements.
- 63 Our gap analysis, comparing the council's existing ICT practices against a nationally recognised best practice framework, highlighted a number of areas where the Council could make further changes and this is being used as a baseline to inform proposed ICT investment. We have recommended that surveys are repeated at intervals to monitor future progress and assess the effectiveness of changes and improvements.
- 64 Surveys of ICT users, as opposed to ICT professionals, have highlighted issues relating to the need to improve communication, provide more information and training, and increase awareness of ICT issues, rather than weaknesses in the actual processes themselves. An action plan to address these points has been agreed with officers.
- 65 The commissioning of ICT services and new products also requires review. The existing process, through the e-Group, although sound in principle, has a number of practical issues which result in a lack of appropriate corporate scrutiny for new project development. Co-ordination between individual ICT projects and overall programme management also needs to be improved, and we have made a number of suggestions for improvement in these areas.

## Looking ahead

- 66 The public service inspectorates are currently developing a new performance assessment framework, the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA). CAA will provide the first holistic independent assessment of the prospects for local areas and the quality of life for people living there. It will put the experience of citizens, people who use services and local tax payers at the centre of the new local assessment framework, with a particular focus on the needs of those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. It will recognise the importance of effective local partnership working, the enhanced role of Sustainable Communities Strategies and Local Area Agreements and the importance of councils in leading and shaping the communities they serve.
- 67 CAA will result in reduced levels of inspection and better coordination of inspection activity. The key components of CAA will be a joint inspectorate annual area risk assessment and reporting performance on the new national indicator set, together with a joint inspectorate annual direction of travel assessment and an annual use of resources assessment. The auditors' use of resources judgements will therefore continue, but their scope will be widened to cover issues such as leadership, staff management and the sustainable use of resources.
- 68 The first results of our work on CAA will be published in the autumn of 2009. This will include the performance data from 2008/09, the first year of the new Local Area Agreements.
- 69 At a local level, we have already agreed an outline audit plan and fee for 2007/08. This will be reviewed following discussions with officers and review of documents to update our assessment of key risks. We will also be developing our outline plan and fee for 2008/09.
- 70 In addition to mandatory testing on the financial statements and use of resources, we anticipate that the focus of our work during 2008 will be on two main issues, namely:
- community engagement with hard to reach groups; and
  - performance management.

## Closing remarks

- 71 This letter has been discussed and agreed with senior officers and will be presented at the Cabinet meeting in March 2008. Copies of the letter have been provided to all Council members.
- 72 Further detailed findings, conclusions and recommendations on the areas covered by audit and inspection work are included in the reports issued to the Council during the year. These are set out below.

**Table 4 Reports issued**

Report	Date of issue
Audit and inspection plan	March 2006
Review of Internal Audit	April 2007
ICT services report	May 2007
YourBusiness@Risk	August 2007
Opinion on financial statements Value for money conclusion Audit certificate on best value performance plan	September 2007
Addressing health inequalities in the North East*	October 2007
Economic regeneration in Tyne and Wear City Region*	October 2007
Final accounts report	December 2007
Annual audit and inspection letter	February 2008

\* these reviews were cross-cutting with a joint report to all relevant organisations

- 73 The Council has taken a positive and constructive approach to audit and inspection work, and I wish to thank the Council's staff for their support and cooperation during the audit.

## Availability of this letter

- 74 This letter will be published on the Audit Commission's website at [www.audit-commission.gov.uk](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk), and also on the Council's website.

**Lynne Snowball**  
Relationship Manager and District Auditor

February 2008

## **CABINET – 12 MARCH 2008**

### **REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

#### **COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT (CPA) 2007**

##### **1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet that the council has continued to achieve the maximum **four star** rating in the latest CPA results and was judged to be **'improving well'** by the Audit Commission.

##### **2. Description of Decision**

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to accept this report.

##### **3. Introduction / Background**

- 3.1 In 2002 the CPA was introduced, which ranked councils on a five point scale (i.e. 'excellent', 'good', 'fair', 'weak' and 'poor'). The CPA covers how a council is run overall (i.e. the corporate assessment) and how its main services perform. Sunderland was judged to be 'Excellent' in 2002, 2003 and 2004.
- 3.2 In 2005, the Audit Commission 'raised the bar' to make the CPA a more rigorous test and ensure that councils continuously improve and meet public expectations of continuing high standards. In doing so it placed greater emphasis upon value for money, diversity, and how councils engage with the communities they serve.
- 3.3 To reflect the significant changes to the CPA framework the Audit Commission revised the way in which it categorises councils and adopted a star rating, with councils ranked as being from four stars to zero stars. For the first time councils were also rated in terms of their direction of travel (i.e. how well a Council has improved local services in the past 12 months). This took a four point scale with Councils judged as 'improving strongly', 'improving well', 'improving adequately' and 'not improving adequately'.
- 3.4 In 2005 and 2006, the council was categorised as four star and 'improving well'.

##### **4. Current Position – CPA Scorecard 2007**

- 4.1 In February 2008 the Audit Commission announced that Sunderland continues to be a four star council, which is 'improving well'.

- 4.2 The narrative used by the Audit Commission within the council's CPA Scorecard demonstrates that the council continues to improve services across the board with a number of the council's key achievements described, namely:

"Sunderland City Council is improving well. The Council is improving services in its priority areas. The local environment is improving: less waste is being sent to landfill, more is recycled or composted and public spaces are cleaner. Crime reduction targets have been exceeded, crime rates are low and mostly improving, and local people are less worried about crime. Children's educational attainment rates are improving at key stages three and four, although key stage two results for English remain poor. Adult social care in the area is excellent, with good services and systems to enable people to live independently. The Council has invested in priority and underperforming services while maintaining relatively low levels of council tax and good value for money. These investments, supported by good performance management, have delivered improvement over the last year. A range of projects and programmes are ensuring that the Council is becoming more citizen focused. Capacity is good and is being strengthened appropriately to deliver priorities, but the Council performs poorly in some aspects of the diversity of its workforce and sickness rates remain high, and deteriorated during 2006/07."

- 4.3 Plans are already in place and progress is being made to improve those areas highlighted by the Audit Commission over the next twelve months.

- 4.4 A copy of the council's CPA Scorecard and the scores awarded to individual services is attached as **Appendix 1**. The scorecard is also incorporated into the council's Annual Audit and Inspection Letter from the Audit Commission, which is also being reported to this meeting of Cabinet.

- 4.5 As part of the revised CPA framework 2005 ('CPA the harder test') the Audit Commission changed the way it carried out the triennial corporate assessment. As a result, until 2008 when all councils will have been assessed under the new style corporate assessment, the CPA category score is based either on a council's new corporate assessment score or the previous one if that is higher.

As a result, the council's score of three out of four in the most recent 2006 Corporate Assessment is not reflected in the current CPA Scorecard i.e. the 2002 Corporate Assessment score of four will be utilised until the 2008 CPA Scorecard (published in 2009). It should be noted that the council's 2006 Corporate Assessment score of three will not affect the council's overall four star CPA rating unless there is a corresponding fall in scores within individual service blocks in 2008.

- 4.6 The overall CPA four star rating places the Council as one of the top performing councils in the country with only 37% of the 150 Single Tier and County Councils given a four star rating. This is demonstrated in Table 1 on the following page.

**Table 1: CPA Categorisations 2007 – All England Single Tier & County Councils**

	4 star	3 star	2 star	1 star	0 star	Subject to Review	*Exempt	TOTAL
Improving strongly	13 (9%)	7 (5%)	2 (1%)	0	0	0		22 (15%)
Improving well	36 (24%)	41 (27%)	9 (6%)	1 (1%)	0	1 (%)		88 (59%)
Improving adequately	1 (1%)	16 (11%)	11 (7%)	1 (1%)	0	0	1 (1%)	30 (20%)
Not improving adequately	0	0	0	0	0	0		0
Subject to review	5 (3%)	4 (3%)	1 (1%)	0	0	0		10 (7%)
<b>TOTAL</b>	55 (37%)	68 (45%)	23 (15%)	2 (1%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)	150 (100%)

\*The Isles of Scilly are exempt from a star rating in 2007 based on the applicability of the methodology to the island's circumstances.

4.7 The scores at a regional level and year on year trends are as follows:

**Table 2: CPA Categorisations 2007 – North East Single Tier & County Councils**

North East Councils	Star rating			Direction of Travel		
	2007	2006	Trend	2007	2006	Trend
Darlington	4 stars	4 stars	↔	Improving well	Improving well	↔
Durham	4 stars	4 stars	↔	Improving well	Improving well	↔
Gateshead	4 stars	4 stars	↔	Improving strongly	Improving well	↑
Hartlepool	4 stars	4 stars	↔	Under review	Improving well	N/A
Middlesbrough	4 stars	4 stars	↔	Under review	Improving well	N/A
Newcastle	3 stars	3 stars	↔	improving well	Improving adequately	↑
North Tyneside	3 stars	2 stars	↑	Improving strongly	Improving adequately	↑
Northumberland	4 stars	3 stars	↑	Improving well	Improving adequately	↑
Redcar & Cleveland	4 stars	4 stars	↔	Improving well	Improving well	↔
South Tyneside	4 stars	4 stars	↔	Improving well	Improving strongly	↓
Stockton on Tees	4 stars	4 stars	↔	Under review	Improving strongly	N/A
Sunderland	4 stars	4 stars	↔	Improving well	Improving well	↔

**KEY:** ↑ Improved Rating      ↔ No Movement      ↓ Rating Dropped

## 5. Reason for the Decision

5.1 To make Cabinet aware of the Council's CPA Scorecard and how this compares to other single tier and county councils.

## 6. Alternative Options

6.1 There are no alternative options.



## **7. Relevant Considerations / Consultations**

- 7.1 The CPA Scorecard is a public document and is published along with those of the other 149 All England Single Tier and County Councils on the Audit Commission's website ([www.audit-commission.gov.uk](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk)).

## **8. List of Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Sunderland City Council Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) Scorecard 2007

## **9. Background Papers**

CPA – The Harder Test *Scores and analysis of performance in single tier and county councils 2007* (Audit Commission, February 2008)

CPA – The Harder Test *Single tier and county councils' framework for 2005* (Audit Commission, October 2005)

# Sunderland City Council

## Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) scorecard 2007

### Overall performance for this Council

This is a council that is improving well and demonstrating a 4 star overall performance.



We reached this overall rating by looking at:

- What progress Sunderland City Council has made in the last year – direction of travel
- How Sunderland City Council manages its finances and provides value for money – use of resources
- How Sunderland City Council's main services perform – service performance
- How Sunderland City Council is run – corporate assessment

Service assessments, use of resources and corporate assessments are scored on the Local Services Inspectorate Forum scale:

- 1 = Inadequate performance – below minimum requirements
- 2 = Adequate performance – only at minimum requirements
- 3 = Performing well – consistently above minimum requirements
- 4 = Performing strongly – well above minimum requirements

## Direction of travel

The progress Sunderland City Council has made in the last year

Direction of travel	2005	2006	2007
This assessment indicates the progress being made, or otherwise, to achieve improvement.	improving well	improving well	improving well

The following summary has been provided to support the 2007 direction of travel assessment:

Sunderland City Council is improving well. The Council is improving services in its priority areas. The local environment is improving: less waste is being sent to landfill, more is recycled or composted and public spaces are cleaner. Crime reduction targets have been exceeded, crime rates are low and mostly improving, and local people are less worried about crime. Children's educational attainment rates are improving at key stages three and four, although key stage two results for English remain poor. Adult social care in the area is excellent, with good services and systems to enable people to live independently. The Council has invested in priority and underperforming services while maintaining relatively low levels of council tax and good value for money. These investments, supported by good performance management, have delivered improvement over the last year. A range of projects and programmes are ensuring that the Council is becoming more citizen focused. Capacity is good and is being strengthened appropriately to deliver priorities, but the Council performs poorly in some aspects of the diversity of its workforce and sickness rates remain high, and deteriorated during 2006/07.

## Use of resources

How Sunderland City Council manages its finances and provides value for money

Use of resources	2005	2006	2007
We have assessed how well the Council manages its finances and provides value for money.	3	4	4

This use of resources judgement is drawn from five individual judgements provided by the Council's appointed auditor:

Auditor judgements	2007
Financial reporting	3
Financial management	4
Financial standing	4
Internal control	4
Value for money	3

## Service performance

### How Sunderland City Council's main services perform

Service area	2005	2006	2007
Benefits - The Council's performance in providing housing and council tax benefit services. The assessment is made by the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate and is based primarily on achievement against the 2005 housing benefits/council tax benefits performance standards.	4	4	4
Children and young people - The Council's performance in providing children's services, such as children's education and social care. The joint assessment is made by the Commission for Social Care Inspection and Ofsted following a review of the Council's overall performance and key indicators.	3	3	3
Culture - The Council's performance in services, such as libraries and leisure, as assessed by the Audit Commission.	4	3	3
Environment - The Council's performance in services, such as transport, planning and waste, as assessed by the Audit Commission.	2	2	3
Housing - The Council's performance in community housing and, where applicable, housing management services, as assessed by the Audit Commission.	3	4	3
Social care (adults) - The Council's performance in adult social care services. The assessment is made by the Commission for Social Care Inspection following a review of the Council's overall performance and key indicators.	3	3	4

## Corporate assessment

### How Sunderland City Council is run

Corporate assessment	2007
In assessing how the Council is run, the Commission considers what the Council, together with its partners, is trying to achieve; what the capacity of the Council, including its work with partners, is to deliver what it is trying to achieve; and what has been achieved?	4

Score used is from the 2002 corporate assessment.

The way we carried out corporate assessments changed from 2005 onwards. Until 2008, when all councils will have been assessed using the new-style corporate assessment, the CPA category will be based on either its new corporate assessment score or the previous one if that is higher.

Please visit the Audit Commission website ([www.audit-commission.gov.uk](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk)) for the full version of this scorecard.

## **CABINET – 12<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2008**

### **THE SUNDERLAND STRATEGY 2008-25**

#### **Report of the Chief Executive**

#### **1.0 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To request the Cabinet to recommend Council to approve the Sunderland Strategy 2008-25.

#### **2.0 Description of Decision (Recommendations)**

- 2.1 That Cabinet recommends Council to approve and adopt the Sunderland Strategy 2008-25.

#### **3.0 Background**

- 3.1 The current Sunderland Strategy 2004-07 was published in Autumn 2004 by the Sunderland Partnership, and significant progress has been made across the city as a result of partners working together. Key improvements in city-life, which would have been impossible for organisations to achieve working in isolation include:

- The major reductions in overall crime in the city,
- Residents and businesses in Sunderland recycling more of their waste than ever before,
- The development of state of the art wellness facilities across the city,
- The reducing number of deaths caused by cancer, circulatory disease, heart disease and stroke,
- Reduced unemployment, and an increasing number of residents choosing, and being supported to set up their own businesses,
- An ever increasing number of school pupils achieving five or more GCSEs, grades A\*-C, giving them the best possible start in adult life.

- 3.2 The Local Government Act 2000 requires that local authorities lead the local strategic partnerships in their areas on the development and implementation of sustainable community strategies. The purpose of these strategies is to set the framework for developing the areas within a local authority's purview and improving quality of life for local people.

- 3.3 At its meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> March 2007, the Cabinet agreed that in order to build on the achievements outlined above, the Sunderland Strategy from 2008 onwards should be more aligned to the aims of the Image Strategy, and articulate an enhanced, long term ambition for the city, moving away from the 3 yearly cycle of refreshing and updating the Strategy. It was agreed that the new Sunderland Strategy should set out a framework for the city's development based on detailed debates about the city that the council and its partners want to create, and as desired by local people, over the longer term.

3.4 This was considered achievable on the basis of the city's strong political leadership, and the Sunderland Partnership's maturity in terms of a long and successful track record of working together, agreeing shared priorities and targets, and the focused, strategic allocation of resources.

#### **4.0 The Role and Key Components of the Strategy**

4.1 The refreshed Sunderland Strategy document has been developed in order to provide a framework for the members of the Sunderland Partnership, and indeed all organisations, groups of people and individuals, to work towards improving quality of life in Sunderland by 2025. In articulating a vision, aims and strategic priorities, it describes how partners will make the vision for the city a reality.

4.2 It is also intended to act as a guide for local people to the focus of the work and resources of the members of the Partnership, as well as giving people outside of the city a flavour of the place Sunderland is now, and the place it will be by 2025.

4.3 It is Sunderland's overarching strategy for improvement and as such is the product of detailed analysis of the city's current position, and the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead over the longer term. Whilst the Sunderland Strategy provides the strategic overview, there are a range of more detailed and specific strategies and plans that sit beneath the Sunderland Strategy identifying, for example, what needs to be done in terms of health or education to ensure the overall vision for the city can be achieved.

#### **4.4 Vision and Aims**

At the start of the Strategy, the Sunderland Partnership sets out its vision and aims. The vision describes the ultimate goal for the city in 2025 and the aims identify the key features of city life that people will be able to see and enjoy as the strategy is implemented and the vision is realised.

#### **4.5 Strategic Priorities**

Whilst the vision and aims define 'what' the city will be like in 2025, the strategic priorities set the framework for 'how' the Partnership will go about achieving its goals.

4.6 Through the continuous assessment of performance and identifying where partners are doing well and making progress, and where they are not, the Partnership is able to identify a clear and evidenced set of priorities for action – around which thematic partnership structures and ways of working, will be based - in order to make the journey towards Sunderland in 2025.

4.7 The eight priorities in the 2004-2007 Sunderland Strategy are all, to a greater or lesser extent, mutually supportive and dependent. The activities under some however, in attempting to maximise the added value from working together as partners, have proved to be inextricably linked over the past four years, and in seeking to optimise outcomes in

the future, the City Council and its partners have agreed the priorities for this strategy as follows:

- Prosperous City
- Healthy City
- Safe City
- Learning City
- Attractive and Accessible City

#### **4.8 Cross Cutting Priorities**

It has been agreed that the efforts and resources previously dedicated under the Housing and Social and Cultural Opportunities priorities need to have more of a widespread focus. Their positive impact on the other priorities such as health, prosperity, safe communities and attractive and accessible city must be fully recognised. On this basis they have become cross-cutting priorities along with Creating Inclusive Communities – this is based on the Partnership’s commitment that the needs and requirements of all groups and individuals will be considered in all that partners do.

- 4.9 On the basis that the Strategy is a Sustainable Community Strategy, sustainability is also a fundamental, cross cutting priority, ensuring that the actions and initiatives undertaken by the partners are planned with due consideration of their impact on the city’s future.

#### **4.10 Supporting Documents and Delivery of the Strategy**

To underpin the Sunderland Strategy a comprehensive Needs Analysis/Evidence Base document, a Sunderland Strategy Delivery Plan (incorporating the Local Area Agreement) and a set of Local Area Plans are under development. The Delivery Plan and Local Area Agreement (LAA), to be refreshed every 3 years, will identify the short term, priority targets for improvement, to enable partners to achieve the longer term goals set out in the Sunderland Strategy. The LAA is the subject of a further report to the Cabinet at this meeting.

### **5.0 The Development Process and Consultation**

- 5.1 The process of developing the Sunderland Strategy 2008-25 commenced with a series of Cabinet and other elected Member workshops and events to determine what the future priorities for the city should be.

- 5.2 Based on the priority framework set by elected Members, an officer coordination group, comprising representatives of all partners, and the thematic partnerships (of the Sunderland Partnership) developed the content of the strategy, analysing the city’s current position in relation to the priorities, and developing proposals and objectives for moving forward.

- 5.3 Community Engagement and Consultation is fundamental to the production of a sustainable community strategy that will ensure the ambitions for the city are realised to create a better future for everyone in Sunderland.



**5.4 Widescale consultation has taken place on the vision, aims and priorities of the strategy.** In addition the results of the Annual Residents Survey and other special surveys have been taken into account. Focus groups have been undertaken with the Citizens Panel on the future of the city and also with the city's Voluntary and Community Network and the Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs). The IAGs represent groups of people in the city who are more vulnerable and at risk of exclusion.

## **6.0 Financial Implications**

6.1 Costs associated with the development of the strategy document itself (and supporting documents referenced under 4.8 above) have been met from a dedicated Sunderland Partnership Budget.

6.2 In terms of implementation, as described above, the Sunderland Strategy sets the overarching framework for improving quality of life in the city and achieving the vision for the city in 2025. This will be achieved as a result of the combined efforts and resources of a vast range of partner (including the City Council) sub-strategies, services, programmes and projects and the financial resources attached to them.

## **7.0 Reasons for Decision**

7.1 The Sunderland Strategy is defined as an Article 4 Plan within the Council's Constitution and the City Council has a duty to lead the Sunderland Partnership in the production and implementation of a sustainable community strategy. The Sunderland Strategy provides the framework, based on detailed analysis of the city's current position and the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead, for the Sunderland Partnership to work together to achieve an ambitious vision for the city in 2025, and create a better future for everyone in Sunderland.

## **8.0 Alternative Options**

8.1 The alternative is for the Cabinet not to recommend the Sunderland Strategy 2008-25 to Council for approval and adoption. This would result in the city not having a sustainable community strategy in place, which is required as part of the duty placed on local government under the Local Government Act 2000, to lead local strategic partnerships in the development and implementation of sustainable community strategies.

## **8. List of Appendices**

Sunderland Strategy 2008-2025 (final draft)

## **9. Background Papers**

- Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007
- Sustainable Communities Act 2007
- Sunderland Strategy 2004-2007 – A Bright Future for Sunderland
- Regional Economic Strategy

- Regional Spatial Strategy
- Local Development Framework – Core Strategy
- Local Area Agreement (Outline Submission)
- Sunderland Image Strategy
- Sunderland International Strategy
- Sunderland Children and Young People’s Plan
- Sunderland 50+ Strategy

**THE SAFER SUNDERLAND STRATEGY 2008-2023**

**Report of the Director of Development and Regeneration**

**1.0 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the Council's support for the Safer Sunderland Partnership's Safer Sunderland Strategy 2008-2023.

**2.0 Description of the Decision**

- 2.1 Cabinet is requested to:
- i. Recommend to Council that the Safer Sunderland Partnership's Safer Sunderland Strategy 2008-2023 be adopted.
  - ii. Authorise the Director of Development and Regeneration to take all necessary action to publish the Strategy including the making of any necessary amendments of a non-substantive nature.

**3.0 Background**

- 3.1 The Safer Sunderland Partnership (the Partnership) was formed in 2005 following a merger between the Sunderland Community Safety Partnership and Sunderland Drugs Action Team, in line with Home Office recommendations, to support an extension of Crime and Disorder Partnership duties to encompass substance misuse (following the Police Reform Act 2002).
- 3.2 Every three years, the Partnership must publish a Strategy to reduce Crime Disorder and Substance Misuse in their area.
- 3.3. The current statutory Safer Sunderland Strategy 2005-2008 will complete on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008. The strategy contains three overarching targets which are to:
- Achieve a 20% reduction in the British Crime Survey comparator crime categories<sup>1</sup>.
  - Narrow the gap in the total recorded crime rate between Sunderland and the national average.
  - Reduce the levels of worry about crime.

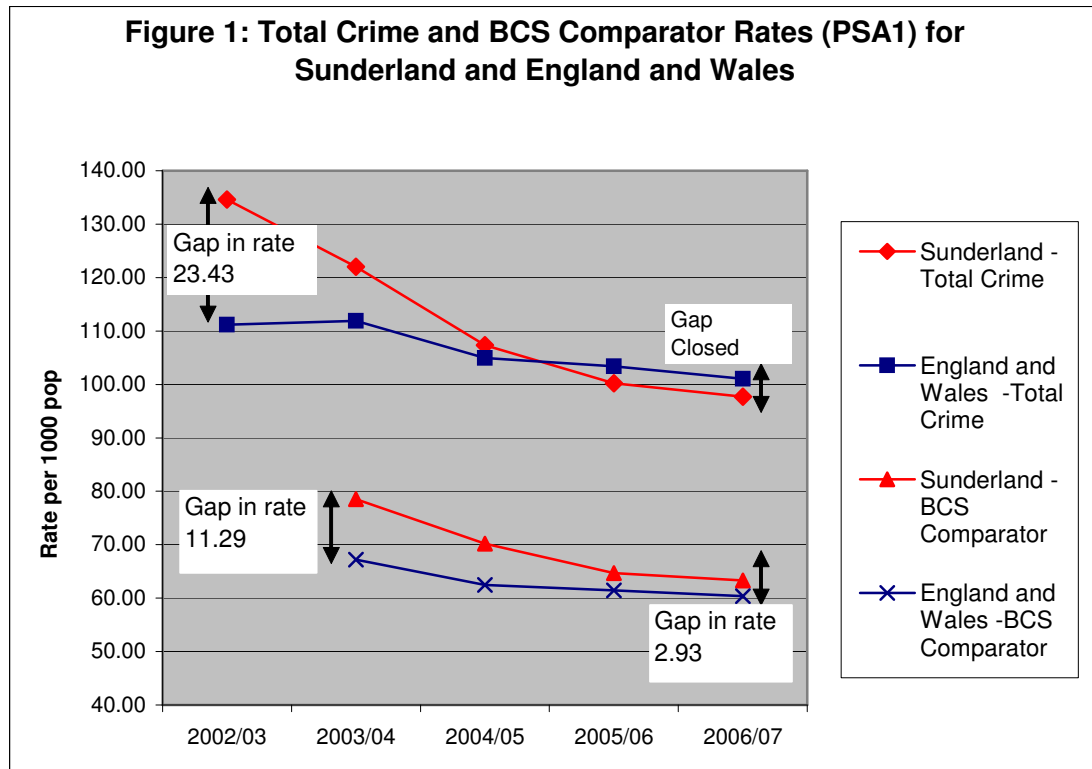
All three key targets have been achieved. Public Service Agreement Target 1 was exceeded a year early with a 31% reduction up to January 2008. Sunderland's crime rate is now better than the national average (Figure 1) as the gap in the crime rate has been closed. There has also been a 13% reduction in people's worry about crime.

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<sup>1</sup> These crime types make up the current Public Service Agreement 1 target

## 4.0 Development of the Strategy

- 4.1 The legislative requirement for three year Crime and Disorder Audits and Strategies has been amended by the Police and Justice Act 2006. From April 2008, the requirement is to produce a rolling three-year plan, issued annually. The Safer Sunderland Partnership has agreed to produce a fifteen year strategy 2008-2023 that will not only meet the statutory three year requirement but will also provide a longer term focus for safer community activity. Publication is expected, in line with the legislative requirements, by April 2008.



- 4.2 To develop the Strategy, the Safer Sunderland Partnership held a series of three workshops during October 2007. This work identified the outcomes that the Safer Sunderland Partnership would wish to achieve over a significantly longer strategy period and mapped some critical conditions in order to achieve those. The outcomes support the overall vision of the Community Strategy.
- 4.3 The strategy development process has included the preparation of a first annual Partnership Strategic Intelligence Assessment. The Assessment (introduced under the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership reform process and a requirement under the Police and Justice Act 2006) replaces the three yearly Crime and Disorder Audit process undertaken by Safer Sunderland in previous cycles. The Partnership Strategic Intelligence Assessment uses a wide range of partner data and is aligned around victims/vulnerable groups, offenders and locations as opposed to individual crime types. Its purpose is to

provide the Partnership Board with the necessary information on which to set its strategic priorities.

4.4 The results of the Partnership Strategic Intelligence Assessment have been used to create the new Strategy which sets out the most important crime, disorder and substance misuse priorities in Sunderland, the challenging outcomes to be pursued and action which the Partnership will take to make an impact on them. It includes:

- What we will do
- How we will do it
- Who is responsible.

4.5 It demonstrates, in a public document, our commitment to making Sunderland a safer place. It will also be used for allocating resources and directing action to where it is most needed. The Strategy has been drawn up jointly by the partner agencies, with individual organisations identifying key actions for which they will be responsible.

## **5.0 Strategy Outcomes**

5.1 The overall outcome of the Strategy is that everyone in Sunderland will be and feel safe and secure. This will be achieved through work on prevention, early intervention, enforcement and support and rehabilitation.

5.2 Supporting outcomes to be delivered through the Strategy during 2008-2023 focus upon:

- Being free from harm
- Creating a safe environment
- Being free from crime, disorder and substance misuse
- Creating active citizens
- Creating a supportive family environment
- Creating cohesive communities
- Embedding a problem solving approach
- Creating an effective partnership

5.3 Every outcome in the Strategy has a supporting long term measure attached to it to ensure it has meaning for local people. By 2023:

- Feelings of safety will be at their highest ever level and no one will feel very unsafe in their neighbourhood
- Residents will enjoy a city with its lowest ever recorded crime rates
- Perceptions of anti-social behaviour will be at their lowest ever level and better than the national average

- More people than ever will perceive that parents take responsibility for the behaviour of their children
- There will be the lowest ever levels of drug related (Class A) offending and proven re-offending by adult and young offenders
- Levels of repeat incidents of domestic violence and assault with injury will be at their lowest ever levels. Hospital admissions due to alcohol will be within the 20% best performing Local Authority areas across the country and there will be fewer repeat substance misusers accessing treatment
- No one will perceive attacks or harassment because of race, colour, religion or sexual orientation as a very serious problem in Sunderland. Feelings of safety amongst vulnerable groups will more closely reflect those of other residents across the City.

5.4 A number of shorter term one and three year targets will also be developed to support the delivery of the Strategy and will form part of a comprehensive performance management framework. Over the next twelve months, the Strategy's short term priorities will be to:

- i) Improve feelings of safety, especially for more vulnerable groups
- ii) Reduce re-offending for adults and young people, including:
  - Addressing the risk factors to offending and promoting protective factors
  - Intervening with the most problematic families to prevent intergenerational crime
- iii) Reduce repeat victimisation (especially domestic violence, house burglary and hate crime)
- iv) Reduce drug and alcohol misuse and the harm it causes including drug-related and alcohol-related crime and disorder
- v) Reduce anti-social behaviour and people's perceptions of it
- vi) Reduce violent crime, including domestic violence
- vii) Narrow the gap between areas of the city with disproportionate levels of crime, disorder and substance misuse problems e.g. city centre and vulnerable neighbourhoods
- viii) Provide support to victims and vulnerable groups including young people as victims and offenders

5.5 The Safer Sunderland Strategy will also be supported and strengthened by the continued development of a number of sub-strategies around key issues including:

- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Alcohol
- Domestic Violence
- Reducing Re-offending

- 5.6 In relation to anti-social behaviour, significant progress has been made with the completion of over 90% of the 2007/08 RESPECT Plan actions. The development of the new Safer Sunderland Strategy incorporates this work for the future under the proposed anti-social behaviour strategy while acknowledging recent developments such as the Sunderland Parenting Strategy and continued RESPECT action area funding for specialist intervention. This development in Sunderland reflects the Government's recent integration of the former RESPECT agenda into the newly created Youth Task Force under the Department for Children and Families while retaining overall responsibility for Anti-Social Behaviour within the Home Office.
- 5.7 All 'responsible authorities' ( Sunderland City Council, Northumbria Police, Northumbria Police Authority, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority, Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust), together with other members of the Safer Sunderland Partnership, participated fully in the formulation of the Strategy and are committed to ensuring the Strategy is incorporated in their own planning and operational systems at all levels.
- 5.8 A final draft of the Strategy (Appendix 1) has been made available in the Members Room, as well as a copy sent to all key stakeholders for comment, as part of the consultation process. It is not anticipated that this draft will alter significantly as key stakeholders and the Safer Sunderland Partnership Board have been involved in the preparation of this draft Strategy since October 2007.
- 5.9 Should any amendments of a non-substantive nature be necessary to publish the Strategy it is proposed that the Director of Development and Regeneration be authorised to take all necessary action.

## **6.0 Financial Implications**

- 6.1 The direct cost of printing and publicising the Strategy is estimated at £6,300. This will be funded from the current Safer and Stronger Communities Fund (Building Safer Communities Fund element).
- 6.2 Strategy implementation will require financial support from the Area Based Grant which from April 2008 will subsume the previous funding support from the Home Office via Safer and Stronger Communities, Anti-Social Behaviour Funding and Drug Co-ordination funds. Delivery of the Strategy would not assume or explicitly require any additional mainstream contributions from the Council or other partner agencies beyond that which they have already either agreed or made available.

6.3 It is worth emphasising that, in the Council's case, significant existing support for Strategy implementation beyond extensive mainstream activity includes:

- Support for the Youth Offending Service
- Partial funding of the Safer Communities core team and partnership infrastructure
- Major contributions to community safety through for example the capital programme, initiatives to improve educational attainment, employment opportunities.

6.4 In addition to partner agency mainstream resources, the Safer Sunderland Partnership is also able to draw upon a range of external funding sources. These include for example substance misuse funds managed by the Teaching Primary Care Trust ( approximately £3.4million in 2008/09) and the Basic Command Unit Fund (approximately £270,000 in 2008/09), managed by the Sunderland Police Area Command .

6.5 Beyond these resources, the Strategy will depend, for added value, on implementation based upon:

- Improving significant and existing mainstream activity (e.g. implementation of Section 17 duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998).
- New, smarter, more focused and therefore efficient approaches (e.g. by smarter working and the identification of, and action on, for example Prolific and Other Priority Offenders).

## **7.0 Reasons for Decision**

7.1 Adoption of the Strategy will:

- Guide future crime, disorder and substance misuse work within Sunderland.
- Ensure the statutory requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (as amended by the Police Reform Act 2002 and the Police and Justice Act 2006) are met, which requires the Council, as a responsible authority, to produce and deliver (in partnership) a Crime Reduction Strategy for 2008-2011 by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008.

## **8.0 Alternative Options**

8.1 There are no alternative options recommended for approval

## **9.0 Background Papers**

- Partnership Strategic Intelligence Assessment – January 2008
- HelmePark Theory of Change Report
- Draft Safer Sunderland Strategy 2008-2023



## **CABINET – 12 MARCH 2008**

### **Report of the Chief Executive and City Treasurer**

#### **STRATEGIC INVESTMENT PLAN**

##### **1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To provide to Cabinet details of the proposed Strategic Investment Plan as a delivery mechanism for achieving the long term ambitions of the city in order to improve the quality of life for residents and communities as encapsulated within the Sunderland Strategy, the Local Area Agreement and the Corporate Improvement Plan.

##### **2. Description of Decision**

- 2.1 That Cabinet approves the overall Strategic Investment Plan and agrees to the individual projects, subject to consultation as appropriate, being further developed.

##### **3. Introduction / Background**

###### **3.1 Policy Context for the Strategic Investment Plan**

The council is committed to delivering improvements to local services and helping to improve local people's quality of life, including improving council services as well as providing wider community leadership benefits at a city and neighbourhood level.

The emerging local policy framework has been led by the council and informed by residents with key input from senior member and officer leadership. The overarching ethos underpinning the policy framework has been about achieving better outcomes for local people, including those who are most vulnerable and reducing the deprivation gap. This is particularly relevant to improving the economic prosperity and the health of local people.

Through its community leadership role and its mainstream budgets, the council has made a significant impact on helping to improve local quality of life in terms of the clean, green and safe agenda. Sustainability is a growing key and cross cutting priority and is now core to the new delivery of the vision for Sunderland by 2025. All of which is underpinned by developing with partners a sustainable network and infrastructure across the city to help local people more easily access the services that they require.

The drive and vision for improving Sunderland are further complemented by the emerging national policy framework which puts further emphasis on delivering local priorities. This is at the heart of the new Comprehensive Area Assessment and reflects the greater emphasis placed on local "place shaping"

improvements through the development of Local Area Agreements and the new set of more outcome focused indicators (National Indicator Set) that will replace the current Best Value Performance indicators.

In addition, the priorities centred on improving the economic vitality mirrors the emphasis placed in Sunderland in creating greater wealth and improving skill levels across the city. This is further reflected by central government in relation to the Multi Area Agreement developments and the Sub National Review.

### **3.1.1 Development of Sunderland Strategy 2008-2025**

Considerable work has been undertaken at both a council and city level to develop a long term vision for Sunderland and supporting outcomes underpinned by a significant assessment of local needs both currently, and in the future up to 2025. The Sunderland Partnership as the Local Strategic Partnership has co-ordinated and facilitated the development of the new Sunderland Strategy (2008-2025).

The new strategy is based on fundamental principles of recognising the importance of Sunderland as a city within the City Region, underlining that if we are to improve the local quality of life we have to focus on developing policies and strategies within a regional and sub regional context. The work of City Regions is led by Sunderland City Council with the Leader of the Council taking a prominent role as chair of the shadow City Region Board.

Secondly is the importance of place and recognising that to achieve improvements we need to work with partners aligning resources and activity that improve areas and communities as well as individual services to focus on outcomes.

The Strategy sets out the key strategic priorities which will secure the economic, environmental and social well being of the City:

- **Prosperous City**

To create an enterprising and productive global city with a strong and diverse economy. A city that provides jobs and careers for generations to come, where everyone has the opportunity to contribute to and benefit from the local economy. People will fulfil their potential to be skilled, motivated and wealth creating without losing the special characteristic of Sunderland's balanced way of life.

- **Learning City**

To create a city with a thriving learning culture that supports personal fulfilment. Everyone will be able to access their learning in a cohesive, inclusive city committed to social justice, equality and prosperity. We will ensure learning supports the city's economic prosperity and enables individuals to thrive in the global economy.

- **Safe City**

To create a city where people feel, and are, safe and secure where they can enjoy life without the concerns of being a victim of crime or being harmed.

- **Healthy City**

To create a city where everyone can be supported to make healthy lifestyle choices - a city that provides excellent health and social care services for all who need them. Everyone in Sunderland will have the opportunity to live long, healthy, happy and independent lives.

- **Attractive and Accessible City**

To ensure that Sunderland becomes a clean, green city with a strong culture of sustainability that nurtures its natural and built environment. A place that is recognised inside and outside the city as an attractive and accessible place to live, work, study and visit, with a high quality and welcoming physical environment.

### **3.2 Development of Local Area Agreement 2008-2011**

The Local Area Agreement is a key delivery element of the Sunderland Strategy containing the related priority improvement actions that are critical to deliver the Sunderland Strategy in the short to medium term. The Local Area Agreement has been shaped to address the long term ambition and intended outcomes of the Sunderland Strategy and it provides the basis for measuring progress towards the vision in the short to medium term. The Sunderland Strategy and the LAA are integrated and partners are engaged in the process, working together more effectively and thinking differently about achieving better outcomes. Although it does not, by any means, represent everything that the partnership and partners will do in the city, it does represent a concentration of activity and the areas for accelerated improvement in the next 3 years relating to key challenges.

The long term challenges set out include:

#### **Prosperous and Learning City**

- Supporting economic growth and participation in the economy by encouraging the development of an enterprising culture.
- Matching the supply of labour with demand at all levels by and supporting those who are currently workless to find suitable sustainable employment
- Everyone in Sunderland will have the knowledge and skills needed to play their part in the city's economic growth, and to achieve individual prosperity.

#### **Healthy City**

- Put in place measures that will identify health risks at an early stage and provide interventions that will enable people to maintain good levels of health and wellbeing so that they can be as independent as possible.
- Increase the proportion of people with long term conditions that are supported to live at home
- Improve the emotional health and wellbeing of children in the city.

- Reduce the incidence of lifestyle choices that have a clear link with poor health, particularly lack of exercise, obesity, smoking and alcohol misuse.

### **Developing High Quality Places to Live and Work**

(Covering the themes of Attractive and Accessible City and Safer City)

- Become one of the UK's most sustainable cities by supporting sustainable patterns of consumption, production, transport and development
- Ensure that there is a sufficient housing choice for those wishing to live in Sunderland in relation to type, location and price
- Continue to improve service delivery so that the city has a public realm that is well maintained, accessible, sustainable and functional
- To develop communities in Sunderland that are confident and where there is an atmosphere of mutual support, respect and trust so that people and the places they live in are thriving pleasant places to live
- Ensure people are free from crime, disorder and substance misuse
- Create a safe environment
- Ensure residents are free from harm

A number of key priority areas relating to the economy, skills and transport are also represented as improvement opportunities in the emerging sub regional Multi Area Agreement as part of the City Region work programme.

### **3.3 Delivering National Priorities**

Linked into the delivery of the Sunderland Strategy and LAA the council is also required to deliver against the new National Indicator Set (NIS) which includes 198 key outcome indicators that cut across all services and partner organisations and focus on better outcomes for citizens. The Sunderland Strategy, LAA and NIS are already providing the framework for the council and partners to work together more effectively.

This links to the delivering of central government's Public Service Agreement targets (please see Appendix 1).

### **3.4 Delivering the council priorities and role of the Strategic Investment Plan**

The council's Corporate Improvement Plan (CIP) effectively acts as the annual delivery plan, outlining the key improvement activities and demonstrating the council's commitment to delivering the city's priorities. The CIP includes all mainstream service expenditure (including all Area Based Grants) and external funding.

The CIP sets out annual improvement actions for 2008 and up to 2011, and to reinforce the relationship with the Sunderland Strategy and LAA, detailed improvement actions will continue to be aligned to both the Sunderland Strategy and Local Area Agreement.

A key element of the policy and planning framework for 2008/11 in order to deliver and accelerate real improvements across the City is the development of the Strategic Investment Plan (SIP)

The SIP has been developed as a mechanism to achieve significant improvement in priority areas through projects which have a strong focus on bringing tangible improvements to those issues which mean the most to local people including environmental issues, tackling crime and community safety, improving economic prosperity, reducing health inequalities and in addition supporting local communities to develop through greater empowerment.

#### **4. Potential Strategic Investment Projects**

A number of key projects are proposed that are based on detailed needs analysis and take into consideration both national and local priorities and where capital investment can significantly improve performance for local people in Sunderland and help realise the long term vision and aims for the city.

**Appendix 1** sets out the linkages between government's Public Service Agreement targets and the key priority themes of the new Sunderland Strategy.

**Appendix 2** sets out the fit between the proposed projects and the linkages to the Sunderland Strategy, LAA, national PSA targets and the associated national indicator set.

**Appendix 3** provides background information to the SIP including resident survey data.

**Appendix 4** outlines the proposed schedule of projects and associated financial implications

#### **4.1 Clean, Green and Safe Improvement Opportunities**

At both a city and local neighbourhood level key priority areas for improvement span across the clean, green and safe agenda and the impact on quality of life. Sunderland residents are slightly less likely (66%) than residents across the North East authorities, and across all Ipsos MORI-surveyed councils, to feel that the Council is working to make the area 'cleaner and greener'.

The benefits linked to the clean, green and safe agenda extend across all parts of the city as well as being important for people living, working and visiting the city.

A key priority for local people is tackling crime across the city and for the council and partners also tackling the associated issue of tackling residents' perceptions of safety. Despite considerable reductions in crime across the city residents perceptions of crime and safety have not yet improved accordingly.

#### 4.1.1 Environmental Improvements

The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy and the PFI Outline Business Case identify the recycling and composting target for 2010 is 30% and progressively increasing to 50% by 2020. It is important that the targets are achieved as quickly as possible to avoid significant cost pressures arising from the cost of landfill in the absence of a systematic alternative provision for recycling. Area "bring" sites continue to play a part in the council's recycling effort in addition to the kerbside collection schemes (particularly for certain commodities e.g. bottles). There are currently 52 "bring" sites across the City, 12 of which are on Council land. The sites, in many cases, appear informal and could benefit from more permanent signage and / or improved infrastructure in order to persuade more people to make better use of the facilities.

Although recycling levels are increasing and we have met current national targets, local people in Sunderland are significantly less satisfied than the rest of Tyne and Wear in relation to local recycling facilities. This is evidenced through the BVPI User Satisfaction Survey (2006).

Despite improvements in performance of environmental cleanliness and reductions in vandalism and criminal damage, perception levels remain more negative. Rubbish and litter on the streets is a key concern for residents (in 2006 58% of residents viewed it as a fairly big / or very big problem. Vandalism, graffiti and deliberate damage follows a similar pattern with 43% of residents viewing it as a problem).

In relation to fly tipping performance levels have deteriorated in the current financial year and are a significant area for improvement for local people.

**Proposed projects:** Recycling - Recycling Village, Recycling Satellite Site, Recycling Bring Sites - 6 New and 12 Revamped

This project aims to make those sites in Council ownership more attractive and user friendly with signage, fencing and hard standing if required, some refurbishment of containers and where possible the extension of the range of containers/commodities that can be recycled, supported by increased site cleansing.

In addition the Government has recently consulted on arrangements for "recycling as you go" / on-street recycling arrangements. The project aims to pilot 6 such arrangements and extend the availability of recycling facilities to the City Centre and public transport hubs e.g. the Transport Interchange and Central Station/Fawcett Street; Concord Bus Station and Houghton Broadway.

Finally, a review of the 'Kerb it' scheme will be undertaken with the objective of replacing the 'black box' with effect from 1st April, 2010.

## **Benefits**

Recycling is a significant area for greater improvement both from the viewpoint of residents as well as from a council perspective with the development of the longer term waste strategy and collaboration with neighbouring local authorities.

The combination of improved "bring" to sites and the potential of a recycling village accompanied by greater levels of education and awareness will help encourage waste minimisation and greater recycling levels.

These facilities should have both a direct and indirect impact on performance – the latter through encouragement to participate in wider schemes, and on satisfaction levels.

Finally the project will help to minimise cost implications associated with landfill.

**Proposed Project:** Environmental Education, Communication, Enforcement and Intervention to address Fly Tipping

Building on the four Enforcement Officers employed by the council, the proposal is to increase the number to twelve to address littering and environmental crime issues which are key elements of residents' perception of anti social behaviour in their local area. The visible presence of enforcement officers and associated activity as part of this project should help to improve these levels. It is also proposed to provide more capacity to deal with fly tipping.

## **Benefits**

The benefits will be both in terms of improving performance in relation to the clean, green and safe agenda as well as improving perceptions. The project will lead to an increase in enforcement activity and education and addressing local issues such as fly tipping and removal of rubbish.

### **4.1.2 Sustainability**

Local residents are recognising the increasing vulnerability of the natural assets they rely upon and through the Sunderland Partnership there is shared commitment to developing sustainable options that support the reduction of carbon emissions.

The Sunderland Strategy is aiming to be the sustainable community strategy for Sunderland, and will set out a vision that Sunderland becomes one of the most sustainable, environmentally-friendly cities in the country. Reducing the city's carbon emissions has been identified as a central aim in achieving this sustainable vision. Corporately, the Council is showing leadership on reducing carbon emissions, having published its own Carbon Plan in June 2007.

Environmental sustainability is both a key priority, at both a city and national level, and highlighted in the new inspection framework of Comprehensive Area Assessment. The Climate Change Bill is also due to be enacted during 2008 which will set legal targets for carbon dioxide emission reduction at a national level.

**Proposed project:** A range of sustainability projects and interventions

This proposal requests funding to support key implementation projects that will deliver carbon reductions both to the Council and for the city, in the next 3 years: a wood fuel programme, improving energy management of buildings, a Climate Change Innovation Project.

### **Wood Fuel Programme**

This proposal aims to establish a wood recycling station in the city as a centre for woodchip fuel from the wood waste from parks and civic amenity green waste, to provide a cheap, low-carbon fuel for use by council properties. In phase 1, the project will install two woodchip boilers at South Hylton and Jack Crawford House, and establish the Houghton Wood Station to process and supply approximately 500 tonnes woodchip fuel per annum. In phase 2, the project will procure and develop land to establish a waste-reception site, designed to receive wood waste from commercial tree surgeons in the Sunderland area. This could increase fuel production by another 1,000 tonnes per year, to be available to supply fuel to the wood boilers being installed within schools being rebuilt or refurbished as part of the Building Schools for the Future Programme by September 2009, or to supply housing-based wood fuel systems, which Gentoo are currently investigating. The project will both create cost savings using council-derived wood waste as a fuel to displace gas heating costs, as well as reducing council carbon emissions.

### **Improving Energy Management of Buildings**

This project will upgrade or replace Building Management Systems (BMS) that control heating/ventilation plant in the council's operational properties. Some of this equipment is approaching 15 years old and has become obsolete. Installing new BMS will result in reduced maintenance costs and energy consumption. If funding was agreed from the SIP then it will be possible to achieve additional matched funding to increase our existing fund for energy conservation measures.

### **Wind Turbine Programme**

Feasibility work has already identified up to six council-owned sites that could accommodate small to medium sized wind turbines. This proposal would finance the feasibility work needed to develop detailed business cases, and planning proposals for 2 or 3 of the most promising sites, with support from the Carbon Trust towards the feasibility work. The project would then seek to secure an experienced private sector partner (for example, a "green energy" company), to share investment, development costs and risks and arising cost savings, before taking the project through the planning, procurement and installation/commissioning phases. Due to the length of the waiting lists (1 - 2 years) for new turbines, the project might take 3 years to completion and is subject to planning and feasibility work results.



### **Climate Change Innovation Project**

On an organisational level, employers in the city are responsible for 40% of Sunderland's total carbon emissions. On an individual level, 20% of the working age population in Sunderland is classed as workless. As well limiting quality of life and economic development in Sunderland, this also leads to greater time spent at home which is reflected in higher than expected home energy consumption for Sunderland's housing stock.

This project aims to tackle both issues by:

- Developing a high visibility, citywide campaign, which aims to commit and support employers in cutting their own carbon emissions and energy costs;
- Creating employment opportunities within trades that support other environmental targets in Sunderland (e.g. increasing recycling rate, improving home insulation).

Match funding and consultancy support will be sought from Forum for the Future's "I-team" programme, and additional campaign sponsorship sought from businesses wherever possible.

### **Benefits**

The range of proposed projects will help the council implement both the city wide climate change action plan as well as the council's carbon plan and will further emphasise our commitment to meeting emission reduction targets over the next three years.

### **Wood Fuel Programme Benefits**

- The project would secure the establishment of a wood recycling station in the City.
- Operational wood chip storage and processing centre at Market Place, Houghton le Spring, turning over 1,500 tonnes woodchip per annum.
- It is estimated that approximately up to £60,000 annual savings (including schools - £30,000 net of schools) could be created, from avoided gas consumption (both in council buildings, and BSF schools)
- It is estimated that up to £30,000 future expenditure can be avoided, by removing need to replace current gas boilers within next 5 years which will allow other priorities to be addressed within the Repairs and Renewals Budget.
- The Council's carbon footprint will be reduced by up to 900 tonnes (1.5%)
- There will be a contribution to citywide recycling targets, by reusing up to 1,500 tonnes of waste
- The project will support the uptake of wood fuel by local businesses and organisations
- Incidences of fly tipping will be reduced by offering local businesses a free tip for wood waste.

### **Improving Energy Management of Buildings Benefits**

- Reduced Maintenance Costs – the potential will be evaluated and targets set
- Reduced Energy Consumption and Cost – the potential will be evaluated and targets set
- Reduced Telephony Costs
- Improved sub metering of energy usage within larger buildings

### **Wind Turbine Programme Benefits**

- Potentially up to £30,000 net savings per annum generated
- Highly visible statement of council's commitment to reducing carbon emissions
- Carbon emissions reduced by up to 450 tonnes per year

### **Climate Change Innovation Project Benefits**

The project will develop the citywide campaign and create specific employment and training proposals.

#### **4.1.3 Improving the public realm and accessibility across the city**

City centre regeneration is a key priority for local residents and Sunderland Station is a highly visible city centre gateway with over 1 million passenger trips per annum. In 2006 only 39% of residents thought the future plans for city centre regeneration were good.

Market Square and its surroundings are part of the primary shopping area, close to the retail heart of the City Centre. It is one of the City's few public squares and it currently presents a poor quality pedestrian environment to its users. The current appearance of the area and station do not project an image of a modern, vibrant and competitive city centre, or an attractive transport hub for the city, that would meet the needs of people working, living and visiting the city. Nexus has committed £7 million to fund improvements to the platform level of the station building. This will reflect the enhanced status of the station not only as a metro and regional rail passenger facility but also now with a new rail service between Sunderland and London. There are no short term plans for any substantial station improvement works by the owners Network Rail.

#### **Proposed project: Central Station public realm improvements**

This project proposes the design and refurbishment of Market Square and its environs, including new paving, street furniture and the potential for public art. It will significantly improve the public realm in Market Square, Waterloo Place and Athenaeum Street which are busy pedestrian routes during the day and into the evening.

The council through its community leadership role has endeavoured to and will continue to promote a significant redevelopment of Sunderland Station to radically improve the very poor quality of urban design, dating back to the 1960's.

Network Rail has confirmed that at this stage it has no current proposals which would meet the Council's and the community's ambitions for the above ground part of the Sunderland Station.

Network Rail's position will be kept under close review, and it is proposed that in partnership with other key stakeholders the Council continues to investigate possible schemes to address this key site in the overall regeneration of the City.

### **Benefits**

The benefits arising from the project would include:

- An improved image of the City Centre
- Improved pedestrian environment and potential for events
- Improved local resident perceptions and greater number of visits to the city centre
- Improved perceptions about cleanliness of the city centre

### **Proposed project: Improving cycle paths**

The council is committed to sustainable transport options and promoting cycling across the city through the provision of cycle paths and networks. This includes the coast to coast route, which attracts significant visitors to the city.

Through the Ipsos Mori survey improvements in perceptions of cycle paths has not shown any significant increase. (37% of residents are satisfied with cycle routes). To further raise the profile of cycling and increase cycling as an alternative mode of transport additional cycle routes will be implemented to improve accessibility

### **Benefits**

Increase opportunities for take up and participation in respect of cycleways and increased perceptions and satisfaction.

### **Proposed project: Washington Road Safety Measures**

Reducing road traffic accidents is a key priority for the city as well as encouraging people to both walk and use public transport. The project will cover road safety, accessibility and community safety matters across the Washington Area. Washington has unique features:

- Bus only links in each village centre;
- Bus services on perimeter routes not served by adequate footways and bus stops.

The project will also introduce new pedestrian links and bus stop facility improving conditions for current users and encouraging more public transport use.

### **Benefits**

The key benefits centre on safer movement of people, including children as well as more efficient transport around Washington. This will improve the safety of

local people as well as promoting wider take up of public transport and walking. The Project will modernise the main transport corridors in Washington and in particular will introduce better and safer access improving perceptions of and satisfaction with public transport.

#### **4.1.4 Mobile CCTV**

The Fear of Crime survey tells us that 63% of residents reporting feeling safe in 2006/2007 and this figure has slightly dipped during 2007/2008. The main issues relate to concern about young people “hanging around” and people drinking or being drunk in public places.

The MORI Survey indicates that in relation to anti social behaviour 51% of residents consider teenagers hanging around a problem and 29% consider people being drunk or rowdy in a public place a problem.

In addition 32% of those surveyed “worry about crime happening to them “because there is no CCTV locally”. This project will contribute to addressing residents’ concerns in this area.

#### **Proposed project: Area Based CCTV**

The proposal would deploy rapid response CCTV cameras across the area regeneration frameworks in Sunderland. Four rapid deployment cameras will be available for each area.

The project will complement the existing fixed public space C.C.T.V systems across the City. The project therefore aims to establish a network of 24 rapid deployment cameras using the latest “3G” technology. This allows camera units to be quickly deployed virtually anywhere providing there are tall lighting columns or buildings available to which the cameras can be fixed. The units are unique, as they transmit images to remote monitoring stations or any laptop computer configured to receive such images, by way of “3G” mobile phone technology. The Council’s City Alarm and Emergency Centre will monitor and record the images on a 24 hour basis.

The units can be removed and redeployed very quickly should the need arise. With this facility available, units can be relocated periodically or in response to a particular problem being highlighted, which allows a range of issues to be addressed including crime, anti social behaviour, fly tipping, nuisance neighbours, problems in parks and open spaces and special events. The systems could also be of great assistance during major incidents in the city.

Although four cameras would be available for each framework area, should the need arise, units could be transferred to other areas to assist with any wide scale problems.

#### **Benefits**

The proposal will tackle both crime and help address fear of crime at a local level. It is expected that specific local issues will be tackled ranging from

dealing with anti social behaviour, environmental crime such as fly tipping and problems in parks and open spaces.

It will help to address problems being encountered across the city with regard to domestic and commercial burglary, vehicle crime and anti social behaviour including youth disorder and harassment. The intention will be to impact on crime and disorder activities by both prevention, deterrents and by detection through the identification of offenders. It is intended that the fear of crime within the framework areas is positively addressed due to the availability, presence and use of these cameras, leading to an improved quality of life for all.

## **4.2 Employment Opportunities**

4.2.1 Significant progress has been made to transform the economic profile and improve the local economy, but there is still a need to further stimulate growth. The city's economy is characterised by low levels of added value and relatively low wages. With the plans to revitalise the city's physical fabric, there is now an opportunity to attract the range of high value office-based activities such as business services that are normally associated with city centres, but which are at present significantly under-represented in the centre of Sunderland.

Despite this, it is unlikely that the local economy will change fundamentally in the next 3 years. In order to increase levels of participation locally we will support economic growth by developing a culture of enterprise. By encouraging start up business, supporting indigenous business growth and generating enterprise a higher number of jobs will be created by local business and this in turn will stimulate activity in the city's economy by increasing wealth.

All the achievement in relation to jobs and investment over recent years, has seen Sunderland's Gross Valued Added (GVA) per head, which is a measure of the productivity of the local economy, grow by five percentage points to 86% of the national average from 1997 to 2005. However, there is still much to do, recognising the high level of worklessness and an under representation of high order business activities.

The number of VAT registered businesses has increased by 5.5% to 4,320 over the past three years, which is in line with the national rate of growth - although the city continues to have a comparatively low rate of self-employment, at 5.8% of the adult population, compared to 9.3% nationally.

Around a half of the city's workforce is employed in approximately 50 organisations (public and private sector), creating issues in terms of the potential vulnerability of the local economy.

In Sunderland there is a demand for more high quality managed technology workspace in the Washington area of the city where studies have shown the demand for start-up and small business accommodation.

4.2.2 Nationally, the Government's approach to raising levels of enterprise across the UK, and to unleashing entrepreneurial potential in the most disadvantaged

communities, is outlined in “Enterprise Britain: a modern approach to meeting the enterprise challenge”, and is focussed on:

- Strengthening competition to encourage firms to innovate, reduce costs and provide better quality goods and services to the consumer;
- Promoting enterprise to maximise the contribution of businesses to employment, productivity, prosperity and social cohesion
- Supporting science and innovation to harness the potential of new ideas, technologies and working practices;
- Improving the skills base to maximise the contribution of human capital to growth;
- Encouraging investment to improve the UK’s stock of physical capital in every sector and industry; and
- Working directly to improve public services productivity.

Government is also committed to ensuring that the benefits of improved productivity are felt in all regions across the UK. The new focus on improving the economic performance of every part of the UK opens a new strategic role for local government in economic policy making that is crucial to success. The Government is keen to provide local authorities with the freedoms and flexibilities as well as the policy levers to carry out this role successfully.

**Proposed project: High Quality Technology Workspace in Washington**

The project aims to develop high quality managed technology workspace in the Washington area where studies have shown the demand for start-up and small business accommodation. This will also include the exploration of links with modern apprenticeships. It is proposed that the project focuses on the use and development of technology and directly links with the Software City development.

This project will provide new business and employment opportunities in modern buildings that meet the requirements of businesses wishing to be competitive in the 21st century, in a location where no such provision currently exists. Work has been undertaken in the past which identified the market needs the project would address:

- Provision of High Quality Business Accommodation
- Provision of Business Support services within the local community
- Diversification of local economy – greater range of business sectors / types
- New Employment Opportunities for local residents
- Opportunity for new enterprise / business start-ups
- Incubator support for new SMEs
- Development of an Entrepreneurial Culture

The Centre will incorporate a range of facilities and will provide fully serviced “modular” space that is capable of division and adaptation in accordance with demand from the private sector. This flexibility, coupled with the excellent IT facilities and the provision of a wide range of support services will provide a sound base from which the emerging and growing ICT sector can prosper.

Turbine Business Park has been identified as the most suitable option for this proposal. Primarily this is because the site is readily available, is located in a prime location and is highly accessible and visible. Outline planning permission has been granted for the whole site by the council and an application is being progressed in relation to reserved matters consent for the site infrastructure.

There is considerable evidence that Sunderland's economy, traditionally with a strong manufacturing sector, is becoming more service orientated. The city's unemployment rate continues to be above the national average, so ensuring an adequate portfolio of suitable business premises to accommodate new and emerging business needs is essential if the city is to succeed in achieving prosperity for all.

### **Benefits**

The provision of business incubators brings many benefits, not just directly related to the construction itself. They contribute to the health and sustainable growth of the economy in a number of ways:

- Improved business creation and survival rates
- Providing a seed bed for future growth
- Job Creation and skills improvement
- Creation and development of enterprise culture
- Positive impacts on local economy

A number of leading edge ICT solutions will be developed and implemented for the Technology Centre. The solutions proposed can benefit many different business types and levels of integration will vary on an individual customer basis. Some of the key solutions currently being considered include:

- Plug and Play Access – utilising ICT infrastructure and local area networks, new SMEs can set-up new IT systems quickly and efficiently, and provide a “walk-in and work” business environment.
- Thin-client technology – using smart card technology, providing individuals with portable desktops for both office, home or mobile operations
- Wireless Hot Spots – providing enhanced network access for mobile users and WI-Fi networks
- Managed Service Environment – providing Disaster recovery, secure access, application hosting (providing evergreen software), Virtual Private Networks
- Voice Over IP Networks – provision of internet telephony over the network reducing local and national call rates

## **4.3 Health Opportunities**

### **4.3.1 Extra care schemes**

A key issue for the city is the challenge presented by changes in the make up of the local population. Population in the city is forecast to decline by 4.4% (12,300 people) between now and 2025. The decline will impact on certain age groups with the population of young people aged between 0 -14 falling by 12.6% and the proportion of the working age population (men aged between 15 and 64 and women aged between 15 and 59) is projected to fall by 11.13%. A natural outcome of the population declines outlined is an increase in the proportion of

older people living in the city: Sunderland's population of older people is forecast to rise by 31.7% by 2025.

The increase in older people in the city places additional pressure on social care services for the most vulnerable. A key priority is to support people to live independently in their own home or the community. The development of extra care housing in Silksworth, Washington and Hetton will be part of the first phase of the Homes for Life programme. This will help us to further increase the numbers of people helped to live at home. (Currently 122 per 1000).

The well-being of older people is an important issue across health, housing and social care, and local authorities are increasingly considering extra care as a way of replacing older models of residential care provision and addressing low demand for traditional forms of sheltered housing.

The concepts of well-being, independence and choice are also essential elements in the philosophy of extra care housing, which is becoming a popular model of specialist housing with care provision for older people.

Extra Care Housing offers a new way of supporting people to live independently. It provides the security and privacy of a home, a range of facilities on the premises, and 24 hour care and support services on hand.

**Proposed project:** Extra care schemes - Silksworth, Hetton and Washington

In January 2005 Cabinet approved the development of extra care housing on three of the Council's existing older peoples' homes sites at Silksworth (Leonard House), Washington (Woodlands) and at Hetton (Moorhouse) , together with re-provision of services from these facilities.

The first scheme to be brought forward will be the Leonard House site in Silksworth (16<sup>th</sup> January 2008 Cabinet report) and through Housing 21 will be the development of a 40 x two bedroom apartment extra care housing scheme incorporating the new community library.

It is proposed that the sites at Washington and Hetton be developed towards the end of 2008. In total it is proposed that the schemes are developed based on a mixed tenure model (50% to rent, 25% shared equity and 25% for sale). In total it will provide for 127 units, each comprising of a two bedroom apartment with completion during 2009 to early 2010 on a phased basis.

### **Benefits**

The benefits for local people are significant as the proposed Extra Care Schemes provide both a home for life as well as a better alternative to residential care and provide for a high level of care with dignity, independence and security.

The current position in Sunderland for older people who need care is the choice of a residential or nursing home, sheltered housing or remaining in their own homes. There is no extra care housing available in the city which provides



appropriate physical standards with social and health care available on site 24 hours per day 7 days a week.

**For local people the benefits include:**

- Living at home - not in a home
- Having your own front door - you decide who comes in
- Couples can stay together
- There is a mix of able and less able people
- 24 hour care services are available
- There is support to retain independence
- Opportunities to join in social activities - or you can be private
- People have control over their finances
- There is security - the aim is a home for life

There are also benefits for the council in relation to starting to address the changing needs of the local population and providing alternative arrangements to local people. The schemes will have a positive impact on peoples' health as well as providing a more cost effective model of service delivery that provides a significantly wider level of service and enhancement to quality of life.

The schemes will provide for greater value for money and deliver ongoing efficiencies as well as diverting approximately 100 admissions from residential care. Currently Sunderland's admissions to residential care are comparatively high.

Other benefits include:

- Greater number of people helped to live at home (approximately 127)
- Greater number of people receiving intensive support (approximately 50)
- Improvement to satisfaction rates of local people in relation to being able to live at home

#### **4.3.2 Community Sports Facilities**

An important element of improving the quality of life for residents is the provision of a wide range of opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity. Improving participation rates in sport and physical activity year on year will help to ensure we have a healthy, vibrant community.

Across the city, local pavilions provide hubs for sport and physical activity and in particular football provision which reaches a core community need and transcends age and social class. Only one facility has been built in recent years and no improvements have been made to current pavilions.

Estimated annual usage across the pavilions (excluding spectators and extra festivals) is 29,890 (approximately 61 teams with 14 players and officials for 35 weeks of a year).

The Sport and Physical Activity Strategy aims to increase participation, improve current and develop new facilities in the city. There is a recognised need to work towards increasing participation by 1% each year in line with national

targets. In Sunderland 20.03% of residents participate in at least 30 minutes sport and active recreation on three or more days a week.

**Proposed project:** Community Sports Facilities

The proposal looks to refurbish 12 of the facilities to encourage greater usage of sporting facilities across the city as well as ensuring that they are accessible to all sectors of the population.

To bring to a quality standard, selected pavilions across the city, to permit the facilities to become part of the overall Sports 'offer' across the city, enabling wider community use and to ensure facilities address 21st Century health and safety standards. Refurbishment work is proposed at sites across the city.

**Benefits**

The benefits extend to improving more accessible and welcoming facilities that enhance the quality of experience by regular customers and visitors to the city. It is highly likely that a further 10 teams would be welcomed if the pavilions were improved, which may also slightly increase income.

The improvements will support the 'crime and grime' issue too, as the general presentation of the facilities does not help to deter 'petty vandalism'.

**4.4 Local Place Shaping Opportunities**

Within Sunderland the needs of local people are diverse and there are different issues and priorities across all of the six area regeneration frameworks.

In order to further improve the city and deliver the long term vision, not only does the council drive city wide improvement activity but also this is vital to achieve on a local basis.

The enhancement of area arrangements and helping to develop local place shaping improvements has been at the heart of area committee and ward work. The new Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act also highlights the importance of services becoming more responsive to local needs and this reflects the current ambition of the council to further enhance arrangements at a local level.

**Proposed project:** Area Interventions

Specific interventions will be developed by local members and local people to meet local needs and issues. This is underpinned by the information arising from consultation with local stakeholders through a comprehensive ward visit programme led by the Leader of the Council.

Guidance will be developed which highlights the importance of one-off measures and investments which have a significant impact on the area as a whole.

## **Benefits**

Benefits include local interventions based on local needs, increased participation in decision making and improvement across local services that are priorities for local people. It will also help deliver the Sunderland Strategy as well as improving perception measures of local people and help build and promote community cohesion.

## **5. Financial Implications**

5.1 Inevitably, different projects are at different stages of development e.g. the extra care proposals are well advanced, whilst others need further work, including further consultation where appropriate, to ensure the best possible implementation and outcomes. In addition to the vast range of consultation undertaken to date which of itself supports the prioritised projects proposed, and the clear linkages to the Sunderland Strategy, the Local Area Agreement and NPIs, regard has been had to a range of criteria to inform the value for money in relation to each project:

- Affordability - the need to ensure that one off and ongoing costs be funded from within existing resources
- Financial Sustainability
  - To prioritise projects that achieve benefits which impact over the longer term to improve pay back i.e. outputs and outcomes;
  - To configure the Plan in such a way as to achieve this objective e.g. fully providing for the ongoing revenue consequences to maintain the investments made.
- Leverage - where external funding can be levered in on proposed projects which are consistent with identified priorities, this external funding must be maximised
- Impact - taking account of known baselines and the intended outputs and outcomes, the impact should be measurable, maximised, and monitored e.g. satisfaction, perceptions, take up etc.

5.2 The estimated total cost of implementing the Strategic Investment Plan, in terms of 'one off' and ongoing revenue consequences are set out at Appendix 4. These are summarised below:

Estimated Council One Off Costs - £12.711m  
Ongoing Revenue Consequences - £0.900m

5.3 The detailed proposed funding is set out at Appendix 4 in detail and summarised below:

	<b>Total One Off £m</b>	<b>Estimated External Funding £m</b>	<b>Council One Off Funding £m</b>	<b>Ongoing Revenue Consequences £000</b>
<b>Estimated Total Costs</b>	<b>31.481</b>	<b>18.770</b>	<b>12.711</b>	<b>900</b>
<b>Proposed Funding</b>				
- Airport Refinancing Receipt			5.000	
- General Contribution from the Strategic Investment Reserve			2.747	
- LPSA Reward Grant			2.000	
- Safer and Stronger Communities Fund - Neighbourhood Element			0.300	
- Working Neighbourhoods Fund			2.000	
- Revenue Budget Base Provision 2008/2009			0.664	900
<b>Total</b>	<b>31.481</b>	<b>18.770</b>	<b>12.711</b>	<b>900</b>

## 6. Reason for the Decision

6.1 The Strategic Investment Plan is a key resource to help realise the city's long term ambitions and demonstrate the Council's role as a community leader. By implementing the Strategic Investment Plan significant improvement priorities can be delivered. It also underpins the City's and Council's overall policy framework.

## 7. Alternative Options

7.1 Not to recommend the Strategic Investment Plan to Cabinet for approval. This would result in the city not delivering significant improvement priorities that reflect local need.

## 8. List of Appendices

**Appendix 1** sets out the linkages between government's Public Service Agreement targets and the key priority themes of the new Sunderland Strategy.

**Appendix 2** sets out the fit between the proposed projects and the linkages to the Sunderland Strategy, LAA, national PSA targets and the associated national indicator set.

**Appendix 3** provides background information to the SIP including resident survey data.

**Appendix 4** outlines the proposed schedule of projects and associated financial implications

## **9. Background Papers**

- Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007
- Sunderland Strategy 2008-2025 (final draft)
- Sunderland Local Area Agreement 2008 – 2011 (draft)
- Comprehensive Area Assessment consultation guidance 2008
- The New Performance Framework for Local Authorities and Local authority Partnerships: Single Set of National Indicators, November 2007
  
- Sub-national economic development and regeneration review, 2007 (including reference to Multi Area Agreements)
- South of Tyne Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy and the PFI Outline Business Case 2007
- Sunderland Council Carbon Plan, July 2007
- “Enterprise Britain: a modern approach to meeting the enterprise challenge”, November 2002
- 16<sup>th</sup> January 2008 Cabinet papers – extra care at Silksworth

**National Indicator Set – Related PSA targets**

**Attractive & Accessible City**

**PSA 15** – Address the disadvantage that individuals experience because of their gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief

**PSA 16** – Increase the proportion of socially excluded adults in settled accommodation and employment, education or training

**PSA 20** – Increase long term housing supply and affordability

**PSA 21** – Build more cohesive, empowered and active communities

**PSA 27** – Lead the global effort to avoid dangerous climate change

**PSA 28** – Secure a healthy natural environment for today and the future

**Healthy City**

**PSA 12** – Improve the health and well-being of children and young people

**PSA 17** – Tackle poverty and promote greater independence and well-being in later life

**PSA 18** – Promote better health and well-being for all

**Learning City**

**PSA 10** – Raise the educational achievement of all children and young people

**PSA 11** – Narrow the gap in educational achievement between children from low income and disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers

**PSA 2** – Improve the skills of the population on the way to ensuring a world-class skills base by 2020

**Prosperous City**

**BERR DSO1** - Promote the creation and growth of business and a strong enterprise economy across all regions. Ensure all departments and agencies deliver better regulation for the private, public and third sector

**PSA 8** – Maximise employment opportunity for all

**PSA 9** – Halve the number of children in poverty by 2010-11, on the way to eradicating child poverty by 2020

**Safe City**

**DCSF DSO1** - Safeguard the young and vulnerable

**PSA 23** – Make communities safer

**PSA 25** – Reduce the harm caused by alcohol and drugs

**PSA 26** - Reduce the risk to the UK and its interests overseas from international terrorism

## Proposed Strategic Investment Projects and Linkages to Long Term Ambition

Theme	Links to Sunderland Strategy	Links to Local Area Agreement	Links to Public Service Agreements	Suggested Scheme	Links to National Indicator Set
Clean, Green and Safe Improvement Opportunities	Attractive and Accessible City	<p>Become one of the UK's most sustainable cities by supporting sustainable patterns of consumption, production, transport and development</p> <p>Continue to improve service delivery so that the city has a public realm that is well maintained, accessible, sustainable and functional</p>	<p><b>PSA 27</b> – Lead the global effort to avoid dangerous climate change</p> <p><b>PSA 28</b> – Secure a healthy natural environment for today and the future</p>	<p><b>Recycling – a new recycling village, a recycling satellite centre, 6 new on street and 12 revamped "bring" sites and investment in education and awareness</b></p> <p><b>Sustainability – investment in a range of initiatives including a wood fuel programme, improving energy management of buildings, a wind turbine programme, and a climate change innovation project.</b></p> <p><b>Environmental education, communication,</b></p>	<p>NI 17 Perceptions of anti-social behaviour</p> <p>NI 21 Dealing with local concerns about antisocial behaviour and crime by the local council and police</p> <p>NI 22 Perceptions of parents taking responsibility for the behaviour of their children in the area</p> <p>NI 24 Satisfaction with the way the police and local council dealt with anti-social behaviour</p> <p>NI 25 Satisfaction of different groups with the way the police and local council dealt with anti-social behaviour</p> <p>NI 47 People killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents</p>

				<p><b>enforcement and intervention to address fly tipping</b></p> <p><b>Washington Road Safety Measures</b> – elimination of bus only links and improved pedestrian facilities</p> <p><b>Central Station Public Realm Improvements.</b></p> <p><b>Improving cycle paths</b></p>	<p>NI 48 Children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents</p> <p>NI 175 Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling</p> <p>NI 178 Bus services running on time</p> <p>NI 185 CO2 reduction from Local Authority operations</p> <p>NI 186 Per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in the LA area</p> <p>NI 188 Adapting to climate change</p> <p>NI 192 Household waste recycled and composted</p> <p>NI 195 Improved street and environmental cleanliness (levels of graffiti, litter, detritus and fly posting)</p> <p>NI 196 Improved street and environmental cleanliness – fly tipping</p>
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<p>Clean, Green and Safe Improvement Opportunities</p>	<p>Safer City</p>	<p>Ensure people are free from crime, disorder and substance misuse</p> <p>Create a safe environment</p> <p>Ensure residents are free from harm</p>	<p><b>PSA 17</b> – Tackle poverty and promote greater independence and well-being in later life</p> <p><b>PSA 18</b> – Promote better health and well-being for all</p>	<p><b>Area Based Mobile CCTV</b></p>	<p>NI 17 Perceptions of anti social behaviour</p> <p>NI 21 Dealing with local concerns about antisocial behaviour and crime by the local council and police</p> <p>NI 22 Perceptions of parents taking responsibility for the behaviour of their children in the area</p> <p>NI 24 Satisfaction with the way the police and local council dealt with anti-social behaviour</p> <p>NI 25 Satisfaction of different groups with the way the police and local council dealt with anti-social behaviour</p> <p>NI 27 Understanding of local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police</p> <p>NI 41 Perceptions of drunk or rowdy behaviour as a problem</p> <p>NI 42 Perceptions of drug use or drug dealing</p>
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					as a problem  NI 196 Improved street and environmental cleanliness – fly tipping
Employment Opportunities	Prosperous City	Supporting economic growth and participation in the economy by encouraging the development of an enterprising culture.  Matching the supply of labour with demand at all levels by and support those who are currently workless to find suitable sustainable employment	<b>BERR DSO1</b> - Promote the creation and growth of business and a strong enterprise economy across all regions. Ensure all departments and agencies deliver better regulation for the private, public and third sector  <b>PSA 8</b> – Maximise employment opportunity for all	<b>High Quality Technology Workspace in Washington</b>	NI 151 Overall employment rate  NI 166 Average earnings of employees  NI 152 Working age people on out of work benefits
Health Opportunities	Healthy City	Increase the proportion of people with long term conditions that are supported to live at home  Improve the emotional health and wellbeing of children in the city.	<b>PSA 12</b> – Improve the health and well-being of children and young people  <b>PSA 17</b> – Tackle poverty and promote greater independence and	<b>Extra care schemes – Silksworth, Hetton and Washington</b>  <b>Community Sports Facilities</b> – refurbish 12 across the city	NI 139 The extent to which older people receive the support they need to live independently at home  NI 119 Self-reported measure of people’s overall health and wellbeing  NI 8 Adult participation in sport

		Reduce the incidence of lifestyle choices that have a clear link with poor health, particularly lack of exercise, obesity, smoking and alcohol misuse.	well-being in later life <b>PSA 18</b> – Promote better health and well-being for all		
Local Place Shaping Opportunities	Cross cutting	Cross cutting Developing higher quality places to live	<b>PSA 21</b> – Build more cohesive empowered and active communities  Cross cutting depending on needs of place	<b>Area Interventions</b> – Providing localised budgets on an area basis to address local strategic priorities	Cross cutting depending on needs of place  Potential indicators may include: NI 1 % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area  NI 2 % of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood  NI 3 Civic participation in the local area  NI 4 % of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality  NI 5 Overall/general satisfaction with local area

## Background Information to the SIP

### Clean, Green and Safe Agenda

To support the delivery of this long term, ambitious vision for the city our residents were asked to identify a number of words or phrases (as part of consultation exercises) to describe how they would like Sunderland to look like in 15 years time. The most common themes are **clean, prosperous** and **safe**. Perceptions are more positive in terms of how people think Sunderland could be in the future compared to now as follows:

Currently	%	15 years time	%
Friendly	49	<b>Clean</b>	<b>42</b>
Down market	46	<b>Prosperous</b>	<b>38</b>
Dirty	40	<b>Safe</b>	<b>37</b>
Busy	38	Welcoming	36
Mundane	34	Environmentally Friendly	34
Dull	34	Cultural	30
Grey	31	Friendly	30
		Lots to do	30

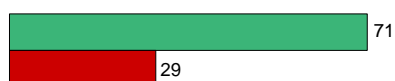
Sunderland residents are slightly less likely (66%) than residents across the North East authorities, and across all Ipsos MORI-surveyed counties, to feel that the Council is working to make the area 'cleaner and greener'.

### Aspects of the Local Council: Comparative Data

Q To what extent do you think that these statements apply to your local council?

■ % A great deal/some extent ■ % Not very much/not at all

*My council is making the local area a better place to live (1,632)*



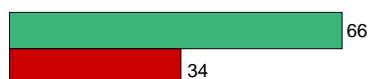
**Combined North East Average**

73  
27

**All Ipsos MORI Counties**

72  
28

*My council is working to make the area cleaner and greener (1,598)*



70  
30

71  
29

Base: All valid responses

Source: Ipsos MORI

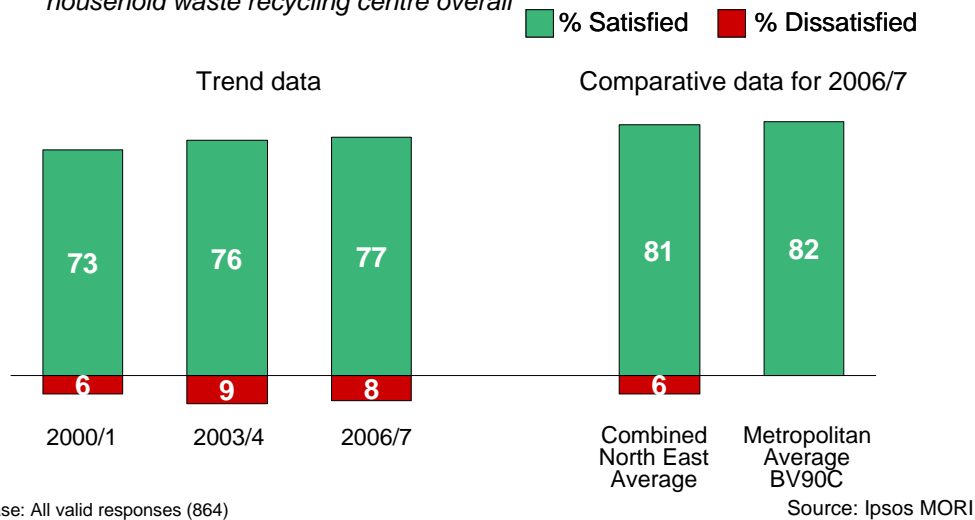
Groups more likely to be satisfied that the Council has worked to keep public land clear of rubbish and litter closely mirror those groups who have higher satisfaction with other aspects of the Council's work. Therefore environmental projects are key to

supporting the overall perception of Sunderland as a place to live and have been prioritized accordingly.

Although recycling levels are increasing and we have met national targets, local people in Sunderland are significantly less satisfied that the rest of Tyne and Wear in relation to local recycling facilities. This is evidenced through the BVPI User Satisfaction Survey (2006)

### The Local Tip/Household Waste Recycling Centre: Contextual Data

Q Please indicate whether you are satisfied or dissatisfied with each of the following elements of the service which we provide: The local tip/household waste recycling centre overall



Use of the Green-it brown bin collection and the Kerb-it black box collection has increased. Kerb-it remains the most commonly used recycling service, with three in four residents (75%) using it every fortnight. Only one in six (17%) never use it. Green-it is also used fairly frequently, fortnightly for half (52%) of residents. Household waste reception and recycling centres and supermarket recycling centres continue to be used by a relatively small proportion of the population: the majority never use them (58% and 72% respectively). This project will contribute to improving this level to build on the success of the Kerb-It and Green-It schemes.

<b>Q How often, if at all, do you use each of the following recycling services?</b>						
	Fort-nightly	Monthly	Only occasionally	Never	Don't know	% change since 2005
	%	%	%	%	%	
<i>Base: 1,218 Sunderland residents</i>						
Kerb-it (black box collection for paper, glass and cans)	75	4	3	17	1	<b>+6</b>
Green-it (brown bin collection for garden waste)	52	8	5	31	3	<b>+17</b>
Household waste reception and recycling centres	2	5	30	58	4	0
Supermarket recycling centres	3	3	17	72	5	0

*Source: Ipsos MORI*

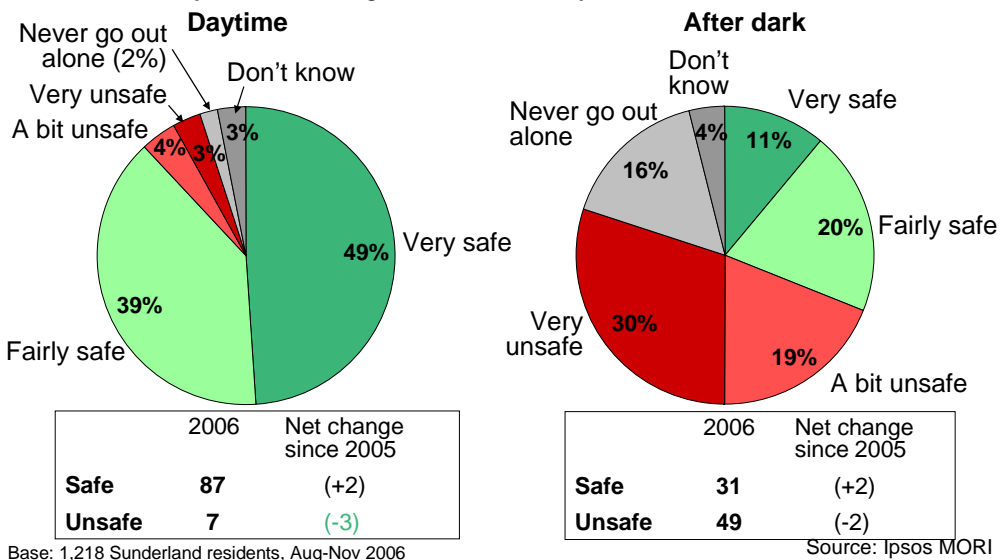
### **Crime and Fear of Crime – Mori Background Data**

Approaching nine in ten (87%) feel safe walking outside in the City Centre alone in the daytime, and three in ten (31%) at night. The proportion of people saying they feel very safe has risen for both, by three points after dark and 11 points in the daytime, while net safety in the daytime has risen by five points. The rising trend in people feeling unsafe since 2003 has now levelled out.

## Perceptions of safety

Q How safe do you feel walking outside in the City Centre alone in the daytime?

Q How safe do you feel walking outside in the City Centre alone after dark?



## Employment Opportunities

### Washington Workspace Feasibility Study 2005

It is well documented that the North East lags behind other regions of the UK in new business generation. This study was commissioned to investigate whether the managed workspace market in Washington is less well served than other areas of Sunderland and the Region.

Washington was originally established as a New Town to produce a new high quality environment and to re-vitalise an area badly affected by the decline in mining and other heavy industries. The provision of facilities for new business start-ups would continue that tradition.

An essential part of this study was to map and comment upon the existing supply of premises under 500m<sup>2</sup> (5,380 sq. ft.) suitable for small to medium enterprises (SME's).

Key findings in relation to the supply were:-

- Current occupancy exceeds 90%.
- Only 18% (11% by floor area) or thereabouts of the total supply of units below 500m<sup>2</sup> (5,380 sq. ft.) are office premises.
- In the size band 0-50m<sup>2</sup> which is the property sector most likely to be of interest to new business start-ups there are only 41 properties in Washington of which only nine are offices.
- Very little new accommodation has been built in Washington in the last 20 years. Whilst many older properties remain fit for their purpose as light industrial or storage premises the overall impression is that the property stock is

at best in average condition and is not attractive in terms of the environment in which it is located.

The national economic trend away from manufacturing towards a service based economy has meant that the type of property currently being demanded has changed in the last 20 years with enquirers needing accommodation which is flexible in terms of its use. There is less of a distinction between industrial and office accommodation.

Whilst accepting the need for workspace to be suitable for both light manufacture at one end of the scale and full office use at the other we feel that the lack of almost any new workshop provision under 140m<sup>2</sup> (1,500 sq. ft.) over the last 20 years is something which should be addressed.

Development of this type of accommodation remains unattractive for most developers and private property investors as the costs of development are high and the security of income attaching to very small or start-up businesses is poor.

On a national basis, it is widely recognised for the increasing requirement for SME accommodation. Within Tyne & Wear, the 2003 Property Study by Chestertons endorsed the national findings by identifying the need for premises suitable for SME's and particularly identified the managed workspace market in Washington as an area where further development was required.

Results from the occupier questionnaires were similarly mixed, answers being largely anecdotal but significant points relating to this Study were:-

- Proximity to both the A1 and A19 is a key requirement.
- Most businesses with less than five employees thought premises were easy to find, citing availability and size as the primary factors which attracted them.
- 95% of businesses thought flexible lease terms were very important.
- 75% of respondents thought their premises were either average or poor and this was emphasised by the fact that businesses "constantly prioritised" better security, improved car parking and better buildings as important factors



## Health Opportunities

Population forecasts broken down by age group up to the year 2025 can be found in the following table.

### Population Projections 2008 to 2025

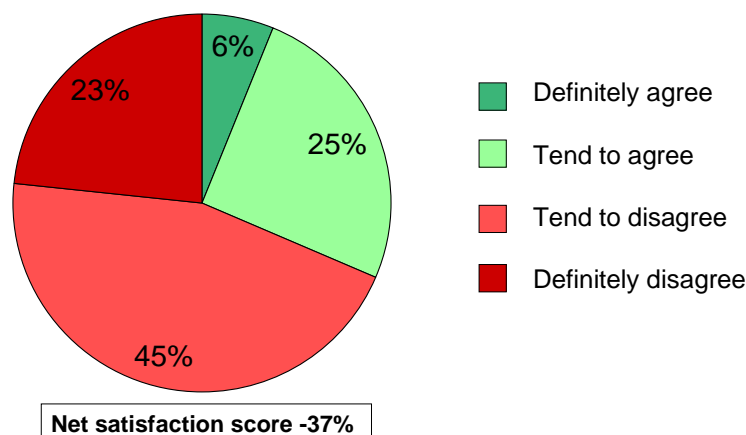
	2008	2010	2015	2020	2025	2008 - 2025 variance	% variance
<b>All people</b>	<b>277,700</b>	<b>275,800</b>	<b>271,900</b>	<b>268,600</b>	<b>265,400</b>	<b>-12,300</b>	<b>-4.43</b>
<b>People aged 0-14</b>	46,000	44,500	42,600	41,600	40,200	-5,800	-12.61
<b>People aged 15-64</b>	186,000	184,800	177,900	171,800	165,300	-20,700	-11.13
People aged 65-69	12,800	13,000	16,400	15,500	16,900	4,100	32.03
People aged 70-74	12,000	12,100	11,700	14,900	14,200	2,200	18.33
People aged 75-79	9,800	9,800	10,200	10,100	12,900	3,100	31.63
People aged 80-84	6,500	6,700	7,400	8,000	8,000	1,500	23.08
People aged 85 and over	4,600	4,900	5,700	6,700	7,900	3,300	71.74
<b>Total population 65 and over</b>	<b>45,700</b>	<b>46,500</b>	<b>51,400</b>	<b>55,200</b>	<b>59,900</b>	<b>14,200</b>	<b>31.07</b>

## Local Place Shaping Opportunities

In terms of place shaping resident involvement is key. Currently only a third of residents agree they can influence decisions affecting their local area, and only a small percentage 'definitely' agree.

### Influencing Local Decisions

Q Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area?



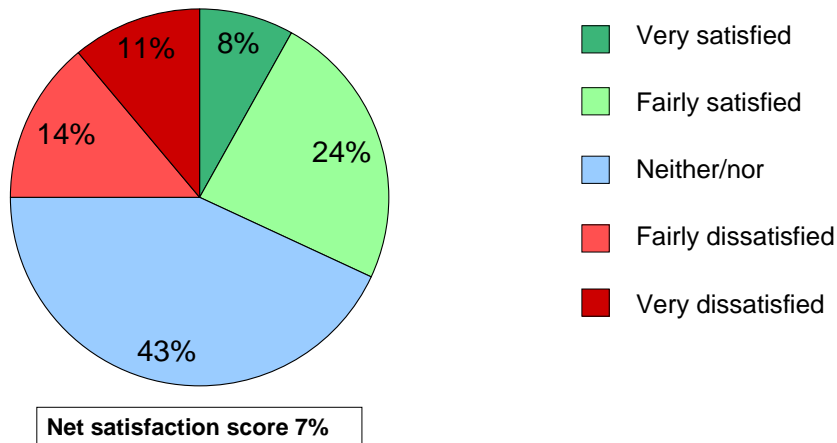
Base: All valid responses (1368)

Source: Ipsos MOR

However, findings suggest that many residents are ambivalent about being involved locally. While only a third are satisfied with the opportunities to get involved in decision-making, almost half do not have particularly strong feelings about these opportunities, suggesting it is a low priority for many.

## Participation in Local Decision-making

Q Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with opportunities for participation in local decision-making provided by your Council?



Base: All valid responses (1363)

Source: Ipsos MOR

Dissatisfaction with opportunities for decision-making is more widespread among 25-34 year olds, male residents, and full-time workers. Dissatisfaction is also more pronounced among owner-occupiers than among social renters. These are key issues to address as part of the place shaping agenda.

**Strategic Investment Plan Estimated Costs**

	<b>Total Cost £000s</b>	<b>External Funding £000s</b>	<b>Council Funding £000s</b>	<b>Ongoing Revenue Funding £000s</b>
<b>Clean, Green and Safe Improvement Opportunities</b>				
Recycling				
- Recycling Village and Statellite Site	3,500		3,500	350
- Recycling Bring Sites - 6 New and 12 Revamped	300		300	50
Environmental Education, Communication, Enforcement and Intervention to address Fly Tipping	400		400	300
A Range of Sustainability Projects and Interventions - Wood Fuel Programme, Improving Energy Management of Buildings, Wind Turbine Programme, Climate Change Innovation Project	1,140	485	655	-25
Central Station Public Realm Improvements	1,600	800	800	
Improving cycle paths	300		300	50
Washington Road Safety Measures	500		500	
Area Based Mobile CCTV	430		430	125
<b>Employment Opportunities</b>				
High Quality Technology Workspace in Washington	5,500	3,500	2,000	
<b>Health Opportunities</b>				
Extra Care Schemes - Silksworth, Hetton, Washington	15,185	13,685	1,500 *	
Community Sports Facilities	1,200	300	900	50
<b>Local Place Shaping Opportunities</b>				
Area Interventions	1,426		1,426	
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS OF PROJECTS</b>	<b>31,481</b>	<b>18,770</b>	<b>12,711</b>	<b>900</b>

**Strategic Investment Plan Funding**

	<b>£000s</b>
<b>Funding to be earmarked for "One Off" Costs</b>	
Airport Refinancing Receipt	5,000
General contribution from the Strategic Investment Reserve	2,747
LPSA Performance Reward Grant	2,000
Safer and Stronger Communities Fund - Neighbourhood Element	300
Working Neighbourhoods Fund	2,000
Revenue Budget 2008/2009	664
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12,711</b>

**Funding of £900,000 is included in contingencies in the 2008/2009 Revenue Budget to meet the ongoing costs relating to the projects.**