

**PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 3 (APRIL – DECEMBER 2010)****STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: SP5: Attractive and Inclusive City****CORPORATE PRIORITIES: CIO1: Delivering Customer Focused Services, CIO4: Improving Partnership Working to Deliver 'One City'.****Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee****Report of the Chief Executive****1.0 Purpose of the report**

The purpose of this report is to provide Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee with a performance update relating to the period April to December 2010. This quarter the report includes:

- Results of the annual budget consultation
- Progress in relation to the LAA targets and other national indicators

**2.0 Background**

- 2.1 Performance against the national indicators, particularly those identified as priorities identified in the LAA and associated improvement targets have been reported to Scrutiny Committee throughout 2010/11 as part of the quarterly performance monitoring arrangements. The LAA priorities have been a key consideration in terms of the extent to which the partnership is improving outcomes for local people. In October 2010 the Government announced that it was putting Local Authorities fully in control of Local Area Agreements. Enabling Authorities and their partners to amend or drop any of the current LAA targets without needing ministerial agreement. Where it is chosen to keep the targets, Government will have no role in monitoring them. Local Authorities will not be required to prepare an LAA from April 2011, once the current regime expires. The Government also announced the replacement of the National Indicator set with a single, comprehensive list of all data that local government will be required to provide.
- 2.2 As a consequence the performance framework is being reviewed to reflect the requirements of the new governments self regulation and improvement agenda as part of the strategic planning process for 2011/12. The new framework will form the basis of performance reports to members from July 2011. This is the last performance report that will focus on the LAA and national indicator performance
- 2.3 The annual budget consultation took place during October/November 2010. The consultation took the form of a survey followed by participatory workshops which were held across Sunderland with Community Spirit panel members and representatives from the voluntary and community sector. The findings helped to inform the Council Revenue Budget for 2011/2012 which was approved on 2 March 2011 at a meeting of the full Council. A summary of how resources will be directed

to the top priorities identified in relation to affordable decent housing and community integration can be found in **section 3.1**.

### **3.0 Findings**

#### **3.1 Consultation**

The annual budget consultation took place during October / November 2010. It included a survey and workshops, both of which focused on nine areas of priority. These were identified by listening to the views of local people and taking into account other priorities, such as those identified by government or through inspections of council services.

For each of the nine areas of priority, the questionnaire asked whether:

- The priority has got better, worse or stayed the same in the last 12 months
- It should be a priority for 2011/12
- There is anything else we can do to address the priority area.

834 Community Spirit panel members took part which represents a response rate of 59%. An additional 32 residents completed the survey online bringing the total to 866.

Below is a summary of the findings from the survey and workshops and how the council is responding to priority areas.

#### **Affordable decent housing**

Respondents' views are more divided over affordable decent housing – 49% of those who expressed an opinion believe it has stayed the same over the last 12 months but 27% believe it has got better and 24% think it is worse. Those with a disability are less likely to think it has got better (19%) and more likely to think it is worse (35%). Those age 65-74 are also less likely to think it has got better (19%) and more likely to think it has stayed the same (59%).

The majority of respondents (77%) agree that affordable decent housing should be a priority for the year ahead and 5% disagree. Those with a disability are more likely to think affordable decent housing is a priority (85%) whereas respondents aged 18-44 are less likely to think so compared to other age groups (66%).

Respondents were asked what, if anything else can be done to improve the provision of affordable decent housing and 401 gave responses. The most popular response relates to the need for more houses to be built (76 respondents). This is followed by the need for more affordable housing (44 respondents) and related to this, affordable rents (19 respondents). These comments reflect discussions at the workshops.

A number of respondents point to the need to refurbish/modernise existing properties such as run down, boarded up and empty housing (37 respondents). Related to this, respondents express dissatisfaction with demolished housing (30 respondents), an issue also discussed at the workshops. Twenty-two respondents

raise issues around private landlords including substandard accommodation and high rents.

Below is a summary of how we are addressing the priority areas and in particular the issues raised in the survey and workshops.

The council has developed a Housing Priorities plan in partnership with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) which was agreed by Cabinet in November 2010. The plan outlines how we are going to provide much needed new homes, support the refurbishment of existing houses and promote sustainable living across the city. More information about the plan can be found at <http://www.sunderland.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1926>

Some of the key actions to achieve this and also address issues raised in the survey and workshops include:

- The development of 388 affordable homes on appropriate sites across the city.
- The continued development and implementation of council mortgages to allow individuals who cannot otherwise secure a commercial mortgage to progress onto the property ladder. This will continue to be developed in 2011/2012.
- Continued work with Housing Associations to discuss and agree with them their priorities for investment in Sunderland; linked with the Affordable Homes Programme 2011-2015.
- Working in partnership with Gentoo and Centrepoint, the development of an immediate access supported housing project in Monkwearmouth for 18 vulnerable young people.
- During 2011 the Housing Service will develop a new way of working so that housing services (including how the council and its partners will tackle anti-social behaviour) can be tailored to local needs.
- Continued development, support and implementation of shared equity schemes by residents buying a percentage of the full market value of a property, usually 50% or 75% with the aim being to make desirable homes more affordable.
- Working with private sector developers to utilise sites which they own but have not yet developed.
- Investing in the current housing stock – especially for vulnerable people through the implementation of the Financial Assistance Policy. This includes providing home improvement loans to residents so that they are able to repair, adapt or modify their home to suit their needs.
- Continuing to bring properties which have been empty for more than 6 months back into use. In 2010/11, 350 properties will have been brought back into use.

### **Community Integration (getting along with each other)**

The majority of respondents who expressed an opinion (72%) think that community integration has stayed the same over the last 12 months. A further 16% believe it has got better and 13% think it has got worse.

Fifty-nine percent of respondents agree that community integration should be a priority for the year ahead while 12% disagree. Respondents aged 18-34 years are

less likely to agree with this priority (44%) and more likely to disagree (21%) and those with a disability are more inclined to agree (72%).

Respondents were asked what, if anything else can be done to improve community integration and 411 gave responses. The most popular response relates to the need for more information and publicity about initiatives/services (52 respondents). As with 'community safety' and 'young people', more activities/facilities for young people is also popular (31 respondents). Other popular responses include:

The need for equal treatment across all groups/areas	- 28 respondents
The need for more community initiatives/events	- 27 respondents
Policing/police involvement	- 26 respondents
Positive comments about integration	- 26 respondents
Tackling anti-social behaviour	- 20 respondents

In terms of the workshops a number of groups mentioned the importance of intergenerational work to improve respect in the community. Facilities for young people was again highlighted as well as the need for education and discipline in schools, which was also mentioned by a small number of people in the survey.

Below is a summary of how we are addressing the priority areas and in particular the issues raised in the survey and workshops.

## 3.2 Performance

### Housing

#### *Reducing the Risk of Homelessness*

The work in relation to homelessness can be divided into 3 areas:

- *"Homelessness Prevention"*: Providing appropriate information, advice and support to individuals and families earlier to reduce their risk of homelessness before these individuals become accepted;
- *"Statutory Homelessness Acceptance"*: This refers to those individuals and families to which the Council has statutory responsibilities in relation to homelessness, housing advice and housing allocations within the Acts discussed above;
- *"Using Temporary Accommodation"*: This refers to the statutory homelessness acceptance cases of families and individuals that need to access temporary accommodation and are then supported to identify and move to more permanent accommodation solutions in the city.

The total number of homeless prevention cases has reduced when compared to the same period last year, decreasing from 532 to 462 homeless cases prevented. It is unlikely that the target of 720 will be achieved. This decline can be attributed to a number of previously successful prevention measures no longer being as effective, because there was a reduction in the number of households approaching the service compared to the previous year. This has been identified as an area for further improvement.

The number of homeless households needing temporary accommodation remains stable when compared to the same period the previous year at 6, which is an extremely low level compared to other authorities. However, further improvement is needed to reduce the utilisation of B&B accommodation particularly for more vulnerable groups, such as families, because research suggests that this is the least effective form of family intervention and is very much a temporary solution.

## **Culture**

There has been an improvement with the number of visits to / usage of museums per 1,000 population. At the end of December 2009 it was 1,194 per 1,000 population this has improved to 1,201 per 1,000 at the end of December 2010. Performance against this indicator remains strong.

There has been a slight decline in the number of visits to museums that were in person per 1,000 population. At the end of December 2009 it was 1,052 per 1,000 population this has slightly fallen to 1,041 per 1,000 population at the end of December 2010. It is thought the bad weather in November and December may have deterred some visitors and this would account for the slight decline. A number of attractions should help to improve performance. A new exhibition 'Writers of Influence' from the National Portrait Gallery has been well publicised in the local media and should attract a good number of visitors in February and March. Events such as Chinese New Year Celebrations and Family Fun during February half-term should also increase 'in-person' visits.

The number of pupils visiting museums and galleries in organised school groups fell slightly when compared to the same period the previous year. At the end of December 2009 it was 10,034 pupils this fell to 9,210 at the end of December 2010. The bad weather in November and December caused some schools to cancel their visits which has affected the figures. However, school workshops during the Spring term are well subscribed and it anticipated that the target of 14,590 will be achieved.

## **Sport and Leisure**

Attendances at the city's leisure complexes continue to be encouraging despite the withdrawal of the free swimming programme in July 2010 and the challenging weather conditions in November and December 2010. Swimming attendance targets were set on the basis that free swimming would be in place until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011, and are 106,242 lower than projected, other visits are well above target by 78,458.

The percentage of adults participating in sport and physical activity (formerly NI8) has increased in Sunderland since the last survey from 19.5% to 22.5%. Research shows that Sunderland performance levels are higher than the average scores for Tyne and Wear (21.32%), the North East (22.05%) and England (22.06%).

These statistics are compiled over a rolling two year period (October 2008-October 2010) for comparison purposes with the original 2005 sample size of 1000. However, one key point to note is that the Active People Survey 4 (500 sample

size) outturn was 24.0%, which is regarded as a significant rise from the previous APS3 score of 19.9%.

In Sunderland, the percentage of the adult population who volunteer in sport for at least one hour a week has also increased from 4.9% to 7.2%. Research evidences that the Sunderland performance is higher than the average scores for Tyne and Wear (4.9%), the North East (4.9%) and England (4.5%).

The City Council have continued to drive forward participation levels in sport and physical activity, which has seen unprecedented increases not only in volunteering and adult participation levels, but also the numbers involved in coaching, competitive and organised sport. It is suggested that the improved performance is attributable to:

- Leading the work of the Active Sunderland Partnership Board to drive forward a joined up approach to increasing participation
- Investment into modern, high class sport and swimming facilities
  - An affordable pricing framework for residents
  - Citywide wellness provision 7 Wellness Centres and 8 Community Wellness venues
- Wellness service delivering preventative services to drive forward participation
  - Mums on the move / Maternity Lifestyle Service
  - Wellness on 2 Wheels, Cycle Sunderland
  - Wellness Walking programme, Walks in the Park, Nordic Walking
  - Active Sunderland Project
  - Over 50 exercise classes in Community wellness venues
- Wellness service delivering targeted intervention services to drive forward participation
  - Exercise Referral and Weight Management Programme
  - Lifestyle Activity and Food Programme
- Wellness service delivering specialist services to drive forward participation
  - Specialist Weight Management Service
  - Stop Smoking Service
- Football Investment Strategy, developing new facilities and pathways for participation
- Partnership working to deliver such activities such as the Active Sunderland Week, Niall's Mile, leisure centre's open weekend and the Beach Festival of Sports.

Sport England have commented on Sunderland's performance:

*"On behalf of Sport England I wish to congratulate Sunderland on their excellent Active People results. Participation rates have risen significantly since the survey was first introduced and Sunderland has seen some of the biggest increases both in the region and nationally. Sunderland have always support the importance of sport for local communities and the recent results are testament to the significant investment into facilities and the excellent sport, health and well-being opportunities provided in the city. Well done"*

Judith Rasmussen, Strategic Lead, Sport England

**Appendix 1** provides an overview of the position for relevant national indicators and also any local performance indicators that have been retained to supplement areas in the performance framework that are not well covered by the national indicator set.

#### **4.0 Recommendation**

- 4.1 That the committee considers the continued good progress made by the council and the Sunderland Partnership and those areas requiring further development to ensure that performance is actively managed.