

Sunderland West Area Committee

7th September 2010

Report of the Chief Executive

Community Action in Sunderland West: Identifying New Issues and Agreeing Actions (2010/11 Work Plan)

1. Why has it come to Committee?

- 1.1 To enable the future development of area based working, the Area Committee requires detailed information to be freely available from a number of different sources. An 'Intelligence Hub' has been established that will act as a repository for information available. Officers will have access to relevant up-to-date information required to make effective decision making at an area level, and provide Area Committees with the detailed analysis required to identify key priorities and future waves of Responsive Local Services activity.
- 1.2 Information has been sourced from other Committee meetings, Community Leadership Programme, Responsive Local Services, which includes the Customer Service Network, the Area Co-ordination Team, Members Query Management System, Questions to Area Committee, Safer Communities Team and the Consultation Team, including resident surveys. Additional links have also been made with the LMAPS, in particular the Data Analyst Team from Northumbria Police.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are requested to:
- i. Ask City Services to review the provision of dropped kerbs in the West and to bring forward proposals to the committee on actions to increase the provision of dropped kerbs and improve accessibility.
 - ii. Implement a two stage approach to refresh the Green Space Topic paper, which forms part of the Local Development Framework:-
 - a. Stage One: host a workshop to identify new open spaces not shown on the survey/large detailed maps, as laid out in the planning and policy guidance: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation 2002, see section three, with key stakeholders across the West during October 2010.
 - b. Stage Two: complete a participatory appraisal for each open space to assess the open space against the recommended criteria to measure the value of area/land to the community by December 2010.

3. New Issues

3.1 Forward Planning

To ensure the Committee is kept up to date with current events and developments in its neighbourhoods, the Area Officer will monitor the key decisions made by other Council Committees, for example, Cabinet via the Forward Plan publication and will consider if future decisions affect the West's work plan. When this occurs, information will be highlighted in the issues log, see Annex 1, along with recommendations for next steps, or will be circulated to Committee members via the ward bulletin service. In addition to monitoring the Forward Plan the Area Officer will systematically monitor the decisions made under Delegated Powers, again to consider and update area Councillors on developments relating to their wards, via the ward bulletin.

3.2 Dropped kerbs and accessibility

An issue has arisen regarding the need for dropped kerbs, particularly in areas where there are a large number of elderly and mobility restricted people. In addition, some shopping areas can prove difficult to access due to a lack of dropped kerbs.

3.3 Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation.

As Committee are aware the Local Development Framework is a suite of documents providing guidance and policies for meeting the community's economic, environmental and social aims of the development of land in Sunderland for the next 10-15 years, which is currently under review.

Included within this suite of documents is the Green Space Topic Paper which provides an analysis of the City's green space by combining a wide variety of information available from various sources including Sunderland City Council, Office of National Statistics, 2001 Census, The Sunderland City Council Consultation Database and key internet resources.

The Council's Planning Policy Team, within Office of the Chief Executive would like Committee to consider the opportunity for Councillor, Officers, Partners and Residents to work collectively to refresh the green space survey from 2002. It is proposed that the refresh of the survey would be completed in two stages:

1. Workshop style events to engage the community in an interactive format, involving key stakeholders from across the area indicating and identifying new open spaces not shown on the survey/large detailed maps of their communities. This stage will raise awareness, identify new open spaces, as detailed above, and build a sense of community ownership in the planning process.
2. Stakeholders to complete a participatory appraisal for each open space assessing the 'value of area/land to the community'. Support and guidance would be provided by Planning Policy Team. This technique has already been used with some success by the Council. It is highly flexible for both small groups and whole communities where a cycle of data collection, reflection and learning and action planning is desired.

Information gained from both the workshop and appraisal process will be included in the Green Space Topic Paper which will be presented to Cabinet for approval.

Background papers

Sunderland West Local Area Plan

Sunderland West Work plan 2010/11

Contact Officer:

Richard Parry, Sunderland West Area Officer

Tel: 0191 561 1217 e-mail: Richard.parry@sunderland.gov.uk

Annex 1: Community Action: New Issues