

## **COMMUNITY & SAFER CITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **AGENDA**

**Meeting to be held in the Civic Centre, Committee Room No. 1, on Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> December, 2011 at 5.30 p.m.**

#### **Membership**

Cllrs Anderson, Copeland, Curran, Emerson, Essl, Forbes, T. Martin, Scaplehorn, Thompson, D. Trueman and Wiper

ITEM		PAGE
1.	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
2.	<b>Minutes of the last meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2011</b>  (copy attached)	1
3.	<b>Declarations of Interest (including Whipping Declarations)</b>  <b>Policy Review Items</b>	
4.	<b>Community Cohesion Policy Review 2011/12: Evidence Gathering</b>  Report of the Chief Executive (copy attached)  <b>Performance Items</b>	10
5.	<b>Performance Report Quarters 1&amp;2 (April – September 2011)</b>  Report of the Chief Executive (copy attached)	13

### **Scrutiny Items**

- |    |                                                                                     |    |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 6. | <b>Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Update</b>                            | 25 |
|    | Report of the Chief Executive (copy attached)                                       |    |
| 7. | <b>The Neighbourhood Helpline</b>                                                   | 30 |
|    | Report of the Executive Director of City Services                                   |    |
| 8. | <b>Work Programme 2011-12</b>                                                       | 34 |
|    | Report of the Chief Executive (copy attached)                                       |    |
| 9. | <b>Forward Plan – Key Decisions for the period 1 December 2011 – 31 March, 2012</b> | 37 |
|    | Report of the Chief Executive (copy attached)                                       |    |

E. WAUGH,  
Head of Law and Governance.  
Civic Centre,  
SUNDERLAND.

28<sup>th</sup> November, 2011

**Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2012 at 5.30pm in the Civic Centre, Committee Room No.1**

**At a meeting of the COMMUNITY AND SAFER CITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on TUESDAY, 18th OCTOBER, 2011 at 5.30 p.m.**

**Present:-**

Councillor Anderson in the Chair

Councillors Copeland, Curran, Essl, T. Martin, Thompson, D. Trueman and Wiper

**Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Emerson and Scaplehorn.

**Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2011**

Councillor Thompson referred to the Performance Report and stated that he had referred to drug drivers rather than the recorded drunk drivers.

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2011 be confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to the inclusion of the above amendment.

**Declarations of Interest (including Whipping Declarations)**

There were no declarations of interest.

**Community Cohesion Policy Review 2011/12: Evidence Gathering**

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which allowed Members to receive evidence in relation to the Committee's Policy Review for 2011/12 into Community Cohesion. As part of this evidence gathering the Committee would be receiving presentations relating to Benefits Reform, Gentoo's approach to Community Cohesion; and the range of initiatives and approaches being undertaken in the East and Coalfield Areas.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Fiona Brown, Head of Transactional Services, delivered a presentation relating to Benefit Reform and the impact this would have on communities within the city. These

changes were the biggest change to the welfare system in 60 years. Within Sunderland there were a quarter of households were in receipt of Housing Benefit while a third of households received Council Tax Benefit; this benefit totalled £140million per annum. The changes would not affect pensioners who were to be protected. People of working age would be affected by the changes as there would be the removal of the 'top up' payment of up to £15 per week for claimants who had negotiated a rent cheaper than the maximum benefit they were entitled to. The housing benefit would also be capped at the 4-bedroom rate which would see families receiving benefit for 5 bedroom houses having their benefit cut. The housing benefit would be cut from 50<sup>th</sup> percentile of rent levels to 30<sup>th</sup> percentile; this would affect 80 percent of claimants. Single claimants up to 35 would only be entitled to housing benefit to cover a single room in a shared house rather than a 1 bedroom flat, the current cut off age was 25.

There was to be a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) of £88,000 awarded to the authority by central government and the council was looking into innovative ways of using this relatively small amount of funding.

These changes would have a serious impact on the city as the shortfall in rent would increase rent arrears and could lead to increased levels of eviction and homelessness. There would also be an effect on landlord confidence and there could be an increase in the number of houses of multiple occupation (HMO). These changes could lead to an effect on community cohesion and community resilience; there would be work done with the planning department to ensure that the impact of HMOs was minimised as much as possible.

There would be changes for the Council on the way the Council Tax benefit was administered. Currently the Council paid the benefit on behalf of the Government and received a grant in order to do this. From 2013 there would be a Council designed local scheme which would be implemented and paid by the Council and there would be funding received from the Government of 90 percent of the cost of the scheme.

It was planned that the range of benefits would eventually be replaced by a single 'Universal Credit' which would be paid to claimants monthly, they would then need to pay the landlord and budget so that the benefit would last them the month. There were concerns over the risk that landlords might not receive their rent from tenants. There were also to be changes to the way crisis loans were issued; they would no longer be operated by the Job Centre but by the Council instead. The Council were looking at ways in which there could be changes made; for example the loaning of white goods or furniture rather than the issuing of money.

Councillor Copeland advised that there was Sunderland Community Furniture Service; they could be used to assist with the loaning of white goods and furniture. Ms Brown advised that there was a need to look at what facilities were available prior to implementing any schemes.

The Chairman thanked Ms Brown for her presentation and stated that she was horrified by the proposals; people were worried about what may happen and whether they would lose their homes. She also queried how many bedrooms a single

claimant over 35 would be entitled to. Ms Brown advised that they would be entitled to enough benefits to provide a 1 bedroom property.

The Chairman then queried what would happen if a single claimant was to have the tenancy from a social rented property handed down to them from their parents. Ms Brown advised that they would not be entitled to sufficient benefits to pay the rent and as such there would be a shortfall in the benefit; a single person in a 2 bedroom property was classed as under occupying the property.

Councillor T. Martin expressed concerns for people who had learning difficulties; when the universal payment came in it could cause issues for them as they may not be capable of budgeting and could end up in arrears or in debt. He asked what would be done to help these people.

Ms Brown advised that there would be work done with the support officers, who for example may be social workers or carers, to give the maximum amount of support possible to the individuals. The statutory legislation for the proposals would not be presented to parliament until 2012 and nothing would be known for certain until then.

Councillor Copeland stated that single people who were living in what had been their parent's houses would be affected negatively by this. She also stated that there was a shortage of one bedroom flats as gentoo had demolished a large number of undesirable flats over recent years.

Ms Brown stated that the proposals were meant to be an incentive for people to move into employment. There had been discussions with Job Centre Plus around the changes which would be implemented in January which would see under 35s only being eligible for benefits for a single room. There was a desire for the city to be growing economically and in order to do this there was a need to work with the job centre to get people into work. Landlords would sometimes be willing to reduce rents to keep a good tenant so it was possible that people would be able to continue living in their current houses despite receiving a smaller amount of housing benefit which would hopefully alleviate any shortages of smaller properties. The changes were also proposed in order to reduce rent levels to more affordable levels.

Ian Porter, gentoo, advised that there was a lot of evaluation work being undertaken and reallocation policies were being developed to try to fully populate houses. If a family had two children of the same sex then they would be expected to share a bedroom meaning that a family with 2 children would be able to be accommodated in a 2 bedroom house, leaving the larger properties free for larger families. There were currently a large number of single occupants living in 2 bedroom flats.

The Chairman expressed concerns over the use of the term affordable and was advised by Ms Brown that affordable was what the government deemed to be affordable as they believed that rents were too high. The 4 bedroom cap would have more of an effect in the south, especially in London, than it would in Sunderland.

Councillor Essl queried whether it was known how many people would be affected by the changes and was informed by Ms Brown that when the analysis had taken place there were 800 people who were currently receiving the single room rate and

there were approximately 23,500 people who would be impacted by the under occupancy changes.

In response to a query from Councillor Curran regarding HMOs Ms Brown advised that there was a lot of work needed to be done. HMOs had an effect on communities and there was a need to mitigate against this; especially considering that it was possible that more landlords would decide to convert properties to HMOs following the changes.

Councillor Copeland referred to the shortage of properties and stated that in Southwick there were a large number of empty properties. There were government initiatives to try to bring empty properties back into use.

Ms Brown stated that there was a need to have an understanding of the city's housing stock. There were a number of strategies related to housing and these needed to be brought together and examined to see whether there needed to be any changes made following the changes to the benefit system. There was a need to look at the way the city's population was changing as there was a need to know how many pensioners there would be in the coming years. There had been discussions around the possibility of having different local authorities working together however this could lead to issues due to the differences in populations; as a proportion of the population Northumberland had 11 percent more pensioners than Sunderland and as such it was likely that the schemes would need to work differently.

The Chairman stated that she believed that the way out of poverty was through employment, she did however acknowledge that currently it was very difficult for people to be able to find work. She anticipated the Welfare Rights service seeing an increase in the amount of people using the service in the future. Within communities there was fear as people were scared that they may lose their homes.

The Chairman then thanked Ms Brown for her presentation and welcomed Ian Porter who was representing gentoo and would be delivering a presentation detailing the work gentoo was doing around the development of community cohesion.

Mr Porter delivered his presentation and advised the committee that gentoo had taken over the management of properties in the Middle Hendon area which were owned by Back on the Map. Gentoo owned properties in 98 different neighbourhoods and each of these areas had different, often difficult, needs which needed to be carefully addressed, each neighbourhood had its own Neighbourhood Plan which detailed the issues in the area and how they could be tackled. He advised that gentoo had 29,500 houses in Sunderland and 70,000 customers. The company employed 850 people across various areas including housing management; neighbourhood safety; grounds and estate maintenance; and repairs and maintenance. There were a number of schemes in place to help improve community cohesion which involved working with the different groups of people who were residents of the estates including young people; old people; the unemployed; and those with drug, alcohol or mental health issues.

The Chairman commented that the estates were quite large and there were a wide range of tenures, from those renting from gentoo to tenants of private landlords and

owner occupiers; she queried whether gentoo linked all of the residents together or whether they were only interested in their own tenants. Mr Porter responded that there were residents' panels which had representatives from all aspects of the local community, not just gentoo tenants.

Councillor Copeland stated that she had been sceptical of the work of gentoo however the work at Leafields in Southwick had been excellent; there were people who had moved in who previously would have never considered moving to Southwick. There were however still some areas which were a problem. It had been excellent to see gentoo speaking to residents to find out what the residents wanted gentoo to do; Marley Potts had been turned around and had gone from being an area which people did not want to live in to an area where a private developer was happy to invest to build new houses. She thanked gentoo for all of their hard work.

Mr Porter stated that there would always be the issue of problem areas and there was a need to continue working within these areas to deliver improvements. There was a need to solve the problems rather than just move them to other areas.

The Chairman stated that areas could change. In Easington Lane there had been an area which was notorious for problems and the properties in the area had been demolished. There was now a new development on the site and the area had improved greatly. She also reminisced about her childhood growing up on a council estate and the sense of community spirit and belonging which had existed.

Mr Porter advised that the main issue faced was engagement and that the majority of the work which was carried out was people related rather than buildings related. The Chairman added that there had been a change in attitudes; in the past petty criminals were ostracised by the community however now it seemed that antisocial behaviour was expected and almost accepted by people in some communities. Mr Porter responded stating that gentoo had done a lot of work to reduce antisocial behaviour and there had been significant improvements.

In response to a query from Councillor Thompson Mr Porter advised that gentoo were working with Alan Caddick the Council's Head of Housing to deal with the issues which were caused by some of the private landlords and their tenants.

Councillor T. Martin commented that it was pleasing to see the work gentoo had done with Back on the Map to improve the cottages in Hendon, he hoped that this taking over of the cottages would be a success. The people of Middle Hendon were pleased with the scheme and there had been positive feedback from residents in relation to the current works in the Long Streets area. He was a member of the LMAPS group for his area and thanked the gentoo staff for their attendance and contribution at the LMAPS meetings.

Mr Porter stated that the work in Hendon was an excellent example of gentoo working with other organisations. Not only had there been the work with Back on the Map to improve the houses but there had been the partnership working with the Council and Back on the Map to develop the Selective Licensing scheme in Middle Hendon and the Long Streets. Councillor T. Martin added that Selective Licensing would make a big difference to the area.

The Chairman thanked Mr Porter for his attendance and then welcomed to the Meeting the officers from the Sunderland Partnership who would be delivering a presentation to the Committee.

Jessica May, Sunderland Partnership Manager, introduced the presentation and advised that it would be providing Members with an overview of the work that was going on in the East Sunderland and Coalfield Areas of the City. She advised that the East Area had a high proportion BME population which the Coalfield had a lower proportion and was made up of distinct villages. She advised of the Cohesion Networks which had been established to bring together representatives from local organisations, projects and groups to share information on cohesion concerns, possible tensions, inequalities and social welfare issues and to address the issues raised. There were some groups which had been established to look into specific issues; the EARR group had been established specifically to look into the problems around the Eden Vale area.

Dawn Rugman, Senior Partnership Officer, then advised of the focus of the work and the citywide issues. She advised of the School Linking Network which had been successful during its first year, there were plans to expand the network to include links to the college and university and to include young people who were at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). There was an issue with trust in some communities; there were communities where people like the local loan sharks were trusted more than authorities such as the police and this was a major concern.

Sarah Woodhouse, Senior Partnership Officer, advised of the work which was being undertaken in the East and Coalfield areas. The East Area Community Cohesion Group was the first group to be established in the city and was set up in response to escalating racial tensions among young people in the area. The group then widened its remit and the membership increased to deal with the wider cohesion concerns in the area. There was a need to have knowledge of the community and the specific issues it faced to know what services could be put into place to tackle problems.

The Coalfield group had been established following the success of the East group. This group had not formed in response to a specific issue but instead was formed to look at the existing work and how collaborative working could be used to respond to local issues. There was an issue in the Coalfield area with hate crime; there was a relatively small BME population and there were a disproportionately high number of racist incidents, this suggested that there were people who were repeat victims of hate crimes. There was also a lack of youth provision in the area and to combat this the XL Youth Villages had been brought to the area.

In response to a query from Councillor Essl, Ms Woodhouse stated that Young Asian Voices had been working with a small group of young Asian men who had raised concerns around intolerance and a feeling of being persecuted. There was a need to ensure that there were as many ways as possible for young people to be able to voice their concerns.



Councillor Copeland stated that there was a lot of work done to integrate new residents into areas however the existing residents, who had often been living there for a long time, were neglected; there was a need to provide services for the existing residents to ensure that they did not feel isolated. Young people were often not included by any services and this led to them feeling neglected and could lead to tensions in the area. Ms May advised that this was something that there was a need to be aware of and the situation was being monitored through the Sunderland Partnership and the Prevent scheme. Ms Rugman added that there was a need for the medium term consequences to be looked at and there was a need to build resilience into communities.

The Chairman stated that during periods of economic turmoil there were often problems around community cohesion. History had shown that during these periods people often looked for something to attack as a way of relieving their frustrations. There was also an issue around youth unemployment, millions of 16-24 year olds were unemployed and wanted to be able to work however they were not given the opportunities they required.

The Chairman then thanked the officers for their attendance and it was:-

2. RESOLVED that the information be given consideration as part of the policy review into Community Cohesion.

### **Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 – Update**

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which allowed Members to receive an update on the progress of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and its implications for the Council.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

Stuart Douglass, Policy Lead for Community Safety, presented the report and advised that the Bill had now completed its journey through parliament to become the Act, much of the detail surrounding the act would be included in the secondary legislative guidance, while this report provided a briefing for Members on the key points and final changes to the Bill as it became enacted. The Commissioner would have responsibility for the whole force area and Chief Constables would need to be retired for 5 years before being eligible to stand for the role of Commissioner. It was not yet known for certain who would be funding the elections. The Police and Crime Panel should be politically balanced and representative of the geographical area covered by the Force wherever possible; it would be up to the local authorities to decide who would make up the panel but if an agreement could not be reached then the Home Office reserved the right to intervene. Mr Douglass then introduced Tom Terrett, Trading Standards and Licensing Manager, who would be advising the Committee on the amendments to the Licensing Act 2003.

Mr Terrett advised that previously there had been a lack of power for licensing authorities to control applications and it had been compulsory for applications to be granted should there be no objections; it was now going to be possible for

applications to be referred to the Licensing Sub-Committee even if there were no objections. Previously the Council could only intervene if 'necessary' and there needed to be a lot of evidence to prove that the action was necessary; this was to be changed so that any action only needed to be appropriate.

There was a lot of work done around combating underage sales and the fine the courts could impose was to be increased from a maximum of £10,000 to a maximum of £20,000.

There was to be the potential for early morning restrictions to be imposed which could be used to force all premises within an area to close by a certain time; there were concerns from the police about this and any proposals would need to be consulted on and any objections heard. There was also the Late night Levy which could be imposed and would require late opening venues to contribute towards the cost of policing and other safety measures such as Taxi Marshalls; it would be possible for there to be exempted sectors so that venues such as theatres could operate without any charges while pubs and clubs would be affected.

Councillor Wiper commented that he was a retired police officer and that he was not convinced by the idea of having elected commissioners. He queried whether any qualifications would be required and what the situation would be with staffing.

Mr Douglass advised that he was not aware of there being any requirement for certain qualifications however it would not be known what restrictions there would be until the final guidance had been produced; it was expected that there would be certain qualifying measures in place such as preventing people with criminal records from holding the post. The role would have a salary attached to it of around £100,000 per annum and the commissioner would have the option of appointing a deputy along with deciding what administration staff they would require. It would be sensible to keep the current administration arrangements for now however there was no requirement for the commissioner to do this.

Councillor Thompson stated that following the recent riots the police forces were struggling. He felt that this was a cynical move and was concerned about who would stand for election and who would fund the elections. The worry was that people with vested interests such as security firms would be funding election campaigns for their own gain.

The Chairman added that it was possible that individuals could stand for election to further their own party political purposes. She was surprised that the proposal to have elected commissioners had actually been passed.

Councillor Copeland agreed that people and companies with vested interests being able to be involved was a concern; she was worried that this would be the beginnings of the privatisation of the police. She did however welcome the proposals for the changes to the Licensing Act, especially the changes which allowed the authority to introduce a late night levy which could then be used to pay for Taxi Marshalls and Street Pastors. She also advised that the committee had previously been on a night out in the city centre to see what work was being done by the police,

Street Pastors and Taxi Marshalls; she felt that it could be useful to have another visit to the city centre to see what changes there had been.

Mr Douglass stated that there was a memorandum of understanding which was currently being drafted and would specify how the Chief Constable would relate to the Commissioner.

Councillor T. Martin referred to the restriction on former Chief Constables and asked whether other police officers would have to wait 5 years after retirement to be able to stand for commissioner. He also queried whether the changes to the Licensing Act would enable the authority to restrict the number of licenses granted within specific areas.

Mr Douglass agreed to find out whether the restriction would only affect Chief Constables or whether other officers would be affected as well. Mr Terrett stated that it was likely that it would be possible to restrict the numbers of licenses granted within certain areas.

3. RESOLVED that the report be noted and further updates be received.

### **Work Programme 2011-12**

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided, for Members information, the current work programme for the Committee's work for the 2011-12 Council year.

(For copy report – see original minutes)

2. RESOLVED that the work programme be received and noted.

### **Forward Plan – Key Decisions for the period 1 October 2011 – 31 January 2012**

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide Members with an opportunity to consider those items on the Executive's Forward Plan for the period 1 October 2011 – 31 January 2011 which relate to the Community and Safer City Scrutiny Committee.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman advised that there were no items on the current forward plan which fell under the remit of the Committee.

3. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

(Signed) F. ANDERSON,  
Chairman.

## **COMMUNITY AND SAFER CITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**6 DECEMBER  
2011**

### **COMMUNITY COHESION POLICY REVIEW 2010/11: EVIDENCE GATHERING**

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

#### **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: SP3: SAFE CITY**

**CORPORATE PRIORITIES: CIO1: Delivering Customer Focussed Services, C102: Being 'One Council', C103: Efficient and Effective Council, C104: Improving partnership working to deliver 'One City'**

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

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to feedback on the attendance of members to the Show Racism the Red Card Event held at the Stadium of Light on 8 November 2011.
- 1.2 Members attended the event as part of the evidence gathering process for its policy review into community cohesion.
- 1.3 The report also includes an opportunity for members to feedback on their visit to Durham Prison which took place on Wednesday 16 November 2011.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 On 7 June 2011, the Committee agreed to undertake a policy review into the actions and interventions being taken by the Council and its partners in relation community cohesion and how national policy will impact on the city.
- 2.2 Members chose this area in view of the importance attached by local people to the related issues of improving employment opportunities, tackling poverty, improving educational attainment, securing better housing and improving sport and cultural activities.
- 2.3 It was agreed that the policy should review should include consideration of the following themes:-
  - the background and policy context for the development of community cohesion at a national and local level;
  - the priorities for a future refresh of the Sunderland Partnership Community Cohesion Strategy;
  - the range of community cohesion interventions in the city across a number of themes including young people, sport and cultural activities, education, housing and planning, community

safety and policing, press and media and ethnic and minority groups;

- the policies and programmes of the Council, its partners and the community and voluntary sector which can help bring people together across the city and build bridges between communities;
- the range of interventions being taken to tackle tensions for example between older and younger generations within neighbourhoods and communities;

### **3 Current Position**

3.1 As part of its policy review, the Committee attended a session held for local schools by Show Racism the Red Card at the Stadium of Light on 8 November 2011.

3.2 Show Racism the Red Card is an educational charity established in 1996 which aims to combat racism through enabling role models, who are predominately but not exclusively footballers, to present an anti-racist message to young people and others.

3.3 The organisation works with schools throughout the North East and East and South East of England to deliver anti-racism workshops to more than 10,000 young people every year. The aim is to:-

- educate young people about the causes and consequences of racism and to explore the various forms racism can take.
- empower young people to challenge racism in the communities in which they live, providing them with relevant knowledge and information to enable them to do this.
- help young people prepare to play an active role as citizens in an increasingly multi-cultural society.
- enable young people to develop good relationships and respect the differences between people, regardless of their ethnicity, faith, culture or nationality.

3.4 Members of the Committee sat in on one of the workshops conducted by a member of the educational team for the young people. This proved a challenging and thought provoking session which encouraged discussion and critical thinking of the issues involved.

3.5 Members of the Committee also had the opportunity to meet with Ged Grebby, Chief Executive of Show Racism the Red Card to discuss the

philosophy that underpins their work and their aims and priorities for the future.

- 3.6 This was followed by an educational film which dealt with racism in football and featured interviews with top Premier league and international footballers.
- 3.7 Finally, the young people took part in a question and answer session involving members of their Community Education Team, including:- former Sunderland Captain Gary Bennett, ex-Newcastle and Republic of Ireland international John Anderson, ex-Newcastle United defender Olivier Bernard and ex-Leicester City player Trevor Benjamin. These were joined by current Sunderland FC players Fraizer Campbell and David Meyler.

#### Visit To Durham Prison

- 3.8 On 16 November 2011, members of the Committee undertook a visit to Durham Prison. Members were accompanied by Louise Hill, Reducing Reoffending Manager.
- 3.9 Members were provided with a tour the prison and an opportunity to view the employment support and training on offer to prisoners.
- 3.10 Further feed back on the visit will be provided at the meeting.

#### **4. Recommendations**

- 4.1 Members are recommended to consider the report which will be included as part of its policy review into community cohesion.

#### **5. Background Papers**

Sunderland Partnership – Community Cohesion Strategy 2008-2015

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

6<sup>th</sup> December 2011

## Performance Report Quarters 1&2 (April – September 2011)

### Report of the Chief Executive

#### 1.0 Purpose of the report

The purpose of this report is to provide Community and Safer City Scrutiny Committee with a performance update for the period April to September 2011.

#### 2.0 Background

- 2.1 Performance reports provided to Scrutiny Committee throughout 2010/11 as part of quarterly performance monitoring arrangements were heavily dependent on performance indicators from the previous governments national indicator list, with a particular focus on those prioritised within the Local Area Agreement,
- 2.2 In October 2010 the Coalition Government announced the deletion of the National Indicator set and also announced that from April 2011 there would no longer be a requirement for council's to produce an LAA. Both announcements signalled a move towards self regulation and improvement with more flexibility to report against local priorities using a set of locally determined measures for 2011/12.
- 2.3 For 2011/12 the Council's aim is that, in future, performance reporting should be an honest appraisal of the situation resulting in actions. It should cover the main strengths, areas for improvement, outstanding risks and how these are being addressed. This is a move away from simply reporting all performance indicators with no value judgement or weighting to reflect their relative importance to the Council. Instead, the aim is to draw attention to the areas that matter most and maximise improvement to deliver Value for Money.
- 2.4 It is envisaged that in 2011/12 Scrutiny will have important role to play in the authority's revised performance management framework. This will include regular challenging of heads of service and senior officers on ongoing performance issues focussing on particular areas of concern.
- 2.5 The following criteria have been taken into consideration by Heads of Service and service managers in establishing performance indicators for 2011/12
  - **Council priorities** (including a City that is Prosperous; a Learning City; Healthy; Safe; and Attractive & Inclusive
  - **Service priorities**
  - **Service/operational needs**
  - **internal management information** (including corporate health measures)
  - **Value for money** – economy efficiency effectiveness
  - **customer expectations**

- **ability to benchmark** against our peers (e.g. other local authorities) – For some services sector led consultation has been carried out through various benchmark groups to establish an agreed set of indicators which could be shared.

2.6 The more of these criteria that an indicator can match the more useful it can be. Any indicator would still need to meet the standard criteria of being robust and fit for purpose without being onerous to collect.

## **2.7 Suggested Performance Indicators for Community and Safer City for 2011/12**

2.8 Attached at Appendix 1 is an extract (produced by performance plus the council's performance management software system ) from the full set of indicators that have been reviewed and the Council has identified so far as essential for local self-regulation and which would fall within the remit of this committee. These indicators are a mixture of former national indicators (NI's) where these are thought still to be appropriate, and locally determined indicators. *For those indicators that relate to the Safer City element these have been developed through the Safer Sunderland Partnership*

2.9 The report shows our actual performance for the first two quarters (April-Sept 2011) against each indicator together with the proposed targets for 2011/12 (and 2012/13 in some cases)?. The last full year's (2010/11) performance is also shown for comparison purposes.

2.10 Members should note that this is work in progress and a more detailed version should be available for the next performance report for quarter 3 performance.

## **3.0 Performance Update**

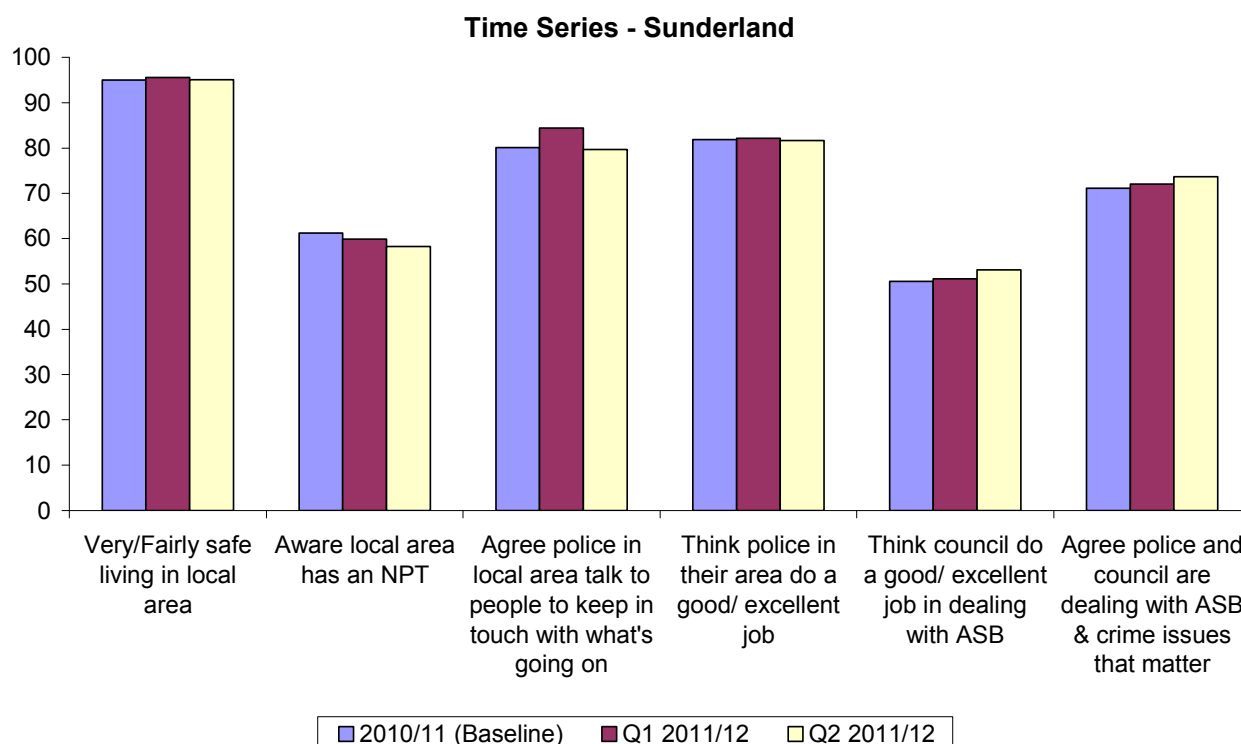
3.1 Total crime for the quarter July-September 11, stood at 4525, down 5% compared with the previous quarter. There has been an 8% reduction in total crime for the year to date (April-September) down from 9867 to 9063. Sunderland currently has the 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest crime rate within its peer group of similar community safety partnerships (iQuanta).

3.2 Many crime types have contributed to this fall serious acquisitive crime has fallen by 10% for the year to date and is down 2% for the current quarter. There were 567 crimes during July-September, compared with 581 for the previous quarter. Most serious violent crime has fallen from 43 to 41 crimes for the current quarter, and down 10% for the year date from 118 to 84 crimes during April-September 11. While Assault with less serious injury has risen for the current quarter, up from 339 to 390, there has been a fall for the year to date down from 458 to 390, representing a 15% fall.



- 3.3 *Vehicle crime has fallen 15 % for the current quarter down from 391 to 332 crimes. Theft of motor vehicles has fallen 30% down from 105 to 74 during July-September. While theft from motor vehicles has seen a small rise for the current quarter up from 228 to 236 (4%), there has been a fall for the year to date (April-September). Violent crime has fallen by 10% compared with the same quarter the previous year down from 1022 to 918 and 15% for the year to date down from 2108 to 1798. Criminal damage has also fallen, down 3% on the previous quarter from 978 to 944 and 13% for the year to date 2219 to 1922.*
- 3.4 Reducing re-offending - Prolific and Priority Offenders (PPO) (previously Ni30) is based on Qu4 of 2010-11 and is within target. For the 46 Prolific and Priority Offenders there has been a -31% reduction in the number of convictions. Of those young people who received a substantive outcome between Jan-March 11 there was a 15% rate of re-offending. Only one young person (10-17yrs) has received a custodial sentence between July-Sept 11. For adult re-offenders the re-offending rate was 15.96%, (to March 11) this was slightly below the predicted re-offending rate of 16.01 and a marked improvement from the last quarter when it was 0.21% above the baseline.
- 3.5 There was a 16% repeat incident rate for Domestic violence cases reviewed by MARAC.
- 3.6 There were 4929 anti-social behaviour incidents during quarter 2 of 2011/12, this compares with 6944 for the same quarter the previous year, representing a fall of 29%. There has been a fall of 30% for the year to date (April-September) with asb incidents dropping from 14374 to 10001 during the current year.
- 3.7 *There were 636 Alcohol related incidents during Qu2 of 2011/12, with a similar number the previous quarter (635). Young people drinking/being rowdy was a key concern raised by residents in the Safer Communities Survey. There were 266 youth related alcohol incidents during quarter 2 July-September, this is a slight fall on the previous quarter down from 281, and a 5% fall. 73% of respondents of the survey thought that the Police and Council were dealing with ASB and crime issues that mattered in their area (the same as the force average, with no significant change from the previous survey).*
- 3.8 95% of respondents of the Safer Communities Survey felt very or fairly safe living in their local area of Sunderland. This is comparable to the Northumbria Force average of 96%. Results were lower when respondents were asked how safe they felt their council area as a whole was. 77% of respondents thought Sunderland was very or fairly safe, this was lower than the force average of 86%.
- 3.9 *Summary of key findings of Safer Communities Survey Qu2 (July-Sept 11):*
- *Residents of Sunderland are more likely to feel that crime has fallen in the last 12 months*
  - *However, they are also more likely to perceive young people being drunk/rowdy as a problem – this issue has seen an increase this year both at an area command level and specifically in Houghton.*
  - *Whilst the majority of residents in Sunderland feel safe in their local neighbourhood, fewer believe Sunderland as a whole is safe compared to the force average.*

- Residents of Sunderland Central are far more likely to feel that their local area has got worse in the last 12 months. Conversely, this measure has fallen in Washington.
- Awareness of Neighbourhood Policing Teams is strong in Sunderland – whilst this measure is no longer higher than the area command average in Sunderland East, this sector's result is still by far the highest result of all sectors in the force area.
- Foot patrol visibility is also strong in Sunderland, with perceptions in Sunderland North having a positive bearing on the area command result.



### 3.10 Summary of key findings:

- The chart above demonstrates that across the six measures shown above, resident's perceptions in Sunderland have shown minor fluctuations over the last two quarters.
- However, there have been no significant improvements or deteriorations in any of these measures.
- This suggests these measures have remained stable over time.
- The fluctuations across these measures in Sunderland are similar to those observed at a force level.

3.11 As with other area commands, the issues that residents are prioritising in Sunderland are mostly quality of life issues rather than crimes. The top concerns for residents were:

- § Young people being drunk, rowdy or a nuisance
- § Speeding or dangerous driving
- § Rubbish or litter lying around
- § Noise nuisance
- § Young people hanging around.

- 3.12 *In common with other urban areas of Northumbria, 'Young people being drunk, rowdy, or a nuisance' is the top priority in Sunderland.*
- 3.13 *The top methods of communicating information to the public were 'Police/Council/Community Newsletters and Magazines' and 'Letters, Flyers and Leaflets' are by far the most preferred methods of communication.*

#### **4.1 Improvement Activity**

##### **4.2 Adult reducing re-offending**

- § Work is underway to consider the use of Restorative Justice Approaches with the IOM unit. Training has been scheduled for early November.
- § Policing task groups have been set up so that problematic offenders can be reviewed and positive actions taken
- § A housing panel has been set up with Gentoo to provide access to housing for offenders. The prison officer in the IOM is developing a Recovery wing in Durham prison.

##### **4.3 Violent crime**

- § The Safer Sunderland Partnership continue to deliver interventions to support continued development of this priority within the Violent Crime Delivery Group and other related Delivery Groups such as Alcohol and Marketing.
- § LGBT Domestic Violence training is programmed for November 2011-11-04
- § Research is planned to understand the number of retractions/failure to show at Court of domestic violence victims within the city.
- § Domestic Homicide Reviews came into force in April 2011 with work ongoing across Northumbria.

##### **4.4 Alcohol Misuse**

- § Northumbria Police and the Councils trading standards and licensing department are continuing to undertake joint operations to address issues relating to the night-time economy and Licensed premises. This work is ongoing through 2011-12
- § A questionnaire has been completed with Pubwatch members regarding the use of polycarbonate vessels to ascertain who is using the glasses and the potential opportunities for expansion of the scheme
- § The Best Bar None Scheme 2011-12 has been launched and includes best community pub for each of the 5 area regeneration frameworks. Assessments are now ongoing and the award ceremony is planned for the 8<sup>th</sup> January
- § Alcohol Concerns Alcohol Awareness Week was held from Monday 14<sup>th</sup> November. Alcohol concern will focus on second hand harm and the impact of alcohol misuse on the family and children in particular.

##### **4.5 Drug Misuse**

- § Co-location of all drug and alcohol services working with offenders has been completed and the emerging team includes PPO, DRR, ATR and DIP. Further proposals for great integration are currently under consultation.
- § Waiting times, planned discharges, care planning and healthcare assessment measures remain on target.

- § The Carers Network for Sunderland, Gateshead and South Tyneside has agreed their vision and are working under the name of Carers Drug and Alcohol Network with the logo 'Better and Stronger Together'. A Carers Conference on information sharing is planned for 2<sup>nd</sup> December and they are also working with GPs to highlight carers of substance misuse issues and to encourage referrals to the range of services available to carers

#### 4.6 Anti-Social Behaviour

- § LMAPS (Local Multi-Agency Problem Solving) groups continue to meet every 5 weeks to address locally identified persistence problems, the majority of which relate to ASB. 'Extra-ordinary LMAPS' can be arranged within the 5 week period when a case of ASB is deemed high risk
- § LMAPS Groups have moved to 5 meetings to mirror the Council Area Regeneration Frameworks and all have a dedicated contact from the People and Neighbourhoods Team.
- § Northumbria Police are to launch the implementation of a 101 number for all non emergency calls including ASB calls. Work is underway in relation to the marketing of this and how information will be shared with the Councils Neighbourhood Helpline
- § The Safer Sunderland Partnership is currently working closely with the national charity Groundwork North East to develop a specialist pilot project titled 'Turning the Corner' with the aim of reducing youth related anti-social behaviour in community hotspots.

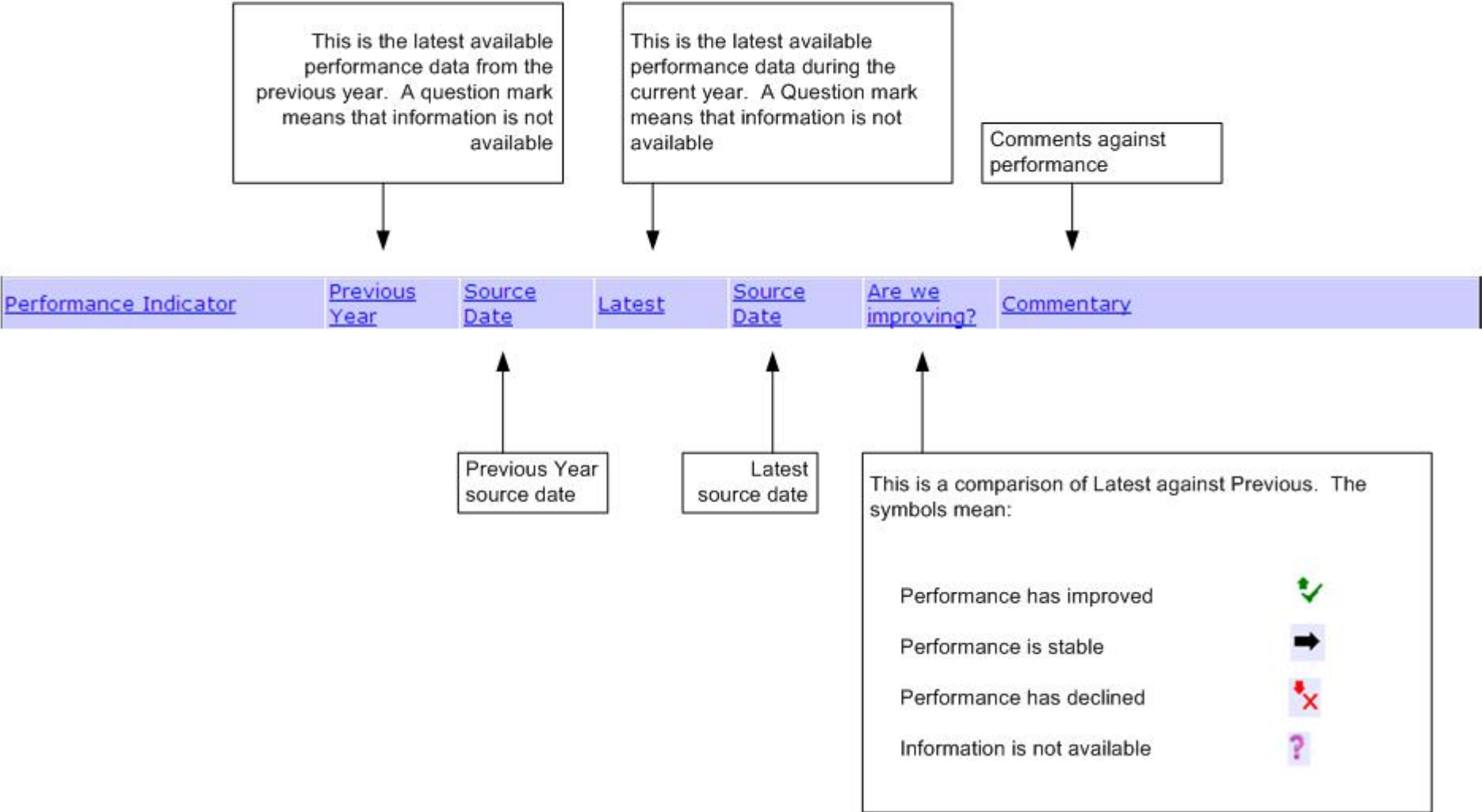
#### 4.7 Feelings of Safety

- § Northumbria Police, with support from the SSP, continued to promote personal safety (in the night time economy) messages aimed at women through the "keys Money Phone, Plans to Get Home" campaign was promoted during the summer. bank holiday. This included radio advertising on SunFM, and additional campaign posters displayed on washrooms in licensed premises in the city centre.
- § Local sentencing outcomes continue to be published on Northumbria Police website
- § The Safer Homes Initiative continues to operate and is improving the home security of victims of crime
- § The Safer Sunderland Partnership web pages have continued to be updated with all relevant press releases. Other elements of the site, including related links and the latest news sections have been revamped and refreshed.
- § A range of community safety press releases have been written and sent out on various topics included: domestic violence and community payback.









### 4.0 Recommendation






- 4.1 Members note the progress made and for the agreed indicators review and challenge progress against targets which have been set for 2011/12.

Report Key



## Community & Safer City

Performance Indicator	Previous Year	Source Date	Latest	Source Date	Are we improving?	Commentary
Violent crime per year, 1,000 population in the Local Authority area (BV127a)	7.48	09/2010	6.34	09/2011		An improvement year on year.
Vehicle crimes per 1,000 Local Authority population (BV128a)	2.88	09/2010	2.55	09/2011		An improvement year on year.
Number of serious violent offences listed below that are recorded by the police and involve the use of a knife or other sharp instrument (Sunderland only) (LPI064)	0.13	09/2010	0.07	09/2011		Improving performance.
Total recorded crime per 1000 population across the Sunderland area (LPI070)	35.03	09/2010	31.97	09/2011		Improving performance.
Recorded incidents of anti-social behaviour per 1,000 population across the Sunderland area (LPI071)	?		17.37	09/2011		This performance measure is new in 2011/12, therefore data is unavailable for the previous financial year.
Total incidents of criminal damage per 1000 Sunderland population (LPI075)	7.88	09/2010	6.78	09/2011		Improving performance.
Alcohol related incidents per 1000 population (LPI076)	?		4.47	09/2011		This performance measure is new in 2011/12, therefore data is unavailable for the previous financial year.
Youth related alcohol related incidents per 1000 population (LPI077)	?		1.93	09/2011		This performance measure is new in 2011/12, therefore data is unavailable for the previous financial year.



Performance Indicator	Previous Year	Source Date	Latest	Source Date	Are we improving?	Commentary
Number of most serious violent crimes per 1,000 Sunderland population (NI015)	0.43	09/2010	0.14	09/2011		<p>Northumbria Police and the Council's Trading Standards and Licensing Department are continuing to undertake joint operations to address issues relating to the night-time economy and licensed premises. This work is ongoing throughout 2011-12.</p> <p>There are ongoing discussions between representatives from the Alcohol Licensing Task and Finish Group with members of the PubWatch Scheme asking them to consider a voluntary arrangement to reduce opening hours. This work will be ongoing as the review of the Licensing Act 2003 passes through Parliament. The Best Bar None working group has also been established.</p> <p>Information has now been shared between Northumbria Police, Sunderland City Council and HMRC regarding the top twenty problematic premises involved in the sale of illicit alcohol and operations to target these premises are now being undertaken.</p>
Number of serious acquisitive crimes per 1,000 Sunderland population (NI016)	4.55	09/2010	2.00	09/2011		Serious acquisitive crime has fallen by 10% for the year to date ( April-September 2011) down from 1270 to 1148
Number of young people (aged 10-17) re-offending in the youth justice system (NI019).	0.53	09/2010	30.00	06/2011		Latest data reflects quarter 1 performance. Quarter 2 data will be available in January 2012.
The number of Actual Bodily Harm (assault with injury) crimes per 1000 Sunderland population (NI020)	3.42	09/2010	1.37	09/2011		A 13% reduction year on year, with actual crimes down from 2,093 to 1,819, a fall of 274. The assault with injury crime rate in Sunderland is below 7.75, which is the average across similar CDRP groups.
Number of recorded firearms offences per 1, 000 forcewide population (NI029)	0.02	09/2010	0.02	09/2011		Stable performance.

Performance Indicator	Previous Year	Source Date	Latest	Source Date	Are we improving?	Commentary
Percentage reduction in repeat victimisation for those domestic violence cases being managed by a MARAC (Sunderland) (NI032)	27.27 %	09/2010	16.67 %	06/2011	✓	<p>An e-learning package around domestic violence is being introduced in conjunction with Safeguarding Boards. Operation Liberty, another domestic violence campaign was undertaken, providing extra Police support on weekends.</p> <p>The 'Only Losers Give Bruises' campaign ran in July 2011 across the City, taking into account teenage relationship abuse and healthy relationships. This campaign was covered in the local press, Radio Newcastle and on Facebook. As a result, more work with local schools on domestic violence is being planned. The campaign was also strongly supported by Leader, Deputy Leader and local MPs. Research is planned to understand the high number of retractions by victims and low turn out at court.</p>
Number of domestic homicide offences per 1,000 forcewide population (NI034)	0.00	09/2010	0.01	06/2011	✗	Domestic homicide reviews are required to be in place for incidents after 1 April 2011. These will be lead by the Community Safety Partnership (CSP). A flow chart and associated procedures have been produced with support across the Northumbria force area.
The percentage of offenders under probation supervision living in settled and suitable accommodation at the end of their licence order (NI143).	85.00 %	09/2010	86.00 %	09/2011	✓	Improving performance.
The percentage of offenders under probation supervision in employment at the end of their order or licence (NI144).	37.00 %	09/2010	37.00 %	09/2011	➡	Stable performance.
The percentage of respondents who strongly agree/ or tend to agree that the police and local council are dealing with the anti-social behaviour and crime issues that matter in the area (NI021).	29.00 %	03/2010	72.00 %	09/2011	✓	The only area to see a change over time is Sunderland East, which has seen a decrease on last year.



% of people who feel very or fairly safe living in their local area (LPI072)	95.00 %	03/2011	95.00 %	09/2011	➡	A postal survey was conducted each quarter to September 2010, when the method changed to a telephone survey from December 2010. Therefore, the latest figure has been compared to the 2010/11 year end.
% of people who feel Sunderland is a very or fairly safe place (LPI073)	76.00 %	03/2011	77.00 %	09/2011	✅	As above

# Environmental Health

Performance Indicator	Previous Year	Source Date	Latest	Source Date	Are we improving?	Commentary
The number of significant issues that the Trading Standards Service is called upon to deal with less the number that it is actually able to deal with (NI183).	3.21	31/03/2010	2.22	31/03/2011		An improvement on the previous year and on target.
The percentage of food establishments within the local authority area which are broadly compliant with food law (NI184).	83.82 %	30/09/2010	86.09 %	30/09/2011		<p>The National Food Hygiene Rating System launched in June 2011 has influenced businesses to improve. All businesses will be encouraged to display their rating on door stickers to help motivate further improvement.</p> <p>Whilst we have already been contacted by good businesses seeking to improve to become "top rated", many businesses at the lower end are likely to be struggling to survive. There is a high level of turnover of these businesses and any good work by Officers to promote knowledge of hygiene and management standards disappears when the business closes.</p>

# COMMUNITY AND SAFER CITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6<sup>th</sup> December 2011

## EMERGENCY PLANNING AND BUSINESS CONTINUITY UPDATE

### REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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

- 1.1 To provide Members of the Community and Safer City Scrutiny Committee with an overview of Emergency Planning and Business Continuity, and to explain how the Council meets its statutory obligations under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA)

#### **2 Background**

- 2.1 The Civil Contingencies Act provides comprehensive guidance on local arrangements. The Act places significant statutory obligations on Local Authorities to Prepare, Respond and Recover from Major Incidents and times of crisis.

#### **3 National, Regional and Local Provision**

The following shows the Hierarchical structure for Emergency Planning from Central Government through to Local Arrangements

##### **3.1 Central Government**

The role of Central Government in Emergency Planning is:

- To give direction to the Sub-national Emergency Planning Teams
- Creation of central guidance on Emergency Planning and Recovery
- Creation and ownership of the National Risk register
- Activation of COBRA in the event of an Major Incident
- Co-ordination of national Emergency reporting

##### **3.2 Resilience and Emergencies Division - North**

Following the closure of the Government Office North East in March 2011, a Northern Resilience Team, was established in Leeds

Its role is to:

- Provide Gateway information to and from Local Resilience Forums
- Provide links between central and local government
- Enable resilient localities
- Ensure Preparedness for high Impact or wide area Emergencies
- Provide government support when emergencies do occur

### 3.3 Northumbria Local Resilience Forum (LRF)

The Role of the LRF is to facilitate multi agency working to fulfil the requirements of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 based on Northumbria police areas. Its objectives are:-

- To facilitate co-operation between local responder organisations such as the Police and Local Authorities
- To facilitate information sharing between local responder organisations
- To assess the risk of emergencies in the Northumbria Local Resilience Forum area
- To facilitate the development of multi-agency emergency plans and arrangements
- To assist local authorities in promoting business continuity in the local community
- To ensure that suitable arrangements are in place to warn, inform and advise the public in the event of emergency

### 3.4 Local arrangements carried out by Sunderland City Council Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Team

The introduction of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (CCA) has lead to a revision of the nationwide and local approach to planning for emergencies and the response to them. The CCA places statutory duties on responders with regard to this, and Local Authorities as top tier Category 1 organisations must:

- Create and Maintain Local plans.
- Contribute to Joint Planning arrangements.
- Provide assistance and full support to Emergency Responders.
- Lead on Recover phase after and Incident.
- Ensure the council has effective business continuity arrangements in place.
- Promote Business Continuity throughout Sunderland.
- Provide welfare and assistance during and after an emergency.
- Provide assistance under mutual aid to other Local Authorities if requested.
- Establish and Assess risks at a local level.
- Contribute to the Contest Counter Terrorism Agenda.
- Train and exercise plans with relevant staff and partners.
- Ensure arrangements are in place to warn and inform public before , during and after an emergency.

## 4 **Current Position**

Following the Joint Services review, and the resulting closure of the Tyne and Wear Emergency Planning unit (TWEPU) in July 2011, the staff from the unit were absorbed into the existing Emergency Planning teams of the five Tyne and Wear authorities to allow the duties carried out by the unit to be maintained. These arrangements also aligned with the government's

recommendation that emergency planning should be delivered at a local level.

The Emergency Planning team within Sunderland is now structured in to the three core duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004

#### 4.1 Emergency Preparedness (Planning)

Emergency Preparedness is a statutory obligation which requires local responders to maintain arrangements in the following areas:

- Cooperation
- Information Sharing
- Local Risk Assessment
- Emergency Planning
- Business Continuity Management
- Communicating with the Public
- Providing advice and assistance on Business Continuity to local Businesses and voluntary organisations

#### 4.2 Response and Recovery

Response and Recovery is the requirement which complements and follows Emergency Preparedness. Emergency Preparedness ensures consistency across responding agencies and further cements the need for detailed preparation for the response and recovery phases of incidents.

The Local Authority has lead responsibility for the recovery phase following major incidents and times of crisis, whilst having a requirement to plan, respond and co-ordinate the recovery and restore the community to normality.

#### 4.3 Business Continuity

Business Continuity Management is a holistic process which identifies potential threats to an organisation and the impacts to business operations that those threats might cause. This approach is embedded through the:-

Management, implementation and review of BC plans in alignment with British Standard 25999 on a rolling programme.

Development and review of a critical functions list giving considerations to environment, security, litigation, finance and reputation.

Facilitation of a Business Continuity Exercise programme to test the plans in place and provide objective assurance of the assumptions made

Active involvement in the procurement process, guarding against supply chain failure

Promotion of Business Continuity within the community providing advice and guidance to Small, and Medium Enterprises.

## 5 Current Commitments

### Plans

The Emergency Planning and Business Continuity Team are responsible for the creation and contribution, to in excess of 50 internal and external plans. Some of these plans are detailed below.

Emergency Response Plan	Pandemic Influenza Plan
Humanitarian Assistance Plan	Rest Centre Plan
Evacuation Plan	Mass Fatalities Plan
Nuclear Flask Train Plan	Tyne & Wear Oil Pollution Plan
LRF Pandemic Influenza	LRF Resilience Telecoms Plan
City Hospitals Emergency Response Plan	Tyne and Wear Rabies Plan
REPPIIR Plan	Sever Weather/Heat wave plan
Emergency Fuel Plan	Regional Mass fatalities Plan
Port of Sunderland Plan	LRF excess Deaths Plan
Corporate Business Continuity Plans	5 Directorate Business Continuity Plans
Sunderland Flood Plan	Critical Functions Lists (Business Continuity)
Recovery Plan	Major Accident Hazard Pipeline Plan
LRF Flood Plan	Airshow Plan
SIAS Event Safety Plan	SRM off site Plan
Sunderland University Incident Plan	Major Accident Hazard Pipeline Plan
Infectious Disease Plans Human / Animal	CBRN Site specific Plan

The Emergency Planning and Business Continuity team are currently involved with:

London 2012 Regional Planning and Exercising	Stadium of Light Special Events planning
Great North Run Planning	HMRC Planning Exercise
Norland Series Exercising	City Hospital Emergency Response Exercise
Olympic Venue Planning	Business Continuity Exercising

Members Resilience training	Business Continuity training (Internal/ External)
Community Resilience	Contest Agenda
CBRN Exercise	Nuclear Flask Train arrangements
Develop Protect and Prepare delivery board	Produce action plan to ensure requirements of protect and prepare are delivered
Widen the scope of crowded places to incorporate other locations	Undertake a local risk assessment to inform the Prevent / Prepare action plan
Under the Prevent theme roll out appropriate training / awareness sessions to staff and members.	Through the CONTEST board continue to monitor progress in Sunderland of the whole CONTEST agenda
Air show Exercise Planning	Rest Centre Training
ST James Park Event exercise group	Project Argus Events

## 6 Conclusion

Emergency Planning and Business Continuity functions of Sunderland City Council will continue to meet its statutory obligation set under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

The Team is now fully resourced to ensure Sunderland City Council can Prepare for, Respond to, and Recover from any major incident or crisis.

The council also has robust business continuity plans in place which will enable the council to carry out its critical functions during any disruptions to its services.

**Contact Officer:** Barry Frost  
Security and Emergency Planning Manager  
0191 561 2643

**Item No. 7**

**COMMUNITY & SAFER CITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**THE NEIGHBOURHOOD HELPLINE**

**REPORT OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CITY SERVICES 6<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2011**

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To provide an overview to the Scrutiny Committee of the work of the Neighbourhood Helpline

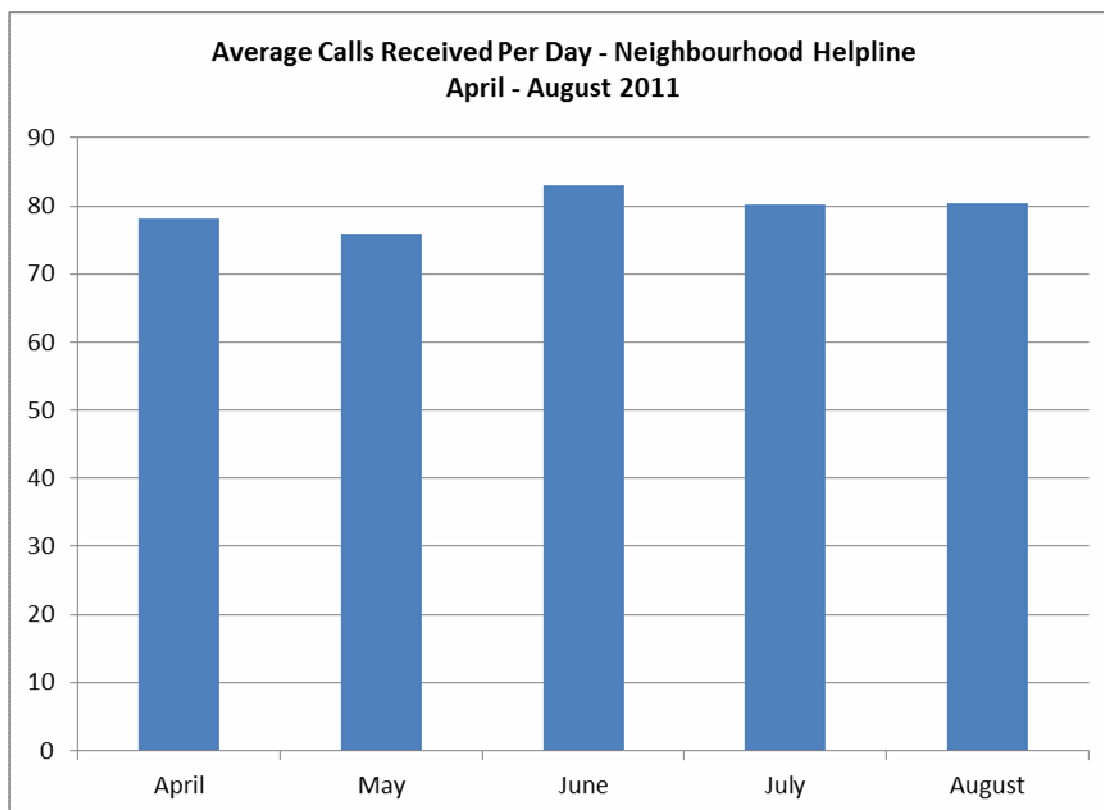
**2. Background**

- 2.1 In June 2006, the Northumbria Partnership launched a Home Office funded initiative, the 101 Non Emergency Helpline. Sunderland was one of 14 partners involved in the initiative along with other Local Authorities and the Police.
- 2.2 In March 2008, the Home Office withdrew the funding for the initiative. Two of the partners, Sunderland and Newcastle decided to continue what had become, a very successful Helpline. On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008, a new 'It's your Service Partnership' was formed and the 101 service transitioned into the 'Neighbourhood Helpline'.
- 2.3 In April 2011, Newcastle City Council reluctantly decided to withdraw from the partnership however due to the popularity of the Helpline, Sunderland City Council committed to the continuation of the service for residents and service users within Sunderland.
- 2.4 Last year, the Committee received a progress report on the work of the Helpline. At that meeting, the Committee recommended that a further report be included on the work programme of the Committee for 2011/12.

**3. Call Volumes and Capacity**

- 3.1 The Neighbourhood Helpline operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with Customer Service Advocates trained to handle a range of enquiries and requests for service.
- 3.2 Since April of this year to the end of August, there have been a total of 11,442 calls to the Helpline, an average of 79.5 calls per day. Call volumes are steadily increasing year on year. As the chart below shows, call volumes are reasonably static month on month although historically, calls do increase over the winter months.





- 3.3 A breakdown of service request types is listed below with dumping of waste being the most popular issue raised during the first five months of this year. The types of service requested are significantly impacted by seasonal variations;

Service Type	Count
Dumping of waste	4598
Maintenance of grass, plantations, plants, trees & water features	1573
Litter, Debris and Leaves (Does not include blocked gullies)	960
Drains (Gullies and Manhole Covers)	610
Street Lights	456
Roads, pavements or surfaces in need of repair	448
Animal fouling	368
Graffiti	320
Noisy neighbours	276
Damaged or faulty street furniture	263
Damage to Public areas, buildings or property	174
Dead Animals	149
Spillages (oil, chemical, solids etc)	146

Animal noise	144
Litter Bins	137
Animal Fouling - Dog Bins	125
All other types	434

- 3.3 All requests for service are logged immediately onto the Customer Contact System and referred to Service Delivery Teams within relevant Departments. For example, all Anti Social Behaviour related requests are referred to the Neighbourhood Relations Team. Anti Social Behaviour Officers respond to the requests and determine the most appropriate course of action.
- 3.4 Reports are also produced directly from the system with data utilised to inform specific courses of action. For example, the Assistant Head of Streetscene takes relevant data along to the Responsible Authority Group, a multi-disciplinary team of officers who discuss issues of mutual concern relating to licensed premises.
- 3.5 For the period in question Helpline Advisors also signposted customers to appropriate agencies as follows;

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Signposts</b>
Northumbria Police	8
RSPCA	6
Ask the Police	5
Sunderland City Council	3
Durham Council	2
NHS DIRECT	1
North Tyneside	1
South Tyneside Council	1
Gas	1
Sunderland Housing Group	1
Northumbrian Water	1

#### **4. Quality of Service**

- 4.1 Quantitative call handling performance at Sunderland is very good with;
- 88% of calls answered and;
  - 89.4% of those calls answered within 60 seconds
- 4.2 In addition, a sample of all calls are quality checked for accuracy and quality of service delivery. Again, sample checks return high levels of compliance.

#### **5. Successes and Future Opportunities**

- 5.1 The Neighbourhood Helpline is a very popular service with residents with high levels of customer satisfaction.

- 5.2 The arrangement allows for the direct dial into emergency services if required to ensure the appropriate level of response is provided, especially during unsociable hours.
- 5.3 Valuable customer intelligence is gained and is being used to inform service delivery and local responsive services. For example, an out of hours noise pilot is due to commence shortly in order to respond to complaints from residents regarding noise nuisance, the majority of which are lodged on Friday and Saturday evenings. The pilot will run for 12 months.
- 5.4 The service is easily scalable and provides the opportunity to expand to other similar service providers and / or out of hour's services in the future.

## **6. Recommendation**

- 6.1 Members are asked to note and comment upon the report.

## **COMMUNITY AND SAFER CITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**6 DECEMBER 2011**

### **WORK PROGRAMME 2011-12**

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

**Strategic Priorities: SP3 – Safer City**

**Corporate Priorities: CIO1: Delivering Customer Focused Services, CIO4: Improving partnership working to deliver 'One City'.**

#### **1. Purpose of the report**

- 1.1 The report attaches, for Members' information, the current work programme for the Committee's work during the 2011-12 Council year.
- 1.2 The work of the Committee in delivering its work programme will support the Council in achieving its Strategic Priorities of Safer City, support delivery of the related themes of the Local Area Agreement, and, through monitoring the performance of the Council's services, help the Council achieve its Corporate Improvement Objectives CIO1 (delivering customer focussed services) and C104 (improving partnership working to deliver 'One City').

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 The work programme is a working document which the Committee can develop throughout the year. The work programme allows Members and officers to maintain an overview of work planned and undertaken during the Council year.

#### **3. Current position**

- 3.1 The work programme reflects discussions that took place at the 7 June 2012 Scrutiny Committee meeting. The current work programme is attached as an appendix to this report.

#### **4. Conclusion**

- 4.1 The work programme developed from the meeting will form a flexible mechanism for managing the work of the Committee in 2011-12.

#### **5 Recommendation**

- 5.1 That Members note the information contained in the work programme and consider the inclusion of proposals for the Committee into the work programme.

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**Contact Officer:** Jim Diamond, Scrutiny Officer  
0191 561 1396,  
james.diamond@sunderland.gov.uk

COMMUNITY AND SAFER CITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2011/2012

REASON FOR INCLUSION	JUNE 07.06.11	JULY 19.07.11	SEPTEMBER 06.9.11	OCTOBER 18.10.11	DECEMBER 06.12.11	JANUARY 10.01.12	FEBRUARY 21.02.12	APRIL 03.04.12
<b>Cabinet-Referrals and Responses</b>			Response to the 10/11 Policy Review – Alcohol, Violence and the Night Time Economy (JD)					
<b>Policy Review</b>	Annual Work Programme and Policy Review 2011/2012 (JD)	Policy Review into Community Cohesion - Scoping Report (JD)	Policy Review into Community Cohesion – Scene Setting (JD)	Policy Review into Community Cohesion - Evidence Gathering (JD)	Policy Review into Community Cohesion – Evidence Gathering (JD)	Policy Review into Community Cohesion – Evidence Gathering (JD)	Policy Review Progress Report (JD)	Policy Review: Final Report (JD)
<b>Performance</b>			Performance Report (Gillian Robinson) Progress on Past Recommendations (JD)		Performance Q2/ Policy Review Progress (Mike Lowe)			Performance Q3/ (Gillian Robinson)
<b>Scrutiny</b>	Food Law Enforcement (Norma Johnston)  Forward Plan (SA)	Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill - Update (Stuart Douglass)  Drug Misuse – Update (Leanne Davis)  Work Programme (SA)  Forward Plan (SA)	Work Programme (SA)  Forward Plan (SA)	Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011  Work Programme (SA)  Forward Plan (SA)	Emergency Planning (Barry Frost)  Neighbourhood Helpline (LSL)  Work Programme (SA)  Forward Plan (SA)	Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011  Work Programme (SA)  Forward Plan (SA)	Work Programme (SA)  Forward Plan (SA)	Work Programme (SA)  Forward Plan (SA)
<b>CCFA/Members items/Petitions</b>								

## COMMUNITY AND SAFER CITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 DECEMBER 2011

### FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS FOR THE PERIOD 1 DECEMBER 2011 – 31 MARCH 2012

#### REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

#### 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide Members with an opportunity to consider those items on the Executive's Forward Plan for the period 1 December 2011 – 31 March 2012 which relate to the Community and Safer City Scrutiny Committee.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 The Council's Forward Plan contains matters which are likely to be the subject of a key decision to be taken by the Executive. The Plan covers a four month period and is prepared and updated on a monthly basis.
- 2.2 Holding the Executive to account is one of the main functions of Scrutiny. One of the ways that this can be achieved is by considering the forthcoming decisions of the Executive (as outlined in the Forward Plan) and deciding whether Scrutiny can add value in advance of a decision being made. This does not negate Non-Executive Members ability to call-in a decision after it has been made.
- 2.3 Members requested that only those items which are under the remit of the Committee be reported to this Committee. The remit of the Committee covers the following themes:-

*Safer Sunderland Strategy; Social Inclusion; Community Safety; Anti Social Behaviour; Domestic Violence; Community Cohesion; Equalities; Food Law Enforcement; Licensing Policy and Regulation; Community Associations; Registrars*

- 2.4 In the event of Members having any queries that cannot be dealt with directly in the meeting, a response will be sought from the relevant Directorate.

#### 3. Recommendation

- 3.1 Members are asked to note that there are no items in the current Forward Plan relating to the remit of this Committee.

#### **4. Background Papers**

- 4.1 There were no background papers used in the preparation of this report.

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Contact Officer: Jim Diamond, Scrutiny Officer  
0191 561 1369  
[James.diamond@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:James.diamond@sunderland.gov.uk)