

## Sunderland City Council

At an EXTRAORDINARY MEETING of SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL held in the CROWTREE LEISURE CENTRE, SUNDERLAND on THURSDAY, 22<sup>nd</sup> JUNE, 2006 at 6.00 p.m.

Present - The Mayor (Councillor T Foster) in the Chair  
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor L. Scott)

Councillor	Allan	E. Gibson	Rolph	Tate
	Ambrose	C. Gofton	J. Scott	P.M. Tye
	Bainbridge	A. Hall	J.B. Scott	P. Walker
	Bell	Higgins	Sleightholme	J.W. Walton
	Blackburn	Lawson	P. Smith	P. Watson
	Bohill	Peter Maddison	Speding	S. Watson
	Carthy	L. Martin	J. Stephenson	L. Williams
	Dixon	Oliver	W.F. Stephenson	Wilson
	D. Forbes	Porthouse	Symonds	Wood
	M. Forbes	Richardson	Tansey	N. Wright

### Also Present:-

Mr. G.W. Allen	Community Spirit
Ms. M. Allen	Community Spirit
Mr. C. Alexander	Sunderland City Council
Mr. J. Allison	Community Spirit
Mr. D. Ambrose	Resident
Mrs. M. Ball	Community Spirit
Mr. R. Ball	Community Spirit
Mr. P. Barrett	Sunderland City Council
Ms. L. Bates	Community Spirit
Mr. K. Beardmore	Sunderland City Council
Mr. B.W. Bell	Community Spirit
Mr. G. Bell	Sunderland City Council
Mr. I.A. Bell	Community Spirit
Ms. M. Blacklock	WBL Provider Network
Miss Jeanette Bolton	Community Spirit
Miss June Bolton	Community Spirit
Mr. G. Brewis	Sunderland Housing Group
Mr. D. Brophy	Business Link Tyne and Wear
Mr. M.G. Browne	Community Spirit

Mr. D. Bulmer  
 Ms. P. Burn  
 Mrs. J. Campion  
 Mr. T. Campion  
 Mr. M. Carr  
 Mr. A. Carton  
 Mrs. J. Carverhill  
 Mr. G.T. Cave  
 Mr. P. Chapman  
 Mrs. S. Charlton  
 Mr. P. Collins  
 Mr. C. Copeland, Senior  
 Mrs. R.E. Copeland  
 Miss K. Cuthbert  
 Mrs. P.A. Dawson  
 Miss D. Dorward  
 Mrs. V. Dowie  
 Mr. S. English  
 Dr. S. Fagbemi  
 Mr. G. Farnworth  
 Mr. J.G. Finn  
 Mr. J. Fisher  
 Mr. G. Fitzgerald  
 Mrs. D. Fitzsimmons  
 Mrs. P. Ford  
 Dr. S. Garfield  
 Mr. Garfield  
 Mr. Garner  
 Mr. D.A. Gray  
 Mr. F.H. Grieves  
 Mr. D. Halley  
 Ms. C. Harries  
 Miss D.F.L. Hauber  
 Miss E. Hindmarsh  
 Ms. L. Hodgson  
 Mr. G. Hollis  
 Mr. S. Hopkirk  
 Mrs. M. Horn  
 Ms. L. Hunt  
 Mr. E.A. Hunter  
 Mr. T. Ivison  
 Mrs. D. James  
 Mr. P. Jasper  
 Mr. I. Kay  
 Mr. B. Keatings  
 Mr. F. Kemp

Sunderland Housing Group  
 Resident  
 Community Spirit  
 Community Spirit  
 Community Spirit  
 Connexions  
 Community Spirit  
 Community Spirit  
 Sunderland City Council  
 Community Spirit  
 Sunderland Housing Group  
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 Sunderland City Council  
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 Sunderland City Council  
 Community Spirit  
 Grand Central  
 University Chaplain  
 Sunderland City Council  
 Community Spirit  
 Sunderland City Council  
 Sunderland City Council  
 Community Spirit  
 Community Spirit  
 Community Spirit  
 Community Spirit  
 NEXUS  
 City Ambassador  
 Community Spirit  
 Resident  
 City Hospitals Sunderland  
 Community Spirit  
 Sunderland City Council  
 Land Securities  
 Sunderland Youth Parliament  
 Northumbria Police  
 Community Spirit  
 Audit Commission  
 Community Spirit  
 Sunderland Housing Group  
 Community Spirit  
 Community Spirit  
 Delegate  
 Community Spirit  
 MP Sunderland South

Mrs. J. Laidler	Community Spirit
Mr. Langan	Resident
Mr. R. Lathan	Community Spirit
Ms. M. Lawrence	Resident
Mrs. L. Lawson	Community Spirit
Mr. R. Lawson	Sunderland Echo
Mrs. S. Lawson	Community Spirit
Ms. Amie Leung	Chinese Community Representative
Mr. C. Lowther	Nissan Motor Manufacturing
Mr. M.P. Lumsdon	Community Spirit
Mr. J. Martin	Resident
Mr. B. Mason	Community Spirit
Mr. D. McCaul	Sunderland Housing Group
Ms. B. McClennan	Community Development Network
Ms. E. McEvoy	Community Spirit
Mr. C. Metcalf	Community Spirit
Mr. R. Morris	Connexions
Mr. C. Mullin	MP
Mr. D. Murray	Sunderland Youth Parliament
Mr. C.C. Neath	Community Spirit
Mr. A.S. Neil	Community Spirit
Ms. S. Old	Resident
Mr. M. Parker	NEXUS
Dr. H. Paterson	Sunderland City Council
Mr. D. Peebles	Sunderland Youth Parliament
Mr. J. Preston	Northumberland, Tyne & Wear NHS Trust
Mr. I. Rafferty	Community Spirit
Mr. R.C. Rayner	Sunderland City Council
Miss M. Riddell	Community Spirit
Mrs. M.J. Roberts	Community Spirit
Mrs. M. Robinson	Community Spirit
Mr. A. Roulestone	University of Sunderland
Mrs. M.E. Scrafton	Community Spirit
Mrs. M.R. Sheeran	Community Spirit
Mr. M. Sheeran	Community Spirit
Mrs. J. Simpson	Community Spirit
Miss A. Smith	Community Spirit
Mr. D. Smith	Sunderland City Council
Mr. A.C. Smithson	Community Spirit
Ms. S. Stanhope	Sunderland City Council
Mr. L. Stoddart	Sunderland City Council
Mr. I. Summat-Smith	Northumbria Probation Service
Mr. B.E. Swansborough	Community Spirit
Mr. S. Taylor	Sunderland Minster and Chair of the Sunderland Partnership
Ms. M. Taubman	Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust

Mr. B. Thompson  
Mr. M. Thurlbeck  
Mrs. C. Tilley  
Mrs. L. Tindill  
Mr. K. Trotter  
Mr. J. Tuckwell  
Mr. A. Waistell  
Mr. D. Walker  
Mr. J. Walker  
Ms. J. Walsh  
Mr. T. Walsh  
Father K. Walton  
Mr. M. Watt  
Ms. S. Wear  
Ms. V. Weir  
Mrs. J. Wharton  
Ms. M. White  
Mr. J. Wicking  
Ms. S. Wilson  
Ms. S. Winfield

Mr. J. Winter  
Mrs. J. Wynne  
Mr. Wynne  
Mr. I. Yeowart  
Ms. P. Young

Sunderland City Council  
North East Chamber of Commerce  
Sunderland City Council  
Community Spirit  
Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service  
Youth Parliament  
Community Spirit  
Sunderland ARC  
Sunderland Housing Group  
Swan Street Centre  
Sunderland City Council  
St. Mary's & St. Peter's Church  
Community Spirit  
Sunderland City Council  
Sunderland City Council  
Community Spirit  
Sunderland Housing Group  
Sunderland Echo  
Sunderland Housing Group  
Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust  
and City Ambassador  
Community Spirit  
Community Spirit  
Community Spirit  
Grand Central  
Sunderland ARC

## **Notice**

The Notice convening the Meeting was read.

## **Welcome by Mayor**

The Mayor, Councillor Tom Foster, welcomed those present to the City Council's fifth Annual State of the City Debate. He welcomed all the citizens and representatives of various organisations and then briefly outlined the programme for the debate. He advised that there would be a number of presentations which would outline the way forward for the City and that the Council would welcome the contributions of those present towards the debate on the theme for the evening, "Thinking bigger for a better future".

## **Declarations of Interest**

Councillors E. Gibson, Higgins and P. Walker declared personal interests in the Debate as Members of the Sunderland Housing Group. Councillors E. Gibson and S. Watson declared personal interests in the debate as a Member of the PCT and as having a family member on the PCT respectively.

## **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors F. Anderson, C. Anderson, Arnott, Bates, Blyth, Charlton, Fletcher, P. Gibson, Grey, G. Hall, J. Heron, R. Heron, Paul Maddison, Mann, T. Martin, M. Smith, Stewart, Tansey, Timmins, Trueman, J. Walker, L. Walton, Whalen, B. Williams and Young.

## **State of the City Debate**

The Debate was facilitated by Kim Inglis. Kim welcomed those present and advised the meeting that the Debate would commence with a number of presentations which would, hopefully, stimulate debate on the debate theme of “Thinking Bigger for a better future”

## **Keynote Speech:**

### **Councillor R. Symonds, Leader of the Council – Thinking Bigger for a Better Future**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Bob Symonds, presented a keynote speech on the Council's aspirations for the future.

He began by advising that the City Council had made the residents of the City its top priority, putting their needs at the heart of the Council's policies

The Council had retained the maximum four-star rating from the Audit Commission - making Sunderland one of the top performing Councils in the country. This had been done despite a more rigorous testing regime – and at an affordable price. The Council tax in Sunderland was still the lowest in Tyne and Wear and the second lowest in the North East.

Bringing jobs and economic prosperity to the City was a priority to help improve the lives of people in the City. In the last three years alone, the international companies attracted to the City had brought three thousand jobs and millions of pounds worth of investment.

Work was now underway to develop Rainton Bridge, where, with private sector partners, the Council had supported the investment of one hundred million pounds to create one of the country's best-connected business parks. Rainton Bridge would attract the next generation of high tech businesses, providing the jobs and careers of the future.

One of the world's leading automotive suppliers – an American - Japanese venture - was soon to announce a further 250 jobs to be located at Rainton Bridge North.

He was of the opinion that the Council's record on job creation was one that many cities in the UK would love to have. The aim was to make sure that as many of these jobs as possible went to local people. To achieve this the Council had announced a range of opportunities to secure funds to give support to local businesses and to projects that help prepare young people for work.

One of the most important achievements during the year; one that would give the young people of Sunderland a real head start - was the unique agreement to locate three Academies across the city. Sunderland was the only city that had persuaded government to allow it to provide a model for secondary schools that was not only right for Sunderland but was also the best model for young people

Schools were continuing to excel, recording the best ever A Level and GCSE exam results during the previous year and receiving praise from Ofsted. He promised to continue to invest in education by modernising and refurbishing nine secondary schools as part of the Building Schools for the Future programme.

The integration of Children's Services, bringing together all agencies and services for children and young people had begun, providing a more holistic approach to meeting the individual needs of all the City's young people. Children's Services was responsible for children across the City. It drew together educational provision, social care for children, support for young offenders and health activities for children.

He maintained that a City that was set to thrive and attract business and visitors must be accessible. The Council had therefore worked very hard to improve access in and around the city with a number of major developments underway.

Nexus had been supported in a hard-won fight for the necessary funding for the development of the central station. The work would cost six million pounds and would transform a key gateway to the City, creating a better facility for passengers and an excellent first impression for visitors. It would at last give Sunderland a station worthy of a growing City.

The Council had supported Grand Central in its bid to operate direct routes to London and had won approval. It was hoped that the new routes would be operational soon. This direct link to the capital and other cities would be a massive boost for business and leisure travellers.

A major step forward had been taken in improving road access with the development of the Southern Radial Route connecting the port with the A19 and bypassing various residential areas. Upon completion the five-kilometer route would redirect traffic from Grangetown and Ryhope and improve access to the east of the City.

Repairing the Queen Alexandra Bridge for the first time in its ninety-seven-year-old history had been an enormous task but he was pleased to say it would be completed and fully operational again later in the year.

Other examples of good news were that a developer was now in place for Farrington Row; at Stadium Park, work was underway on the new Aquatic Centre. This fifty-metre pool and diving facility would be both a fantastic centre for the local community as well as a place to nurture the City's emerging young athletes. As it would be the only pool of its size between Leeds and Edinburgh and would include a state-of-the-art Wellness Centre the 2012 Olympic officials had been persuaded to inspect the site.

He then highlighted further developments within the City such as: -

- the regeneration of Sunnyside and Foyle Street, The Gardens and The Place,
- new bars, cafes and restaurants which were opening,
- good homes being provided all over Sunderland, not just the City centre,
- major schemes such as the Doxford Park housing renewal scheme, and
- the investment of more than five million pounds to improve homes in area renewal schemes in Eppleton, Castletown and Hendon,

In relation to crime and disorder he advised that the City was addressing the issue of safety through engagement with partners and that there had been huge strides made in reducing crime and helping people feel safer; crime had now been reduced by a fifth and was below the national average for the first time ever. Sunderland was now the safest big City in the North.

In the area of social care the City Council had won acclaim from government for its pioneering work in supporting carers. Sunderland was one of only four authorities in the country to win Beacon Status.

Pioneering plans to help older people maintain their independence by supporting them in their own homes were ahead of schedule. The Council had a five-year programme that offered extra care housing provision to help meet the needs of an ever increasing and ageing population.

Helping everyone, no matter what their age, to have a healthy lifestyle was one of the most important jobs the Council had to do. The Council was tackling some of the health inequalities across the City by combining efforts in partnership with the Teaching Primary Care Trust to develop the new Wellness Programme.

This new service had seen Wellness Centres opening across the city providing people with the resources, facilities, and the individual support they needed to change their lifestyle, in a welcoming and user-friendly setting.

The first purpose-built Wellness Centre had opened at Bunny Hill in the north of the City and had already succeeded in helping people develop wellness programmes suitable to their individual needs.

Bunny Hill was to be officially opened during the following week and was to be a beacon of achievement with Sunderland Customer Service Centres. Working with Sunderland Housing Group, the Primary Care Trust and other partners the Council had improved access to hundreds of services such as health, libraries, nurseries, housing and education, by bringing them together under one roof.

Sunderland was famed for its spectacular events and for ensuring that they were accessible to all; from kite flying to ox-roasting; air-displays and the County Show. In addition the Council had secured further funding for major events, with increased investment in the Airshow, the Kite Festival and new events such as the Great Women's Run with three thousand women taking part.

The Sunderland Empire was enjoying record successes and visitors to the Winter Gardens continued to increase.

He indicated that the Council had won status as a Beacon authority for providing culture and sport to hard-to-reach sections of the community.

In terms of attracting visitors, the Council was a shareholder in Newcastle International airport that had just had one of its most successful years ever and also in Beamish Museum, which was celebrating record attendances.

In concluding he referred to the launch during the previous year of the Council's vision to challenge the outdated perceptions of the City and to create a new image. The aspiration was for Sunderland to become the most liveable City in the UK; to be recognised for its balanced quality of life and for its quality of environment. Sunderland was to be the smart choice for people choosing where to live, study, work or visit.

The City had made great strides in promoting its new image and was committed to sustaining a special environment through improving recycling services, adopting a Climate Change Action Plan and being a member of the Carbon Trust, taking practical action to reduce energy consumption and therefore the damaging emissions into the atmosphere.



Councillor Symonds then asserted that it was a testament to the changing image that the City had established an important relationship with the world's most powerful city, Washington DC, this being a major coup for North East England and the UK. The relationship was built upon historic links with Washington Old Hall resulting in a powerful tool to reap mutual benefit for the people of Sunderland and the people of Washington DC through closer friendship and co-operation.

He promised that the City would take full advantage of this unique opportunity to boost economic development, to generate new cultural and educational programmes for the young people and to provide them with a sense of their place in the world as global citizens.

### **Mayor of Washington DC, Mayor Williams**

The meeting then viewed a short film of the Mayor of Washington DC, Mayor Williams, paying a tribute to the City of Sunderland.

### **Vicky Taylor, Director of Human Resources, Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust - Partnerships in Sunderland Our Strengths in the City**

Vicky advised that during her presentation she would be addressing the issues of health in Sunderland and the benefits which could be brought to bear by partners working together.

In this respect Sunderland benefited from sound relationships between statutory bodies and strong partnerships with the voluntary sector, local communities, patients, carers and service users. This resulted in a high quality of services provision with loyal, high quality staff. She felt that there was a good sense of City spirit on which to build and that there was also a high commitment from front line staff to work together.

In terms of health within the North East and in Sunderland it was statistically likely that people would die earlier than the rest of England from heart disease, cancer, respiratory disease and most other causes. In addition, people would suffer from more ill health than elsewhere with a higher rate of heart disease, diabetes, mental health, circulatory disease and most other illnesses.

Vicky then described the underlying causes in Sunderland as being that people were generally worse-off financially as individuals, less likely to be employed, less likely to be skilled and paid less when in work. The region was economically and socially deprived with a high population deprivation factor coupled with low family income and expenditure. She advised that these factors were known to be the most significant determinants of the health of a population.

Turning to the question of what partnership working had delivered, Vicky described some visible developments such as the appearance of Wellness Centres in Sunderland, the upgrading of Leisure Centres, Customer Service Centres, Primary Care Centres and other health improvement measures at grass roots level. She held as an example the Primary Care Centre at Grindon Lane where services were available to enable patients with health problems to be cared for in community settings or at home. There was now an integrated Learning Disability Service and integrated Mental Health teams. In addition, Community health development programmes were being developed at grass-roots level such as well-being workers and Area Healthy City Groups.

In relation to some less visible developments, joint training of generic multi-skilled Health and Social Care workers had been undertaken and work had been done with the Local Authority to attract the future workforce by selling the City as a place to live and work.

Work with school pupils to provide help with career options and a clear entry route into health care jobs had been carried out with additional joint work to support Sunderland residents into employment. Joint working with nursing homes to improve health care standards and listening to and involving patients, carers and service users to address issues and concerns and plan future health developments, were just a few of the improved areas. The city would also be benefiting from a range of Modernisation and Reform Groups to plan and transform health and social care services across the City.

Vicky then provided some key headlines in relation to Health Improvement, these were:

- Health was an issue for the whole population not just Government,
- The general health of our population was improving,
- Smoking cessation targets had been exceeded,
- Between 1997 and 2002 in the under 75's there had been:-
  - a 10% reduction in deaths due to cancer
  - a 27% reduction in deaths due to coronary heart disease

In terms of a health perspective Vicki felt that the challenges we faced were that the health of the people of Sunderland was still significantly poorer than the health of people living in other areas of the UK. We needed to ensure that we provided accessible, high quality health care services which were responsive to the needs of local people and that we needed to find new ways to listen and involve the people of Sunderland in planning and decision-making.

She advised that partnership working had paid off by responding effectively to the impact of organisational changes in both health and social care, these changes included the:-

- North East NHS SHA,
- Formation of Northumberland, Tyne & Wear NHS Trust,
- Changes to PCT management teams South of Tyne, and

- Development of Adult Services and Children's Services.

In closing she advised that strong partnership working was critical to improving services for the people of Sunderland and that a partnership approach had delivered many improvements over recent years although there was still much to do. Changes in health and social care management arrangements and management systems would act as a catalyst to maintain and develop partnership working at all levels.

### **John Hays, Managing Director of Hays Travel - A Business Perspective**

John Hays began by describing the early roots of his business in Sunderland. He dispelled the misconception that people needed to be wealthy in order to start their own business and outlined the modest start up of his business in the rear of his mother's Ladybird Shop in Vine Place. His father had built a counter for him from second hand timber and a section of garden trellis had been used to provide a screen between the two businesses.

From these humble roots his travel agency business, Hays Travel, had grown into the ABTA's largest independently owned travel agent with sales of £250 million per annum and a workforce of over 600 staff; 175 of whom were based at the Company's Head Office which was still situate in Vine Place.

John then outlined the importance of encouraging young people to embark on business start ups and the importance of investing in new businesses which he described as being part of the community. Indeed all branches of Hays Travel were allocated £500 to invest in local worthy causes. These had included such causes as the Yellow Brick Road and a truancy scheme targeting tots, "Every School Day Counts". This latter scheme had helped to reduce truancy by 16%.

In closing John advised that, in his opinion, Sunderland was a great place to live and work. The City Council was supportive of businesses and this had gone a long way to helping his firm to grow to be one of the Sunday Times Best 100 Companies to work for in 2006. Only two North Eastern businesses had been included in the top 100 and these were Hays Travel and SCS – both Sunderland firms!

### **Canon Stephen Taylor, Chair of the Sunderland Partnership**

Canon Taylor expressed his delight to be able to share some of the key achievements of the Sunderland Partnership over the previous year and also to take the opportunity to look ahead in partnership to shape the City's future.

He advised that the Sunderland Partnership continued to bring together public, private and voluntary community sector organisations to promote the social, economic and environmental success of Sunderland. In 2004 the Sunderland Strategy was published and set out our eight key priorities to 2007. Sunderland Partnership had become one of the few green rated Local Strategic Partnerships in the region and early this year it had hosted a 'best practice' event at the Stadium of Light with Government Office.

Structures and strategies had been designed to bring about an equality of opportunity within Sunderland and to try to ensure that Sunderland was not disadvantaged compared to other areas.

Each of the priorities had been worked on by a thematic partnership. Through a series of jointly developed and agreed action plans, partners had been working together to tackle and overcome problems, encourage improvement and ultimately achieve success for the benefit of all residents. This strategy had been put into practice by a number of thematic partnerships working together as part of the Sunderland Partnership. Each partnership had a range of networks bringing together many organisations. Significant progress had been made over the last few years and regeneration programmes had started to revitalise some of the more deprived neighbourhoods.

The Pupils First Project had been hugely successful raising educational attainment in the initial cohort of 8 schools to which a further 12 were to be added in the coming year. He advised that he had been delighted to see first hand the real difference that Partnership working could make to the lives of individual young people.

Sunderland was now the safest city in the North of England and he felt that was a tribute to the work of the Safer Sunderland Partnership, the police could do so much to tackle crime themselves but cross cutting work with other partners could bring real added value, working with partners in education, health and the local authority to name but a few.

Whilst Sunderland was the safest City in the north and had experienced excellent reductions with recorded crime falling 26% since 2002, this was not mirrored in how safe people felt. To combat this TV screens across the City were being used as a tool to address this. The Partnership was looking to increase the number of screens in the City and make the facility available to other thematic partnerships to inform the public of their key messages.

In the previous year the Partnership Board had agreed that the skill shortages within the construction industry was one of the main issues to be addressed within Sunderland given that predictions show Sunderland would experience a great deal of new build and renovation within the next decade through the work of Sunderland ARC, Sunderland Housing Group, the building schools for the future agenda and the NHS proposals.

A Construction Sub Group had been established to manage the Partnership's response to the challenge and present proposals to establish an Adult Construction Skills Training programme. The first intake of 25 trainees had started their programme and the second intake was to commence shortly.

Partners had also recently agreed to work towards Sunderland becoming a Fair Trade City by March 2007. The College had already been a registered Fair Trade organisation and the University had been well on its way. Canon Taylor encouraged everyone present representing organisations to consider serving fairly traded goods within their organisations. He advised that Peter Chapman from the Council was leading the Fair- Trade City bid.

In closing, he hoped that he had shown how the continued partnership working in the City was adding value to the work of individual organisations. He reminded the meeting that over the course of the speeches they had heard how the Partners together are achieving those targets set out in the Sunderland Strategy.

He added that the processes by which community strategies were produced were as important as the strategies themselves involving the people of Sunderland in identifying the main issues of concern and opportunities for the City. He advised that, building on work undertaken to engage with the community in drafting the last strategy document, the Partnership would shortly be embarking on a number of consultation events, such as discussion workshops, meetings and local neighbourhood events to start thinking about the types of issues and proposals that could form the vision for Sunderland for the next three years. The aim was to provide a broad framework of what is wished to achieve and to encourage local people, community groups and the public and private sectors to get involved and share their ambitions for the City.

Canon Taylor then invited everyone to participate in those consultations to help to make Sunderland a City that all could be truly proud of.

### **Sunderland In a New Light**

Attendees at the Debate then viewed a five minute promotional DVD prepared in connection with the City's New Image Strategy.

Kim then thanked the speakers for their presentations and invited them to form a panel to discuss any issues raised during the open debate.

### **Debate**

Mrs. J. Curran, resident, indicated that the TPCT was moving to private medicare in Washington, a petition had been signed by residents protesting at the lack of doctors at

The Galleries. She felt that the Trust was forcing through privatisation by the use of its tendering procedures which she felt to be unnecessary.

Vicky Taylor responded that it was important to say that it was correct that the TPCT had not made any firm decisions yet as only the process had been decided upon. A decision was yet to be made as to who the new providers would be and the decision could well be that no change would be made.

Amie Leung, a member of the Chinese Women's Club wondered if it was possible to have the Metro extended to Washington along the site of the old railway line. She felt this would attract more economic activity as residents of Washington would be more able to travel to Sunderland shopping centre. She also asked if more investment was to be made into the creation of more cycleways. In addition, she requested more information on the City's new agreement with Washington DC.

The Leader responded that, unfortunately, the days of large Government investment into Metro rail extensions were gone and, therefore, Nexus was now looking at the introduction of a new generation of super tram routes rather than Metro extensions. In relation to cycleways he reminded the meeting of the C 2 C route to the west coast and the considerable amount of work to create cycleways within the City. In relation to links to Washington DC he advised that there were five chapters to the agreement to build on which would provide tremendous opportunities for the City. The agreement was for an initial five years. He also advised that the old railway line from Sunderland to Washington no longer existed in its entirety with stretches having been used to construct the A1231 dual carriageway and the Hylton Business Park.

Mr. George Allen, Community Spirit, commented that the City's international aspirations were laudable however he had met a family on holiday in Rome who had not known where Sunderland was. He also cited a reference to Seaham Hall being recorded as being on the outskirts of Newcastle and wondered how such misconceptions of Sunderland could be overcome.

The Leader advised that the City was not in rivalry with Newcastle and that Wearsiders should be proud of the advances made by the City. He accepted Mr. Allen's comments saying that Sunderland had in the past been in the shadow and had sometimes been overlooked. However new strategies were in place such as the Image Strategy and progress was now being made with Sunderland being recognised as the biggest City between Edinburgh and Leeds. He then promised that the City Council would continue to promote the City wherever it could in partnership with other agencies.

Canon Taylor also conceded that Sunderland had suffered from a poor reputation nationally however this was now historical and events were changing. The City now boasted events such as the Great Women's Run and the reputation of the Empire was attracting large numbers from across the region. He agreed that many people had no idea about the wonderful coastline and river of the City nor its green nature and other natural assets.

Mr. Jerry Finn of the Marine Activities Centre and Lifeboat Centre commented that Sunderland was now well known in the sailing world and highly regarded. Two major water events were now staged at Sunderland, however the beach at Roker and Seaburn was often let down by the amount of debris which floated down river. He wondered if the Council's Engineers could consider the erection of a barrier on the river to collect the debris in order that it could be swept onto the banks of the river near Alexandra Bridge. He felt this would go a long way to assist in keeping the bridges and harbour area clear.

The Chief Executive advised that he would put the relevant Officers in touch with Mr. Finn in order to follow up on the practicality of this proposal.

Mrs. Copeland of the Citizens Panel and Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator, Southwick commented on the number of private landlords and tenants who dumped rubbish in the back lanes of Southwick. She advised that the Council was being called out on a daily basis and wished to see landlords fined for this activity.

The Leader advised Mrs. Copeland that he would speak with her after the meeting and undertook to pass on details to the Anti-Social Behaviour Team.

David Halley, a resident of Doxford Park for 36 years enquired why it was to take 10 years to rebuild Doxford Park. He commented that only 700 houses were to be built and was of the opinion that if a private developer had been doing the work this would have been undertaken within 12 months.

The Leader advised that the question was really one to be answered by the Sunderland Housing Group but he understood that the work was being phased as the Housing Group had a number of ongoing renewal strategies throughout the City within areas that fit their criteria.

Grant Hollis of the Youth Parliament advised the debate that the Youth State of the City Debate had been held recently and that four key messages had emerged for the Council. The first was in relation to mosquito ultrasonic systems which emitted high pitched noise which were only audible to persons under 25. He asked the Council to help to deter usage of the devices and the look at other methods of deterring groups of youths from gathering. The second message had to do with youth opportunity with the Council being requested to continue to support young people engaged in positive activities. The third message was to request the Council to continue to consult with the Youth Parliament and the last message was in relation to changes in discount for young people in education which the Parliament felt might mean that young people could not afford to attend College in future years.

The Leader advised that the Council would continue to give funding to the Youth Parliament so that it would continue to have a meaningful role and advised that the Council would consider the outcomes from the Youth State of the City Debate. In addition Canon Taylor advised that the Sunderland Partnership had been in touch with Dr. H. Paterson, the Director of Children's Services, advising that the Partnership wished to involve more young people in shaping the Sunderland Strategy.

Mrs. D. Fitzsimmons, Community Spirit, described Newcastle as a retail metropolis as compared to Sunderland. She complained that Sunderland Town Centre contained too many "pound" shops and suggested that Sunderland needed better quality shops. She referred to the seafront as the City's greatest asset but suggested that money was needed to undertake improvements.

The Leader responded that he was conscious of the quality of shops on offer in the City and advised that the quality was improving. He reminded the meeting that the ARC was in negotiations to improve the Holmeside triangle and that this venture would soon be coming to fruition. He reminded the meeting of various quality retail outlets which had established themselves in the City in recent years and expressed his opinion that success breeds success. Turning to the seafront he agreed that it was a wonderful asset for the City and he explained that improvements were ongoing, citing the purchase of additional planters and the recent refurbishment of the toilets. He felt that the Council was making steady progress in improving the area.

Councillor Allan referred to "Every School Day Counts" as mentioned in John Hays presentation. He referred to parents taking children out of school in order to take holidays during off peak periods and asked what the industry could do to encourage young families to take holidays during school holidays.

John Hays responded that this was a perennial problem and depended on supply and demand at peak dates. He advised that the Every School Day Counts scheme tried to impress upon parents how important it was to take holidays during school holidays and described how the scheme worked to offer discounts for parents taking holidays during school holiday periods. He advised that there was no complete solution, however the Government was considering changing term times in order to stagger holiday periods which might alleviate the situation.

Susan Lawson of Hetton advised the meeting that she was a mother of three with two grandchildren and that she felt that the Council was failing them by closing swimming baths and not providing enough easy access buses for pushchairs. She felt that Hetton Baths should be promoted because as a single parent she could not get into Sunderland easily. She also referred to anti-social behaviour with motorcycles and advised that she had rang the Police five times in relation to a possible drug dealer but had never received a call back.



The Leader advised that the problem with Hetton Baths was that the building was no longer structurally sound. He advised that the Council was currently planning to build three new swimming pools one of which would be the new 50 metre pool at Stadium Park. There would also be a South side pool and a Coalfields facility. There was a study due in the summer and the Olympic pool would be completed by early 2008. In relation to buses he advised that this was a problem since deregulation which had allowed commercial ventures to withdraw services which were no longer profitable. He advised that the Council together with partners was looking at the problem on a regional basis.

Susan Lawson advised that new fences needed to be erected in Hetton to curtail motorcycle riding and the Leader undertook to meet her after the Debate in order to take details of her complaint.

Danny McCaul of Sunderland Housing Group suggested that the Council should consider damming the River Wear west of Pallion Refitting Yard and turn the upper section of the river past South Hylton into a watersports centre similar to the one in Nottingham.

The Leader agreed that the proposal was an interesting one but advised that, as with every proposal, such questions were always determined by the availability of finance. He advised that unfortunately everything could not be achieved overnight. He then pointed to recent developments on the riverside such as the Fish Quay, St. Peter's Wharf and the Marina and agreed that there were huge opportunities for further development.

Joe Allison of Community Spirit advised that he lived near Rainton Bridge and asked what the Council was going to do about the road system at Rainton Bridge.

Ged Fitzgerald advised that the plans currently in place did not, to date, assume a huge infrastructure change. He advised that there had been a difference of opinion with the Highways Agency and that he and the Leader of the Council were to meet with the appropriate Minister.

Malcolm Brown, Community Spirit, advised that he lived near the Hospital in Chester Road and referred to the various parking schemes being undertaken by the Council. He asked what the Hospital was doing to improve the parking situation and whether or not it would be proceeding to build a multi-storey car park.

Vicky Taylor advised that there were a number of issues around the site. The Health Service was trying to provide more services in patients' homes and she agreed to take further details from Mr. Brown and refer them to colleagues at the Hospital.

Lorraine Bates, Community Spirit, enquired whether the new swimming pools would be built with disabled children in mind.

The Leader advised that the new facilities would indeed be designed and built for use by the whole community.

Ms. D. Hauber, Community Spirit, referred to the Council's poor record in relation to recycling and wondered whether the Council would be extending its recycling service into a wider scheme.

The Leader advised that the Council had only been recycling up to 2% of its rubbish four years ago but was now approaching 21% and still improving. In relation to widening the scheme, he advised that at the moment there were no commercial ventures prepared to take on materials such as plastics. He expressed his wish that more people would sign up to and use the present service.

Mrs. M. Ball, Community Spirit, enquired whether the Council would develop a camping and caravan site at Seaburn.

The Leader advised that the Council was currently considering every opportunity for development of the seafront however he did wonder whether local residents would be happy with such a proposal.

Deborah Fitzsimmons, Community Spirit, advised that there had been camping on a site near Morrisons Supermarket during the previous summer however the site had not been permanent.

Pat Burn, a City resident, commented that everyone seemed to grumble these days however, so far as she was concerned, the residents of Sunderland had never had better education, health facilities and leisure facilities, etc. She pointed to the fact that many young people were leaving Sunderland because of a lack of job opportunities and wondered what was being done in Sunderland to alleviate this problem.

John Hays agreed with the sentiments expressed and advised that in his view the people of Sunderland needed to show more aspiration. The Council was doing everything it could to engage the business community and the young people of the City. The Leader of the Council added that the Council was working closely with the Universities in relation to incubator units for small business start ups. Ged Fitzgerald also advised that the Council was supporting an initiative by Northern Rock to issue a North East bond, the proceeds of which would support new businesses.

Councillor Porthouse addressed a question to John Hays asking what the travel industry was doing to attract people to Sunderland.

John Hays advised that his business mainly involved arranging holidays for people to travel away from Sunderland however he did advise that on a recent visit to China he had seen a lot of potential for bringing Chinese people to the UK for holidays. He referred to good links through the University which had been forged with China.

John Martin, resident wondered whether the Council would be televising Council meetings in order to stimulate more interest in local democracy.

The Leader of the Council advised that the Council was considering the question of televising Council meetings in relation to e-democracy. Ged Fitzgerald advised that all meetings of the Council were public and that all residents were welcome to come to the Council Chamber to listen to meetings. In addition, Stephen Taylor advised that the Partnership's digital enterprise involved a national bid to bring increased awareness to Sunderland.

Jamie Tuckwell, Youth Parliament enquired whether there were any plans to support young people in education in terms of concessionary travel.

The Leader advised that the Council was aware of the problems with the Teen Travel scheme but that it was hoped to have the problems sorted out by the summer when the current scheme ends.

Ged Fitzgerald added that the LSC indirectly subsidised travel for persons in further education.

Chaplain Dr. Fagbemi, University Chaplain, commented that it was great to hear about the agreement with Washington DC and agreed that it would spread the name of Sunderland across the world. He advised that the University had also built an international reputation and was attracting students from across the world to study in the City. He then asked how could the City make the students feel more welcome when they are here. Many students didn't feel welcome and some of them were subject to racist attack.

Canon Taylor advised that the Sunderland Partnership took the problem very seriously and was setting up a special group to examine it. He advised that work was well underway and that the Partnership would be launching the Inclusive Communities Partnership in October. This Partnership would fully engage with the communities described by Dr. Fagbemi.

Mr. D. Halley, resident, asked when would the Council get to grips with street vermin such as seagulls and pigeons.

The Leader of the Council responded that a lot of the problem was caused by people feeding the pigeons and seagulls. He advised that the Council did try to control the problem however people often became outraged if the birds were culled and the problem was a very emotive one. He did advise that gull populations were lower this year.

The Mayor then closed the Debate and thanked the delegates for their attendance and for the healthy level of debate. He then moved and it was agreed that the contents of the Debate would be circulated to partner agencies and would be taken into account by the Leader in proposing the budget and policy framework to Council for the coming year.

(Signed) COUNCILLOR T FOSTER,  
Mayor.

## THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN (CYPP)

### Report of the Director of Children's Services

#### 1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To present the Cabinet with the final draft of the Children and Young People's Plan 2006-2009.

#### 2. Description of decision (Recommendations)

2.1 Cabinet is asked to consider and approve the plan.

#### 3. Background and Context.

3.1 The CYPP will be the single, strategic, overarching plan for all services for children and young people in the area provided by the local authority and all relevant partners. The plan will cover services for all those in the area aged 0-19, those over 19 receiving services, including leaving care, and those over 19 and under 25 with learning difficulties. The local authority has the duty to prepare the plan, jointly with all relevant partners.

3.2 The Strategic Planning Group, a sub-group of the Children's Trust Steering Group has co-ordinated the preparation of the plan. Membership of this group is made up of Children's Services, TPCT, Youth Offending Service, Community and Cultural Services, Chief Executives Directorate, and Development and Regeneration Directorate.

3.3 A planning network was created based on the local arrangements put in place in developing a Children's Trust, cross-referenced against the government guidance issued in relation to preparing the plan, which outlines the partners who should be engaged in the process. A programme of consultation with this group has taken place during the process of preparing the plan.

#### 4 Current Position

4.1 This is the first CYPP we have been required to produce. The first plan must be in place by 1 April 2006. *['Excellent' local authorities are exempt from submitting a plan for April 2006 but it has been agreed that it is good practice for a Sunderland Children and Young People Plan to be prepared.]*

4.2 The Plan will be for 3 years, reviewed and updated on a yearly basis.

4.3 The work involved in preparing the plan will link closely to the process of preparing for Joint Area Review (JAR). The quality of the data, analysis and consultation leading up to the CYPP, and effectiveness of its implementation will be considered carefully by inspectors during the JAR.

4.4 The main format of the plan will be web based, and development work is underway on a Children's Trust website.

4.5 To supplement this an executive summary, and an accessible children and young people's version will be produced in hard copy.

## **5 Reasons for the decision.**

5.1 This plan is presented for the approval of Cabinet.

## **6 Alternative options**

6.1 None identified.

## **7 Relevant considerations/ consultations**

7.1 The Involving Children Task Group had the responsibility for ensuring the involvement of children and young people in the preparation of the plan. This group commissioned a working group of practitioners to carry out the work. A programme of consultation with this group has taken place during the process of preparing the plan.

7.2 Consultation has taken place throughout the process of preparing the plan. A Planning Network was established with representatives from all agencies providing services to children and young people in the city. This network met regularly for information sharing and consultation sessions, and has been involved in commenting on drafts of the plan as it developed. The Children's Trust Steering Group, Executive Group and Board have also been involved in a consultation exercise of the plan.

## **8 Glossary**

8.1 The meaning of all acronyms are spelt out clearly within the CYPP with a glossary attached as an appendix to the plan.

## **9 List of appendices**

9.1 Sunderland Children and Young People's Plan 2006-2009 Final Draft

## **10 Background Papers**

10.1 The background paper used in the preparation of the CYPP is:

- Children's Trusts: leadership, co-operation, planning and safeguarding, Guidance on the Children and Young People's Plan.

This document is one of a suite of five issued from Government which gives guidance on children's trust governance and strategic planning, and on the cross cutting issue of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. All five documents are accessible through <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk>

## REPORT OF THE CABINET

21<sup>ST</sup> JUNE, 2006

The following matter was referred to the Planning and Highways Committee for advice and consideration. The Committee reports and recommends as follows:-

PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE – 23<sup>RD</sup> JUNE, 2006

Cabinet Report No.	Matter
No. 4 Hetton Downs Area Action Plan: Report on Options and Issues for Consultation	The Committee agreed to support the recommendation that the report on Options and Issues be approved as the basis of public consultation to identify a preferred option to be taken forward in the preparation of an Area Action Plan.

