






THE CABINET

AGENDA

Meeting to be held in the Civic Centre (Committee Room No. 1) on Wednesday, 5 October, 2011 at 2.00 p.m.

Part I

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Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006

The reports contained in Part II of the Agenda are not for publication as the Cabinet is considered likely to exclude the public during consideration thereof as they contain information relating to any individual, which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual, the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) and to consultations or negotiations in connection with labour relations matters arising between the Authority and employees of the Authority (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part I, Paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4).

Part II

17. **Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on 22 September 2011 Part II** 245

(Copy herewith).

18. **Report of the Meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 22 September 2011 Part II** 253

(For approval of the recommendations on executive functions and to note the remaining decisions).

Denotes Key Decision.

- * **Denotes Rule 15 Notice issues – item which is a key decision which is not included in the Forward Plan.**

ELAINE WAUGH
Head of Law and Governance

Civic Centre
SUNDERLAND

27 September 2011

CABINET MEETING – 5 OCTOBER 2011
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

MINUTES, PART I

Author(s):

Head of Law and Governance

Purpose of Report:

Presents the minutes of the last meeting held on 22 September 2011 Part I.

Action Required:

To confirm the minutes as a correct record.

At a meeting of the CABINET held in the CIVIC CENTRE (COMMITTEE ROOM NO. 1) on Wednesday 22 September 2011 at 2.00 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Trueman in the Chair

Councillors Blackburn, Gofton, Kelly, P. Smith, Speding and T. Wright

Also present:-

Councillor Wood.

Part I

Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 7 September 2011, Part I (copy circulated) were submitted.

(For copy report - see original minutes).

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Receipt of Declarations of Interest

The following Councillors declared personal interests in the reports below as Members of the bodies indicated:-

Item 6 – Establishment of a Local Authority Owned Company: Assignment of Contracts	Councillors Charlton, Gofton, P. Smith, Trueman and T. Wright.	Local Government Pension Scheme
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Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors Allan, Charlton and P. Watson.

Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006

At the instance of the Chairman, it was:-

2. RESOLVED that in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 the public be excluded during consideration of the remaining business as it was considered to involve a likely disclosure of information relating to any individual, which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual, the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information), to consultations or negotiations in connection with labour relations matters arising between the Authority and employees of the Authority and in respect of which a claim to professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part I, Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5).

(Signed) H. TRUEMAN,
Chairman.

Note:-

The above minutes comprise only those relating to items during which the meeting was open to the public.

Additional minutes in respect of other items are included in Part II.

CABINET MEETING – 5 OCTOBER 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

Report of the meeting of the Personnel Committee, Part I held on 22nd September 2011

Author(s):

Head of Law and Governance

Purpose of Report:

Presents the report of the meeting of Personnel Committee, Part I

Action Required:

The Cabinet is requested to note the report of the meeting held on 22nd September 2011

At a meeting of the PERSONNEL COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on THURSDAY, 22nd SEPTEMBER, 2011 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Errington in the Chair

Councillors Gofton, Mordey, D. Trueman, H. Trueman, A. Wilson and Wood.

Part I

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors D. Smith, Speding, P. Watson and S. Watson.

Declarations of Interest

The following Councillor declared a personal interest in the report below as a Member of the body indicated:-

Item 5 – Request for Flexible Retirement	Councillor Mordey	Regional Pensions Committee
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Report of the Meeting of the Personnel Committee, Part I

The report of the meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 25th August, 2011 Part I (copy circulated) was submitted and consideration given thereto.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

1. RESOLVED that the report of the meeting be noted, confirmed and signed as a correct record subject to the inclusion of apologies for absence from Councillors Gofton and Wood.

Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation Order) 2006

At the instance of the Chairman, it was:-

2. RESOLVED that in accordance with Section 100(A)4 of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded during consideration of the remaining business as it is considered to involve a likely disclosure of exempt information relating to an individual or information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual or information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations matters arising between the Authority and its employees (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A, Part I, Paragraphs 1, 2 and 4).

(Signed) D. ERRINGTON,
Chairman.

Note:-

The above minutes comprise only those relating to items during which the meeting was open to the public.

Additional minutes in respect of other items are included in Part II.

CABINET MEETING – 5 OCTOBER 2011 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I	
Title of Report: EUROCITIES – Conference and Annual General Meeting	
Author(s): Chief Executive	
Purpose of Report: This report seeks authorisation for the Cabinet Secretary to attend the EUROCITIES Conference and Annual General Meeting	
Description of Decision: Cabinet is requested to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Authorise attendance at the Conference and Annual General Meeting from 2 - 5 November and the consequential travel of the Cabinet Secretary to Genoa, Italy (ii) Note the progress being made and benefits generated through Eurocities membership 	
Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? *Yes	
If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework	
Suggested reason(s) for Decision: It is important that the City Council engages effectively within the network to identify and pursue the opportunities EUROCITIES can open up for Sunderland, and that Sunderland continues to demonstrate its commitment to be an active partner in order to be able to maximise the benefits of those opportunities for the city. The theme of the 2011 Conference and AGM is in line with current priorities for the City Council and wider Sunderland Partnership objectives. The Conference programme will provide an opportunity to share experience in key areas and take part in discussions about the Work Programme for the network for 2012.	
Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected: A decision could be taken not to take part in the Conference and AGM. This would send a negative message about the City's commitment to participation in EUROCITIES and mean that key opportunities to develop and share good practice in important policy areas as well as influence the future Work Programme of the network would be lost.	
Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution? No	Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Management
Is it included in the Forward Plan? No	

EUROCITIES – CONFERENCE AND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE****1.0 Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 This report seeks authorisation for attendance at the EUROCITIES Conference and Annual General Meeting.

2.0 Description of Decision

- 2.1 Cabinet is requested to:
- i) Authorise attendance at the Conference and Annual General Meeting from 2 - 5 November and the consequential travel of the Cabinet Secretary to Genoa, Italy
 - ii) Note the progress being made and benefits generated through Eurocities membership

3.0 Background

- 3.1 Created in 1986, EUROCITIES is the network of major European cities. Membership is open to cities which are recognised as important regional centres with an international dimension, and with at least 250,000 inhabitants. EUROCITIES works along three complementary strands of activities: networking to share and improve knowledge, lobbying to develop and influence policies, and campaigning to raise public awareness.
- 3.2 Sunderland City Council was accepted into the EUROCITIES network at the Annual General Meeting in November 2007. This was the subject of a report to Cabinet in October 2007, giving background information on the network itself, and information on the three strands of activities referred to in paragraph 3.1 above. This report also outlined how these activities are taken forward through six Forums focused on a series of thematic areas: Culture, Economic Development, Environment, Knowledge Society, Mobility, and Social Affairs.
- 3.3 The theme of the 2011 annual conference is 'Planning for People'. The conference will underline the importance for city planners and politicians of finding innovative ways to promote social cohesion and prosperity through urban regeneration. Discussions will address the challenges and opportunities of the participative democracy process, in terms of planning with people as opposed to planning for people.
- 3.4 The conference will provide an opportunity to share experience on approaches used. As host city, Genoa will bring its own experience in this area to the debate, and will invite other cities to contribute their experiences. This will be achieved through a series of panel debates, keynote speeches and a political Mayors' Debate, as well as technical visits.
- 3.5 Particular examples of good practice will also be highlighted through the annual Awards which are made by EUROCITIES under three headings – innovation, participation and co-operation. The theme for the awards is linked to the theme for the Conference and AGM.

4.0 Current Position

- 4.1 EUROCITIES activity within the City Council to date has been concentrated on three of the six Forum areas, which were prioritised initially: Economic Development, Knowledge Society, and Environment.
- 4.2 Within the Economic Development Forum, officers have continued to participate in a range of Working Groups linked to City Council priorities. This has provided an opportunity to share experience on approaches to supporting the Creative Industries which, taking the broader definition used by many European cities that also encompasses Software and Technology, relates to two key sectors within the city's Economic Master Plan. Through the Forum's Cohesion Working Group, EUROCITIES has lobbied to ensure that urban priorities are reflected in the development of the European Commission's budget policy for 2014-20 and the structural funds in particular. These discussions will intensify in the next three years. Membership of the Cohesion Working Group enables the council to contribute to EUROCITIES' lobbying on relevant aspects of policy such as the structural funds regulations. It also will inform the City Council's position in responding to government consultations on European funding.
- 4.3 Officers also started work during 2011 on the Cascade project, which is led by EUROCITIES. Cascade brings together 18 partner cities from 11 European countries including Gateshead, Birmingham, and Edinburgh from within the UK alongside Sunderland. The project is part-funded under the EU's Intelligent Energy Europe Programme and is the first trans-national project which Sunderland has been successful in securing funding for through its membership of the network. The project is focused on accelerating the implementation of partner cities' sustainable energy action plans under 3 key themes: urban planning, renewable energy sources and distributed energy generation, and energy in urban transport. Sunderland's primary role will focus on the energy in urban transport theme which links closely to the city's priority, as a major centre for the European automotive industry and development of electric vehicles, of developing low carbon transport infrastructure.
- 4.4 As part of the Cascade project, Sunderland will be peer-reviewed in Spring 2012 on its experience with installing electric vehicle charging points and its approach to developing and implementing low carbon urban transport initiatives. The Peer Learning Event is expected to: support Sunderland in addressing knowledge gaps on the integration of smart card technology with electric charging points and public transport; build know-how, capacity and experience in developing the low carbon infrastructure across the City; and develop skills and employment opportunities in the low carbon economy.
- 4.5 Under the Environment Forum, the City Council is a signatory to the EUROCITIES Declaration on Climate Change which complements the EU's Covenant of Mayors to which the authority is also a signatory. Participation in the Cascade project is expected to contribute towards the city's Sustainable Energy Action Plan, which is a requirement linked to the EU Covenant of Mayors. Ongoing liaison with the network's Environment policy officers also provides the city with additional opportunities to share good practice in this field and to influence related policies at national and European level.

- 4.6 Within the Knowledge Society Forum, officers have continued to participate in a range of Working Groups. There has been a realignment of the working groups for 2011/12. E-Inclusion has continued as a Working Group and Sunderland has been invited to become Vice-Chair of this group, an indication of the extent to which Sunderland has now come to be viewed as a valuable partner within the network. Two new Working Groups have also been formed that are in line with the strategic direction of the City Council: Open Data, and Smart Cities. Sunderland's approach to Open Data has already been the subject of a presentation to the Open Data Working Group,
- 4.7 Officers continue to explore opportunities for support through EU trans-national programmes related to ICT to develop and exchange good practice, or to pilot initiatives linked to the identified Working Group areas. This includes programmes such as the 7th Framework Regions Programme which will have a call for proposals in 2012. Participation within the Knowledge Society Forum also provides the opportunity to build knowledge relating to potential future opportunities, such as the Horizon 2020 funding framework which is due to commence in 2014.
- 4.8 An additional opportunity, linked to the European Year of Volunteering in 2011, has also been created through engagement in EUROCITIES. Sunderland was successful as a partner in an EU funded project, 'Madrid en Red', supported through the Europe for Citizens Programme and led by a volunteer organisation in Madrid. The project, which is in line with the city's Volunteering Strategy, will focus attention on different issues related to volunteering through a series of events during its lifetime. A delegation led by Sunderland City Council of voluntary and community representatives, mainly young people aged 18-30, took part in the first event which took place in March. This concentrated on youth volunteering and how more young people can be encouraged to volunteer.
- 4.9 Participation in the 'Madrid en Red' project, as the only UK partner, provides Sunderland with an opportunity to showcase examples of volunteering, citizenship and local decision-making. Volunteer delegates, from a range of organisations across the city, who attend events will contribute their experiences and the lessons learned will then be shared at a local level with voluntary and community networks throughout the city and region.
- 4.9 A fuller report on activity within EUROCITIES during 2011 will be included in the annual report on the International Strategy which will be brought to Cabinet in Spring 2012.

5.0 Reasons for the Decision

- 5.1 EUROCITIES provides a strong platform through which to influence EU policy and legislation, exchange knowledge and experience, and develop best practice through dialogue with European Union institutions and fellow cities within the network. It is a network which requires both Officer and Elected Member involvement at appropriate times. The opportunities represented by membership of EUROCITIES are in line with the City Council's approach to international engagement as set out in the International Strategy.
- 5.2 It is important that the City Council engages effectively within the network to identify and pursue the opportunities EUROCITIES can open up for Sunderland, and that Sunderland continues to demonstrate its commitment to

be an active partner in order to be able to maximise the benefits of those opportunities for the city. The theme of the 2011 Conference and AGM is in line with current priorities for the City Council and wider Sunderland Partnership objectives.

- 5.3 The Conference programme will provide an opportunity to share experience in key areas through discussion sessions and technical visits, and see examples of good practice which may be able to be adopted or adapted within Sunderland. Participation in the Conference and AGM will also provide the opportunity to take part in discussions about the Work Programme for the network for 2012.

6.0 Alternative Options

- 6.1 A decision could be taken not to take part in the Conference and AGM. This would send a negative message about the City's commitment to participation in EUROCITIES and mean that key opportunities to develop and share good practice in important policy areas as well as influence the future Work Programme of the network would be lost.

7.0 Relevant Consultations

- 7.1 Financial Implications

Costs for participation will be met from existing cash-limited budgets.

8.0 Background Papers

EUROCITIES Conference and AGM Programme

CABINET MEETING – 5TH OCTOBER 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

Vaux Site Interim Works Phase 2- Appointment of Contractor

Author(s):

Deputy Chief Executive

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to obtain Cabinet authority to award the contract for the Vaux Site Interim Works Phase 2.

Description of Decision:

Cabinet is recommended:

To authorise the Deputy Chief Executive to award the main works contract for the Vaux Site Interim Works Phase 2 to, Sunderland City Council, City Services, following the completion of a competitive tender process which has been undertaken.

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? Yes

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

The Vaux Site Interim Works project is identified in the Strategic Investment Plan as a key element of the regeneration of the City Centre.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

Now that the site is in Council ownership it is important to make progress to improve the condition of the site. Taking no action would fail to realise the interim benefits that can be achieved on such a prominent site, pending its redevelopment.

Is this a “Key Decision” as defined in the Constitution?

Yes

Is it included in the Forward Plan?

No

Relevant Scrutiny Committee:

Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee

VAUX SITE INTERIM WORKS PHASE 2 - APPOINTMENT OF CONTRACTORS**REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE****1.0 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to obtain Cabinet authority to award the contract for the Vaux Site Interim Works Phase 2

2.0 Description of Decision

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended:

To authorise the Deputy Chief Executive to award the main works contract for the Vaux Site Interim Works Phase 2 to Sunderland City Council, City Services, following the completion of a competitive tender process which has been undertaken.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 The former Vaux Brewery site came into Council ownership in February 2011. Council approved funding for a project of interim remediation on 2 March 2011 as part of the capital budget for 2011/2012.
- 3.2 Following the demolition of the former brewery by the previous owners, Tesco, the site had been levelled to a loose state with spread demolition material and ground obstructions in the form of hard standings and roadways remaining; and with contaminated material present on the site.
- 3.3 Remediation of the site serves two purposes. First, the removal of contaminated material and breaking up of demolition residue means that a clean site would be available for handover for redevelopment purposes. Secondly, pending master planning, marketing and redevelopment the appearance of the site can be greatly improved at this important gateway to the city centre and consideration can be given to appropriate temporary uses.
- 3.4 Following confirmation that funding had been secured, the Vaux Site project team has progressed detailed designs for the project and submitted a planning application which was approved on 6 September 2011. The scheme includes the following main elements:
- A temporary metered car park for 170 cars and 9 coaches at the west end of the site with lighting and CCTV; the coach parking being of particular benefit to the Empire Theatre.
 - Topsoiling and grass seeding to create a temporary public open space for informal recreation and potential use as an events space, approximately 2.5 hectares in size (6 acres).
 - New footpaths across the site connecting routes to the Galley's Gill footbridge and St Mary's Car Park

- Removal of the existing mounds containing asbestos to a licensed tip.
- 3.5 The first phase of works to clear vegetation and crush rubble in-situ has already been carried out. The demolition of the existing building is the subject of a separate tender and order.
- 3.6 For the main contract, expressions of interest were sought in June 2011. The Council received 32 expressions of interest, from which 7 contractors were short-listed to submit tenders. One submitted tender was invalid as it was incomplete. Sunderland City Council, City Services has been selected on the basis of the lowest cost, valid tender. The price of the proposed contract is £1,385,176.92.

4.0 Reasons for Decision

- 4.1 The Vaux Site Interim Works project is identified in the Strategic Investment Plan as a key element of the regeneration of the City Centre.

5.0 Alternative Options

- 5.1 Now that the site is in Council ownership it is important to make progress to improve the condition of the site. Taking no action would fail to realise the interim benefits that can be achieved on such a prominent site, pending its redevelopment.

6.0 Relevant Considerations

- a) Financial Implications – The funding requirement for main contract works of £1,385,176.92 is provided for in the approved Capital Programme.
- b) The works include the grounds maintenance works until September 2016 excluding litter picking. The car park revenue will be sufficient to cover the running costs of that part of the scheme.
- c) Legal Implications – Clause 9.0 Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 provides local authorities with a power for the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well being of their area.
- d) Policy Implications - The Vaux Site Interim Works forms part of the wider City Centre regeneration initiatives which are in line with the objectives of the Sunderland Strategy and Economic Masterplan.
- e) Project Management Methodology – the delivery of the project uses the Council's standard Prince2 methodology.

8.0 Background Papers

- Council agenda and minutes 2 March 2011
- Council's Invitation to Tender

CABINET MEETING – 5 October, 2011
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET- PART I

Title of Report:

Capital Programme Second Review 2011/2012 (including Treasury Management)

Author:

Executive Director of Commercial and Corporate Services

Purpose of Report:

This report details changes made to the Capital Programme 2011/2012 since the First Capital Programme Review 2011/2012 and provides an update on progress in implementing the Treasury Management Borrowing and Investment Strategy for 2011/2012.

Description of Decision:

Cabinet is recommended to:

In relation to the Second Review of the Capital Programme for 2011/2012:

- approve, and where necessary recommend to Council, the inclusion of additional schemes for 2011/2012 detailed at Appendix A and associated resourcing of the Capital Programme since the First Review was reported to June Cabinet;
- approve re-investment of a North East Enterprise Bond.

In relation to the Treasury Management Strategy for 2011/2012:

- to note the progress in implementing the Treasury Management Strategy for 2011/2012
- to approve amendments to both the Lending List Criteria set out in Appendix B and the Lending List set out in Appendix C.

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? Yes

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

To respond to variations in the Capital Programme which have arisen since the 2011/2012 First Capital Programme Review was approved to enable effective budgetary control to be exercised.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

No alternative options are proposed.

<p>Is this a “Key Decision” as defined in the Constitution?Yes - there are a number of key decisions – these relate to all new capital projects detailed at Appendix A estimated to cost above £250,000 individually.</p> <p>Is it included in the Forward Plan? Yes provisionally - in light of the content of this report this was necessary.</p>	<p>Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Management</p>
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Cabinet – 5th October 2011

Capital Programme Second Review 2011/2012 (including Treasury Management)

Report of the Executive Director of Commercial and Corporate Services

1. Introduction

1.1 This report details:

- reprofiling of projects since the First Capital Programme Review was reported;
- the inclusion of additional schemes and revisions to costs and resourcing for 2011/2012 since the First Capital Programme Review was reported;
- the overall updated Capital Programme following the Second Review;
- the progress in implementing the Treasury Management Strategy for 2011/2012.

2. Description of Decision:

2.1 Cabinet is recommended to:

In relation to the Second Review of the Capital Programme for 2011/2012:

- approve, and where necessary recommend to Council, the inclusion of additional schemes for 2011/2012 detailed at Appendix A and associated resourcing of the Capital Programme since the First Review of the Capital Programme was reported to June Cabinet;
- approve re-investment of a North East Enterprise Bond.

In relation to the Treasury Management Strategy for 2011/2012:

- to note the progress in implementing the Treasury Management Strategy for 2011/2012
- to approve changes to the Council's Lending List Criteria and Lending List.

3. Second Capital Review 2011/2012

3.1 Since the First Capital Programme was reported to Council in June 2011, there are proposed changes to the Capital Programme both in terms of expenditure and resourcing. This reflects changes made as notifications of additional schemes and resourcing since the original programme was set and phasing of schemes as projects are reviewed. In total, reprofiling and other adjustments have led to the 2011/2012 Capital Programme reducing by £4.109 million from £84.701 million to £80.592 million. This reduction can be analysed as follows:

- Reprofiling of expenditure between 2011/2012 and future years.
- Additional fully funded schemes and cost variations notified since the Capital Programme was last reported.
- Technical adjustments.

4. Reprofiling of Expenditure between 2011/2012 and future years

Schemes where significant reprofiling of expenditure and resources are being proposed are set out below.

4.1 Children and Learning City

Schools Asset Management Priorities

Funding towards access and modernisation works within schools is allocated to those schools with schemes assessed as having a high priority and providing good value for money. The programme of works retains flexibility that allows necessary works, unforeseen when the original programme is developed, to be accommodated. At this stage of the year it is anticipated that £0.816 million of funding currently allocated in 2011/2012 will be reprofiled into 2012/2013.

Maplewood School Replacement

There are no changes to the overall cost of this scheme, however profiling of works to the replacement school following award of the contract have necessitated a transfer of £0.717 million budget from 2012/2013 into 2011/2012. Works on the replacement school began on site in June 2011 and are estimated to be completed by July 2012 with the new school becoming operational for the new term beginning in September 2012.

4.2 Prosperous City

Washington Managed Workspace

The scheme to create 5,200 sq m of floorspace in Washington has been reprofiled into 2012/2013. This follows the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) taking over the ERDF approval process from One North East. Washington Managed Workspace is a site, design and build project and will not be appraised by the ERDF team at CLG until the council has carried out a procurement process. The reprofiling will enable the Council to undertake a full procurement exercise prior to submission of a robust business case by 30th November 2011 which will include site details, final designs, costings and outputs.

A decision on ERDF approval is anticipated by the end of February 2012 and the project timetable anticipates work starting on site by the end of April 2012 with building handover by the end of April 2013. To minimise any risk to the Council contracts will not be awarded to the successful tenderer before ERDF approval is received.

4.3 Sustainable Communities

Area Renewal - Hetton Downs

To allow for a structured development, in line with the findings of Neighbourhood Renewal Assessments that have been undertaken in the area. It has been agreed with the Homes and Communities Agency that funding they have provided may be reprofiled into future years. Spend on area renewal initiatives is difficult to forecast and is dependent on legal agreement being reached with property owners in the area. It is anticipated that £1.146 million will be spent in 2011/2012 on purchase of properties in Maudlin Street with £3.000 million being reprofiled into future years to be used for further purchase of homes, of industrial premises and on carrying out of infrastructure works in the area.

5. Additional Schemes and Cost Variations

- 5.1** A number of new schemes have been added to the programme which are fully funded. Full details are set out at Appendix A with the additions not previously reported to Cabint set out below .

5.2 Children and Learning City

The Government has awarded capital funding in 2011/2012 towards enhancing the short break provision available for disabled children and their carers. It is proposed to use this that funding both to support adaptations to homes that would not be covered by Disabled Facilities Grant and other priorities within the safeguarding budget.

5.3 Safer City and Culture

Bowes Railway Museum Wagonshop Repairs

It has been agreed to contribute £0.035 million to Bowes Railway Museum towards development of the Wagon Shop at the site. Initial works will make the building wind and water tight and tackle the most pressing structural needs of the building. By the Council agreeing to provide matched funding Bowes Railway will be able to access £0.134 million of Heritage Lottery Grant funding and will be in a position to bid for a further funding towards other necessary works at the site.

5.4 Prosperous City

North East Enterprise Bond

Cabinet, on 7th June 2006, approved investment of £0.100 million in a five year zero interest North East Enterprise Bond (NEEB). This bond is due to expire in 2011 and it is recommended that funding provided by the Council is re-invested in the NEEB SkillsBridge programme to help enable continuation of work to tackle employability and to create an enterprise culture amongst young people. SkillsBridge will carry on the developments initiated through the initial bond for the next 5 years with the primary aim being to deliver packages of bespoke, sustainable skills and expertise to the voluntary and community sector.

6. Review of the Prudential Indicators and Treasury Management Strategy for 2011/2012

- 6.1** The Prudential Indicators for 2011/2012 were approved by the Council on the 2nd March 2011 and are regularly reviewed to ensure that:
- the Council remains within it's Authorised Limit for External Debt;
 - treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with the Treasury Management Code of Practice and existing Council Treasury Management Policy and Strategy Statement;
 - the capital expenditure control framework operated locally is consistent with, and supportive of, local strategic planning, local asset management planning, and proper option appraisal.

- 6.2 Internal monitoring procedures track performance daily against the various prudential indicators agreed by the Council. To date, the Council has operated within its Authorised Borrowing Limit, which is a statutory limit determined under Section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2003 and at this stage there are no areas for concern or any issues which require any review of the indicators as originally approved.

Borrowing Strategy for 2011/2012

- 6.3 The Borrowing Strategy is based upon interest rate forecasts from a number of City institutions. The table below shows the anticipated movement in interest rates since those reported to Cabinet at the First Capital Review in June 2011.

	Anticipated Bank Base Rate		Anticipated PWLB 5 year Maturity Rate		Anticipated PWLB 10 year Maturity Rate		Anticipated PWLB 50 year Maturity Rate	
	May 2011	Aug 2011	May 2011	Aug 2011	May 2011	Aug 2011	May 2011	Aug 2011
March 2012	1.00%	0.50%	3.75%	2.90%	4.80%	4.10%	5.30%	5.10%
March 2013	2.00%	1.00%	4.25%	3.40%	5.05%	4.60%	5.50%	5.20%
March 2014	3.00%	2.25%	4.75%	4.10%	5.25%	5.00%	5.65%	5.50%

Economists are now predicting an increase in the Bank of England Base Rate in December 2012 at the earliest (previously this was forecast was for November 2011) and a reduction to previously forecast PWLB rates. There are significant potential risks regarding economic growth and increasing debt levels, particularly within the Euro Zone and America. Economists are advising that due to these risks and market volatility caution must be exercised in respect of all interest rate forecasts at the current time.

- 6.4 No new borrowing has been undertaken in the current financial year. The Council's strategy for 2011/2012 is to continue to adopt a pragmatic and flexible approach and to respond to any changing circumstances to seek to secure best value for the Council.

Investment Strategy for 2011/2012

- 6.5 The primary aim of the Investment Strategy is the security of Council funds, then having regard to liquidity i.e. the availability of cash to meet council liabilities, and finally to secure a reasonable rate of return on its investments.
- 6.6 As at 31st August 2011, the funds managed by the Council's Treasury Management team has achieved a rate of return on its investments of 1.51% compared with the benchmark rate (i.e. the 7 day rate) of 0.40%. Performance is very positive and is significantly above the benchmark rate, whilst adhering to the prudent policy agreed by the Council.

- 6.7 The investment policy is regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure it has flexibility to take full advantage of any changes in market conditions to the benefit of the Council. In view of volatility within financial markets it is recommended that the Lending List Criteria is amended to increase amounts approved to be invested for AAA institutions from £50 million to £70 million. This will reduce risk by enabling the Council to increase its investments with those institutions in which the UK Government holds a financial stake and would be very unlikely to allow to fail should the financial situation substantially deteriorate.
- 6.8 The amended investment criteria are set out Appendix B and the amended Lending List is set out in Appendix C for information and endorsement.

Appendix A

Scheme Variations since the First Capital Review 2010/2011

	£000
Reprofiling of Expenditure from 2011/2012 to future years since the First Review	
Children and Learning City	
Schools Asset Management Priorities	(816)
Maplewood Replacement School	717
Prosperous City	
Washington Managed Workspace	(1,267)
Sustainable Communities	
Area Renewal	(3,000)
Total Reprofiling	(4,366)
Additional Schemes and Revisions to Scheme Costs 2011/2012 – fully funded	
Cabinet Secretary	
Port Crane approved Cabinet 20 th July 2011	500
Children and Learning City	
Short Breaks for Disabled Children	100
Safer City and Culture	
Bowes Railway Museum Wagonshop Repairs	35
Other Fully Funded Additional Schemes and Minor Variations	28
Total Additional / Amended schemes	663
Technical Adjustments	
Prosperous City	
City Centre Improvements - expenditure transferred to revenue	(406)
Total Technical Adjustments	(406)
TOTAL VARIATIONS	(4,109)

Lending List Criteria

Appendix B

Counterparty Criteria

The Council takes into account not only the individual institution's credit ratings issued by all three credit rating agencies (Fitch, Moody's and Standard & Poor's), but also all available market data and intelligence, the level of government support and advice from its Treasury Management advisors.

Set out below are the criteria to be used in determining the level of funds that can be invested with each institution. Where an institution is rated differently by the rating agencies, the lowest rating will determine the level of investment.

Fitch / S&P's Long Term Rating	Fitch Short Term Rating	S&P's Short Term Rating	Moody's Long Term Rating	Moody's Short Term Rating	<u>Maximum Deposit</u> <u>£m</u>	<u>Maximum Duration</u>
AAA	F1+	A1+	Aaa	P-1	70	2 Years
AA+	F1+	A1+	Aa1	P-1	50	2 Years
AA	F1+	A1+	Aa2	P-1	40	364 days
AA-	F1+ / F1	A1+ / A-1	Aa3	P-1	20	364 days
A+	F1	A-1	A1	P-1	10	364 days
A	F1 / F2	A-1 / A-2	A2	P-1 / P-2	10	364 days
A-	F1 / F2	A-2	A3	P-1 / P-2	5	6 months
Local Authorities (limit for each local authority)					30	364 Days
Money Market Funds Maximum amount to be invested in Money Market Funds is £50 million with a maximum of £30 million in any one fund.					50	2 Years

Where the UK Government holds a shareholding in an institution the UK Government's credit rating of AAA will be applied to that institution to determine the amount the Council can place with that institution.

Where any banks / building societies are part of the UK Government's Credit Guarantee scheme (marked with * in the Approved Lending List), these counterparties will have an AA rating applied to them thus giving them a credit limit of £40 million for a maximum period of 364 days

The Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services recommends that consideration should also be given to country, sector, and group limits in addition to the individual limits set out above, these new limits are as follows:

Country Limit

It is proposed that only countries with a minimum sovereign credit rating of AA+ by all three rating agencies will be considered for inclusion on the Approved Lending List.

It is also proposed to set a total limit of £40 million which can be invested in other countries provided they meet the above criteria. A separate limit of £300 million will be applied to the United Kingdom and is based on the fact that the government has done and is willing to take action to protect the UK banking system.

Country	Limit £m
UK	300
Non UK	40

Sector Limit

The Code recommends a limit be set for each sector in which the Council can place investments. These limits are set out below:

Sector	Limit £m
Central Government	300
Local Government	300
UK Banks	300
UK Building Societies	150
Foreign Banks	40

Group Limit

Where institutions are part of a group of companies e.g. Lloyds Banking Group, Santander and RBS, then total limit of investments that can be placed with that group of companies will be determined by the highest credit rating of a counterparty within that group, unless the government rating has been applied. This will apply provided that:

- the government's guarantee scheme is still in place;
- the UK continues to have a sovereign credit rating of AAA; and
- that market intelligence and professional advice is taken into account.

Proposed group limits are set out in Appendix C

Approved Lending List

Appendix C

	Fitch				Moody's			Standard & Poor's			
	L Term	S Term	Individual	Support	L Term	S Term	Fin Strength	L Term	S Term	Limit £m	Max Deposit Period
UK	AAA	F1+			Aaa			AAA		300	364 days
Lloyds Banking Group (see Note 1)										Group Limit 70	
Lloyds Banking Group plc	AA-	F1+	C	1	Aa3	-	-	A	A-1	70	364 days
Lloyds TSB Bank Plc	AA-	F1+	C	1	Aa3	P-1	C-	A+	A-1	70	364 days
Bank of Scotland Plc	AA-	F1+	C	1	Aa3	P-1	D+	A+	A-1	70	364 days
Royal Bank of Scotland Group (See Note 1)										Group Limit 70	
Royal Bank of Scotland Group plc	AA-	F1+	C	1	A1	P-1	-	A	A-1	70	364 days
The Royal Bank of Scotland Plc	AA-	F1+	C	1	Aa3	P-1	C-	A+	A-1	70	364 days
National Westminster Bank Plc	AA-	F1+	-	1	Aa3	P-1	C-	A+	A-1	70	364 days
Ulster Bank Ltd	A+	F1+	E	1	A2	P-1	D-	A	A-1	70	364 days
Santander Group *										Group Limit 40	
Santander UK plc	AA-	F1+	B	1	Aa3	P-1	C-	AA	A-1+	40	364 days
Cater Allen	AA-	F1+	B	1	Aa3	P-1	C-	AA	A-1+	40	364 days
Barclays Bank plc *	AA-	F1+	B	1	Aa3	P-1	C	AA-	A-1+	40	364 days
HSBC Bank plc *	AA	F1+	B	1	Aa2	P-1	C+	AA	A-1+	40	364 days

	Fitch				Moody's			Standard & Poor's			
	L Term	S Term	Individual	Support	L Term	S Term	Fin Strength	L Term	S Term	Limit £m	Max Deposit Period
Nationwide BS *	AA-	F1+	B	1	Aa3	P-1	C	A+	A-1	40	364 days
Standard Chartered Bank *	AA-	F1+	B	1	A2	P-1	C+	A+	A-1	40	364 days
Clydesdale Bank / Yorkshire Bank **	AA-	F1+	C	1	A1	P-1	C-	A+	A-1	10	364 days
Co-Operative Bank Plc	A-	F2	B/C	3	A2	P-1	D+	-	-	5	6 months
Northern Rock ***	BBB+	F2	C	2	-	-	-	A-	A-2	0	
Top 10 Building Societies (by asset value)											
Nationwide BS (see above)											
Yorkshire BS	A-	F2	B/C	5	Baa1	P-2	C-	A-	A-2	0	
Coventry BS	A	F1	B	5	A3	P-2	C	-	-	5	6 Months
Skipton BS	A-	F2	B/C	5	Baa1	P-2	D+	-	-	0	
Leeds BS	A	F1	B/C	5	A2	P-1	C+	-	-	10	364 Days
West Bromwich BS ***	BBB-	F3	C/D	5	Baa3	P-3	E+	-	-	0	
Principality BS ***	BBB+	F2	C	5	Baa2	P-2	D+	-	-	0	
Newcastle BS ***	BBB-	F3	C/D	5	Baa2	P-2	D-	-	-	0	
Norwich and Peterborough BS ***	BBB+	F2	C	5	Baa2	P-2	D	-	-	0	
Nottingham BS	-	-	-	-	A3	P-2	C-	-	-	5	6 Months
Foreign Banks have a combined total limit of £40m											
Australia	AA+	-	-	-	Aaa	-	-	AAA		40	364 Days
National Australia Bank	AA	F1+	B	1	Aa1	P-1	B	AA	A-1+	40	364 Days
Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Ltd	AA-	F1+	B	1	Aa1	P-1	B	AA	A-1+	20	364 Days

	Fitch				Moody's			Standard & Poor's			
	L Term	S Term	Individual	Support	L Term	S Term	Fin Strenat	L Term	S Term	Limit £m	Max Deposit Period
Commonwealth Bank of Australia	AA	F1+	A/B	1	Aa1	P-1	B	AA	A-1+	40	364 Days
Westpac Banking Corporation	AA	F1+	A/B	1	Aa1	P-1	B	AA	A-1+	40	364 Days
Canada	AAA				Aaa			AAA		40	364 Days
Bank of Nova Scotia	AA-	F1+	B	1	Aa1	P-1	B	AA-	A-1+	20	364 Days
Royal Bank of Canada	AA	F1+	A/B	1	Aa1	P-1	B+	AA-	A-1+	20	364 Days
Toronto Dominion Bank	AA-	F1+	B	1	Aaa	P-1	B+	AA-	A-1+	20	364 Days
Money Market Funds										50	2 Years
Prime Rate Stirling Liquidity	AAA MMF							AAAm		30	2 Years
Insight Liquidity Fund					AAA MR1			AAAm		30	2 Years
Ignis Sterling Liquidity	AAA MMF							AAAm		30	2 Years

Notes

Note 1 Nationalised / Part Nationalised

The counterparties in this section will have the UK Government's AAA rating applied to them thus giving them a revised credit limit of £70 million for a maximum period of 364 days

* Banks / Building Societies which are part of the UK Government's Credit Guarantee scheme

The counterparties in this section will have an AA rating applied to them thus giving them a revised credit limit of £40 million for a maximum period of 364 days

** The Clydesdale Bank (under the UK section) is owned by National Australia Bank

*** These will be revisited and used only if they meet the minimum criteria (ratings of A- and above)

Any bank which is incorporated in the United Kingdom and controlled by the FSA is classed as a UK bank for the purposes of the Approved Lending List.

CABINET MEETING – 5 OCTOBER 2011 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET- PART I	
Title of Report: Revenue Budget Second Review 2011/2012	
Author(s): Executive Director of Commercial and Corporate Services	
Purpose of Report: To report details the outcome of the Revenue Budget Second Review for 2011/2012.	
Description of Decision: Cabinet is recommended to - approve the contingency transfers proposed at Appendix A.	
Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? Yes	
If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework	
Suggested reason(s) for Decision: To respond to variations in expenditure and income which have arisen in 2011/2012 and enable effective budgetary control to be exercised.	
Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected: No alternative options are proposed.	
Is this a “Key Decision” as defined in the Constitution? No Is it included in the Forward Plan? Yes provisionally In light of the content of this report it is not necessary.	Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Management

Revenue Budget Second Review 2011/2012

Report of the Executive Director of Commercial and Corporate Services

1. Introduction

This report advises Members of the overall Revenue position following the second review for 2011/2012 including proposed contingency transfers for the second quarter of 2011/2012.

2. Description of Decision

- 2.1. Cabinet is requested to approve the proposed contingency transfers proposed at Appendix A.

3. Revenue Budget Monitoring 2011/2012

Overall Position

- 3.1 In overall terms whilst there are significant challenges in delivering the savings requirement for 2011/2012 and ongoing mitigating actions being put in place by Portfolio holders, at this stage it is anticipated that the outturn position will be positive. In addition savings on capital financing charges as a result of slippage on the capital programme and income from interest on investments are anticipated to result in savings of approximately £4.0m at year end. It is proposed that these amounts and any further underspendings arising from underspent contingencies at the end of 2011/2012 are earmarked to support transitional costs arising from the 2012/2013 budget setting process.

A full review has been undertaken in respect of each Portfolio and a summary of the position following the second review is set out in the report for each Portfolio, together with the contingency allocations proposed for the second quarter.

3.2 Contingency Transfers

A full review has been undertaken for each service and full details of proposed contingency transfers are set out at Appendix A.

3.3 Major Variations

Cabinet Portfolio holders have been fully briefed on the variations which have arisen in the second quarter of the year. Significant items to draw to Members attention are set out below:

3.3.1 Leader

It is forecast the Portfolio will be within its delegated budget at the end of 2011/2012. The following is drawn to members attention:

- **Design and Print**

A service review is currently on-going within the Design and Print service to identify future service delivery options. The service has experienced a further reduction in income during 2011/12 as a result of a decline in council printing requirements, as other parts of the council have made efficiencies and introduced cost containment measures. Action is being put in place to mitigate this shortfall and the position will be updated as part of the third quarterly review.

3.3.2 Deputy Leader

It is forecast the Portfolio will be within its delegated budget at the end of 2011/2012. There are no issues to draw to members attention at this time.

3.3.3 Cabinet Secretary

It is forecast the Portfolio will be within its delegated budget at the end of 2011/2012. The following areas are drawn to Members attention:

- **Port**

The Port is forecasting a deficit against budget of £412,000 due to the continuing difficult trading conditions associated with the global economic downturn. This position represents a significant improvement on the outturn position for 2010/2011 as a result of an increase in income levels early in the current financial year. The position is being kept under close review with regular updates to the Port Board. The forecast deficit position was provided for in setting the 2011/2012 contingencies provision.

- **Industrial Units**

The Industrial Units portfolio is anticipating a shortfall in income of £100,000 due to vacant units. Recent progress on letting of units is anticipated to reduce this shortfall in future years. The forecast shortfall in income for 2011/2012 was provided for in setting the budget for contingencies. The ongoing position will be considered as part of the 2012/2013 budget process.

3.3.4 Children and Learning City

It is forecast the Portfolio will be within budget at the end of 2011/2012. However the Safeguarding service area continues to be subject to significant demand pressures. As part of the 2011/2012 budget planning framework additional funding was provided to address budget pressures within the Safeguarding Service in respect of external placements and agency social workers. However, demand for services continues to increase resulting in significant budget pressures in the following areas:

- **External Placements**
It is currently forecast the service will exceed its budget by £630,000 which can be met from the External Placement Reserve (£360,000) and anticipated savings as a result of management actions in other areas of the Looked after Children budget including use of grant funding. The ongoing position will be taken into account within the medium term financial planning process.
- **Safeguarding Legal Fees** – It is currently predicted that this area will overspend by £150,000 at the year end. A review of this area is being undertaken to ascertain the extent to which internal resources can be enhanced or other mechanisms used to mitigate this impact on an ongoing basis
- **Extended Rights to Free Transport**
Subsequent to the setting of the 2011/2012 budget, notification was received in relation to the Extended Rights to Free Travel and General Duty to Promote Sustainable Travel Grant of £0.154m in 2011/2012, increasing to £0.191m in 2012/2013. It is proposed to passport £0.094m of this funding to Children's Services to assist Home to School, and Home to College Transport services in responding to new statements and promoting independent travel initiatives. The remaining funding in 2011/2012 of £0.060m will be earmarked to support transitional costs arising from implementation of the Sunderland Way of Working operational arrangements.

3.3.5 Prosperous City

It is forecast the Portfolio will be within its delegated budget at the end of 2011/2012. There are no issues to be drawn to members attention at this time.

3.3.6 Healthy City

The Portfolio continues to experience a number of service pressures and the following areas are drawn to Members attention:

- **Health, Housing and Adult Services**
The Directorate are progressing the three year delivery plans which seek to enable people to receive care associated with their needs and introduce ways of enabling people to live independently in their own homes. Some of these plans will be delivered later than the original timescales. The directorate have identified alternatives to deliver the required level of savings including utilising £0.842m received from Health to help mitigate the shortfall.

Officers are currently identifying projects/areas of investment which will help deliver the savings required.

- **Sport and Leisure**
The service continues to be adversely affected by the impact of the economic downturn, which is resulting in reduced attendances, particularly in Wellness Centres and a consequential shortfall in income. This reflects the national trend, however, work is underway to quantify the financial impact and a plan of action is in the process of being developed. An update will be provided as part of the third revenue review report.
- **Meals at Home**
Following a review of the service clients are transitioning from this service to alternative service providers. Internal service provision will cease operation as at the 31 August 2011. However as clients are transitioning to alternative service providers this is resulting in a reduction in meal numbers provided and therefore reduced income for the service resulting in a forecast budget shortfall which will need to be addressed.

3.3.7 Safer City and Culture

The Portfolio is forecast to be within its delegated budget at the end of 2011/2012. There are no issues to draw to members attention at this stage.

3.3.8 Attractive and Inclusive

The following is drawn to Members attention:

- **Parking Services**
This service area is continuing to experience a downturn in income, similar to previous years resulting in a forecast shortfall in income of £227,000. The potential shortfall in income was provided for in setting the 2011/2012 contingencies provision.

3.3.9 Sustainable Communities

The Portfolio is forecast to be within its delegated budget at the end of 2011/2012.

3.3.10 Responsive Local Services and Customer Care

The Portfolio is forecast to be within its delegated budget at the end of 2011/2012.

4. Summary Position - Implementation of Savings Plans

4.1 The budget process for 2011/2012 took account of the requirement for reductions in expenditure of £57.9 million. As outlined to cabinet in June, progress in implementing the proposals is being rigorously monitored by Directors in conjunction with Portfolio Holders, using a traffic light system. Monthly budget monitoring is being carried out at an enhanced level to ensure the position is understood early and actions put in place to mitigate any impact.

4.2 At this stage, the following is noted

- £33.2m of the savings has been fully realised;
- £15.8m are not yet scheduled for full implementation but good progress has been made in these areas with action plans developed, responsibilities assigned and timescales identified. At this stage therefore it is not anticipated that this will impact on the overall financial position of the Council as the saving is anticipated to be achieved.
- £8.4m of savings have been affected by delays in implementation, however these are either offset by reductions in costs to the Switch team which is budgeted for, or alternative savings have been identified and the ongoing position into 2012/2013 is secured;
- £0.4m of savings have one off alternative savings identified to ensure a balanced budget in 2011/2012, however the ongoing position into 2012/2013 is still to be secured;
- At this stage £0.1m of savings are forecast unlikely to be achieved as originally intended. Work is on-going to identify alternative savings to address this gap.

As reported as part of the budget setting process transitional costs are arising in 2011/2012 as the organisation moves to the revised Sunderland Way of Working operational arrangements. Budget provision was provided to meet the costs of the SWITCH team and this is being closely monitored.

4.3 At this stage in the transition process one off early retirement costs of £3.567m have arisen, the cost of which can be met from the resources set aside to meet transitional costs as part of the outturn position for 2011/2012.

4.4 The first six months of 2011/12 represents a period of significant transition in relation to staffing and associated salaries costs. As restructures are being implemented considerable realignment of costs and budgets is being necessitated in order to map staff appointments to redesigned services or the SWITCH team. This is resulting in considerable difficulty in monitoring and forecasting staffing costs at the micro / individual service level for individual budget managers. At this stage therefore a holistic approach to monitoring salaries costs across the council has been adopted. This takes into account salaries costs incurred to date and forecast across the council including costs of staff within the SWITCH team.

4.5 The net position in relation to staffing cost under spends across the council will be earmarked to support transitional costs arising from the implementation of the Sunderland Way of Working operational arrangements.

5. Reasons for Decision

- 5.1 To respond to variations in expenditure and income which have arisen in 2011/2012 and enable effective budgetary control to be exercised.

6. Alternative Options

- 6.1 No alternative options are proposed

7. Background Papers:

- 7.1 Portfolio Holders Briefing Notes

Cabinet Meeting – 5th October 2011
Variations Necessitating Contingency Transfers 2011/2012

	Justification / Approval	2011/2012 £	Full Year Effect £
Leader			
Transformation, Programme and Projects salary costs	General Provision	61,773	61,773
Deputy Leader			
Graduate Trainee Costs	Specific Provision	15,286	15,286
Diversity and Inclusion	General Provision	30,000	30,000
Cabinet Secretary			
Counsel Fees	General Provision	6,950	6,950
Rental Income Shortfall – Industrial Units	Strategic Priorities	85,000	100,000
Children and Learning City			
Hendon Old Orphanage	Specific Provision	7,893	94,712
Counsel Fees	General Provision	48,249	48,249
Safer City and Culture			
Bowes Railway Grant	General Provision	5,112	0
Summer Events	Specific Provision	175,000	175,000
Attractive and Inclusive			
Coroners Court - Premises hire costs	General Provision	34,621	0
Overall Efficiencies			
Flexible Working Efficiencies	General Provision	(101,819)	0
Procurement Efficiencies	Specific Provisions	(232,311)	(232,311)
BTP Efficiencies	Specific Provisions	(145,426)	(145,426)
	TOTAL	(9,672)	154,233

CABINET MEETING – 5th October 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET- PART I

Title of Report:

Budget Planning Framework 2012/2013 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2011/2012 – 2014/2015

Authors:

Chief Executive and Executive Director of Commercial and Corporate Services

Purpose of Report:

This report identifies the key factors influencing the development of the Councils financial plans into the medium term and sets out the budget planning framework for the Council for 2012/2013. The report sets out the headlines and context for the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2011/2012 to 2014/2015.

The strategy is now in draft form and will be presented to Cabinet in November.

Description of Decision:

Cabinet is recommended:

- to agree the proposed Budget Planning Framework summarised at paragraph 12 which will guide the preparation of the Revenue Budget for 2012/2013;
- to note that the full Medium Term Financial Strategy 2011/2012 to 2014/2015 will be presented to Cabinet in November.

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework?

Yes

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

Adoption of the Budget Planning Framework forms an essential part of the process of the preparation and compilation of the Revenue Budget for 2012/2013.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

There are no alternative options recommended.

Is this a “Key Decision” as defined in the Constitution?

No

Relevant Scrutiny Committee:

Management

Is it included in the Forward Plan?

No

Cabinet 5th October 2011

**Budget Planning Framework 2012/2013 and Medium Term Financial Strategy
2011/2012 – 2014/2015**

Report of the Chief Executive and Executive Director of Commercial and Corporate Services

1. Purpose of Report

This report identifies the key factors influencing the development of the Councils financial plans into the medium term and sets out the budget planning framework for the Council for 2012/2013. The report sets out the headlines and context for the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2011/2012 to 2014/2015.

The strategy is now in draft form and will be presented to Cabinet in November.

2. Description of Decision

Cabinet is recommended:

- to agree the proposed Budget Planning Framework summarised at paragraph 12 which will guide the preparation of the Revenue Budget for 2012/2013;
- to note that the full Medium Term Financial Strategy 2011/2012 to 2014/2015 will be presented to Cabinet in November.

3. National Economic Context

3.1 Impact of the Deficit Reduction Plan

There continues to be uncertainty as to the impact that the Government's policy to eliminate public sector debt over the next few years will have, and how this will impact on the economic recovery, especially in areas with greater reliance on public sector jobs and higher grant cuts such as the North East.

The International monetary Fund have revised down UK growth for 2011/12 from 1.7% to 1.1% and for 2012/13 from 2.3% to 1.6%. As a result they estimate the structural debt will be £12bn higher than government estimates - now £94bn.

The fiscal outlook therefore is likely to remain very challenging in the medium term and as a result there is likely to be a compound impact of reductions in financial resources over the period 2011 to 2015.

3.2 Inflation

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) has been above the Government's target level of 2% since December 2009 placing additional pressures on the Council's finances. It is anticipated that whilst non pay volatility will continue there will be continued suppression of pay. The average rate of inflation (CPI) is forecast to be 2.6% in 2012/2013.

The position will therefore continue to be regularly monitored and revised.

3.3 Base Rate

The Bank Base Rate has remained at an all time low of 0.5% since March 2009. Recent weak UK data releases coupled with poorer global economic recovery especially in the Euro-zone and the United States are now seeing markets push back their expectations for interest rate increases. The prospect of a base rate of 0.5% remaining in 2012/2013 remains quite high with only low 0.25% rises in prospect possibly towards the end of 2012.

4. Local Government Finance Settlement

The Local Government Finance Settlement announced in December 2010 follows the framework set out in Spending Review 2010 (SR10). The settlement covers the two year period 2011/2012 and 2012/2013. The Government is consulting on changes to the local government finance system from 2013/2014 further details of which are set out at section 5. This is a key issue for Local Authorities and particularly for Sunderland.

4.1 2011/2012 Summary Position

In overall terms taking formula grant reductions, cost pressures and other grant reductions into account the total reductions required for 2011/2012 were £57.9m. The implementation of savings proposals continues to be rigorously monitored and whilst there are challenges with delivering this significant reduction, at this stage it is anticipated that the savings will be achieved in 2011/2012 and the ongoing position in 2012/2013 secured.

4.2 2012/2013 Latest Position

The provisional Formula grant level for 2012/2013 is to reduce in cash terms by a further £12.293m.

4.3 2013/2014 Onwards

Although Government has indicated at a national level the overall grant reductions in their Spending Review 2010 for local government, it is not possible to accurately estimate the impact on each individual authority's grant allocation. However, using indicative totals from the Spending review, the reduction in grant at that stage is estimated to be £13million, before cost pressures are added. This position is even more uncertain as the outcome of the Government's Local Government Resource Review will not be known for some time and this will inevitably impact on all authorities Formula Grant funding levels. Plans will need to be revisited when the position is clarified.

4.4 Other Core Grant Funding

The Government has notified the Council of a number of core grants for 2012/2013 and the main changes are detailed below:

4.4.1 Early Intervention Grant

The provisional Early Intervention Grant (EIG) allocation for 2012/2013 of £15.937m represents an increase of £0.286m on the 2011/2012 allocation, which at 1.8% is the floor position. This reflects a specific increase in funding to support the expansion of the 2 year old offer from April 2012 and it is therefore proposed that this increase in funding is passported to Children's services for this purpose.

4.4.2 Learning Disabilities Funding (£262,000 increase) and NHS Support for Social Care (£185,000 decrease)

As in 2011/2012 investment plans will incorporate these pressures therefore it is proposed that grant will be taken into consideration at a corporate level.

4.4.3 Safer and Stronger Communities

A notified reduction of £153,000 in 2012/2013 represents year 2 of the planned three year reduction. In accordance with the approach for 2011/2012, it is proposed these grant reductions be passported to the related services.

4.4.4 Transition Grant

The Council does not qualify for any Transition Grant in 2012/2013 resulting in a reduction in resource available of £267,000.

5.0 **Future Funding Changes - 2013/2014 Onwards**

5.1 Local Government Resource Review

The Council's resource position for both 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 is not yet known. The Government is currently consulting local government on the proposals. This includes in particular the potential basis for future local retention of business rates. The position and proposed Council response are included elsewhere on this agenda and there is significant potential risk (particularly financial) for Sunderland in the proposals.

The Council are significant net recipients of redistributed business rates. Reference is made in the consultation document to creating a fair starting point by fixing the 2012/2013 baseline. This is in order that Council's such as Sunderland do not lose out as the current redistributed amount manifests itself in Formula grant funding distributed on the basis of need for essential services. However, moving on from the baseline position it is not clear how Council's such as Sunderland with high levels of deprivation and increased service pressures as a result of a growing elderly population will be resourced to support this increasing need. If business rates resource is retained or utilised to support economic growth in areas with low business rate bases or infrastructure there will still be a funding gap as a result of increased need.

Key issues including proposals around tariff and top up authorities and setting the right baseline are key to ensuring risks such as further financial risk and loss of resources are avoided when the new system is implemented.

Other aspects of the local Government Resource review are yet to be announced regarding a review of the Formula grant distribution methodology.

5.2 Public Health Transfer of Funding

The White Paper Healthy Lives, Healthy People, sets out how Local authorities will have a new role in improving the health and wellbeing of their population. There will be ring-fenced public health funding from within the overall NHS budget, dedicated to support this. The funding along with responsibility for the function will be transferred to local authorities through a ring fenced grant payment from April 2013.

The value of funding to be transferred to local authorities is currently being quantified through a national exercise and Government is reviewing the basis on which funding will be allocated to individual authorities.

5.3 Welfare Reform

The Welfare Reform Bill represents the biggest change to the benefits system in 60 years. In summary, the Bill aims to reduce the overall spending on the welfare system, and ensure that those on benefits are not better off than those with modest incomes.

One significant impact on Council resources will arise from proposed changes to Council Tax Benefit which is currently paid in line with Government guidance. From April 2013, the Council must design, implement and pay Council Tax Benefit based on its own local scheme. It is proposed that funding will only be provided at 90%, therefore the scheme will need to take this reduced level of funding into consideration. In addition the additional risk being passed to local authorities will need careful handling.

In addition the potential impact of other proposed areas of welfare reform on living standards of city residents may require consideration of provision of funding to assist with excessive hardship.

5.4 Schools Funding

A national review is currently being undertaken on the future distribution of school funding. The Government is seeking to develop a clear and transparent funding formula that supports the needs of pupils and enables Schools and Academies to be funded on a broadly comparable basis.

Any planned changes will result in movement of funding between Schools and areas. In order to provide stability in school funding, transitional arrangements will be applied to ensure that the reforms are introduced at an appropriate speed that is manageable for Schools. The current funding system for Schools will continue in

2012/2013 and the consultation will consider the right time to introduce the new system.

5.5 Academies Top Slicing

In addition to the School Funding consultation, the Government is reconsidering the reduction to Local Authority funding and the transfer of resources to the DfE made as part of the two year local government settlement for 2011/2012 and 2012/2013, to reflect the transfer of central services from local authorities to Academies. The consultation sets out the evidence the Secretary of State will use to consider the appropriate level of transfer and the proposed basis for calculation of the transfer.

As part of 2011/2012 settlement the Council had its formula grant reduced by £674,000. The revised methodology and the increase in the number of Academies nationally could see this sum potentially increasing in 2011/2012 and 2012/2013.

6. Local Income Position

6.1 Council Tax

The Localism Bill currently before Parliament provides for the provision of referendums to veto excessive council tax increases. Once it becomes law, this effectively places a limit on council tax increases and if councils exceed the government limits then the public will be able to vote to agree or veto any considered 'excessive' increase. There is no national provision for a 'freeze' beyond 2011/2012 and therefore the Council Tax position will require consideration as part of the budget process.

6.2 Options for Future Funding

A more rigorous approach will be included in the budget process regarding a more commercial approach to Authority business and driving external funding/resources opportunities.

The reduction in both revenue and capital funding requires the Council to focus on new and existing opportunities for funding including through:

- Charging arrangements
- Capital Funding such as Bonds, Tax Increment Funding, asset backed partnerships, European support
- Trading opportunities
- Alternatives to revenue funding such as social impact bonds
- Renewable/green Energy Resale

This will be used as a checklist for the Council and services to maximise opportunities for funding priority spending by

- Maximising the Council's use of its resources and assets to drive activity, lever resources and maximise benefits to the City

- Ensuring that opportunities from existing, new and developing financing funding and regeneration models are accessed where appropriate.

6.3 Reserves and Balances

The Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires local authorities to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement.

In accordance with the approach adopted to date all earmarked reserves will be revisited as part of the budget process to ensure they still accord with the Council's priorities and overall funding position.

7. Spending Pressures and Commitments

It is proposed to take into account the following spending commitments in the Budget Planning Framework for 2012/2013. Noting that at this stage in a number of cases specific cost detail requires finalisation and will be subject to review and refinement throughout the budget setting process:

7.1 Replacement of One-off Resources in 2011/2012

In meeting the funding gap for 2011/2012 directorates utilised £5.420m of one off resources such as reserves or delegated surpluses. This therefore represents an ongoing pressure into 2012/2013.

7.2 Pay and Pensions

7.2.1 Pay

The Government built its assumptions of a two year pay freeze for public sector workers (2011/2012 and 2012/2013) into its SR10 spending plans, except for those workers earning less than £21,000 a year. Beyond 2012/2013 prudent assumptions will be made at this stage for planning purposes.

7.2.2 Pensions

The results of the Actuarial review of the Local Government Pension Scheme 2010, was implemented in 2011/2012 covering three years to 2013/2014. There is no increase in deficiency payment for 2012/2013, and an increase of 5.3% for 2013/2014.

The Government has agreed to implement the recommendations from the Hutton Review and is currently in negotiations with the relevant public sector unions to agree measures that will help reduce the costs to the tax payer of funding pensions for public sector workers and is aimed at making them more affordable.

The Council is currently awaiting details of the proposed revised pension schemes for Teachers and LGPS members in order to assess the financial impact any changes will have on future year's budgets.

7.3 Energy Prices

Energy and vehicle fuel prices continue to be particularly volatile. It is therefore proposed that prudent provision be included for continued annual increases in

charges for gas, electricity and vehicle fuel for the medium term.

7.4 Waste Disposal

The impact of cost variations in relation to waste disposal have been factored into the Medium Term Financial Strategy including landfill tax, volume of waste, recycling implications, and the impact of implementing the Waste Disposal Strategic Solution.

7.5 Recycling Vehicle Leasing

Inclusion of funding to meet the additional costs of leasing vehicles to support the 'blue bin' scheme which is replacing the existing 'kerb it' scheme is proposed. This will allow for the provision of rear end loading vehicles to accommodate the new bin.

7.6 Carbon Reduction

The Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficient Scheme (CRCEES) is a mandatory carbon trading scheme, that came into effect on 1st April 2010. Participation is a legal requirement for organisations that used a minimum of 6,000 MegaWatt hours of electricity during the calendar year 2008. Sunderland City Council is required to participate in the scheme. The first sale of allowances will be in April 2012, based on 'footprint' data from 2010/2011 with an anticipated cost of £540,000 (£320k excluding schools).

7.7 Adult Services Demand Issues

The increasing longevity of the national and specifically, the city's, population continues to place pressure on Adult Social Services budgets. In addition, client expectations and increasing demand to support clients with complex cases to enable clients to maintain independent living, is requiring reconfigured services and additional investment. With these pressures in mind the Government has announced additional funding for Primary Care Trust's over the coming four years, with an expectation that the funding is passported to Local Authorities for investment within Social Care services.

The impact of additional cost pressures and necessary investment have been factored into plans on an initial basis.

7.8 Children's Services Demand Pressures

There continues to be increasing demand pressures in relation to safeguarding and specifically external placements and prudent provision will be made as appropriate to strategy.

7.9 Winter Maintenance

Following the severe winters over the last two financial years additional costs have been incurred in respect of winter maintenance. It is therefore considered prudent to include a sum of £0.800m for planning purposes in line the additional cost incurred in each of the last two years.

7.10 Port Dredging

Dredging of the Port is required yearly to maintain advertised depths in order to enable the Port to continue to operate commercially. This will follow initial dredging works to be carried out in 2011/2012 and will be included from 2012/2013.

7.11 Economic Downturn

Whilst significant resources have already been earmarked to support service pressures and actions in response to the economic downturn as part of the previous years' budgets, given the continuing uncertainties, this will need to be kept under review and appropriate provision made throughout the budget process.

7.12 Integrated Transport Levy

For planning purposes further savings in respect of the ITA levy for 2012/2013 are based on an additional 5% saving being achieved in accordance with the approach agreed by the Tyne and Wear Joint Services Committee during the 2011/2012 budget setting process.

7.13 Invest to Save Programmes

In order to address demand pressures particularly in respect of adult social care and the transformation programme, up front investment to support the future generation of service provision at less cost will be required. The one off costs have been factored into plans and will be updated as plans develop.

7.14 Capital Financing

Prudential borrowing has been provided for within the medium term financial position in relation to known investments over that period, together with a provision to provide future flexibility at this stage to enable strategic priorities of the Council to proceed, in the future.

7.15 Workforce Planning

A range of workforce planning measures are in place to support the smooth implementation of savings proposals. Costs arising from voluntary early retirement can be accommodated from specific resources earmarked for this purpose. In addition the Medium term financial position provides a provision related to the cost of SWITCH. Transitional costs as a result of implementing this strategy are continually refined and reviewed.

8. Spending Priorities

8.1 Priorities from Consultation

The key priorities which emerged through the budget consultation process for 2011/2012 were:

- Community safety
- Refuse collection
- Road and footpath maintenance
- Clean streets
- Facilities for young people
- Affordable decent housing
- Enabling people with a disability, illness or health condition to live independently through access to services and facilities
- Community integration

Resources allocated as part of the 2011/2012 budget recognised these priorities with additional funding earmarked to support highways, the city centre, adult social

care modernisation and recognition of community safety priorities in the context of reduced government grant funding.

The proposals for the 2012/2013 Budget Consultation process are set out elsewhere on today's Cabinet agenda. The approach adopted will broadly follow the approach adopted last year including setting out the latest overall funding position and Council approach to address this through the Sunderland Way of Working and exploring views of residents about the direction of travel for services in response to the changing financial landscape.

Service Priorities

Directorates are currently developing three year Improvement Plans as part of their service planning processes. This will include the identification of key service priorities and action plans. These will need to be considered as they are developed to identify any financial implications.

9. Summary Resource, Pressures and Commitments Position

9.1 The table below summarises the resource and pressures position taking account of the issues set out in paragraphs 4 to 7 above.

9.2 The total reduction in resources and spending pressures represents the estimated overall savings requirements at this stage as follows:

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14 to 2014/15
Latest estimated savings requirement	£57.9m	£25.33m	£33.73m

9.3 In evaluating the overall resource position it should be noted that the position in respect of savings requirements beyond 2012/2013 remains uncertain because of the unknown impact of the Local Government Resource Review which will not be known until the end of this year. Figures are included on the basis of best forecasts at present and will inevitably be subject to change.

10. Strategy for meeting the Savings Requirement

10.1 Productivity and Efficiency Strategy

The Council's Productivity and Efficiency Strategy 2011/2012 to 2014/2015 provides the framework for developing plans for future service delivery, ensuring that the main priorities are to support the most vulnerable residents in the city and enable economic regeneration to attract new businesses to invest in the city, despite the prevailing economic conditions. The strategy supports the aim of ensuring the most productive use of resources is maintained during this period of financial restraint.

This will progress through the continued development of individual Directorate improvement plans and service review / diversification plans to identify future

medium term pressures and the potential for savings aligned to the delivery of the Councils vision and Corporate Outcomes Framework through:

- Specific efficiency savings arising from the Business Transformation Programme;
- Reviewing services to gain a comprehensive understanding of customer need and the most cost effective way of meeting that need through service reviews, including through modernising and improving services across the Council and the Sunderland Way of Working;
- Seeking opportunities through new financial models;
- Directorate cash limits being tightly drawn and prompting the identification and reinvestment of efficiency savings.

10.2 Current Budget Savings Programme

The current savings programme aims to transform the Council into a more efficient and effective organisation and protect as far as possible frontline services through:

- The Business Transformation Programme – focussing on back office services
- Service Reviews and Directorate Modernisation programmes.

It should be noted however, that at this stage whilst targets are in place detailed plans require further development to deliver the savings set out for future years in respect of the Business Transformation programme.

11. Addressing the Savings Requirement

11.1 Options for Savings

Reflecting the approach of the Productivity and Efficiency Strategy set out at paragraph 10, it is proposed the following approach be adopted to securing the existing budget savings programme and identification of additional budget savings proposals:

- Current Budget Savings Programme:
 - Original permanent planned savings for 2011/2012 will be achieved or an alternative must be delivered on an ongoing basis in 2012/2013;
 - In accordance with the budget planning framework agreed for 2011/2012 savings originally identified for 2012/2013 will be achieved. Alternative savings will need to be identified by Directorates where a proposal has become unviable;
 - BTP Work streams to be reviewed to accelerate as appropriate;
 - Current service review programmed savings will be achieved or alternative savings identified by Directorates where necessary.
 - Opportunities for achievement of additional savings through BTP and Service Review Programme be identified;
 - Directorates be requested to bring forward additional savings plans arising from proposed implementation of 3 year Improvement Planning activity to enable a programme of additional key service reviews to be proposed;

- Opportunities for new charges and changes to existing charges be identified;
- External Funding opportunities be pursued and match funding considered for priority areas;
- The position regarding Council tax will be considered as part of the budget process.
- The SWITCH outputs and programme will be considered as part of the budget process;
- All commitments against Delegated surpluses / reserves will be reviewed;

12. Budget Planning Framework 2012/2013

12.1 Summary of Budget Planning Framework

The following budget planning framework for 2012/2013 is proposed:

- that provision for spending commitments be included at this stage on the basis set out at paragraph 7 and kept under review;
- that the spending priorities be considered in line with the finding of the budget consultation and emerging service improvement plans as set out in paragraph 8;
- that budgets be prepared on the basis that all spending pressures not specifically identified above as commitments be accommodated within Directorate cash limits;
- that options for savings to address the funding gap be progressed as set out at paragraph 11.1;
- that commitments against general balances be noted and the scope to utilise balances temporarily be explored.

13. Consultation and Equalities Impact

A framework for evaluating the potential equality impact of the Council's proposals in respect of the 2012/2013 budget and future years will be prepared taking into account:

- The Public Sector Equality Duty and the Equality Act 2010
- The Council's Improvement Plans.

14. Reasons for Decision

- 14.1 The Budget Planning Framework forms an essential part of the process of the preparation and compilation of the Revenue Budget for 2012/2013.

15. Alternative Options

- 15.1 There are no alternative options recommended.

APPENDIX A

Statement of General Fund Balances

	£000	£000
Revised Estimate of Balances as at 31st March 2011		12,419
Additions / Variations to Revised Estimate Balances		
Unutilised Contingencies and non delegated budgets		4,458
Transfer to Earmarked Reserves		
Service Pressures Reserve	(1,000)	
Development Reserve	(1,500)	
Strategic Investment Reserve	(1,958)	(4,458)
Balances 31st March 2011		12,419
Use of Balances 2011/2012		
Contribution to Revenue Budget		(4,849)
Estimated Balances 31st March 2012		7,570

CABINET MEETING – 5 OCTOBER 2011 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET- PART I	
Title of Report: Proposals for Budget Consultation 2012/2013	
Author(s): Chief Executive and Director of Commercial and Corporate Services	
Purpose of Report: To propose the budget consultation strategy and framework to inform the preparation of the Budget for 2012/2013.	
Description of Decision: Cabinet is recommended to approve the budget consultation strategy and framework as set out in this report and refer it to the Management Scrutiny Committee for consideration.	
Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? Yes	
If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework	
Suggested reason(s) for Decision: To comply with the constitutional requirements taking account of central government guidance.	
Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected: There are no alternative options recommended.	
Is this a “Key Decision” as defined in the Constitution? No Is it included in the Forward Plan? No	Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Management

Cabinet - 5th October 2011

Proposals for Budget Consultation 2012/2013

Report of the Chief Executive and Executive Director Commercial and Corporate Services

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To propose the budget consultation strategy and framework to inform the preparation of the Budget for 2012/2013.

2. Description of Decision

- 2.1 To approve the budget consultation strategy and framework as set out in this report and refer it to the Management Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 The Budget and Policy Framework procedure rules contained within the Constitution of the Council requires consultation on budget proposals to take place. This report sets out proposals for budget consultation as part of the 2012/2013 budget process.
- 3.2 For a number of years the Council has recognised consultation as an important part of planning and delivering services that meet peoples' needs. Consultation by the City Council is already very wide-ranging and intensive. Examples range from:
 - consultation in relation to major strategies such as recent consultation around a new customer access strategy;
 - in depth satisfaction surveys such as the Residents Survey;
 - project specific consultation e.g. Royal Sunderland Hospital Area Parking Management Scheme.

Community Empowerment

- 3.3 The government published new Best Value Statutory guidance in September 2011. The new guidance says that authorities have a duty to consult representatives of council tax payers, those who use or are likely to use services provided by the authority, and those appearing to the authority to have an interest in any area within which the authority carries out functions. Authorities should include local voluntary and community organisations and small businesses in such consultation. This should apply at all stages of the commissioning cycle, including when considering the decommissioning of services.

- 3.4 This guidance provides further commitment to the government's localism and Big Society agendas, key aspects of which are to strengthen accountability to local people and empower local communities. This further demonstrates the need for involvement of local residents and voluntary and community sector in the budget setting process to shape what is best for Sunderland.
- 3.5 In order to develop policy and approaches for engaging with and empowering local people a Corporate Communities Officer Group links with the Community Leadership Programme. The groups remit is to embed and integrate community engagement and empowerment and ensure its full value is realised.

Budget and Council Tax Consultation

- 3.6 Central Government highlighted the need for local authorities to establish the views of local taxpayers before they take budget decisions with the publication of guidance in 2002 on conducting budget and council tax consultation.
- 3.7 The 'Council Tax Consultation: Guidelines for Local Authorities' sets out the issues that local authorities should consider when designing their own individual approach to council tax consultation and identifies different methodologies and approaches which might be taken. The following suggested approach draws on this guidance.
- 3.8 It should be noted that the Council remains the ultimate decision making body regardless of the valuable consultation undertaken in relation to budget setting. The process of consultation is about providing Members with more information in order to help them to come to an informed judgement when making budget decisions.

4. Government Guidance on Council Tax Consultation

- 4.1 There are numerous options set out in the Government guidance for developing a dialogue with the public and stakeholders on budget matters. This is simply a menu of methodologies available and there is not in any sense a requirement to pursue most, or all of them (to do so would be impractical and wasteful of resources). The approaches set out are:
- Surveys of citizens panel members e.g. in Sunderland, Community Spirit;
 - Community workshops;
 - Quantitative surveys;
 - Budget conferences / public meetings;
 - Interactive websites;

- Focus groups / forums;
 - Referenda.
- 4.2 The guidance recommends against relying solely on a single methodology to ensure that a full range of public opinion can be tested and suggests adopting a staged approach to consultation:
- Initial stage – this should be early in the budget setting process and involve discussions about priorities for different services;
 - Later stage – this should take place later in the budget setting process once a firmer picture of the financial position is known. This will consider in more detail specific issues, spending priorities and impact on Council Tax levels.

5. Proposed Arrangements

- 5.1 The proposed arrangements largely follow the successful arrangements of previous years with some minor amendments.
- 5.2 The current arrangements for undertaking budget consultation are already extensive and involve:

Consultation – Non Budget Specific

- 5.3 Whilst not budget specific, there are numerous other wide ranging consultations that take place which help to inform the priorities included in the budget consultation process. The Corporate Consultation Strategy seeks to streamline and make maximum use of consultation undertaken including the Resident's Survey, service review specific consultation, and lower level scheme specific consultation. These are all taken into account and used intelligently to help inform the resource allocation process.

Trades Unions and Chamber of Commerce

- 5.4 A briefing will be provided in November on the emerging budget resource position, the spending pressures faced by the Council, and the provisional priorities together with an indication of the impact on services and on council tax provided an informed judgement can be made.
- 5.5 A further consultation is undertaken on the provisional budget proposals during January/February where the priorities, impact on services, and indicative council tax increases are shared. Traditionally, if a formal response is to be received to the consultation it is made at this point, prior to the final consideration of the budget by Cabinet and Council.

Schools Forum, Governors and Head Teachers

- 5.6 Following a similar approach to that adopted for the Trades Unions and the Chamber of Commerce, the Schools Forum, Governors Association and Head Teachers are consulted at meetings held in November and again in January. Issues covered at these meetings include the overall budget position, but also the Children's Services specific issues e.g. Dedicated Schools Grant implications, other specific grants, and spending pressures.

Youth Parliament

- 5.7 Following a similar approach to that adopted for the 2011/2012 budget it is proposed to provide a briefing to the Youth parliament on the emerging budget position and discuss issues and priorities for young people which will be taken into account as part of the consultation process.

Citizens' Panel

- 5.8 A postal self-completion survey is undertaken in October / November of Community Spirit to ascertain views of our citizens panel. This includes exploring views of residents about the direction of travel for services in response to the changing financial landscape.

Other City Residents

- 5.9 In addition to making the survey available to the citizens panel the survey will also be available on-line via the council's e-consultation system. Anyone signed up to the system who has registered an interest in relevant subject areas will be automatically alerted when the survey is added. It will also be promoted via the council's Facebook and Twitter pages, and Community News.
- 5.10 Employees who are residents will be made aware of the online survey and encouraged to take part.

Focus Group workshop sessions

- 5.11 Further detailed feedback is sought from the citizens' panel in the form of budget consultation focus group workshops. The purpose of this element is to add to the feedback gathered from the questionnaire to provide enhanced information to assist in reaching budget decisions.
- 5.12 For the 2011/2012 budget consultation process, the approach included workshops where members of the Citizens Panel were invited to attend Focus Group events held in November at four locations throughout the

City. A number of locations and varying times are used in order to encourage a wider representation of attendance from across the city with sessions held at locations North of the River, South of the River, and in the Coalfields and Washington.

5.13 Attendance is limited by necessity to manageable numbers of Citizens Panel representatives at each group i.e. approximately 30 – 40 participants per session. However, the mixture of day and evening sessions ensures options on attendance for participants.

5.14 The events are arranged in two stages:

- Stage 1 provides a briefing on the financial context for the coming Budget, the purpose of the session being to enable participants to understand the broad issues facing the Council so that they can provide more informed feedback at the second stage session. This stage includes a question and answer session with senior officers which participants have indicated is a valued part of the process.
- Stage 2 takes the form of small group workshops with relevant council officers

The aim is to enable a more in depth analysis of local residents' views to be ascertained.

5.15 Summary feedback from the events informs the budget decision making process.

5.16 Very positive feedback was received from those involved in the Focus Group events in preparing the 2011/2012 revenue budget and it is proposed that this approach be repeated for the 2012/2013 budget process.

Independent Advisory Groups (IAG's) and Voluntary Sector

5.7 These citywide groups were formed to provide an opportunity for marginalized or hard to reach people in the city to contribute their views on public services and policy development. There are seven groups looking at different themes - disability, gender, BME (race), older people, younger people, LGB (lesbian, gay and bisexual) and faith.

As part of the 2011/2012 budget consultation process IAG members and the CVS (Community Voluntary Service) were asked to partake in the same survey as undertaken with the Citizens Panel. For the 2012/2013 budget, the IAGs and Voluntary Community Sector representatives will be asked to encourage completion of the survey through their networks.

- 5.8 In addition a separate workshop session was held with representatives of the IAGs and VCS to enable further informed feedback to be gained. It is proposed that a similar approach be undertaken for the 2012/2013 budget.

Elected Members

- 5.9 As ward councillors elected members gather the views of local people and are able to feed these views into the political decision making process on priorities and council tax levels.

Timetable

- 5.10 A timetable for the proposed consultation is set out at Appendix A.

Budget Consultation 2012/2013 and Beyond

- 5.11 The Council has developed its budget consultation approach over a number of years. Following this years' consultation exercise it is intended to gather feedback on the effectiveness of both the Citizens Panel survey and the focus group workshops and use this to inform the budget consultation process for 2013/2014.

6. Involvement of Management Scrutiny Committee

In relation to the consideration of the budget, the constitution places a responsibility on the Cabinet to 'canvas the views of local stakeholders as appropriate'. The Management Scrutiny Committee is then required to consider the process proposed and undertaken and ensure its adequacy. It is therefore proposed to refer this consultation strategy and framework to the Management Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

7. Reasons for Decision

To comply with the constitutional requirements taking account of central government guidance.

8. Alternative Options

There are no alternative options recommended.

Background Papers

Council Tax Consultation - Guidelines for Local Authorities (publication of the former ODPM June 2002)

Best Value Statutory Guidance - CLG September 2011

Budget Consultation – Proposed Timetable

As recommended by the government it is suggested that a two stage approach to budget and council tax consultation be continued. The timetable below is proposed:

October 2011

- Agree approach with IAGs via the Inclusive Communities Thematic Group.
- During late October / early November a survey is to be undertaken using Community Spirit and Independent Advisory Groups. This includes exploring views of residents about the direction of travel for services in response to the changing financial landscape.
- The survey will also be available for all residents to complete on-line through the Council's new e-consultation solution.

November 2011

- Commence consultation with Trade Unions, representatives of Business Rate Payers, the Schools Forum, Head Teachers, Governors, and the Sunderland Youth Parliament. Consultation covers the anticipated budget constraints and spending priorities identified in the Medium Term Financial Strategy following adoption of the budget planning framework by Cabinet.
- In late November it is proposed to hold four budget consultation focus group workshops for representatives of the Citizens Panel using an Area based approach covering North of the River, South of the River, Coalfields and Washington.
- Workshop with Independent Advisory Groups and Community Voluntary Service.

January 2012

- Feedback from the consultation exercises in October / November will be collated and reported to Cabinet and the Management Scrutiny Committee to inform the budget decision-making process at that time.

Late January early February 2012

- Final consultations take place with Trades Unions, Chamber of Commerce, the Schools Forum, Headteachers, Governors, and the Youth Parliament regarding the budget.

March 2012

- Feedback to the public generally on:
 - the outcomes of the budget setting process;
 - how the decision-making process was informed by the consultation.

It is proposed to communicate through appropriate methods including the Council Tax Leaflet and direct to the participants of Community Spirit and through the Internet.

CABINET MEETING – 5 OCTOBER 2011 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I	
Title of Report: Localising Support for Council Tax in England Consultation Response	
Author(s): Executive Director of Commercial and Corporate Services	
Purpose of Report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purpose of this report is to advise Cabinet of a consultation exercise on the proposed localisation of Council Tax support in England. It also makes Cabinet aware of the potential impact of these proposals and how the council intends to respond to the consultation, and asks for any comments or amendments Cabinet may wish to add to the main issues included in the response as highlighted within paragraphs 4.3 and 4.4. 	
Description of Decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To note the potential impact of the proposals contained within the consultation and to provide any additional comments or amendments to the main issues included in the proposed consultation response. 	
Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? *Yes/No	
If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework	
Suggested reason(s) for Decision: The reason for the decision is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note the impact of the proposals to provide local support for Council Tax Agree a response to the consultation, by providing any additional comments or amendments to the draft response 	
Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected: The only alternative option would be to not respond to the consultation	
Is this a “Key Decision” as defined in the Constitution? No Is it included in the Forward Plan? No	Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Management Scrutiny Committee

CABINET 5 OCTOBER 2011

LOCALISING SUPPORT FOR COUNCIL TAX IN ENGLAND CONSULTATION RESPONSE

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF COMMERCIAL AND CORPORATE SERVICES

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Cabinet of a consultation exercise on the proposed localisation of Council Tax support in England.
- 1.2 It also makes Cabinet aware of the potential impact of these proposals and how the council intends to respond to the consultation, and asks for any comments or amendments Cabinet may wish to add to the main issues included in the response as highlighted within paragraphs 4.3 and 4.4.

2 Description of Decision

- 2.1 To note the potential impact of the proposals contained within the consultation and to provide any additional comments or amendments to the main issues included in the proposed consultation response.

3 Consultation

- 3.1 Communities and Local government (CLG) have issued a consultation which seeks views on proposals for the localisation of Council Tax support in England from 2013. The consultation is open for anyone to respond, and the consultation will close on 14 October 2011.
- 3.2 The consultation sets out:
 - Schemes must be developed within broad parameters set by the Government, including:
 - The framework for support for eligible pensioners – which will ensure pensioners are no worse off.
 - The importance of supporting incentives to work to ensure that people are generally better off working than claiming benefits.
 - Local authorities will be encouraged to consider how the process of establishing eligibility for working age claimants can be simplified. The Government will work with local government to understand how data sharing can help further reduce administrative costs and complexity.
 - Local authorities will seek to integrate arrangements for providing support within the council tax system, and will continue to provide support to households as a reduction in the amount of council tax payable, rather than a cash payment.

The reform will be accompanied by a new Government grant to local authorities, who will be able to take this into account when setting the local scheme.

The Government will consider whether maintaining the new grant allocations unchanged for several years will help to provide certainty for local authorities.

This consultation document sets out proposals for local mechanisms to help manage financial pressures.

- 3.3 Members have recently received briefings on the wider impact of Welfare Reform plans including the proposal to localise Council Tax support.

4 Impact of the proposals /Response to the Consultation

- 4.1 Currently, the Council pays Council Tax support (Council Tax Benefit) to eligible customers on behalf of Government, and this is based on Government rules. From April 2013 it is proposed that the Council must design, implement, and pay Council Tax support based on its own local scheme. It is proposed that funding will be reduced by 10%. The detail of the proposals are still be worked through, however, the broad principal will be that any local scheme must not work against Government policy of making work pay and supporting eligible pensioners. This will mean that the scheme will have to support incentives to work and ensure that people are generally better off working than claiming benefits and to ensure that pensioners are no worse off than under the current scheme. Significant work is ongoing to understand and manage these proposed changes, such as impact assessments and financial modelling. In addition, the financial risk of changing the grants to Local Authorities, such as the current £3.5M administration grant for paying the benefit and potential for freezing the 90% funding irrespective of changes in caseload, will need to be planned for when the detail is released. In summary, there is significant potential financial risk to these proposals.
- 4.2 A task group led by the Executive Director of Commercial and Corporate Services, is in place to respond to the Welfare Reform agenda. The task group will assist the city in dealing with the significant changes of Welfare Reform, both up to 2013 when localised Council Tax support and Universal Credit are implemented (April and October 2013), and to 2015 when Housing Benefit claims will cease. The task group consists of officers from Policy, Welfare Advice, Housing Advice/Policy, Child Poverty Board, Customer Services, Community Services, Benefits, Council Tax, Finance, Communications and Fraud, which will be expanded to include external partners and stakeholders who can take a city wide approach to the changes.
- 4.3 The task group have produced a draft response to the questions raised in the consultation. The main issues included within the response are set out below:
- The value of any funding provided should adequately recognise the cost of provision by the local authority

- The potential 10% reduction and pensioner protection should not impact disproportionately on other client groups.
- The ability to support new vulnerable groups will be limited without the Local authority meeting the cost.
- Local authorities will need access to DWP/HMRC/Pension Service data, and passporting of information to allow for administration, forecast demand, and take up actions.
- There needs to be a clear understanding of the impact of other benefit changes.
- Local Authorities will need to be able have access to national employment market data, as well as local data to determine the likelihood of additional demand.
- There are significant risks in the timescales and it may not be possible for software providers to deliver by April 2013, particularly as primary and secondary legislation will not be in place until 2012.
- External scrutiny of the scheme should be minimised, and Council Members must be involved in the development of any scheme.
- Setting longer periods of award or runs-ons will give stability and reduce administration costs.
- Any risk sharing should be in the form of a legally binding agreement.
- There should be simplified approach to the application process, changes in circumstances, award letters and decision making.

4.4 Whilst not requested by government, it is proposed that some additional comments could be included in the consultation should Cabinet wish to express some more fundamental concerns regarding the proposals, including,

- The development of the local Council Tax support is taking place alongside the Local Government Resource Review and Business Rates localisation. All are proposing a significant change which could have major financial planning implications. The proposals put an unacceptable risk on Local Authorities, in terms of grant level, ability to collect Council Tax from those who cannot afford to pay, and is not consistent with proposals for localisation of Business Rates.
- Welfare Reform is something that should be dealt with by central government policy.
- Whilst local schemes will provide discretion, it will mean that entitlement will vary between Local Authorities.

4.5 Work is underway on a task group action plan to address the Welfare Reform impact, including the localisation of Council Tax Support. Actions underway include, financial modelling, impact assessments, risk register, take up strategies, advice provision (including major employers in Sunderland), joint working with landlords, and linkages to Housing Reform and Community Resilience. Future actions include, comprehensive and ongoing reporting to Members of progress against the action plan, development of communication strategies / social marketing, consultation, maximisation of income and preparation for the take on of community care grants and crisis loans.

5 Reasons for the Decision

- 5.1 The reason for the decision is to:
Note the impact of the proposals to provide local support for Council Tax
- 5.2 Agree a response to the consultation, by providing any additional comments or amendments to the draft response

6 Alternative Options

- 6.1 The only alternative option would be to not respond to the consultation

7 Relevant Considerations/Consultations

(a) Financial Implications

The financial implications are set out in paragraph 4.1 of the report. The Executive Director of Commercial and Corporate Services has confirmed the position.

(b) Legal Implications

The Head of Law and Governance has been consulted on the preparation of this report and there are no issues in relation to the legality of the proposed response.

8. Background Papers

- 1. Communities and Local Government Consultation paper, Localising Support for Council Tax in England

CABINET MEETING – 5 OCTOBER 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

Local Government Resource Review Consultation

Author(s):

Executive Director of Commercial and Corporate Services

Purpose of Report:

This report provides details of the government's consultation paper on the local retention of business rates which is the main thrust of the Local Government Resource Review and sets out:

- the main features of the government's Local Government Resource Review proposals as set out in the consultation document released on 18th July 2011 and the eight technical papers released on 19th August 2011 which require responses by 24th October 2011;
- the potential impact of these proposals on the Council;
- how the Council intends to respond to the consultation paper (Appendix 2), and
- that the Council is to feed in comments to both ANEC and SIGOMA to support their individual responses to the consultation.

Description of Decision:

Cabinet is requested to:

- Note the contents of this report;
- Add any additional points or comments to the draft response;
- Note that the Council is to help inform the responses to the consultation of both ANEC and SIGOMA.

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? No

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

To respond to the government's consultation on the Local Government Resource Review.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

No alternative options are proposed.

Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution? No

Relevant Scrutiny Committee:

Management

Is it included in the Forward Plan? No

Local Government Resource Review Consultation

Report of the Executive Director of Commercial and Corporate Services

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1** This report provides details of the government's consultation paper on the local retention of business rates which is the main thrust of the Local Government Resource Review and sets out:
- the main features of the government's Local Government Resource Review proposals as set out in the consultation document released on 18th July 2011 and the technical papers released on 19th August 2011 which requires responses by 24th October 2011;
 - the potential impact of these proposals on the Council;
 - how the Council is to respond to the consultation papers (Appendix 2); and,
 - that the Council is to feed in comments to both ANEC and SIGOMA to support their individual responses to the consultation.

2. Description of Decision

- 2.1** Members are requested to:
- Note the contents of this report.
 - Add any additional points or comments to the draft response.
 - Note that the Council is to help inform the responses to the consultation of both ANEC and SIGOMA.

3. Background

- 3.1** The government announced last October in their Spending Review 2010 (SR10), which covered the period 2011/12 to 2014/15, that it was to reform the way local government revenue expenditure is financed as the current Formula Grant system was regarded as too complex, lacked transparency and was criticised by most councils that it did not allocate resources to where they were most needed.
- 3.2** The government, following on from this, announced in December 2010 a 2 year local government finance settlement which covered the years 2011/12 and 2012/13 with the intention of introducing a new funding system from 1st April 2013. The system will have to be reviewed in some way from 1st April 2015 however to incorporate the separate and specific arrangements for non billing authorities such as Police and Fire and Rescue authorities which have been excluded from the proposed changes in 2013/14 and 2014/15.
- 3.3** In the SR10 the combined effect of projected business rates growth and the planned reductions in government funding means that from 2013/2014 business rates income nationally is projected to be sufficient to fund total local government spending with excess funds anticipated which are also being consulted upon. This fact together with the criticisms of the present system, LGA pressure for business rate to be localised, and options presented by various think-tank groups has meant that the government has decided to implement this option and is therefore no longer a proposal up for discussion. The consultation is more about the detail of how the new system will operate.

3.4 A summary of the main changes proposed in the consultation document is set out in Appendix 1 for information.

4. Impact on the Council

4.1 The current proposals could adversely impact upon the Councils funding levels from 2013/14 as:

- Details of the final scheme to be implemented by the government could still produce significant winners and losers across the country and the Council will not know the true impact until the scheme is finalised and fully exemplified despite claims by the government that no council will be any worse off under the new system.
- The scheme may not be fair in terms of resource equalisation, as it needs to ensure that those councils with high spending needs and with the least ability or opportunity to generate increased business rates in the most deprived areas of the country, is fully recognised within the new system.
- The Council has incurred most of the government cuts in funding in the first two years of the finance settlement which were front loaded and this also saw the council facing significantly greater cuts compared to both the national average and the more affluent parts of the country. If the new system starts at this point then this will perpetuate the current unfairness in the current funding system which will effectively widen the resources gap between the deprived and affluent councils across the country.
- If the Formula grant baseline is fixed at 2012/2013 levels and additional income generated through business rate growth is utilised to support economic growth only, then this will impact on the amount of funding available for future additional service needs especially on the more deprived areas of the country.
- Whilst the Council welcomes incentives for economic growth such as Enterprise Zones to be introduced to enable business rate income to be used to support repayment of investment in infrastructure costs, this will mean that service needs, for example adult social care increased costs due to increased elderly population, will need to be recognised through special grant or alternative funding arrangements – otherwise the Council will have to reduce services to pay for increases due to demographic changes that it has little control over.
- The Council needs to ensure it has systems in place to be able to administer the new system and its requirements and that other related developments such as the proposed localised housing and council tax benefits changes can also be accommodated from 1st April 2013.

4.2 The government published an additional set of 8 technical papers on 19th August with an extra set of 36 questions to help further inform the consultation covering the following areas, which are still being considered and include:

- Establishing the baseline position
- Measuring business rates
- Dealing with non billing authorities such as police / fire and rescue authorities
- Business rates administration
- Tariff, top up and levy options
- Volatility
- Revaluations and Transitional arrangements
- Renewable Energy

4.3 The delay and timing of the release of these technical papers results in a much reduced time frame in which to properly consider the government's proposals.

4.4 The Council has considered the details and the specific issues raised by the 33 questions set out in the original consultation document and the proposed draft response is set out in Appendix 2 for member's information.

4.5 The Council will also help to inform the responses from ANEC and SIGOMA as appropriate as well responding to the consultation in its own right.

The headlines and key issues from a Sunderland perspective will be highlighted when making the submission to government.

5. Reasons for Decision

5.1 To respond to the government's consultation on the Local Government Resource Review.

6. Alternative Options

6.1 No alternative options are proposed

6. Background Papers:

Local Government Resource Review: Proposal for Business Rate Retention Consultation

The main changes proposed in the Consultation document

1. Summary of the proposals

- The main change relates to the planned introduction of incentivising councils to grow business rate income by allowing them to retain a certain percentage of their Business rates growth each year above a predetermined quantum. This will replace the current Formula Grant mechanism.
- Business Rates will still be determined nationally by the government however the consultation paper sets out various issues to be considered on how the new system will operate, what the starting point will be and also addresses particularly where councils do not currently generate enough business rate income to finance their spending / budget. This situation applies to Sunderland which receives £58.3m in re-distributed rates and additionally RSG of £20.6m from the government to add to the amount it currently collects in business rates of £79.3m. The combined figure of £158.2m forms the Council's Formula Grant allocation for 2011/2012.
- The New Homes Bonus Grant directly interacts with Formula Grant because Formula grant is to be top sliced to help fund the New Homes Bonus in addition to the £1 billion set aside in the SR10 over the 4 year period. As Formula grant will end in 2012/13 this area also needs to be consulted on to ensure sufficient funding is in place to finance this initiative for future years.
- Tax Increment Financing and Enterprise Zones are also being consulted on in the paper as these will also be affected by the introduction of the retention of business rates proposals.
- There are also a number of other related issues covered in the consultation dealing with areas such as: pooled arrangements, the Central List, Local Authority Central Services Education Funding (LACSEG) to help fund statutory services transferring from LEA's to Academies, Business Rates Relief and other functions funded by the local government finance settlement.
- It is evident that the Government intends to implement these changes in full and that the consultation is to inform or tweak the final system being consulted upon.

2. Features of the Consultation

2.1 Principles for Reform

The consultation states the key principles for reform as:

- To build into the local government finance system an incentive for local authorities to promote local growth over the long term
- To reduce local authorities' dependence upon central government , by producing as many self sufficient authorities as possible
- To maintain a degree of redistribution of resources to ensure that authorities with high need low tax-bases are still able to meet the needs of their areas

- Protection for businesses and specifically no increases in locally imposed taxation without the agreement of local businesses

2.2 A scheme for business rate retention

There are seven core components that the government has highlighted in the consultation document, these include:

2.2.1 *A fair starting point...*

Component 1: Setting the baseline

To establish a fair starting point for all local authorities and ensure that no-one loses out at the outset of the system the proposal is to set a baseline position in 2013-14 for each local authority, within the overall envelope of the expenditure control totals set out in the 2010 Spending Review. This means that a proportion of business rates revenues will be set aside and directed to local government through other grants.

2.2.2 **Component 2: Setting tariffs and top ups**

In order to achieve this fair starting position, government would calculate a tariff or top up amount for each local authority. Those authorities with business rates in excess of their baseline level of funding would pay a tariff to government; those authorities with business rates yield below their baseline would receive a top up grant from government. The tariff and top up grants would be self funding and remain fixed in future years.

2.2.3 *A strong growth incentive...*

Component 3: The incentive effect

In future years, local authorities would keep a significant proportion of increases in their business rates. So, authorities whose business rates grew would retain a significant proportion of that growth in revenues, while those whose rates declined or grew at a lower rate would experience lower or negative growth.

2.2.4 *A levy recouping a share of disproportionate growth to ensure sufficient stability in the System...*

Component 4: A levy recouping a share of disproportionate benefit

To manage the possibility that some local authorities with high business rate taxbases could see disproportionate financial gains, government would recoup a share of disproportionate benefit through a levy. The proceeds would, in the first instance, be used to manage significant negative volatility in individual authorities' business rates and so ensure stability in the system. Depending on the amounts raised, resources could also be redistributed to, for instance, authorities with lower growth, or for example, to fund regeneration schemes, in areas with high growth potential.

2.2.5 **Component 5: Adjusting for revaluation**

The system would be adjusted to take account of changes in the distribution of business rates yield resulting from five yearly revaluations, while ensuring that the incentive to promote physical growth in the business rates base remained in place for all authorities.

2.2.6 *An ability to reset to ensure levels of need are met...*

Component 6: Resetting the system

Government would have the option of resetting the system if it was felt that resources no longer met changing service pressures sufficiently within individual local authority areas. The longer the period between resets, the greater the incentive effect and level of certainty for local authorities about the funding system.

2.2.7 *And a mechanism for collaborating.*

Component 7: Pooling

Local authorities, for example those in local enterprise partnerships, or districts and counties, could choose to form voluntary pools within the system, allowing them to share the benefits of growth and smooth the impact of volatility over a wider economic area.

2.2.8 Technical papers were provided in late August (e.g. 'Tariff, top up and levy options') allowing local authorities to see the effect of the options within the key components upon the balance between maximising the growth incentive and offering sufficient protections in order to help inform local authority's views on the proposals.

Summary of consultation questions and draft responses

Chapter 3: A scheme for rate retention

Component 1: Setting the baseline

Q1: What do you think that the Government should consider in setting the baseline?

Proposed Draft Response

A number of issues need to be considered in setting the baseline that are not adequately reflected in the 2012-2013 formula grant settlement, which is the proposed basis for setting the baseline for the new system. The government should consider setting the baseline using a method that takes into account the socio economic needs of deprived areas and areas with an increasingly aging population, commencing this initiative on a fairer and more transparent basis.

Q2: Do you agree with the proposal to use 2012-13 formula grant as the basis for constructing the baseline?

Proposed Draft Response

No. The more deprived areas of the country have generally received a poorer grant settlement because of the many changes to the formula grant system introduced from 1st April 2011. There was also a raft of other changes that impacted upon the level of formula grant from 2011/12 onwards that were either not fully included to correctly inform the true baseline position reduction e.g. education grants removed from Area Based Grant (for this authority this amounted to a loss of grant of £4.5m) and this was in addition to the significant in year cuts of £5.150m to revenue grant funding or where adjustments / deductions were made that could not be fully supported (e.g. Academies top slice).

If so, which of the two options at paragraphs 3.13 and 3.14 do you prefer and why?

Neither. The Council does not agree with the proposed starting point of 2012/2013 as set out in the consultation paper both options sets the baseline by adjusting the 2012/013 formula grant allocations using the national baseline. The proposed national baseline includes adjustments for New Homes Bonus and other initiatives that we believe should be funded centrally outside of this new grant regime.

Component 2: Setting the tariffs and top ups

Q3: Do you agree with this proposed component of tariff and top up amounts as a way of re-balancing the system in year one?

Proposed Draft Response

Yes – this seems appropriate so that the system can commence on an agreed and fair basis. The Council has concerns however that this position must be agreed and is fully reflective of the particularly high needs (deprivation) and resources (resource equalisation) of councils especially those currently net recipients of business rates.

Q4: Which option for setting the fixed tariff and top up amounts do you prefer and why?

Proposed Draft Response

The Council would prefer option 1 which up-rates the tariff and top up amounts by the RPI each year to reflect the annual RPI increase applied to business rates each year. (The alternative option is to retain the cash amounts and not up-rate by RPI which would have the effect of creating as strong incentive for growth but offers less protection to authorities with low tax bases and high needs).

Component 3: The incentive effect

Q5: Do you agree that the incentive effect would work as described?

Proposed Draft Response

Yes both options will work however as previously mentioned full recognition and safety net funding will be required to protect those not able to generate sufficient or targeted growth because of their location / circumstances.

Component 4: A levy recouping a share of disproportionate benefit

Q6: Do you agree with our proposal for a levy on disproportionate benefit, and why?

Proposed Draft Response

Yes - the system must be fair and sustainable especially in order to provide funding for those councils with little opportunity to grow their tax base because of their location or because of other prohibiting factors such as the levels of deprivation and other socio-economic factors that impact on their ability to grow their economy faster or higher than in high growth / self sufficient areas. The level at which the recoupment commences will need to be transparent and fair, the technical papers are unclear on this point as it will depend upon whether tariffs and top-ups are index linked.

Q7: Which option for calculating the levy do you prefer and why?

Proposed Draft Response

The third option is preferred to allow the retention of growth in an equivalent proportion to its baseline revenue e.g. 1% growth in business rates income equalling retention of up to 1% revenue growth. This would mean that where a 1% growth is achieved it will not exceed 1% of an authority's baseline revenue. This way the gearing effect that exists is addressed and means a more equal incentive to all authorities. It is noted that this option could be flexed to either increase or reduce incentives by changing the percentages accordingly. (e.g. retain a 2% revenue increase means councils would keep more of their growth etc.).

Q8: What preference do you have for the size of the levy?

Proposed Draft Response

The levy must be fair and appropriate so that it generates sufficient funding to provide adequate protection to those that require it. The Council appreciates that this will be a difficult balancing act as the greater the size of the levy the lower the potential incentive for growth however in the interests of fairness the council would prefer the government to ensure fairness is inherent in the system and that high need low tax base councils are adequately and properly funded – the risk is that they are not which could impact detrimentally on services particularly in deprived areas where there may be less opportunity to increase business rates. .

Q9: Do you agree with this approach to deliver the Renewable Energy commitment?

Proposed Draft Response

The Council supports the approach in principle that local authorities can retain the full business rates revenues from new renewable projects which means this income is excluded from the business rates top up and levy calculations each year. However, the proposal is that this would only apply new schemes from 1st April 2013, we believe that all renewable energy schemes should have the same exemptions applied to them regardless of the implementation date. The current proposals penalise those areas that have been at the forefront of renewable energy initiatives.

Q10: Do you agree that the levy pot should fund a safety net to protect local authorities:

- i) whose funding falls by more than a fixed percentage compared with the previous year (protection from large year to year changes); or
- ii) whose funding falls by more than a fixed percentage below their baseline position (the rates income floor)?

Proposed Draft Response

i) and ii) Yes to both questions - variations and fluctuations in business rate income are unavoidable and are usually beyond the control of local authorities in most cases as they tend to arise because of economic conditions or where a major industry ceases trading. This protection is considered essential to the fairness of the system. The level of the floor will need to be considered carefully and may need to take into account the impact on a councils net revenue budget requirement as well as the impact on its business rate income to ensure the impact is not disproportionate to its funding.

Q11: What should be the balance between offering strong protections and strongly incentivising growth?

Proposed Draft Response

The Council would support a system that offers appropriate protection or constraint that means a council can not experience a drop or increase in its business rate funding beyond a set percentage of its revenue budget by type or by banding (eg low tax base). Councils need some certainty to be able to set their budgets each year.

Q12: Which of the options for using any additional levy proceeds, above those required to fund the safety net, are you attracted to and why?

Proposed Draft Response

All income generated by business rates should be retained for local authority spending. The Council would support the view that some funds must be set aside in higher growth years to ensure sufficient funding is available to fund the safety net in lower growth years. It is also recognised that to rebalance the economy, one of the government's aims that it would also be appropriate to provide additional revenue support to areas of lower growth and to target projects to unlock growth and prosperity in these low growth areas.

Q13: Are there any other ways you think we should consider using the levy proceeds?

Proposed Draft Response

To create more Enterprise zones particularly targeted in low or low tax base areas or to provide grants or low / zero interest loans (this could be linked to TIF's) for infrastructure development those areas.

Component 5: Adjusting for revaluation

Q14: Do you agree with the proposal to readjust the tariff and top up of each authority at each revaluation to maintain the incentive to promote physical growth and manage volatility in budgets?

Proposed Draft Response

Yes this seems reasonable as this would then remove the volatility caused by revaluation changes.

Q15: Do you agree with this overall approach to managing transitional relief?

Proposed Draft Response

We support the principle to strip out from the rates retention scheme the impact of transitional relief but would need to see the impact this will have on the new system.

Component 6: Resetting the system

Q16: Do you agree that the system should include the capacity to reset tariff and top up levels for changing levels of service need over time?

Proposed Draft Response

Yes this would seem fair and reasonable as changes will inevitably need to be made to the system over time to address changes in spending patterns, income generation etc.

Q17: Should the timings of reset be fixed or subject to government decision?

Proposed Draft Response

The timings should be fixed and could coincide with each Spending Review period. There should be sufficient funding in the system to be able to deal with any in-year volatility over the period.

Q18: If fixed, what timescale do you think is appropriate?

Proposed Draft Response

See above.

Q19: What are the advantages and disadvantages of both partial and full resets? Which do you prefer?

Proposed Draft Response

A full reset should be carried out periodically to reflect changes in circumstances across the country – 4 years which reflects the spending review period is considered appropriate for this purpose.

Q20: Do you agree that we should retain flexibility on whether a reset involves a new basis for assessing need?

Proposed Draft Response

Yes as with any national funding mechanism a reset should retain the flexibility to include a new basis for assessing need.

Component 7: Pooling

Q21: Do you agree that pooling should be subject to the three criteria listed at paragraph 3.50 and why?

Proposed Draft Response

Yes – they seem relevant and appropriate. It is important that any pooling has clear governance arrangements and that each party can return to their original position if required.

Q22: What assurances on workability and governance should be required?

Proposed Draft Response

Those who part-take would need to ensure that the scheme and the conditions agreed to are clear, transparent and clarify the actions in all situations by way of a signed agreement to ensure all parties are fully aware of the working and reporting arrangements put in place.

Q23: How should pooling in two tier areas be managed? Should districts be permitted to form pools outside their county area subject to the consent of the county or should there be a fourth criterion stating that there should always be alignment?

Proposed Draft Response

The Council is a unitary metropolitan council and is responding on this basis. Districts should only be allowed to pool within their county boundary for ease of administration and accountability reasons. The fourth criterion is therefore supported.

Q24: Should there be further incentives for groups of authorities forming pools and if so, what would form the most effective incentive?

Proposed Draft Response

No, pooling should be a matter for individual or groups of authorities to consider on their merits.

Impact on non-billing authorities

Q25: Do you agree with these approaches to non-billing authorities?

Proposed Draft Response

Yes it seems reasonable to exclude the police and fire authority until 2015/16 and base grant allocations on the control totals set out in the SR10. However it is important that the method of grant allocations to these authorities is further exemplified and agreed as soon as possible to assist them with their longer term financial plans both in the interim period and to show how they would be affected from 2015/16 if included in the new system.

Chapter 4: Interactions with existing policies and commitments

New Homes Bonus

Q26: Do you agree this overall approach to funding the New Homes Bonus within the rates retention system?

Proposed Draft Response

No. The council is opposed to local government funding the government's initiative as this should be funded by central government outside of this system. The proposal will also remove more New Homes Bonus funding than required in the early years of the new scheme, the Council would agree in principal to returning this funding to local government however using the proposed baseline as a method of allocation would be unfair due to the reasons discussed earlier in this consultation response.

Q27. What do you think the mechanism for refunding surplus funding to local government should be?

Proposed Draft Response

Not applicable see response above Q26.

Any surplus should be targeted to low growth areas as an alternative to simply redistributing sums in proportion to each councils' baseline position.

Business rates relief

Q28: Do you agree that the current system of business rates reliefs should be maintained?

Proposed Draft Response

Yes.

Chapter 5: Supporting local economic growth through new instruments

Q29: Which approach to Tax Increment Financing do you prefer and why?

Proposed Draft Response

Option 2 is preferred however the government would have to limit the number of schemes as otherwise it would impact on the amount nationally available to fund the levy pot (this funds the protection / safety net for net recipients). Preference should be given to TIF applications from low growth / low tax base authorities.

Q30: Which approach do you consider will enable local authorities and developers to take maximum advantage of Tax Increment Financing?

Proposed Draft Response

Option 2 has more certainty as business rates are then not included in the national rate retention scheme.

Q31: Would the risks to revenues from the levy and reset in option 1 limit the appetite for authorities to securitise growth revenues?

Proposed Draft Response

Yes.

Q32: Do you agree that pooling could mitigate this risk?

Proposed Draft Response

No difficult to see how pooling would work here.

Q33: Do you agree that central government would need to limit the numbers of projects in option 2? How best might this work in practice?

Proposed Draft Response

Yes. Priority must go to the low tax base authorities.

CABINET MEETING – 5 OCTOBER 2011 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I	
Title of Report: Capital Investment in Schools – Opportunity to bid for priority schools building programme	
Author(s): Executive Director of Children’s Services and Executive Director of Commercial and Corporate Services	
Purpose of Report: The purpose of this report is to advise and update members on the current position in relation to capital investment in schools and the opportunity to bid for the Department for Education (DfE) Priority Schools Building Programme, which is a programme funded by the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). The report also asks members to consider the recommendation to undertake further work with a specific group of schools to determine their eligibility for the Department for Education (DfE) Priority Schools Building Programme. Should these schools meet eligibility criteria, the final list of schools that meet eligibility criteria will be provided to the Cabinet meeting on 5 th October 2011. Subject to approval at the meeting, Children’s Services will submit a bid on behalf of those schools to the Department for Education (DfE) to be included in the Priority Schools Building Programme.	
Description of Decision: Cabinet is recommended to approve that:	
(ii) Should the specific group of schools meet eligibility criteria, the final list will be provided to the Cabinet meeting on 5 th October 2011. Subject to approval at the meeting, Children’s Services will submit a bid on behalf of those schools to the Department for Education (DfE) to be included in the Priority Schools Building Programme.	
Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? *Yes/No	
If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework	
Suggested reason(s) for Decision: Submitting an application for the Priority Schools Building Programme is a pragmatic opportunity to tackle the issues in those schools which are deemed to be in the worst condition in Sunderland. An opportunity such as this may not present itself for some time in the future and the capital investment would allow annual capital maintenance monies to then be allocated to a wider group of schools. This in turn would enable the maintenance backlog to be addressed.	
Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected: In terms of progressing capital investment priorities for schools within Sunderland, the Priority Schools Building Programme is the only opportunity available at this time. Therefore there are no alternative options suggested.	
Is this a “Key Decision” as defined in the Constitution? Yes	Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Children, Young People and Learning
Is it included in the Forward Plan? Yes	

JOINT REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF COMMERCIAL AND CORPORATE SERVICES**CAPITAL INVESTMENT IN SCHOOLS – OPPORTUNITY TO BID FOR PRIORITY SCHOOLS BUILDING PROGRAMME****1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise and update members on the current position in relation to capital investment in schools and the opportunity to bid for the Department for Education (DfE) Priority Schools Building Programme, which is a programme funded by the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). The report also asks members to consider the recommendation to undertake further work with a specific group of schools to determine their eligibility for the Department for Education (DfE) Priority Schools Building Programme.

2. Description of Decision

- 2.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve that:
- (i) Should the specific group of schools meet eligibility criteria, the final list will be provided to the Cabinet meeting on 5th October 2011. Subject to approval at the meeting, Children's Services will submit a bid on behalf of those schools to the Department for Education (DfE) to be included in the Priority Schools Building Programme.

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 The Council has maximised opportunities over the past ten years to invest in schools wherever possible with a total of more than £200 million invested in new build over that period. Through Building Schools for the Future (BSF) and Primary Capital Programme, the Council successfully implemented significant capital investment of more than £120 million in eight secondary schools and Sunderland academies, and had secured investment of approximately £10 million in primary and primary special schools with building works currently underway (St Joseph's RC Primary School and Maplewood Primary Special School). Prior to its cessation in July 2010, Sunderland had also successfully secured a place in Wave 7 of BSF which would have seen a further £130 million invested in the nine remaining secondary schools and 4 secondary special schools across the city.
- 3.2 The removal of the above funding has frustrated plans to create a fit for purpose school estate and to eliminate the backlog of significant condition priorities which still exist in many of our schools. The backlog across all schools amounts to some £20 – 25 million approximately. In 2011/12 capital allocations for schools were reduced nationally by about 60% compared to 2010/11 funding, largely due to the demise of BSF and pending the outcome of the government commissioned

Sebastian James Review. The number of funding streams for the Council were reduced in 2011/12 with £3,307,883 allocated in Basic Need funding and £3,979,270 for Capital Maintenance, to be shared appropriately with all schools, including the Voluntary Aided Sector and academies.

- 3.3 As neither of these grant allocations are ring fenced, both have been treated as a single sum to address urgent maintenance priorities in secondary non-BSF schools and primary schools. This work includes the replacement of life-expired boiler plant, water systems, infrastructure, roofing, windows and so on. The estimated cost for Priority 1 work (ie the most urgent work) in secondary schools is £2,838,431; in primary schools this is £2,833,000. The priority for Children's Services is health and safety, keeping buildings wind and watertight, and avoiding loss of schooling through school closures. In addition to planned maintenance, a contingency sum is required to address the numerous ad-hoc situations that arise in schools year on year. In addition, the Council has statutory responsibilities in relation to Health and Safety in schools eg asbestos management and legionella testing. Any findings must be funded through maintenance budgets. In recent years schools themselves were able to use Devolved Formula Capital (DfC) to address maintenance priorities in line with their asset management plan, or to increase or upgrade ICT stock. DfC sums have been reduced by 75% in 2011/12 and will continue at this level in future years.
- 3.4 On 19th July 2011 the Department for Education (DfE) announced a privately financed (PFI) programme to re-build schools in the worst condition nationally and those in the most pressing case of Basic Need (pressure on places). The full scale of the programme is still to be finalised but is likely to include a mix of primary, secondary and special schools, sixth form and alternative provision potentially covering 100 - 300 schools in total. Local Authorities (LAs) are responsible for co-ordinating and submitting applications from all maintained schools (including VA, Voluntary Controlled and Foundation Schools). Academies may choose to be included in LA submissions or can apply themselves. It is anticipated that 20% of the programme will be delivered each year with the first schools to open in the academic year 2014-15. Those schools included in the initial group for procurement are expected to commence during the second quarter of 2012.
- 3.5 Eligibility for the programme is clearly set out by the DfE in the 19th July announcement letter:
- Schools must accept being part of a long-term (approximately 27 year) private finance arrangement including Hard/ Soft Facilities Management (FM). This includes a requirement for schools to make a contribution to the annual revenue payment of around £50-£60 per square metre;
 - Voluntary Aided Schools will be required to make a 10% contribution to the cost of capital;
 - The PFI contract will be procured and managed by a central procurement body (although LAs or schools could be the

contracting parties) and new schools will be delivered in batches, not necessarily geographically;

- Procurement will be based upon standardised designs and space standards;
- Schools that have received major investment in the last 15 years (full replacement or refurbishment of more than 50% of existing buildings) are unlikely to be considered for this investment;
- Schools where more than 30% of buildings are Listed under Planning Regulations are unlikely to be considered for the investment;
- Schools where there are significant site issues that may include difficult ground conditions or land ownership or legal issues are unlikely to be considered;
- The cost of addressing the current condition of the school must address more than 30% of the notional rebuilding cost;
- Schools will only be considered where there is evidence of sufficient long term pupil demand.

3.6 Officers within Children's Services and the Transformation Programmes and Projects Team have developed a 'short list' of schools across secondary, primary and special schools which could be considered as eligible for the programme. Applying the eligibility criteria in 2.5 above has created a much reduced list of schools which are considered to be the worst condition schools (using 30% maintenance against notional rebuild cost) but which also meet the criteria in relation to their listed status and site specific issues; where long term projections of sustainability can be evidenced and where there has been no significant investment in the past 15 years.

3.7 The Asset Management Plan (AMP) information which the Council holds on each of its schools has been used to assess whether the cost of the maintenance backlog is more than 30% of the notional building cost. By way of illustration this would mean that a secondary school would have a notional building cost of £9, 800,000 (on the basis of DfE space standards) and therefore the AMP priorities would need to exceed £2, 940,000 to be considered for inclusion in the programme. Further survey work is being undertaken to provide a detailed picture of condition in a shortlist of five to six schools to inform the submission. The shortlist will be reduced further to two to three schools and this detail is yet to be finalised. It is unlikely that more than one or two would be successful given that there is likely to be strong competition nationally for inclusion in the programme.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 The PFI programme proposed by DfE is seen as a pragmatic opportunity to renew a very small number of schools in Sunderland over the next three year period. As the projects will be funded through PFI and for the most part centrally managed, the Council would not be financially responsible for the capital building works.

- 4.2 From a revenue cost perspective the expectation of schools is to; 'accept being part of a long-term private finance arrangement including Hard and Soft FM with a requirement for schools to make a contribution to the annual payment of around £50-£60 per square metre'. It should be noted that schools maintained by the LA currently spend significantly less than £50-£60 per square metre on Hard and Soft FM services, with current spend being closer to £20 per square metre. For an averaged sized secondary school of 900 places, the increased FM spend requirement is likely to cost an additional £200,000 - £300,000 revenue spend per annum. For an average sized primary school of 420 places, the additional revenue spend per annum would be between £60,000 - £80,000. The reason for the discrepancy between current and expected PFI revenue spend levels relates largely to the requirement of the PFI contractor to maintain the buildings to a high service standard and carry out lifecycle replacement of building components over the c25 year contract life.
- 4.3 There is therefore no question that buildings will be better maintained given that there will be a tightly defined performance regime in place. That aside the ability of an individual school to manage such an additional cost pressure could prove extremely difficult particularly as funding sources previously earmarked for spend in relation to buildings are significantly depleted. If individual schools are unable to meet PFI costs, the alternative for consideration would be an increased budget allocation from the DSG to meet their contractual revenue commitment. This additional call on the global DSG allocation will result in all schools being impacted as the global DSG grant will be top-sliced before individual schools are allocated their budgets from the remaining grant. The sum involved is assumed to be up to £500,000 depending upon how many schools are taken forward as part of the application. This would represent approximately 0.03% of the overall DSG, based upon the 2011/12 DSG global sum of £183,000,000. The review of the current funding formula indicates that a provision will be made in order that PFI commitments can be made before individual schools and academies are allocated their annual budgets.
- 4.4 Although there appears to be no financial risk to the Council, this will be clarified through the application process and before proceeding to the next stage. The annual FM payment is a key issue since it places the on-going (and long term) financial responsibilities of the programme with all schools through the proposed 'top-slice' of the DSG. Under current legislation, matters relating to the total schools budget are taken by the Schools Forum in relation to the delegated budgets to schools and a decreasing number of centrally managed services. Membership is made up mainly of representatives from Headteachers and governing bodies but also includes "non-school" members, representing relevant bodies such as the Trade Unions, Diocesan representatives and the Council. The Schools Forum is the appropriate body asked to make the decision as to whether the funding available to all schools through the DSG could be used to fund the annual FM payments in relation to the PFI contract.

- 4.5 The Schools Forum met on 15th September 2011 and received a presentation from officers on their Priority Schools Building Programme and the revenue implications for schools. The Forum agreed in principle that the revenue implications on DSG were acceptable and asked that further work be undertaken to develop the application to DfE to the next stage. The group also requested further reports in relation to progress at their October meeting. Furthermore the Schools Forum was clear that the programme offered a good opportunity to attract capital investment to rebuild a small number of schools in the worst condition. These schools currently are allocated a disproportionate share of the limited capital available to keep them operational. If the application were successful this would allow the remaining schools to benefit from the investment and the overall maintenance backlog would reduce.

5. Reasons for decision

- 5.1 Submitting an application for the Priority Schools Building Programme is a pragmatic opportunity to tackle the issues in those schools which are deemed to be in the worst condition in Sunderland. An opportunity such as this may not present itself for some time in the future and the capital investment would allow annual capital maintenance monies to then be allocated to a wider group of schools. This in turn would enable the maintenance backlog to be addressed.

6. Alternative Options

- 6.1 In terms of progressing capital investment priorities for schools within Sunderland, the Priority Schools Building Programme is the only opportunity available at this time. Therefore there are no alternative options suggested

7. Relevant consultations

- 7.1 Consultation has taken place with the Schools Forum, the Office of the Chief Executive (Land and Property) and Corporate and Commercial Services. Individual schools are also being consulted on proposals.

8. List of appendices

DfE Invitation to Bid letter (19th July 2011)

33 Greycoat Street
London SW1P 2QF

Tel 020 3301 7000

www.partnershipsforschools.org.uk

**To: Local Authorities
Academy Trusts
Sixth Form Colleges
Dioceses/Faith Bodies**

26 August 2011

Dear Colleague

Priority School Building Programme

1. The Department for Education is commencing a privately financed programme to provide school facilities. The programme is intended to address those schools in the worst condition. Ministers may also take into account pressing cases of basic need (the requirement for additional school places) and other ministerial priorities.¹
2. This letter provides information and sets out the application process for local authorities, sixth form colleges, trustees, dioceses/faith bodies and academies that wish to be considered for inclusion in the programme on the basis of the poor condition of their school premises. Where a school in poor condition also has basic need, then the process will invite supporting detail.
3. We anticipate that the programme will cover the equivalent of building or rebuilding approximately 100 secondary schools. The full scale of the programme is still to be finalised, but is likely to include a mix of primary schools, secondary schools, special schools, sixth form colleges and alternative provision and so could cover between 100-300 schools in total. It is expected that 20% of the total programme will be delivered each year, with the first schools scheduled to open in the academic year of 2014-15. Those schools included in the initial group for procurement are expected to commence procurement during the second quarter of 2012.
4. The part of the programme to which this letter relates is intended to address the needs of those schools in the very worst condition provided that they are also suitable for funding through a privately financed programme. A brief explanation of private finance is included at Appendix 1, and some of the factors that indicate suitability for public private procurement are given at Appendix 2.

¹ In this letter the term "schools" refers to primary schools, secondary schools, special schools, sixth form colleges and alternative provision.

5. Given competing priorities and that the funding available is finite, not all schools in poor condition that would be suitable for this procurement can be included in this part of the programme. Schools should therefore be aware that, even if eligible for this part of the programme as described below, the condition of their school will be compared to those of others.
6. Local authorities will be responsible for co-ordinating and submitting applications from all maintained schools (including VA, VC and foundation schools without a religious character) in their area. Dioceses and other faith bodies may submit their own applications for individual schools and if so no application should be made for the same school through the local authority. Academies² may wish to be included in their local authority's submission, or may alternatively apply on their own behalf. Academy chains may apply on behalf of their schools. Individual sixth form colleges should apply on their own behalf.
7. Completed applications should be submitted electronically as per the instructions set out in this letter. The deadline for applications is **1200 on Friday 14 October 2011** though applications may be submitted from 0900 on 3rd October 2011. The key dates relating to this process are summarised at Appendix 3.

Eligibility

8. This part of the programme is open to all maintained schools (as described above) and academies subject to the requirements set out below.
9. To be considered for inclusion in the programme, sixth form colleges, academies, trustees, dioceses/faith bodies, local authorities and the schools on behalf of whom a local authority, diocese, faith body or academy chain is applying must accept:
 - being part of a long-term (approximately 27 year) private finance arrangement where the building maintenance including soft services (e.g. cleaning, pest control, waste management, caretaking, security and grounds maintenance) will be provided by a third party. Please note that over the course of the programme the private finance model used will be developed and improved to deliver more flexibility, better risk transfer arrangements and improved value for money;
 - that the contract will be procured by a central body (or by a centrally determined alternative value for money route) and that, for procurement purposes, each school will be batched together with a number of other schools not necessarily in the same geographic area. The detailed arrangements for the procurement and contract management have not yet been determined.

² Including UTCs, Free Schools and Studio Schools

Whilst the procurement will be centralised it may be that local authorities or individual schools are the contracting parties, rather than the Department for Education. Similarly, whilst local authorities and/or schools will have a role in managing the contracts (at a minimum reporting shortfalls in performance and availability), and whilst there will be an element of central support, the detail of how much of the contract management role will be carried out centrally will be determined along with the detailed procurement process before schools are selected for inclusion;

- that the procurement will be based on standardised designs (subject to site constraints, planning requirements and a limited amount of local choice); and
- that schools will be required to make a contribution to the annual revenue payments of the private finance contract (to cover, for example, facilities management and maintenance costs, anticipated to be around £55 per m² in 2010 prices). Schools will continue to pay for utilities, anticipated to be around £15 per m² in 2010 prices, and rates and will carry responsibility for some elements of contract management.

In addition, VA schools may be required to make a further contribution to the cost of the scheme. We are currently considering the link between a public private partnership (which is funded through revenue) and the legal requirement that VA schools make a 10% contribution to capital schemes. As soon as this issue is resolved we will indicate the nature and scale of any contribution if one is required.

10. Applications in respect of schools which have received major investment in the last 15 years (e.g. a new or replacement school or refurbishment of more than 50% of the existing buildings) are unlikely to succeed.
11. Schools may not be eligible for inclusion in the programme where buildings Listed under Planning Regulations in any form comprise more than 30% of the school's gross internal floor area. This is because for VfM reasons the programme is only suitable for schools which have to be substantially rebuilt.
12. Only schools which show sufficient long term pupil demand will be considered for inclusion in the programme. Where pupil demand is expected to be sustained but at a lower level than the school's current capacity, applicants can propose a reduced capacity for the rebuilt school. Conversely, where basic need or pupil demand shows long term demand for greater capacity at a school, applicants can propose increased pupil numbers for the rebuilt school.
13. Schools selected to be taken forward will, once notified, be required to provide a signed statement by the head teacher, the Governing Body, trustees, any diocese or faith body and the local authority (for maintained schools) that they accept the conditions set out in this letter.

The Application Process

14. Applications can only be made online. All application forms will be hosted on a secure website, enabling applicants to log in, complete and submit the application. No hard copies or email versions of the application will be assessed; please do not submit hard copies of the electronic application as these will not be considered.
15. An application form must be submitted for each school. This, together with associated documentation is available at:

<https://sharepoint.partnershipsforschools.org.uk/PSBP/>

Completed applications should be submitted electronically as set out in this letter.

16. Applicants can view the application form without registering on the PfS website, but will need to register to be able to submit the application. Applicants can register from 25 July 2011. Once registered, any updates or clarifications will be sent to the registered email address and will also be published on the PfS website. Once registered, applicants should check this area to ensure they are aware of any updates or clarifications which have been published prior to the date of registration.
17. Applicants must register at before **1200 on 7 October 2011**. For key dates in the process please see Appendix 3.
18. Local authorities, dioceses/faith bodies, sixth form colleges and academy chains are able to submit applications on behalf of as many eligible schools as they consider suitable for the programme. However, only one application form should be submitted per school.

Applications can be submitted from **0900 on 3rd October 2011** but the deadline for submission of applications is **1200 on Friday 14 October 2011**.

Information required for applications on grounds of condition

19. The application form requires the following information:
 - Demand: schools must have a sufficient long-term pupil demand requirement. In order to demonstrate such demand, local authorities, sixth form colleges, dioceses/faith bodies and academies selected to be taken forward will be asked at a later stage to provide school level pupil place projections for same phase (i.e. primary or secondary) schools in the local area.

- Condition: schools must be able to demonstrate that they are in a poor condition, where condition is defined as the physical state of the building fabric. Applications will need to be supported by data extracted from a building condition survey obtained or updated within the two years prior to the date of the application. The survey must be carried out by a suitably competent professional. Local authorities may hold this information in relation to academies as well as maintained schools in their area, and dioceses/faith bodies may similarly hold this information in respect of VA schools. The applicant must bear the costs of preparing the application, updates to surveys or new surveys as required, irrespective of whether the school is selected for inclusion in the programme. The building condition survey does not need to be submitted with the application form but schools should ensure that such surveys are available on request.

The online application form will automatically calculate whether the cost of addressing the current condition of the school will exceed 30% of the notional rebuilding cost. This threshold is being used as an indication to help schools considering whether to apply, but a condition need above this level will not guarantee inclusion in the programme. If condition need is below 30% then it is unlikely that it would be value for money to include the school in the programme. To avoid abortive costs and false expectations, an applicant might therefore decide not to proceed if the school condition need falls below this threshold.

The application requires estimates of Priority 1, 2 and 3 maintenance requirements:

- Priority 1 is urgent work;
- Priority 2 is work needed within two years; and
- Priority 3 is work needed within three to five years.

These categories are explained in the DfE condition assessment guidance for the data last requested from local authorities in 2005. A link to the relevant - part of the guidance can be found at <https://sharepoint.partnershipsforschools.org.uk/PSBP/>.

- Shortcomings: please identify any shortcomings of the existing premises in providing for the needs of users, for example in the range of accommodation, comfort of the building environment or provision for health, safety and welfare.
- Site issues: please provide indications of any site constraints, conditions or planning issues which you are aware of to inform views on project delivery. It is not necessary for additional surveys to be carried out to provide this data for the application form - an overview of the relevant issues is sufficient.

- Equalities information: please provide any equalities information relevant to the application.
- Although the focus of this programme is to address schools in the worst condition, if a local authority feels that a separate new school is required in order to relieve basic need pressures, then the local authority should complete Section G of the online application form and PfS will contact the local authority to discuss the proposal in more detail.

Please note that PfS will also refer to centrally held data when assessing returns.

Review of Applications and Prioritisation

20. Following receipt of applications:

- schools will be ranked. The ranking will be determined in accordance with the condition information submitted, with those in the worst condition ranked highest;
- the shortcomings of the existing premises for each school in providing for the needs of its users will then be considered with its condition to assess whether the project would be likely to represent value for money as a privately financed procurement. If the assessment demonstrates that the project is unlikely to represent VfM for this type of procurement then that proposal will not be taken forward;
- Cases of severe and pressing basic need may be considered alongside the worst condition schools and other programme priorities.

21. Further work will then be carried out with those schools in the worst condition that are considered likely, from the information provided, to meet the requirement for value for money to be delivered through a privately financed procurement. These schools will be most suited to inclusion in the first group in the programme, to be launched in the first half of 2012. This work will involve detailed analysis to confirm whether they are appropriate for this procurement and a more general assessment of the project's deliverability and suitability for inclusion in the first group. This may include consideration of such issues as:

- site issues that may prevent the project being delivered in the timescales necessary, for instance the need to acquire further land or other title issues, planning constraints, etc.;
- school re-organisation issues or other statutory processes that cannot be resolved within the requisite timescales;

- any relevant equalities considerations that should be taken into account in accordance with the Equalities Act 2010;
 - affordability constraints;
 - availability of information required to progress procurement preparation;
 - suitability for batching of schools into projects; and
 - any other relevant issues.
22. Academies, schools, local authorities, trustees, dioceses and other faith bodies (as appropriate) will be asked to co-operate fully in providing information, site access and resources to allow this assessment to be carried out.
23. Schools considered unsuitable to be delivered in the first group under this process will remain eligible for inclusion in future groups unless they are considered unsuitable for privately financed procurement.
24. Schools selected for inclusion in the first group will be notified and will then be asked, along with local authorities, trustees, dioceses and other faith bodies (as appropriate) to assist in the preparation and development of the Outline Business Cases for the projects and thereafter during the procurement process. Schools and other relevant bodies will be notified further of these requirements once they have been identified but should expect to provide:
- access for surveys to be carried out;
 - relevant employee information;
 - title information; and
 - other assistance as required during the procurement process.
25. It is currently anticipated that applicants will be informed in December whether their application has been successful and whether they are expected to participate in the first group of the programme, or in later groups.

If you have any queries in respect of the application process please contact:

psbp@partnershipsfor schools.org.uk

Yours faithfully



Paul Milner
Commercial Director

Appendix 1 – Brief explanation of Private Finance

Privately financed schemes use a procurement model through which a public sector procuring body engages a private sector contractor to design, build, finance and operate a facility (including providing facilities management, maintenance and lifecycle services) for the life of the contract, which is typically 27 years. As no money is paid by the procuring body until construction is complete, the contractor borrows the capital needed to construct the facilities from commercial lenders and then, once the school is operational, earns a monthly fee (referred to as a 'unitary charge'). The contractor uses this to repay the commercial debt and cover the cost of operating the facility. It may in addition earn a profit.

Key features of the model:

- **Construction at risk** – the procuring body pays nothing to the contractor until the build is completed to the standards set out in the contract, which ensures a high degree of certainty as to the time of completion;
- **Maintenance (often referred to as 'hard FM') services** – are provided by the contractor throughout the life of the agreement – the contractor is being paid to ensure that the school is available for use;
- **Cleaning, security and grounds maintenance (often referred to as 'soft FM') services** – are typically provided by the contractor and the costs for these services are tested against costs in the market at intervals throughout the term of the agreement. The soft services may include other services such as catering, pest control and waste management;
- **School contribution** – schools participating in a privately financed contract are usually required to contribute revenue funding during the 25 year term operational period of the contract for the provision of facilities management services, a proportion of which will be index-linked. Schools would usually also continue to pay for utilities and rates;
- **Performance regime** – the contractor's performance (and ability to earn the full Unitary Charge every month) is governed by a performance regime which measures availability of areas within the school and performance against set standards. Performance issues (and spaces not being available) can lead to deductions being made from the unitary charge. This process is designed to incentivise the contractor to rectify problems early and ensure a good level of service;
- **Long-term arrangement** – contracts typically last 27 years and, with little opportunity for early exit, schools need to be aware that this represents a long-term commitment;

- **Handback** – the contractor is required to hand the school back in good condition to the public sector procurer at the end of the contract term, thus ensuring that the school is well maintained and designed to last;
- **Value for money** – in order to ensure that a privately financed contract represents good value for money the contract needs to include a sufficiently high value of construction work and it will typically be the case, therefore, that schools will be batched together with other schools in order to create a viable contract.

Appendix 2 – Suitability for Public Private Procurement

Some of the factors that indicate a school's suitability for using public private procurement:

- **Land ownership** – certainty that the local authority or school holds or will be able to hold title to all of the land required by the start of the procurement, and that the school (where applicable, such as for academies) holds a long term lease;
- **New build proportion** – private finance is generally better-suited to new build than refurbishment. As a guide, private finance is unlikely to be the best value procurement route if the refurbishment element is more than 30% of the gross internal floor area;
- **Listed status** – any parts of the school which have listed building status will have to be refurbished rather than rebuilt. Hence if more than 30% of a school's gross internal floor area has listed building status, private finance is unlikely to be the best value procurement route as the refurbishment proportion will be too great; and
- **Value for money** – the procurement will be tested for value for money at various points during the process – if these tests are failed at any point, the school will no longer be part of this procurement.

Appendix 3 - Summary of Key Dates

Information available	19th July 2011
Registration opens	25th July 2011
Window opens for submission of applications	0900 on 3rd October 2011
Deadline for registration	1200 on 7th October 2011
Deadline for submission of applications	1200 on 14th October 2011
Target date for informing applicants of the outcome of their application	December 2011

CABINET MEETING – 5 OCTOBER 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

Children and Young People's Plan Annual Report 2010-2011

Author(s):

Executive Director of Children's Services

Purpose of Report:

To present to Cabinet the final draft of the Children and Young People's Plan Annual Report 2010-2011, which incorporates comments from a range of partners.

Cabinet is asked to approve the Children and Young People's Plan Annual Report and to agree to refer to full Council for ratification as an Article 4 Plan.

Description of Decision:

Following consultation with various partners, including Cabinet, Children's Trust and the Children, Young People and Learning Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet is recommended to approve the Annual Report (attached) and recommend that it is presented to full Council for ratification.

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? Yes

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

The Children and Young People's Plan is an Article 4 plan under the Council's Constitution and is the primary document for Children's Trust Partnerships to set out how they will deliver improved outcomes for children and young people in the city.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

The alternative option is not to submit the CYPP Annual Report to full Council. This would result in progress not being reported against the actions set in the CYPP.

Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution? Yes

Relevant Scrutiny Committee:

Children, Young People and Learning

Is it included in the Forward Plan? Yes

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN ANNUAL REPORT 2010-2011**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES****1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To present to Cabinet the final draft of the Children and Young People's Plan Annual Report 2010-2011, which incorporates comments from a range of partners.
- 1.2 Cabinet is asked to approve the Children and Young People's Plan Annual Report and to agree to refer to full Council for ratification as an Article 4 Plan.

2. Description of Decision

- 2.1 Following consultation with various partners, including Cabinet, Children's Trust and the Children, Young People and Learning Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet is recommended to approve the Annual Report (attached) and recommend that it is presented to full Council for ratification.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Children and Young People's Plan Strategy 2010-25 was published in 2010, together with a Delivery Plan for 2010-13.
- 3.2 The Delivery Plan provides detailed information about each of the Children's Trust priority outcomes. These outcomes are broken down into:
 - Two overarching themes that cut across the Children's Trust
 - Five priority areas for vulnerable groups
 - Seventeen specific outcomes for all young people, linked to the Every Child Matters framework.
- 3.3 Against each of these priority outcomes is an identified partnership which has a commissioning strategy and implementation plan in place.

4. Current Position

- 4.1 The Children and Young People's Plan Annual Report as an Article 4 plan has been widely consulted on and the comments and suggested amendments proposed have been considered and where appropriate incorporated into the Annual Report.
- 4.2 The final draft of the Annual Report is presented to Cabinet for final approval and if received, will be referred to full Council for ratification and thereafter published on the Children's Trust website.

5. Reasons for the Decision

- 5.1 The Children and Young People's Plan is an Article 4 plan under the Council's Constitution and is the primary document for Children's Trust Partnerships to set out how they will deliver improved outcomes for children and young people in the city. As an Article 4 Plan, we are required to submit an annual report to Cabinet for consideration and comment.

6. Alternative Options

- 6.1 The alternative option is not to submit the Children and Young People's Plan Annual report to full Council, however this would result in progress not being reported against the objectives and milestones within the Plan.

7. Relevant Considerations/Consultations

- 7.1 The following groups have been consulted in preparing the Annual Report:

Children's Services Leadership Team	6 July 2011
Joint Commissioning Board	8 July 2011
Children's Trust	12 July 2011
CYPL Scrutiny Article 4 Group	1 August 2011
Cabinet	7 September 2011
CYPL Scrutiny Committee	8 September 2011
Second presentation to Cabinet	5 October 2011
Council	30 November 2011

8. List of Appendices

Children and Young People's Plan Annual Report 2011

9. Background Papers

Children and Young People's Delivery Plan, 2010-2013
Children and Young People's Plan 15 Year Strategy, 2010-2025

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2010-25

DELIVERY PLAN 2010-13

ANNUAL REPORT APRIL 2010-MARCH 2011

INTRODUCTION

This Annual Report of 2011 is the first annual report against the Children and Young People's Plan 2010-25 and the related Delivery Plan 2010-13. It covers the period 1 April 2010-31 March 2011.

The Delivery Plan provides detailed information about each of the Children's Trust priority outcomes. These outcomes are broken down into:

- Overarching themes that cut across the Children's Trust
- Priority areas for vulnerable groups
- Specific outcomes for all young people, linked to the Every Child Matters framework.

Against each of these priority outcomes is an identified partnership which has a commissioning strategy and implementation plan in place. This document reports progress against the actions and targets in those strategies and plans, by setting out:

- What actions were planned for the three-year period 2010-13
- What achievements have been made since April 2010
- What still needs to be done
- Performance information, where relevant, to show the direction of travel of the outcome area.

It is worth acknowledging that since the Delivery Plan was published in 2010, there have been significant changes for public services, not least the change of Government and the significant budgetary cuts that all public sector organisations are facing.

Since coming into office in May 2010, the Coalition Government has introduced a number of reforms and reviews into the way we work, and has announced the spending cuts that it intends to make in order to stabilise the economy. Details are set out below of new legislative requirements.

Legislation impacting on improving outcomes for young people

- Academies Act
- Education Bill (The Importance of Teaching)
- SEN & Disability Green Paper
- Behaviour and Attendance in Schools
- National Curriculum Review
- Review of Key Stage 2 Testing
- Tickell Review of Early Years Foundation Stage
- Wolf Review of Vocational Education
- Munro Review of Child Protection
- James Review of Education Capital
- Consultation of National Funding Formula
- Consultation on Inspection Framework (Ofsted)
- Review of Teachers' Standards
- Review of National Professional Qualifications for Headship (NPQH)

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- The unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment procedures was carried out in June 2010. It was a positive inspection, with many areas highlighted as doing well. Only four areas for development were identified, and the service was aware of these issues and is working towards their improvement
- The city exceeded its target for young children going into primary school who are obese. The target was 13% and we achieved 11.32%
- Year on year school meal uptake has increased, which means it is now above the national average by 10.5 percentage points in primary schools and 20.9 percentage points in secondary schools
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) have been successfully reviewed and service providers commissioned
- Through a partnership approach to tackling domestic violence, repeat incidents of domestic violence presented to the MARAC Board has fallen from 34% in 2008/09 to 20% in 2010/11
- Anti-bullying agenda promoted and successful launch of reviewed Anti-Bullying Charter Mark is being well received in schools and settings
- Youth Offending Service reports that young people's feelings of safety has improved. In 2010, 61.5% of children and young people said they felt safe in Sunderland. This is 17.6 percentage points higher than in 2008 (52.3%).
- Target exceeded in relation to the achievement of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation stage with at least 6 in each of the scales in Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Communication, Language and Literacy. The target was 50% with the outturn being 58.1%
- The target to narrow the gap for the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile was exceeded by 4 percentage points. The target was set at 37%, with the outturn being 32.9%
- 2010 results for pupils making two levels of progress between Key Stages 1 and 2 in English increased by two percentage points to 85% and in mathematics remained at 82%. The result for progress in English was particularly pleasing because it was one percentage point above the national average
- Provisional GCSE results are the highest achieved in Sunderland, continuing a strong upward trend over the last five years
- The government's gold standard measure requires 16 year olds to achieve at least five GCSEs or equivalent at grade A*-C including English and maths. Sunderland's results this year are the highest achieved and also the highest year on year improvement since the measure was introduced
- Sunderland achieved its highest ever A-level results in 2010, with an average points score (APS) per candidate of 813.6, which is higher than the regional average of 717.7 and national 744.8. In terms of APS per entry Sunderland achieved 214.7, with regional figure at 209.9 and national 214.4
- The City Adventure Centre, including outdoor and indoor play provision at Silksworth has been a great success to date
- First time entrants to the youth justice system reduced by 34% at the end of 2010/11 against a national target of 1.9% for 2010/11
- The Youth Justice Plan 2011/12 reported 27% reduction in youth re-offending for 2010 against a three year (2008-2011) target of 10% reduction
- A low use of custody at just 1.7% brought praise from the Chair of the Youth Justice Board in early 2010 for performance against this indicator
- Excellent progress in NEET, with the figure dropping from 13.2% in 2009, to 8.5% in 2010

CHILD POVERTY

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

A Child Poverty Strategy 2010-13 was developed to improve outcomes for children and young people living in poverty. The five objectives identified in the strategy were:

- Ensure appropriate and relevant strategic arrangements are in place
- Education, health and family
- Employment and skills
- Housing and neighbourhoods
- Financial support.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

- Governance structure in place, with the Sunderland Partnership as lead, supported by the Child Poverty Board
- Committed 'buy-in' from all strategic partners
- Greater level of understanding of child poverty issues in Sunderland
- Child Poverty Strategy developed with a wide range of partners actively engaged and then consulted
- Engagement of young people in the planning process (with an exceptional piece of work in producing a DVD)
- Comprehensive action plan which covers the scope of the actions which have been committed to across the partnership to tackle child poverty
- High level of political support
- Senior management support from council officers and partners
- Child Poverty Needs Assessment completed
- Regional profile on an innovative and progressive approach
- National profile with the Child Protection Unit visit and health task team reports
- Performance framework in place with partners signed up.

Over the course of the first year, Sunderland has reflected on its plans and, through consultation, has re-focussed its strategy and the subsequent actions, to ensure that work to tackle child and family poverty in Sunderland really does support the poorest and most needy families. A new **Child and Family Poverty Strategy (Phase 2) 2011-13** has been produced which reflects the outcome of the consultation, the findings of the Child and Family Poverty Needs Assessment, the change in policies from the Coalition Government and the impact of the Comprehensive Spending Review.

The new strategy identifies just two overarching priorities:

1. Make child and family poverty everybody's business through adopting an approach to 'child and family poverty proof' strategic plans of all partners as routine practice.
2. Develop integrated neighbourhood models of service to re-target and deliver Early Years and Early Intervention.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

The Action Plan for the Strategy and the two priorities established therein, will be developed with partners by Autumn 2011. The Action Plan will reflect the outcome of considerations by all partners to the Comprehensive Spending Review and the Policy Framework highlighted in this Strategy.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

As we move to Phase 2 of the Sunderland Model, it is also worthy to note some of the broader key outcomes achieved during Phase 1 as identified through the needs assessment:

- Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) results have improved significantly over the last three years with a 13% increase in results for those living in areas with a high percentage of children living in poverty
- Sunderland's 5+ A*-C including English and maths has a 7% point improvement this year and an 18% point improvement over five years
- An increase of 17.6% in attainment for those eligible for Free School Meals at KS4
- Reduction in under 18 conceptions rate in Sunderland (15.5% from the 1998 baseline). The actual number of under 18 conceptions has reduced from 327 in 2007 to 290 in 2008
- 99% of social housing meets the Decent Homes Standard
- A substantial reduction in the number of 16 to 18 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET) in Sunderland, from 13.2% to 8.5%.

In noting the developments in Phase 1, it is important to acknowledge that a lot more work needs to be done to reduce child and family poverty in Sunderland.

SAFEGUARDING

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

The Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) Business Plan 2009-2012 sets out priorities, actions and targets to improve safeguarding outcomes including those listed below:

- Raising awareness of outcomes and implementing the findings of Laming Report: The Protection of Children in England 2009
- Improving the relationship between the Children's Trust and the SSCB by establishing more robust arrangements (in having reporting arrangements, responding to national policy and guidance, having joint development days)
- Establishing a safeguarding dataset to monitor, assess and challenge agency performance
- Quality assuring single agency and SSCB safeguarding training
- Having up to date, good quality and well-used policies and procedures
- Further developing multi agency strategies around Hidden Harm
- Further engaging relevant groups to secure faith and BME representation on the SSCB
- Recognising the needs of specific groups of children and young people, particularly those who are most vulnerable, children in custody and children who have run away from home
- Safeguarding disabled children, specifically implementing DCSF guidance and reviewing the effectiveness of services
- Ensuring statutory requirements are met in respect of children missing from home and care.

The SSCB plans to improve multi agency practice from Serious Case Reviews by:

- Developing an SSCB audit process to evaluate individual agency implementation of Serious Case Review action plans. This will allow the SSCB to challenge agencies if there is insufficient evidence of implementation
- Reviewing SSCB training in line with lessons learned
- Delivering specialised training sessions regarding lessons learned from national, regional and local Serious Case Reviews.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

- Since 2010, the SSCB has incorporated and integrated some work with the Children's Trust, and relationships have improved through joint development days. Under the new coalition government, the statutory basis for Children's Trusts has changed. The SSCB will continue to maintain its links with the Children's Trust through any period of change
- Responsibility for the implementation of Laming's recommendations has now been shared across the SSCB and the Children's Trust, and procedures and training courses have been updated to reflect these changes
- All SSCB training plans have been quality assured
- SSCB Safeguarding Dataset has been established and will be continuously improved
- Revised SSCB Safeguarding Procedures, October 2010 have been launched
- Hidden Harm Strategy developed and implementation is underway
- Attended Chairs of IAGs (Independent Advisory Group) meetings to deliver a brief presentation and raise awareness of safeguarding with minority groups. This will be carried forward into the new Business Plan
- The Children Missing from Home and Care Protocol is fully implemented and a Preventative Group has been set up. The group has been tasked with analysing the relevant data in order to recommend actions to reduce the numbers

- Arrangements have been established to safeguard the needs of disabled children. The SSCB has identified a lead and a time-limited Task Group is liaising with all SSCB sub-committees to raise awareness of issues for disabled children and ensure their needs are considered. Two multi-agency file audits in respect of disabled children will be completed as part of the audit programme
- So that the SSCB has a better understanding of the needs of specific groups of children and young people, the procedures relating to Children in Custody have been reviewed and go live in July 2011
- Procedures are being developed in relation to PREVENT - tackling radical extremism and trafficking
- Violence Against Women and Girls Action Plan is being developed through Safe Sunderland Partnership, Safeguarding Adults Board and SSCB
- A review of the SSCB Serious Case Review audit process has taken place and a new process in place from January 2011
- “Lessons Learned” sessions delivered in September 2010 and more planned for July to December 2011.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

The 2009-12 Business Plan was instrumental in the SSCB improving its systems and processes. Many of the actions have been completed from this plan, even at this early stage.

A new plan from 2011-13 is being produced, which:

- adopts a more outcomes based approach and will support the SSCB to be smarter in the way it works
- will take into account recommendations from the Munro Review.

The new plan will be available for consultation in September 2011.

NARROWING THE GAP FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS

CHILDREN FROM BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC (BME) GROUPS

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

In applying the commissioning process, the Children's Trust intends to engage with children, young people and families from BME communities with the intention of building on and sustaining these relationships. The key areas of work that have been identified by the Children's Trust to improve outcomes for BME children, young people and families are to:

- Undertake a comprehensive assessment of the needs of children and young people from BME communities.
- Engage and seek the views of children, young people and families from BME communities through identified networks in order to understand their needs.
- Identify any gaps to ensure all partnerships delivering the CYPP have a focus on narrowing the gap in outcomes for BME groups.
- Use the assessment of need to commission services that aim to meet the needs and improve the outcomes of BME groups.
- Review these services to ensure they do meet needs of children and young people from vulnerable communities.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

- A working group has been set up which engages practitioners and professionals who work directly with BME communities across Sunderland
- A service mapping exercise is being explored to understand current service provision to BME communities. It is anticipated that this will be undertaken by the BME Network
- The exercise will be widely distributed to services through the BME network, any health services and identified organisations by the Diversity and Inclusion Team
- Current national and local performance information for young people from BME communities has been gathered to support understanding needs.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

During 2011-12, a number of further actions will be taken:

- A workshop session will be set up in 2011 to gather services views about the needs of young people from BME communities. As part of the workshop, discussions will take place about:
 - information collected as part of a service mapping exercise
 - how to move forward in continuously understanding need/changing needs of BME communities
 - what information individual services could collect to continuously inform the needs assessment
- A forum to engage health colleagues and Children's Centres about recording service users ethnicity and how this can help our understanding of the needs of young children from BME communities

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Ref	Description	Actual	Baseline	Year 1		Year 2 target 2011/12	Year 3 target 2012/13
		2008/09	2009/10	Target	Actual		
		%	%	2010/11	%		
NI 107	Key Stage 2 attainment for Black and minority ethnic groups (Bangladeshi)	52	58	56	62.2	59	62
NI 108	Key Stage 4 attainment for all Black and minority ethnic groups	23	28	35	54.1	42	44

CHILDREN IN CARE

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

The Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership (MALAP) is preparing a Children in Care Strategy 2010-25. The key areas of work that have been identified so as to improve outcomes for children in care are to:

- Increase access to emotional and mental health services for children in short term placements
- Increase foster care recruitment
- Reduce looked after children offending – to do this there is a multi-agency group in place that monitors trends and plans interventions to reduce the levels of offending amongst children in care. Performance began to increase in 2008 and so it is anticipated this will continue over the coming years
- Increase educational attainment. Specific areas of work have been identified that will build on current arrangements. These will include:
 - The Looked After Children Education (LACE) Team will support children in care with one-to-one sessions, especially targeting literacy and numeracy. In the last school year over 500 children were supported in this way. Through the Government's "making better progress" programme, this work will be further enhanced (and will be funded through Personal Education Allowances (PEA) funding for the next academic year)
 - The residential "Maths Supercamp" for children looked after in years 10 and 11 will be further developed, having been held for one year and deemed successful
 - The targeting of early years children looked after. The aim of this targeted work is to support children as young as possible and then throughout their educational career, to improve their educational outcomes, as well as baseline attainment
- Create a stable establishment of social workers
- Extend and refurbish three older children's homes to improve the facilities and environment in which children in care live.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

- The re-provision of CAMHS Tier 3 services will see a new contract in place by September 2011, which will provide a more accessible CAMHS service for children in care. This will improve the provision of universal services and will give children in care greater access to a wider variety of treatment options
- A Foster Care Fee Scheme has been introduced in the city, to allow greater competitiveness in the market. This has been influenced by the 'invest to save' scheme, which has resulted in a reduction in the use of external placements. The future planned closure of a children's home in December 2011 will allow reinvestment of money into the Fostering Strategy. The intention is to recruit sufficient carers to achieve a net increase of 10 per year over the next 4 years
- Looked After Children offending figures have fluctuated for a number of years and recently the Children Looked After Offending Group has implemented an action plan from May 2011 to March 2012. The plan has timescales with responsible officers taking the actions forward
- Over the last year there has been fantastic progress in stabilising the social worker workforce. A number of experienced and newly qualified social workers have been appointed, including 10 social workers from the USA. Vacancies are also at a very low level

- Three children's homes were extended in October 2010 to provide a more homely environment with greater privacy and more space for recreational and homework activities
- Two dedicated officers have been appointed to support children in care in the use of Viewpoint, an electronic system which helps to collect and collate their views on the services they receive. This will provide us with better information with regards to children in care and help us to improve our service to them.

In education:

- One-to-one tuition for children in care has been completely revised in line with the new Personal Education Allowance (PEA) Policy
- Sunderland Virtual School (SVS) now monitors the progress of pupils receiving tuition and staff delivering it. In 2010/11, 2,279 hours of one-to-one teaching and learning sessions were carried out for 132 pupils from Reception to Year 11, involving teachers and learning support assistants from the pupil's own school and those of SVS
- In addition, in the academic year 2010/11, SVS extended one-to-one tuition to include Foundation Stage (ref PEA Policy) for Personal, Social, Development and Reading.
- During the academic year 2010/11, focussed communication and work with Designated Teachers for Looked After Children has established a more inclusive school community for LAC, so that they participate in their home school activities rather than holding specific and exclusive programmes outside of school for them. This has included revision and booster classes, as well as other learning programmes and events. In many cases, the focus on school inclusiveness has contributed to an improvement in attainment and attendance
- A SVS specialist teacher now has responsibility for Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), which has involved:
 - liaising with nursery and Reception teachers
 - teaching and supporting children in EYFS
 - providing 'Little Book Bags'
 - extending one-to-one support for children in personal, social, development including behavioural support and reading
 - providing individual children with support in transition where need was identified.

Comprehensive information about the education of looked after children can be found at Outcome 9 – Attainment of Vulnerable Groups.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

- Monitor the implementation of CAMHS Tier 3 Service, specifically in relation to the impact this is having on outcomes for children in short term placements
- Continue to implement the Foster Care Recruitment and Retention Strategy, in order to reduce the number of external placements the city uses
- Implement and evaluate the action plan to reduce offending by children in care
- Produce aggregate reports, using Viewpoint, to ensure that the collective views of children in care are gathered and used to inform service delivery
- Pilot the use of the new PEP templates that have a greater focus on learning development and achievement
- Implement post-16 PEPs.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Ref	Description	Actual	Baseline	Year 1		Year 2 target	Year 3 target
				Target	Actual		
		2008/09	2009/10	2010/11		2011/12	2012/13
		%	%	%	%	%	%
NI 58	Emotional and behavioural health of looked after children	12.3	not set	16	13.1		
NI 63	Stability of placements of looked after children: length of placement	67.3	74	75	72.5	76	77
NI 147	Care leavers in suitable accommodation	88.5	86	86	94.4		
NI 148	Care leavers in education, employment or training	73.1	62	67	61.1		
NI99	Looked after children reaching level 4 in English at Key Stage 2	79	42	45	61.5	63	55
NI100	Looked after children reaching level 4 in mathematics at Key Stage 2	93	47	45	61.5	50	55
NI101	Looked after children achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent) at Key Stage 4 (including English and mathematics)	6	10	26	6.5	13	22
	% of children who have been looked after continuously for at least 12 months, who were given a final warning/reprimand or convicted during the year for an offence committed whilst they were looked after.		1.2	2.4	2 *		
	Attendance rate at school for children who were looked after for 12 months or more:						
	• Overall absence rate	4.9	4.8	Not yet available			
	• Persistent absence rate	11.0	3.4	Not yet available			

* provisional figures

CHILDREN IN NEED AND IN NEED OF PROTECTION

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

The SSCB recognises a number of priority areas:

- Parental behaviour - issues such as domestic violence and parental substance misuse are factors which can have a detrimental effect on the welfare of children and young people. The interaction of the combined effects of these factors which compromise effective parenting will be considered by the SSCB and strategies adopted to address
- Neglect and emotional abuse - the SSCB will be involved in the pilot of the Graded Care Profile which is designed to help workers assess families where neglect is a factor
- Children missing from home and care – the SSCB has plans in place that aims to address the needs of children and young people who go missing and enables staff to be clear about their responsibilities for this group of vulnerable children
- Working with services that support adults with substance misuse difficulties - the SSCB will embed the use of a Hidden Harm Audit Tool and Common Assessment Framework, to ensure services for children and young people are able to work with families earlier on a multi-agency basis, to meet child and family needs
- Young males who sexually harm - the SSCB will assess, implement and monitor the AIM 2 model (Assessment, Intervention and Moving on) to ensure this is incorporated into practice. This model intends to improve multi-agency risk assessments of young males who sexually harm

The SSCB is also establishing a multi agency data set, which will be used to monitor the above actions.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

Since April 2010:

- The SSCB and the Safeguarding Service have developed a Hidden Harm Strategy. In addition, joined up work is being carried out with the Safeguarding Adults Board and the Safer Sunderland Partnership, by taking a 'whole-family' approach to Hidden Harm
- The SSCB has reviewed and revised procedures on responding to the needs of children missing from home and care and these are now fully implemented. A Preventative Group has been set up, and charged with analysing the relevant data in order to recommend actions to reduce the numbers
- Actions continue to embed Common Assessment Framework (CAF) across the city. The numbers of CAFs being completed is rising, as is partner buy-in to the process
- SSCB procedures have been reviewed and are compliant with Working Together 2010
- SSCB is supporting in a two year Graded Care Profile pilot being led by Children's Services, taking a multi-agency approach to assessing neglect. A supported induction process provided by the NSPCC has been completed
- Two AIM 2 training programmes have been carried out for leads completing the AIM 2 assessment
- An audit has been undertaken in respect of the number of children subject of a child protection plan for 18 months+, with an action plan in place to address the recommendations.

In addition, Safeguarding Services have made a number changes to improve outcomes for Children in Need and children in need of protection:

- The service specification for Therapeutic Services has been reviewed, the contract awarded and the successful bidder is due to begin service delivery in August 2011

- Great steps have been made to stabilise the workforce within the social work service. A recruitment drive in the USA, as well as the appointment of a number of newly qualified social workers, has contributed to a very low level of vacancies in the service
- Children's Social Work Service has also been restructured so that social workers are based in localities; this will enhance professional relationships
- A Child in Need team has also been put in place. This ensures equality of service delivery to Children in Need. It is also anticipated that this will increase the appropriateness of the referrals received by the service
- A revised audit process has been implemented to monitor work, recognise good practice and where improvements are required.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

- Continue to reduce the number of children missing from home and care
- Complete and evaluate the 2 year Graded Care Profile pilot in conjunction with Children's Services and the NSPCC
- Deliver awareness raising sessions for agency contributing to the AIM2 assessments.

The 2009-12 Business Plan was instrumental in the SSCB improving its systems and processes in this area. Many of the actions have been completed from this plan, even at this early stage. A new plan from 2011-13 is being produced, which:

- adopts a more outcomes based approach and will support the SSCB to be smarter in the way it works
- will take into account recommendations from the Munro Review.

The new plan will be available for consultation in September 2011.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Ref	Description	Actual 2008/09	Baseline 2009/10	Year 1		Year 2 target 2011/12	Year 3 target 2012/13
				Target 2010/11	Actual 2010/11		
NI 65	Children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time	15%	13%	13%	16.6%	13%	13%

CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND/OR DISABILITIES

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

The “Children and Young People with LDD – A Strategy for Transformation 2009-2025” identifies six key priorities for improvement:

- **Information** – provide accurate, targeted and accessible information about available services and ensure appropriate information sharing with professionals
- **Funding** – clear pathways for identifying, accessing and pooling funds and resources.
- **Transition to adulthood** – clear pathways upon leaving school for young people. Children's and Adult Services to work together with health services to ensure support continues into adulthood
- **Access to services** – consistent support to working parents and families to access mainstream services
- **Workforce development** – deliver appropriate LDD training to staff in mainstream services
- **Education and learning** – flexible transport from home to school and extended services.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

In 2010, the above LDD Strategy was launched. Then, in March 2011 the Government published its Green Paper “Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability - A consultation”. The Green Paper makes wide ranging proposals in relation to the education of young people with a special educational need or learning difficulty/disability. Work is currently being carried out to identify the key priorities that could impact on the delivery of services as a consequence of the Green Paper, and these are being shared with a range of services and will inform all future planning.

In the meantime, the following progress has been made to improve outcomes for children and young people with LDD:

- Aiming High funding is being used to produce a DVD which will focus on Transition to Adulthood for disabled young people. This will be launched in September 2011
- A two-day Kaizan event has been held on the National Framework for children and young people's continuing care. The results of the event were a formulation of a pathway, protocol and procedures to manage continuing care. These will be signed off at South of Tyne and Wear CAMHS/LDD Programme Board in early July 2011. Continuing care pathways for children with disabilities can be operating from December 2011
- The Futures Team is now well established and a multi-agency protocol was in place from February 2011. A more joined up transition process/assessment process needs to be developed and a Kaizan event will be held during the summer to begin planning for this
- Work has been carried out to ensure a clear pathway of provision from Extended Services Group and SEN teams. This is impacting positively on the progress and support for children with LDD and their families
- A training programme for SENCo's in Early Years settings, including children's centres, has been carried out and another course is to be run during the next academic year
- Connexions service delivery is now much more responsible in relation to work with LDD in areas such as Learning Difficulty Assessments and working together with partners such as schools, local authority and Futures Team. Work continues on finding better approaches to transition / assessment process.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

- To ensure that the findings of the Green Paper are considered and actions taken to implement the recommendations.
- To ensure that integrated working arrangements are fully embedded across the Local Authority
- Review existing SEN partnership working arrangements to ensure effective service delivery

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

NI 54 – Services for disabled children was the indicator linked to this outcome. However, the Coalition Government removed the need to report against this indicator very early in its term of office, so no data is available to report.

BEING HEALTHY

PRIORITY OUTCOME 1

REDUCE LEVELS OF OBESITY SO THERE ARE FEWER OVERWEIGHT OR OBESE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

The NHS South of Tyne and Wear Overweight and Obesity Strategy (2010-2020) sets out detailed plans including actions and targets to improve this outcome, the key features of which include:

- Undertaking a range of promotional campaigns including media interventions to raise awareness of what constitutes a healthy diet and appropriate physical activity levels
- Creating health enabling environments
- Ensuring consistent availability of healthier food choices in public places
- Auditing and co-ordinating and/or commissioning more preventative activities across the life course including generic multi-disciplinary, holistic health improvement programmes
- Establish effective partnership working between all providers: public, private and third sector
- Developing, commissioning and implementing a consistent, evidenced based pathway of care for children, young people and families
- Establishing and monitoring the prevalence of obesity amongst women who are pregnant and develop and provide specific interventions for women and their families
- Focussing on the early years setting
- Providing effective continuous professional development and specific training to all staff delivering on the obesity agenda in order to better support behaviour change and healthy lifestyles
- Ensuring equitable access for targeted groups such as BME, where necessary delivering services in local communities
- Establishing an effective performance management and evaluative framework to inform future commissioning decisions.

WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED

Since April 2010, the Obesity Partnership and Childhood Obesity Delivery Group has been re-established and is responsible for the delivery of the NHS South of Tyne and Wear Overweight and Obesity Strategy (2010-2020).

- The **Lifestyle, Activity and Food Programme (LAF)**, a weight management programme for children and young people has been developed and commissioned for three years from April 2010. LAF is a Tier 2 and Tier 3 service with Tier 2 being delivered by the Wellness Service and Tier 3 by City Hospitals
- From May 2010 to March 2011, 281 referrals have been received from GP's and school nurses with 116 families starting the programme. Sixteen (16) families were transferred to the adult programme as they were aged 16 years+, 25 families were given 1:1 support from the Specialist Dietician and a further 99 families are ready to start the programme from April 2011
- The LAF Team delivered 10 x 8 week LAF programmes at various venues across the city over the year and recorded a total weight loss of 62.4kg in those that completed the programme
- Following attendance on the 8 week LAF programme, families are offered a variety of follow up activities to ensure they remain physically active for at least 16 weeks after completion

- Three (3) celebration events have been delivered to provide opportunities to track progress through weighing and measuring and to offer further advice and support where required
- Four x 4 week pre school prevention programmes were delivered for 2-4 year olds
- Eighteen (18) families attended 3 day “Lets Get Cooking” cook and eat courses in October and February half term holidays
- A summer holiday programme was delivered during July / August 2010 to ensure that families remained active during the holiday. Seventy-one (71) adults and children attended the programme
- These referrals are received initially by Tier 2 services, but it is hoped to increase capacity in Tier 3 services in the future by providing a Community Nutritional Assistant to support young people and their families. This will encourage take up of that service and ensure those with the greatest need are assigned to the appropriate service at an earlier point
- The Obesity Partnership developed an **Early Years Food Policy**, which was launched in November 2010. Training around this was delivered to 94 Early Years practitioners between January and March 2011. It is hoped to roll out the training in nurseries, which will support the implementation of the policy
- The policy itself has received some interest from the Department of Health, who are considering rolling out this type of policy nationally
- Sunderland participated in the delivery of a **HENRY (Health Exercise Nutrition for the Really Young)** pilot, which is underpinned by the Family Partnership Model. Sunderland’s participation involved the development, pilot and long-term evaluation of a programme to help practitioners work more effectively with parents of babies and pre-school children to prevent childhood obesity. The pilot is now completed and through the securing of additional funding further training sessions are planned for July 2011, which will allow up to 32 additional practitioners to be trained. The programme trains health and community practitioners working with young people and their families on obesity and lifestyle concerns
- Sunderland offers the **Maternity Lifestyle Programme** to all pregnant women and families, particularly those from disadvantaged groups and communities, to improve access to positive lifestyle services, by providing activities that fit easily into families’ everyday lives. This includes nutritional and physical activities aimed at maximising the likelihood of long-term health, particularly for women with a BMI >30
- The Specialist Exercise Practitioner – Maternity has made 1615 client contacts (target 1500) from April 2010 to March 2011, 37 of which were referred to the Exercise Referral and Weight Management programme. Activities delivered include Mums on the Move, Aquanatal, Gentle Circuits, Aerobics, Cycling and Legs, Bums and Tums. A new activity was added to the programme during this period. “Mums in the Pool....and baby comes too” is a water based exercise class for the mother with the baby in an inflatable seat. This activity, and “Mums on the Move” create exercise opportunities for new mums without the need for additional child care
- The **Health Related Behaviour Survey (HRBS)** is a questionnaire of a sample of young people in Years 4 and 6 of primary school and Years 8 and 10 in secondary. The results of the 2010 Survey have been published and some of the key trends are:

Primary pupils

- 43% of girls in Year 6 in 2010 said they wanted to lose weight. This is lower than the 55% of girls in 2008 and 47% who said the same in 2006
- 22% of Year 6 pupils in 2010 said they had 5 or more portions of fruit and vegetables the day before the survey. 33% said this in 2008 and 28% in 2006
- Sunderland pupils were more likely to eat chips, sweets and chocolate ‘on most days’ and less likely to eat fresh fruit in 2010 compared with previous years

- 42% of pupils in 2010 exercised hard at least 5 times in the last week. This is lower than the 48% of pupils who said this in 2008 and 49% in 2006

Secondary pupils

- 12% of secondary pupils in 2010 bought their lunch from a takeaway or shop. This compared with 34% who said this in 2008 and 26% in 2006. Consumption of chips, sweets and crisps 'on most days' has also fallen steadily since 2006. Sadly, fresh fruit and vegetables 'on most days' have also fallen after a rise seen between 2006 and 2008
- 36% of pupils described themselves as 'fit' or 'very fit' in 2010. This compared with 42% who said this in 2008 and 44% in 2006
- In 2010, 35% of Year 10 boys said that they exercised hard at least 5 times in the previous week. In 2008, 43% said this and in 2006 this figure was 45%

All of the data collected through HRBS will be used in the needs analysis of the Obesity Partnership and inform future planning and service improvement.

- The Healthy Schools Programme focuses on healthy eating and physical education in schools as well as PHSE/Emotional wellbeing. The HSP now offers an **Enhancement Programme**, which around 30 schools in Sunderland have engaged with. Twenty-one of those schools are focussing on 'Healthy Weight'. There will be evidence in each of these schools of a 'whole school focus' on Healthy Weight, with some smaller projects concentrating on particular year groups. All schools engaging in the Enhancement Programme have received national grant funding of £2,000 to cover training costs and appropriate interventions. In addition, each school involved has evaluated a variety of data and information to form local and school priorities and develop:
 - Measurable outcomes – many schools have used school meal numbers
 - Perception outcomes – which will include a survey of young people to gain their views
 - Targeted outcome – focusing on a particular group, to ensure those identified are offered appropriate programmes (this could be young people identified as being obese onto identified healthy eating programmes, or a particular year group where physical activity levels are deemed as low, etc).
- Year on year school meal uptake has increased by 1.7% in primary schools (52.9% to 54.6%), and by 15% in secondary schools (43.5% to 58.5%). This means school meal uptake is 10.5 percentage points above the national average in primary schools (44.1%), and 20.9 percentage points above the national average in secondary schools (37.6%). Improvements in performance in primary schools are due to better customer engagement strategies, most notably the School Meals Investigators pupil-led consultation programme and associated service developments, such as increased delivery of theme days and installation of music equipment in dining halls. The improved performance for secondary schools is due to ongoing implementation of closed gate policies at lunchtimes and the development of bespoke services to meet individual pupil and school needs.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

The focus in the coming year relating to obesity will be:

- Target efforts towards the early years, to change lifestyles of parents/carers at an early stage so that fewer young people become obese
- Further 2-4 year olds prevention programmes to be delivered by the LAF Team, building on the success of the pilot programme at Ryhope CA

- Consolidate the child weight management programme through increased referrals to LAF
- Develop and implement a “self referral” route into the LAF programme to assist in increasing the number of families accessing the programme
- Deliver an event in support of National Childhood Obesity Week to raise awareness of the programmes and services available for families who have concerns about their children’s weight
- Roll out HENRY
- Continue to promote breastfeeding with expectant mothers, as research shows that babies who are breastfed are less likely to become obese in infancy
- Further develop the Maternity Lifestyles programme to continue to meet the needs of the client group
- Levels of obesity in children are measured at reception and year 6 through the **National Childhood Measurement Programme**. The Programme is administered by school nurses and the aim is to measure the BMI of young people in schools, and where concerns about weight are identified, services are offered to the young person and their family. To help improve the programme, including coverage and response time for contacting parents to inform them of their child’s measurement outcome, a Kaizen event is planned for May 2011. This will bring together key stakeholders to share their expertise and identify areas for improvement.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

National performance indicators linked to this target are:

Ref	Description	Actual	Baseline	Year 1		Year 2 Target	Year 3 Target
				Target	Actual		
		2008/09	2009/10	2010/11		2011/12	2012/13
		%	%	%	%	%	%
NI55	% children in reception with height and weight recorded who are obese	10	n/a	13	11.32 2009/10 data		
NI56d	% children in year 6 with height and weight recorded who are obese	21	22	21	21.1	20	20

PRIORITY OUTCOME 2

REDUCE LEVELS OF TEENAGE PREGNANCY

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

The Risk and Resilience Strategy 2008-12 encompasses sexual health, teenage pregnancy, substance misuse and smoking. The detailed plans to reduce teenage conception rates include:

- Providing services that offer:
 - prevention
 - well publicised and accessible sexual health services offering free contraception, advice and pregnancy options advice in each of the five areas of the city.
 - integrated healthcare packages of support to young parents and their child
 - access to childcare to support engagement in education, employment and training and appropriate benefits through Jobcentre Plus
 - a proactive approach to supporting young fathers
 - enhanced support to care leavers.
- Increase the participation of teenage parents in education, training and employment by:
 - increasing access to “care to learn” funding for young parents
 - developing courses across the city to engage young parents in learning
 - working with Connexions to identify and engage young mums
 - providing a specialist resource (b2b) with onsite childcare to engage young mums in education, training and employment.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

Since April 2010, the Risk and Resilience Partnership has:

- Commissioned **Answers**, a young people’s dedicated contraception and sexual health service in Sunderland for young people under the age of 25. There will be at least one Answers clinic in each of the five areas of the city. There are currently four operating in Washington Primary Care Centre, Bede and Hylton College sites and Chester Lodge at the city hospital. The fifth clinic will be based within the new Primary Care Centre at Houghton le Spring and is expected to be operating in September 2011. The CASH service, including all age clinics, and Genito-Urinary Medicine are provided by City Hospitals
- Through the Prevention and Staying Healthy Board, developed a primary care model to provide contraception and sexual health advice within GP practices. The tender applications for this contract have been issued and it is likely that the contract will be awarded in September 2011. The successful service will co-ordinate training and raise awareness of the role of GPs in the delivery of sexual health services as part of the primary care provision
- Secured funding from the Young People’s Learning Agency for courses at foundation stage across the city. Courses have taken place in Hendon and Pallion with groups of young mums
- Your Health has been launched, which provides information and key health messages on a range of issues, including teenage pregnancy. Your Health is delivered through a website, an Essential Guidebook for Parents and a Big Health Book for young people. All secondary schools have a Your Health information area
- As a result of the teenage pregnancy grant ending in March 2011, the service provided by the Sexual Health Promotion Team has been decommissioned
- In December 2010 a **Rapid Process Improvement Workshop (RPIW)** was held, involving the PCT, City Hospitals and the local authority. The workshop focussed on

repeat terminations and access to contraception. As a result, measures have been put in place to allow nurses to see an additional three patients per clinic, thereby reducing the waiting times from termination to insertion of LARC (Long-acting Reversible Contraception). Systems have been standardised across the different clinics available, ensuring people get consistent services at every point. Work is also underway to establish a Young People's Contraceptive Nurse to work with the most vulnerable young women accessing the termination service to ensure they are using the chosen contraception effectively. The nurse will be in place by September 2011. We will also explore opportunities to establish an Options Counsellor

- **Chlamydia Screening Programme** – to promote the screening programme, a number of marketing initiatives have been developed including a text service for a young person to request a kit, Facebook advertising to promote awareness and providing a link to the regional Chlamydia screening website for a testing kit and further information. In addition, a number of seasonal and holiday campaigns are used to cover key events such as Valentine's Day, summer holidays and Christmas
- The CASH service (Contraception and Sexual Health) continues to be provided by City Hospitals
- The Healthy Schools Programme focuses on PHSE and emotional wellbeing as well as healthy eating and physical education. The HSP now offers an **Enhancement Programme**, which around 30 schools in Sunderland have engaged with. Six secondary schools are focussing on 'Teenage Pregnancy'. There will be evidence in each of these schools of a 'whole school focus' on this topic, with some smaller projects concentrating on particular year groups. All schools engaging in the Enhancement Programme have received national grant funding of £2,000 to cover training costs and appropriate interventions. In addition, each school involved has evaluated a variety of data and information to form local and school priorities and develop measurable, perception and targeted outcomes
- Individual services have made improvements, such as:
 - Connexions has identified lead Personal Advisors in each locality with responsibility for teenage mums
 - B2B offers a range of courses for young parents/parents to be, which include educational courses where accreditations are achieved, parenting courses, such as weaning and other activities which include messy play, swimming, healthy eating, etc. Over the 2010/11 year, 58 young mums/mums to be have accessed courses
- Due to the cessation of Teenage Pregnancy Implementation Grant, there is no longer a dedicated resource to work with young fathers.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

- In July 2011, the **C-card** will be launched. This is the rebranded condom card scheme for young people. New publicity materials will be produced and training is scheduled throughout June and July. The training will include use of the c-card system, which is a live web-based system, sexual health, Chlamydia screening and substance misuse. The c-card will offer:
 - greater choice of outlets
 - Chlamydia screening as an 'opt out' which will increase uptake
 - substance misuse (alcohol) assessments integrated – potential referrals to YDAP
 - C-card will also be provided by CASH and GUM in the future.
- Promote **Emergency Contraception Scheme** – whilst preventing unwanted pregnancies is clearly the major focus for sexual health services, access to emergency contraception is an important option for young people who need it. We will develop a brand and promotional materials to clearly outline for young people which pharmacies are engaged in the scheme. Any promotional material will also include signposting to other forms of contraception

- Through the council's current reorganisation, move towards a strengthened Risk and Resilience model of working, which teenage pregnancy will be a part of.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

The Risk and Resilience Partnership will monitor performance against this priority outcome using the national indicator below:

Ref	Description	Actual 2008/09	Baseline 2009/10	Year 1 target 2010/11	Year 2 target 2011/12	Year 3 target 2012/13
NI 112	Under 18 conception rate		35 per 1000*	34 per 1000	Reduce by 30% (from 1998 baseline)	Reduce by 40% (from 1998 baseline)

*It is likely that the figure given here is the target for 2009/10 as opposed to the baseline and is linked to the ten-year plan to reduce teenage pregnancy rates nationally. **Sunderland currently has a teenage pregnancy rate of 51.8** (as reported from the Q3 conception data for 2009). This is above both the national and regional average. Continued efforts, along with a recent national support visit for teenage pregnancy, are striving to make improvements to young people's sexual health and to reduce the number of teenage conceptions.

PRIORITY OUTCOME 3 IMPROVE THE MENTAL HEALTH OUTCOMES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

The Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) Strategy and Implementation Plan 2006-2009 sets out detailed plans including priorities and specific actions and targets to improve this outcome.

The priorities within the strategy include:

- Partnership
- Planning and commissioning
- Participation
- Meeting the mental health needs of children, young people and their families
- Effective service delivery

Priorities for improvement include:

- Work with parents to promote well being, self confidence and self esteem in children and young people
- Ensure children and young people develop personally and socially, tackling cultural, religious and moral issues through Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and Social Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL)
- Provide accessible and dedicated mental health services to develop resilience skills and improve emotional health.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

- A partnership of NHS South of Tyne & Wear, Sunderland, South Tyneside and Gateshead Councils has completed a review of Tier 2 service provision, including TAMHS (Targeted Mental Health in Schools), to inform the development of the core offer and commissioning plan, including improved access to talking therapies
- Formal consultation to inform the commissioning of the specialist community CAMHS has been undertaken and the service has been commissioned to include services for children and young people:
 - with complex severe or persistent mental health needs
 - with moderate to severe learning disabilities and are experiencing psychological distress
 - who are in special circumstances, e.g. looked after children, those who have substance misuse issues, those who are at risk of or are involved in offending and are experiencing psychological distress
 - with severe, acute and complex mental health needs requiring an enhanced community CAMHS intervention as an alternative to inpatient admission
 - with complex behavioural mental health and social care needs that require enhanced specialist CAMH intervention as part of an integrated multi-agency package of care
- The Eating Disorder Service has been commissioned and will be operational from 1 July 2011
- The Neurodevelopmental Disorder Service has been commissioned and will be operational from 1 April 2011
- The new model of inpatient service provision has been commissioned and will be operational from 1 September 2011
- Children and young people have been involved in all aspects of the commissioning process at each stage of the review.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

- Maintain the quality, range and scope of Tier 2 CAMHS services as part of an integrated pathway of care
- Ensure the new specialist community CAMH and Learning Disability Service is developed, to meet the needs of the population served, as part of an integrated model of children's service delivery, with particular emphasis on meeting the needs of children in special circumstances, e.g. links between CAMHS and youth offending, learning difficulties and/or disabilities and looked after children
- Develop clear pathways of care between universal, targeted, specialist and in-patient services
- Develop clear multi-agency pathways of care for children and young people on the autistic spectrum. This will be the first of a number of specialist pathways developed in future years.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

- The original performance measure for this outcome area was NI 50 – “Emotional health of children”. This was measured by an indicator in the Tellus Survey – a survey of children and young people against the five outcomes. However, it is not now possible to report against this indicator, as reporting against it has come to an end, as has the Tellus Survey
- Future performance reporting will come from the impact of the commissioned CAMH Services. Outcome based performance measures are built in to all contracts issued as part of the review, and service providers are required to collect and report on a minimum dataset, including outcome measures. This will be provided in future annual reports and monitoring reports for the CYPP.

PRIORITY OUTCOME 4 REDUCE SUBSTANCE MISUSE

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

The Risk and Resilience Strategy 2008-2012 encompasses sexual health, teenage pregnancy, substance misuse and smoking.

The detailed plan to reduce substance misuse includes:

- Prevent harm to children, young people and families affected by drugs and alcohol by:
 - reducing the number of young people frequently using illicit drugs, alcohol or volatile substances
 - ensuring appropriate services for young people in treatment as defined by NTA
 - reducing alcohol related Accident & Emergency attendances and hospital admissions
 - reducing alcohol related crime and disorder
 - reducing the number of women smoking at the time of delivery
- Reduce numbers of young people and families that smoke by:
 - reducing smoking prevalence in young people aged over 16
 - ensuring all secondary schools attain gold smoke free award by September 2009
 - improving access to smoking cessation services across the city for under 18's
 - reducing levels of smoking during pregnancy by 15% by 2010.

In addition to the above, the Risk and Resilience Strategy details the way in which we aim to address young people's substance misuse, including alcohol and smoking, as part of a holistic integrated approach to promoting resilience, supporting positive lifestyle choices and addressing risk taking behaviours. Key elements of the strategy are to:

- Enable young people with drug or alcohol issues to access the full range of substance misuse treatment interventions
- Re-provide services to establish locality based young people's Risk and Resilience workers to work as an integral part of 5 locality teams to offer brief advice and support on positive lifestyle choices including drugs, alcohol and smoking
- Strengthen support to parents and carers' of young people and their families with drug & alcohol issues
- Enable and support universal and targeted Services to identify the drug or alcohol related needs of young people and refer appropriately
- Increase appropriate referrals to Young People's Specialist Treatment Service from universal, targeted and specialist young people's services
- Strengthen care pathways for young people attending Health & Wellbeing Services
- Support schools in the planning, delivery and monitoring of high quality drug education & PSHE
- Ensure young people have an opportunity to feedback on the treatment they receive
- Increase the number of Stop Smoking advisors
- Increasing the number of referrals to NHS Stop Smoking services by offering more support.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

- The Youth Drug and Alcohol Project (YDAP) is funded and monitored by NTA and is regarded as a high performing service. The NTA Performance Report for the last quarter of 2010/11, showed that 100% of those young people assessed as requiring a specialist

substance misuse treatment, commenced that treatment within 15 working days of referral.

- In order to prevent harm to children, young people and families a range of prevention and early intervention work is undertaken, including:
 - specific targeted programmes have been delivered in schools and children's homes to support early intervention work
 - prevention projects continue through SAFC Foundation
 - work with the XL Youth Villages preparing non-alcoholic cocktails for young people
 - joint work with health around the C-Card, so that young people who take up the C-Card Service, answer questions related to substance misuse, and where a need is identified, they are automatically referred to YDAP. In addition, all YDAP practitioners will be C-Card distributors
- To further support prevention/early intervention a number of YDAP practitioners are now based in localities. All YDAP practitioners will be fully integrated into locality based working from 1 September 2011
- So that YDAP receives referrals that are appropriate to the service, the Risk and Resilience Partnership has rolled out training for practitioners in the use of the YDAP screening tool. That training is now complete and is, in part, contributing to the appropriateness of referrals now being received by the service. In 2008/09, there were 300 referrals, which rose to 320 in 2009/10. For 2010/11, referrals reduced to 263
- Regarding alcohol related admissions to hospital and A&E attendances, YDAP has a dedicated worker based within Sunderland City Hospital to work in partnership with staff in the health service to support young people presenting at A&E with alcohol related issues. This also supports the appropriateness of referrals the service receives, which, in relation to this issue, have increased from a baseline of 6 in 2008/09 to 29 in 2010/11. The increase in numbers is a positive result, as it demonstrates that the service is engaging with young people and means that intervention programmes can be introduced at a relatively early stage
- YDAP also works in partnership with the Youth Offending Service regarding alcohol related crime and disorder. Where young people who engage in criminal activities are also involved in substance misuse, the YOS refers them to YDAP. During the year 2010/11, 125 young people were referred
- YDAP wants to ensure that young people are routinely able to provide feedback on the treatments they receive. In 2010, the service participated in a Viewpoint trial, an electronic method of gathering young people's views. However the evaluation showed that this was not an appropriate method of gathering views of young people using the service. Therefore alternative ways of obtaining user views are being sought
- A range of carer services for families affected by substance misuse have been developed across Sunderland including Families United Supporting Help In Addiction (FUSHIA), Sunderland Area Parent Support (SAPS), Sunderland Carers Centre, Northern Engagement into Recovery from Addiction Foundation (NERAF) and North East Council on Addiction (NECA)
- YourHealth website launched to provide children and young people, their parents and carers with information on the impact of drug and alcohol use and where to access further help and support – www.yourhealthsunderland.com.

WHAT DO WE STILL HAVE TO DO

- Enable young people with drug or alcohol issues to access the full range of substance misuse treatment interventions
- Strengthen support to parents and carers' of young people and their families with drug and alcohol issues
- Strengthen care pathways for young people attending Health & Wellbeing Services

- Support schools in the planning, delivery and monitoring of high quality drug education and PSHE. This will be taken forward by the Risk and Resilience Trainer from September 2011
- Ensure young people have an opportunity to feedback on the treatment they receive
- Increase the number of Stop Smoking advisors
- Increasing the number of referrals to NHS Stop Smoking services by offering more support
- Improve the quality of data collected by City Hospitals Sunderland and shared with Sunderland City Council and Northumbria Police to reduce alcohol related violence. Safer Sunderland Partnership is working with a range of stakeholders, to improve 'the Cardiff model'. The project group will agree the best way to monitor the data and make use of all the available information.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Substance misuse among children and young people

- A Sunderland Young People's Substance Misuse Needs Assessment was completed in February 2011 to assess the trends of substance misuse treatment for young people in Sunderland, particularly over the 2009/10 period. Some interesting findings included in that report, which were identified through the Health Related Behaviour Survey (HRBS) 2010, are summarised below.
 - there were less Year 10's drinking alcohol in the last 7 days compared to previously
 - there were less Year 10's drinking 28 units or more in the last 7 days
 - the number of Year 10's not drinking alcohol in the last 7 days has increased
 - less Year 10's have been offered cannabis or other drugs

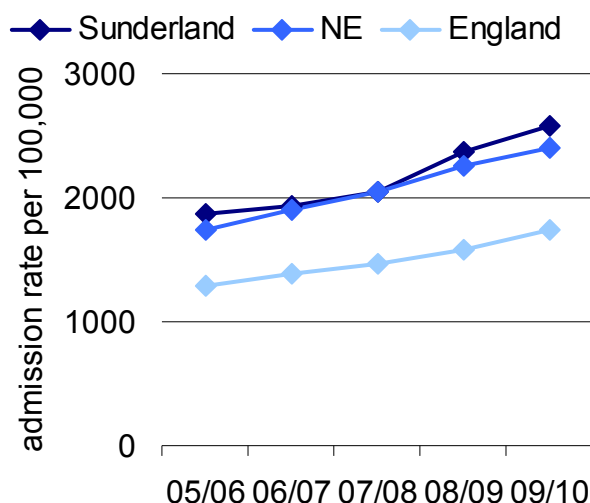
The HRBS findings show a positive trend change for alcohol use. Across England, the proportion of both boys and girls of school age who regularly consume alcohol (by self-reporting having consumed alcohol in the past week) appears to have fallen between 2002 and 2010. In Sunderland, the proportion of girls regularly consuming alcohol is falling but the proportion of boys has remained steady. Among both boys and girls, around 40% of children in Year 10 and 20% in Year 8 regularly consume alcohol, so this remains a significant public health issue.

Furthermore, the participation of pupils was much larger in 2010 than 2008, and while this can affect trend analysis, the increased participation provides a broader, more representative picture of Sunderland.

Alcohol related hospital admissions and A&E Attendances

The data set out below relates to alcohol related hospital admissions, though it must be noted that this is for all ages, not specifically young people:

Alcohol-related hospital admission rate per 100,000



- During 2009/10, 291 young people under the age of 18 presented at Sunderland A&E with alcohol related concerns. This figure rose to 319 in 2010/11.
- The number of under 18's being admitted to hospital with alcohol related primary diagnosis concerns dropped from 108 in 2009 to 88 in 2010.
- Alcohol specific hospital admissions for under 18's is significantly worse in Sunderland compared to the English average, and also worse than the regional average. Sunderland is ranked 311/326 in the country in relation to alcohol related admissions to hospital for under-18's (Source: Local Alcohol Profiles in England – LAPE)

Smoking cessation

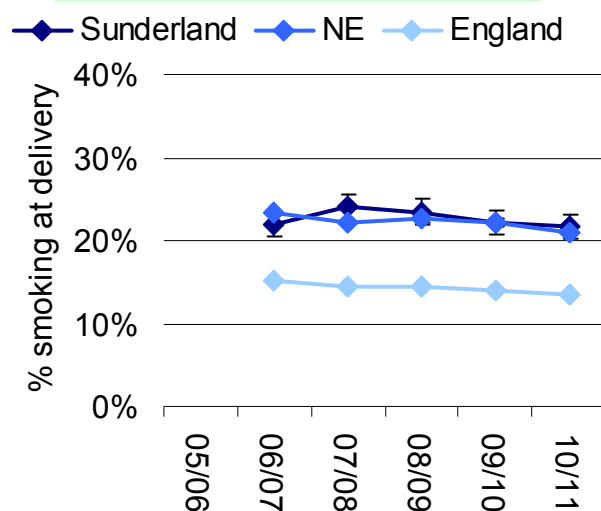
- In relation to reducing numbers of young people and families that smoke, and in particular reducing smoking prevalence in young people aged over 16, the 2008 South of Tyne and Wear Lifestyle survey, asked 2% of adults resident in Sunderland whether they smoked. Among people aged 18-24 years, 23% of females and 29% of males said that they smoked, compared to 23% of all adult females and 28% of all adult males. The proportion of adults that smoke is highest in the 25-44 years age band. The survey will be repeated in 2012 and will produce comparable data which will take fuller account of the effect of the 2007 ban on smoking in public places
- In relation to improving access to smoking cessation services across the city for under 18's, two consecutive health equity audits of NHS Stop Smoking Services across South of Tyne and Wear showed the following figures for the number of young people under 18 years accessing Stop Smoking Services

Number of young people under 18 years accessing NHS Stop Smoking Services who are resident in Sunderland			
Year	2007/08 (Apr-Mar)	2009 (Jan-Dec)	2010 (Jan-Dec)
Number setting a quit date	175	267	235
Number successfully quitting at 4 weeks	35	54	36
Percentage quit rate	20	20	15
Average quit rate among people all ages	43	47	47

Although levels of access to Stop Smoking Services among young people under 18 years have increased, quit rates among this group of service users is significantly lower than average quit rates.

- In relation to reducing levels of smoking during pregnancy, although the rate has fallen in recent years in Sunderland (in 2010/11 the figure was 22%), it is still significantly higher than the England rate (14%)
- Data is presented below in relation to the proportion of mothers smoking at the time of delivery:

Proportion of mothers smoking at time of delivery



STAYING SAFE

PRIORITY OUTCOME 5

TACKLE THE IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

The impact of domestic violence on children and young people was acknowledged as a key priority in the Children and Young People's Plan 2010-25. Domestic Violence is a cross-cutting issue and the CYPP Delivery Plan: 2010-13 identified the following groups/partnerships as having a leading role in making improvements:

- Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board
- Safer Sunderland Partnership and in particular the:
 - Sunderland Domestic Violence Partnership, and
 - Violent Crime Delivery Group.

Following the launch of the Government's Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy, work has been progressing across the Safer Sunderland Partnership, Safeguarding Adults and Safeguarding Children Boards to ensure Sunderland has a clear, coordinated approach to tackling violence against women and girls in the form of a joint action plan.

Key detailed actions and expectations set out in the Government's Action Plan are now being incorporated into the Sunderland VAWG Action Plan which will be monitored by the three Boards.

The Action Plan, which will be in place by September 2011, will ensure Sunderland has a clear implementation plan in tackling violence against women and girls.

The Plan will focus on 4 key areas:

- **prevent** such violence from happening in the first place by challenging the attitudes and behaviours which foster it and intervening early where possible to prevent it;
- **provide** adequate levels of support where violence does occur;
- work in **partnership** to obtain the best outcome for victims and their families; and
- **take action** to reduce the risk **to women and girls who are victims of these crimes and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice.**

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

Until the action plan is in place, work progresses to improve this outcome, as set out below:

- The MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) Coordinator is in post and has successfully completed a secondment within the City Council to raise awareness of staff of the MARAC process
- MARAC practical sessions in operation to allow staff to observe a MARAC so they are aware of what is required should they need to attend
- MARAC statistics show that repeat victimisation stands at 20% which is well below the original target of 34%
- A successful domestic violence awareness raising campaign ran for 2 weeks in December in the Sunderland Echo
- IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advisor) Service to support victims continues to successfully run

- Police have ran Operation Liberty in conjunction with partners to provide support to victims of domestic violence on weekends
- An e-learning package covering the impact of domestic violence on children has been introduced which will allow partners to access it ensuring a clear joined up message across the City
- Perpetrator programmes continue to run in the City
- Specialist Domestic Violence Court in operation
- Sunderland Domestic Violence Partnership in operation now also has Task and Results Groups on key issues such as alcohol and Domestic Violence.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Ref	Description	Actual 2008/09	Baseline 2009/10	Year 1		Year 2 target 2011/12	Year 3 target 2012/13
				Target 2010/11	Actual 2010/11		
NI 32	Repeat incidents of domestic violence	New Indicator	34%	30%	20%*		

* 220 cases went to MARAC of which 44 were repeat victims.

PRIORITY OUTCOME 6 REDUCE LEVELS OF BULLYING

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

The Sunderland Anti-Bullying Strategy and Implementation Plan 2010-2013 sets the following key priorities for tackling bullying:

- To ensure that robust anti-bullying policies are in place and children and young people are offered different options to report incidents, as well as understand what response they can expect
- To ensure that a practical method of establishing baseline information is put in place to identify local incidence of reported bullying
- To target anti-bullying services to schools, services for looked after children and other community settings
- To ensure that children and young people have the opportunity to participate in strategy and policy development
- To review Sunderland's Anti-Bullying Charter Mark
- To appoint a Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator to enhance and drive effective partnership working and inform commissioning
- To ensure that bullying is picked up early and that 'low level' harassment is challenged.

WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED

Since April 2010:

- An Anti-Bullying Operational Group has been established, which meets monthly, to undertake anti-bullying work. A Strategy Group has also been established which meets quarterly to oversee developments and co-ordinate activity
- An Anti-Bullying Co-ordinator was appointed in May 2010
- A Young People's Conference was also held in May 2010
- The Anti-Bullying Strategy was reviewed, revised was consulted on from June to September 2010, and is now published
- A young people's version of the Strategy was produced in October 2010
- An anti-bullying website is in place with advice and guidance for young people, parents and professionals – www.yourhealthsunderland.com/anti-bullying
- The Anti-Bullying Charter Mark was reviewed and updated, with the input of young people, between April and September 2010
- Charter Mark has also been produced for settings and organisations, including Children's Homes. This was launched in November 2010
- The Positive Behaviour Charter Mark has been revised for nurseries
- An official Charter Mark logo has been launched for schools and settings to include on their official stationery and other promotional material, demonstrating their achievement in a standard of care
- Anti-bullying awareness raising sessions have been held with:
 - City Equals (disabled young people's group)
 - Change Council (looked after children's group)
 - Youth Parliament
 - Hendon Young People's Project (BME young people's group)
 - School governors.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

- Explore options for a standard approach to recording bullying incidents. Work will be carried out with schools and other services to design an appropriate system
- This will support the establishment of accurate baseline information to identify local incidence of reported bullying
- Target anti-bullying services to schools, services for looked after children and other community settings to ensure that bullying is picked up early and that 'low level' harassment is challenged
- Five young people's conferences will be held in each locality in the Autumn Term. One hundred and twenty young people will attend across the five conferences, and community police will be involved. Clear outcomes will be produced from those conferences which young people can feed into school
- An 'App Competition' will be run, where young people's groups will be asked to design an app to keep young people safe in a cyber-world
- A training programme to be set up to carry out Charter Mark assessments in schools and settings. This will be a 'train the trainer', aimed at young people, so that they can train other young people as cohorts change
- Complete the e learning package for all professionals across the city.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

The number of schools and settings that have registered for the Charter Mark is set out below:

- 18 schools
- 5 children's homes
- 5 youth projects (2 commissioned and 3 non commissioned)

Of those:

- 3 primary schools
- 2 secondary schools
- 3 children's homes

have already gained the award at Silver or above with the remainder set to gain the award by end of September 2011.

National Indicator 69 – "children who have experienced bullying", was assigned to this outcome as performance information. However, it is not possible to report accurately against the indicator as reliable baseline information is yet to be established.

PRIORITY OUTCOME 7

REDUCE THE NUMBERS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE VICTIMS OF CRIME AND REDUCE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S FEAR OF CRIME

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

The Safer Sunderland Strategy 2008-2023 is being implemented. Key actions to improve this outcome are:

- Continue provision of YOS Prevention Service to address anti-social behaviour or potential offending
- Continue provision of the Challenge and Support Team which ensures that enforcement activity comes with greater support for young people and their parents, particularly those who are at risk of developing further problems. The Team will work with up to 20 families in the year
- Strengthen the Family Intervention Project (FIP) to work with the most vulnerable and problematic families with children at risk of offending
- Implement the Youth Victim Action Plan, delivering effective support for young victims of crime across the city
- Commission the Youth Drug and Alcohol Project (YDAP) to provide a full range of specialist substance misuse services including prescription harm reduction, relapse prevention, solution-based therapy and group work
- Undertake a further Fear of Crime Survey with children and young people during 2010/11.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

- The additional funding received for the Challenge and Support Team ended in March 2011. The YOS Prevention Service has, however, been remodelled to incorporate the good work of the team and move towards a more family based approach to service delivery. Thirteen young people and their families had been supported by the team until this point
- The Family Intervention Project (FIP), also mainstreamed upon cessation of funding, supported 56 families in 2010/11, working with 246 individuals from the most vulnerable and complex families in the city with excellent results. During this financial year, 35 cases were closed, 60% of those with an acceptable/successful closure reason, compared to the national average of 46%. The 40% that were not closed successfully had a robust exit strategy to ensure access to services
- One hundred and fifty seven young people accessed and engaged with the Wear Kids Prevention Service which provides support for children and young people aged 5-17 and their families in the Sunderland area. An additional 3100 young people were also able to access, participate and learn from one of the educational programmes that were delivered in schools by the prevention service. These short thought provoking interventions were delivered to ensure wider knowledge was gained on key subjects including anti social behaviour, substance misuse and citizenship
- A Partnership Strategic Intelligence Assessment (PSIA) has been completed by the Safer Sunderland Partnership and includes a victim matrix of victimisation by age. The matrix (based on those aged 10–60+) shows the lowest risk age group is aged 10-14
- Under the Youth Victim Action Plan a range of actions have been taken to support young victims of crime, including:
 - a DVD is being produced with young victims providing positive messages to other young people on how to stay safe

- practice and referral procedures have been developed to identify young people accessing YOS Prevention Services who may also be a young victim and ensure the provision of appropriate support
- a parenting information pack has been published that provides advice and guidance on how to recognise signs of victimisation
- A Victims Champion has been appointed by the Safer Sunderland Partnership and work has been done to ensure the appropriate links are in place to ensure vulnerable young victims are referred into appropriate services
- The Youth Drug and Alcohol Project has supported 96 young people who have entered treatment, having been referred by Sunderland YOS. As well as the full range of commissioned services, work is being extended to offer brief interventions at arrest referral stage
- The YOS managed a highly successful summer media campaign (2010) around confidence in the criminal justice system and fear of crime. The campaign aimed to get the public involved in seeing justice done. The campaign generated six newspaper articles as well as specialist media coverage. As a result, Sunderland Youth Offending Service was nationally recognised by Youth Justice Board England and Wales for communicating youth justice to young people. Work with media continues through Media Strategy.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

- Complete the DVD being produced by young people on positive messages to other young people on how to stay safe
- Continue to positively promote the work of the Youth Offending Service through the Media Strategy
- Undertake Fear of Crime Survey for 2011 and act on results and recommendations.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Ref	Description	Actual 2008/09	Baseline 2009/10	Year 1		Year 2 target 2011/12	Year 3 target 2012/13
				Target 2010/11	Actual 2010/11		
NI 17	Perceptions of anti-social behaviour	23.5%	22.2%	20%			

- The Youth Offending Service commissioned research in 2008, which was repeated in 2010, on young people's feelings of safety. In 2010, 61.5% of children and young people said they felt safe in Sunderland. This is 17.6 percentage points higher than in 2008 (52.3%)
- In 2010, a number of new factors had emerged around social media such as social networking sites (e.g. Facebook), Youtube, Internet, mobile phones and text messages. The survey also found children and young people's feelings are significantly influenced by TV and press coverage of crime.

ENJOYING AND ACHIEVING

PRIORITY OUTCOME 8

IMPROVE ATTAINMENT FOR ALL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE FOR ALL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE BY ACHIEVING NATIONAL AVERAGE AT ALL KEY STAGES

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

The areas identified for improvement in the children and young people's plan 2010-25 and the deliver plan 2010-13 are:

- Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP)
- Key Stage 2 Performance
- Key Stage 4 GCSE Performance
- Achievement of Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications by age 19.

Set out below is an overview of what our plans are, the achievements made, what we still need to do and performance information linked to the specific area.

EARLY YEARS

The Early Years and Childcare Strategic Partnership aims to improve this outcome by:

- Improving the quality of schools, settings and services by:
 - providing support and challenge on the environment
 - monitoring children's progress
 - developing strong partnerships with parents and professionals
 - improving the quality of support to Local Authority providers
- Improving the ability of schools, settings and services 0-5 to identify and narrow the gap for lower achieving or disadvantaged children
- Developing specific projects to focus on areas that need significant improvement, for example boys, BME, SEN, LAC and speaking and listening skills.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

- To improve the quality of schools and settings, during Summer 2010, the Early Years Team scrutinised data from schools and daycare setting and carried out a Welfare Audit (daycare only). This influenced the level of support that settings received. Eleven (11) schools received high level support, 5 received medium level during 2010/11. Three (3) daycare settings received high level support and 13 received medium level during 2010/11
- A further detailed audit of 49 daycare settings is currently underway and due for completion by the end of August 2011. The focus of the audit is around Teaching and Learning and Welfare requirements. As in previous years, the findings will help to tailor support to those settings where it is most required
- The EYFS Capital Project is now fully complete and invested in 65 schools and settings to improve their outdoor play areas
- An electric tool to monitor children's progress from birth to 5 years has been implemented in schools and settings. This is a pilot and will be tested for a year from April 2011 to March 2012
- The 0-7 Partnership Pilot Project has developed some good practice models for improving the partnership between parents and professionals. The funding for the

project has been withdrawn but some of the good practice models are being disseminated for settings to use

- Projects for specific groups of children have been developed, namely for boys and BME. Learning from these projects has started to be disseminated to other settings. Staff have received detailed training on speaking and listening skills to roll out the learning from ECAT/ICAN to all settings. This has been well received and will be monitored after June 2011
- The Early Years Team visited every school in Spring 2010 to review data of children in Reception. Using the findings, schools have targeted support at those children who are not predicted to reach 6 points, to provide additional support to narrow the gap between children
- Four schools are engaged and learning from each other to improve BME good practice. This has been running for approximately 18 months and involves focused training based on action learning
- Training has been completed with foster carers to improve Looked After Children speaking and listening skills
- The quality of local authority support is being improved through detailed practice guidance for all staff, support and training from the School Improvement Service, and quality assuring reports and support visits
- The Special Educational Needs (SEN) Monitoring Officer and EYFS Team are working together to provide advice and guidance to settings on the identification of lower achieving children
- Training has been provided to 10 Lead Managers of Good and Outstanding daycare settings to develop a support network between themselves, with the intention that they will then roll out their learning and provide support other daycare settings to achieve a Good or Outstanding result from Ofsted.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

- Continue to focus on support for individual settings with levels of support matched to identified need
- Continue to focus on improving outcomes for BME, boys, SEN children and speaking and listening skills
- Disseminate the learning from 0-7 partnership pilot.

Key projects that have been identified since April 2010 are:

Funding for disadvantaged 2-year olds

- Sunderland is one of 15 pilot areas and has received £365,803 from the Early Intervention Grant to trial new approaches for the early education of 2 years olds. Sunderland is committed to providing 15 hours of early education for this younger cohort by 2014. This will support the Narrowing the Gap programme in that young people should enter into primary education at higher levels than currently. The pilot will test what the issues are, and this is likely to include availability of spaces. To support this we will:
 - encourage schools in the North and Coalfields areas of the city to provide additional childcare as this is where there is currently a shortage
 - establish an accredited network of childminders to increase this demand among parents
 - lead the work to improve the quality of settings currently rated “satisfactory” using the Every Child a Talker programme, so focusing on speaking and listening.

Tickell Review of the Early Years Foundation Stage

- The review will reform the current framework and make it less bureaucratic. One of Dame Tickell's recommendations includes significantly reducing the number of early learning goals children are assessed against at age five from 69 to 17. The review was reported on 30 March 2011 with a view to implementing any changes from September 2012 onwards.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

- Since April 2010, improvement has been made across all the main performance measures at FSP and statutory targets have been exceeded
- Good progress has been made by both boys and girls and the gender gap has narrowed in personal and social education (PSE)
- This is alongside continued improvement of the lowest performing 20% of pupils, which is now close to national average.

KEY STAGE 2

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

The 0-16 Partnership aims to improve this outcome. During 2010-2011:

- Schools needing to maximise the progress that pupils make will carry out development activity within the Priority Learning Local Authority (PLLA) initiative and they will share good practice with other schools in the Local Authority
- School Improvement Partners (SIPs) will identify schools where Primary National Strategy (PNS) Consultants will support the implementation and development of the Improving Schools Programme (ISP) to strengthen leadership and management systems and improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- In the schools in which they are deployed, PNS Consultants will:
 - develop and embed the use of Assessing Pupils' Progress (APP) to ensure accurate teacher assessment judgements through moderation and standardisation
 - develop and embed the use of the Primary Framework to develop understanding of progression and strengthen teachers' subject knowledge
- Where there is underperformance in writing, schools will be targeted for inclusion in the Every Child a Writer (ECaW) programme
- Ten schools will engage with the Specialist Mathematics Teacher programme (MaST) to improve the teaching and learning of mathematics in primary schools.
- Beyond March 2011, when the PNS has ceased, the Government will drive forward improvements through "Your child, your schools, our future: building a 21st century schools system: Timetable for action", which expects SIPs to:
 - sign off the school improvement plans of weaker or underperforming schools, linked to the receipt of some schools improvement funding
 - help all schools to source improvement support by carrying out a brokerage role through, for example, sharing good practice, enabling school to school partnerships and other networks.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

- A significant number of children in Sunderland enter primary school with low attainment levels, which can have an impact on their overall education. The PLLA initiative in Sunderland aimed to improve the levels of progress young children made between Key Stages 1 and 2. Eleven schools took part in the initiative over the last two years and

improvements were evident in the 2010 Key Stage 2 SATs results of each of these schools

- The National Strategies programmes ran until March 2011. The support, challenge and intervention provided to schools brought about continued improvements in primary schools. As a result, during this academic year:
 - three primary schools emerged successfully from Notice to Improve within the required timescale
 - one school in Special Measures was judged to be making satisfactory progress at its first monitoring inspection.
 - a second school in Special Measures is awaiting its first monitoring inspection
 - of the nine additional schools currently within Local Authority Concerns, four will be removed from this category in July 2011 and the remaining five schools are making steady progress in improving outcomes for pupils
- Before its cessation in March 2011, the ECaW programme was implemented in the Autumn 2010 and Spring 2011 terms, with all planned actions carried out. 2011 SATs results for the 2010/11 academic year should demonstrate the impact of this intervention
- The MAST programme is continuing. Ten schools are following the programme with maths teachers accessing good quality CPD. Change of government policy means that developments are following the agenda set out with the education white paper, “The Importance of Teaching”.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

- The Coalition Government through its White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching* has charged local authorities to work in new ways with schools. Whilst Sunderland Local Authority must still challenge and support schools where there are concerns there is a clear direction of travel towards school improvement activity itself being carried out ‘school to school’. The government aims to create a system which is more effectively self-improving, rather than using a centralised approach
- As a result of the cessation of the National Strategies programme, the funding for SIPs and PNS Consultants has ceased. However with the agreement of its schools the Local Authority has put in place a one year ‘transitional’ Service Level Agreement to provide challenge and support to those schools buying into it.

We will:

- Support and challenge schools where results are below the floor standard. That is., where the proportion of pupils achieving Level 4+ in English and mathematics combined is below 60% and the proportions of pupils making two levels of progress between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics needs to improve to reach national averages
- Target underperforming schools at Key Stage 2 to improve pupil performance by engaging them in relevant English and mathematics development activities
- Develop school to school support through, for example, National Leaders of Education (NLEs) Local Leaders of Education (LLEs), Lead Teachers and Lead Schools
- Fully implement and embed APP programmes and ensure accurate teacher assessment judgements through moderation and standardisation, by facilitating established Lead Schools to spread their good practice in this
- Provide training and support for schools to implement approaches from Every Child a Reader and Every Child Counts, which to date have been Key Stage 1 intervention programmes, so they can be used to meet the needs of pupils struggling to grasp basic skills in Key Stage 2
- Further promote and develop the use of ‘Support for Writing’ and ‘Talk for Writing’ materials

- Provide training in conjunction with the Open University for a third cohort of teachers to become accredited Maths Specialist Teachers through the MaST Programme.

2010 PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

- 2010 results for English and mathematics combined for the 49 schools that took SATs increased by 1 percentage point from 2009 to 71%
- 2010 results for pupils making two levels of progress between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in English increased by two percentage points to 85% and in mathematics remained at 82%. The result for progress in English was particularly pleasing because it was one percentage point above the national average
- In 2010 in Key Stage 2 the Teacher Assessments which were carried out by all schools showed that improvements were made at levels 4 5.

KEY STAGE 4

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

The 0-16 and 14-19 Partnership both aim to improve this outcome. The two partnerships work together around shared pieces of work. The Secondary National Strategy (SNS) Action Plan 2009/10 sets out overarching priorities, actions, milestones and impact measures.

After March 2011 the SNS will cease and the Government will drive forward improvements through “Your child, your schools, our future: building a 21st century schools system: Timetable for action”. A national consultation process is taking place and Sunderland will be prepared to accommodate anything that emerges from this.

Until that time, we will continue to strive to make improvements across the key stage. We will:

- Respond to the new Schools’ White Paper which will inform future actions
- Continue to consistently challenge schools on their performance through: the revised SIP programme cycle of visits; National Challenge monitoring; implementation of the Gaining Ground initiative; good quality risk analysis; the effective use of data; setting challenging targets
- Strengthen the use of assessment as a tool to inform support and intervention for targeted students and improving the quality of teaching
- Further develop and target intervention strategies at KS3 and KS4 including Study Plus, guided group work, improving subject knowledge, developing functional skills, improving planning, well-articulated consultant-school agreements
- Reduce significantly the gap between vulnerable pupils (including SEN and Gifted & Talented) and all other groups are developed and implemented in schools
- Have in place effective teaching and learning policies with a focus on assessment for learning
- Support and monitor the national one-to-one tutoring initiative
- Strengthen the quality of school self evaluation in targeted schools, to focus on readiness for Ofsted inspection
- Support the delivery of effective leadership of Teaching and Learning through strengthened line management and senior middle leadership levels.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

- In response to the Schools’ White Paper we have begun to develop:

- a recruitment programme with the national college, and have appointed Local Leaders Education (LLEs) and National Leaders Education (NLEs)
- a triad peer to peer school, including three schools: Oxclose, Sandhill View and Monkwearmouth, to promote government's agenda in supporting schools
- Network Learning Communities across themes and subjects
- (all of the above are in their very early stages of development)
- Sunderland has also written its plan in response to how we will deal with schools underperforming, and has submitted this to the DfE for approval
- A series of Headteacher consultative groups have been held with the purpose of establishing partnerships between schools and the local authority.

In challenging schools to improve attainment, we have achieved the following:

- The SIP programme was followed until it came to an end on 31 March 2011. It was an extremely effective scheme in supporting schools to complete self-evaluation and focussing local authority support to schools
- Farringdon School was identified as a National Challenge school in September 2008, as part of a three year programme. The progress of pupils at the school was so good it was subject to DfE research. It has consistently been one of the highest achieving schools on the programme, being in the top tranche for rate of improvement
- The Gaining Ground Initiative will conclude in August 2011. It has been implemented in six schools in Sunderland and evaluation is still to be completed by DfE
- Risk analysis in Sunderland on schools' performance continues to be effective. SIPs understand how schools are performing and are able to predict where schools require specific support or are at risk of falling into Ofsted categories
- Schools continue to set challenging and realistic targets. In the 2009/10 academic year, all local authority maintained schools' combined results exceeded the local authority target for 5A*-C, i.e. the gold standard
- APP programmes were implemented in English, maths and science in schools. However, with the closure of the national strategies this programme has come to an end
- National Strategies funded a programme of targeted intervention at Key Stages 3 and 4, which was effective and contributed to the improvement in performance.
- Implementation of the Narrowing the Gap plan has supported young people from identified vulnerable groups to close the gap between themselves and their peers.
- Early evaluation indicates that the national one to one tutoring initiative was effective in supporting programmes in English and maths at Key Stage 3 for targeted groups. The programme is continuing to be mainstreamed during the course of this year and there are plans for this to be continued in the academic year 2012
- There has been a local authority supported programme based around Pre Inspection Briefings (PIB) which is building the capacity of schools leadership teams to self evaluate accurately and to support other schools in doing the same. This programme is likely to expanded in the course of the 2011/12 academic year
- CDP is also being made available to develop skills of model leaders in self evaluation and reference.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

- Key Stage 4 results (GCSE and equivalent) for pupils at the end of statutory school age are the highest achieved in Sunderland, continuing a strong upward trend over the last five years
- The government's gold standard measure requires 16 year olds to achieve at least five GCSEs or equivalent at grade A*-C including English and maths. Sunderland's results for 2010 are the highest achieved and also the highest year on year improvement since the measure was introduced

- 5+A*-Cs including English and Maths has improved as has 5+A*-Cs in any subject
- More young people are achieving A*-C in two or more sciences
- There is a strong rate of improvement for both boys and girls.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

- The Coalition Government through its White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching* has charged local authorities to work in new ways with schools. Whilst Sunderland Local Authority must still challenge and support schools where there are concerns there is a clear direction of travel towards school improvement activity itself being carried out 'school to school'. The government aims to create a system which is more effectively self-improving, rather than using a centralised approach. Over the coming years, the School Improvement Service will develop new systems in line with the White Paper.

ACHIEVEMENT OF LEVEL 2 AND 3 QUALIFICATIONS BY THE AGE OF 19

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

In order to meet the 14-19 Entitlement the following priorities were identified:

- Having an effective strategy for Raising the Participation Age (RPA) to reduce the proportion of 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment and/or training (NEET)
- Having education pathways in place for all children and young people
- Having effective collaborative partnership arrangements in place
- Providing high-quality impartial information, advice and guidance to young people
- Supporting employers to develop a growing, adaptable, sustainable skilled workforce for the City of Sunderland Council Having sufficient high-quality facilities providing a range of high quality provision – in schools, colleges and training providers across the area for delivering Apprenticeships, Diplomas, Foundation Learning and General Qualifications
- Providing targeted provision for young people at risk of disengagement, i.e. those NEET
- The 14-19 Partnership will develop and implementation plan that will detail actions to progress these priorities.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

The new Coalition Government made immediate and significant changes to the 14-19 agenda in the summer of 2010, which impacted on the relevance of the current 14-19 Strategy.

It was announced that there would be a review of national curriculum and, as part of the proposed reforms, Professor Alison Wolf was commissioned to carry out a whole-scale review of 14-19 vocational education. The findings of that review were published in March 2011.

The responsibility for the local authority to act as lead commissioner for post-16 provision was also withdrawn.

Nevertheless, the 14-19 Partnership has continued to support the 14-19 curriculum in the following ways:

- Produced a local strategic analysis for 2009/10 and summary of partnership priorities
- Explored the implications of the RPA in Sunderland

- The findings of these two projects are, that despite there being a projected decline in the total 14-18 population in Sunderland by 2015, there will still be a requirement to have more post-16 provision in 2015 than in 2010 if we are to meet the RPA target. Plans are currently being developed through the NEET Improvement Board
- Explored the implications of the withdrawal of EMA. As an interim measure, some providers across the city have continued to provide some learners with the equivalent funds from their own resources
- Sunderland continues to have education pathways in place for all children and young people, through the Sunderland Model. The model is built around an infrastructure of pooled resources - human, physical and financial and not around the delivery of any one suite of qualifications, whether they are academic or vocational
- A Memorandum of Understanding is in place with the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS). Looking to work with NAS to improve the links with employers locally and regionally
- European Social Fund (ESF) – Engaging Vulnerable Young People. The 14-19 Partnership produced successful co-financing tender bid valued at £1,347,042. The funding will provide tailored packages of education and support to assist the engagement of young people who are NEET. It also will aim to close the attainment gaps between advantaged and disadvantaged young people at Levels 2 and 3. The period of this activity is 2011-2013. Activities will be delivered by a consortium of local providers and strategic organisations, including City of Sunderland College, Springboard, Sunderland AFC Foundation, Jobcentre Plus and voluntary and community groups
- To support IAG, Sunderland continues to contribute to the Area Wide Prospectus and the 14-19 website has been redesigned and relaunched
- Through the 14-19 Partnership local strategic analysis and Curriculum Leaders' meetings, a high quality 14-19 curriculum continues to be delivered
- An Options Analysis is currently being carried out around the development and introduction of University Technical College and Studio School in Sunderland
- For the second year, schools have agreed to a shared INSET day where training is offered to all teachers at a number of locations across the city, as opposed to being delivered in their home school.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

- Continue to implement strategy for RPA
- Implement the recommendations from the forthcoming reviews of national curriculum
- Implement the recommendations from the Wolf Review. The report includes three clear principles for reform, namely that programmes of study, whether 'academic' or 'vocational', should:
 - provide for labour market and educational progress
 - provide people with accurate and useful information, so that they can make decisions accordingly
 - the system needs to be simplified dramatically, as a precondition for giving people good and accurate information, to free up resources for teaching and learning, and to encourage innovation and efficiency
- In November 2010 the Government announced the creation of an all-age careers service for England, to be fully implemented by April 2012. The responsibility for careers advice will be placed directly with schools. Consideration will need to be given as to how the Partnership can support this.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Ref	Description	Actual	Baseline	Year 1		Year 2 target	Year 3 target
		2008/09	2009/10	Target	Actual	2011/12	2012/13
		%	%	%	%	%	%
NI 72	Achievement of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation stage with at least 6 in each of the scales in Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Communication, Language and Literacy	44	53	50	58.1	59	60
NI 92	Narrowing the gap between the lowest achieving 20% the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the rest	42	37	37	32.9	33	30
NI73	Achievement at Level 4 or above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 2	72	70	75	71	77	Not set til 2011
NI 75	Achievement of 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths	43	45	53	52.6	54	57
NI76	Reduction in number of schools where fewer than 55% of pupils achieve level 4 or above in both English and Maths at KS2	8	13	6	5	4	2
NI 78	Reduction in number of schools where fewer than 30% of pupils achieve 5 A*-C GCSE grades at GCSE and equivalent including GCSEs in English and Maths	2	2	0	1	0	0
NI79	Achievement of a Level 2 qualification by the age of 19	71	74	76	76.3	78	80
NI80	Achievement of a Level 3 qualification by the age of 19	37	41	45	42.8	48	51
NI84	Achievement of 2 or more A*-C grades in Science GCSEs or equivalent	45	49	52	59	54	55

PRIORITY OUTCOME 9 IMPROVE ATTAINMENT FOR ALL VULNERABLE AND UNDERPERFORMING GROUPS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

The areas identified for improvement in the children and young people's plan 2010-25 and the deliver plan 2010-13 are:

- Children living in poverty
- Children from black and minority ethnic communities
- Children in care
- Children with a learning difficulty and/or disability

Set out below is an overview of what our plans are, the achievements made, what we still need to do and performance information linked to the specific area.

CHILDREN LIVING IN POVERTY

Children living in poverty is measured against entitlement to/take up of free school meals. Plans are in place to monitor the link between free school meals and attainment. Actions will be put in place to respond to the analysis.

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

A Narrowing the Gap plan was developed which underpinned the Child Poverty Action Plan. The following overarching actions identified what the School Improvement Service would undertake to support the narrowing of the attainment gap:

- Ensure that all vulnerable pupils are identified across the local authority
- Ensure that schools have effective processes in place to track pupil progress and set realistic targets
- Ensure appropriate provision is in place to meet needs and monitor their gaps
- Improve the ability of Early Years settings, services and practitioners to identify and narrow the gap for the lower achieving or disadvantaged children.

WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED

- Identification of vulnerable groups is more robust and school leaders are aware of the need to ensure effective targeting of pupils through the use of data
- The majority of schools now have costed provision maps in place that clearly identify the range of interventions that are available to support individual pupil needs. However, further work needs to be carried out to ensure that interventions are robustly monitored and evaluated
- Schools have delivered 1-1 tuition to identified pupils through the pupil premium.

WHAT DO WE STILL NEED TO DO

- Place a high premium on Quality First Teaching and emphasise that effective action to narrow the gap begins with children's learning and progress in lessons
- Put in place timely and appropriate interventions for under-performing pupils and monitor the impact
- Engage pupils in helping to improve learning

- Make effective use of teaching assistants and tutor support
- Engage and empower governors to offer support and challenge to senior leaders about the progress of identified groups
- Work with parents and the community to raise aspiration and engagement with learning
- Develop a culture which is pupil centred and failure free.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

In the academic year 2009/10, the gap between those young people entitled to free school meals and those who are not, narrowed at Key Stage 2 L4+ to 21% from 26% in the previous year.

CHILDREN FROM BLACK AND MINORITY ETHNIC COMMUNITIES

Bangladeshi children and young people and other BME groups – the Primary National Strategy Action Plan 2009/10 sets out overarching priorities, actions, milestones and impact measures. At the time of print (of the CYPP) actions for 2010-13 were being discussed.

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

The following actions were agreed:

- Ensure that schools have effective processes in place to track pupil progress, set realistic targets and ensure appropriate provision to meet needs
- Narrow the attainment gap between EAL pupils (English as Additional Language) and all pupils by establishing individual and school performance summaries for BME pupils
- Use data to identify specific support packages for schools
- Increase the capacity of Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS) Team to meet the needs of schools through personalised support in learning and teaching.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

- Through the SIP programme all schools have been supported to ensure that they have effective systems in place to track the progress of pupils from BME backgrounds, set realistic targets and ensure provision in the school is appropriate to the needs of the pupils
- School performance summaries have been made available to support services allowing them to identify targeted packages of support to individuals and groups of pupils. As a result, the attainment gap has been narrowed at Key Stages 2 and 4
- Targeted work has been carried out by the EMTAS Team to support schools to build the capacity of all staff in meeting the needs of students through a range of programmes including the New Arrivals Programme and the EAL Toolkit
- Two teachers from the EMTAS team have been trained as ECAR (Every Child a Reader) and ECC (Every Child Counts) teachers. During this training, these staff supported identified groups of pupils from a BME background in order to narrow the attainment gap
- An Early Years BME project was carried out throughout 2010 which included cross-phase working and external support through the National Strategy Link Adviser for Early Years and EAL
- Opportunities were provided for senior leaders in all schools to attend training events addressing equality, diversity and community cohesion. These whole day events provided up to date information in relation to equality and diversity matters in general, and matters to do with race equality, cultural diversity, religion and belief, and community

cohesion more particularly. This supports schools to create objectives for their own equality plans, and helps them to meet the Equality Duty 2011

- Opportunities were also made available for staff to reflect on how the curriculum can be utilised to address race equality, cultural diversity, religion and belief and community cohesion with practitioners from within the city explaining how they already engage with these matters.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

- Develop an assessment framework to identify Lead Schools/Teachers for EAL
- Audit current provision in special schools and schools where there is good EAL practice to establish a breadth of specialist expertise that can be used to develop practice across schools
- Identify Lead Schools/Teachers in each SEN in each of the five locality areas supported by specialist partnership working
- Identify three cross phase Lead Schools for EAL
- Establish and implement a training package for staff in Lead Schools for EAL by supporting the development of systems and processes to track progress and inform school improvement activity
- Establish systems to quality assure the support offered by Lead Schools/Teachers
- In light of the current re-organisation of services, ensure effective working practices within the revised EMTAS Team
- Facilitate the development of an EAL network to be led by a Lead Teacher for EAL with the support of a local authority officer.

CHILDREN IN CARE

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

Specific actions in place include:

- The LACE Team (Looked After Children's Education) will support children in care with one-to-one sessions, especially targeting literacy and numeracy.
- The residential "Maths Supercamp" for children looked after in years 10 and 11 will be further developed.
- Children in their early years will be targeted, with the aim of supporting children as young as possible and then throughout their educational career to improve their educational outcomes.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

In raising attainment of Looked After Children, the strategic priority of Sunderland Virtual School is to improve the understanding of all professionals and carers about the needs of LAC. This will help them to support LAC to participate and achieve stability, integration and inclusion within their school and enjoy their learning and achievements.

Celebrated the achievements of students

- Certificates issued to students for participation, engagement and achievement at school or in other contexts and carers receive an accompanying letter to thank them for their help in supporting the child or young person
- Schools demonstrating exceptional working practice with looked after children receive a commendation letter
- Year 12 Celebration and Motivation evening held.

Staff roles and responsibilities have been developed with Lead Practitioners in:

- Early years, to support children who are looked after to improve their educational outcomes, as well as baseline attainment
- Extended learning, which includes home learning
- Transition support and Aim Higher Co-ordinator
- Inclusion and Behaviour for Learning.

Progression and Continuity

- Closer working links have been formed with work based learning providers in the city, particularly with Springboard, who hold QA Gold Award and have successfully completed the Safeguarding Checklist
- Closer working links with the University of Sunderland and currently working directly with the Manager of the 'Choices Together' Programme for Key Stage 4 LAC students
- Individual visits organised to university to meet with students currently at university who were LAC.

Implemented and/or revised policies, procedures and proformas:

- The Sunderland Virtual School (SVS) Policy has been received by all staff
- Produced a Looked After Children Policy for SVS, which was distributed to schools via the Governors' Agenda Booklet
- Safeguarding Policy and Procedures implemented
- Educational Visits Policy and Procedure implemented
- Performance Management Policy and Procedure introduced
- Procedure and proformas for INSET, linked to the School Improvement Plan and Performance Management
- Student Supervision Policy implemented
- PEA Policy introduced and a PEA Panel established as part of the new procedures.

Safeguarding

- Team member attends Designated Person meetings
- All team members and sessional tutors have received safeguarding training and all safeguarding documentation has been issued with agreement forms being completed by staff
- Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) training has been undertaken by the Assistant Headteacher and SVS uses the Evolve IT system for recording visits.

Personal Education Plans

- PEP Template reviewed with other professionals to focus on progression, engagement and achievement
- SVS has set a target of 95% of LAC having a PEP in place within 20 working days of becoming looked after. Support and training is provided to schools by the service to achieve this target.

One to one tuition

- One-to-one tuition for children in care has been completely revised in line with the new Personal Education Allowance (PEA) Policy
- SVS now monitors pupils receiving tuition and their progress, as well as monitoring staff delivering tuition. From April 2010–March 2011, 2,279 hours of one-to-one teaching and learning sessions were carried out for 132 pupils from Reception to Year 11, involving teachers and learning support assistants from the pupil's own school and those of SVS
- In addition, in the academic year 2010/11, SVS extended one-to-one tuition to include Foundation Stage (ref PEA Policy) for Personal, Social, Development and Reading.

Inclusion

- Clear focus on the participation, integration and inclusion of LAC within their own schools
- From September 2010, Sunderland Virtual School has worked in partnership with the Children's Homes on a daily basis to provide strategies and support on improving children's attendance
- SVS has successfully implemented an Inclusion Framework which involves working in partnership with Children's Home and EBD schools to support children with emotional and behavioural difficulties. This has contributed to a reduction in exclusions.

Early Years

- Provided opportunities for support for literacy, numeracy, personal, social, development including behavioural support and reading via one-to-one tuition
- An SVS specialist teacher now has responsibility for EYFS children
- Designated Teachers in nursery provision are now included within the DT Forum
- Teaching and supporting children directly in the classroom
- Providing individual children with support in transition where need was identified
- Provided a home reading programme: 'Little Book Bags' for reception children.

Attainment

- Progression database has been set up for termly data collation from all schools in Sunderland and other local authorities. A more robust IT system is being investigated. Progression of looked after children attaining the expected levels of progress are monitored within each key stage. This information helps to measure the impact of PEA funding and other interventions on progress
- Study Support pamphlets have been issued to Year 9 students in preparation for Key Stage 4
- Termly Literacy and Numeracy competitions have been implemented for Year 6 pupils
- Letterbox Club has been extended to include Year 7 pupils and Literacy results show improvement
- SVS has promoted and monitored LAC's access to the national One-to-One Scheme
- SVS commenced the collation and monitoring of exclusions including increase in school contact
- Behaviour support courses for pupils and young people have been implemented in primary and secondary phases with the aim of reducing behaviour incidents at school by focusing on the development of self-esteem and realising talents, skills and potential.

Communication

- Implemented a Social Care 'Change of Social Worker' Alert system to schools.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

To improve attainment outcomes for LAC by:

- Targeting support provision for Early Years by continuing with the Little Book Bags scheme, promoting one-to-one support and classroom support within EYFS settings
- Target Year 6 and Year 11 pupils for one-to-one tuition in English and Mathematics
- Allocate new budgets and align with service/provision development plans – all spending plans according to priorities
- Extend the Inclusion Framework to include the Pupil Referral Unit
- Implement and promote alert system to further support pupils who are not making expected progress
- To review the collation and identification of attainment and progression database and implement a more robust IT programme for the collation of attainment data

- To investigate and implement a system for the improvement in the return of school attainment data by the deadline dates
- Implement the Information Sharing Protocol North East
- In light of the new pupil premium, challenge and work with schools to ensure that the needs of Looked After Children continue to be met within the school setting
- Implement self-evaluation procedures
- Implement SVS staff development programme for improvement in teaching and learning
- Implement new PEP proforma with a focus on attainment, progression and achievement
- Improve attendance record collation from schools outside of Sunderland LA.
- Increase communication with carers
- Set up a system within Sunderland LA School Admissions to identify and locate LAC from other LAs attending Sunderland schools
- Change the focus of the Designated Teachers' Forum to provide opportunities for a range of professionals to meet with DTs
- Establish a new partnership with schools/academies to ensure that what we offer meets the needs of LAC.

CHILDREN WITH A LEARNING DIFFICULTY AND/OR DISABILITY

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

Partnership agreements have been established with schools to promote the delivery of services to support pupils with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities):

- The sensory partnership offers support to children and advises schools on strategies to support pupils with Hearing and Visual Impairment in mainstream and specialist settings (Partnership lead – Sandhill View School)
- Physical disability and medical partnership provide support for pupils with physical and medical disabilities (Partnership Lead – Oxclose School)
- The language and learning partnership supports pupils with language and communication difficulties (Partnership Lead – Sunningdale Special School)
- The Autism Outreach Service supports and provides advice on pupils with autism in mainstream settings (Partnership lead – Columbia Grange Special School)
- Curriculum Access Provisions (CAP) are based in Washington School, Academy 360 (5-16), Usworth Grange Primary School
- Language unit provisions are based at Highfield Primary School, Hylton Red House Primary school, New Penshaw Primary School, and Hetton School.

In addition to the above, the School Improvement Service Plan sets out the following actions:

- Focus SEN monitoring on those pupils identified as School Action/School Action+ with reference to quality of provision and target setting. Links have been made to the EYFS Team in considering early identification and intervention for pupils identified within datasets
- Work with a group of targeted schools with the largest SEN/Non-SEN gaps which have been identified for focused support
- Disseminate the key messages from the Progression Guidance documentation, with an emphasis on making two levels of progress
- Review provision mapping in schools in line with the Value for Money Toolkit
- Rollout Inclusion Development Programme in Autism and Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties.

- Continue the rollout of Inclusion Development programme for SLCN/Dyslexia ensuring that Headteachers understand how these programmes can support priorities identified in School Development Plans, e.g. improving the quality of speaking and listening, raising standards in reading across a school
- Provide all schools with comprehensive datasets in relation to progress of SEN pupils, funding arrangements for SEN pupils, % of children accessing free school meals, looked after children, Ofsted judgements. Support will also be provided to schools to use datasets effectively in order to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEN
- Rollout national accreditation for SENCOs
- Continue the development of the Language and Learning Partnership
- Review and develop the Language Unit provision at Hetton School
- Provide opportunities for staff in schools to access a comprehensive training programme that develops the skill base of staff to meet the needs of pupils with SEND in their schools.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

- Forty-eight (48) schools have received targeted support in reviewing their procedures and provision to narrow the SEN attainment gap
- All schools have received a SEN Synopsis sheet that collates SEN data in respect of the individual school. This allows schools to identify trends and areas for development for SEN pupils
- Worked with 12 regional local authorities to establish systems to ensure Progression Guidance has been implemented across our schools with emphasis on raising schools expectations for young people with SEN. Systems developed in Sunderland have been identified as good practice at a regional and national level
- SENCOs have received training on the Progression Guidance which is now informing the setting of challenging targets. This training has ensured that SENCOs have raised expectations of pupil with SEN. PIVAT and provision mapping training has complemented this process by ensuring that attainment data is used to inform appropriate provision for pupils in schools
- Twenty-one (21) SENCOs enrolled on the first phase of the national accredited training which the local authority is leading on, and another 12 SENCOs have enrolled on the second phase. Additionally, a cohort of 12 teachers are involved in the accredited Dyslexia training
- The Language and Learning Partnership is now well established and is providing support to primary schools and early years settings across the city through programmes such as Portage. The Partnership receives referrals through the CAF process and as a result provides targeted support to schools and parents in meeting the needs of individuals and groups
- The Language Unit provision at Hetton has been reviewed and developed in partnership with Health Services
- A provision for secondary school pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder has been established at Biddick School and the development of two primary mainstream provisions is being considered.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

- Consider the proposals within the SEN & Disability Green Paper and review current services for children so that they can be more responsive to any changing needs. For example, review current service delivery in terms of the SEN partnerships and resourced provisions in line with future developments in funding arrangements and school to school delivery

- Ensure that schools and settings are prepared for future ways of working as identified in the Education White Paper by:
 - developing an assessment framework to identify Lead Schools/Teachers for SEN
 - auditing current provision to identify where there is good SEN practice, to establish a breadth of specialist expertise that can be used to develop practice across schools
 - identifying Lead Schools/Teachers/SENcos in each of the five locality areas supported by specialist partnership working
 - establishing and implementing a training package for staff in Lead Schools (SEN) to support the development of systems and processes to track progress and inform school improvement activity
 - establishing systems to quality assure the support offered by Lead Schools/Teachers.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Ref	Description	Actual	Baseline	Year 1		Year 2	Year 3
		2008/09	2009/10	Target	Actual	target	target
		%	%	2010/11	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
NI 92	Narrowing the gap between the lowest achieving 20% the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the rest	42	37	37	32.9	33	30
NI81	Inequality gap in the achievement of a Level 3 qualification by the age of 19	21.6	23	20.5	23	20	19.5
NI82	Inequality gap in the achievement of a level 2 qualification by the age of 19	50	56	60	60	62	64
NI102 a	Key Stage 2 achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers	24	26	22	21.2	22	21
NI102 b	Key Stage 4 achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers	28	28	26	32.3	26	25
NI106	Young people from low income backgrounds progressing to higher education	Not set, awaiting baseline data					
NI99	Looked after children reaching level 4 in English at Key Stage 2	79	42	45	61.5	63	55
NI100	Looked after children reaching level 4 in mathematics at Key Stage 2	93	47%	45	61.5	50	55
NI101 *	Looked after children achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs (or equivalent) at Key Stage 4 (including English and mathematics)	6	10	26	6.5	13	22
NI104	The special Educational Needs/non SEN gap – achieving key stage 2 English and maths threshold	52	54	50	54	49	48
NI105	The special Educational Needs/non SEN gap – achieving 5 A*-C GCSE including English and Maths	49	48	46	55.6	45	44

* In relation to educational performance of looked after children, it is important to understand that this is an exceptionally small cohort compared to the overall Sunderland cohort, so the results of each individual young person has a significant effect on the performance of the whole group. It is also important to understand the make up of the cohort in that performance period. For example, in the 2009/10 academic year, there were 39 young people in Year 11 who were looked after. Of this number, 17 (43%) did not access mainstream provision.

PRIORITY OUTCOME 10

HAVE LOCALLY ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE FUN, PLAY AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

The Active Sunderland Board currently works to meet objectives set out in key partner strategies, including the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy (2005-2010), and the Play and Urban Games Strategy – Moving Forward (2007-2012), each of which set out overarching priorities, including detailed actions, milestones and impact measures to improve this outcome.

At the time of publication, the Active Sunderland Board was developing its own strategy, which aimed to build on the Board's current priorities and include:

- Establishing effective partnership working between all providers: public, private and third sector
- Developing clear pathways for volunteers into play, sport and physical activity
- Attracting funding and develop a range of promotional campaigns and information tools
- Attracting and prioritising funding to deliver key city needs
- Working with regeneration providers to ensure that child friendly neighbourhoods exists to support play and physical activity and green transport
- Commissioning preventative activities and specific training to all staff working in play, sport and physical activity with children and young people
- Commissioning more play and positive activities for children aged 5-13.

These aims have been reflected in the work undertaken with specific regard to children and young people.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

The outcomes and activities offered to children and young people can be categorised into three areas:

- Play
- Sport
- Physical activity and wellness.

Play

- Twenty-nine (29) new or refurbished play facilities for children and young people have been made available. The Partnership is making further progress with an updated Play & Urban Games – Moving Forward Addendum to identify facilities for improvement
- Work has already commenced to deliver one new and one upgraded facility in Washington and a phase two development in South Hylton
- The 'Lets Play' campaign was launched to inspire families to enjoy their local play spaces and to challenge negative perceptions of children playing and further events are planned
- The City Adventure Centre, including outdoor and indoor play provision at Silksworth has been a great success to date
- The Play and Positive Activities programme aimed to engage a minimum of 925 young people across the city and is also working with play providers to ensure the workforce is upskilled with nationally recognised qualifications
- During 2010/11:

- more than 2500 children engaged in meaningful play activities across the city, of which 759 children participated in more than four sessions. This was key in promoting long term participation
- twenty six (26) community groups received one to one support in developing their groups, and looked at areas of concern such as funding, health and safety and constitutional issues
- four (4) voluntary groups were assisted in submitting external funding applications. Almost 100 people received training to develop their skills and obtained nationally recognised qualifications. This ensured activities delivered within the community and voluntary sector continued to be delivered in a safe and appropriate manner once the project had concluded, adding sustainability
- Away from the Pathfinder programme, play developments were also completed relating to new floodlighting at Washington Wheeled Sports Park, the creation of an attractive open space at Grosvenor Street, the refurbishment of the Blackfell play area and the opening of the developer play area at Biddick Woods.

Sport

- The Active Sunderland Board has appointed two externally funded posts that have contributed to the above events. The Community Sport Network (CSN) Coordinator has a specific remit for developing the city's sports network and a Football Development Officer was appointed in November 2010 with a remit to increase participation for young people
- Funding from Sport England has enabled 3394 young people within the city to access and participate in the Sport Unlimited programme of new sporting opportunities over the last year. The programme is targeted at young people who may have some interest in sport, but aren't currently engaged with community or club sport. The project has now concluded and has engaged 6474 young people into regular sport outside of curriculum time over the past three years
- 'Thrillseeker' was held during the Easter holidays and was delivered in partnership with the BBC's national Dropzone campaign. The week encouraged children and families to take part in adventure sports such as rowing, rock climbing and fencing. In total 600 people took part across the whole week
- The Active Sunderland Week took place between July and August 2010. The week saw three major events take place across the city, targeted towards young people:
 - Sunderland FIFA International Beach Soccer Trophy at the Stadium of Light (300 young people)
 - Active Sunderland Beach Festival at Roker Park and beach (700 young people).
 - Active Sunderland Open Weekend, when Council leisure facilities opened their doors free of charge (3800 young people)
- Positive Futures is an activity based social inclusion programme, based in the Southwick area of the city. The project, which ceased in March 2011, offered a range of challenging 'no cost' activities to young people aged 8-19. It engaged with nearly 200 young people each week offering them local, safe and fun opportunities to participate in. The project last year saw 108 young people attain an accredited qualification and each young person receiving 81 hours of support, against a target of 17 hours. This programme has been superseded by a new initiative called Growing Sport and is explained further in this report
- Sunderland Sports Fund has helped 40 young people and disabled athletes access small grants to support their involvement in performance sport. The sports fund aims to support a further 290 young athletes and develop an Olympic Fund for the city's future Olympic and Paralympic athletes
- Funding was secured from the Coalfield Regeneration Trust to develop a youth inclusion programme focused on football and to support up to 40 coaches to gain a Level 1-2

coaching qualifications. The programme is being delivered from Community North Sports Complex with 40 young people regularly engaged

- Following the opening of two new 25m swimming pools in Silksworth and Hetton, programmes have been developed to offer new opportunities at these facilities including Learn to Swim (LTS) programmes. The LTS programme offers opportunities for up to 1,000 young people each week and the new National Teaching Plan is also currently provided to 23 city schools
- Two funding applications to the Football Foundation were made to develop artificial pitches at Farringdon and Biddick Community Sports Colleges as part of the Football Investment Strategy. The developments will contribute towards four Community Charter Standard Clubs being developed, providing new opportunities for girls and young people with disabilities to participate. These will be completed in 2011
- In terms of events, the 2010 UK School Games was hosted across Gateshead, Newcastle and Sunderland and attended by 1,600 elite school aged athletes. The Games included competition across 10 Olympic sports and Sunderland's contribution towards the Games included the hosting of events at the Aquatic Centre (swimming) and Silksworth Sports Complex (table tennis and fencing)
- The Physical Education (PE) School Sport Young People Group has been established to drive forward the city's strategy for delivering five hours of high quality sport and PE for all young people in the city. The group is currently under review following the Comprehensive Spending Review, but will be reshaped to fit new PE targets
- The School Sport Partnership was supported in delivering 'Sports Ability' with three multi sport events held targeting 200 young people with disabilities. Plans are in place to hold two more events in 2011. Further plans for disability sport are in place to establish a Wheelchair Rugby and Basketball Club, and for Sunderland Ski Club to establish a disability strand in partnership with the Sunderland Adaptive Skiers. The city has been supported by a Disability Inclusion Officer working within schools to support those with disabilities
- Following the completion of the Government funded Schools Competition Manager's post in March 2011, the service (in partnership with Biddick School) has delivered over 300 competitions involving 29,000 young people. The competitions have encompassed 23 different sports, ranging from traditional sports such as athletics, cricket and rugby, to the introduction of new sports such as indoor rowing and triathlon. In total 77% of primary schools accessed the competitions on offer and 100% of the city's secondary schools.

Physical Activity & Wellness

- There are several fitness classes available within the city's Wellness and leisure centres for those children and young people under the age of 16
- The Lifestyle Activity and Food (LAF) Programme has been developed with the aim of supporting children and families to adopt and maintain healthier lifestyle choices. This is achieved through fun and interactive group sessions, which provide healthy eating advice and the opportunity to be physically active. From May 2010 to March 2011, 281 referrals have been received from GP's and school nurses
- For those young people between the ages of 16-19 there are several programmes available including:
 - Mums on the Move
 - Wellness Walking Programme
 - Active Sunderland Project
 - Cycle Sunderland
 - Exercise Referral and Weight Management Programme
 - Specialist Weight Management Service
 - Maternity Lifestyle Programme.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

In the coming year, 2011/12, the Active Sunderland Board will focus on the following activities:

- In December 2010 an update of the **Play and Urban Games Strategy** was approved by Cabinet and provides strategy direction and a framework from which to guide future investment and resources. In 2011 work will commence on completing refurbishments and developments relating to the Oxclose and Millfield play areas, and equipment replacement at the Pirates Play Park in Seaburn
- As detailed previously in this report, Sport Unlimited has now ended and an alternative programme called **Sportivate** is to be established, which comprises an activity programme offering 6 weeks of sporting opportunities available to 14 -25 year olds. The Schools Competition Managers funding ceased in March 2011. However, moving forward the service will continue to support the Sunderland School Sport Partnership, therefore ensuring Sunderland schools are fully represented at the **2011 Tyne & Wear School Games**
- **Growing Sport** is a new sports intervention programme for young people funded by the Home Office, which will focus on reducing violence and knife crime. It will target hot spot areas across the city where anti social behaviour has been highlighted as a problem by Local Multi Agency Problem Solving Group (LMAPS). The programme will comprise 12 weeks direct delivery of sport (predominantly football). Then at week 6 community partners will become involved in taking over the programme with the support of Council coaches. This will encourage the transition from young people causing problems to becoming engaged in a community project. Another facet of the project will be to support the community groups to secure funding to ensure that the programme remains sustainable with the final journey for the young people concluding in them being accepted by a sports group or club
- The **National Citizen Service** will offer 15 young people in the city the chance to develop 'sports leadership' skills and the young people will have the opportunity to gain both sports leaders qualifications and a first aid certificate. It is hoped that by enabling the young people to develop their leadership skills, they will have developed the skills to become future sports leaders
- The **Active Sunderland Adventure Week** will be delivered again in 2011 with the aim of attracting over 600 young people. Promotional events leading up to the Adventure Week will take place such as 'Massive Attack Paintball' and BMX events
- The inaugural **Sunderland Bike Ride** is planned for 2011 with special programmed ride for children and families
- Area participation will be organised to encourage participation in sport and physical activity specifically up to 2012 and beyond
- **Centres for Excellence** and elite performance pathways will be established with specific regard to girls football, establishing a boys football academy and further development of the swimming Beacon programme
- New sports facilities at **Houghton Sports Centre** will be developed to encourage participation by young people as part of the Houghton Primary Care Centre development
- Work will commence with **local sports clubs** to develop participation pathways for children and young people into priority sports such as aquatics, cycling, cricket boxing, football, netball, athletics, snow sports, tennis martial arts, rugby and gymnastics. This will also include maintaining and developing Centres of Excellence and elite programmes.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Ref	Description	Actual	Baseline	Year 1 Target	Year 1 Actual	Year 2 Target	Year 3 Target
		2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2009/10 data	2011/12	2012/13
		%	%	%	%	%	%
NI55	% children in reception with height and weight recorded who are obese	10	n/a	13	11.32		
NI56d	% children in year 6 with height and weight recorded who are obese	21	22	21	21.1	20	20
110	Young people's participation in positive activities	69.4	Target not set				

Additional identified performance measures for this outcome were:

- NI 50 – Emotional health of children
- NI110 – Young people's participation in positive activities

NI 50 was measured by an indicator in the Tellus Survey – a survey of children and young people against the five outcomes. However, it is not now possible to report against this indicator, as the National Indicator Set has come to an end, as has the Tellus Survey.

Other relevant performance information is described below:

- In 2007, just 19% of children had access to high quality play 1km from their door. Currently, 70% of children have access to high quality play facilities. New facilities and programmes have been developed to enhance local provision and to make a positive contribution to social inclusion and community cohesion
- Since 2003, resident satisfaction levels in play areas have risen from 26%, to 50% in 2008 and levels are now at 59% in 2010. In addition, those residents dissatisfied with the services have encouragingly decreased from 36% in 2008 to 30% in 2010
- The Schools Competition Manager has undoubtedly made a significant impact on the provision of schools competition in Sunderland, which has been demonstrated by the improve performance data. At the start of 2007, Sunderland's percentage of pupils taking part in inter-schools competitions was 36% (12,043), with current figure now having increased to 54% (18,065), which is 7% above the national average
- Over the three years of the Sport Unlimited programme, Sunderland achieved an actual retention figure of 6,474, against a target of 5,239 (overachieving by 1,235 participants and 124% of target). Sunderland's performance of 124% exceeded all other sub regional authorities
- Evidence of how young people's programmes have improved sustainability in local sport, can be demonstrated through the 2010 Active People Survey results, showing Sunderland higher than the Tyne & Wear, the North East and England average for residents involved in local Volunteering (7.20%), Coaching (18.20%) and Competitive Sport (14.80%). In addition, the percentage of adults now participating in sport (16+) has benefited as a direct result of sustaining physical activity in younger age groups. The Active People Survey results has seen Sunderland rise from 19.5% (2009) of the city's population participating in regular physical activity to 22.5% (2010), with the Sunderland performance levels higher than average scores for Tyne & Wear, the North East and England.

MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION

PRIORITY OUTCOME 11

REDUCE LEVELS OF OFFENDING (RE-OFFENDING AND FIRST TIME OFFENDING)

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

Sunderland's Youth Justice Plan sets out the purpose and 5 key aims of the Youth Offending Service (YOS) and describes how these key aims will be achieved through the setting of clear priorities for the service at a strategic and operational level.

The five key aims are critical to the success of the YOS as a service and provide the focus for the delivery plans linked to each aim:

- Prevention of offending by intervening early to prevent first time entrants
- Reduce re-offending by intervening early to prevent the escalation of re-offending
- Engagement: as the key to achieving behaviour change with robust enforcement arrangements for those who refuse to comply
- Assessment: as the foundation to effective service planning and delivery
- Risk management: to manage offender risk of reoffending, harm to others and vulnerability/safeguarding

The delivery of these aims is underpinned by specific work plans and monitored through the YOS Partnership Board and Youth Justice Board.

For 2010/11, the YOS will be required under the YJB Planning Improvement Framework, to develop a Youth Justice Plan and a Capability and Capacity assessment by 31 March 2010. The Performance Improvement Framework includes a range of elements that work together to improve YOT practice and performance across the eight outcome areas of:

1. Assessment, planning interventions and supervision (APIS)
2. Resourcing and Workforce Development
3. Reductions in first-time entrants
4. Reducing reoffending
5. Use of custody
6. Risk of serious harm
7. Safeguarding
8. Victim and public confidence

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

- A comprehensive analysis of First Time Entrants was undertaken and as a result a six-month pilot is being run around how to improve the quality of assessments and how we intervene where risk and vulnerability is identified in young people to ensure a more consistent approach to engagement
- During 2010 YOS undertook a number of quality assurance and benchmarking exercises to ensure quality around assessment, planning and intervention. Robust monitoring through monthly case file audits confirms that target improvements in quality are being achieved, e.g. timeliness of assessments
- Changes have been made to the delivery model to produce a tiered approach to risk in relation to prevention, so that risk and need are linked
- YOS has worked with Safeguarding to understand the triggers to engaging in anti-social behaviour and youth offending. This has had a positive impact on the appropriateness of referrals received.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

- The Green Paper, “Breaking the Cycle” states the intention to introduce “payment by results”. This means that rehabilitation/criminal justice service providers (such as Youth Offending Services) will receive funding based on performance. In addition, new performance measures will be introduced, performance will not be comparable to previous years. This may show less favourable results than previously. In light of these two points, YOS must begin to prepare for these changes and understand what the effects will be.
- YOS has attracted extra funding from the Department of Health (£69,000 for two year), to improve health pathways for young people and in particular to identify need at an early stage. This will create better networks with CAMHS.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Ref	Description	Actual 2008/09	Baseline 2009/10	Year 1		Year 2 target 2011/12	Year 3 target 2012/13
				Target 2010/11	Actual 2010/11		
NI 19	Rate of proven re-offending by young offenders	0.96	1.1	3% reduction	27% reduction*	2% reduction	No set target
NI 111	First time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10 – 17	766	751	1.9% reduction	34% (261)	5% reduction	No set target

* Reported in the Youth Justice Plan 2011/12.

National targets for reducing re-offending are no longer measured. However, the following local targets have been agreed in the Youth Justice Plan:

- First Time entrants will be reduced by a further 5% in 2011/12
- Re-offending will be reduced by 2% in 2011/12.

Targets for 2012-13 will be developed in line with Youth Justice Planning for 2012/13, which will commence in January 2012.

PRIORITY OUTCOME 12 REDUCE LEVELS OF ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

Key factors to tackling anti-social behaviour (ASB) are:

- Community empowerment
- Identifying the alternatives that youths want and involve them in the solution
- Using resources wisely, balancing the funding of new initiatives (e.g. Youth Village) with sustaining established youth provision accessed and valued by young people
- The link between ASB to private rented issues and repeated displacement (e.g. using selective licensing, ASBOS and other tools and powers to tackle bad landlords)
- Reducing alcohol misuse, the harm it causes and alcohol related crime and disorder.

Both the grant funded Challenge and Support Team and the Family Intervention Project will be embedded into mainstream service provision from 2011 onwards.

The development of a community resolution scheme by Northumbria Police will bring an alternative way of dealing with less serious crimes, allowing officers to use their professional judgement when dealing with offenders, for offences such as low level public order, criminal damage, theft and minor assaults. This scheme will have a direct impact on anti-social behaviour, reducing first time entrants into the youth justice system, enabling victims to have quick resolutions and closure to their crime, and offenders will receive speedy justice.

Effective information sharing arrangements with partners across the city, particularly between key preventative services, aim to support the delivery of reductions in first time offending, anti social behaviour and re-offending.

Information on levels of youth related ASB and on perceptions of teenagers “hanging around” will be routinely collected and monitored, and findings of specific consultation with children and young people will be utilised to inform our needs assessment and ensure progress is made in improving this outcome.

The Children’s Trust will actively explore the relationship with this outcome and the outcome around public perceptions of children and young people.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

- The ASB Unit is working in a targeted area of Sunderland West which is suffering from alleged anti-social behaviour being perpetrated by youths. Questionnaires have been carried out with the community in order to gauge the level of issues. The details revealed community tension, noise, youth disorder and rowdy and disruptive behaviour. Officers attend residents meetings to speak with the community and take on board their ideas and concerns about how the issues can be tackled. As a result a Project Group has been established to look at youth provision and diversion, environment, community tensions, enforcement and education
- Residents play an active part in providing information about anti-social behaviour and are regularly consulted and updated with regard to ongoing work in their community.
- The ASB Unit has worked with youths in the Sunderland West area to try and understand why they are gathering and has subsequently provided information about the youth diversionary activities available in the area
- The ASB Unit is also working with a number of secondary schools to provide information about the long-term implications that enforcement action may have on a child or young person’s future, such as the impact on obtaining a driving licence; gainful employment in

certain fields; travelling abroad, etc. with a view to encourage young people to engage in positive activities rather than anti-social behaviour. The lesson plans delivered are aimed at preventing anti-social behaviour and reducing re-offending. Presentations have been delivered at Venerable Bede, St Robert of Newminster, Southmoor and Castleview Academy. Further schools will be approached with a view to rolling this presentation out across the city

- The ASB Unit has strong partnership arrangements in place with private landlords to support them to tackle anti-social behaviour by their own tenants
 - Support is provided to landlords to work with tenants engaging in anti-social behaviour to modify their behaviour rather than using eviction as an option. This also avoids displacement of tenants, and moving difficulties to another area of the city
 - As a result of a Neighbourhood Assessment in the Hendon area, Selective Licensing arrangements are in place, with heavy fines imposed on landlords in breach of the conditions of the licence. There are approximately 650 properties within the Selective Licensing area in Hendon, and as at June 2010, 66% have either applied for or have received a licence
 - Sunderland City Council operates a Private Landlord Accreditation Scheme. As at June 2011, the scheme has 357 members
 - The ASB Unit offers a vetting service for private landlords. During 2010/11, 251 vettings were carried out on behalf of Accredited Landlords. Of these, 139 were suitable to be recommended for a tenancy, 37 were unsuitable to be recommended for a tenancy and 75 were deemed insufficient to enable a firm decision to be made
 - The ASB Unit also offers joint tenancy sign-ups with private landlords and their new tenant to positively promote relationships and encourage reporting of anti-social behaviour. There were 12 joint tenancy signups undertaken during 2010/11.
 - Private landlords are also key partners in supporting victims of anti-social behaviour, when that victim lives in rented accommodation
- YOS Family Intervention Project workers are based in each locality and provide group work with those children and young people who present a lower risk of perpetrating anti-social behaviour and work intensively with the highest risk families to prevent re-offending
- There is strong liaison between the ASB Unit and YOS, particularly in relation to Acceptable Behaviour Agreements (ABA) and first time entrants into the criminal justice system
- Common Assessment Framework referrals are made in majority of cases when ABA is required
- When a young person is identified as engaging in anti-social behaviour, sibling links are made and referrals made to the YOS Wear Kids early intervention programme, to try and engage the sibling in diversionary activity and prevent them from emulating the behaviour of their brother or sister
- The ASB Unit undertakes community engagement questionnaires which provide details of perceptions of youth related anti-social behaviour. Findings from the questionnaires are used to inform relevant partners of the issues facing communities and how partners, including the YOS, Police, Gentoo, Youth, can work together to prevent and stop anti-social behaviour
- There have been 690 fewer victims of anti social behaviour (3%) in Sunderland in 2010/11. This includes a 13% reduction in youth related anti social behaviour
- Mobile Youth Villages have been rolled out across the City in areas where incidents of ASB are high. Some areas have seen a 30% decrease in youth disorder during the time the events are on. In the last year, 165 villages have been held with 3383 children in attendance
- YOS has worked with young offenders on community payback to tackle criminal damage and anti social behaviour by clearing fly tipping, removing graffiti and litter etc

- Operation Horizon ran in the Washington area. This involved Police and ASB Officers working Friday and Saturday evenings between the hours of 5.00-10.00pm. It reduced youth related ASB by 11%
- Five Community Respect days have been held in the Washington area. The aim of the events was to bring residents and young people together in a fun atmosphere to break down barriers
- Mobile youth buses are deployed across the city and have engaged and supported over 1000 young people in the last year
- An ASB campaign ran last year 'Respect and Consideration, It's a Two Way Street' . The aims of the campaign were to raise awareness that not all young people are perpetrators of ASB, engage teenagers in developing messages for the campaign and raise awareness of summer activities available for young people in their neighbourhood. Area specific 'What's on where cards' were also developed for young people
- Youth re-offending reduced by 27% at the end of 2010 against a three year (2008-2011 target of 10% reduction. Also, young people entering the youth justice system for the first time reduced by 34% at the end of 2010 against a national target of 1.9% for 2010 – 2011.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

- The Anti-Social Behaviour Service provided by the Council is currently under service review; the outcome of this will be implemented within this financial year
- The purpose of the review is to provide a more transparent, effective customer focussed service which will assist to meet the outcomes within the Children and Young People's Plan.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Ref	Description	Actual	Baseline	Year 1		Year 2 target	Year 3 target
		2008/09	2009/10	Target	Actual	2011/12	2012/13
		%	%	%	%	%	%
NI 17*	Perceptions of anti-social behaviour	23.5	22.2	20			
NI 111	First time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10 – 17	766	751	1.9% reduction	34 (261)	5% reduction	No set target

Additional performance information linked to the response times to anti-social behaviour cases, is set out below for 2009/10 and 2010/11, so a comparison can be made:

Indicators	Jun 2010	Sept 2010	Dec 2010	Mar 2011
% of ASB cases responded to within 2 days	98.5% (738/749)	99.3% (837/843)	99.3% (885/891)	99.3% (927/934)
% of ASB cases responded to within 5 days	98.5% (738/749)	99.4% (838/843)	99.4% (886/891)	99.5% (929/934)

Indicators	June 2009	Sept 2009	Dec 2009	Mar 2010
% of ASB cases responded to within 2 days	94.4%	99.4%	95.7%	97.1%
% of ASB cases responded to within 5 days	99%	99.4%	100%	98.9%

* The Coalition Government removed the requirement to measure against this indicator in 2010, therefore no information is available.

PRIORITY OUTCOME 13

IMPROVE THE PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF YOUNG PEOPLE

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

- Align with the Sunderland Strategic Partnership on this priority outcome for improvement and identify a partnership to take this priority forward
- Review use of promotional and publicity material including investment plans for the funding
- Carry out needs assessment across generations, identifying issues to be resolved and set baselines for measuring improvement
- Apply the 'turning the curve' exercise to improve this outcome
- Research and identify opportunities for intergenerational projects
- Develop the notion that communities are all age communities
- Promote positive images of young people, their activities and their need for 'Space'
- Have a communications strategy which places positive stories about young people in council publications and the Sunderland Echo
- Establish performance indicators and measurements during 2010/11 and set targets for 2011 and beyond.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

- Whilst there is no formal Communication Strategy in place, there is certainly lots of evidence of good practice. Children's Services has a long-standing good relationship with the Sunderland Echo and the Youth Development Group, Youth Offending Service and schools, as well as other services, regularly place articles in the newspaper to promote the positive activities young people in Sunderland engage in
- Through support from the Council's Communication Team, other media channels are used, with news features and reports on local and regional radio stations
- Sunderland Echo and Metro Radio are long-standing sponsors of the Young Achievers' Awards
- Regarding Intergenerational projects, examples of the projects that have taken place in the last year are:
 - 11m take over day, where young people shadowed adults in different roles. Specific examples are young people shadowing the Mayor, other Councillors and senior council officers
 - Councillor Shadowing Programme, where young people and councillors worked together, as part of a national programme, so that young people could learn about leadership in the council. When funding ceased for that programme, aspects of it were piloted in the "Get to Know Your Councillor" project (see below)
 - The "Get to Know Your Councillor" pilot took place in the east of the city, and councillors and young people from Youth Parliament held joint surgeries
- Groundwork NE has undertaken a **Community Philosophy** programme, to increase community engagement with young people in Peat Carr (Houghton le Spring), Pennywell and Southwick. Though the project is now complete, officers are working with local partners and communities to continue to provide support, enabling project sustainability. Local schemes that came out of the project were: Thompson's Park Arts Project (Southwick), St Andrew's Community Garden (Southwick), Electronic Village Hall (Pennywell), Achievement Centre Garden (Pennywell), Pop Up Allotment (Peat Carr/ Moorsley), community events and activities including estate tree planting, XL youth village etc (Peat Carr/ Moorsley). Funding to the value of £90,000 from the North East Empowerment Partnership was secured by the council to support this project.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

There is a new Commissioning Lead for this outcome, and there will be a drive to better understand the issues. During 2011/12 we will:

- Carry out needs assessment across generations, identifying issues to be resolved and set baselines for measuring improvement
- Establish performance indicators and measurements
- Apply the 'turning the curve' exercise to identify actions needed to improve this outcome.

ACHIEVING ECONOMIC WELLBEING

PRIORITY OUTCOME 14

INCREASE THE PROPORTION OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING (EET)

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

The 14-19 Strategy sets out detailed plans including actions and targets to improve this outcome. Key overarching actions are to:

- Ensure all key stakeholders are engaged in the development of a robust and deliverable action plan and that they are committed to timely delivery
- Support young people to maintain their engagement and support staff working with them to understand issues and respond effectively
- Enable young people to have good information, advice and guidance and support at transition
- Place a collective responsibility for ensuring young people are appropriately placed on all partners
- Ensure learning providers offer an appropriate curriculum for all young people
- Increase the number of supported apprenticeships across partners
- Improve performance management framework in relation to young people not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Following a Turning the Curve exercise that took place in September 2009, a refreshed action plan has been prepared and is being actioned by the NEET Sub-Group.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

There have been some major strategic changes in relation to the NEET agenda in the last year:

- Sunderland has been a 'NEET hotspot' for many years, and in 2009 – with the NEET figure at 13.2% – it was agreed that urgent and sustainable action needed to be taken. A senior manager in Children's Services carried out some in depth work with Connexions to improve monitoring and information. By 2009/10 the NEET rate reduced to 8.5% and that figure has been sustained until early 2010
- In addition, a NEET Improvement Board, which includes council officers and relevant partners, has been convened to be accountable for this area and continue the good progress made. Governance arrangements are being reviewed in summer 2011. That Board is also aiming to include schools as partners, as they are key to influencing young people's progression
- The NEET Improvement Board has an action plan in place
- In 2010/11 Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee carried out a review of 'Learning and Into Work', which includes young people who are NEET. The review acknowledges that the country is in an economic downturn, which will affect the availability of employment opportunities, particularly for young people. It also recognises that the cessation of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) will affect the engagement levels of young people in further education. Recommendations from this review have been included in the NEET Improvement Board's Plan
- Government Office North East (GONE) carried out an independent review in 2010 of Sunderland's position with regard to NEET. The resulting report contains key actions for improvements, which are again included in the NEET Improvement Board's Action Plan.

In addition, lots of good operational work has continued to improve this outcome. This includes:

- NEET Panels take place to review the hardest to help young people and develop strategies to get them engaged in EET activities. In 2010/11, 166 cases were presented and of those 69 young people moved onto education, employment or training. The format of the panels is currently under review
- Improved data sharing processes have been put in place with City of Sunderland College to ensure that Connexions can track the EET/NEET status of young people
- Overseen the Engagement Support & Prevention (ESP) Project, where staff have worked intensively to identify and intervene early with young people to raise their aspirations, as well as working with school leavers
- The Activity Agreement has been implemented, where staff work one to one on a weekly basis with NEET young people aged 16-17 to help them to achieve a positive outcome. Training providers also have drop in sessions at Connexions centres as part of this programme to raise awareness and help recruit young people who are NEET into positive opportunities. Funding for this initiative ended in March 2011
- Connexions attend College Progression Boards to identify those not able to progress to the next level of their course (June 2010)
- A review of joiners and leavers to and from the NEET group was conducted. Partners are working more collaboratively to ensure young people progress from programmes to remain EET
- Local Strategic Partnership held an event to promote Apprenticeships to key employers in the city
- Connexions Advisers are now based in each of the five localities across the city
- JobCentrePlus constantly reviews and enhances support for unemployed people and provides additional specialist provision for specific customers groups, including young people. Early access to all Get Britain Working (GBW) measures and the Work Programme is also offered. GBW measures include work clubs, volunteering, work experience, work activity, self employment support, enterprise clubs, work academies and skills training.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

The challenge for EET/NEET activities in at least the forthcoming year is the current economic recession. There are fewer jobs available and young people will be particularly affected in their search for employment. Further considerations in relation to the outcome are:

- The way NEET is measured is changing, so that it is based on young people's residency, i.e. the place where they live, as opposed to the location of their education, employment or training. This is likely to have a positive impact on Sunderland's data, but will significantly add to issues of tracking young people as an additional 3000 young people will be included in the cohort to follow up
- The NEET Improvement Board will engage schools in the NEET programme, as they will be instrumental in influencing young people's progression routes post-16
- Improvements need to be made in engaging with employers to promote and increase the number of apprenticeships available across the city. This will also support the Government's intention to award £150,000 to support apprenticeships in the next couple of years
- Wolf Report – the Government commissioned Alison Wolf to conduct a review of vocational education for 14-19 years olds across England and Wales. The findings were published in March 2011 and include three clear principles for reform, namely that programmes of study, whether 'academic' or 'vocational', should:

- provide for labour market and educational progress
- provide people with accurate and useful information, so that they can make decisions accordingly
- the system needs to be simplified dramatically, as a precondition for giving people good and accurate information, to free up resources for teaching and learning, and to encourage innovation and efficiency
- The age of compulsory education or training increases in 2013 for all 17 year olds and in 2015 all 18 year olds. Schools, the local authority and other partners, need to prepare for this
- In November 2010 the Government announced the creation of an all-age careers service for England, to be fully implemented by April 2012. Plans will need to be formulated to action this
- Jobcentre Plus will implement the new skills offer (also known as skills conditionality) for unemployed customers. From August 2011, any customer in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance, or Employment Support Allowance (Work Related Activity Group), who is identified as having a skills need that is preventing them moving into work, will be supported in having those needs met
- Department of Work and Pension will bid for funding from the European Social Fund to be in place from December 2011. It will allow employment related support to be provided for families identified as having multiple barriers to employment. All adult members of the family unit will be able to access the provision. Referral to provision will be made initially by local authorities, followed by an eligibility check by Jobcentre Plus.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Ref	Description	Actual 2008/09	Baseline 2009/10	Year 1		Year 2 Target 2011/12	Year 3 Target 2012/13
				Target	Actual		
				2010/11			
NI117	16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)	13%	10%	9%	8.5%	8%	7%

PRIORITY OUTCOME 15

PROVIDE DECENT HOMES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

The 2010-13 CYPP Delivery Plan set out plans to improve this outcome, detailing actions in:

- Sunderland Strategy 2008-25
- Local Area Agreement 2008-11
- The Housing Strategy 2006-11.

The latter of these two plans have been superseded by the following:

Sunderland's Housing Priorities Plan has been developed by Sunderland City Council working in partnership with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to ensure that we have a shared and agreed understanding of the ambition for Sunderland's future economy and to create sustainable places and communities for all in Sunderland

The Housing Priorities Plan sits alongside other key plans for the city and together they form a suite of plans guiding the delivery of the overall Local Strategic Partnership's Sunderland Strategy. It details what the city's overarching housing priorities are up to 2025. Also in place is the Economic Masterplan for Sunderland, setting the aims for the city's current and future economy.

The key actions identified in the CYPP have been transferred into these two plans. They were:

- The Council's work on fuel poverty has made available a specially subsidised price for cavity wall and loft insulation for families with children under 4 who don't qualify for free measures – thus ensuring that children and young people do not suffer from the effects of fuel poverty
- Information on energy efficiency support to families with young children is being made available through nurseries and parent groups
- The development of a supported housing project of 18 units for homeless young people aged 16-21 which aims to reduce the chronic shortage of immediate access accommodation for people aged 16-21 in Sunderland
- Actions to minimise rough sleeping amongst young people
- Trying to reduce costs to the Council by spending less on bed and breakfast.

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

- Against the priority to improve **fuel poverty and energy efficiency**, subsidised home insulation has continued to be delivered to families with young children using the Single Housing Investment Pot (SHIP) funding. This funding ended in March 2011, but the scheme will continue in its current format until at least March 2012 due to legacy funding being available
- The partnership between Sunderland City Council and KNW (the Council's procured installer) has:
 - confirmed the availability of funding and the spend rate for 2011/12
 - identified the priorities for 2011/12 which are to maintain the current installation rate and commence with the 'Hardship Scheme' for vulnerable people to improve their own homes

- develop longer term objectives in response to Government policy, specifically relating to the Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT), the end of 'Warm Front' and the introduction of the 'Green Deal' in December 2012
- For the year April 2010 to March 2011 the 'Council – KNW' partnership:
 - conducted 2,698 energy efficiency measures
 - provided 919 homes with cavity wall insulation
 - insulated 1,779 lofts
 - levered in £455,000 from npower (electricity and natural gas supply company) to reduce the overall costs of energy efficiency measures to the home owner
- For the supported housing project, Gentoo, in partnership with Centrepont, started building on site in December 2010 with the completion of the new 18 bed supported housing unit for homeless single people aged 16-21 expected in January/February 2012
- Proposed changes to welfare reform, which include housing benefit, will be monitored and proposals have already been responded to. The aim being to minimise the impact in Sunderland to ensure that any proposed reforms do not have a detrimental impact on the sustainability of the new project as well as other supported housing schemes as housing related support undergoes funding changes over the coming year
- Minimising rough sleeping continues to be both a key priority for Sunderland, but also nationally, with a greater emphasis on the accurate reporting of rough sleeping by local authorities
- Specific work in Sunderland revolves around the proposed restructure of the Housing Options Team. The new structure will become more area focused in its approach, with all of the committee areas having an Access to Housing Caseworker and Support Worker concentrating specifically on the presenting needs of those areas. This will enable a greater understanding of the services available and more importantly enable earlier identification of any cases to prevent homelessness and potentially rough sleeping from occurring. It is intended that the new structure will be in operation from 1 August 2011
- Additionally Sunderland has been awarded £60,000 from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on behalf of the North East to lead on the development of further work to minimise rough sleeping. This money has been pooled with other resources received by Newcastle Council and will be used to develop a consistent approach to rough sleeping by all North East councils building on the nationally recognised work currently carried out by Cyrenians in Newcastle. A further element of this funding will be a pilot on personal budgets carried out in Sunderland on behalf of the North East. This is still in its infancy but will be developed by the Substance Misuse / Rough Sleeper Officer within the team, building on the findings of the initial pilots that were completed last year
- A great deal of work has been carried out to address the problem of Bed & Breakfast accommodation both in terms of actual numbers and more importantly in terms of support. Since 2006/07 there has been a decline in the number of households placed in B&B from 146 households per year to 126 in 2009/10 and 104 in 2010/11
- The number of 16-17 year old households has reduced by 54% from the peak of 42 households in 2007/08 to only 19 cases in 2010/11. This was also reflected by a similar reduction in the number of single male/female households placed in B&B accommodation
- There has been an increasing trend since 2008/09 for households to spend more time in B&B accommodation. In 2008/09 households on average spent 2.8 weeks in B&B. In 2010/11 this increased to 3.5 weeks. For single households aged 16-17 though performance improved, particularly for single females who, in 2008/09, spent on average 6.1 weeks in B&B, in 2010/11 this reduced to 2.1 weeks. Although not as dramatic, the length of time single male households spent in B&B also reduced from 2.8 weeks to 1.5 weeks on average

- Over the course of 2010/11 the support provided by the Housing Options Team via the Family Liaison Officers to families placed in Bed and Breakfast has been further developed with improvements being:
 - drop in at St Peters Children Centre
 - Home from Home at Austin House Children's Centre, Southwick
 - links to other agencies such as Sunderland City Council Works Club, Community Development Team, Child and Family Support workers, Youth workers, Healthy Eating Team, health trainers.
 - Children Centres
 - Teenage Pregnancy Planning Group
 - Children Missing from Education
- Additionally if any placements are made outside of the Sunderland area the Family Liaison Officers ensure the continuation of support from the receiving Local Authority. For example in South Tyneside links have been established with a Health Visitor who has agreed to link in with any families who have been placed into Bed & Breakfast accommodation within that area and will sign post to local facilities.

PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Ref	Description	Actual 2008/09	Baseline 2009/10	Year 1		Year 2 target 2011/12	Year 3 target 2012/13
				Target	Actual		
				2010/11			
		%	%	%	%	%	%
NI 116	Proportion of children in poverty						
NI 141	Percentage of vulnerable people achieving independent living	90.6	77.7 (at Q2)	87	June 10: 77% Sept 10: 83% Dec 10: 78% Mar 11: 79%		
NI 142	Percentage of vulnerable people who are supported to maintain independent living	98.1	98.8 (at Q2)	Target: 100	June 10: 99% Sept 10: 99.09% Dec 10: 99.07% Mar 10: 99.07%		
NI 147	Care leavers in suitable accommodation	88.5	86	86	94.4		
NI 156	Number of households living in temporary accommodation (not as a percentage)	9		10	June 2010: 10 Sept 2010: 7 Dec 2010: 6 Mar 2011: 9		

PRIORITY OUTCOME 16

IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY AND AFFORDABILITY OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT

This priority came about as a direct result of young people's comments that fares for those in full time education were extremely high – around £56 per month – which is a real burden on young people and their families, who don't earn a lot.

A link has been made between this priority and one of the Sunderland Partnership's, namely Attractive and Inclusive City. There is not an obvious partnership within the Children's Trust that would be responsible for this priority. As such, the commissioning lead will look to progress this priority outcome through the relevant delivery partnership.

WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED

- Currently only young people up to the age of 16 are entitled to a travel pass, which offers reduced fares on public transport. It is not available to young people over 16 who may be travelling to further education or training
- A 16-19 Transport Policy is in place, which sets out the concessions that the travel companies offer for students post-16. It also details how the local authority supports young people from Sunderland who travel outside of the Tyne and Wear boundaries for education, against certain criteria
- In addition, fares for young people in Tyne and Wear are subsidised by Nexus, and so are relatively low compared with neighbouring counties
- The Education Maintenance Allowance is a grant of £30 a week for students who meet certain criteria, to support travel to education and training. This grant ceased in March 2011, which may have a negative impact on young people continuing to attend college.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

A partnership approach is required if a positive impact to this outcome area is to be achieved, i.e. reduction in fares for young people attending further education and training. In the coming year, the appropriate delivery partnership will be identified to take this priority forward.

OUTCOME 17 – IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT

WHAT WE SAID WE WOULD DO

During consultation with young people, specific issues regarding the environment were very common in the free text. These ranged from wanting more parks in the local area, through to keeping the community clean by reducing litter, graffiti and other forms of vandalism. It was also apparent that pupils had an understanding of, and wished to focus on wider environmental issues, as many mentioned issues such as recycling, green house gases, pollution and endangered species:

“Keep the environment clean”

“...stop pollution in the environment”

WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

Lots of good work is happening within the city to improve the environment, including:

Greenspace

This is a project to support the Green Infrastructure Strategy. To date the green space sites around the city have been mapped and audited to understand how they are used and where there are surpluses and gaps in the space. The next stage of the project is to ensure that there are adequate green spaces across the city, in line with what residents in the area have said they would like to see. This could be parks, walking and bridle paths, cycling routes, etc. Throughout September work will be conducted through schools and other settings specific to young people, to gain their views on how green space land can be developed.

Eco-Schools

Eco-Schools is an international award programme that guides schools on their sustainable journey, providing a framework to help embed these principles into the heart of school life. Twenty (20) schools in Sunderland participated in the two-year project, up to July 2010, supported by the City Council's Sustainability Team and Groundwork North East, working on environmental issues such as water, waste and transport issues. Within the project, schools achieved Eco-School Awards at bronze, silver or the highest level of Green Flag Award. Of the schools that were supported by the council's Sustainability Team and Groundwork North East, four schools achieved the Green Flag award, 10 achieved the silver award and three achieved bronze.

Groundwork

Groundwork North East delivers innovative environmental education and positive engagement activities to unlock the full potential of children and young people. The types of learning activities it provides include:

- alternative education
- early years education
- learning outside the classroom
- sustainable development education
- positive engagement activities.

During 2010/11, in Sunderland, Groundwork worked with:

- 30 schools
- 1400 young people
- 30 training sessions for teachers
- 200 sessions with young people.

WHAT WE STILL NEED TO DO

The task for Children's Trust for the coming year is to identify a delivery partnership to co-ordinate this work and ensure that children and young people can have a voice in how the environment should be shaped in the future.

CABINET MEETING – 5 OCTOBER 2011 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I	
Title of Report:	Access to Housing Project – Allocations Scheme
Author(s):	Executive Director of Health, Housing and Adult Services
Purpose of Report:	To seek approval for a new Allocations' Scheme, to determine how properties are allocated across the City.
Description of Decision:	<p>Cabinet is recommended to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Approve the new Allocations' Scheme for the city. To be implemented early 2012 - date yet to be confirmed. 2 Agree that a full re-registration process be progressed for all applicants in line with the new Allocations Scheme to assess applicants' needs in accordance with the scheme. 3 Agree that Council's existing housing register be closed, except for those customers who have an urgent housing need. For example, statutory homeless cases and those with an urgent medical need. This will need to start 3 months prior to the go live date to enable a re-registration exercise to be carried out and completed. 4 Agree that Council nominations should continue to be made from the existing housing register until the new Allocations' Scheme comes into effect. 5 To agree that the Sunderland scheme is part of a sub-regional approach across Tyne and Wear.
Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework?	Yes
If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework	

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

- To enable customers to have a single point of entry to access housing within the City and across the sub region by virtue of a common application form and website.
- To have an Allocations' Scheme based on housing need making it fairer, open and transparent for customers to use and understand.
- Create efficiencies by removing the need for the Council to provide nominations in many cases. The new scheme will allow all Registered Providers (RPs) to advertise their properties directly on the system which will be monitored by the Council to ensure compliance for nominations and that the policy is meeting the needs of those living within the City.
- To ensure better accessibility for customers as they can manage their applications themselves as well as express interest in properties online, via automated telephone service and texting. They will also be able to do this in person, by attending offices of the Council, or the offices of any of the partners in the scheme. This should release staff resources to assist vulnerable customers navigating the scheme.
- To provide a clearer picture of housing need within the City as applicants will be registered in one place with no duplicate applications on multiple RPs lists.
- To help those who have to move across boundaries to do so.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

To continue with the existing scheme, however the change proposed provides the opportunity to improve allocating available housing to those most in need and introduces a consistent single approach for customers to apply for housing.

Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution? Yes

Is it included in the Forward Plan? Yes

Relevant Scrutiny Committee:
Sustainable Communities

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH, HOUSING AND
ADULT SERVICES**

ACCESS TO HOUSING PROJECT – ALLOCATIONS SCHEME

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To recommend a new Allocations' Scheme to determine how properties are allocated within the City.

2. DESCRIPTION OF DECISION

- 2.1 Approve the new Allocations' Scheme for the city. To be implemented early 2012 - date yet to be confirmed.
- 2.2 Agree that a full re-registration process be commenced for all applicants in line with the new Allocations Scheme to assess applicants' needs in accordance with the new scheme.
- 2.3 Agree that the Council's existing Housing Register be closed, except for those customers who have an urgent housing need. For example, statutory homeless cases or those with an urgent medical need. This will need to start 3 months prior to the go live date to enable a re-registration exercise to be carried out and completed.
- 2.4 Agree that Council nominations should continue to be made from the existing housing register until the new Allocations' Scheme comes into effect.
- 2.5 To agree that the Sunderland scheme is part of a sub regional approach across Tyne and Wear.

3. INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council is required by the Housing Act 1996 to have an Allocations' Scheme for determining priorities and for determining the procedures to be followed in allocating housing accommodation. Every allocation of housing made by or on behalf of the Council must be in accordance with the scheme.
- 3.2 The Council has nomination rights with all Registered Providers (RPs) who operate within the City. If the Council nominates a prospective tenant to a RP and they then let the person a property, that is regarded as an allocation for the purposes of the 1996 Act.

- 3.3 The Council's current Allocations' Scheme was agreed by Cabinet in April 2005. Changes to the existing scheme have been agreed by Cabinet previously on the 11 July 2007 and 5 December 2007.

4. CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 The Council's Allocations' Scheme has been in use since 2005 and it operates by awarding points to applicants to reflect their level of housing need taking into account their personal circumstances. The more points an applicant is awarded the higher their needs as determined within the policy, in accordance with the Council's priorities and legislative requirements.
- 4.2 Once an applicant has been placed on the housing register and points have been awarded, depending on their need the Council looks for suitable properties to meet this need. This is done by the RPs who operate within the City providing a percentage of their housing stock to the Council. This is referred to as nomination rights but is still regarded as an Allocation in law.
- 4.3 The Council then chooses the person with the highest points, ensuring the highest level of need being put forward for the vacancy. Those applicants who have identical point levels are prioritised taking into account which applicant has waited the longest.
- 4.4 Prioritised applicants are offered the first available property regardless of location, effectively limiting choice of where people want to live.
- 4.5 Guidance released by the Department for Communities and Local Government (Fair and flexible: statutory guidance on social housing allocations for local authorities in England – Dec 2009) suggests the current approach for allocating homes is not considered to be good practice.
- 4.6 Access to housing in Sunderland is further complicated as many of the RPs hold their own waiting list for housing. They also have different mechanisms for letting properties which can vary from point systems to banding systems to waiting times.
- 4.7 As a result applicants wishing to maximise their chances of being housed in Sunderland have to complete many application forms for the RPs, all collating similar details.
- 4.8 This disparate approach to accessing housing makes it difficult for customers to navigate the system, understand where they are placed on lists and causes confusion and frustration.
- 4.9 In order to overcome the issues set out above the Council has been working with RPs to develop a new Allocations' Scheme for the city that allocates properties on a need basis whilst providing the customer with some ability to exercise choice in where they would like to live.

- 4.10 The Council has also been working in partnership with the Tyne and Wear local authorities to look at creating an efficient and effective sub regional partnership using an improved accessible and choice driven approach.
- 4.11 The Tyne and Wear Partnership was successful in securing a grant of £148,000 to implement the Scheme.
- 4.12 The partnership is working with all social landlords who operate in the city, and they are all signed up to the new scheme. Gentoo, Home Group, and Isos will go live when the scheme is introduced, with others looking to go live at a later date.
- 4.13 It is considered good practice to offer mobility to applicants, and not be restricted by Local Authority boundaries particularly to access opportunities such as employment and training. Whilst evidence from other sub regional schemes suggest not many customers move across boundaries the scheme will provide flexibility in this regard.
- 4.14 All customers will be required to re-register for the new Scheme as applicants will need to be assessed under the new policy.
- 4.15 To ensure the consistent, single access approach Sunderland's Housing Register will no longer exist and applicants will be applying to the new scheme which will be badged the Sunderland Scheme. We are working with the Communications Team to produce literature in an easy to read and understandable format which will explain fully how the new scheme will operate.
- 4.16 As a result of the re-registration exercise it is proposed that the Council's existing housing register is closed to all non urgent housing applicants 3 months prior to going live. This will allow a thorough review of all existing applicants and will ensure that when the system commences in early 2012 it has the most accurate and up to date information available.
- 4.17 All non-urgent applicants will be signposted to the new scheme to register their details.
- 4.18 During the intervening period all allocation of properties will be carried out from the Council's existing waiting list on the basis of the old Allocations' Scheme until the go live date for the new system.
- 4.19 It is intended that an early review of the Allocations Scheme take place 6 months after the go live date to enable the Council to ascertain its effect and make any necessary changes.

5. REASONS FOR THE DECISION

- 5.1 To enable customers to have a single point of entry to access housing within the City and across the sub-region by virtue of a common application form and website.
- 5.2 To have an Allocations' Scheme based on housing need making it fairer, open and transparent for customers to use and understand.
- 5.3 Create efficiencies by removing the need for the Council to provide nominations in many cases. The new scheme will allow all Registered Providers (RPs) to advertise their properties directly on the system which will be monitored by the Council to ensure compliance for nominations and that the policy is meeting the needs of those living within the City.
- 5.4 To ensure better accessibility for customers as they can manage their applications themselves where appropriate as well as express interests in properties online, via automated telephone service and texting. They will also be able to do this in person, by attending offices of the Council, or the offices of any of the partners in the scheme. This should release staff resources to assist vulnerable customers navigating the scheme.
- 5.5 To provide a clearer picture of housing need within the City as applicants will be registered in one place with no duplicate applications on multiple RPs lists.
- 5.6 To help those who have to move across boundaries to do so.

6. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 6.1 Should the Council decide not to agree the Allocations Scheme;
 - A large proportion of accommodation would continue not be allocated based on housing need
 - It would restrict improvements for customers as the process would still contain duplication and waste.
 - The status quo would not improve the customers experience, or extend choice.
 - Customers would have no real time information about how where they are placed on the lists to enable them to make informed decisions about what their realistic housing options are.

7. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS / CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 Financial Implications / Sunderland Way of Working

The introduction of this Scheme will bring about efficiencies for the Council due to shared financial costs across the Tyne and Wear sub regional partners for IT systems and processes. It will also help generate income from partner landlords using the system as they will be charged to advertise their properties.

7.2 Risk Analysis

The project has its own risk register in place which has been used to mitigate and minimise any potential or identified risks.

7.3 Employee Implications

Council staff and those of other agencies have been involved in the consultation processes and comments have been taken on board and incorporated as appropriate

7.4 Legal Implications

The Head of Law and Governance has been consulted and her comments are incorporated in the Allocations' Scheme and this report.

7.5 Policy Implications

The Council must have an Allocations' Scheme in law which stipulates how social housing is allocated.

7.6 Health & Safety Considerations

Not Applicable

7.7 Property Implications

Not applicable

7.8 Implications for Other Services

To enable the scheme to work with the full Sunderland Way of Working model discussions are ongoing with the CSN in relation to working processes and practices, as well as identifying staff, agencies and partners who require training on the new scheme.

7.9 The Public

Numerous consultation events have taken place at various stages using different mediums. Comments and changes have been made to the policy as appropriate whilst also meeting legislative requirements

7.10 Compatibility with European Convention on Human Rights

The Head of Law and Governance has been consulted and her comments are incorporated in the Allocations' Scheme and this report.

7.11 Reduction of Crime and Disorder – Community Cohesion /Social Inclusion

The proposals in this report and the changes to the scheme should allow for greater social inclusion as those people in the greatest housing need will be prioritised.

7.12 Equalities

The Council has completed a full Equalities Impact Assessment on the Scheme.

7.13 Project Management Methodology

The Council's PRINCE2 methodology has been used.

7.14 Children's Services

The Scheme is in line with all legislative requirements.

7.15 Procurement

The Council's Procurement Team have been fully involved and rules complied with finding a suitable IT provider.

7.16 Sustainability

As this is a new Scheme ongoing monitoring and outcomes will be analysed along with comments from customers to form part of a 6 monthly review of the scheme.

8. GLOSSARY

Registered Providers (RPs) -previously known as Social Landlords or Housing Associations.

Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) -The Government Department who the Council are responsible to for such a scheme.

Tenant Services Authority (TSA) – The department who Registered Providers are responsible to.

9. LIST OF APPENDICES

9.1 'The Allocations Scheme' for Sunderland'

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Housing Act 2006 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002

10.2 Code of Guidance for Allocations

10.3 Fair and Flexible Consultation and other document responses

Housing Allocation Scheme For Sunderland

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Section 1: Introduction

This document sets out the Housing Allocations Scheme (the 'Scheme') for Sunderland.

The Scheme has been developed to improve access to housing in the city and to allocate properties in an open and transparent way offering as much choice as possible for applicants. This document aims to clarify how allocations will work and make it simpler for customers to apply for a home. The Scheme is Sunderland City Council's statutory allocation scheme and it is intended that it will also be followed by all social landlords ("partner landlords") who have properties in the city.

Sunderland City Council ("the Council") has statutory (or legal) duties for housing in Sunderland and associated responsibilities which come with this. For example, the responsibility for the prevention of and assistance for those who are homeless lies with the Council. The Council also works with other housing providers in the city and has nomination rights to some of their properties.

Support and Advice

A range of support is available for applicants who are vulnerable and who may experience difficulties in applying and/or using the scheme. For further information please contact the City Council's Access to Housing Team. If you want the information in this scheme in a different language or a different format such as large print please just let us know.

Contact details:

Sunderland City Council Access to Housing Team: 0191 520 5555

Section 2: Policy and Aims

Our Policy

We recognise that the way homes are allocated is a matter of real importance to local people. The demand for social housing in Sunderland far outweighs the supply and therefore our policy seeks to make the best possible use of housing stock.

We aim to create an excellent customer experience by providing a seamless, end-to-end service and offering each customer the help and advice they need to choose the housing option which is best for them and their household.

We will regularly monitor and review this policy with our customers, the Council's Cabinet and other relevant Committees and Boards.

Our Policy Aims

Providing support for those in greatest housing and social need

Including those who are homeless, overcrowded, living in poor housing conditions, those who need to move for medical or welfare reasons and those who need to move to avoid hardship.

Promoting greater choice for prospective and existing customers

Giving people a greater choice by advertising vacant properties and providing advice on a wide range of housing options.

Promoting greater mobility for customers

Making the allocations system more flexible so that it is possible for tenants to move to a property that better meets their specific needs and aspirations and working with partners across the geographic region to provide additional mobility and choice.

Creating more mixed and sustainable neighbourhoods

Helping to create safe, prosperous and cohesive communities where different people want to live and work.

Making better use of the housing stock

Working to improve how we match people and properties so that, for example, adapted accommodation is prioritised for people with the relevant needs.

Supporting people in work

Ensuring that people who are in certain types of work, or have received an offer of a certain type of work can be assisted through our banding system if they need to move because of their job.

Maintaining a system which is open and transparent

Providing regular and accurate information to people about how many properties are available and how they are being allocated which enables customers to make informed decisions on their best housing options.

Equalities Statement

We are committed to the principles of equality and fairness. We will make sure that everyone has fair and equal opportunities to access our services and will treat everybody with dignity and respect. We acknowledge that everyone is different so we work hard to recognise, respect and respond to the different needs of our customers.

To help us to do this we collect information from applicants, that they are prepared to give us, about their gender, age, sexuality, disability, race and faith or religion. The information will be used to provide an appropriate service to individual applicants and will be anonymised and aggregated to allow us to monitor the scheme to check that there are no barriers that disadvantage particular groups of applicants.

Choice Statement (Section 167(1A) Housing Act 1996)

It is the policy of the Council to seek to extend choice to all eligible applicants for social housing by giving them an opportunity to express their preference for areas and types of housing. Wherever possible such preferences will be taken into account in allocating accommodation. However, this must be balanced with the requirement that the Council meets its legal duties as a local housing authority and addresses local housing need.

Confidentiality Statement

In order to manage our business effectively the City Council needs to collect and use confidential information. When doing so we will comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and will treat sensitive personal information fairly and lawfully. In certain circumstances we may share sensitive and personal information with other organisations.

We will only do this with either appropriate consent from our customers or in circumstances where the law allows us to do so. **This will also extend to other social landlords and local authorities across the partnership of Tyne and Wear.**

The information provided will be held on computer and may be used for prevention and detection of fraud and any other crime.

Legislation

We have prepared this Scheme in accordance with the requirements of the Housing Act 1996, as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002, and have had regard to the Allocation of Accommodation Code of Guidance for local housing authorities that was issued by the Government in November 2002, and other guidance on allocations issued on August 2008 and November 2009. We have also considered relevant case law, circulars, regulations and good practice.

Consultation

The scheme has been drawn up following wide consultation with key groups.

- Members of the public
- Applicants
- Young People
- People with Disabilities
- BME Groups
- Councillors
- Council Staff, other agencies, Registered providers

All of the views expressed have been carefully considered and wherever possible they have been taken into account within the scheme. Consultation will continue as the scheme develops and this will allow us to use the experience of customers and other stakeholders to review, amend and continue to improve the scheme.

Section 3: Overview of how the Scheme works

There are 8 steps or elements to the Scheme:

- Step 1: Application
- Step 2: Assessment and eligibility
- Step 3: Banding
- Step 4: Suspensions
- Step 5: Property Advertising
- Step 6: Bidding
- Step 7: Short listing
- Step 8: Property offer

1. An applicant can submit an application :
 - online
 - in person at either a Council or partner organisation's office
 - by posting a completed form to the Council's Access to Housing team office (a blank application downloaded from the schemes website or can be sent on request)



2. Checks will be carried out on applicants to confirm they are eligible to apply for accommodation.



- 2a. Providing an applicant is eligible an assessment will be carried out to identify any housing need and their application will be placed into one of the category bands



3. There are four category bands in which an application could be placed:
 1. Urgent
 2. Priority
 3. Choice
 4. Renewal.



4. Once an applicant has been placed into their category band, checks will be carried out to establish whether they are subject to a suspension by any of the partner providers in line with their policies.



5. Available properties are advertised every week. Each advert has a "label" which gives information on the property and the type of customer that would be best suited. Properties are banded and advertised as Band 1,2,3 or 4 which reflects the assessment bands



6. An applicant can submit a bid for any property advertised which matches their band and where they meet the label. Applicants in any band can bid for Choice band properties where they meet the label.



- 6a. After 5 days adverts are closed (Thurs – Mon).



7. The list is compiled of applicants who have bid and the short listing procedure is used to identify the successful applicant.



8. Successful applicant views property. The applicant decides whether to accept the property. If the applicant accepts the property they sign tenancy agreement and move in.

Section 4: Application

An applicant can register alone, jointly with a partner or with another adult who wishes to live with them, including family members. The Scheme operates as an open housing register which means that anyone over 16 years of age can apply, subject to the results of an eligibility assessment (see section 5).

Out of City Applicants

We welcome applicants who live outside of the Sunderland area. This policy will be kept under review to ensure that applicants within Sunderland are not disadvantaged as a result.

Owner Occupier Applicants

We welcome owner occupiers within the Scheme. However, those who wish to access the Scheme will be required to sell or dispose of their interest in their current property or demonstrate that they are actively trying to do so.

Making an Application

Applications can be made in the following ways:

1. Complete an online application. *xxx internet site*
2. Complete an application form in person at one of the Council's Offices or the offices of any of the partner landlords across the Tyne and Wear local authority areas.
3. A blank application form can be downloaded from the Scheme's website. It can also be sent on request to a customer's home address. Post a completed application form to the Council's Access to Housing Team, or to any of the partner landlords across the Tyne and Wear local authority areas.

Applicants will need to provide information about:

- Themselves and those they wish to share a home with
- Their housing history
- Their housing needs
- Any support needs
- Their financial circumstances
- Their areas of choice

To help applicants consider their areas of choice, information on the supply and demand for properties can be found on the Scheme website, at Council offices and at the offices of partner landlords. The information provided includes details of housing stock, the types of properties within those areas and the previous year's turnover rates, in other words how many properties became available for rent in the past year.

Joint Access Arrangements

Only the parent with primary care of a child should qualify for a family home. Primary care is based on individual merits, but takes into account:

- ☐ Receipt of Child Benefit
- ☐ Court Orders
- ☐ Percentage of time spent caring for child(ren)
- ☐ Regularity and permanence of arrangement.

When a customer does not have primary care of dependent child, but shares care, either as a result of a court order or an informal arrangement, we will consider on a case by case basis. For example, this may mean granting an additional bedroom or considering a single applicant for a two bedroom flat.

Change of Circumstances

Customers are required to inform either the City Council's Access to Housing Team or the partner landlord to whom the original application was made if they have any changes in circumstances which may affect their application.

False or Misleading Information

If applicants have supplied false or misleading information which leads to them being allocated a property, legal action will be taken.

Deliberately worsening your circumstances

Where there is evidence that an applicant has deliberately worsened their circumstances in order to qualify for a higher housing priority under the Scheme, no additional priority will be given. In some circumstances this may be considered by partner landlords as unacceptable behaviour, leading to suspension of an application (see section 6). **The Council itself does not operate a suspensions policy**

An applicant will not be considered as having deliberately worsened their circumstances if they have evidence that it would have been unreasonable for them to have remained in their original accommodation.

Applicants are entitled to request a review of a decision. (See section 13 on Reviewing Decisions).

Housing applications from members of staff and their families

Applicants for housing from Sunderland City Council employees, Elected Members, Committee Members of any partner landlords, or their families must declare their interest when applying.

Such applications will be assessed in the normal way, but offers of accommodation will not be made without the prior approval of the Head of Strategic Housing, Sunderland City Council.

Section 5: Registration and Eligibility

Registration

Having received an application it will be checked for eligibility (see below) and unless the applicant is deemed ineligible then it will be registered. Once an application is registered they will be sent a letter to tell them into which band their application has been placed, to confirm their date of application and to provide their user name and password which will allow them to access their application on line.

Eligibility

Some people may be ineligible to participate in the Scheme:

People from abroad who are subject to immigration control will be ineligible unless they come within an exempted class prescribed by the Secretary of State.

Other persons from abroad may be prescribed by the Secretary of State as being ineligible for an allocation of housing accommodation by the local housing authority.

An applicant will also be ineligible if anyone in the household or with whom they have applied would be subject to one of the above categories.

The main legal provisions in relation to eligibility are currently contained in Part VI of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002); and the Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Eligibility) (England) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

In order to confirm a customer's eligibility we may carry out checks with a number of statutory agencies, for example the Home Office.

If an applicant is considered to be ineligible they will be notified of this decision and the grounds for it in writing. Applicants have the right to request a review of this decision (see section 13).

Section 6: Suspensions

Partner landlords and our partners across the Tyne and Wear local authority areas may operate Suspensions or Exclusions Policies. If an application is suspended by a partner then an applicant would not be able to express interest in that partner's properties and would not be offered a tenancy with that partner until their suspension was lifted.

To decide whether an application will be suspended partner landlords may consider behaviour and/or breaches of tenancy from current or former;

- Social housing tenants
- Private rented tenants
- Owner occupiers
- Applicants who live in with any of the above

Where an application is suspended the applicant will be notified of the decision and the reasons for it in writing. An applicant can request a review of the decision to suspend their application (see section 13).

For further details, support or advice, contact the relevant landlord or Local Authority.

Applicants who have been suspended by a partner landlord can still register in Sunderland and may be considered by the City Council for accommodation with other housing providers. It is the responsibility of other partner landlords to carry out their own relevant checks as to the suitability of the applicant.

Section 7: Application Banding

The Scheme has four bands, into which all registered applications, will be categorised.

The different bands distinguish between applicants who have an urgent need to move, those with a recognised priority need, those who wish to move out of choice and those who need to move from an area that is being developed or renewed by the City Council or other partners within the City.

We will review an applicant's band status on a regular basis to ensure they are effectively accessing the Scheme.

An applicant must contact the Council or other relevant partner if their circumstances change.

Band 1: Urgent Housing Need

This Band is for cases of urgent housing need and to meet the criteria a customer must have an immediate need to move. The following reasons mean that an application will be put into this band.

Medical Reasons

To qualify for this band based on medical needs an applicant or member of their household will have a chronic/degenerative illness or impairment (which may be physical, mental, learning or sensory) which has resulted in them being no longer able to cope in their present home.

In making an assessment about whether an applicant qualifies for this band a Principal Officer will consider the impact the applicant's home has on their ability to access essential facilities and whether the existing home can be adapted to meet their needs.

Written recommendation will be required from a health professional(s) to confirm that an urgent move is necessary to resolve the current difficulties and that the current home cannot be adapted to meet the medical needs. The information may be provided from a variety of health professionals such as a GP, Consultant, or Occupational Therapist.

Severe Harassment

To qualify for this band based on severe harassment an applicant will either be a victim of serious anti-social behaviour (ASB) or harassment that the Council, partner landlord, the Police or other agencies cannot resolve.

Harassment will include actual violence, serious threats of violence, hate crime motivated by prejudice or intimidation significant enough to be deemed unreasonable for the applicant to remain in their home. This band will only be awarded to assist an applicant to move from the locality of the ASB or harassment, and be rehoused to an area that is a sufficient distance to avoid a re-occurrence of the problem.

Written evidence and supporting documentation will be required from a senior officer of the Police.

Domestic Abuse

To qualify for this band based on domestic abuse an applicant will need immediate rehousing because they have been categorised as at a high risk of domestic abuse, for example via a Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) or partner landlords. Also, applicants who are experiencing domestic abuse will be assessed via the Council's Access to Housing Team under the homeless legislation as prescribed in the Housing Act 1996 (as amended), see below.

Homelessness

Homelessness is a statutory (legal) duty that the Council are required to investigate and assess. The Council's Access to Housing Team will assess all potentially homeless applications.

To qualify for this band based on homelessness an applicant will need to have had their circumstances assessed and have received confirmation in writing from the Council that they have been accepted as statutorily homeless and that they are owed a duty under section 193(2) or 195(2) of the Housing Act 1996.

An applicant is likely to be statutorily homeless if they are

- ✓ Homeless or threatened with homelessness within 28 days **and**
- ✓ Eligible for housing assistance **and**
- ✓ Not intentionally homeless **and**
- ✓ In priority need.

Unfit Property

To qualify for this band based on unfit property a household must be assessed as living in insanitary or unsatisfactory housing where they have one or more "category 1" hazards (as defined and assessed under the Housing Act 2004 and the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (England) Regulations 2005); and where it is not feasible to satisfactorily resolve the problem within an acceptable time period.

Statutory Overcrowding

To qualify for this band based on statutory overcrowding a household must meet the current statutory (legal) standards on overcrowding, contained in the Housing Act 1985. An applicant will have had their circumstances assessed by the Council and will have received confirmation in writing that they have been accepted as statutorily overcrowded. An assessment for statutory overcrowding will consider the number of rooms and space in the rooms within the current property. (See Appendix 1 for the definition of statutory overcrowding).

Verification or evidence will be required to be awarded Priority Housing Need.

Band 2: Priority Housing Need

This band is for cases of priority housing need. The following reasons may mean that a customer's application will be put into this band.

Medical Reasons

To qualify for this band based on medical reasons an applicant or member of their family will have a chronic/degenerative illness or impairment (which may be physical, mental, learning or sensory) which could be eased or improved by rehousing.

As with the Urgent band, verification or evidence will be required from health professionals.

Welfare need

To qualify for this band based on a welfare need an applicant will have been assessed as having a social need. For example this could be someone leaving care or another vulnerable person who needs a secure base from which to build a stable life and who could not be expected to find their own accommodation.

To receive or give support

This is intended to reduce the need for formal care services and allow the care recipient to receive support from their immediate family to remain in their own home environment rather than moving into residential care. To qualify for this band an applicant will need to either give or receive full-time assistance or monitoring due to chronic health problems, physical disabilities, dementia, or terminal illness.

The criteria for this category are:-

The person requiring the care must have a critical support need, **and**
The need cannot be met by local carers or support networks without moving home, **and**

The need can be met by the care recipient, or care giver being moved nearer to their support network, **and**

The care giver will be eligible to receive carers allowance, **and**

The move must be to a different location which is beyond reasonable travelling distance, **and**

Where failure to meet that need will cause hardship to themselves or others.

To avoid hardship

To qualify for this band based on avoiding hardship an applicant will have been assessed as having a need to move to a particular locality. For example to take up education, employment or training or to access specialist medical treatment, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship.

Applicants at risk of homelessness

To qualify for this band based on the risk of homelessness applicants will meet all of the following criteria, confirmed by a home visit by Access to Housing staff:

- Living in with friends or family
- Have their own dependant child or children, or who would otherwise be in priority need if homeless – as defined under section 189 of the Housing Act 1996
- Are likely to be asked to leave their current home in the near future
- Have a local connection with Sunderland
- Have not intentionally worsened their circumstances.

Other Homeless

To qualify for this band, applicants will have been assessed by the Access to Housing team as homeless but as not meeting the criteria for homelessness in the Urgent Housing Need Band. The details of how this category is assessed are set out in Appendix 2.

To take up an employment opportunity

To qualify for this band based on an employment opportunity an applicant will have received an offer of key worker employment within the city. The applicant will need to move into Sunderland to take up the offer of work. Key workers are defined as those people who provide essential services necessary for the economic growth of Sunderland and those who fill skill shortages within the city. Acceptance into this band will be subject to the provision of appropriate written evidence/proof from the employer.

Moving on from Supported Accommodation

To qualify under this category an applicant will be living in supported accommodation, will have successfully engaged in and completed a programme of support and be ready to move on to independent living. An assessment will be completed and evidence will be required from the organisation that has provided the support.

Overcrowding

The Council expects its partner landlords to act as responsible landlords and to make best use of stock. Partner landlords may look to award their tenants priority in such circumstances. To qualify for this Band based on overcrowding an applicant must be a current social tenant and they will have been assessed in the following way:

- The assessment will be based on the number of bed spaces that are needed. Every person within a household needs one bed space - a double room counts as two bed spaces and a single as one bed space.
- If a room will fit a double bed and wardrobe, even if there is very little space left, this is classed as a double bedroom. A room that cannot physically accommodate this amount of furniture will be classed as a single room.
- We will only count people in households who live there on a permanent basis and have been there for more than six months.
- If an applicant is short by two or more bed spaces then they will be accepted for assistance in the Priority Band.
- Children of opposite gender over the age of 10 years will not be expected to share a bedroom.

We would expect that household members make the best use of space and rooms i.e. single parent in a single room.

Under occupancy

To qualify for this band based on under occupancy an applicant will be a current social landlord tenant and be living in a property which is too big. If there are two or more spare bedrooms then it is possible that an applicant could be placed in band two. However, an assessment will be carried out and acceptance into this band will depend upon the applicant's current property and area in which the property is located. Social Landlords will consider under occupancy for tenants as this will free up larger properties which will be allocated to someone else thus making best use of the available stock.

Please note: a child for the purpose of assessing overcrowding or under-occupancy is anyone under the age of 18 years.

Children in Upper Flats

To qualify for this band based on having children in an upper flat an applicant will be a current social tenant and will have child (ren) under the age of 16 years living in an upper flat of two or more storeys. This does not include maisonettes. In addition by moving an existing tenant to another more suitable property a vacancy will be created which will be allocated to someone else thus making best use of the available stock. For a woman who is pregnant, proof of pregnancy will be required using form MATB1 (this is received from a midwife or doctor after 21 weeks pregnancy).

Other landlords and partners in the Tyne and Wear local authority area may have their own policies in place. Contact them direct for further details.

Verification or evidence will be required to be awarded Priority Housing Need.

Band 3: Choice

This Band is for all applicants without an urgent or priority need to move who would like to move out of choice. Every application will initially be placed into this band pending further assessments of need.

Band 4: Renewal

This Band is the renewal band. An applicant will be assessed and admitted into this band if their housing is going to be imminently affected by Sunderland City Council or partner landlord renewal programme. Applicants will only be awarded this band status once a renewal schedule has been agreed.

Reviewing Band Status

An applicant's band status will be reviewed to assess whether circumstances have changed and to ensure an applicant is actively engaging in the process. The minimum frequencies within which reviews will be carried out are detailed below:

Band 1: Urgent Housing Need – Priority given for 4 weeks. A review will be carried out at the end of the 4 week period.

However if applicants within the Band 1 due to 'Homelessness' do not engage appropriately in bidding for properties they may be made a single final offer of a suitable property.

Applicants have a right to request a review of this decision (see Section 13).

For all others in the band 1 category: if they refuse 3 suitable offers, priority status for housing may be removed and the application will be placed into Band 3 only (Choice). Applicants have a right to request a review of the decision to refuse to extend band status.

Band 2: Priority Housing Need – Priority given for 3 months.

Applicants in the 'Other homelessness' category of Band 2 who do not engage appropriately in bidding for properties may be made a single final offer of a suitable property.

Applicants have a right to request a review of this decision (see Section 13).

For all others in Band 2: a review will be carried out at the end of the 3 month period. If the applicant refuses 3 offers which are deemed to be reasonable after reviewing suitability, priority status for housing may be removed and the application will be placed into Band 3 only (Choice). Applicants have a right to request a review of the decision to refuse to extend band status.

Band 3: Choice – Everybody is placed into this band. A review will be carried out annually.

Band 4: Renewal – Priority given for 4 weeks. A review will be carried out at the end of the 4 week period.

For applicants in Bands 1, 2 or 4 who have not engaged in the bidding process, the Scheme may introduce Automatic Bidding (see section 9) and offer the applicant extra support with the process.

Band Overview

Band 1 (applicants who have an immediate need to move)	Band 2 (applicants who have a priority housing need)	Band 3 (open to all applicants)	4 - Renewal (applicant living in renewal area)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants or a member of their household who are unable to cope in their present home due to medical reasons • Applicants who are experiencing severe harassment and have been assessed as being at risk if not re-housed • Applicants who are experiencing domestic abuse and have been assessed as being in immediate risk if not re-housed • Accepted homeless cases, where Sunderland City Council need to discharge their full statutory duty • Applicants living in a property which is unfit for occupation agreed by Sunderland City Council • Applicants who are statutorily overcrowded as assessed by the City Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants with a medical need which could be eased or improved by rehousing • Applicants who need to move for a welfare reason • Applicants assessed as needing to move to receive or give support • Applicants who need to move to avoid hardship • Applicants at risk of homelessness • Other homeless applicants who do not satisfy the Urgent Band criteria. • Applicants assessed as needing to move to take up Key Worker employment • Applicants moving on from supported accommodation. • Applicants assessed as overcrowded in social tenancy • Applicants assessed as under occupying the property in social tenancy • Applicants with children under 16 years who are living in an upper flat in social tenancy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All applicants without an urgent or priority need to move 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants who are currently living in a social landlord renewal area • Applicants who are currently living in a Sunderland City Council renewal area

Section 8: Property Advertising

Vacant properties are advertised openly and anyone who is registered can bid. Properties may be advertised in the following ways:

- On the Scheme website
- Displayed in Council Offices
- Displayed in partner landlords' local housing offices

The advertisements for properties will open at 00:01 on a Thursday morning and close at 23:59 on a Monday night. This may vary on weeks with a Bank Holiday.

The advertisement will include information on the property type and number of bedrooms, the current rent for the property, property labels (see below) and any special features. The advertisement will also detail which bands will be given preference.

Property labels

A property label will be attached to each property advert. The label gives information on the accommodation and the type of customer that would be best suited to the property. This takes into consideration factors including the type of property and the surrounding community. Information may include:

- The minimum and maximum number of people who could be accommodated in the property
- Any age restrictions for example, 60 years+ for a bungalow
- Any pet ownership restrictions
- Any adaptations (for example walk-in shower) which make the property suitable for someone with specific needs or requirements
- Any local lettings criteria.

Local Lettings

Some partner landlords have local lettings arrangements in place. Some examples of these are age restrictions on bungalows and a 35 and over age requirement for multi storey accommodation. The local lettings arrangements aim to introduce social balance whilst still addressing housing need.

Partner landlords use local lettings to:

- Help meet particular unmet needs within a locality
- Help regenerate areas
- Help to target the best use of properties in higher demand areas

- Help to promote properties which are in low demand and help promote the regeneration of an area through different management arrangements
- Encourage greater community cohesion and sustainability
- Respond to particular housing management issues where problems of anti-social behaviour, nuisance or crime occur where there may be an imbalance of customers from different age groups or family type within existing properties.
- Help achieve balanced communities when letting new developments.
- Allocate supported housing schemes for people with specific support needs.

Where a property is to be let under local lettings arrangements it will be clearly labelled on the advertisement.

Sunderland City Council has a local lettings policy in place in relation to Accommodation with Care and Support and some of these properties are owned by other housing providers (see Appendix 3).

Further details of Local Lettings Plans can be found on the Scheme website.

Minimum age for any offer of a property

A person cannot legally hold a tenancy until they are 18 years old. Therefore any tenancy granted by many social providers to a young person will be an equitable tenancy which means that an adult will need to sign the tenancy and agree to hold the tenancy for the young person until they reach 18 years. Applicants aged between 16 – 18 years will be offered a support package providing extra help and guidance to enable them to maintain a tenancy.

Property Banding

When a property is advertised, the advert will indicate the order of preference of the bands.

The number of properties prioritised to each band is determined by levels of need and demand on the housing register. This is monitored on a regular basis. Changes will be made as necessary to enable us to be responsive to local circumstances.

We will publish information in relation to the letting of properties on the Scheme website.

Section 9: Bidding

Bidding is the name for the way in which an applicant expresses an interest in an advertised property. The bidding system is led by the applicant.

An applicant can only bid for a property within the timescales indicated on the advert. Within each advert cycle an applicant can only make three bids.

Before making a bid an applicant should check that they meet any labels set out in the property advert (see Section 8).

How to bid

There are a variety of ways in which an applicant can bid for a property:

- On line www....etc

- By telephone on 5255000 or 0800 (this is available in a number of different languages).

- By text number xxxxxxxxxx

- At any of the local Council or partner landlords' offices

- Via the Support worker/Advocate

Automatic bidding

Automatic bidding is the name of the process by which the system will match properties to suitable applicants and place bids on behalf of an applicant.

Automatic bidding will only be used in the following circumstances:

- Where an applicant has been assessed and placed into the Urgent, Priority or Renewal bands and fails to engage in the bidding process, a review of their circumstances will be carried out and automatic bidding may be introduced.

- For vulnerable applicants who need extra support in the bidding process.

Applicants within Bands 1 (urgent) or 2 (priority), who have been made 3 offers of property deemed to be reasonable after reviewing suitability, may have their priority removed and be placed into Band 3 (Choice). However, those applicants within the Band 1 in the 'Homelessness' or Band 2 'Other homelessness' categories who do not engage appropriately in bidding for properties may be made a single final offer of a suitable property.

Applicants have a right to request a review of this decision (see Section 13).

Section 10: Listing and Offering a Property

Once the bidding cycle has closed a list of applicants who have bid for each property will be produced.

The table below shows how we will create each list to identify the successful applicant.

Band	Listed by:
1: Urgent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Matching the property label criteria• Date accepted into the Urgent band
2: Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Matching the property label criteria• Date accepted into the Priority band
3: Choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Matching the property label criteria• Date application was received
4: Renewal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Matching the property label criteria• Date accepted into the Renewal band• Programme phase

Property Viewing and Offer Checks

The viewing and offer checks will be carried out according to the relevant landlord's policies. The partner landlord will normally arrange a viewing with the successful applicant. This viewing does not constitute a formal offer of property. Such offer will not be made until certain checks have been carried out to confirm details and can include:

- Identity
- Current housing need
- Current circumstances
- Previous housing history
- Satisfactory property condition

A successful applicant will be expected to make a decision within 48 hours of a viewing. An applicant who is successful for more than one property within the same bidding cycle will also be expected to make a decision within 48 hours of each viewing. Future bidding will only be allowed when an applicant has confirmed that they do not wish to accept an offer, or the offer has been withdrawn by the partner landlord.

An offer could be withdrawn in the following circumstances:

- The applicant has provided false or misleading information.
- The property is required for exceptional housing management reasons.
- The outgoing tenant has withdrawn their notice of termination.

If a property has been formally advertised twice and no suitable applicants have been identified, then social landlords may take alternative action to let the property, for example by changing the labelling, rolling the advert over on a first come-first served basis, or by making an exceptional allocation.

Section 11: Exceptional Circumstances

All properties should be advertised unless a property needs to be used for Exceptional Circumstances.

Under exceptional circumstances it may be necessary for a partner landlord to act outside of the allocations scheme. This will be to address an unforeseen need or situation that cannot be resolved reasonably within the banding criteria. For example, a fire, flood or major incident. Where this occurs, records will be kept of why the allocation took place.

Section 12: Cancelled and Used Applications

Used Applications

An application is considered 'used' when an applicant:

- Accepts a tenancy from a social housing provider through a Tyne and Wear partner landlord
- Is assigned a tenancy through a Tyne and Wear partner landlord
- Is granted a succession of tenancy through a Tyne and Wear partner landlord
- Purchases or part-purchases their own property, for example right to buy, shared ownership or outright ownership through a Tyne and Wear partner landlord
- Has carried out a mutual exchange.

This means the application will no longer be included in the system. An applicant will have to register again if they wish to access the Scheme. An applicant can request a review of this decision (see Section 13).

Cancelled Applications

We will cancel an application in the following circumstances:-

- It is used
- At the applicant's request
- If an applicant does not respond to a review letter or other correspondence
- If an applicant moves and does not inform us of their new address
- If an applicant leaves the country and they are subsequently prevented from being registered because of immigration status
- If we find that an applicant has supplied false or incomplete information connected with their registration
- If it is a duplicate application.

This means the application will no longer be included in the system. An applicant can request a review of this decision (see Section 13).

Section 13: Reviewing Decisions

Applicants will be able to request a review against any decision relating to:-

Review reason	Who carries out review
1. Eligibility	The organisation who made the original decision i.e. City Council or partner landlord
2. Facts of the case	The organisation who made the original decision
3. Access to Bands	The organisation who made the original decision
4. Extension of band status	The organisation who made the original decision
5. Date of registration	The organisation who made the original decision
6. "used" or cancelled applications	The organisation who made the original decision
7. Reasonableness of offer	Partner landlord or the City Council in cases where it is a final offer for a priority given by the Council.
8. Suspension	Partner landlord
9. Exceptional allocation	Partner landlord monitored by the City Council
10. Homelessness	City Council

All reviews

Requests for a review must be made in writing **within 21 days** of the date of receiving a decision letter. In the review request letter an applicant should explain why they think the decision was wrong and provide any available evidence.

All reviews will be considered by principal officers who were not involved in the original decision. The officer will consider the review on the basis of the applicant's individual circumstances, the written submission and in accordance with the Scheme. Furthermore careful note will be taken of relevant legislation, Statutory Instruments and Code of Guidance. The officer will notify the applicant of the outcome of their decision within 28 days normally, or 56 days for homelessness reviews.

Possible Outcomes of a Review

Uphold the original decision – the applicant will be notified in writing and give reason supporting the review decision.

Reject the original decision – the decision letter will explain what actions will be carried out and the reasons for doing so.

Section 14: Information and Decision Making

Information

Applicants have a right to request general information which will enable them to assess:

- (i) How their application is likely to be treated under the Scheme (including, in particular, whether they are likely to be regarded as a member of a group of people who are to be given preference by being placed in Band 1 or Band 2); and
- (ii) Whether housing accommodation appropriate to their needs is likely to be made available to them and, if so, how long it is likely to be before such accommodation becomes available for allocation to them.

Applicants also have the right to request the Council to inform them of any decision about the facts of their case which is likely to be, or has been, taken into account in considering whether to allocate housing to them.

Decision Making

In accordance with the Allocation of Housing (Procedure) Regulations 1997, no elected member of the Council will at any stage be involved in the allocation of properties within the Scheme.

Section 15: Monitoring and Reviewing the Scheme

Publishing Lettings

We aim for our Scheme to be open and transparent. Results of all completed lettings will be published weekly and made available to customers. Details will include the following:

- Types of property let during the period
- Total number of bids received for each property advertised
- Band and waiting time of the successful applicant

Monitoring the Scheme

The Council will put robust monitoring arrangements into place to ensure that the objectives of the policy are met.

We will monitor personal information from the application form and the Scheme overall to ensure it is meeting our aims and objectives and to continuously improve our services. To do this, we will monitor the following:

- Housing management performance ie. Re-let times and refusals
- Support mechanisms
- Need and lettings outcomes
- Equality and diversity data
- Potential disadvantaged applicants
- Tenancy sustainment
- Bidding behaviour
- Inter authority or inter regional mobility
- Customer satisfaction
- The numbers, types, sizes and locations of properties in each band.

Reviewing the Scheme

We will provide monitoring reports at least annually to our customers, Council's Cabinet, relevant scrutiny committee and Executive Management Team. We will look to fundamentally review the Scheme every 3 years, as a minimum.

The Council will continue to review the appropriateness of the policy and respond to changes such as legislation, demand and supply and other strategic issues.

Section 16: Other Housing Options

Enhanced housing options

Sunderland City Council Access to Housing Team provides free, confidential and impartial advice for people in housing need. The team will work to try and assist customers to find alternative solutions in a more managed and sustainable way.

Other partner's housing options

As demand for properties is far greater than the number of properties available there may be a long wait for a socially-rented or affordable rented home. Unfortunately, not everyone will be able to be offered a socially-rented or affordable rented home that they would like so other partner landlords may be able to offer advice and assistance on other housing options, including:

- Market Rented Properties
- Intermediate Market Rented Properties
- Affordable Homeownership products.

Assignment and Succession

Social providers are legally required to give their tenants one right to assign their tenancy, or succeed to a tenancy where a tenant dies. Further details of these rights and the conditions attached can be found at social landlords offices.

Mutual Exchange

The Council takes part in the Tyne and Wear Sub-regional scheme for mutual exchanges (called 'HomeXchange'). This allows tenants to advertise their property via the HomeXchange website throughout Sunderland and the Tyne and Wear area.

Nominations to other social housing providers

The Council has nomination rights with a number of social housing providers operating in Sunderland. These providers offer a proportion of their vacant homes to the Council for nomination. This means that properties from such housing providers may be advertised through this Scheme even if the provider in question is not a partner landlord.

The receiving provider of the nomination will then make their own enquiries as to the suitability of the applicant by applying their own policies and procedures.

Extra Care and other accommodation with care and support

The term 'Accommodation with Care or Support' refers to housing specifically designed for people with a care and/or support need which enables them to live independently in their own home, with access to care or support tailored to meet their needs.

Due to the special nature of this type of accommodation, Extra Care and Supported Housing Schemes are let under a Local Lettings Policy or – by partner landlords – as an Exceptional Circumstances letting.

This does not include sheltered housing or accommodation used to prevent homelessness.

Appendix 3 provides further detail on accommodation with care or support.

Section 17: Service Standards

We will:

Register an application **within 10 working days** of receiving it once all information has been received

Support a customer to complete a housing registration form, where required

Advise the customer in which band their application has been placed

Send a personal reference number to use when expressing interest in advertised properties.

Appendix 1: Statutory Overcrowding Definition

Households who meet the current statutory standards on overcrowding – contained in the Housing Act 1985 – will be placed in Band 1 (Urgent).

There are two elements to assessing whether a household is statutorily overcrowded:

1. The **'room' standard** which requires that there should be enough rooms in each letting so that no male and female aged 10, or over, should have to sleep in the same room, unless they are living together as 'husband and wife'; and
2. The **'space' standard** which specifies the maximum number of people who can sleep in any room considered suitable for use as a sleeping room and the maximum number who may sleep in any individual letting when taking into account the number of sleeping rooms available to the occupants. In this second standard, children aged between one and ten count only as $\frac{1}{2}$ a person and babies under one year are not counted at all.

The table below shows the maximum number of people who can live in a house before the space standard is contravened.

Number of rooms	Number of persons
1	2
2	3
3	5
4	7 and a half
5	2 for each room

For the purposes of these standards, a room is considered to be "available as sleeping accommodation" if it is "of a type normally used in the locality either as a bedroom or a living room".

Appendix 2: Other Homelessness

The Band 2 (Priority) category of “Other Homeless” includes people (other than those who qualify for Band 1 homelessness) who:

- have been confirmed as homeless under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 by the Council’s Access to Housing Team (for example verified rough sleepers and others who do not have a home);
- are owed a local housing authority duty because they are homeless and have a priority need, whether or not they became homeless intentionally or because they are threatened with homelessness, have a priority need and did not become threatened with homelessness intentionally (sections 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2) of the 1996 Act or sections 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985);
- are unintentionally homeless with no priority need and a local housing authority has decided to exercise the power to provide accommodation for them (section 192(3) of the 1996 Act).

However, this priority may not be given – following an assessment of the issues in each individual case – to those who are homeless because of eviction due to serious unacceptable behaviour (by the applicant or a member of their household), including serious or persistent non-payment of rent, such that they are considered to be unsuitable to be a tenant of the authority and undeserving of any preference for the allocation of housing.

Appendix 3: Accommodation with Care or Support

The term 'Accommodation with Care or Support' refers to housing specifically designed for people with a care / support need which enables them to live independently in their own home, with access to care or support tailored to meet their needs. This includes accommodation for older people (such as extra care housing) people with a cognitive impairment; physical, sensory or learning disability, or with a significant mental health need. When a relevant property becomes vacant – it will be identified as 'Accommodation with Care / Support' and the process set out here will be followed.

Excluded accommodation types

Because the term Accommodation with Care or Support can be applied to a broad range of accommodation it is important to clarify that this term – as used in this document – does not refer to sheltered housing or accommodation used to help prevent homelessness. It is specifically for the types of accommodation set out above.

Accommodation with Care or Support allocated within a local policy

Section 167(2E) of the 1996 Housing Act enables a local authority to allocate particular accommodation to people of a particular description, whether or not they fall within the reasonable preference categories. This is the statutory basis for 'local lettings policies'. This element of the Allocations Scheme is a local lettings policy. Most of the clients referred for Accommodation with Care or Support would be likely to be due reasonable preference for allocations as they will tend to have medical and/or welfare needs. However, where accommodation includes care provision it is best to make decisions based first on people's care needs – while also taking account their housing need – on a case by case basis.

Housing Associations and Nominations

Accommodation with care or support may be owned and managed by housing providers with whom the Council may have nomination rights. A person nominated by the Council and accepted by the housing provider may therefore count as having been allocated accommodation under the Council's Housing Allocations Scheme. Allocation of rented or shared ownership accommodation with care or support will be as described in this section.

Accommodation with Care or Support – Nominations' Criteria

To be considered for a nomination to accommodation with care or support applicants, or a member of their household, must be in need of support or care at home.

In addition, to be considered for a nomination to extra care accommodation applicants must normally be aged 55 or over (with any partner aged 50 or over). Someone below this age with a long term disability may be considered.

Applicants – or their partner or dependant if relevant – for accommodation with care or support must also meet at least one of the following criteria, as assessed and identified by the Council's Adult Services section:

- A combination of housing, support and / or care needs, or are awaiting discharge from residential / nursing/ hospital or other care settings
- Require assistance with their daily living tasks and / or personal care.

Applicants must be considered to have a positive attitude towards retaining or regaining their independence.

Expressions of Interest

People interested in applying for Accommodation with Care or Support will need to complete a Self Assessment Form. These will be made available on the Internet, at Customer Contact Centres and through the Council's Adult Services.

Joint Assessments

A joint assessment will be carried out to assess the applicants:

- Care and support needs.
- Housing need.

Local Connection

Due to the Council having an open housing register an applicant does not need to have a local connection to apply for housing in the City. However for extra care accommodation an applicant must ordinarily be a resident of Sunderland. Applications will be considered from out of City applicants. This may be, if the applicant has existing connections with the City which may assist their current or future care needs.

Allocations' Panel

An Allocations' Panel (or panels) will consist of representatives from the council sections responsible for housing and for assessing and meeting the care and support needs of the clients covered by this part of the Housing Allocations Scheme. Where relevant a panel will include representatives from providers – for example housing associations that provide Extra Care accommodation. Panel meetings will discuss the allocation of Accommodation with Care.

CABINET – 5 OCTOBER 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET

<p>Title of Report: Contract Provision for Welfare Rights Advice.</p>	
<p>Author(s): Executive Director of Health, Housing and Adult Services</p>	
<p>Purpose of Report: The purpose of this report is to seek agreement to commence the procurement of the Welfare Rights Advice Service, and to seek approval to award the contract(s) to the successful independent sector providers.</p>	
<p>Description of Decision: To seek approval from Cabinet to commence the procurement process and award contracts to provide welfare rights advice / information for the period 2nd August 2012 - 31st March 2014 on the basis that the value of these contracts will be over £75,000 in total. The budget for the contracts is £192, 000.00 per annum.</p>	
<p>Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? Yes</p>	
<p>If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework</p>	
<p>Suggested reason(s) for Decision: The Cabinet's decision will ensure that Sunderland residents continue to access support with their benefits, debt, employment and housing issues, as part of the councils overall approach to advice / information being implemented through the ongoing Information, Advice & Guidance Review.</p>	
<p>Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To discontinue this provision entirely 2. To deliver the service in house <p>These alternative options are not recommended for reasons set out at paragraph 6.</p>	
<p>Is this a “Key Decision” as defined in the Constitution? Yes</p> <p>Is it included in the Forward Plan? Yes</p>	<p>Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Health and Wellbeing</p>

Report of the Executive Director of Health Housing & Adult Services

Contract Provision for Welfare Rights Advice

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek agreement to commence the procurement of the Welfare Rights Advice Service, and to seek approval to award the contract(s) to the successful independent sector providers.

2 Description of Decision

- 2.1 To seek approval from Cabinet to commence the procurement process and award contracts to provide welfare rights advice / information for the period 2nd August 2012 on the basis that the value of the contract(s) s will be worth over £75,000 in total. The budget for the contracts is £192, 000.00 per annum.

3 Introduction/Background

- 3.1 Welfare rights advice provision covers the provision of information, guidance, advice, and specialist advice across a spectrum of social welfare categories - welfare benefits, debt, employment and housing. This assistance has been recognised as playing a vital role in helping to reduce poverty, inequality and deprivation levels, and in combating the impact that these would otherwise have on local people and communities. Such support can also help people into and to retain employment, and improve their health and well being, especially mental health.

- 3.2 The delivery model developed over the past two years will ensure that support is offered at all levels and the work linked to the Information, Advice & Guidance (IAG) review will further strengthen this approach. The model will compliment the need for locally accessible advice – which offers active involvement from welfare rights advisers, and where people's issues or circumstances make self help and supported self help inappropriate.

There will also continue to be the need for specialist advice and casework support which will continue to be provided by the Council's Welfare Rights Service.

- 3.3 The Council currently has five advice contracts in place – each covering one local committee area.
- 3.4 In the two years to end March 2011 these contracts dealt with 33,000 individual enquiries, and they also provided additional support to residents during the initial economic downturn through one off Working Neighbourhood Fund (WNF) funding.

- 3.5 The current contracts have allowed for increased flexibility with regard to how each provider meets the contract specification. There has been emphasis on innovation and providers have been encouraged to provide telephony and self serve materials as well as to provide more traditional face to face services. Ongoing monitoring and support has been in place throughout.
- 3.6 The contracted providers have also contributed to the delivery of a number of actions within the Council's Strategic Advice Plan for Welfare Rights (2008-11). These include;
- Developing an active network of advice providers with the shared aim of improving access to their services; the network is called libra and has its own website and provider directory.
 - Developing more responsive local services. This includes making advice available from more locations, reduced waiting times, and the development of improved on line information.
 - Creating clearer pathways into and between the city's advice services - through agreed referral processes and public information.
 - Increasing access channels for people needing advice - including telephone advice and online provision.
- 3.7 However, the demand for welfare rights advice has continued to rise and is projected to rise further due to the impact of the ongoing welfare reform programme and personal debt levels. At the same time local and national public sector funding pressures present real challenges to how this demand on services can be managed.
- 3.8 These issues are being addressed by the Council through the development of an improved welfare rights advice and financial inclusion delivery model – that can better meet demand from within existing overall resources, and also result in customer confidence and independence.
- 3.9 This advice model is being developed across the city and has been the foundation of wider council Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) review.
- 3.10 Whilst this model is being developed city wide, responding to the need's of local communities is recognised as essential with provision coordinated and managed on an area basis with locally responsive operating standards. Extensive consultation has been undertaken to develop this approach. This has included sessions and briefings with
- Area VCS Networks
 - Area Committees
 - Advice providers
- Further work is planned with
- members of the Sunderland Compact
 - the Local Strategic Partnership
 - community e-champions

- 3.11 In addition, an extensive programme of consultation is almost complete with residents and service users to identify and understand customer needs, priorities, preferences, capabilities and expectations in relation to different situations and access channels.
- 3.12 The Council is committed to working effectively with all commissioned service providers and agencies it funds , and to implement this model it is intended that a toolkit will be developed to embed the principles of the Advice Model within the Commissioning, Procurement and Grant Provision Frameworks of the Council.
- 3.13 The Council is pivotal to leading and continually supporting this improvement journey in partnership with a wide range of service providers from both the private and community and voluntary sectors.

4 Current Position

- 4.1 The current contracts between the City Council and local providers are for a two year period, ending on 1 August 2012.
- 4.2 For this next round, and given the current financial situation, a period of 2 years is proposed, so as to minimise any potential risk to the council.

5 Reasons for the Decision

- 5.1 These contracts will help to support a number of the Council's new strategic and corporate improvement priorities (within the new Outcomes Framework). and will also help deliver outcomes against the council wide Health Inequalities Service Assessment Review (HISAR) and IAG reviews. Reasons for the decision also include;
 - 5.2.1 Ensuring that the proposed new Advice model works at all levels by maintaining a level of welfare rights service provision for the people unable to effectively access self serve or mediated access;
 - 5.2.2 Supporting residents to manage transitions linked to welfare reform, to manage their finances , and to provide additional support for those entering work;
 - 5.2.3 Supporting the Council's commitment to partnership approaches to service delivery, and the value of community/locality based advice provision;
 - 5.2.4 Encouraging local innovation in relation to service delivery and ensure services deliver according to the needs of the local areas.

6 Alternative Options

6.1 To discontinue this provision entirely.

6.1.1 As detailed above the provision currently assists significant numbers of people and demand for this type of advice is projected to rise further. The type of provision is a small but necessary part of the overall provision being developed within the new advice model, and accords with the council's core values and preferred outcomes with regard to People and Place.

6.2 To deliver the service in house.

6.2.1 This would be a retrograde and more costly step and is against the principles of the Sunderland Way of Working. There is no requirement or need (based on current contract outcomes) for the Council to be the deliverer as well as the commissioner of these services. Previous consultation exercises linked to the Councils Strategic Advice Review (2008) also showed that residents wanted choice around their advice provision and wanted local access for more basic enquiries.

6.2.2 The councils own Welfare Rights Service is continuing to establish itself as a specialist advice provider and will be providing the resources to take forward both mediated access and in reach activity , to enable the delivery of the new advice model.

7 Relevant Considerations / Consultations

7.1 Public sector funding for such services is under severe pressure due to competing priorities. In addition independent advice providers are finding it more difficult to secure money from other funding streams.

7.2 National funding for specialist advice services is also at risk.

7.2.1 The Department of Business, Innovation and Skills had stepped in to provide one year funding from April 2011, for the national face to face debt advice service provided primarily by Citizens Advice Bureaux. This replaced the funding provided through the now ended Financial Inclusion Fund. BIS announcements encourage other organisations to look at picking this up thereafter.

7.2.2 Similarly a Ministry of Justice consultation exercise has recently ended but includes proposals for removing benefits, debt and some housing issues from being within the scope of Legal Aid – and could come into effect from April 2012.

7.3 Additional funding for some advice services for some customer groups may become available through for example, the Big Lotteries Improving Financial Confidence Programme. This however is aimed at the development of preventative rather than crisis services, cannot be used to replace existing funding, and is not due to come on line until after the current contracts end.

7.4 All of these changes are being factored into the model and approach being implemented by the council.

8 Sustainability Impact Assessment

8.1 Advice Services support the objectives of the Sustainability Community Strategy through stimulating economic growth and assisting residents to get back into employment.

9 Background Papers

- Briefing-Level Explanations Final20110525 – covering the 4 different levels within the new Advice Model

