

SUNDERLAND NORTH AREA COMMITTEE

8TH NOVEMBER 2010

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

COMMUNITY ACTION IN SUNDERLAND NORTH – PROGRESS REVIEW Distribution of Food Parcels

1. Why has it come to Committee?

1.1 The report is presented to Committee as a result of a matter arising at the previous Committee meeting, where further information was requested on the distribution of food parcels in the North Area.

2. Background

2.1 At the July area committee during a discussion relating to the Child Poverty Strategy the Salvation Army Children's Centre based in Southwick stated that they had seen a significant increase in the distribution of emergency aid food parcels in comparison to the last year.

2.2 This led to the committee to understand that the increase pertained to only the North Area of the City. As a result of this information being put before the committee a group of officers looked at the data behind the Salvation Army's statement.

3. Current Position

3.1 Comparison of number of food parcels distributed in 2009 and 2010 for the period April to Sept

Year	Total	Break down	
		Families	Singles
2009	20	10	10
2010	32	13	19

3.1.1 The increase in relation to the child poverty strategy agenda was 3 Families from 2009 to 2010. The bigger increase in applications to the Salvation Army was single person's applications from 10 in 2009 to 19 in 2010 with a significant increase from 0 applications in 2009 to 11 in 2010 from the probation service on behalf of offenders of which only 2 were families.

3.1.2 In the main single applications came from agencies that were involved in tenancy set ups at a city centre location and therefore more likely to use the service as a stop gap whilst benefits are established.

3.2 Distribution Locality

3.2.1 When this data was examined in further detail regarding the location of the distribution within the North Area it was almost impossible to identify the numbers pertaining to the North Area. However records of which services referred in show the following:

Year	Total Families	Confirmed North location	Non Area	Unknown referral location
2009	10	2		8
2010	13	7		6

3.2.2 Distribution by Agency to Families

Agency	2009	2010	Location
Homeless team	0	2	Non North Area
Children's Services	6	2	unknown
Ashkirk unit	2	5	Non North Area
Welfare rights	1	2	unknown
Gentoo	1	0	unknown
Probation	0	2	unknown
Total	10	13	

3.2.3 Due to the way that the Salvation Army takes referrals there is no way at present of confirming as to whether the remaining family group recipients of the emergency food parcels were resident on the North Area of the City.

3.2.4 The assumption for the North Area committee is of those 8 unknown families locations in 2009 and the 6 unknown locations in 2010 not all likely to reside in the North Area of the City and therefore the actual figures which could be presented to the committee will be lower and as such the data used in July's committee is not as significant an increase as first presented.

3.3 Other issues

3.3.1 The committee should note that the data used in this analysis was collected in such a way that the following was unable to be obtained:

- Specific client addresses
- Reason for referral
- Whether clients were repeat referrals

3.3.2 As more agencies became aware of the service that the Salvation Army ran it began to see a rise in referrals but not all were specific to the North Area as first outlined at committee.

3.3.3 The needs of the clients are only assessed by the referring agency therefore the salvation army cannot validate each referral as having access to alternative provision.

4. Recommendations

4.1 The committee should note that within the context of the child poverty there does not appear to be a significant number of families from the North Area of the city applying for emergency food parcels.

4.2 Committee notes this may become a more increasing widespread issue as we face welfare and housing reform over the coming years.

4.3 A recommendation that a dataset of information relating to this issue be established on a city wide basis to understand the exact nature of the needs of those presenting as requiring this service.