

ENVIRONMENT AND ATTRACTIVE 12 SEPTEMBER 2011 CITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 4 (APRIL 2010 – MARCH 2011)

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1.0 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Environment and Attractive Scrutiny Committee with a performance update against the former national indicators relating to the period April to March 2011.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Performance against the national indicators, particularly those identified as priorities identified in the former Local Area Agreement (LAA) have been reported to Scrutiny Committee throughout 2010/11 as part of the quarterly performance monitoring arrangements. This report provides the end of year position.
- 2.2 In October 2010 the Government announced that from April 2011 there would no longer be a requirement to produce an LAA. In 2010/11 the Government also announced the demise of the National Indicator set and a move towards self regulation and improvement with an emphasis on reporting against local priorities.
- 2.3 As a consequence the performance framework of Sunderland City Council is being reviewed. A new framework is being developed that focuses on local priorities and the achievement of outcomes relevant to the people, place and economy of Sunderland. The new framework will form the basis of future performance reporting to scrutiny.

3.0 Performance

The following section contains a summary of performance across a number of priority areas including recycling, cleanliness standards, planning, transport, road safety, highways and accessibility. A full overview of performance can be found at appendix 1.

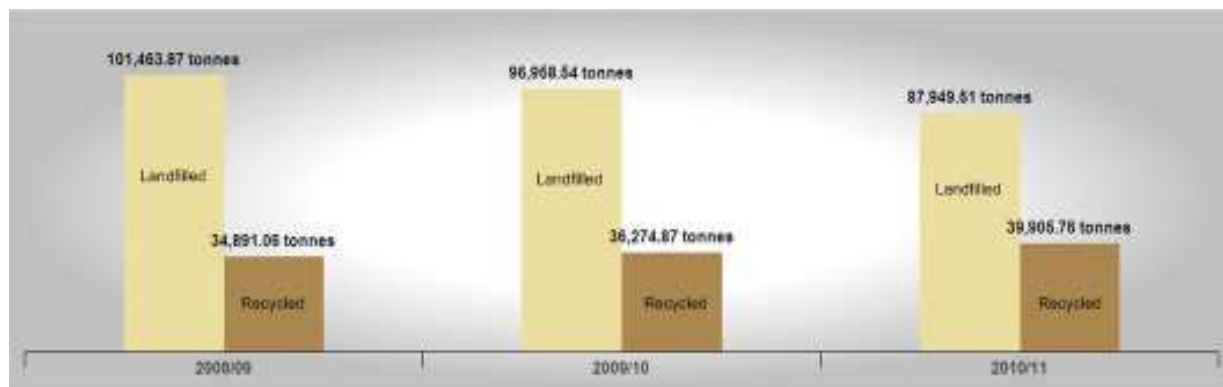
3.1 Recycling

During the 2010/11 financial year the amount of household waste recycled, composted, sent for anaerobic digestion and re-used (NI 192), was 39,906 tonnes (31.21%). Although this was lower than other authorities in Tyne and Wear, and just under the target of 40,914 tonnes (32%) this was a significant improvement compared to 27.23% or 36,275 tonnes (27.23%) in March 2010. This improvement was achieved mainly by the introduction of the blue bin kerbside collection service, which has been received extremely well by residents. Roll out of the service to all households across the City was completed part way through the year, so it is expected that there will be some further small improvement on year end recycling performance during 2011/12 with more waste collected for recycling after a full year of operation.

During the 2010/11 financial year, 65.2% or 93,187 tonnes of municipal waste including household waste, trade waste and street cleansing waste was sent to landfill (NI 193), which is a reduction of over 71.62% or 103,771 tonnes reported last year. The annual target, to landfill less than 68% of municipal waste was also achieved. The increase in performance was due to the success of the new blue bin recycling scheme, and other smaller scale recycling activities. Additionally less residual waste for landfill was generated during the year which may be due to wider public awareness about waste reduction and reduced economic activity.

During 2011/12 the Council signed a long term waste treatment contract with SITA UK. This will ensure that from 2014 nearly all waste that cannot be recycled is sent to an 'Energy from Waste' plant in Teesside and so avoiding reliance on landfill.

The diagram below shows the year on year improvements that have been achieved both in relation to recycling and use of landfill.



3.2 Cleanliness

A series of independent surveys were carried out during July, January and March against a random sample of land and highways across Sunderland in order to identify levels of cleanliness (NI195).

A combined average of all three surveys identified that:

- 3% were deemed to have unacceptable levels of litter, an increase over the 2% reported last year, although lower than our projected target of 8%.
- 7% were deemed to have unacceptable levels of detritus, an increase over the 5% reported last year and higher than our projected target of 6%.
- 1% was deemed to have unacceptable levels of graffiti, a reduction on last year and lower than our projected target.
- 0% was deemed to have unacceptable levels of fly-posting, no change over last year and lower than the projected target of 1%.

The winter period influenced a rise in the amount of litter and detritus found during the 2nd survey which was delayed until January. The service was unable to carry out litter collections and street sweeping due to snow from the end of November until January. The extreme conditions also lead to unusual quantities of grit and whinstone chippings being spread on footpaths and roads, therefore increasing the appearance of detritus.

It should be noted however that performance in terms of levels of both litter and detritus improved into the 3rd and final survey conducted during March 2011.

3.3 Planning (*Applications*)

The percentage of major applications processed within 13 weeks (NI 157a) fell from 100% in March 2010 to 81% in March 2011. The target of 80% was met.

The percentage of minor applications processed within 8 weeks (NI 157b) fell marginally from 97% in March 2010 to 95% in March 2011. The target of 93.5% was met.

The percentage of other applications processed within 8 weeks (NI 157c) fell marginally from 99% in March 2010 to 97% in March 2011. Performance was just marginally under the projected target of 98%.

There has been a decline in performance particularly over the last quarter of 2010/11 as a result of additional workload combined with a period of a reduced workforce. The increased workload has arisen as a result of an increase in pre submission advice enquiries. Historically Sunderland has been ranked as a top performing authority in terms of the time it takes to process major, minor and other planning applications and despite a recent decline in performance it is anticipated that Sunderland will still be performing above neighbouring authorities when regional results become available.

3.4 Transport

The indicators relating to local bus and light rail journeys and bus punctuality (NI177 and NI178) are measured for the ITA (Integrated Transport Authority) area and hence the figures given relate to the whole of Tyne and Wear.

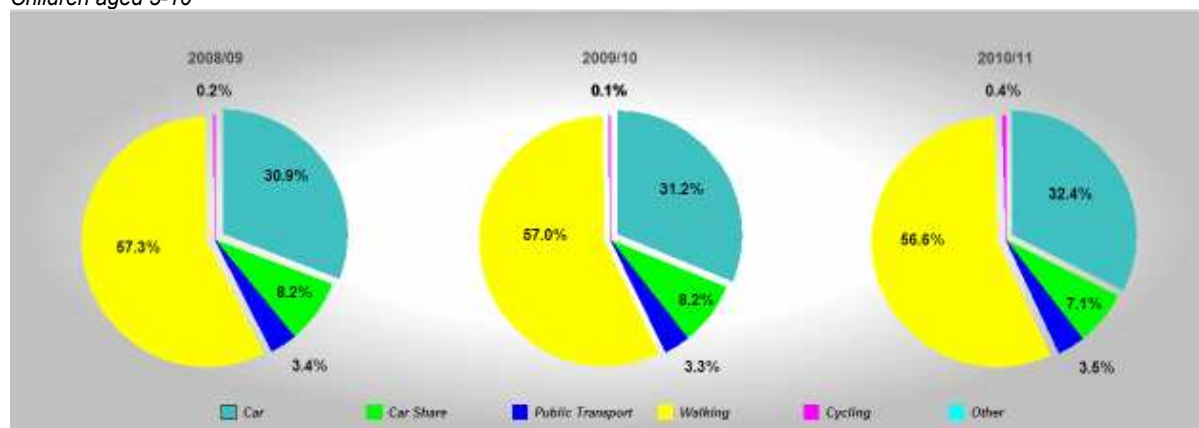
The total number of local bus and light rail passenger journeys originating in the authority area (NI 177) remains above the projected target of 169,644,000 although the numbers have fallen slightly from 180,775,000 during 2009/10 to 178,271,000 this year. The number of Metro passengers has been affected by reinvigoration works to tracks and stations whilst there has been a decline in bus passengers in relation to the number of older and disabled people using services, as well as a decline in adult fare paying passengers.

The timeliness of non-frequent bus services (less than 6 an hour) (NI 178i) has improved from 74.7% during 2009/10 to 76.2% during 2010/11. Bus punctuality for non-frequent services has improved year on year which reflects well on the work of partners in implementing bus priorities and other highway improvement measures. The 85% target is set nationally by the Traffic Commissioners and is considered an aspirational target as it does not reflect local circumstances.

The timeliness of frequent bus services (more than 6 per hour) (NI 178ii) has declined slightly from March 2010 to March 2011 but is within target for 2011. Nexus are continuing discussions with operators regarding improvements to punctuality.

The proportion of 5-10 year olds travelling to school by car has increased slightly year on year from 30.9% in 2008/9, to 31.2% in 2009/10 to 32.4% in 2010/11. This is considerably higher than the projected target to reduce the figure to 13%. The proportion sharing a lift and walking to school has decreased and is lower than the projected target to increase to 10% and 59% respectively.

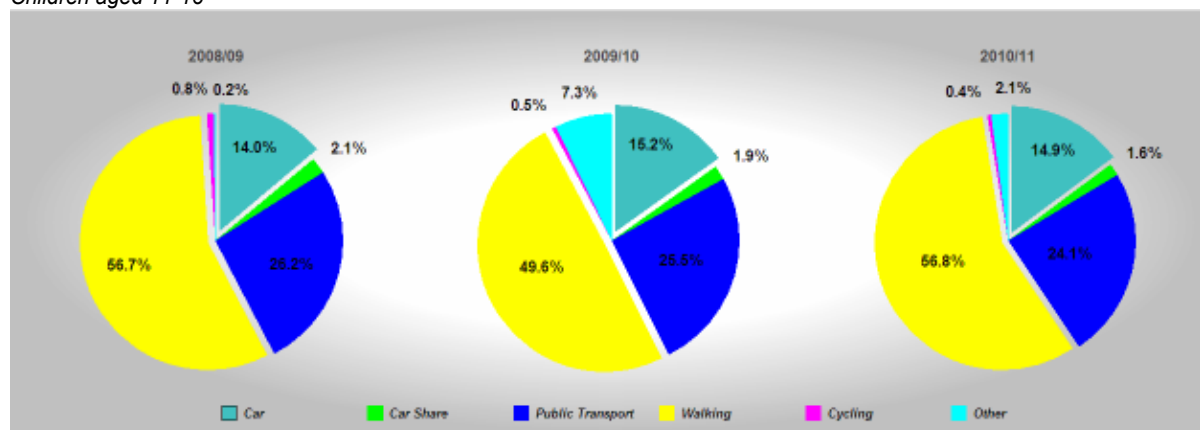
Children aged 5-10



Slight variations on 100% are due to rounding of figures.

Amongst children aged between 11 and 16, the proportion travelling to school by car has decreased, 2009/10 into 2010/11, although is still significantly higher than the projected target to reduce this figure down to 13%. The proportion sharing a lift and using public transport has decreased year on year, with the proportion sharing a lift also lower than the projected target of 10%. The proportion walking to school has increased from 2009/10 into 2010/11

Children aged 11-16



Slight variations on 100% are due to rounding of figures.

3.5 Road Safety

The number of people killed or injured on our roads continues to fall, with a 20% reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured 2009 into 2010 (based on the latest provisional figures). There has been a 45% reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured with the number of children killed or seriously injured at 16 based on the latest available data. There has been a marginal reduction of 3% in the number of slight injuries on our roads, 2009 into 2010.

3.6 Highways

The average number of days it takes to repair street light faults under local authority control (BV 215a) has increased slightly from 4.86 days in March 2010 to 5.42 days in March 2011, while the average number of days to repair street lights outside local authority control (BV 215b) has improved from 27.44 days to 21.29 days. A 20% increase in reported faults to the local authority and the severe winter weather conditions are seen as contributing factors to the slight decline in performance, however, for both measures the March 2011 target has been achieved. Trends relating to numbers of faults reported and repair times are being closely monitored to ensure performance is maintained during 2011/12.

The percentage of the authority's 'A' road network (NI168) and 'B' and 'C' road network (NI169) where maintenance should be considered have both worsened from 2% in March 2010 to 3% in March 2011. Although these figures still compare very well with other authorities, the condition of the highway needs to be kept under careful review. The main cause of the deterioration is likely to be the two successive severe winters. Continued targeted investment in the highways asset will be required to prevent further deterioration.

3.7 Accessibility to Services (*using public transport and other sustainable methods, such as walking or cycling*)

2010/11 targets for access to services and facilities (NI175a-h) have been met in relation to closest secondary school, closest primary school, closest GP surgery and specific employment sites other than the city centre. Performance for closest A&E is marginally under the target at 86.5% against a target of 88.20%.

4.0 Recommendation

- 4.1 That the committee considers the continued good progress made by the council and the Sunderland Partnership and those areas requiring further development to ensure that performance is actively managed.

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