

**18 March 2020****REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOODS****NEIGHBOURHOOD INVESTMENT PLANS****1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To advise West Area Committee of the next steps, subject to Cabinet Approval of the Article 10, area Neighbourhood Investment Plans.

**2. Introduction / Background**

- 2.1 The Council's constitution states that Area Committees will lead the delivery of local area plans (now known as Neighbourhood Investment Plans), which include the main priority themes for improvement of the area, following approval by the Cabinet. The five area Neighbourhood Investment Plans (North, Coalfield, East, West, Washington) are Article 10 plans.
- 2.2 The area Neighbourhood Investment Plans, subject to Cabinet approval on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020, will be directly aligned with the Area Committee priorities and delivery plans moving forward. The plans are also aligned to the City Plan. The plans focus on capital improvements and investments as well as service/neighbourhood solutions.
- 2.3 Residents, elected members and partners will be able to easily track progress via the Neighbourhood Investment Delivery Plan Activity Tracker, which will be available on the Council's website. This tracking facility will enable everyone to be aware of the action taken and developments / investments within their local neighbourhood.
- 2.4 Through the delivery of the Neighbourhood Investment Plans, alongside a bespoke and intensive communications campaign, Sunderland has a real opportunity to transform its Neighbourhoods, developing a joint pledge alongside communities and partners to regenerate and create more resilient communities and to influence and enable positive community behaviours. Area Committees will be at the heart of this transformation journey.

**3. Resident Engagement**

- 3.1 Understanding the views of residents was vital to inform the development of the Neighbourhood Investment Plans. In September 2019, Sunderland Council launched the Let's Talk Sunderland Engagement Strategy, demonstrating its commitment to strengthen, consistently, engagement with residents – the strategy has been adopted for all resident engagement undertaken by the Council moving forward. It was first used for the resident engagement required to develop the Neighbourhood Investment Plans.
- 3.2 The brand 'Let's Talk Sunderland' was used to promote the Neighbourhood Investment Plan consultation as widely as possible across the city, offering the opportunity for all residents to get involved and share their views. This is the first-time resident engagement of this magnitude has been arranged by the Council. The consultation was

undertaken alongside focused and themed consultation in relation to health, housing, young people, neighbourhood solutions, investment, crime and anti-social behaviour.

- 3.3 The detailed breakdown of the resident consultation undertaken at an area / neighbourhood level, supported by partners including the voluntary and community sector and elected members has directly informed the Neighbourhood Investment Plans.

#### **4. West Neighbourhood Investment Plan - Themes**

- 4.1 Subject to approval of the Neighbourhood Investment Plans by Cabinet on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020, the main themes for the West Neighbourhood Investment Plan are as follows, as requested by the residents from the area:

- Traffic, transport and infrastructure
  - Reduce potholes and improve drainage systems especially around shopping centres
  - Tackle inconsiderate parking and reduce speeding
- Support the development of a thriving city centre and riverside, local shopping centres and improved leisure offer
- Create safer neighbourhoods
  - Improve lighting in parks
  - Challenge housing issues around, empty houses, rogue landlords and tenants not getting vetted
  - Re-introduce a modern take of Neighbourhood Watch – not just reporting issues and listening to stats, but encourage community spirit and action i.e. Neighbourhood Spirit
- Invest in the voluntary and community sector
  - Invest in Voluntary Community Sector buildings
  - Deliver more communities activities and events that bring people together
  - Provide digital facilities in and for the community including more access to wi-fi
  - Prevent poverty – fuel, food, furniture, cloths, etc and increase aspirations
  - Contribute and support mental health and wellbeing opportunities
  - Support opportunities for residents to volunteer
- Improve the feel and look of neighbourhoods
  - Improve Parks and facilities in them
  - Improve play areas
  - Improve streets installing planters, shrub beds and plant more trees
  - Provide more benches and bins
  - Carry out Love where you live campaigns
  - Deep cleans to remove broken glass, graffiti, litter, dog fouling, and fly tipping
  - Increase enforcement
  - Increase recycling
- Improve Mental Health and Wellbeing
  - Support people who have multiple issues
  - Support people to maintain a healthy weight

- Support more events in the community- local markets, Barnes Park family fun day
- Improve Activities for young people
  - Provide more support for spaces for young people to feel safe

4.2 Delivery of the priorities and tracking achievement of outcomes, informing residents and partners, over the coming years, will be crucial to maintain the momentum secured through the resident engagement undertaken to develop the plans.

4.3 It will also be vital that the Council feeds back to residents at a neighbourhood level regarding the issues raised which the Council may not be able to fully rectify through the delivery of the plans, using lack of parking places in residential areas, by way of an example. A separate piece of work will be undertaken alongside the relevant Council or partner service to understand the cause of issues and where the Neighbourhood Investments Plans are able to assist.

## **5. Neighbourhood Investment – Detailed Delivery Plans and Activity Tracker**

5.1 Following Cabinet approval in March 2020, Neighbourhood Investment Delivery Plans will be finalised. The delivery plans will include the following and will be presented at June 2020 Area Committee:

- Investments (capital & revenue) to address issues raised through resident consultation
- Service solutions to address issues raised through resident consultation
- Large-scale investments including leisure and housing
- External funding opportunities
- Cultural services and activities
- Highways Infrastructure
- Environmental Services and low carbon commitments
- Community offer and capacity
- Health and Wellbeing
- Digital Neighbourhoods
- Jobs and skills growth
- Financial wellbeing

5.2 Residents clearly stated during the Let's Talk consultation that they wanted to know more about what the Council was doing within neighbourhoods on a day to day basis. The Neighbourhood Investment Delivery Plans must therefore also be available to view via the Council's website. Residents will be able to track delivery of priorities as well as investment within the neighbourhoods from across Council services. This tracking facility will not only keep residents informed but also enable them to see where they could also get involved to support community efforts or projects.

## **6. Neighbourhood Pledge**

6.1 To enable delivery of the Neighbourhood Investment Plans, the Council must continue to engage with residents and partners to work together. Only through a change in behaviour and joint commitment, can the plans be delivered, particularly in relation to maintaining a clean, healthy and safe city.

6.2 The residents of Sunderland must play their part – delivering the outcomes of the Neighbourhood Investment plans will only be possible if residents support delivery.

Therefore, an intensive communications campaign will support the launch and delivery of the detailed delivery plans, as we further galvanise a commitment to a Neighbourhood Pledge with all residents.

## **8. Financial Implications – Neighbourhood Renewal**

- 7.1 Financial provision for the delivery of the West Neighbourhood Investment Plan is included within the Council's budget for 2021/2022 and the Medium-Term Financial Plan. Provision was made for Neighbourhood Renewal investment to commence in 2019/2020, however this was reprofiled to commence spend from 2020 onwards, as significant resident engagement activity was required prior to investment being agreed.
- 7.2 Area Committees each have an allocation of Neighbourhood Funding per annum, which can be utilised for both capital and revenue projects. All priorities and projects delivered by the Area Committees will directly link with delivery of the Neighbourhood Investment Plans, as the plans are Article 10 and informed by residents at a Neighbourhood Level.

## **8. Recommendations**

- 8.1 To note the West Neighbourhood Investment Plan themes, subject to approval at Cabinet on 24 March 2020.
- 8.2 Agree to support delivery of the priorities within West Neighbourhood Investment Delivery Plan, which will be presented to People / Place Boards prior to June 2020 Area Committee.