

Coalfield Area Committee

14 April 2010

Report of the Chief Executive

Coalfield Annual Report 2009/10

It was agreed in June 2009 that the April 2010 Area Committee would be dedicated to reflect on the work delivered, via the Local Area Plans, during 2009-10. To support this process the annual report has been produced focusing on the following areas:-

- The Area
- Safe
- Attractive and Inclusive
- Learning
- Healthy
- Prosperous
- Meetings and Governance
- Finance

Under the thematic headings a summary is provided outlining the achievements delivered and influenced by Area Committee, using practical examples.

The Area

The Coalfield area comprises the four electoral wards of Shiney Row, Houghton, Copt Hill and Hetton. There are 12 Councillors who represent the Coalfield area of Sunderland.

The Coalfield has its roots deep in the mining industry, with coal being mined in the area since Roman times. Coal continued to be the lifeblood of the area until the 1970s and 80s, with 4,645 jobs lost between 1971 and 1999, the majority disappearing in the 1980s. The area is rich in heritage containing Penshaw Monument, the City's most prominent landmark, and the prehistoric burial site of Copt Hill.

The area contains a number of distinct communities based mainly on former pit villages. These include 23 villages such as Easington Lane, Fencehouses, Hetton, Houghton, Newbottle, Philadelphia, New Herrington, Penshaw and Shiney Row. The area is the most rural part of the City, and includes Herrington and Hetton Downs Country Parks as well as nature reserves including Hetton Bogs and Rainton Meadows. There are 19,500 homes housing a population of around 47,000 (16.7% of the City's population). The area has a predominantly white ethnic group. Older people make up 20.2% of the population and children under 16 make up 18.8%

The Coalfield area is unique in the fact it contains the only Town Council in the City. Hetton Town Council and the City Council have a charter which sets out how they work together for the benefit of local people in the communities of Easington Lane, Moorsley, East Rainton, Eppleton and Hetton le Hole.

There are a number of local neighbourhoods in the Coalfield Area. You can find out more about what services are available in the area, such as the nearest library to your home, by visiting www.sunderland.gov.uk and using Sunderland directory.

1. Coalfield: Safe Area 2009-2010

Key statistics

Ward	All Crimes (per 1,000 pop)	% change from previous year	Burglary Dwelling	Burglary Non-dwelling	Theft of Vehicles	Theft from Vehicles	Criminal Damage	Drug Offences
Copt Hill Ward	65.5	-9.29	12.3	5.9	1.7	5.7	18.5	3.1
Hetton Ward	71.4	-16.12	12.3	4.4	2.3	4.3	23.8	5.8
Houghton Ward	62.3	-4.12	5.3	5.4	1.0	4.8	16.5	3.6
Shiney Row Ward	53.9	3.77	6.9	4.0	2.7	2.9	20.7	1.9
Sunderland	82.5	-3.30	8.9	5.0	2.5	5.8	22.0	4.2

The rates for each ward have been compared with the City average and highlighted as Green – better than the City, Amber – equivalent to the City, and Red, worse than the City. The overall crime rate for each of the four wards is considerably lower than the City average. Although Hetton ward has the highest rate in the Coalfield area, there has been a reduction of 16.12% from the previous year. Shiney Row ward has shown a slight increase from the previous year, however still has the lowest crime rate in the Coalfield and one of the lowest in the City, with only five wards having a lower rate.

What we set out to do

The overall objectives identified were to reduce anti-social behaviour, including tighter control on sale and access to alcohol and to provide more police or community support officers (CSOs) on the street. At the July 2009 meeting the Area Committee discussed five specific priorities and allocated actions against them. Progress is monitored on all actions and reported at each meeting of the Committee.

You Said

Raise the profile and presence of police on the streets.

We Did

We promoted and encouraged attendance at the PACT (Police and Communities Together) meetings. The number of officers in the Neighbourhood Police teams has increased and there are named sergeants, PCs and CSOs for each area. Each Neighbourhood Team has first hand knowledge of the issues and challenges in their local area. The police have a base in a number of community venues making them more accessible and responsive to the local community.

You Said

Improve intelligence sharing between partners, officers and councillors.

We Did

The Local Multi Area Problem Solving (LMAPS) group provides the forum for information sharing and problem solving regarding 'safe' issues. Issues from Area Committee are represented at the LMAPS meetings by a nominated elected member. Joint meetings of the Neighbourhood Policing Team and Area Committee Members have been set up to further assist with information sharing and intelligence gathering

You Said

Target hotspots around illegal sales of alcohol and underage drinking.

We Did

A Youth Alcohol Operation by the Police in September 2009 to target underage drinking resulted in a 21.7% decrease in Anti Social Behaviour from the previous year

You Said

Use local intelligence to redeploy CCTV cameras to areas of need.

We Did

The rapid deployment of the 3G CCTV cameras has resulted in a number of successes, such as a number arrests and prevention of further disorder in Easington Lane High Street. The cameras have helped achieve a reduction in Anti Social Behaviour incidents and provided reassurance to residents. The Area Committee have requested a review of the Citywide 3G CCTV system to ensure it has the capacity to meet the needs of all areas.

You Said

Ensure that young people in the Coalfield area have equity of access to youth provision.

We Did

With the support and involvement of Coalfield Area Committee members, the commissioning procedure for allocating youth provider contracts has been reviewed. Now each ward has a guarantee of a minimum of three sessions of youth provision each week. An additional £300,000 has been secured from mainstream budgets to deliver mobile youth villages on Friday or Saturday evening in each area of the City. An operational group, consisting of agencies and elected members, oversees the planning of the mobile villages.

Other Achievements Delivered

- Area Committee provided £13,500 of SIB funding to deliver the Phoenix Project which is delivered by the Fire & Rescue Service and aimed at young offenders or young people at risk of offending
- A Community Payback Scheme has been developed with the Youth Offending Service. Area Committee will identify locations for clean up programmes.

2. Coalfield: Attractive & Inclusive Area 2009-2010

Key Statistics

Ward	Average House Price	% of residents who feel the Council is making the area cleaner and greener	% of residents satisfied with public transport	% of residents satisfied with how well land is kept clear of litter and refuse	Empty Properties (private sector)	Empty Properties (social rented sector)
Copt Hill Ward	£87,554				210	134
Hetton Ward	£86,143				159	27
Houghton Ward	£102,724				148	32
Shiney Row Ward	£139,888				178	19
Coalfield		70	59	57		
Sunderland	£116,866	66	66	54		

What we set out to do

The key aims of the Attractive and Inclusive priority areas were to make the streets and environment more attractive, address issues around accessibility of public transport and to improve housing and residential areas. At the Area Committee in September 2009, eight specific priorities were discussed and an action plan was developed. Community engagement and awareness raising of the work of the Committee was also an area for development.

You Said

Make services more relevant to the local area. Where possible tailor services to address the needs of the community.

We Did

The “Responsive Local Services” Project has been developed. The first phase of the project will focus on tailoring five key service areas relating to crime and grime. Area Committees will be involved in identifying the level of services required for graffiti removal, refuse collection, litter, dog fouling and grass cutting services.

You Said

In addition to essential highways maintenance, carry out work to make our streets and estates more attractive.

We Did

SIB funding of over £44,000 for non essential Street Scene improvements has been provided to make the area more visually attractive. Together with £49,670 of highways mainstream budget this will enable physical improvements to be made to areas which were not deemed as priority. Road markings, pedestrian guardrails, carriageway patching and street name plates are included in the programme of works, which will be completed by June 2010.

You Said

Provide us with more information regarding empty properties and the powers of the Local Authority over private landlords. Explore the feasibility of increasing the number of Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) officers and private sector officers in relation to housing and empty homes.

We Did

The Housing Team presented information to Area Committee regarding legislative powers. The Empty Property Strategy is currently being reviewed with the aim of introducing area based action plans. Funds to support this work have been increased as part of the 2010/11 budget settlement.

You Said

Address issues of lack of accessible public transport in some areas.

We Did

A representative from Nexus is now a key partner at Committee and attends each meeting to ensure transport issues form part of thematic discussions. Nexus recently consulted with the Area Committee regarding the secured services network in the area. This consultation will now be extended to local residents using venues and methods suggested by Area Committee.

You Said

Develop a communications strategy for the area to include issues relevant to members, partners and residents in the Coalfield area.

We Did

Named Communication Link Officers from Corporate Communications attend Area Committee and help identify key news stories and information at an Area and ward level. Items from meetings have been fed into the Coalfield Area Newsletter currently being piloted. The newsletters also promote the work of Area Committees and encourage public involvement.

Other Achievements Delivered

- SIB funding of £3,134 for restoration work at Kepier Hall has been used as match funding to lever in an additional £28,197 from Biffaward.
- SIP funding has provided street lighting schemes in Shiney Row and New Herrington.
- In conjunction with the Friends of Rectory Park, an ambitious masterplan has been drawn up for Rectory Park. Area Committee have provided £50,000 to deliver Phase 1 of the scheme which will be used to secure additional funding to deliver further phases.
- Area Committee has allocated £30,000 towards a £48,000 improvement scheme for Gilpin Wood. This is as a result of numerous requests from local residents, to their local ward councillors, and users of the popular walking route.
- SIP funding has enabled improvements to the road surface around Shiney Row Primary School, enabling easier access for pupils, parents and teachers.
- In a joint programme with Washington Area Committee, an accessible River Wear Trail walking route will be developed. Coalfield Area Committee have provided £19,500 in order for the work to be carried out.
- £12,000 has been spent on the Eco Schools project. The project is working with St Michael's, Dubmire, Hetton Lyons, Hetton and Houghton Kepier schools to work towards Green Flag status, the national award for parks and green spaces.

3. Coalfield: Learning Area 2009-2010

Key statistics

Ward	Percentage of 11 year olds achieving Level 4+ in both English and Maths			Percentage of 16 year olds achieving 5 or more GCSEs or equivalent at grades A*-C, including English and maths		
	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009
Copt Hill Ward	76	67	62	40	51	52
Hetton Ward	73	73	75	37	45	47
Houghton Ward	74	70	62	45	33	49
Shiney Row Ward	71	81	71	44	39	40
Sunderland	70	72	70	39	43	45

The attainment levels of 11 year olds has decreased substantially in Copt Hill and Houghton Wards over the past two years. However, the attainment levels of 16 year olds has increased in three of the four wards over the past two years.

What we set out to do

The key objective identified was to provide better support for children and young people, focusing on raising aspirations, providing non academic support and youth provision. At the November 2009 meeting, Area Committee discussed a number of specific actions, including providing family and adult learning, which are being taken forward by the relevant lead officers. Progress is being monitored on all actions.

You Said

Develop youth provision to meet local need.

We Did

Members of the Committee took part in the development of ward based contracts for youth provision. The new contracts will be implemented from April 2010 and will be more needs led. The XL Youth Village was delivered at Easington Lane Flatts from January 2010.

You Said

Review anti-bullying provision in schools.

We Did

An anti-bullying strategy group has now been established to look at provision, policies in school and initiatives across the Area. A pilot programme will be developed based on information gathered.

You Said

Adult learning is important to the area. We need provision which is accessible and relevant to local residents.

We Did

A review of Family Adult and Community Learning (FACL) was requested to explore new ways of identifying and appointing providers of family learning to meet the needs of local communities. Procurement systems are now being reviewed to ensure the provision meets local demand

You Said

Review apprenticeship opportunities.

We Did

The 14-19 Partnership are undertaking a review of the current approach and exploring the role of the City Council to increase opportunities. Feedback will be given via the Learning representative

Other Achievements Delivered

- A contribution of £25,000 SIB funding has been approved towards a £50,000 project to create a workshop/classroom on the site of Monument View children's home at Penshaw. The new facility will allow a range of maintenance related NVQs to be developed and delivered on site.
- Funding of £11,543 was granted to the Community Leaders of the Future project which will work with Houghton Kepier School to develop employability skills, work readiness and entrepreneurship through volunteering opportunities. The project will work with 30 young people who will undertake a locally based volunteering programme over a two year period.
- As requested by Area Committee, cross boundary working with Durham County Council is in place via the Headways 6th Form and related work. Further opportunities for joint working is being explored by the Learning Partnership.

4. Coalfield: Healthy Area 2009-2010

Key statistics

Ward	Residents claiming incapacity benefits	Life expectancy	Mortality rates from circulatory disease	Mortality rates from cancer	% of residents smoking	NHS Stop Smoking service users successfully quitting at 4 weeks	Residents self reporting obesity BMI 30+
Copt Hill Ward	11.3	76	120.89	99.9	27	53	15-18
Hetton Ward	15.9	76.7	107.76	160.22	27	56	11-15
Houghton Ward	11	76.5	126.7	143.69	23	51	15-18
Shiney Row Ward	11	75.7	122.73	148.31	23	50	15-18
Sunderland	10.9%	76.4 years	108 per 100,000 population	136.15 per 100,000 population	25%	42%	18%

What we set out to do

The key focus for the Healthy theme was to provide better support for older people and make it easier for them to access health services. Easier access to GPs, hospitals and sporting/exercise facilities were among the objectives identified by Committee.

You Said

Health services need to be accessible to meet the needs of patients. More information is required, in terms of opening hours and availability of public transport.

We Did

We provided Area Committee with information on the extended opening times of GP surgeries in the Coalfield Area. We gathered information on times and routes of local bus services and invited Nexus to be part of the Area Committee. Consultation has taken place regarding future provision of commercial and secured bus services.

You Said

We need more accessible exercise and wellness opportunities.

We Did

The Sunderland Active Bus is a mobile exercise provision available to those areas which are not served by wellness or fitness centres. The Active bus has provided the service in five areas across the Coalfield and Area Committee has been asked to suggest other venues.

You Said

We need more detailed and meaningful information to ensure that resources are being directed to the right services/neighbourhoods.

We Did

A nominated Health representative from the Healthy Cities Partnership is now part of the Area Committee core partnership and has provided some suggestions of where there were needs or gaps in provision. A detailed report will be presented to Area Committee in the new municipal year to ensure best use of resources.

Other Achievements Delivered

- A contribution of £12,000 (SIB) has been made to enhance a new £93,000 play development at Easington Lane Flatts.

5. Coalfield: Prosperous Area 2009-2010

Key statistics

Ward	% claiming out of work benefits	% claiming incapacity benefits	Unemployment rate	% of children living in poverty
Copt Hill Ward	18.54	11.51	6.6	26.1
Hetton Ward	24.12	15.88	7.8	30.6
Houghton Ward	17.44	10.85	6.4	20.1
Shiney Row Ward	19.35	11.47	6.6	20.3
Sunderland	19.4	10.9	8.4	26.5

What we set out to do

The main objective within the prosperous theme was around educational provision for adults to raise skills and aspirations and improve employment opportunities. Support for local business in order to increase employment opportunities was also identified as a priority within the area, along with improvements to local shopping/town centres.

You Said

We need to provide relevant community learning opportunities for adults to improve their skills and employment opportunities.

We Did

A review of locally based adult learning is being undertaken via the Learning theme. The Economic Prosperity Group representative will also escalate the issue via the Prosperous theme.

You Said

We need more apprenticeships to give young people an opportunity in the labour market.

We Did

A review is being undertaken by the Sunderland Learning Partnership and the Economic Prosperity Group.

You Said

We need a more detailed action plan and to review our priorities to focus on areas where the Area Committee can make a difference.

We Did

The Economic Prosperity representative has provided more detailed employment related data and an analysis of what support is already in place. This information will be presented to Area Committee at the work planning meeting in June 2010 to inform the reviewed priorities.

Other Achievements Delivered

- Funding was provided to appoint experienced consultants to carry out a feasibility study for New Herrington club in order to develop a business plan that would secure a focus for the future use of the facility, including potential income generation.
- Approved funding to appoint a consultant to review the provision at Herrington Burn YMCA and develop a business plan, which will enable the organisation to provide more effective use of their resources by developing a sustainable trading arm for future developments.

- The Hetton Festival Organising Committee has been awarded £6,000 as a contribution to the 2010 Hetton Town Festival which will take place in July 2010. The event provides a week of activities and events for local people to participate and volunteer in; promoting the area and engaging key partners such as Gentoo, Job Linkage and Age Concern.

6. Area Committee meetings and Governance

Membership

The meetings are chaired by Councillor John Scott and Councillor David Tate is the Vice Chair.

Each Area Committee has a Sunderland City Council Executive Director as its Area Lead Executive (ALE). The ALE reinforces the strategic importance of the area dimension to the Council's policy and planning framework, and in particular will reinforce the importance the Council places on enhancing community governance, aligning resources and activity and improving public service delivery at a local level. The ALE for the Coalfield Area is Dr Helen Paterson (Director of Children's Services).

There are named representatives from each of the Local Strategic Partnership Delivery Boards. This is to ensure a consistent, two way flow of information between Citywide and Area based working under each of the five thematic areas.

Partner organisations represented at the Coalfield Area Committee are:

Northumbria Police
Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue Service
Gentoo
Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust
Nexus
Hetton Town Council
City of Sunderland College

A Coalfield Area Network has been established to represent the Voluntary and Community Sector in area working. Three nominated representatives from the Network attend Area Committee.

There are a number of nominated officers from Council Directorates who attend meetings to give input and carry out actions relevant to their own area of work within the Council and act as a link between Area Committee and their Directorate.

Meetings

The Committee met six times during 2009-10, this being the seventh. Attendance levels of elected members have been consistently high throughout the year with an average of 10 out of 12 members attending each meeting. Officer attendance has fluctuated depending on the agenda, partner attendance has increased steadily throughout the year from three at the June 2009 meeting, to nine at the March 2010 meeting. Attendance from the public has been poor. However, three members of the public attended the March 2010 meeting.

Area Committee now has a standard agenda for each meeting to ensure that only issues which are of importance to the Coalfield area come forward for discussion.

- Questions to Area Committee have been introduced at the beginning of meetings. There have been no Questions to Area Committee at the Coalfield meetings. The process is being reviewed by Democratic Services.

- At each of the usual business meetings, one of the five strategic themes has been the main agenda item for discussion and action. This agenda item has therefore been given priority and more time allocated to it.
- A thematic feedback report is presented to give updates on themes previously discussed. Performance updates are reported during this part of the meeting. However, this has been an area of weakness and work is ongoing with the Performance Improvement Team to introduce a more meaningful performance framework in the new municipal year.
- Financial reports include applications for Strategic Initiative Budget (SIB), Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) and Community Chest funding. Area Committee receives a summary of each project with a recommendation whether to approve, defer or reject the application. Extensive consultation is carried out outside of Area Committee in order to inform recommendations. This has reduced time taken to discuss this item at meetings.
- Consultation items, of relevance and interest to the area, are presented to gain feedback and information from a local perspective. There have been nine items for consultation, allowing the opportunity for the Committee to shape services.
- Information only items are not formally presented and do not form part of discussions.

Standards for Area Committees have been developed and a set of guidelines are available for those presenting reports or carrying out consultation. As a result there are fewer pages and reports are tailored to reflect information at an area level. The average numbers of committee papers this year was 48, compared with 113 for last year.

The average duration of Area Committee meetings during the last year is 2 hours 37 minutes, with the longest meeting lasting 3 hours 14 minutes. Although the time management of agenda items has improved there is still a need to be more focused and reduce the amount of issues discussed at each meeting.

SIB, Community Chest and SIP Governance and application processes have been revised to ensure funding applications are specific to the area and meet priorities identified by Area Committee.

Building the Infrastructure of Meetings

An Area Committee Handbook has been developed to outline the aims and objectives of the Committee, and also individual roles and responsibilities. The Handbook will be published in June 2010.

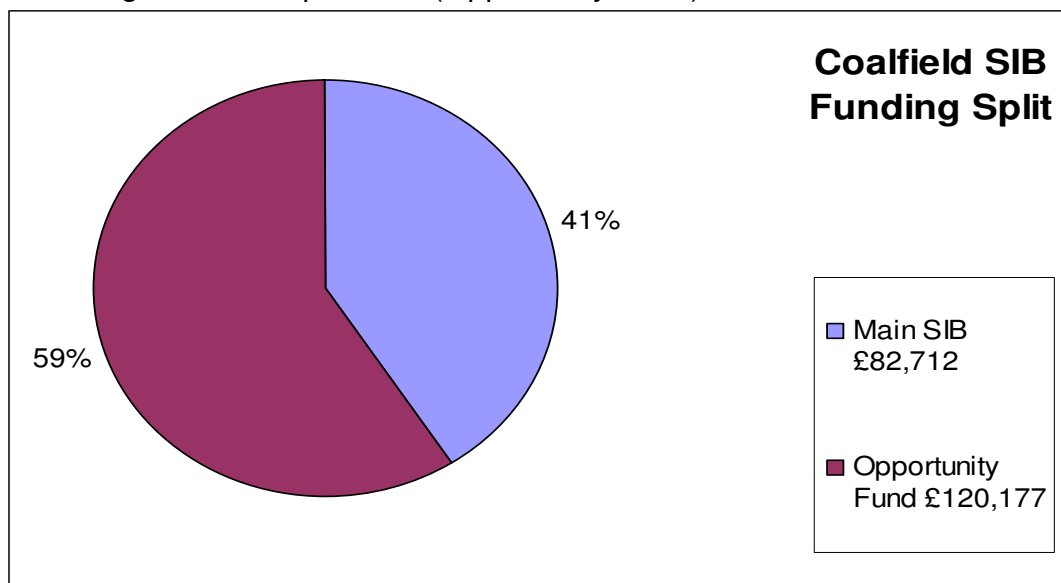
The 'Councillor Call for Action' mechanism came into force on 1 April 2009 namely through the Police and Justice Act 2006 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. Such provisions provide Members with the opportunity to ask for discussions on issues where local problems have arisen and where other methods of resolution have been exhausted. At the same time work was also being undertaken to develop the Area Committees links with both Scrutiny Committees and the Sunderland Partnership, one of which was the ability to signpost and escalate local issues to the most appropriate body for resolution where appropriate as referred to in the current Area Review process. On a practical level a 'referral and criteria' mechanism will be considered by Cabinet for implementation in the new municipal year. This will enable escalation / re-direction of issues of local concern either raised by an Elected Member/Committee, member of the public or external partner to the appropriate body namely the Area Committees, the City Council's Scrutiny and Sunderland Partnership

In addition to the support of the ALE, an area team has been established to support the work of the Area Committee. The Area Officer, Community Co-ordinator, Communications Officer, Diversity & Inclusion Officer and Democratic Services Officer work together as an area team to ensure the Coalfield area has dedicated support to achieve their objectives.

7. Finance

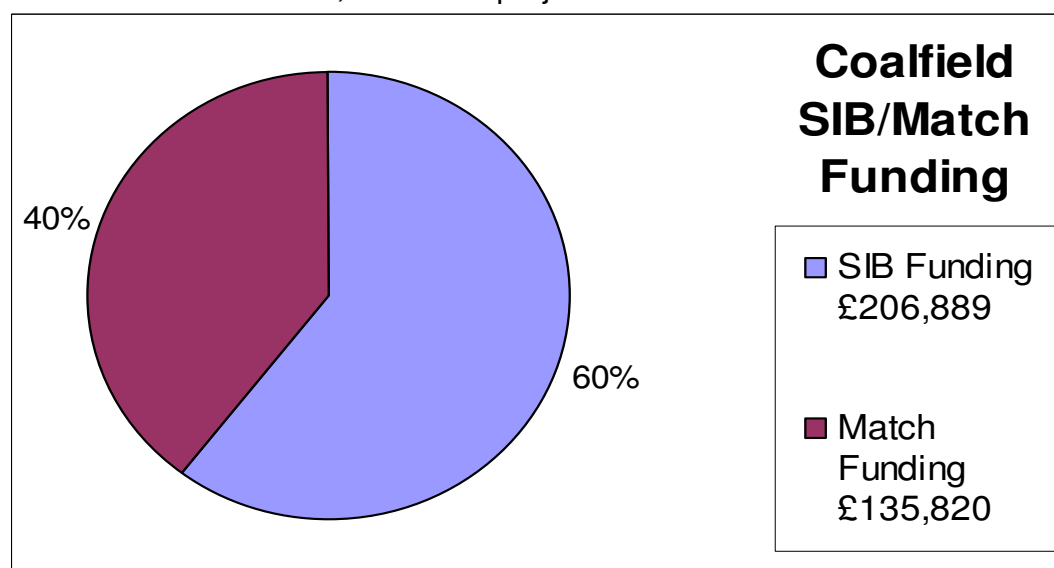
SIB (Strategic Initiative Budget) Proactive Allocation of Funds

A budget of £268,311 was available for 2009/10. A total of £202,889 has been allocated, leaving a balance of £65,422 to be carried over to 2010/11. Under the revised governance arrangements for SIB, resources are allocated against the priorities outlined in the Local Area Plan. At the beginning of the municipal year, Area Committee set out to allocate a proportion of SIB funding by proactively identifying projects to deliver against agreed priorities and commission services to meet local need (main SIB budget). The need to be flexible and responsive was also important and therefore Committee were receptive to organisations also identifying need and gaps in line with the priorities in the LAP and applying for funding to deliver against these priorities (Opportunity Fund). The breakdown is shown below:



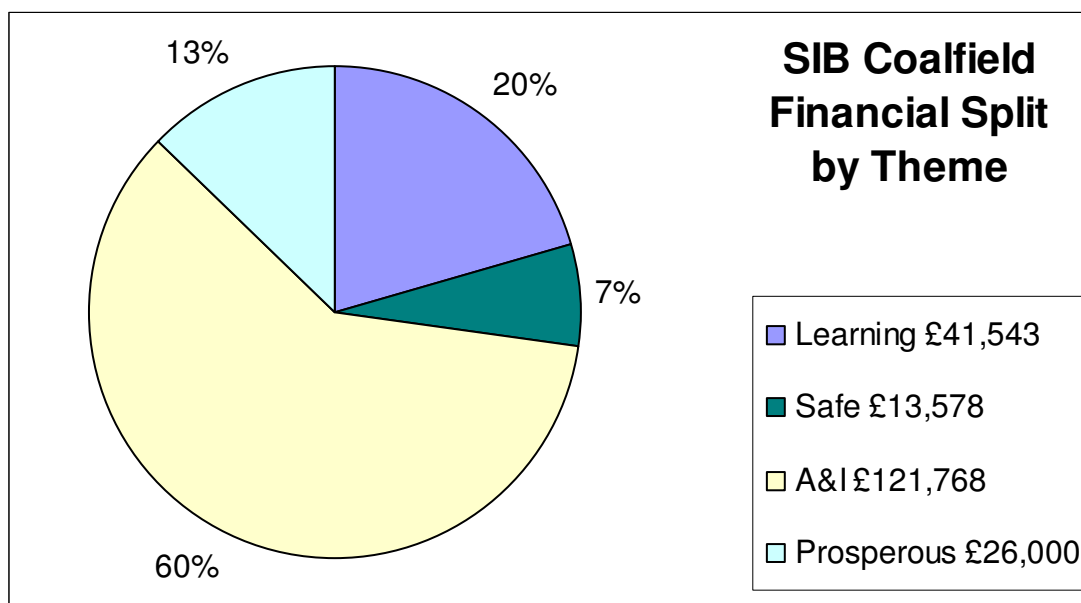
SIB Match Funding

One of the aims of SIB funding is to attract match funding from other sources in order to maximise the benefits to local projects and communities. The £202,889 SIB allocated has attracted a total of £135,820 to the projects it has funded. See below:



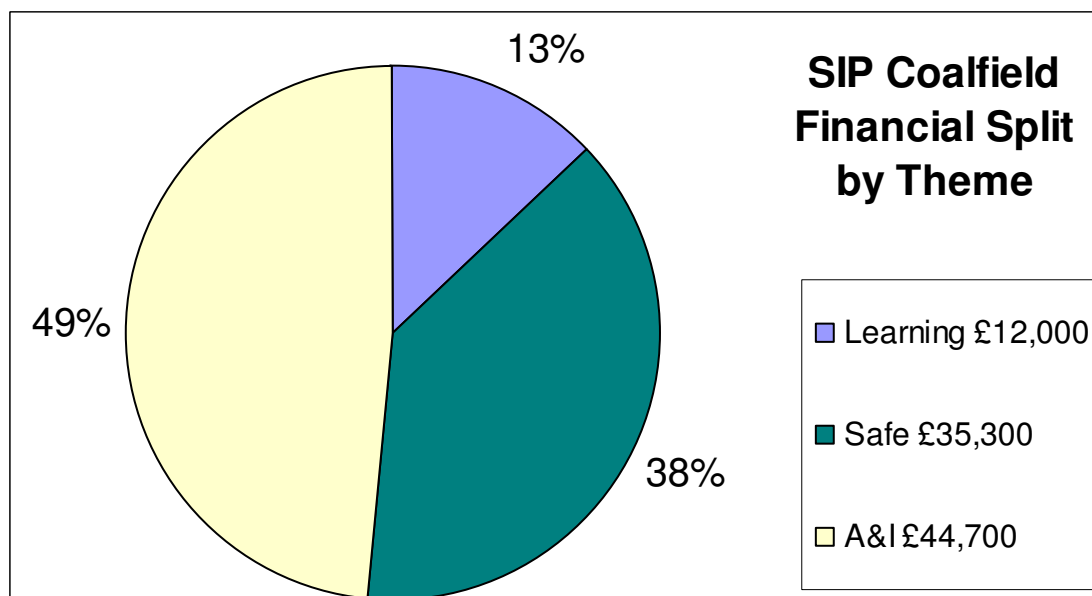
SIB Thematic Breakdown

Each project funded must deliver priorities against one of the five themes in the Local Area Plan. The thematic breakdown is as follows:



Strategic Investment Plan

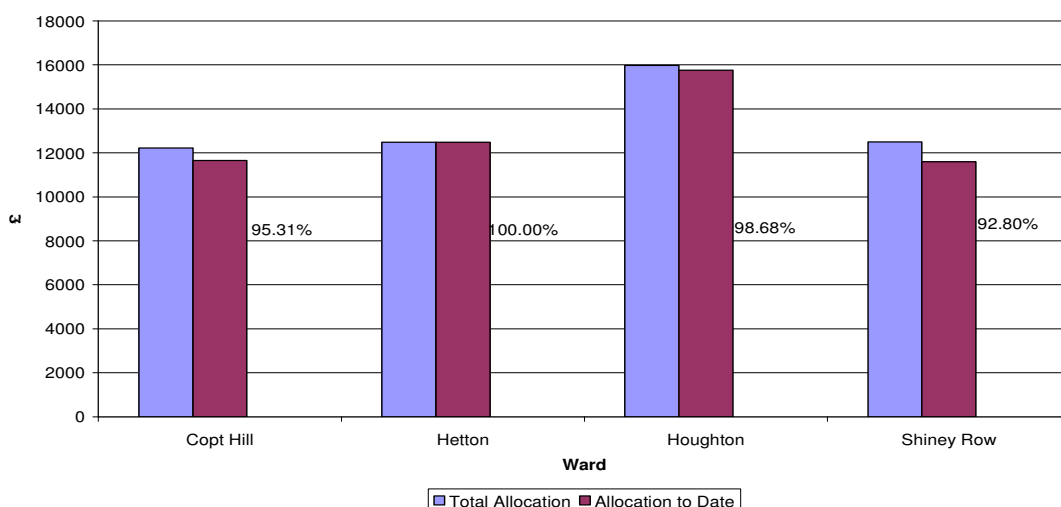
A one off budget of £237,142 SIP was available for 2009/10. A total of £92,002 has been allocated, leaving a balance of 145,140 to be carried over to 2010/11. The remaining SIP budget must be fully expended by 31 March 2011. As identified in SIP criteria, this budget is available to make physical improvements to the area and therefore the majority of this spend has been allocated within the Attractive & Inclusive and Safe themes.



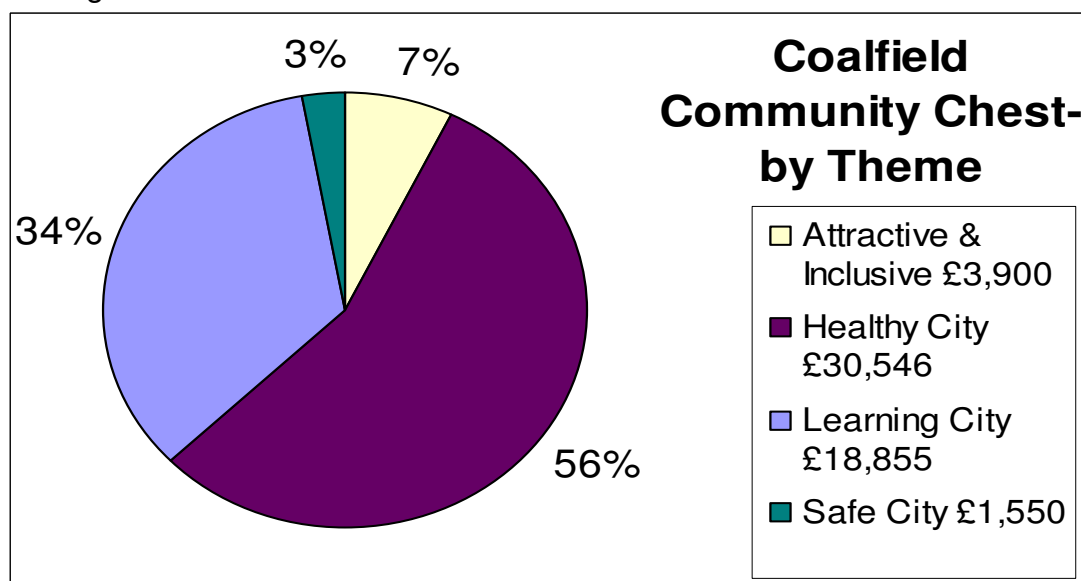
Community Chest

A budget of £53,186 was available for 2009/10. A total of £51,501 has been allocated, leaving a balance of £1,685 to be carried over to 2010/11. Allocation by ward is shown below:

Community Chest Spend by Ward



There were 88 projects funded by Community Chest during 2009-10. All projects are assessed against the thematic priorities in the Local Area Plan. The proportion of the total funding allocated to each theme is shown below:



8. Summary

The Annual Report and supporting information will be used to analyse and reflect on the work that has taken place throughout the past year and help to inform the June meeting as the committee moves towards a new work plan.

9. Background papers

- Sunderland Strategy Delivery Plans
- Local Area Agreement Delivery Plans
- Coalfield Local Area Plan
- Coalfield Area Committee papers

10. Contact Officer: Pauline Hopper, Coalfield Area Officer
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