

**At a meeting of the CABINET held in the CIVIC CENTRE (COMMITTEE ROOM NO. 1) on Wednesday 20 June 2012 at 2.00 p.m.**

**Present:-**

Councillor P. Watson in the Chair

Councillors Blackburn, Gofton, Kelly, G. Miller, P. Smith, Speding and H. Trueman

**Also in attendance:-**

Councillors Allan, T. Martin, Mordey, Tate, Walker and S. Watson

**Part I**

**Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 6 June 2012 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 4C – Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee: Rehabilitation and Early Supported Discharge – Policy Review Final Report

Councillor G. Miller

City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust Council of Governors

Item 9 – A19 Ultra Low  
Carbon Vehicle Enterprise  
Zone: Draft Local  
Development Order  
(Turbine Park and Vehicle  
Test Centre Site)

Councillor P. Watson

North Eastern Local  
Enterprise Partnership

Item 10 - Vaux: Advance  
Infrastructure and Public  
Realm Improvements

Councillor Gofton

University of Sunderland –  
Board of Governors

Councillor Gofton declared a personal and prejudicial interest in “Item 4F - Prosperity and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee: Aim 1 of the Economic Masterplan: A New Kind of University City - Policy Review Final Report,” as a Member of the Board of Governors of the University of Sunderland and withdrew from the meeting during the consideration of the report.

### **Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence submitted to the meeting.

### **Items Arising from Scrutiny Committees:-**

#### **Community and Safer City Scrutiny Committee – Development of Community Cohesion in Sunderland – Policy Review Final Report**

The Community and Safer City Scrutiny Committee and the Chief Executive submitted a joint report (copy circulated) to set out the recommendations of the Community and Safer City Scrutiny Committee following the Committee’s review into Community Cohesion in Sunderland.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman of the former Committee, Councillor T. Martin, was in attendance to introduce the Community and Safer City Scrutiny Committee’s policy review into the development of community cohesion in Sunderland. He explained that the Committee had chosen to look at this issue in view of the importance of community cohesion to the stability and sustainability of our local communities.

Councillor Martin reported that during the course of the review, the Committee had consulted with a broad range of partners and had viewed at first hand some of the initiatives being developed throughout the city. He added that the Committee was most impressed by the enthusiasm and commitment of everyone involved on these initiatives and the very real impact their work was having. In particular the Committee wished to thank to all of the officers of the Council and the LSP who supported the Committee during the review and also representatives from Show Racism the Red Card and Wear Out who provided invaluable support and guidance.

Councillor Martin advised that based on the Committee's discussions, it was considered that one of the key factors in community cohesion revolved around the issues of deprivation and unemployment. He added that action tackling poverty and unemployment were a major part to securing stable and cohesive communities.

Councillor Martin considered that the report had generated a number of far reaching recommendations that together could make a significant improvement to the development of community cohesion in the city. In concluding his presentation, he thanked his colleagues on the Community and Safer City Scrutiny Committee for their hard work during the course of the review and thanked them for their valuable contribution.

In response to the presentation, Councillor Gofton advised Cabinet Members that the Committee had reviewed a wide range of evidence and had developed an action plan with recommendations for the Council, including the Sunderland Partnership team. She added that the actions included ensuring cohesion was seen in its broadest context, and ensuring staff and Elected Members had an awareness of equalities legislation.

Councillor Gofton reported that the Committee had recognised the broad range of factors influencing community cohesion and felt that if the Council was to make a real impact, it was important to align and integrate cohesion with other strategies and plans, including the emerging Community Resilience Plan, Equalities Scheme and Area Local Plans.

Cabinet Members were assured that all of the recommendations were considered to be achievable within existing resources.

The Cabinet having thanked the officers of the Council and the Sunderland Partnership team for their help and support with the review and to the Council's partners who contributed so willingly to the investigation, it was:-

2. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee Policy Review Final Report be noted and the recommendations contained within the report be approved, and

- (ii) the proposed Action Plan for the implementation of these recommendations, which has been prepared in consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s), be noted.

### **Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee: Low Carbon Vehicles in the Delivery of Public Services – Policy Review Final Report**

The Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee and the Executive Director of City Services submitted a joint report (copy circulated) to set out the recommendations of the Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee following its review into Low Carbon Vehicles in the Delivery of Public Services.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The former Chairman of the Committee, Councillor G. Miller, presented the findings and recommendations of the Scrutiny Committee's study into Low Carbon Vehicles in the Delivery of Public Services.

Councillor Miller reported that the targets to reduce carbon emissions contained within the Climate Change Act 2008 were binding and there were huge implications if they were not achieved. He added that the growth of the low-carbon transport industry provided a real opportunity for Sunderland and the North-East region to cement its position as a leader in this arena. In considering the issues the Committee therefore found that the use of low-carbon vehicles would positively impact the city environmentally, financially and economically.

Councillor Miller advised that the Committee had gathered a large amount of evidence from local people, local MPs, the North East Purchasing Organisation (NEPO), Nexus and the bus operators, the University of Sunderland, Gateshead College and a number of local businesses working in the low-carbon transport sector. He added that the Committee had concluded that the Council should consider implementing targets to adopt electric cars into its fleet and that it should continue to keep a 'watching brief' on developments in low-carbon technologies, particularly larger vehicles, until such a time they become financially viable. The Committee also thought that a wide range of other measures should be explored to reduce the Council's carbon emissions and that the Council should be trail blazers in terms of adopting low-carbon vehicles into its fleet and encouraging its partners to do so.

Councillor Miller thanked everybody who had contributed to the policy review, in particular the Vice Chair and all members of the Committee, the Community Spirit Panel and the officers who supported us in carrying out the review, Les Clark (Head of Streetscene) and Paul Muir (Engineer).

In responding to the presentation, Councillor Blackburn reported that the work of the Scrutiny Committee and its recommendations aligned with and complemented the Fleet and Transportation Review currently being undertaken, and which would be used to take the actions forward. He added that a particularly important piece of evidence was a detailed cost benefit analysis commissioned from CENEX (the national Centre of Excellence for low carbon and fuel cell technologies) of electric cars and medium size vans specifically in the context of deployment by the Council. He advised that it took into account the Government's Plug-In Car grant of up to a maximum of £5000 for cars and £8000 for vans and concluded that there was an immediate business case for the procurement of electric cars but not for larger electric vans. He explained that this had been reflected in the recommendations made to Cabinet.

Councillor Blackburn reported that during the recent peer review the Council's commitment to reducing carbon emissions was commended and noted that a sound platform was being developed by preparing and extending the infrastructure for charging points in the city.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

3. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee Policy Review Final Report be noted and the recommendations contained within the report be approved, and
- (ii) the proposed Action Plan for the implementation of these recommendations, which has been prepared in consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s), be noted.

**Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee: Rehabilitation and Early Supported Discharge – Policy Review Final Report**

The Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee and the Executive Director of Health, Housing and Adult Services submitted a report (copy circulated) to set out the recommendations of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee following the Committee's review of rehabilitation and early supported discharge.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman of the former Committee, Councillor Walker, was in attendance to present the review of rehabilitation and early supported discharge. He reported that the aim of the review had been to assess how health and social care services were working together to support timely and smooth discharges from hospital and support independence in the community and to ensure that the policies were fit for purpose.

Councillor Walker reported that the Committee had heard many examples of good practice around smooth transitions of care and it was clear that all partners aimed for a genuinely shared vision of the model that would actively promote smooth transitions. He added that unfortunately this was not always achieved and all too often the patients with complex post-hospital needs were delayed in hospital after they were clinically fit to leave and then once discharged, many found themselves having to be re-admitted.

Councillor Walker reported that whilst the health and social care services could not hope to solve all of these complex problems with a review hopefully the recommendations for improvement and the highlighted policy gaps where efforts could be better focused would go some way towards helping to improve services.

In conclusion, Councillor Walker thanked all of the witnesses who provided evidence to the review, particularly the co-opted members of the Committee representing Sunderland Link, Age UK, and the Carers Centre and the staff at Sunderland Link who gathered patient evidence to allow their views and experiences to be reported.

In responding to the presentation, Councillor Miller reported that the work of the Scrutiny Committee had very much supported the partnership work the Council was engaged in, both to support the appropriate discharge arrangements of patients but also looking to prevent unnecessary hospital admissions, and avoidable admissions to care homes. He added that the work was helping the Council to progress with the practical changes needed and was also supporting discussions with the new Clinical Commissioning Group to work together to drive integrated working in communities which was the key to the outcomes the Council wished to see.

Councillor Miller thanked Councillor Walker as the outgoing Chair and congratulated the Committee and those who worked with them for producing a good report which was supporting real change which would lead to better outcomes for patients and their families.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

4. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee Policy Review Final Report be noted and the recommendations contained within the report be approved, and
- (ii) the proposed Action Plan for the implementation of these recommendations, which has been prepared in consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s), be noted.

## **Management Scrutiny Committee: Demonstrating Local Accountability – Policy Review Final Report**

The Management Scrutiny Committee and the Chief Executive submitted a joint report (copy circulated) to set out the recommendations of the Management Scrutiny Committee following the Committee's review of local accountability and self regulation.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman of the former Committee, Councillor Tate, was in attendance to present the review of the Management Scrutiny Committee's into self regulation. He reported that the Committee had looked at a number of aspects of this new 'self regulation' agenda and the emerging self regulation tools being developed through a series of interactive workshops. He advised that these workshops had proved extremely useful in not only gaining a clear understanding of self regulation and the associated mechanics, but also how this was being implemented and developed in Sunderland.

Councillor Tate thanked his colleagues on the Management Scrutiny Committee, in particular the Vice Chairman, Councillor Rolph, for their valuable input and contribution throughout the course of the review. He hoped that the review and its recommendations could help to add value and develop further the self regulation role within the Council.

In response, Councillor Trueman welcomed the recommendations of the policy review and he commend the work of Councillor Tate and the Management Scrutiny Committee in undertaking a robust policy review which had come up with constructive and practical recommendations.

Councillor Trueman reported that it was a timely piece of work as the Council, along with all other councils, was moving away from a national framework of assessment and inspection to a framework for Sunderland which was more localised and reflected its commitment to be more transparent and accountable to local people. He advised that it was reassuring that the policy review had acknowledged that Sunderland was well placed to take on board 'self regulation' as Sunderland had a strong sense of purpose and self awareness and was well placed through the Sunderland Way of Working to embrace the challenges and opportunities of self regulation.

Councillor Trueman informed Members that the Council had a strong track record of taking action and improving services, whilst at the same time providing assurance that its services were fit to achieve the quality and outcomes for people which were among the best in local government. He reported that the work undertaken in localities and the impact, for example, Responsive Local Services was making at the local level was evidence of the Council's track record in listening and acting on local needs.

Councillor Trueman reported that recent changes to governance arrangements including Cabinet, Area Arrangements and Scrutiny reinforced that the Council would continue to evolve and develop its structures provide the appropriate accountability and transparency.

Councillor Trueman highlighted that one of the key elements of self regulation was listening to local communities and Members would be aware that there was a focus on customers at the heart of the Sunderland Way of Working and ensuring that the Council listens and acts on what the residents say was important to them. He added that the consultation the Council undertook including around the State of the City, day to day feedback from operational services, the feedback through the customer service network and the recent Area based consultation meant it was well placed to demonstrate the local accountability and transparency which underpinned self regulation.

Councillor Trueman advised Members that the Council had always welcomed external challenge to support its improvement journey. He reminded Members that the Council had been a high performing council under the previous regimes of the CAA and CPA and would look to continue high levels of performance as it went forward- but measured through local residents based on their experiences of interacting with the Council, rather than by external inspectors.

Members were also advised that the policy review had recommended that the Council took advantage of a corporate peer challenge from the LGA and this was something that the Council had used constructively in the past.

In concluding, Councillor Trueman reported that the Council had nothing to fear from the new self regulation agenda as the elements of self regulation already supported the way that it worked in Sunderland and its values and aspirations.

5. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Management Scrutiny Committee Policy Review Final Report be noted and the recommendations contained within the report be approved, and
- (ii) the proposed Action Plan for the implementation of these recommendations, which has been prepared in consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s), be noted.



## **Management Scrutiny Committee: At What Cost: The Effects of High-Cost Credit and Illegal Loan Sharks on Local Communities – Policy Review Final Report**

The Management Scrutiny Committee and the Chief Executive submitted a joint report (copy circulated) to set out the recommendations of the Management Scrutiny Committee following the Committee's review of unlicensed and high-cost credit.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman of the former Committee, Councillor Tate, was in attendance to present the review of the Management Scrutiny Committee's on illegal loan sharks and high-cost credit. He reported that the Committee had gathered a wide range of views and evidence in undertaking this piece of work and was delighted that the Illegal Money Lending Team was working in Sunderland. This team together with key partners from across the city is looking to gather information and intelligence from communities and individuals that will lead to prosecutions, prison sentences and ultimately the removal of loan sharks from Sunderland.

Councillor Tate reported that Councillor Rolph had suggested signposting the provision of the right support to the most vulnerable and a scheme of including relevant contact details on free samples of lip gloss had been made available in community centres had been established. This scheme had proved to be very successful and Gentoo were also taking this initiative on board.

In concluding, Councillor Tate thanked his colleagues on the Management Scrutiny Committee and all the officers and witnesses who have contributed to this piece of work. He hoped that with the Council working with its partners and other agencies viable options can be provided for people to make better informed choices about their own financial situation.

Councillor Speding in responding to the presentation reminded Members that the Government had set up the England Illegal Money Lending team in 2011 and the Council had approved the protocol with the Team in June 2011 which was launched by the Leader of the Council in November 2012.

Members were advised that in February 2012 there was a month of action to raise awareness of loansharks and to seek intelligence on their activities. Councillor Speding reported that this had included a wide range of activities with partner agencies including Southwick Primary pupils designing a banner which was paraded at a Sunderland AFC match, training sessions to raise the awareness of front line staff within the Council and other agencies such as Jobcentre Plus and Gentoo.

Councillor Speding reported that it had been recognised that it was important to maintain the profile of the Illegal Money Lending team and promote access to advice and information from the Council and partner agencies. To this end City Services staff had been working with Health Housing and Adult Services to develop an action plan to continue through the financial year which included:-

- ensuring that any activity by the Illegal Money Lending Team was well publicised and key messages were delivered to those who might be suffering the same fate;
- Enforcement and advice agencies would continue to receive training on the signs which might indicate loanshark activity;
- Feedback would be given to the Office of Fair Trading on the City Services survey of high cost lenders and the Scrutiny Committee would be kept abreast of developments;
- Schools would be encouraged to support saving clubs and work would be undertaken to support the Bridges Community Bank; and
- New media would be used to put across the risks of high cost lending and use of loansharks.

Councillor Speding reported that these activities would be delivered in conjunction with the Illegal Money Lending team and with the Support of the Libra Partnership of advice agencies.

Cabinet Members having thanked the Management Scrutiny Committee for its review on such an important issue, it was:-

6. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Management Scrutiny Committee Policy Review Final Report be noted and the recommendations contained within the report be approved, and
- (ii) the proposed Action Plan for the implementation of these recommendations, which has been prepared in consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s), be noted.

At this juncture, Councillor Gofton withdrew from the meeting during consideration of the following item in which she had a personal and prejudicial interest.

## **Prosperity and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee: Aim 1 of the Economic Masterplan: A New Kind of University City - Policy Review Final Report**

The Prosperity and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee and the Deputy Chief Executive submitted a joint report (copy circulated) to set out the recommendations of the Prosperity and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee following the Committee's review into Aim 1 of the Economic Masterplan.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman of the former Committee, Councillor Mordey, was in attendance to present the Prosperity and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee's policy review into Aim 1 of the Economic Masterplan – "A New Kind of University City". He reported that the review set out to examine the measures being taken by the Council, the University and all of the Council's partners to this end and consider the influence and impact that the University had on the city's economy at the present time and the potential for this to be increased. He added that the Committee also examined the way in which the Council and the University could more fully integrate the University into the city's economy, including business start up and growth; the development of workforce skills through education and retention and the potential for research to support business growth through innovation, graduate placement and management and staff development.

Councillor Mordey reported that the Committee's work was supported throughout by staff and academics from the Sunderland and Sheffield Universities and he thanked the University's Vice Chancellor and Chief Executive, Deputy Vice Chancellor and Deputy Chief Executive and the Assistant Director, and colleagues on the Prosperity and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee for their hard work, support and guidance during the review.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Mordey and the Prosperity and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee for the excellent review and welcomed and supported their recommendations, subject to the availability of resources, which would contribute to the aims and aspirations of the Economic Masterplan.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

### **7. RESOLVED that:-**

- (i) the Prosperity and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee Policy Review Final Report be noted and the recommendations contained within the report be approved, and
- (ii) the proposed Action Plan for the implementation of these recommendations, which has been prepared in consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s), be noted.

Councillor Gofton was re-admitted to the meeting.

### **Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee: Building a Sustainable and Lasting Legacy in Sport and Physical Activity – Policy Review Final Report**

The Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee and the Executive Director for City Services submitted a joint report (copy circulated) to set out the recommendations of the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee following its review into Building a Sustainable and Lasting Legacy in Sport and Physical Activity.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman of the former Committee, Councillor S. Watson, was in attendance to present the Scrutiny Committee's study into Building a Sustainable and Lasting Legacy in Sport and Physical Activity. She explained that the Committee had agreed that it was the right time to consider the future of sport and physical activity in Sunderland due to the rapidly changing environment, as well as the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Councillor Watson acknowledged the role of local providers, schools, the Active Sunderland Board and Sport England for providing the Committee with knowledge of this subject area and thanked all of the Elected Members who provided us with intelligence about sport and physical activity in their wards, the results of which gave the Committee a comprehensive and positive view of local provision and not only contributed to the findings, but would also be used to plan future service delivery and development and increase the level of access to and engagement with local communities.

Councillor Kelly, in responding to the presentation, highlighted that sport and physical activity played a unique role, in being able to cut across many strategic priorities and supporting a wide range of important issues, including positive activities for young people, volunteering, regeneration, education, health improvement and community safety. He outlined that during the policy review, the Committee received evidence from a range of sport and physical activity providers including the voluntary sector, the University, Sunderland AFC Foundation, school headteachers and Sport England.

Councillor Kelly advised that Sport England had presented an overview of their new Strategy for 2012-17, and five years after the London Olympic and Paralympic Games it was hoped that a sustainable sporting legacy could be developed both nationally and locally. He added that in order to respond to the challenge of Sport England's aim and creating an Olympic and Paralympic legacy for Sunderland, a comprehensive action plan had been developed from the policy review, and subject to the financial resources, would aim to drive forward participation in sport and physical activity by:

- Further developing the role of the Active Sunderland Board to place 'sport and physical activity' as a priority in the city's agenda
- Increasing the number of sport development pathways, based on agreed priority sports with Elected Members and volunteers playing a key role
- Promoting greater access to sport and physical activity for minority groups
- Utilising the intelligence data gathered as part of the Scrutiny Review to inform service planning
- Exploring opportunities to maximise funding
- Developing an activity plan to reflect the legacy aligned to the Health and Wellbeing Strategy

Councillor Kelly highlighted that the 2012 Olympic Games would provide a great opportunity to increase participation levels in sport and also engage residents in physical activity and volunteering. He added that the review also provided a great platform to place sport high on the city agenda, so that playing sport or taking part in physical activity became a lifelong habit and a regular choice for residents.

8. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee Policy Review Final Report be noted and the recommendations contained within the report be approved, and
- (ii) the proposed Action Plan for the implementation of these recommendations, which has been prepared in consultation with the appropriate Portfolio Holder(s), be noted.

In concluding consideration of the Scrutiny Committees' Policy Reviews, the Chairman, on behalf of the Cabinet, thanked the Chairmen and their Committees for their valued contribution in scrutiny and the effectiveness and ability to respond to the wishes of local residents.

### **Transition from Early Implementer to Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board**

The Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Health, Housing and Adult Services submitted a joint report (copy circulated) to set out the next stage of transition from an Early Implementer to Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Miller reported that the health and wellbeing of the residents was of crucial importance to the Council and that was why the opportunity presented by the Health changes to provide local democratic leadership of the Health System in the city was being embraced. He added that this had been reflected in the recent Cabinet changes with an increased emphasis on health responsibilities.

Councillor Miller advised that the report highlights the background to the health changes particularly in relation to Health and Wellbeing Boards, which was the one part of the Health reforms that emerged unscathed from the wider concerns about the Health Bill and had been universally welcomed. He reminded Cabinet Members of the establishment of an Early Implementer Health and Wellbeing Board in 2011 which had used the last year to develop the board and work with the Children's Trust and Adults' Partnership Board as key advisory board's to prepare for the necessary changes.

Cabinet Members were advised that following the establishment of the Health and Social Care Act in March the Council had reached an important milestone in moving to the Health and Wellbeing Board operating in shadow form before taking on its full statutory role in April 2013. During the next year the Council would see the Board, as a committee of the Council, oversee the final stages of Public Health responsibilities transferring to the Council, supporting the authorisation of the new Clinical Commissioning Group for the city to replace the Primary Care Trust, and establishing a Health and Wellbeing Strategy for the city.

Councillor Miller reported that this was a key milestone not only in the physical transfer of services and responsibilities such as in Public Health but particularly as a significant step in opening up accountability and transparency in relation to NHS Services. The NHS locally would become more accountable to local people through the Health and Wellbeing Board and Council Members as their elected representatives.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

9. RESOLVED that the:-

- (i) transition to Shadow Board status be endorsed,
- (ii) representation of nominated elected members on the Shadow Board as stated in the revised terms of reference be approved,
- (iii) Children's Trust and the Adults' Board will act in an advisory capacity to the Shadow Board, and
- (iv) developmental work programme of the Board be noted and that as a consequence further changes may be made.

## **Public Health – Procurement of Adult Substance Misuse Services**

The Executive Director of Health, Housing and Adult Services and the Assistant Chief Executive submitted a joint report (copy circulated) to request approval for the procurement of adult substance misuse services on behalf of Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust. The commissioning of public health services would become the formal responsibility of the Council in April 2013 and it was therefore felt appropriate that the procurement was undertaken within the Councils operating model. The report also provided an update on the ongoing work currently being undertaken by Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust and Safer Sunderland Partnership around the proposed delivery model for Adult Substance Misuse Services within Sunderland beyond 2013.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Kelly reported that the commissioning of drug and alcohol services was currently the responsibility of Public Health in the Primary Care Trust and it undertook this role on behalf of the Safer Sunderland Partnership. He explained that the commissioning work was led by a Joint Commissioning Group which reported to the Safer Sunderland Partnership. He added that the responsibility and funding for substance misuse services would transfer to local authorities from April 2013 as part of the transfer of Public Health responsibilities.

Councillor Kelly reported that the current service had evolved over a number of years often with new elements of service added as additional funding or initiatives had been introduced. He advised that there were currently eight separate providers commissioned to provide a range of treatment interventions.

The attention of Cabinet Members was drawn to the publication of a new Drug Strategy by the Government in late 2010 which highlighted recovery as the ultimate treatment outcome alongside the intention to finance localities based on a payment by results model. Councillor Kelly reported that the focus of treatment historically had been in engaging people into treatment and payment from the National Treatment Agency had been based on the numbers in treatment rather than on how many people had successfully recovered. He advised therefore, that a full redesign of the service had been undertaken and this now needed to be finalised and the appropriate procurement process undertaken.

Cabinet Members were advised that in view of the impending transfer of responsibilities it was considered more appropriate that the Council's systems and processes be used for the final stages and the procurement. The process is expected to run during 2012 and the new system to be live by April 2013

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

10. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) approval be given to the Council undertaking the procurement of adult substance misuse services for up to 3 years from 2013/14 to 2015/16 on behalf of Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust, and
- (ii) the progress on the substance misuse service redesign be noted.

**International Strategy – Annual Report January 2011 to March 2012**

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide an overview of activity undertaken from January 2011 to March 2012 in relation to the city's International Strategy, to highlight the benefits this had generated, and to identify the outline Work Programme for the year 2012/13.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

The Chairman reported that the International Strategy aimed to ensure the city's international engagement supported the Sunderland Partnership in achieving its vision for Sunderland, maximising the opportunities and benefits for the city and its residents. He advised that this was the fifth Annual Report and covered the period from January 2011 to March 2012, a fifteen month period, as it was proposed that future reports would be based on financial years rather than calendar years. He added that following consideration by Cabinet, it would be presented to the Sunderland Partnership.

The Chairman highlighted the work and key developments during 2011/12 which had primarily focussed on consolidating activity undertaken in previous years, including:-

- The city's Friendship Agreement with Washington DC being renewed for a further five years.
- A second Sunderland software company setting up an American subsidiary in the Washington DC area.
- The first Harbin software company setting up a business in Sunderland.
- School pupils from Sunderland visiting Harbin for the first time.
- A teacher from Saint-Nazaire spending a year teaching in a Sunderland primary school.
- Young people from the city taking part in Essen's European Youth Arts Exhibition.



- Sunderland's membership of EUROCITIES and the World Health Organisation's Healthy Cities Network opening up opportunities to exchange good practice in key policy areas
- The announcement of 2,000 new jobs by overseas-owned companies in the city, bringing in £700 million of capital investment.

The Chairman reported that detailed information on the range of activity undertaken during the year was included within the Annual Report itself, including an assessment of the benefits this is generating. He added that a number of actions had been identified within the Annual Report as part of the Work Programme for 2012/13, and work on these areas had begun through the Partnership-wide Steering Group for the International Strategy.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

11. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the level and nature of activity developed under the International Strategy during 2011/12 be noted, and
- (ii) the series of actions proposed for 2012/13 be endorsed.

### **Sunderland City Council Draft Greenspace Audit and Report 2012 & Draft Ecological Evidence Base for Sunderland's Local Development Framework 2012**

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek approval of the 2012 Draft Sunderland Greenspace Audit and Report and 2012 Draft Ecological Evidence Base for public consultation, and to seek its approval for its use in developing the Local Development Framework.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Speding reported that good quality local environments were seen as vital ingredients for the health and well-being of neighbourhoods and were important considerations for people and businesses choosing to locate in the city. He added that the Council's emerging Local Development Framework would set policies for how land in the city should be used and the policies must be informed by robust and up-to-date evidence. He advised that this report set out the draft evidence prepared to inform policies in relation to greenspace and ecology and that this evidence would also be used to assist in determining day to day planning applications.

Councillor Speding referred to the draft Greenspace Audit which provided a comprehensive audit of all types of greenspace in the city which had been categorised and assessed according to a broad set of criteria including their value, quality and accessibility. He advised that the Audit confirmed previous assertions that Sunderland was a 'green city'. Specifically, 57% of the city was undeveloped green field and much of this was of considerable benefit to local people. He added that the audit also found that the quality and accessibility of greenspace in some areas could be improved and that opportunities existed to use some greenspace areas for development where this was necessary and appropriate.

Cabinet Members were advised that the report had been informed by consultations with 1,000 local people and the Audit and its draft recommendations would now be subject to further consultation.

Turning to the Ecological Audit, Councillor Speding explained that this outlined the outcome of investigations of all sites and species protected by European, national and local designations, as well as the wider countryside including green corridors and previously developed sites. He reported that the audit revealed that Sunderland was home to a rich and diverse landscape with significant biodiversity and geological interest. However, some of the designated sites were vulnerable due to their size and location and some measures would need to be taken so that the Council was able to satisfy its legislative responsibilities. He advised that the report set out a set of recommendations that would be subject to further consultation.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

12. RESOLVED that it be recommended to Council to:-

- (i) endorse the 2012 Draft Greenspace Audit and Report and 2012 Draft Ecological Evidence Base for consultation purposes,
- (ii) following the close of the consultation and in consultation with the appropriate Portfolio holder, to authorise the Deputy Chief Executive to make any minor amendments to the report prior to its adoption. The final report will be used:
  - a. As part of the evidence base to inform the emerging Local Development Framework, and
  - b. As a material consideration in determining planning applications.

## **A19 Ultra Low Carbon Vehicle Enterprise Zone: Draft Local Development Order (Turbine Park and Vehicle Test Centre Site)**

The Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek approval of the A19 Ultra Low Carbon Vehicle Enterprise Zone Draft Local Development Order (Turbine Park and Vehicle Test Centre Site) for the purposes of public consultation.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Trueman reminded Cabinet Members that as part of the coalition Government's plans to stimulate economic growth and job creation, a new wave of Enterprise Zones (EZs) had been launched. He reported that the EZ for Sunderland comprised two adjoining sites located to the south of the Nissan car plant; namely Turbine Park and the Vehicle Test Centre site and Hillthorn Farm site situated adjacent to the Leamside railway line.

He highlighted that in addition to the financial incentives available, EZ status was conditional on putting into place a simplified planning regime across the sites through Local Development Orders (LDOs). He reported that the LDO grants advance planning permission for specified types of development and removed the requirement for a developer to submit an application for planning permission.

Councillor Trueman reported that a draft LDO for Turbine Park and the Vehicle Test Centre site had now been prepared and a subsequent LDO would be produced for the Hillthorn farm site as detailed in the report.

Cabinet Members were pleased to see the implementation of a simplified planning regime under the EZ status which would introduce reduced developer costs through the removal of planning fees, increased certainty due to its site specific nature and significant time savings compared to the conventional Development Management process.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

13. RESOLVED that approval be given to the A19 Ultra Low Carbon Vehicle Enterprise Zone Draft Local Development Order (Turbine Park and Vehicle Test Centre Site) for the purposes of public consultation.

## **Vaux: Advance Infrastructure and Public Realm Improvements**

The Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director City Services submitted a joint report (copy circulated) to seek approval to undertake a significant infrastructure and public realm scheme design to support the regeneration of Vaux and the wider city centre. The works would comprise the re-alignment of St Mary's Way / Livingstone Road into a boulevard, and the development of a new civic space referred to as Magistrates Square.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Speding in highlighting the proposals in the report, advised that the new square would provide a flexible multi-functional area capable of holding a wide range of events and activities. He added that the proposed scheme would also create attractive potential commercial development opportunities around the new square, most likely for retail, food and drink uses in addition to delivering a further phase of the Council's multi-phase Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor (SSTC).

Councillor Speding reported that several alternative approaches to improving this highway corridor had been considered and the other options were summarised in Appendix 1 of the report. He added that however they were unlikely to deliver the same regenerative benefits as the recommended option and, apart from the “do nothing” option, would require higher levels of investment.

Cabinet Members were advised that the overall scheme cost was estimated to be in the region of £13.4m and was included in the capital programme approved by full Council on 7 March 2012. Potential external funding opportunities were currently being explored in an effort to secure a contribution towards scheme costs.

Councillor Speding then highlighted that a series of public consultation events were planned for later this month, prior to the submission of a planning application towards the end of the summer.

Cabinet Members were advised that the best case current programme indicated a start on site in April 2013 and scheme completion by November 2014. However this might change depending on certain factors which could cause slippage, such as delays in completing utility diversions or inclement weather conditions during construction.

Cabinet Members applauded the progress that had been made in the short time that the site had been brought into the Council's ownership and the steps made to realise the Economic Masterplan to reinvigorate the City Centre and bring employment and economic opportunities.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

14. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) the proposed scheme for the re-alignment of St Mary's Way / Livingstone Road and the development of the proposed Magistrates Square be approved and the Deputy Chief Executive and the Executive Director of City Services be authorised to take all necessary actions required for the procurement and delivery of the scheme, and

- (ii) the Deputy Chief Executive be authorised to progress the disposal of two development plots overlooking the proposed Magistrates Square for best consideration and otherwise on terms to be agreed by the Deputy Chief Executive.

### **Revenue Budget Outturn for 2011/2012 and First Revenue Review 2012/2013**

The Executive Director of Commercial and Corporate Services submitted a report (copy circulated) on details of the Revenue Budget Outturn for 2011/2012 and First Revenue Review 2012/2013.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Speding reported that in relation to the revenue Outturn position there was very positive news reflecting the work carried out over the last year by Portfolio Holders and Directorates to ensure that the Council succeeded in dealing with the financial challenges it faced both now and in the medium term. He added that there were two key issues to highlight:-

- all Portfolio holders were within delegated budgets at outturn which was an excellent outcome given the significant £58m budget savings targets for the year which Portfolio holders had had to achieve, and
- taking into consideration final calls on contingencies, savings through proactive treasury management together with the Council's rigorous approach to financial management had led to an under spending of £7.58 million at year end which would be used to support transitional costs.

Councillor Speding highlighted that this was yet again another excellent and strong financial performance which was made more notable by the increasingly difficult climate in which it had been delivered.

The attention of Cabinet Members was then drawn to the position at first review. Councillor Speding reported that there were a number of challenges in implementing the required reductions in 2012/2013. He added that whilst in overall terms progress was positive, the position in the report reflected the fact that it was getting much more difficult in the second year of the spending review. He referred to the significant demand pressures in adult and children's social care which continued to be experienced. In addition there was an increasing pressure being experienced in the SWITCH budget primarily due to turnover and that position was being closely monitored with actions being considered to address the position.

Councillor Speding assured Cabinet Members that robust monitoring processes were in place to ensure that a positive budget would be delivered and where delays in implementation of savings targets were identified Portfolio holders and Directors were progressing alternative actions to address the position.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

15. RESOLVED that:-

- (i) in relation to 2011/2012:
  - (a) the contingency and reserve transfers proposed at Appendix A, and the budget transfers and virement at Appendix B be approved;
  - (b) the final account decisions as set out in the report be approved.
- (ii) in relation to 2012/2013, the contingency transfers at Appendix E and budget transfers be approved.

### **Capital Programme Outturn 2011/2012**

The Executive Director of Commercial and Corporate Services submitted a report (copy circulated) to detail the Council's capital programme outturn for 2011/2012.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Speding was pleased to report that the outturn reflected both positive performance and robust budget management across the programme, with the majority of planned activity delivered and expenditure retained within budget. He advised that the final capital expenditure for 2011/2012 was almost £57 million reflecting a wide range of Council investment which included:-

- A new school at St Joseph's with Maplewood on schedule to open in September,
- Major progress with the new Software Centre due to open in the autumn,
- Economic development grants including a contribution to the Nissan Battery Plant to bring additional jobs to the city,
- Acquisition of some key city centre sites to attract future development,
- Progress with the regeneration of the Seafront,
- A new Wellness Centre, café and support facilities at Houghton Sports Centre, and
- Invest to save schemes that would support the Council's green agenda and reduced ICT spend in the future.

Councillor Speding then drew attention to the reprofiling of spend amounting to £6.4 million into £2012/2013 which was primarily as a result finalising agreements with landowners and contractors, reviewing scheme requirements to minimise costs to the Council and, reprofiling of works to minimise service disruption.

Councillor Trueman reported that this had been an excellent performance to achieve these schemes in the current economic climate and budget pressures. The Chairman in adding his congratulations and thanks to the Executive Director of Commercial and Corporate Services and his team, also reminded Cabinet Members of the new leisure centre to be constructed in Washington.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

16. RESOLVED that the amendments to the Capital Programme since it was reported to Council in March 2012 be approved and the projected outturn position for 2011/2012 be noted.

### **Schools Capital Works Procurement**

The Executive Director of Children's Services submitted a report (copy circulated) to seek approval to procure and appoint a contractor(s) to undertake major capital works at Monkwearmouth School and Highfield Primary School.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Smith highlighted that the first proposal was to invest £370,000 from the schools' capital maintenance programme to replace windows at Monkwearmouth School. She advised that the school had been built in the 1960's and had been a high priority for investment had the second phase of Building Schools for the Future gone ahead.

Councillor Smith then reported that the second proposal concerned Highfield Primary School and was to provide an additional two class bases for a cost of £300,000. She referred to the report to Cabinet in April 2012 which highlighted pressure on school places in the Washington and South areas of the City. She added that the increase in the published admission number (PAN) at Highfield would deal with a trend of oversubscription and successful appeals as well as planning for a proposed housing development in the immediate vicinity of the school.

Cabinet Members were advised that the additional two class bases would increase capacity at Highfield from 315 to 420 and as these would adjoin the nursery, it would provide a much better foundation stage provision for the very young children. Councillor Smith reported that these works would be funded from the Council's Basic Need allocation, which was specifically for the provision of additional places.

Cabinet Members having been advised that should these schemes be approved, they would be progressed from 1 July 2012.

Consideration having been given to the report, it was:-

17. RESOLVED that approval be given to:

- (i) procure capital works in excess of £250,000.00 and appoint a contractor for the window replacement scheme at Monkwearmouth School, and
- (ii) procure capital works in excess of £250,000.00 and appoint a contractor to construct an extension at Highfield Primary School.

### **Announced Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children's Services**

The Executive Director of Children's Services submitted a report (copy circulated) to provide Cabinet with the final inspection report and draft action plan arising from the recently successful announced inspection of safeguarding and looked after children's services.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Councillor Smith was pleased to provide Cabinet with a copy of the final report and draft action plan arising from the recent announced inspection of safeguarding and looked after children services. She highlighted that the multi-agency inspection had taken place in February 2012, and had graded Sunderland as being 'good' against each of the four headline inspection judgements, and 'good' against 17 of the 18 supporting judgements.

Councillor Smith reported that the inspection had identified a small number of formal areas for improvement and an improvement plan had been drafted with the Council's partners which would enable the Council to address these, as well as the 'softer' areas for improvement which were referenced throughout the report.

Cabinet Members having thanked and congratulated the Executive Director of Children's Services and the Safeguarding Team for their excellent work in achieving this inspection judgement, it was:-



18. RESOLVED that the contents of the report and the associated improvement actions the Council and its partners are undertaking in response be noted.

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

At the instance of the Chairman, it was:-

19. 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) or 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 1, Paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4).

(Signed) P. WATSON,  
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.