

**UNIVERSITY CITY POLICY REVIEW 2011/12:  
SCENE SETTING**

**REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: SP3: PROSPEROUS CITY**

**CORPORATE PRIORITIES: CIO1: Delivering Customer Focussed Services, C102: Being 'One Council', C103: Efficient and Effective Council, C104: Improving partnership working to deliver 'One City'**

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the baseline position in relation to the Committee's policy review into Aim 1 of the Economic Masterplan – A New Kind of University City

**2. Background**

- 2.1 On 18 June 2011, the Committee agreed to undertake a policy review into Aim 1 of the Economic Masterplan – A New Kind of University City. A report setting out the aim and remit of the review is included earlier on this agenda.
- 2.2 The purpose of this report is to provide members with further background and set the scene for the review.
- 2.3 Andrew Perkin, Lead Policy Officer for Economy and Sustainability will provide a presentation setting out the background to Aim 1 of the Economic Masterplan – A New Kind of University City.

**3 Economic Masterplan - A New Type Of University City**

- 3.1 The Economic Masterplan sets out its overall economic vision and strategy as being 'An entrepreneurial University City at the heart of a low-carbon regional economy.'
- 3.2 It also sets out five key aims which envisage Sunderland as:-
- Aim 1 - a new kind of University City;
  - Aim 2 - a national hub of the low-carbon economy;
  - Aim 3 - a prosperous and well-connected waterfront City Centre;
  - Aim 4 - an inclusive City economy for all ages;
  - Aim 5 - a one City approach to economic leadership
- 3.3 The purpose of the Economic Masterplan is to:-

- help set the direction for the City's economy over the next 15 years;
- establish how Sunderland would earn its living and what it would look like on the ground;
- identify key actions that public, private and voluntary sector partners need to take to ensure a prosperous and sustainable future

3.4 The key challenges to be addressed by the Masterplan include:-

- the City Centre is underpowered as an economic driver;
- there is a too narrow range of industries, career opportunities or well paid jobs;
- the City has been better at attracting international companies than local growth;
- Sunderland is a City within a University but not a University City;
- the City has a prevalence of low skills and aspirations;
- there is a limited housing choice.

#### **4 Aim 1 of the Economic Masterplan – A New Kind of University City**

4.1 Aim 1 of the Economic Masterplan sets out the aim for Sunderland to be a vibrant, creative and attractive city, with a strong learning ethic and a focus on developing and supporting enterprise, with the University of Sunderland at its heart.

4.2 As part of an Enterprise and Innovation Strategy for Sunderland, it will put entrepreneurship development programmes on the city's educational curricula and provide better support for start ups and small and medium sized enterprises. More knowledge exchange, internships and research opportunities will help business benefit from the university. In turn the city's reputation and influence will improve as we foster cultural change.

4.3 A number of measures are available to indicate how far this approach is succeeding. These include the level of VAT registrations, knowledge based jobs and businesses, research and development investment, educational attainment and demand for University places, plus strategic and practical collaboration between the city and the university will all help to measure success.

4.4 The key features of Aim 1 can be summarised as follows:-

- An Enterprise and Innovation Strategy for the city, developed in partnership with the University in 2010
- The University of Sunderland's support for innovation within key sectors through two facilities: the new Ultra Low Carbon Vehicle Testing and Development Facility and the Sciences Complex which will start operating by spring 2011.

- Sunderland Software City's new building scheduled to open in 2012
  - A comprehensive Communications Strategy, supported by an ambassadors programme for the city
  - The Creative Industries Strategy to be developed in 2010 to better support the sector
  - A Widening Participation Strategy developed in partnership in 2010 to help raise the profile of both the university and college with residents and schools
- 4.5 Andrew Perkin, Lead Policy Officer for Economy and Sustainability will provide a presentation setting out the background to Aim 1 of the Economic Masterplan – A New Kind of University City.

## **5 Recommendation**

- 5.1 That the report be included as part of the evidence for its policy review and final report.

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