

**18<sup>th</sup> December 2019**

**REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY RESILIENCE**

**Resident Engagement and Neighbourhood Investment Plans**

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to Elected Members an update on Resident Engagement 'Let's Talk Sunderland' and how the engagement is informing the development of the emerging Neighbourhood Investment Plans. The report also explains how the priorities within the Neighbourhood Investment Plans will be presented for approval by the Area Committee in March 2020.

**2 Background**

- 2.1 Following the previous update report presented to September Area Committee, the Resident Engagement Strategy was adopted by the Council and Let's Talk Sunderland was launched city-wide, demonstrating the Council's commitment to listen and respond accordingly to residents' views and aspirations. Let's Talk Sunderland resident engagement strategy will shape all future resident engagement activities.
- 2.2 The first task for Let's Talk Sunderland has been to engage with residents, of all ages, across the city, to inform the content of the five Neighbourhood Investment Plans. The Council wishes all residents to be part of the city's plans and to share their views and ideas as well as work with the council to develop solutions and deliver projects.
- 2.3 The five Neighbourhood Investment Plans will be informed by resident views and written to ensure delivery of the City Plan (Vibrant, Healthy, Dynamic) at a local level. The Neighbourhood Investment Plans are Article 10 plans, as explained in para 4 of this report.
- 2.4 This report shares updates on the action and progress to-date relating to the following topics:
- Resident Engagement – Let's Talk Sunderland
  - Neighbourhood Investment Plans – Part 2 Article 10 Plans
  - Area Committee priorities 2020 onwards

**3. Resident Engagement – Let's Talk Sunderland**

- 3.1 Following the September Area Committee, Let's Talk Sunderland was launched. Following the launch, we have reached far and wide across the city, utilising every communication mechanism possible. The Voluntary and Community Sector and partners have been incredibly supportive.
- 3.2 The following is a snapshot of the activities delivered to engage with residents:
- [www.sunderland.gov.uk/letstalk](http://www.sunderland.gov.uk/letstalk) website
  - Conversation sheets circulated to all community buildings, shopping centres, doctor surgeries, employers and employees, Gentoo offices etc.
  - Working with schools, Together for Children, University of Sunderland and Sunderland College

- SAFC support during home games – large screens and match-day programme
- Gentoo via residents groups and networks
- Large-screen at St Mary's Car Park
- All Voluntary and Community Sector providers including local charities
- Local Councillors engaging with residents and communities
- Area Conversations held during November and December
- Social media – various platforms and via multiple partnerships
- Sunderland Echo
- Local events including Christmas switch-on activities
- Sunderland Business Network
- Sunderland Business Improvement District
- Chamber of Commerce
- Customer Service Network including Customer Service Centres
- GP Practices, Sunderland CCG and All Together Better
- Police and Fire community engagement
- Local traders
- Transport providers including Station Taxis
- Everyone Active Leisure Centres

3.3 By the end of December we will have engaged with some 50% of Sunderland residents of all ages. The resident feedback continues to be received and results are being analysed to support development of the five area Neighbourhood Investment Plans.

#### **4. Neighbourhood Investment Plans**

4.1 The five Neighbourhood Investment Plans (North, Coalfield, East, West, Washington) will be Article 10 plans. The Council's constitution clearly states that Area Committees will lead the development of local area plans (now known as Neighbourhood Investment Plans) which includes all main priorities for improvement of the area, for approval by the Cabinet. The Area Committee will also lead and enable effective implementation of the plans and will consult, engage and involve local people and organisations as well as partner agencies in development and delivery of Plans.

4.2 The Neighbourhood Investment Plans will directly align with the Area Committee priorities moving forward, they will be long-term plans, aligned to the themes and timeframe of the City Plan, which will also include focused, 3-5-year delivery blocks, focusing on capital improvements as well as service/neighbourhood solutions. Residents, elected members and partners will be able to easily track progress via the Sunderland Council Neighbourhood Investment Plan activity tracker. This tracking facility will enable everyone to be aware of the action taken and developments within their local neighbourhood as well as ensure we maximise social value from procurement and contract opportunities. Appendix 1 illustrates the reporting mechanism and links to the City Plan.

4.3 To ensure the five area Neighbourhood Investment Plans are ready for approval by Cabinet in March 2020, it will be important to share the emerging plan themes and priorities as well as feedback generally from the resident engagement with elected members, residents and stakeholders / partners. It is therefore important that various communication mechanisms are adopted.

4.4 The February People and Place Boards will be presented with the Neighbourhood Investment Plan themes and engagement feedback and be given the opportunity to review the plans prior to full approval at March 2020 Area Committee. Wider stakeholders will also be updated in February. Further area conversations will also be arranged to feed back to residents at an area level. This re-engagement

communication process will ensure full buy-in, city-wide, for the five plans, which in turn will support delivery moving forward as well as resident and partner ownership for the local priorities.

## **5. Area Committee priorities from 2020 onwards**

- 5.1 As highlighted within section 4 of this report, it will be the responsibility of the Area Committees to lead the delivery of the final Part 2 Article 10 Neighbourhood Investment Plans and therefore ensure the area priorities moving forward support delivery of the Plans.
- 5.2 The Neighbourhood Investment Plans will be themed (Healthy, Vibrant, Dynamic) and will allow for flexibility as priorities alter/vary within communities, often due to unforeseen circumstances as well as to maintain delivery momentum – for example, where opportunities arise to support partner projects or Crowdfund projects which support priorities or where opportunities arise to apply for external funding/grow community wealth to support delivery or where new issues arise within a community as a priority identified by ward members.
- 5.3 The Area Committees during their February People and Place Boards will discuss and agree priorities, to make recommendation to March 2020 Area Committee, to ensure direct alignment of Area Committee priorities to the Neighbourhood Investment Plans – as the plans will be formed following significant resident consultation and engagement in relation to what residents wish to see within their local neighbourhood.
- 5.4 Members are reminded that opportunities to align both revenue and capital funding to deliver priorities are in place as well as opportunities to enhance and supplement this through supporting aligned crowdfunded projects.

## **6. Summary**

- 6.1 Sunderland has a real opportunity to transform its Neighbourhoods, working alongside communities and partners to regenerate and create more resilient communities. Area Committees will be at the heart of this transformation journey.

## **7. Recommendations**

- 7.1 Note the content of the report.
- 7.2 Refer to Area People/Place Board for further discussions on how members would wish to support and monitor delivery of their area Neighbourhood Investment Plan.

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