

# **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE      14 JUNE 2011**

## **ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME AND POLICY REVIEW 2011-12**

### **REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: SP2: Healthy City; SP3: Safe City; SP5: Attractive and Inclusive City**

**CORPORATE PRIORITIES: CIO1 Customer focused services; CIO2 One Council; CIO3 Efficient and effective council; CIO4 Improving partnership working**

#### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 For members to determine the Annual Work Programme for the Scrutiny Committee during 2011-12, including the main theme for a detailed policy review.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Committee is responsible for setting its own work programme within the following remit:

*General Scope: To consider issues relating to sustainability and key city projects, and maintain an overview of each of the Sunderland Partnership's cross cutting priorities.*

*Remit: Cross Cutting Priorities: Sustainability, Creating Inclusive Communities, Housing and Culture*

- (a) **Creating Community:** Building Partnerships, Civic Engagement, Community Development and Compact, Justice and Equity, Mediation, Culture, Heritage;
- (b) **Natural Resources:** Water, Energy, Air and Climate, Biodiversity, Land and Ecosystems;
- (c) **Governing Sustainability:** Public/Private Partnerships, Community Relations; and
- (d) **Living Sustainably:** Lifestyles, Recreation, Sport, Play, Leisure Facilities, Responsible Buying and Consumption, Healthy Homes and Property.

- 2.2 The council's Scrutiny Committees are aligned to the relevant priorities of the Sunderland Strategy. This allows each Scrutiny Committee to focus on the priority areas and targets in the Sunderland Strategy and for the work of all Scrutiny Committees to consistently address those areas of performance requiring detailed examination.
- 2.3 This approach, linked to strategic priorities, is proposed to allow a clear themed focus on the outcomes for the people of Sunderland, and allow for cross-cutting examination of issues, with potential for linking areas of knowledge and expertise that would not ordinarily be brought together, so increasing the likelihood of the committees identifying novel approaches and solutions to the issues they consider.
- 2.4 The most relevant Sunderland Strategy priority for this committee is:
- To ensure that Sunderland becomes a clean, green city with a strong culture of sustainability, protecting and nurturing both its built heritage and future development and ensuring that both the built and natural environments will be welcoming, accessible, attractive and of high quality.*
- 2.5 All Scrutiny Committees will take a role in the scrutiny of partnership and area issues and have a role in engaging with partners, external scrutiny, community and public engagement, engaging with media and area scrutiny.

### **3. Policy Review**

- 3.1 Policy review is the process of maintaining an overview of council policies and will usually examine whether the council and its partners intended policy outcomes have been achieved. The process will also explore issues such as the perspective of residents affected by the policy.
- 3.2 Policy reviews are project planned with appropriate methodology applied to investigate the chosen topic. This may include meetings, site visits, surveys, public meetings or analysis of comparative practice in other local authorities.
- 3.3 Previous reviews carried out by this Scrutiny Committee have included:

The Role of Culture in Supporting Sustainable Communities; Access to Housing; Local Studies Provision; A Place to Play – A Review of Music Venues in Sunderland.

All previous reviews are available at:-

<http://www.sunderland.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=3420>

- 3.4 Following the selection of a topic for review, the Committee will receive a report setting out a possible approach to the review. This will include the terms of reference, definitions, links to corporate goals, partnerships, the national and local context, and proposals for gathering evidence.
- 3.5 The shortlist of topics for 2011-12 is listed below. The Committee is recommended to select one topic from this shortlist for an in-depth review. The list includes topics suggested as priorities at the discussions between members, officers and partners at the Annual Scrutiny Conference on 19 May 2011.

<b>Suggested Topics for Policy Review</b>		
	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Objective</b>
1.	Building a Sustainable and Lasting Legacy in Sport and Physical Activity	To review the existing council Sport and Physical Activity (taking into account the economic climate and the need to engage with communities), considering partnership working to enable this. This review would be undertaken in the context of the 2012 Olympics and how this will contribute to developing a sustained and lasting legacy of sport and physical activity.
2.	Sunderland's Cultural Strategy	To review the Cultural Strategy for Sunderland, reflecting upon the targets set out for the city and how culture has changed in the ten years since the strategy was developed. Consideration could be given to a future direction and work plan, whilst taking into account other relevant strategies for the city.
3.	Volunteering Strategy	To explore the provision of volunteers in the current climate, including how support is currently delivered to the VCS (Voluntary and Community Sector) to support sustainability and how this can be improved and delivered going forward.
4.	The Private Rented Sector	To explore the issues around private and/or absentee landlords, looking at hot spot neighbourhood areas and ways in which to raise standards, including the Private Sector Enforcement Policy and the accreditation scheme for landlords.

#### **4. Work Programme**

- 4.1 A draft work programme for 2011-12 is attached as Appendix A. The work programme will be populated with items agreed by members at this meeting and submitted to the July meeting.
- 4.2 The work programme can be amended during the year. Any member of the Committee can add an item of business to an agenda (see Protocol 1 Overview & Scrutiny Handbook).

## **5. Conclusion & Recommendation**

- 5.1 The Committee is asked to
  - (a) Consider the draft Annual Work Programme for 2011-12 and indicate any additions or amendments
  - (b) Consider the list of suggestions for policy review and determine one topic for review.
- 5.2 Subject to any amendment at this meeting, the work programme will be submitted to the Management Scrutiny Committee in its coordinating role.

## **6 Background Papers**

None

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