

Environment & Attractive City

COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT (CAA) REPORTS AND PERFORMANCE UPDATE (APRIL - SEPTEMBER)

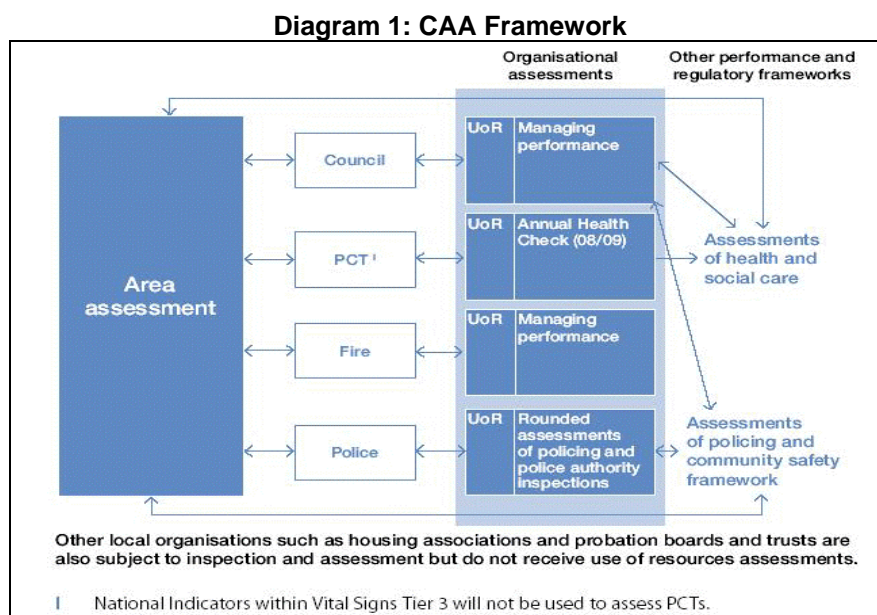
Report of the Chief Executive and Director of City Services

1.0 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Scrutiny Committee with the findings from the inaugural Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) and a performance update which includes those areas identified by the Audit Commission (AC) as being the focus of improvement during 2010.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 CAA was introduced in April 2009 to provide an independent assessment of how local public services are working in partnership to deliver outcomes for an area. The first results were reported on the new Oneplace website (www.oneplace.direct.gov.uk) on 9 December 2009.
- 2.2 CAA comprises two main elements namely, an area assessment and an organisational assessment for each of the four main public sector organisations (i.e. council, fire, health and police). This is demonstrated in the diagram below.



- 2.3 Members will recall that a new national performance framework was implemented during 2008/2009. This includes 198 new National Indicators which replaces previous national performance frameworks. As part of this new framework 49 national indicators have been identified as key priorities to be included in the Local Area Agreement (LAA). Performance against the priorities identified in the LAA and associated improvement targets have been reported to Scrutiny committee throughout 2009 and are a key consideration

in CAA in terms of the extent to which the partnership is improving outcomes for local people

3.0 AREA ASSESSMENT

3.1 Process and methodology

3.1.1 The area assessment focuses on the prospects for better outcomes on local priorities and is an annual assessment of the work of the public services in the city by a range of inspectorates. It answers three key questions:

- How well do local priorities express community needs and aspirations?
- How well are the outcomes and improvements needed being delivered?
- What are the prospects for improvement?

3.1.2 Between April and September 2009 the Audit Commission CAA Lead (CAAL) assessed the work of the Sunderland Partnership (SP) as part of the inaugural CAA Area Assessment. This was achieved through a series of workshops, interviews and briefing notes and a review of evidence (e.g. key documents, performance indicators, consultation results, etc.). This was an iterative process and the CAA Lead shared the findings at regular intervals throughout.

3.2 Findings – good practice and areas for improvement

3.2.1 The area assessment is not scored and does not carry a star rating. It is a narrative report providing an overview of progress against key priorities for the area, overall successes and challenges.

3.2.2 Area assessments may award green or red flags. Red flags highlight those areas where there are significant concerns by the inspectorates about outcomes or future prospects, and where more or different actions are required. Green flags highlight exceptional performance or outstanding improvement in outcomes through an innovative approach, from which others nationally can learn. No red or green flags have been identified for Sunderland.

3.2.3 The fact that Sunderland has no red flags demonstrates that the inspectorates have no significant concerns and that the Council and its partners are clear about what needs to be done and has plans in place to secure the necessary impact on outcomes.

3.2.4 Although Sunderland was not awarded any green flags the report recognises the positive impact the Sunderland Partnership is making on quality of life. For example:

- There is a good record of attracting new businesses and investment to the city and this is likely to continue helped by an Economic Masterplan.
- The Sunderland Learning Partnership is helping to improve skills in the city and clear plans are in place for it to continue to deliver improved outcomes.
- There is a good understanding of the health, social care and wellbeing needs of the population.

- Easier access to treatment is reducing some health inequalities and this is likely to continue.
- Access to primary health care at a local level is easier and care services for adults are good.
- Overall crime is lower in Sunderland than similar areas in England and Wales and continues to fall and fear of crime is reducing.
- There are positive outcomes from a range of targeted work including drug treatment programmes, a safer homes programme improving quality of life, youth engagement projects and parenting initiatives.
- Sunderland's local environment is currently ranked joint third best of the UK's 20 largest cities. Social housing and transport are good.

3.2.5 The report highlighted a small number of areas for improvement, which are already priorities for the city, namely:

- To reduce the number of young people in Sunderland that are not in employment, education or training (i.e. NEETs) from the current levels of one in young eight young people.
- To meet some key targets around health inequalities, which are not being met, such as reducing death rates for men to nearer the national average; reducing the teenage pregnancy rate; and smoking rates, particularly smoking during pregnancy.
- To continue to address child poverty, which is reducing faster than in other areas but remains high.
- To address the issue of affordable housing in Sunderland, through the implementation of developed plans.
- To ensure that City Region actions deliver improved actions in relation to transport and skills.
- To ensure the Alcohol Strategy delivers the planned outcomes, particularly in relation to alcohol related hospital admissions.

3.2.6 Good practice in relation to the services within the Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee's remit and the council and Sunderland Partnership's own analysis of where we are at in relation to these improvement areas is contained in section 4 and 5. **Appendix 1** provides an overview of the position for relevant national indicators and also any local performance indicators that have been retained to supplement areas in the performance framework that are not well covered by the new national indicator set.

3.3 Improvement planning approach

3.3.1 The Sunderland Partnership's Delivery and Improvement Board considered the draft area assessment report, and in particular those areas identified as being in need of improvement at its meeting on 11 November, as part of a wider discussion on improvement priorities for the next year. Delivery Plans are currently being refreshed to ensure that the work programme is targeting the right issues, and outcomes can be demonstrated, minimising the risk of areas for improvement becoming red flags in 2010. These Delivery Plans will be presented to Scrutiny Committees in February 2010.

3.4 2010 approach

- 3.4.1 The CAA Lead has now shared his planned approach to undertaking the evidence gathering for area assessment in 2010, which will differ significantly to the approach undertaken in 2009. There has been an acknowledgement within the inspectorates that the level of resources allocated to the assessment is not sustainable and so a more proportionate approach is now planned.
- 3.4.2 In Sunderland (and the rest of Tyne and Wear) the CAA Lead plans to adopt an approach with two complementary elements, namely:
- A Risk Assessment Matrix
 - A small number of themed probes across Tyne and Wear (the exact nature and subject of the probes have yet to be agreed).
- 3.4.3 The Risk Assessment Matrix will be the primary tool against which the Sunderland Partnership will be assessed and is designed to provide greater clarity and certainty around the final outcome of the area assessment (for example the number of green and red flags that will be awarded in the final report).
- 3.4.4 The Matrix will incorporate those issues that were identified in the first year of the CAA area assessment as having the most potential to become red flags and green flags, as well as any themes that weren't considered in the first year of CAA that the CAA Lead wishes to explore in 2010 (e.g. mental health).
- 3.4.5 Once the Risk Assessment Matrix has been agreed, the CAA Lead will use it to monitor progress against the agreed performance trajectory (up until the end of September 2010) for each issue to arrive at his final area assessment judgement for 2010. Progress will be monitored through the Council and the Sunderland Partnership's performance management and reporting arrangements.

4.0 Audit Commission Findings

- 4.1 Sunderland's local environment is currently ranked joint third best of the UK's 20 largest cities. Sunderland's streets and green space are well maintained. Improvement is likely to continue through plans to identify a network of green corridors to increase opportunities for sport and leisure activities and for 'Legible City' to improve information and help people enjoy the City and find their way around.
- 4.2 Sunderland is clean and well kept with good levels of open green space including well maintained parks. Roker Beach was again awarded a "Blue Flag" for cleanliness in 2009. However, people have mixed views about the area they live in. Overall satisfaction with the local area is up to 76.8 per cent and satisfaction with cleanliness improved to 54.4 per cent in 2008 surveys, but both these figures remain slightly below average. Parks and open spaces satisfaction - at 63.3 per cent - is in line with the North East average, although below the national average.
- 4.3 There is good work in Sunderland to reduce partners' impact on the

environment. Waste going to landfill sites has reduced and the Joint Waste Partnership between Sunderland, South Tyneside and Gateshead is to use new waste handling facilities to further reduce waste to landfill.

- 4.4 Transport links are good, both by public transport and by road. There are good, well maintained road connections to the major road network, a frequent Metro train service to Newcastle, a regular train service to London and two nearby airports. There are high levels of satisfaction with public transport in Sunderland: 62 per cent with local bus services and 55 per cent with local transport information, both well above averages.

5.0 Areas for Improvement

- 5.1 In relation to Attractive and Inclusive City no issues have been identified in the first year of the CAA area assessment as having potential to become red flags.

- 5.2 Local Area Agreement indicators included within Environment and Attractive City are as follows:

Ref	Description	2008/09 Outturn	Latest Update	Trend	Target 2009/10	On Target
NI 195a	Improved street and environmental cleanliness (litter)	4%	4%	◀▶	9%	✓
NI 195b	Improved street and environmental cleanliness (detritus)	5%	5%	◀▶	7%	✓
NI 195c	Improved street and environmental cleanliness (graffiti)	4%	4%	◀▶	3%	✗
NI 195d	Improved street and environmental cleanliness (fly posting)	0%	0%	◀▶	1%	✓
NI 192	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	25.59%	30.8%	▲	30%	✓
NI 175a	% households within 20 minutes of closest secondary school	100%	n/a	n/a	100%	n/a
NI 175b	% of households within 20 minutes of closest primary school	100%	n/a	n/a	100%	n/a
NI 175c	% of households within 30 minutes of closest A&E hospital	88.5%	n/a	n/a	88.20%	n/a
NI 175d	% of households within 20 minutes of closest GP surgery	99.7%	n/a	n/a	99.80%	n/a
NI 175e	% of households within 40 minutes of specific employment sites - Doxford	86.6%	n/a	n/a	86.90%	n/a
NI 175f	% of households within 40 minutes of specific employment sites - Nissan	78.3%	n/a	n/a	70.80%	n/a
NI 175g	% of households within 40 minutes of specific employment sites - Pattinson	74.3%	n/a	n/a	83.70%	n/a
NI 175h	% of households within 40 minutes of specific employment sites - City Centre	85.8%	n/a	n/a	89.70%	n/a
NI 159	Supply of ready to develop housing sites	145%	n/a	n/a	100%	n/a

Nb. the figures for Ni195a,b,c,d represent the %'age of failing streets/ transects and in this case the lower the actual figure (and target) the better.

There are no key risks in terms of LAA indicators at this point of the agreement.

- 5.3 In terms of other national indicators the following performance indicators are declining and not on schedule to meet the 2009/10 target.

NI 47 People killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents

NI 47 measures the percentage change in the number of people killed or seriously injured during the calendar year compared to the previous year. Figures are based on a 3 year rolling average up to the current year i.e.

Average for 2007/2008/2009 compared to the average for 2006/2007/2008
Is -1.25% compared to -0.9% performance is declining as a positive percentage change indicates good performance.

The number of road accident casualties killed or seriously injured year on year can be found in the table below

Ref	Description	2007/08 Outturn	2008/09 Outturn	2009/10 Update	Trend	2009/10 Target	On Target
BV 99ai	No. Road Accident Casualties KSI All	120	93	66 (July 09)	▼	93	✗
BV 99bi	No. Road Accident. Casualties KSI Child	29	13	11 (July 09)	▼	13	✗

Improvement activity

The Council continues to attempt to reduce casualties arising out of road traffic accidents through education, promotion and implementation of traffic calming measures. Under the current mechanism, traffic accident data determines the priority of any future works. In addition the scrutiny committee's policy review during 2009/10 is focussing on road safety and traffic issues including casualty reduction initiatives such as 20mph zones and speed limits.

6.0 Recommendation

- 6.1 That the committee considers the continued good progress made by the council and the Sunderland Partnership, as described in the CAA reports, and those areas requiring further development to ensure that performance is actively managed.

7.0 Background papers

Area assessment report – Sunderland
Organisational assessment report – Sunderland City Council
Use of resources report – Sunderland City Council