

**INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY FOR SUNDERLAND
(Consultative Draft – October 2006)**

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FOREWORD

This is the first time Sunderland has drawn together its many international connections, networks, initiatives and activities to create a strategy and action plan which will have a long-lasting positive impact on the future of the City, the lives of its residents and that of fellow citizens in countries around the world. It enables us to draw upon past experience, bring together expertise and resources and aspire to achieve the full potential of a city that is truly international.

Sunderland has been an international city for centuries. In medieval times the City was the European centre of learning and culture. During the manufacturing revolution the ships built on the Wear were in demand all over the world. Today the cars made in Sunderland are driven by motorists in three continents and the City is at the heart of the new global knowledge economy. More and more students from as far afield as China, Africa and India are completing Sunderland University degree courses.

Sunderland's links with its twin towns in France and Germany are as strong and relevant today as they were when they were signed more than 50 years ago and a new Friendship Agreement with Washington DC promises a wealth of opportunities for the people of Sunderland.

Thanks to better transport and communications it is increasingly easy to connect with partners, businesses, cultural institutions and educational opportunities outside the UK. That means that the competition for business, investment, tourism, education and technology exchanges is even more challenging. Although Sunderland has been well ahead in capitalising on the benefits of cultural, learning and entrepreneurial exchange and foreign investment, it has never been more important to ensure that the City retains and improves its competitive advantage.

The key to this is the City's greatest asset – its people. This strategy will help us ensure not only that Sunderland remains competitive, but crucially, that the people of Sunderland are ready to take advantage of all that international working can bring.

Cllr Robert Symonds
Leader of the City Council

Canon Stephen Taylor
Chair, Sunderland Partnership

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The need for, and value of, international engagement for cities such as Sunderland is increasingly evident. Companies and their employees compete in a global economy, and individuals and organisations need to work together to protect the environment and tackle global issues such as climate change. Within this context, developing a sense of global citizenship and promoting stability and security across the world through supporting initiatives such as fair trade is increasingly important.

Sunderland is setting out its stall to become the UK's most liveable city, developing and delivering initiatives in line with three key values (life-enhancing, smart and balanced) in the knowledge that the way people see Sunderland will be crucial to its regeneration and development. Effective engagement with the wider world is essential to achieve the vision for Sunderland's future to ensure that it can compete nationally and internationally and that its citizens have the skills required by employers in an ever more global context.

The City has benefited significantly from its international links and activity over many years and its experience is reflected nationally in research commissioned by the UK Alliance for International Development and the three categories of benefits identified by the Local Government International Bureau and Local Government Association: institutional, citizen, and socio-economic benefits.

The City has a long history of international connections and activity beginning with its significance as an early European centre of learning and strong historic ties with America and the Washington family, which date back to 1183. Internationally important in the heyday of its heavy industries, Sunderland's economy has been regenerated in recent years with significant international investment. The City is increasingly cosmopolitan with more than 50 nationalities now represented in the community including the growing international student population.

Sunderland enjoys active links with Essen and Saint-Nazaire, its European twin towns for more than 50 years, and has a Friendship Agreement with Washington DC. Together with experience from international networks, projects, and educational and cultural initiatives this represents an excellent base on which to develop the City's international engagement through a more co-ordinated and pro-active approach.

The International Strategy will underpin Sunderland's need to compete nationally and internationally. International engagement will support the Sunderland Partnership in achieving its vision for Sunderland, maximising opportunities and benefits by:

- developing, and exchanging, good practice within international partnerships and networks;
- including an international dimension in the City's activities wherever appropriate;
- influencing European Union policy and legislation which might impact on the City;
- identifying appropriate European Union policies and initiatives which can be implemented for the benefit of the City;
- raising the profile of Sunderland internationally;
- ensuring people and organisations in Sunderland acknowledge the benefits of international engagement;
- sharing experience within the Sunderland Partnership on the benefits and practicalities of international working;
- working with regional and other partners to maximise the benefits of international engagement.

INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY FOR SUNDERLAND

INTRODUCTION

This is the first International Strategy for Sunderland, developed collectively by members of the Sunderland Partnership. It seeks to ensure the opportunities and benefits of international engagement are maximised in all areas of the Partnership's activity.

In some thematic areas there is already considerable experience and expertise on which to build, while in other policy areas there is less of a tradition of international engagement. This document therefore begins in Section 1 by setting out the strategic context for developing international activity in the future, which will already be familiar to some partners. Section 2 summarises the benefits of international engagement, drawing on national research and experience within Sunderland to date. A fuller overview of Sunderland's international connections and activity to date is included in Section 3 to give a flavour of the experience available for the Partnership to build upon.

The framework within which international activity will be developed is set out in Section 4. This is followed, in Section 5, with details of how this framework will be implemented to ensure international engagement supports the Partnership in achieving its vision for Sunderland.

This Strategy has been developed within the context of the Sunderland Strategy, which provides the vision and strategic objectives together with an agreed set of principles within which initiatives will be taken forward. More detailed information on the Sunderland Strategy, and the context it provides for developing our international work as a City, is included in the Strategic Context section.

SUNDERLAND'S VISION

"Sunderland will be a prosperous city. A desirable, safe and healthy place to live, work, learn and visit, where all people can reach their full potential" (Vision, Sunderland Strategy, 2004– 2007)

"A city that is striving to maximise people's quality of life by pursuing a smarter attitude to city living and leading the way in creating a sustainable balanced future" (Image Strategy, 2005)

Effective engagement with the wider world is essential to achieve this vision for the City's future. A strong international dimension within its activities will enable the City to increase opportunities for its residents, attract investment, and exchange ideas and information to develop the necessary knowledge and best practice.

SECTION 1: STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Introduction

Sunderland's future prosperity depends on its ability to adapt and thrive within an increasingly competitive and complex international setting particularly in relation to the economy, the environment, image and tourism, and culture, media and the internet.

Economy – Globalisation affects us all. In the global economy today, investment is increasingly mobile and decisions depend on the quality of the location, the availability and skills of local people, and the potential to achieve world-class standards of productivity and performance. Equally, businesses need to access new markets and develop new products. It also provides increased opportunities for individuals to travel from and to the City. Continuing to adapt to globalisation will enable the City to compete nationally and internationally and ensure our citizens are equipped with the skills and capabilities to meet the needs of employers operating within this global context.

Case Study: Nissan

In 1994, Nissan Motor Manufacturing Company of Japan chose to locate their first car manufacturing facility in Europe. Nissan originally had a list of over 50 possible locations for this investment and, after rigorous analysis and research throughout Europe, they selected Sunderland.

Nissan was the first Japanese car manufacturer to begin production in Europe. The total invested by the company is in excess of £2 billion, and the models built in Sunderland include Micra, Note, Primera and the new Quashqai 4x4. The Nissan investment in Sunderland has become an excellent example of Foreign Direct Investment. From day one, they have had close links with both the City Council and the local community.

The benefits Nissan has brought to Sunderland, the region and the UK are wide-ranging:

- Nissan contributes over £400 million to the local economy.
- There are currently 240 Nissan suppliers within the region who provide anything from local services to hi-tech automotive components.
- International companies who have located in the City to supply Nissan currently employ over 5,000 people; many of these companies also supply components to other car manufacturers throughout Europe.
- Cars made in Sunderland are exported to over 45 countries throughout the world.
- The plant is one of the most advanced with over 435 robots on the production line, which means over 80% automation. Nissan also works closely with the University of Sunderland on skills development and the advanced training of its workforce.
- Every year since 1996, Nissan has been independently assessed as the most productive car plant in Europe.

Environment – Sunderland is affected by global environmental issues such as pollution and climate change, and must make its contribution towards reducing negative impacts on the environment and ensuring sustainable development. Being pro-active in addressing these challenges will help to improve the quality of life within the City.

Case Study: Measuring Sunderland's Eco-footprint

Since 2003 Sunderland City Council has been working with World Wildlife Fund-UK (WWF-UK) and Stockholm Environment Institute to try to understand the City's impact on the global environment, and work out the City's eco-footprint.

Sunderland's eco-footprint is the amount of land required to supply all the food, energy, waste and materials that people in Sunderland consume. It accounts for the City's own greenhouse gas emissions and the impact of goods imported into Sunderland from around the world.

The study was part of a much wider regional and national project, called Ecological-Budget UK, which was led by WWF-UK and funded by Biffaward. As part of this wider project, Sunderland put itself forward as a pilot City to be footprinted.

Community groups helped develop the eco-footprint during 2004 and 2005. The City's eco-footprint was published in May 2006, together with the eco-footprint for the North East region as a whole. Awareness material and a toolkit are now being developed to help residents, organisations and businesses first understand, and then reduce, their own impact on the global environment which will help to improve the quality of life within the City.

Image and Tourism – Improving Sunderland's image and promoting the City nationally and internationally will influence individuals and businesses as they choose where to study, visit, live, work and invest.

Case Study: A new image for Sunderland

Sunderland is re-inventing itself and has set out its vision to become the most liveable city in the UK. Re-positioning Sunderland came about as a result of extensive research and consultation with people both inside and outside the city who recognised that image is important for the City to be able to retain and attract residents, students, investors and visitors.

During the process of creating a brand for the City we drew upon the experience of other cities that had successfully set about changing people's perceptions. We looked at Barcelona, where marketing campaigns appealed to local pride and resulted in people working together to smarten up the city centre, making it more attractive for tourists. In New York the famous I love New York campaign helped change its image as an unwelcoming place. But we were most interested in cities similar to Sunderland that had successfully re-invented themselves.

In Tampere, Finland's third city, people were facing decline of the traditional logging industry and an associated legacy of ill health and inactivity. Recognising the potential of attracting the new high tech jobs, Tampere challenged its people to become more active, introduced healthy city programmes and soon began attracting the high tech jobs and associated investment that helped it win the title of the best place to live in Finland. In Portland, Oregon, USA, the city was facing economic decline and like Sunderland, people were leaving. The people of Portland began to think more smartly about their commitment to the city's green environment, re-routing a major road away from the city, using renewable energy and nurturing and developing the city's special culture. Soon it was voted the best place to bring up a family and the best place to be a student in America.

Sunderland is aiming to create that balanced way of life, making the most of the city's fantastic environment by the sea and committing to smarter ways of working both in the new industries and

in a reinvigorated commitment to sustainability. The vision is to offer young people a quality of life that they can't get in other cities - that will encourage people to choose Sunderland to live, study, work and bring up their family.

Culture, media and the internet – Enabling our citizens to experience other cultures will help them to develop as global citizens and enhance cultural provision within the City. Presenting the City effectively to an international audience through the internet and global media, which touches all aspects of life in the City, will increase Sunderland's profile and contribute to improving its image.

Case Study: Sunderland International Kite Festival

Sunderland International Kite Festival, now in its 21st year, is a shining example of an arts event, rooted in the community, transcending cultural boundaries by bringing together professional kite fliers from all over the world to engage in the well loved pursuit of kite flying. The universal nature of this activity positively breaks down barriers of age, race, creed, politics or language.

The making and flying of kites is enjoyed and shared by all but at the same time highlights the customs and traditions unique to a particular country. The kite fliers travel from all over the world, including the USA, Europe, China, Japan, Thailand, Australia and the United Kingdom, to entertain, teach and share their skills and knowledge. Kite fliers flourish through their friendships and in Sunderland enable visitors to engage with them in a relaxed and stimulating environment promoting greater knowledge and understanding of different cultures. The Festival also provides an international programme of music, dance and street theatre to complement and enhance the event, again presenting a broader cultural experience to all the visitors.

The Festival website, linked to Sunderland.gov.uk, received the second highest number of hits on the Council's micro sites and promotes this multicultural activity to thousands of people nationally and internationally.

Even after 20 years the festival still attracts a high level of media interest, from both local and national press, TV and radio enabling the people of Sunderland to be proud of hosting an international event that is visually attractive, popular and represents so many different cultures.

In order to develop means by which Sunderland can adapt and thrive in this competitive and complex international setting, it is important to understand the different levels of policy which affect key areas of concern for the Sunderland Partnership in relation to the City's development.

This section therefore sets out the inter-relationship of key International, European Union (EU) and UK policies, which affect decision-making within the City and influence the ongoing development and implementation of the Sunderland Strategy. Together with associated initiatives, they provide the momentum for the City to adopt a co-ordinated and strategic approach to its international activity.

a) International

Companies increasingly need to compete in international markets in order to survive and to grow, sourcing suppliers and marketing their services to consumers within a global context. Economies such as China and India are growing rapidly and, coupled with the growth of economies in the new

EU Member States, will continue to increase competition. More established economies will need to respond to this challenge. Attracting and retaining international investment, and enabling local businesses and people to compete effectively in international markets are major challenges for the City within this context.

Many environmental issues such as climate change and pollution are global. The Earth summit, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, agreed a range of objectives in relation to the environment and sustainable development, with the aim of integrating environmental considerations into economic development and reducing negative environmental impacts. These cover areas such as the planning and management of land resources, waste management, energy development, resource efficiency and consumption, and transport. The principles established at the Earth Summit are also reflected in, for example, the Kyoto Protocol which sets targets for industrialised countries to cut greenhouse gas emissions. Limited progress had been achieved towards the voluntary targets by the Johannesburg summit in 2002, although there is ongoing international dialogue to progress this work. The introduction of mandatory measures at EU or UK level could have a significant impact on the City and its businesses. International co-operation, through activities such as the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEs) Cities for Climate Change Programme, which brings together 600 municipalities world-wide representing more than 10% of global carbon emissions, can make a significant contribution.

Alongside the need for increased economic productivity and equitable trade to improve the quality of life, stability and security are increasingly a priority at the international level. Individual cities do not operate in isolation but are increasingly inter-connected and inter-dependant. Investment decisions that may create jobs, or result in job losses, are often taken thousands of miles away from the place of work. Increased awareness of international issues, experience and understanding of other cultures, and specific initiatives to encourage fair trade, reduce poverty, and promote local democracy and civic engagement within an international context can contribute significantly to raising the quality of life for all.

Recognising that a set of priorities was needed to improve the lives of the poorest people, world leaders signed the Millennium Declaration in September 2000 under the auspices of the United Nations (UN). Ambitious targets then were agreed to tackle poverty, improve environmental sustainability, public health, gender inequality and access to education, as well as to form global partnerships for this purpose. It was concluded in 2005, however, that more action would be needed if the targets were to be reached, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. The UN recognises that the required progress will not be achieved without local action across the world and the UK Alliance for International Development is working to encourage active contributions from communities in the UK.

The G8 Group made commitments to support equitable trade with developing countries at its summit in the UK in 2005. These commitments are supported by the UK and other EU countries and reflected in the City Council's resolution to become a Fair Trade City.

b) European Union

Significant enlargement of the European Union took place in 2004, making the EU the largest multi-country single market with a population of 450 million across its 25 Member States. Negotiations are underway for further enlargement, for example, with Bulgaria and Romania expected to join the EU in 2007. A programme, known as Plan D (for Democracy), was launched by the EU in 2005 to ensure it engages more effectively with people across the EU. This followed 'no' votes in referenda held in Holland and France on the proposed European Constitution and is

complemented in the UK by an increased emphasis on outreach work on the part of the European Commission and European Parliament. Linked to this, the European Parliament's Europe Day Celebration for the UK was held in the North East in 2006.

Policy developed within the EU has an impact on the UK as a Member State, and therefore on the City of Sunderland, its institutions, businesses and people. The European Union's most significant policy agenda, known as the Lisbon Agenda, is set firmly within the context of Europe as a player in the global market. In 2000, it set ambitious targets to make the EU's economy 'the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion' by 2010. An environmental element was added six months later in Gothenburg, meaning that the Lisbon Agenda combined economic, social and environmental goals within one policy area for the first time. The Lisbon targets include increasing investment in research and development, raising employment rates, increasing skill levels, and reducing the paygap between men and women. Within the context of the Lisbon Agenda, a European Strategy for Languages was developed. This includes a Common European Framework for Languages, providing a shared set of standards to measure linguistic competence.

Following an independent review, the Lisbon Agenda was re-focused on growth and jobs in 2005 to help ensure its targets would be achieved. Five key policy areas were identified for action: the knowledge society, the internal market, the business climate, the labour market and environmental sustainability. These are reflected in the revised Regional Economic Strategy.

European and UK government funding supports the implementation of key EU policies such as the Lisbon Agenda, for example, by supporting skills development activity, encouraging co-operation between universities and businesses in research and development, and financing initiatives to enable people to become economically active. For the period 2007 to 2013 European funding will be available to support such initiatives in the City through the EU's Competitiveness and Employment Objective, although this will be limited reflecting the region's relative economic position in an EU of 25 Member States. Trans-national programmes will continue to support co-operation between European partners across a wide range of EU policy areas including research and development, culture, the environment, lifelong learning, and citizenship. These programmes offer a valuable opportunity to develop and exchange good practice with European partners and are developed within the overall policy context set by the Lisbon Agenda.

EU legislation also impacts directly on the City. For example, EU regulations govern the level of support that can be provided from public funds to encourage private investment to ensure that competition is not distorted across the EU as a whole. During the period from 2000-2006, these regulations allowed significant support to be given to companies such as Nissan to support investment. Revised State and Regional Aid guidelines for 2007-2013 will play an important role in facilitating the ongoing development of the City's economy and our ability to compete nationally and internationally. Similarly, EU environmental legislation sets targets for the percentage of waste that must be recycled, and for the cleanliness of our beaches. Further examples of EU legislation being implemented within the UK are included in part c) of this section.

In areas where the EU has no legal authority, the Member States still often choose to work together. In Education, the Bologna Agreement was established to ensure that European universities have common standards and systems so that they can compete collectively within a global higher education market. The region's universities are working together to implement the Bologna Agreement. This complements EU policies in line with the Lisbon Agenda which actively promote lifelong learning, encouraging people to continue to develop their skills and capabilities on

an ongoing basis.

c) National

International agreements on the environment or trade are generally implemented at EU and UK level. The outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg are reflected in the EU's Lisbon Agenda and environmental initiatives, the UK Sustainable Development Strategy and Climate Change Strategy (revised in 2006), and the Government's Sustainable Communities agenda. Sunderland is one of a hundred signatories committed, under the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change, to preparing local Climate Change strategies. The challenges of globalisation are reflected in the UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) document 'Prosperity in a Changing World', issued in July 2006.

Similarly, much of EU policy and legislation is implemented by the government at the national, and regional, level. In terms of policy, the EU's Lisbon Agenda is reflected in the National Lisbon Reform Programme, which sets out how the UK will work towards achieving the Lisbon targets and increasing competitiveness. In turn this is reflected within the UK in the revised Regional Economic Strategy, which seeks to increase competitiveness through the region's businesses and its people, as well as in national and regional programmes for EU funding. Examples of how EU legislation affects UK businesses, residents, consumers and local authorities on a day-to-day basis are included below.

Case Studies: EU legislation in the UK

Business – A considerable share of overall pollution within the EU, in terms of greenhouse gases, acidifying substances, wastewater emissions and waste, comes from industrial production processes. To try to minimise pollution from industry the EU has a set of rules, set out in its Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Directive, for permitting and controlling industrial installations. The regulations cover approximately 50,000 industrial processes, including glass production, and companies wishing to operate in any of these areas are required to obtain an environmental permit. The Directive is being reviewed by the EU during 2006-07, together with legislation on industrial emissions. As part of this review, which is looking at the impact of the legislation including experience within industry as well as among regulators, the City Council's Environmental Health and Consumer Services section has been involved in interviews with the EU's Chief Consultant.

Residents - Trading Standards Officers in the City were involved in investigating a company based in the Netherlands, following complaints from local people. The company was sending unwanted publications to vulnerable members of the community and then harassing them for payment. Working in partnership with other Trading Standards colleagues, officers intervened in over 400 complaints. The end result was that the company signed undertakings to the Office of Fair Trading, under the Enterprise Act 2002, to stop this activity. The Enterprise Act 2002 has its roots in European Union Directives designed to protect consumers.

Consumers – The General Product Safety Directive makes provision for the rapid exchange of information within the EU on products, which are likely to be harmful to consumers. This information exchange, known as RAPEX, is hosted in the UK by the Department of Trade and Industry. In 2005, Sunderland City Council's Trading Standards Service made a RAPEX notification about a dangerous laser pointer, which could also be used as a lighter. This information was then forwarded, through the rapid information exchange system, to all Member States to alert them of the potential danger and protect consumers across the EU.

Council – As a public body, the way the Council purchases its goods and services is subject to EU regulations through the EU Procurement Directive. The Directive is designed to open up competition in this area, increasing cross-border competition to enable providers in other EU countries to compete for contracts, with the overall aim of reducing costs. The regulations apply when contracts go above certain financial limits, for example, over £140,371 for basic supply contracts and over £3,611,319 for works. Under this Directive, the tender for the contract for the installation and maintenance of the Council's Voice Over IP telephone system was advertised in the EU's Official Journal. The contract was subsequently awarded to a UK-based company.

One of the principal messages of the UK's Alliance for International Development, 'Think Global, Act Local', reflects the need for local action to address global challenges. The Alliance was set up in 2004 to 'promote local government and local community participation in international development through providing tools and resources to help local authorities become more actively involved'. Membership of the Alliance includes the Local Government International Bureau, the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF) and the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA).

The Local Government International Bureau (LGIB) and Local Government Association (LGA) published its draft International Policy in 2006, building on previous policies covering European Enlargement and International Development. While this policy is specific to local authorities, it is relevant to a City-wide Strategy within the context of the Local Government Act 2000 and the community leadership role it sets out for local authorities, including powers to act where this is likely to promote or improve the economic, social and/or environmental well-being of its people.

The LGIB and LGA policy has four aims:

- i) to increase the involvement of UK local government in international cooperation;
- ii) to help UK local government maximise the domestic benefits of international cooperation in relation to service delivery and community wellbeing;
- iii) to raise awareness of the role that UK local government can play in promoting the development of local democracy overseas and the important contribution they can make to international development activities;
- iv) to emphasise that all forms of international cooperation are valid and equal, and can contribute positively to the reputation of UK local government.

It welcomes the involvement of local authorities in international partnerships and asks that each local authority:

- i) becomes more actively involved in all forms of international partnership
- ii) adopts an international policy and develops a strategy for engagement and activities, and
- iii) appoints an elected member to promote the international dimension.

Within Sunderland City Council, it is envisaged that overall responsibility for the international dimension will lie within the Leader's portfolio.

The Government's 'National Strategy for Languages' (2002) promotes foreign language learning as an important part of equipping young people with the skills and cultural understanding needed for the world of work. This develops the standards set out in the Common European Framework through the UK Language Ladder, which offers an accreditation framework for linguistic competence for people of all ages.

Encouragement to engage in international activity is not restricted to initiatives from organisations with a specific international remit. The Government's 'Putting the World into World Class

Education' initiative, which was launched by the Department for Education and Skills as part of its International Strategy in 2004, focuses on the importance of young people being taught within an international context. This includes developing an understanding among all young people of what it means to be a global citizen in the widest sense, as well as equipping them to be able to take part in a global economy. Citizenship, as set out in the National Strategies for schools (in the primary and secondary phases), is supported and underpinned through the international dimension. The international dimension also promotes, and can enrich, learning across the curriculum. The DfES Strategy therefore sets targets for all schools to have at least one overseas link, and to achieve the International School Award's Foundation level, by 2010.

There is a wide range of policy areas where an international dimension could add value to existing strategies at national level. For example, a significant contribution could be made to achieving the five outcomes for children of the 'Every Child Matters – Change for Children Programme' (underpinned by the Children's Act 2004): being safe; being healthy; enjoying and achieving; making a positive contribution; making an economic contribution. These five outcomes are directly reflected at local level in the objectives of the Sunderland Strategy. In sport, London's successful Olympic bid for 2012 includes a strong international dimension, particularly in relation to young people, reflecting the potential this has to enhance the Olympic Programme. Equally, the international dimension could support the achievement of the outcomes set out in the Adult Services White Paper: improved health and well being; improved quality of life; making a positive contribution; choice and control; freedom from discrimination; economic wellbeing; personal dignity.

In addition, the requirement for public organisations, including local authorities, to pursue continuous improvement goals, and achieve value for money, indirectly forms part of the national context for encouraging international engagement. Developing and sharing good practice within international projects and networks can be an effective tool in achieving such goals.

d) Regional

The European Strategy Group (ESG), established in November 2004, sets the strategic direction for European engagement at a regional level. Its membership brings together representatives from key organisations in the region, together with North East MEPs and Committee of the Regions (CoR) representatives.

The European Strategy Group launched 'North East England in Europe – a Framework for Action' in November 2005. The overall aim of the document is to facilitate a co-ordinated approach to European engagement within the region, ensuring that it contributes to the achievement of the vision for the region, as set out in the Integrated Regional Framework (IRF) and revised Regional Economic Strategy (RES):

"The North East will be a region where present and future generations have a high quality of life. It will be a vibrant, self-reliant, ambitious and outward looking region featuring a dynamic economy, a healthy environment, and a distinctive culture. Everyone will have the opportunity to reach their full potential."

The Framework for Action therefore sets out objectives in four policy priorities (People, Prosperity, Culture and the Environment), which regional partners will work to achieve by 2010. Effective European engagement under these policy priorities will contribute to areas for action identified in the revised Regional Economic Strategy in relation to Business, People and Place. The policy priorities set out in the Framework for Action also reflect the aims of other regional strategies including the Cultural Manifesto for the North East and Regional Tourism Strategy, and initiatives such as the Regional Image Campaign.

Five over-arching principles underpin the Framework for Action and the activities within each policy area:

- i) ensuring that the European dimension helps the region to develop in a sustainable way;
- ii) enhancing the development and implementation of other strategies such as the Regional Economic Strategy;
- iii) influencing the European policy agenda where it might have a particular effect on NE England;
- iv) using the opportunities Europe offers to encourage and enable people to actively participate in society;
- v) raising the profile of the region in Europe, and of Europe within the region.

A summary of the Framework for Action is provided in Appendix 1. It is being implemented through a series of annual work programmes that seek to broaden region-wide co-operation in European matters beyond the traditional focus of EU Structural Funds.

e) Sub-regional

Tyne and Wear City Region proposals, developed in the context of the Northern Way Initiative which was set up to reduce the £30 billion productivity gap with the rest of the country, are set within an international context. Exchange of experience, and joint work with city regions in Europe and globally, will be invaluable in supporting the necessary progress in spatial planning, economic development, skills and education, and transport and connectivity. EU trans-national programmes, and participation in networks such as Eurocities, offer significant opportunities to engage in this nature of activity. TyneWear Partnership (TWP) acknowledges the value of international exchange of experience in urban regeneration, which is promoted through its Good Practice Scheme.

Area Tourism Management Plans are being developed at sub-regional level from 2006 onwards. Overseen by the Area Tourism Partnership (ATP), this plan will include attraction of international tourists to Tyne and Wear, and the inclusion of an international dimension in events.

f) Local

The significance of international engagement to enable the City to reach its vision is specifically referred to within the Sunderland Strategy: 'European initiatives and funding programmes, as well as wider international links, provide opportunities to improve the quality of life for the people of Sunderland, enhance our culture, and make our businesses more competitive.'

The Sunderland Strategy sets out the framework for Sunderland's development and aims to achieve the sustainable regeneration of the city. Its vision, which is set out at the beginning of this document, is underpinned by eight strategic objectives:

- Creating a Prosperous City
- Extending Cultural Opportunities
- Improving the quality, Choice and Range of Housing
- Improving Health and Social Care
- Reducing Crime and the Fear of Crime
- Raising Standards and Increasing Participation in Learning
- Developing an Attractive and Accessible City
- Creating Inclusive Communities

Initiatives to achieve these objectives will incorporate the three core values identified in the City's Image Strategy (life-enhancing, smart and balanced), which has the overall aim of Sunderland becoming the most liveable city in the UK. They will also address the challenges of sustainable development and service integration set out in the Sunderland Strategy, and be delivered in line with its principles: putting people first; being fair and open; acting with integrity; striving to be the

best. The Sunderland Strategy also highlights the key role which e-government and ICT will play in continuously improving service delivery, closing the digital divide, and facilitating the delivery of each of the strategic objectives and has been developed with equality at its heart.

The Sunderland Strategy sets out Sunderland's aspiration to become a prosperous international city, namely, a city which embraces principles such as profile, competitiveness, quality, connectivity and diversity. International partnership working has the potential to make a significant contribution towards the principle of 'Striving to be the Best' through opportunities it provides to exchange ideas and information and develop good practice. The significance of the international dimension is also acknowledged in the City's Cultural Strategy. For example, the key target for Creativity in the Sunderland Strategy aims to 'enhance and develop existing cultural facilities to improve their impact internationally, nationally, regionally, sub-regionally and at community levels'. It includes a specific commitment in its Action Plan to continue to develop international relationships and contribute to relevant initiatives and exchange programmes for our young people.

Sunderland's 'Future City Future Lives' Strategy (2001-2006) set out to create a more sustainable and better future for Sunderland and its people, to ensure Sunderland is a place where people want to live and work, which cares for its natural environment, takes its international role seriously and responsibly, and where people are local and global citizens. Building on these aims, which are now incorporated within the Sunderland Strategy, the City's Image Strategy acknowledges that there are international examples of good practice, such as Seattle, Portland (Oregon), and Tampere (Finland), which have been successful in developing themselves into sustainable cities and from which Sunderland can learn.

The Sunderland Strategy's intention is that this will be a city where all people can reach their full potential. In striving to improve the quality of life for all, the Sunderland Strategy sets out to support those who are at risk of social exclusion for whatever reason and to make sure that all children and young people, the future of Sunderland, have the best possible life chances. International engagement can assist in developing the social and economic contribution of all members of Sunderland's increasingly cosmopolitan community.

The City's Local Area Agreement emphasises that Sunderland is alert to the new social challenges that living in a diverse, global society brings. These include tackling discrimination and inequality, especially in terms of raising quality of life standards for vulnerable groups, combating negative stereotypes and promoting social inclusion and community cohesion. It notes that, in order to be successful, Sunderland needs to address a number of key challenges. Building on the experience gained from its international activity to date, the international dimension has the potential to make a significant contribution within the City to each of the four blocks of the Local Area Agreement: Safer and Stronger Communities, Children and Young People, Healthier Communities and Older People, Economic Development and Enterprise. For example, developing opportunities for international students to undertake placements with local businesses would improve students' employability and raise awareness within the companies of the benefits of a diverse workforce. Broadening the City's leisure offer would facilitate integration of international students into life in the City.

This International Strategy will underpin delivery of the Sunderland Strategy, ensuring that the City continues to compete nationally and internationally, and that its citizens are equipped to participate in our global society.

A summary of the International, European and UK policy context, showing how this relates to the objectives of the Sunderland Strategy, is provided in Appendix 2.

BENEFITS OF INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

International engagement offers a wide range of benefits, direct and indirect, qualitative as well as quantitative. Sunderland has benefited substantially from its international links and activity over the years, accessing EU funding, exchanging experience through twinning links, EU trans-national projects and networks such as the World Health Organisation's European Healthy Cities, enhancing education provision and events, and attracting inward investment and international students to the City. This section summarises the benefits of international work which have been identified nationally, and gives recent examples from Sunderland's experience. A fuller picture of international engagement within Sunderland is provided in Section 3.

Defining the Benefits

The Local Government International Bureau and Local Government Association's draft International Policy breaks the benefits of international working into three categories:

Institutional benefits - including improving service delivery by working on common issues; accessing funding through partnership working; developing useful links and networks of authorities; and effective staff and Member development and training.

Citizen benefits - including increased tolerance and understanding between and within communities leading to better social cohesion; stronger community partnerships and community engagement; cultural enrichment and greater global awareness

Socio-economic benefits - including local economic development; increased trade, tourism etc; community well-being and environmental improvements; and better links with the wider community (civil society, education sector, businesses etc).

Research Findings

The LGIB's Policy draws on the experience of local authorities across the country as well as on research commissioned by the Alliance for International Development, of which it is a member. The Alliance's research (*Why should UK local authorities work overseas?*) was commissioned to study the domestic impact, in terms of benefits and challenges, of local government involvement in international development. It examined ten local authorities and communities in the UK with international partnerships in developing countries, identifying a range of benefits many of which are also applicable to partnerships with developed countries. The key findings were that:

- an international development partnership focused chiefly on securing domestic benefits is unlikely to work but, similarly, an imbalanced partnership which sets out primarily to provide aid would be severely limited;
- domestic benefits within international development partnerships are more substantial where partnerships focused on a particular sector, such as education or trade;
- joint work which exposes participants to different working practices, as well as to new ideas and perspectives on how to tackle common problems, provides opportunities to share skills and good practice;
- exchange work can develop the capacity of staff to work in difficult circumstances and build interpersonal skills, as well as boosting project management skills;
- working relationships with local organisations, private and public, can be improved through close involvement in joint activities resulting in better links with the wider community;
- International partnership working increases awareness of cultural diversity.

Benefits within Sunderland

Institutional Benefits

In terms of improving service delivery by working on shared issues, Sunderland has access to a wealth of good practice in relation to the development of high-quality public transport through its participation in the Hi-trans project, an EU trans-national project. This can bring concrete benefits to the City, for example, with its potential to inform the Local Development Framework and contribute to the Sunderland Strategy objective of Developing an Attractive and Accessible City. Under the Sunderland Strategy objective Improving Health and Social Care, nursing staff in the City and region gained a different perspective on tackling MRSA through keynote speeches by hospital representatives from Saint-Nazaire and Essen at the 10th Annual Sunderland Nursing Conference.

Joint work with neighbouring Easington District Council on the URBACT Young Citizens Project is an example of effective staff development and training through international partnership working. This has enabled Youth Development Group staff to benefit from exchange of experience locally, as well as with their counterparts within the European network.

Participating as a City in relevant European or International networks, for example through the World Health Organisation, increases the ability to influence or lobby on issues which will impact on the City. Networks provide critical mass and are therefore generally in a better position to influence the development of, for example, future policy and legislation in relation to international matters both within the EU and UK.

Implementation of the 'North East England in Europe - A Framework for Action' will help to highlight good practice in European engagement within the region. An active contribution by organisations in Sunderland, where this is in line with the City's own strategic priorities, will raise Sunderland's profile within the North East and in Europe. It may also open up opportunities across each of the objectives of the Sunderland Strategy to exchange experience, develop good practice, and lobby within a European context, which might not be available without wider partnership working.

Citizen Benefits

The Sunderland Mela, which contributes to the Extending Cultural Opportunities of the Sunderland Strategy, increases awareness within the community of other cultures. Similarly, initial feedback following exchange work, as part of the URBACT Young Citizens Project, with young people in Lithuania indicates potentially long-lasting benefits for the Sunderland participants in terms of their personal development and awareness of other cultures.

Under the Sunderland Strategy objective of Creating Inclusive Communities, work within the City's schools to promote the international dimension in education raises awareness of other cultures, and helps to develop a sense of global citizenship. This can increase tolerance and promote social cohesion. Through its impact across the school curriculum, and more widely in the context of lifelong learning, the development of the international dimension in education can also make a contribution across the other Sunderland Strategy objectives.

Encouraging the people of Sunderland to look outwards, and engage actively with the wider world, will be essential in working towards the City's vision. Similarly, raising awareness and understanding of the international nature of Sunderland today, and throughout its history, will be key. Developing a sense of global citizenship among the people of Sunderland can be achieved, for example, through engaging residents in initiatives associated with Fair Trade City status and in

international development activity, as well as encouraging participation in cultural and sporting exchanges. This will contribute significantly towards enabling everyone to reach their full potential, as well as to Creating Inclusive Communities.

Socio-Economic Benefits

These are reflected in work to increase economic and business opportunities within Sunderland, for example through success in attracting inward investment and supporting businesses to trade internationally. This makes a contribution to the Sunderland Strategy objective of Creating a Prosperous City and will be enhanced through activities to promote economic development and tourism under the City's Friendship Agreement with Washington DC. Additional benefits result from raising the profile of the City, for example through international cultural initiatives which increase tourism and the City Ambassadors programme. Joint work with partners in developing the Friendship Agreement with Washington DC is already resulting in better links with wider community, particularly with business and the University.

SUNDERLAND'S INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT – AN OVERVIEW

Although this is the City's first International Strategy, and it marks a new stage of partnership working, it is not the beginning of international engagement within Sunderland. This section provides an overview of the City's international connections and activity throughout the years on which the Sunderland Partnership can now build.

a) History

Sunderland's international links are long-standing. The twin monasteries of St Peter's Monkwearmouth in Sunderland, and St Paul's Jarrow in neighbouring South Tyneside, were established in the late 7th Century. Together with St Paul's in Jarrow, St Peter's is a candidate UNESCO World Heritage Site in recognition of its significance as a European centre of learning. Sunderland is also proud to have the ancestral home of George Washington, the first President of the United States of America, which is located in Washington Village. The links between Washington Old Hall and the Washington family date back to 1183, and the Friends of Washington Old Hall celebrate American Independence Day there each year.

Sunderland grew as a City along the banks of the River Wear, which supported its industries of glass-making, pottery, ship-building and coal-mining. In the 19th century, Sunderland was the largest ship-building town in the world, an indication of the City's international importance in the heyday of its traditional industries. The first stained glass was also made in Sunderland, by French artisans. Trading activity meant that Sunderland people travelled, and sometimes settled, throughout the world.

Sunderland has two European twin towns, Essen in Germany and Saint-Nazaire in France, which it has had since 1949 and 1953 respectively, and a Friendship Agreement with Washington DC which was signed in 2006. The twin town links were developed as part of an initiative to promote peace and stability in the post war period, cementing friendship between the people of Europe. Traditional industries were very important to the economies of Essen and Saint-Nazaire and it was on the basis of this shared experience that the town twinning links were established. Essen has a strong history of coal-mining and steel, and Saint-Nazaire shared Sunderland's ship-building and maritime industrial history. The Friendship Agreement formalises the City's unique historical link with Washington DC as George Washington's ancestral home is located within Sunderland's boundary.

b) An International City

Sunderland's increasing cosmopolitan nature is reflected in the range of languages spoken in the City. Currently, more than 20 different languages are spoken by young people attending Sunderland's schools. Language Point, the Council's in-house Interpretation and Translation Service, provides interpreters and translators in 41 different languages and dialects. In addition, Language Point manages a telephone interpretation service, which is provided by the National Interpretation Service, on behalf of the Council as back-up to its own service. It is estimated that there are now more than 50 different nationalities represented within the City's population. Some initial work has been undertaken with the Sylhet region of Bangladesh to support Sunderland young people to continue their education during extended family visits. Learning resource packs have also been developed for use in the City's schools to improve information about Bangladesh and India among teachers and pupils of other nationalities. In addition, City of Sunderland College and the Council's Adult and Community Learning service offer English for Speakers of Other Languages provision, which helps remove language barriers and increase the number of Sunderland residents who are able to participate actively in all aspects of life in the City.

Students at Sunderland University come from all round the world with significant numbers from China, Malaysia, India, Hong Kong and Pakistan. With 18% of the University's full-time students being from overseas, including 5% from the European Union (excluding the UK), the international students make a vital contribution in making the University the most multi-cultural organisation in Sunderland, adding diversity to the University itself but also enriching the City as a whole.

Programming at Sunderland Museum and Winter Gardens seeks to promote cultural diversity through exhibitions such as Bollywood. This is complemented by initiatives such as the 'Who am I?' project, developed by Education Business Connections, to increase awareness and understanding of other faith groups in the City. More information on the 'Who am I?' project is included in the case study below.

Case Study: 'Who am I?' Project

The 'Who am I?' project trained Community Ambassadors to work with teachers in schools to develop young people's understanding of different faiths and beliefs. The project ran from January 2004 to July 2006 and was funded by Back on the Map, the City's New Deal for Communities programme and the City's Strategic Initiatives Budget. The Community Ambassadors worked with three primary and two secondary schools in the Back on the Map area, and were recruited to reflect the area's ethnic make-up.

Bringing an open mind to the role, the Community Ambassadors were able to help challenge some of the myths and misconceptions about people seen as 'different from us'. They were supported by leaders from within different local faith groups who could explain their own set of beliefs in more detail and in an appropriate way depending on the age group of the young people.

The 'Who am I?' project developed a series of lesson plans providing information on the various faith groups, as well as a number of Faith Boxes with materials that represent the core aspects of life of particular groups. It also gave pupils the opportunity to experience a day in the life of a Community Ambassador.

Developing the Economy

The cornerstone of our economy is built on investment and employment with businesses from the USA, France, Spain, Germany, Switzerland, Finland, Denmark, Luxembourg, Ireland, Australia, Canada and Japan. Sunderland is home to a wide range of international businesses including Nissan and Calsonic (from Japan), CitiBank, TRW, Johnsons Controls and Tacle UK Ltd (from the United States), as well as to the UK Headquarters of Nike to name but a few.

Companies within Sunderland are increasingly finding new markets in mainland Europe, as well as throughout the world. Within the automotive sector, for example, more of Nissan's product is exported than stays in the domestic market and steering components manufactured by TRW are exclusively for the export market. Similarly, Sunderland companies such as the Leighton Group are investing overseas, with revenue flowing back into the City.

The City has been recognised internationally by the Intelligent Communities Forum for five consecutive years, being nominated as one of the seven most IT-Intelligent Communities in the world. An International Automotive Conference is held in Sunderland bi-annually bringing together key figures in the automotive industry, and the City is developing one of the best connected e-Business Parks in Europe. The University of Sunderland's Global Automotive Technology

Exchange (GATE) project encourages the development of new technologies for the automotive sector, and develops associated business opportunities working with R&D institutions in the USA, China and Japan. Social Enterprise Sunderland also works internationally to share good practice.

European Union funding has made a significant contribution to the regeneration of Sunderland over the last 25 years, with the City receiving more than £35 million from economic development programmes for the period 2000 to 2006 alone. The development of the University campus at St Peter's, Rainton Bridge E-Business Centre, the City's 50 metre swimming pool, and the National Glass Centre are recent examples of this investment. Many of the City's residents have benefited from training, employment support initiatives and community facilities funded by the European Union. This has been complemented by experience in EU trans-national projects, developing and sharing good practice, which is covered under International Partnerships later in this Section.

Enhancing Education

In total, more than 1,100 overseas students were studying at the University in 2006 with a further 1,600 students studying the University's programmes overseas. The University has offices in South East Asia (Kuala Lumpur and Penang), East Asia (Beijing and Hong Kong), India and Greece, as well as agents operating around the world. The University also attracts international academics to work in Sunderland, and co-ordinates a programme which encourages graduates to teach English in China for a year. In addition to offering staff and students a range of exchange opportunities with other European countries (through the EU's Socrates Programme), the USA, Canada and Australia, the University has a pro-active approach to developing Trans-National Education initiatives and encouraging integration of international students through initiatives such as International Students into Schools, the Sunderland Language and News Group (SLANG), and language buddies. City of Sunderland College also has a significant number of overseas students from, for example, China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Vietnam and Saudi Arabia and is actively engaged in developing its international activity. The growth in the number of international students benefits the City as a whole.

Sunderland has one specialist language school, St Aidan's, which works pro-actively with local primary schools to encourage language learning. Progress towards the roll-out of languages in Primary National Strategy is being supported and developed through the work of centrally deployed Advanced Skills Teachers and Foreign Language Assistants, and through targeted continuous Professional Development to enhance the quality of provision in Sunderland's schools. Children in schools across the City learn French, Spanish and German, with language teaching beginning at primary level in a number of schools. The City has several Advanced Skills Teachers in Modern Languages, including one with the specific remit of promoting the International Dimension in Education and promoting and supporting projects under the European Union's Comenius Programme. Sunderland welcomes approximately 30 Foreign Language Assistants to Sunderland each year to work in its schools.

Many schools in Sunderland have at least one international link. These links include schools throughout Europe, as well as in Canada, Chile, Malawi, Hong Kong, Ghana, Zimbabwe, and Tanzania. Teaching staff in a number of schools participate in the British Council Teachers' International Professional Development scheme which has, for example, involved study visits to Ghana, South Africa and India. Events such as Europe Day and the World Cup are also used by some schools to promote the International dimension. Other international activity in schools includes Education Business Connections' European Language Days, which bring pupils and local businesses together to raise the young people's awareness of the value of language skills and how languages are used on a day-to-day basis in local companies. An example of international activity

within one of the City's schools is included in the case study below. In March 2006, 3 Sunderland schools had achieved the British Council's full International School Award with an additional 5 having achieved the Foundation, Intermediate or Action Plan level. In some cases, the University's International Students into Schools programme has played a role in these achievements.

The Youth Development Group encourages international work, both with the City's twin towns and other international partners including Poland, Finland and Lithuania. In recent years, members of staff have taken part in an International conference on Young People with Disabilities in Madrid and a Quality Assurance training seminar in Turkey. The Duke of Edinburgh Awards scheme undertakes a Gold exhibition to Norway every year.

Case Study: International Work at Hetton School

Hetton School is situated in the former coalfield area of Hetton-le-Hole. The school has 1,000 pupils who traditionally had little interest in, or knowledge and understanding of, their neighbours from Europe and around the world.

The school began its international work in 1997 with the specific aim of raising awareness of cultures other than its own, and of broadening pupils' horizons and prospects. They set out to achieve this by encouraging the young people to acquire skills and positive attitudes that will support them effectively in making a positive contribution within their communities, and provide a stepping stone for their economic well-being as young adults in society.

In December of that year, Hetton School set up its first Comenius partnership with schools in France and Spain. This partnership work focussed on pupils' daily lives. The second project with partners in Germany, Spain and Hungary, which ran from 2001 to 2004, looked at 'Life' in general. The school is currently starting the second year of its third project, 'Communication', with schools in Spain, Poland, Estonia and Lithuania.

All three projects have involved pupils and staff in different subject areas. Pupils are motivated and excited by preparing pieces of work, which will be seen by their peers in other countries, and are keen to see work they receive in return. Each of their projects has been supported through the EU's Socrates Programme.

On the strength of this international work, and other activities that it has stimulated, Hetton School has won two International School Awards. They are also starting to branch out into other areas such as the Dreams and Teams programme focussing on international sports, which is firmly established at Biddick School, and are developing global links with schools in Chile and China.

Improving Sustainable Development

The City was represented at the Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002. The global commitment to come out of the Johannesburg Summit, Local Action 21, was launched locally in Sunderland the same year. Its aim is to ensure local people and organisations take action within their own neighbourhoods to create sustainable communities; an example of how this is being delivered is that Sunderland is a partner in the World Wildlife Fund-UK Eco-footprinting project, which allows residents and organisations to understand, and then reduce, the impact of the City and its people on the environment.

Enhancing Culture and Tourism

Each year the City hosts an International Air Show, which has attracted flight displays from Europe, Jordan, the USA and Russia during its lifetime. The City also hosts an International Kite Festival with artists participating from countries such as Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Russia, China and America as well as Europe. In addition, Asian and Bangladeshi members of the community organise Sunderland's annual Mela Event to raise awareness of cultural diversity. The City also participates in international cultural activity with partners in the region, including an annual Audio Visual Festival working with New Zealand, the United States, Asia and Europe. Cultural programming at the Reg Vardy Gallery, National Glass Centre and Northern Gallery of Contemporary Art, all located within Sunderland, as well as Sunderland Museum and Winter Gardens, bring the work of international artists to the City. This has included, for example, an exhibition by the Finnish designer Tapio Wirkkala and an exhibition by a British artist based in Barcelona, Andy Gracie. Sunderland works with partners such as VisitBritain to promote itself as a visitor destination within Europe and internationally.

In sport and recreation, Sunderland's impressive facilities for watersports, including the Marina and Yacht Club, have attracted a number of high performance sailing championships with UK and international competitors, including the Musto Performance Skiffs, 18 ft Skiffs and the Ultra 30s. Sunderland also hosts Lawn Tennis Association international tennis events for men and women, and Sunderland is a partner in the North Sea Cycle Network linking locations around the North Sea. The City's football club, Sunderland AFC, has a number of international connections including strong ties with Ireland. The City's specialist sports colleges have developed strong international links, for example, with Poland and China.

Sunderland's Tourist Information Centre assists international visitors to the City and arranges a welcome for international students at the beginning of the academic year. Partners in the City are also involved in encouraging young people to consider a career in tourism, whether in hospitality, leisure, or travel and tourism. The Exploring Tourism project, delivered by Education Business Connections, involved pupils from a number of Sunderland schools travelling to Amsterdam to promote North East tourism to an audience of Dutch tourism experts. The young people then returned to promote Dutch tourism to a North East audience.

Raising the City's Profile

The City has a World Wide Ambassadors Programme, involving well-regarded figures from the world of business, sport and the arts, as well as politicians. Many of the 86 Ambassadors travel regularly which, together with the City's Ambassadors in France, Germany, Ireland and the United States, provides regular opportunities to raise the profile of Sunderland on the international stage.

c) International Partnerships

Washington DC

Sunderland and Washington DC formalised their unique historic link in a Friendship Agreement in 2006 to promote closer friendship and co-operation for the benefit of both communities. Under this Agreement both cities will exchange information, ideas and experience on a range of key policy areas to improve the quality of life for residents in both communities. These include economic development, tourism, educational and cultural activities, ICT and e-government initiatives to promote social inclusion and citizen participation. Information linked to the Washington family and ancestral home of George Washington will also be exchanged. The development and coordination of activity under the Agreement will be overseen by a Steering Committee in both cities with representatives from key partners including the business community and universities.

Representatives of both cities will meet annually to assess progress and develop proposals for the following year. Where appropriate, activities may involve each other's partner cities. For Washington DC, this includes Beijing (China), Bangkok (Thailand) and Dakar (Senegal).

European Twin Towns (Essen and Saint-Nazaire)

A wide range of exchanges has taken place over more than 50 years with both Essen and Saint-Nazaire, and the links remain active. In recent years, there has been a shift in focus towards more technical exchange of experience in areas of shared interest particularly with Essen. Official visits to both twin towns are dedicated to a theme, which runs for a two year period. This approach is designed to allow an effective assessment of the potential for joint work in the given area.

Joint activities with Sunderland's twin towns have included international conferences focused on culture, disability, and nursing and have involved representatives from a range of organisations in the City. The City also benefited from practical support from Essen in developing its first German Christmas Market, and from a study visit to Saint-Nazaire to learn from its experience in developing its maritime heritage.

This activity is complemented by an active programme co-ordinated by the Council's Youth Development Group. In recent years this has included exchange of experience in recognising the achievements of young people, resulting in Essen adopting Sunderland's Young Achievers Programme, and in youth provision for gay and lesbian young people. There is also an on-going programme of young people's exchanges, for example, in music and art and the University of Sunderland has developed close links with the University of Duisberg in Essen involving staff and student exchange as well as joint work within the International Photography Research Network. Colleagues in Saint-Nazaire are keen to encourage increased co-operation between community groups engaged, for example, in cultural activity or sport.

Increasingly, opportunities for co-operation have opened up within a wider twinning network involving Essen and Saint-Nazaire's other twin towns. For Essen, this includes Tampere (Finland), Grenoble (France), Nishny Novgorod (Russia), Tel Aviv (Israel), and Zabrze (Poland). For Saint-Nazaire, it includes Saarlouis (Germany) and Avilés (Spain). Significant opportunities will be offered in this context as Essen prepares to be European Capital of Culture for 2010 on behalf of the Ruhrgebiet.

Trans-national Projects

Members of the Sunderland Partnership have experience of participating in a number of trans-national projects with European Union partners designed, for example, to develop and share good practice or promote cultural awareness. For example the University-led 'Changing Faces' project, focused on the theme of work, which aims to visualise important social and cultural changes through a series of commissions and exhibitions in locations across the world. A fuller picture of this project is given in the case study below. Through the work of the IPRN, Sunderland is now recognised internationally as a key player in this field. Social Enterprise Sunderland, is actively involved in a European project under the Equal Community Initiative to promote research and development within social enterprises.

In addition, the City Council has worked with Nexus and partners in Scandinavia, through the Interreg Programme, to develop good practice in high-quality public transport for medium-sized cities and will use the results to help shape the Council's Local Development Framework. The City also gained experience from taking part in an Interreg project to share good practice in regeneration with other former coalfield areas. This included discussion of economic development

issues, environmental remediation, and different approaches to training for residents. Other EU trans-national projects, through Equal and Urbact, have provided an opportunity to test new ways of supporting people from disadvantaged groups to enter employment, and to develop a toolkit to engage young people effectively in decision-making in civic society.

Case Study: Changing Faces Project

Changing Faces is a photography commissioning project organised and managed by the International Photography Research Network (IPRN), which is funded through the EU's Culture 2000 Programme. The project is managed by the University of Sunderland and the other founding partners of IPRN who are project co-organisers: Leiden University/Paradox, the Netherlands; University of Jyväskylä, Finland; Museum Folkwang in Essen, Germany; Dom Fotografie, Slovakia; and University of Sunderland, United Kingdom. Arts Council England is a leading partner in this project.

In each of the three years from 2004 to 2007 Changing Faces commissions new images from photographers from the co-organiser countries above with three additional partners. For 2004/5, the project worked with Lithuania, Czech Republic and Iceland. In 2005/6 the three partners were France, Spain and Italy, and in 2006/7 the project is working with South Africa, Brazil and Russia. The Changing Faces project organises an annual exhibition, publication and conference featuring each year's series of commissions. It is also developing a physical archive of work, as well as an internet archive, and facilitating networking and transfer of skills and knowledge between partners.

The commissions are organised through a series of international exchanges and have three main aims:

- to support individual photographers looking for international practice-based research in new artistic and cultural contexts;
- to build new international artistic partnerships through a network of galleries, universities and archives;
- to build understanding of cultural diversity, promote socially-engaged photography, and establish new audiences for photography.

Over and above the core project work, a number of spin-off activities have been developed. For example, a number of parallel projects have been established, academic partnerships developed, and there have been some additional exhibitions and touring.

International Networks

Sunderland is a member of Phase IV of the World Health Organisation's European Healthy Cities Network. The City is undertaking a work programme on issues such as Healthy Urban Planning, Health Impact Assessment, Physical Activity and Active Lifestyles, and is working with a sub network of other core cities on the subject of Healthy Ageing. The City also participates in Sister Cities International, a global network open to communities with a sister city in the United States. In addition, the Business Innovation Centre is an active member of the European Business Network, the leading European network which brings together BICs with similar organisations such as incubators, entrepreneurship centres. Linked to this, the University of Sunderland's St Peter's Gate is a member of Gate2Growth, sharing best practice at regular workshops. The City's VOICES network also belongs to the British Association of Settlements and Social Action Centres, which is part of the International Settlement Movement.

Other International Links

Partners in the City increasingly receive ad hoc requests to participate in international co-operation activity, including requests to host study visits from cities interested in learning from Sunderland's experience and, in some cases, in developing formal links through the City Council. In recent years, meetings have been arranged to cover a wide range of issues including strategic planning, regeneration and economic development including employment initiatives, urban planning, environmental reclamation and sustainable development, and social services. Delegations have come from countries such as Sweden, Lithuania, the Czech Republic, Russia and China.

International Development

Sunderland Minster has had links since the 1990s with the Province of Lesotho in southern Africa, as well as in Kenya and Tanzania, where it is involved in joint work with churches, schools and hospitals. The University of Sunderland is also engaged in work in Lesotho as part of its work within the Association of Commonwealth Universities to tackle HIV and Aids, and has hosted African students on its courses within Sunderland, and overseas, through a scholarship scheme funded by the Department for International Development. In addition, both City of Sunderland College and the University of Sunderland are recognised as having Fair Trade University status. The City Council has adopted a formal resolution to become a Fair Trade City and is working closely with the Sunderland Partnership to achieve this.

FRAMEWORK FOR INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

As illustrated earlier in this document, the need for, and value of, international engagement for cities such as Sunderland is increasingly being stressed at all levels and the potential benefits highlighted are reflected in the City's existing experience. Although much has been achieved so far, a more co-ordinated and strategic approach is needed to ensure we engage in international activity to the best advantage of the City within the available resources. This includes the need to develop a shared approach to the on-going development of the City's twin town links, to raise awareness of the benefits of EU trans-national programmes within the City and increase participation, and to progress engagement in International Development activity. A more co-ordinated approach is equally needed to ensure maximum benefit for the City from existing international engagement and to provide a framework for participation in new activity.

Overall Aim

To ensure the City's international engagement supports the Sunderland Partnership in achieving its vision for Sunderland, maximising opportunities and benefits.

This will be achieved by actions in a number of key areas of activity as set out below.

Key Areas of Activity

- Developing, and exchanging, good practice within international partnerships and networks.
- Including an international dimension in the City's activities wherever appropriate.
- Influencing European Union policy and legislation which might impact on the City.
- Identifying appropriate European Union policies and initiatives which can be implemented for the benefit of the City.
- Raising the profile of Sunderland internationally.
- Ensuring people and organisations in Sunderland acknowledge the benefits of international engagement.
- Sharing experience within the Sunderland Partnership on the benefits and practicalities of international working.
- Working with regional and other partners to maximise the benefits of international engagement.

Guiding Principles

In order to ensure that international work is encouraged within the context of the Sunderland Strategy, a series of guiding principles will be adopted:

- All International activity should contribute, directly or indirectly, to the implementation of the Sunderland Strategy, its vision, strategic objectives and principles or to associated initiatives within Sunderland Partnership member organisations.
- The International dimension should be considered by partners as an integral part of policy and project development.
- External funding to support International activity should be maximised.
- No parts of the community should be excluded.
- Special attention should be given to engaging the City's children and young people.
- Specific learning opportunities should be able to be demonstrated.

Criteria for Establishing International Partnerships

The City will deliver much of its International Strategy through links developed and maintained between individual schools, youth and community groups, businesses and partner organisations. In some circumstances, one-off initiatives to learn or exchange ideas and information will be the most appropriate way forward. In other circumstances, medium to long term links may be considered more appropriate, for instance, the development of partnerships to participate in EU or other international programmes, or the establishment of formal City-wide links within which to develop ongoing programmes of co-operation.

The following criteria will be used to assess the appropriateness of such formal partnerships. This will include participation in European and International networks. The same criteria will also apply to sub-regional or regional international partnerships, where there may be benefit to the City from working collectively with others in Tyne and Wear or the wider North East region.

Before engaging in a formal partnership, the City will consider whether the proposed partnership arrangement would be mutually beneficial and whether one or more of these criteria are applicable to the potential partner city / community / organisation:

- The partner city shares Sunderland's socio-economic background, is operating on a similar scale, and/or facing or overcoming similar challenges.
- There is previous experience of working successfully together in international projects (including EU trans-national activity) and value in further developing the link in that work area, or in another strategic priority area.
- There is an existing connection through the community.
- Specific learning opportunities can be demonstrated.
- There is added value to the City as a result of entering into a partnership, furthering the aims and objectives of the Sunderland Strategy.

Where appropriate, the City will take the opportunity to build on existing international links.

IMPLEMENTATION

Action Plan

A three year action plan will be drawn up by the International Strategy Working Group. As part of this process and, using the template in Appendix 3, partners will highlight activities within their organisation's existing Business Plan which involve international activity or in which this will be pursued. The action plan will set out concrete actions, together with a timetable and expected outputs or outcomes, against the City's strategic priorities. The relevant key area(s) of activity under the International Strategy will be highlighted for each action. Operational actions, which relate to the overall implementation of the Strategy, will be included separately.

Consideration will be given during 2006/07 to how broader outcomes and added value can effectively be measured. As a starting point, the audit of activity carried out in spring 2006 will act as a benchmark against which increased levels of engagement can be measured at the end of each financial year.

Co-ordination and Monitoring

The Strategic Programmes and Europe Team will maintain an overview of all City Council international activity, co-ordinating the development of its international partnerships and implementation of the International Strategy through the action plan.

The International Strategy Working Group, involving representatives from Council Directorates and the Sunderland Partnership, will support implementation of the International Strategy within their work areas. Regular meetings will provide a forum to develop the action plan and monitor progress, share information on international activity, and assist in the compilation of an annual audit of activity. A system will be developed to evaluate the immediate and longer-term benefits of international activity undertaken.

Within the City Council, the Policy and Co-ordination Review Committee will have an overview of the International Strategy. Progress will be reported to the Sunderland Partnership Board, and within the City Council to Cabinet, annually at the end of each financial year (April to March).

Project Development

The Framework for International Engagement set out above will assist in assessing the benefits of potential international activity to Sunderland against strategic priorities. This will facilitate the allocation by partner organisations of the resources required, both staff and financial, to enable individual projects to be developed successfully. The amount, and quality, of development time will have a significant impact both on securing external funding, particularly from EU trans-national programmes, and ensuring effective project management. Within the City Council protocols for external grants and partnerships, and appropriate project management methodology, will be followed.

Liaison through the International Strategy Working Group will enable proposals for new international activity to draw on experience both within Sunderland and beyond. This will strengthen project development and help to address potential issues in advance.

External Support

Three Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) represent North East England in the European Parliament. They have a role in scrutinising European policy and legislation as it is developed within the EU, and each specialise in a range of policy areas. The region also has three

political representatives on the EU's Committee of the Regions (CoR), which also considers EU policy and legislation as it is developed. Effective liaison with these elected representatives offers an opportunity for the City to influence policy and legislation development within the EU. One avenue to facilitate this liaison is through the region's European Strategy Group (ESG), which brings together representatives from key organisations across North East England, such as local authorities and the university sector, to set the strategic direction for regional engagement in Europe.

Sunderland will draw on the wide-range of support for international engagement, which is available. At national level this includes the Alliance for International Development, which was set up specifically to help local authorities and their communities become involved in international development activity, and the Local Government International Bureau, which promotes international co-operation to benefit service delivery and community well-being within the UK and to support democracy and governance overseas. Partners in the City will also draw on other specific sources of support such as VisitBritain to promote tourism, and the British Council which promotes cultural exchange and educational initiatives.

Similarly at the regional level, Sunderland will ensure its businesses and residents benefit from support available. This includes support in language learning and cultural awareness for businesses and employees, through the Regional Language Network based at the Regional Development Agency (ONE), and within schools through the North East's Comenius Centre based at the Sandhill Centre in Sunderland. In its role as a region-wide umbrella organisation providing European funding advice for the voluntary sector, ESFVON is developing the support it can offer to voluntary and community organisations wishing to forge links with other EU countries, for example, to develop and share good practice through trans-national programmes. The City will also work closely with the region's Europe Direct service in Durham, in its aim to enhance provision of information about the European Union particularly for young people.

Partners in the region also have an office in Brussels, the North East England Office (NEEO), which has useful links with European Union institutions, for example, the European Parliament and European Commission as well as with other regional representatives who are based in Brussels. Staff at the NEEO will support implementation of 'North East England in Europe - a Framework for Action', referred to in section one, as well as supporting effective engagement by partners across the region with the European Union, its institutions, and other European partners to influence policy and legislation, and develop and exchange good practice. Where the City's view on European matters is shared with other regional partners, the European Strategy Group (ESG) represents an effective avenue to influence EU policy and legislation as it is developed. This can be achieved both through contributing to regional position statements, as well as through liaison with the MEPs and CoR representatives referred to above to inform discussion within EU institutions. The Chief Executive of the City Council represents the local authority sector (through the Association of North East Councils) on ESG.

In addition, regional organisations have a number of international links which may be of benefit to the City. The North East England Office in Brussels has access to over 270 regional representative offices covering all EU Member States, and the North East Assembly has formal links with the Moravia-Silesia region in the Czech Republic and the Gyeonggi Province in Korea. In addition, One North East (the Regional Development Agency) has offices in America, Australia, China, Korea and Japan, and a range of international partnerships developed through its trans-national work.

Networks

Sunderland will maximise the benefits of sub-regional, regional, national and international networks to assist in achieving its objectives. The City will pursue membership in additional networks, such as Eurocities and the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, where this is assessed as being beneficial. Partners in the City will develop international work with sub-regional and regional partners wherever this is beneficial.

Communications

Partner organisations will develop individual procedures for internal communication to raise awareness, and promote implementation, of the International Strategy.

Within the City Council this will be facilitated by the inclusion of the International Strategy on DMT, SMT, and Team Meeting agendas as appropriate. International Strategy Working Group representatives, and the Strategic Programmes and Europe Team, will support this wherever possible. This will assist with two-way communication between Directorates and the International Strategy Working Group.

A Communications Plan for the Strategy will be developed within the City Marketing Group, led by the City Council's Corporate Communications team.

Mainstreaming

The international dimension will be included as a regular item on the agenda of all Sunderland Partnership groups, for example, City Marketing Group, City of Sunderland IT Group, Creative Partnerships, and the World Heritage Bid Steering Group. Sunderland representatives will also raise awareness of the international dimension in sub-regional, regional, national networks as appropriate.

Within the City Council the international dimension will be included as a regular item on the agenda of Corporate groups and of Directorate management groups. It will be a standing item for the Corporate Communications Group.

Members of the International Strategy Working Group will liaise regularly with their representatives on these groups to facilitate effective two-way communication.

Resources

The Local Government (Overseas Assistance) Act 1993 gives local authorities the specific legal power to provide "advice and assistance as respects any matter in which they have skill and experience" to a body carrying on local government activities overseas. It also authorises local authorities to provide assistance where the expenditure (excluding staff related costs), less any charges for the services, falls within specified financial limits.

A future revision is planned by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to further ease partnership activities by removing the requirement for local authorities to have government consent before engaging in advice or assistance overseas.

Consultation

The draft Strategy was developed collectively within the Sunderland Partnership, as follows:

Board meeting (initial presentation) – 19 April

Joint Partnership Group and Management Group meeting (presentation of draft Strategy) – 17 May

Joint Partnership Group and Management Group meeting (discussion of final draft, recommendation for endorsement) – 13 September
Board meeting (discussion of final draft and endorsement) – 17 October
Members of the above groups were asked to consult within their organisations and thematic partnerships.

Endorsement

The International Strategy was formally endorsed by the Board of the Sunderland Partnership on 17 October 2006 and, within the City Council, it was endorsed by Cabinet on 11 October 2006. It was agreed to circulate the International Strategy to stakeholders for comment.

As the Sunderland Strategy is to be reviewed, it was agreed that the International Strategy would influence this review and that it would, in turn, be updated once the revised Sunderland Strategy is in place.

Consultation will be undertaken with the Sunderland Echo, in addition to their involvement through the Sunderland Partnership Board, as well as with the BBC, ITV Tyne Tees and Sun FM. It is also proposed to consult with the North East England Office in Brussels, the LGIB, the Alliance for International Development, as well as colleagues in Essen, Saint-Nazaire and Washington DC.

GLOSSARY

Alliance	Alliance for International Development
ATP	Area Tourism Partnership
BASSAC	British Association of Settlements and Social Action Centres
CLGF	Commonwealth Local Government Forum
CoR	Committee of the Regions
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DfID	Department for International Development
ESFVON	European Structural Funds Voluntary Organisations Northern
ESG	European Strategy Group
EU	European Union
GONE	Government Office North East
ICLEI	International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IRF	Integrated Regional Framework
IDeA	Improvement and Development Agency
LAA	Local Area Agreement
LGA	Local Government Association
LGIB	Local Government International Bureau
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
NEA	North East Assembly
NEEiE	North East England in Europe – a Framework for Action
NEEO	North East England Office in Brussels
ONE	One NorthEast
R&D	Research and Development
RES	Regional Economic Strategy
RLN	Regional Languages Network
RSS	Regional Spatial Strategy
TWES	TyneWear Economic Strategy
TWP	TyneWear Partnership
UK	United Kingdom
UKTI	UK Trade and Investment
UN	United Nations
WHS	World Heritage Site

People - Ensuring that everybody has the opportunity to develop their full potential means that they can both share in and contribute to the region's greater economic prosperity.

Action Stream 1

Developing new approaches to addressing worklessness and incorporating good practice from other European regions where appropriate

Action Stream 2

Enabling all relevant organisations to participate actively in addressing disadvantage and promoting employment

Action Streams 3

Increasing the participation of North East England's learners and educational professionals in European education and training initiatives

Prosperity - Enhanced prosperity and sustainable economic development are major factors in delivering a high quality of life for the people of North East England.

Action Stream 1

Ensuring that the regional economic development priorities are reflected in EU level and UK policy guidelines and programme development for the period 2007-13, and that regional partners gain maximum

Action Stream 2

Maximising the impact of the region's FP6 resources for 2000-2006 and securing the maximum benefit for the region from FP7 (2007-13), focussing on activities that will help to improve the region's economic performance

Action streams 3

Promoting economic, university and R&D links utilising the North East England Office in Brussels and considering how the office can support the region's international trade and investment agenda.

Culture - Culture is central to North East England's future as an important European region and is the basis of its distinctiveness, identity and image.

Action Stream 1

Raising the profile of North East England throughout Europe, maximising the opportunities presented by the region's cultural programming and assets.

Action Stream 2

Strengthening cultural exchange within an enlarged EU, ensuring that North East England is recognised throughout Europe as a region with a strong cultural identity.

Action streams 3

Improving co-ordination and communication of European linkages within the cultural sector and with other sectors to increase culture's contribution to the region's development.

Environment - Within Europe, environmental issues are now inseparable from questions of economic growth, restructuring and prosperity

Action Stream 1

Developing integrated approaches to reducing negative environmental impacts by anticipating the EU policy changes and participating in European programmes and partnerships

Action Stream 2

Stimulating wider awareness of environmental issues to create greater public engagement with environmental policy development and initiatives.

Action streams 3

Increasing the economic value of the environment by taking up European opportunities, including R&D initiatives.

Sunderland	Sub-regional / Regional	National	EU	International
Creating a Prosperous City	Regional Economic Strategy (Business, People and Place); Regional Spatial Strategy; North East England in Europe – a Framework for Action (Prosperity); City Region Development Plan (Economic Development)	National Lisbon Reform Programme; National Strategy for Languages; UK Sustainable Development Strategy; Assisted Areas Guidelines; The Northern Way	EU Lisbon Agenda (business climate, knowledge society, labour market, internal market); EU Competition Policy – State and Regional Aid guidelines; EU Environmental legislation; EU Cohesion Policy – Competitiveness and Employment Objective; EU Education and Youth initiatives; European Strategy for Languages	Global Economy; Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg Sustainable Development summit outcomes, Kyoto Protocol; Millennium Development Goal (Developing a global partnership for development)
Extending Cultural Opportunities	Cultural Manifesto for the North East; North East England in Europe – a Framework for Action (Culture); Regional Tourism Strategy; Regional Image Campaign; Area Tourism Management Plan		EU Culture initiatives; EU Cohesion Policy	
Improving the quality, Choice and Range of Housing	Regional Spatial Strategy			Millennium Development Goal (Ensuring Environmental Sustainability)

Sunderland	Sub-regional / Regional	National	EU	International
Improving Health and Social Care	Regional Economic Strategy (People); North East England in Europe – a Framework for Action (People)	UK initiatives under EU Social Protection Agenda	EU Social Protection Agenda – pensions, health and long-term care	World Health Organisation initiatives; Millennium Development Goals (Alleviating extreme poverty and hunger; Reducing child and maternal mortality; Combating HIV / Aids, malaria and other diseases)
Reducing Crime and the Fear of Crime	Regional Re-offending strategy; Regional Alcohol Statement; Regional Misuse of Drugs Statement	National Community Safety Plan; National Drugs Strategy; National Respect Action Plan; Reducing Re-offending National Action Plan; National Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy	EU initiatives promoting co-operation between police, customs; EU Social Protection Agenda EU initiatives to support women/children victims of trafficking	
Raising Standards and Increasing Participation in Learning	Regional Economic Strategy (People); North East England in Europe – a Framework for Action (People); City Region Development Plan (Skills and Education)	National Lisbon Reform Programme; DfES Putting the World into World-Class Education; National Strategy for Languages; Every Child Matters – Change for Children Programme	EU Lisbon Agenda – appropriate skills development to create an economy capable of sustained growth; European Strategy for Languages; EU Cohesion Policy – Competitiveness and Employment objective; EU Education and Youth initiatives including Bologna Agreement	Millennium Development Goal (Achieving universal primary education);

Sunderland	Sub-regional / Regional	National	EU	International
Developing an Attractive and Accessible City	Regional Economic Strategy (Place); North East England in Europe – a Framework for Action (Environment); City Region Development Plan (Spatial Planning, Transport and Connectivity)	UK Climate Change Strategy; UK Sustainable Development Strategy; Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change	EU Cohesion Policy – Co-operation objective; European Spatial Development Perspective; EU Lisbon Agenda (environmental sustainability)	Millennium Development Goal (Ensuring environmental sustainability); Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg Summit outcomes, Kyoto targets
Creating Inclusive Communities	Regional Economic Strategy (People); North East England in Europe – a Framework for Action (People)	UK's response to EU Social Protection Agenda	EU Social Protection Agenda; EU Culture objectives EU Active Citizenship initiatives EU Lisbon Agenda (labour market)	G8 Equitable trade commitments; Fair Trade Initiative All Millennium Development Goals

The LGIB's International Strategy cuts across each of the eight Sunderland Strategy objectives.

Action Plan Template

Sunderland Strategy Priority	Action	International Strategy Key Area(s) of Activity	Milestones and Timetable	Outputs / Outcomes	Lead Officer

Key Areas of Activity (for reference)

- A Developing, and exchanging, good practice within international partnerships and networks
- B Including an international dimension in the City's activities wherever appropriate
- C Influencing European Union policy and legislation which might impact on the City
- D Identifying appropriate European Union policies and initiatives which can be implemented for the benefit of the City
- E Raising the profile of Sunderland internationally
- F Ensuring people and organisations in Sunderland acknowledge the benefits of international engagement
- G Sharing experience within the Sunderland Partnership on the benefits and practicalities of international working
- H Working with regional and other partners to maximise the benefits of international engagement