

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, 18 January 2016

PRESENT: Councillor John Eagle

Councillors: P Foy, J Wallace, M Brain, M Charlton, P Dillon,
S Green, M Hall, B Oliphant, M Ord and A Thompson

CR26 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Beadle, L Caffrey, T Graham, J Hamilton and M Hood.

CR27 MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2015 be approved as a correct record.

CR28 CORPORATE RESOURCES OSC WORK PROGRAMME REVIEW

The Committee received a report seeking its views on the effectiveness of the two case studies undertaken in 2014/15, including the subsequent monitoring of actions arising from the Committee's findings.

The case studies were used to examine the impact of welfare reform on Gateshead residents and the progress being made in relation to channel shift within the Council's transformation programme.

The report summarised the key issues and findings for each case study.

The Committee was also asked to note that a draft work programme for 2016/17 is being prepared and that this will be set by the Committee at its meeting in April.

- RESOLVED: i) That the Committee was satisfied that potential review topics identified by Committee members for 2016/17 will be considered for inclusion in the work programme.
- ii) The Committee was satisfied with the review monitoring process carried out so far.
- iii) The Committee was satisfied with the effectiveness of the case studies undertaken so far.

CR29 PERFORMANCE MONITORING: GATESHEAD VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS COUNCIL SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

The Committee received a performance report from the Gateshead Voluntary Organisations Council (GVOC), in accordance with the requirements of the Service Level Agreement (SLA).

Ian Blake, Interim Chief Executive of GVOC presented the report which provided an overview of GVOC's performance in relation to developing and supporting Gateshead's Voluntary and Community Sector.

The quarterly monitoring chart, appended to the report, showed that GVOC had failed to meet five of the targets contained within the Service Level Agreement. The reasons for the variances were outlined.

It was queried whether there is data showing the geographical delivery of support to Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations. It was noted that this is not monitored at present but that the collection of information for monitoring purposes will begin in due course.

It was acknowledged that GVOC has experienced significant change. However concerns remain about GVOCs ability to deliver, particularly in relation to supporting grassroots organisations and groups.

RESOLVED - i) That the information be noted.
 ii) That the comments of the Committee be noted.

CR30 GATESHEAD COMMUNITIES TOGETHER - ANNUAL UPDATE

The Committee received the fourth annual update report on the impact of Gateshead's Communities Together Strategy (the strategy). The report included information on the impact of actions as a result of the strategy by a range of Council services and partners over the period December 2014 – December 2015.

Implementation of the strategy continues to be overseen through a co-ordinated approach between the Council and Gateshead Voluntary Organisations Council. Although the multi-agency working group no longer meets regularly, the group maintains an oversight of activities taking place in communities across Gateshead and encourages close working relationships to share resources and avoid duplication.

Examples of the work undertaken by the Council and partners were identified against the following five priority areas:

- Community engagement and participation
- Community capacity building
- Information and communication
- Involving children, young people and schools
- Supporting positive community relationships

The Committee was satisfied with the outcomes, the overall impact of the strategy as detailed in the report and in particular, the co-ordinated approach to community engagement, increased levels of participation and the sustainable approach to community asset transfers.

The key areas of work to be delivered through 2016 were also detailed in the report.

The activities delivered as part of the “Fill the Holiday Gap” scheme were welcomed, such as the provision of recipes and advice on how to eat healthier on a budget. It was requested that information be provided to evaluate the long-term success of these activities.

- RESOLVED -
- i) That the information be noted.
 - ii) The Committee was satisfied with the impact of the strategy and action plan.
 - iii) The Committee endorsed the five priorities for the forthcoming year.
 - iv) That the strategy be reviewed in 2016.

CR31 THE COUNCIL PLAN - SIX MONTH ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE AND DELIVERY 2015/2016

The Committee received a report providing a six month assessment of performance for 2015/16 as a means of monitoring progress against the Council plan 2015-2020. The information presented specifically related to the role and remit of the Committee.

It was clarified that CR10 (Increase speed of processing benefit claims) concerns only Housing Benefit claimants. It was queried whether the target should be lowered, however, the Committee was satisfied that it is consistent with other authorities and that work is being undertaken to improve actual performance.

Details were sought on CR13a (Increase the number of under 19 year olds within the workforce through apprenticeships) and CR13b (Increase the number of Job Carved posts within the Council), in light of the challenging financial climate the Council continues to face.

Reference was made in the report to disability and it was requested that the definition being used in performance monitoring activity be provided to the Committee for information.

- RESOLVED -
- i) That the Committee was satisfied with the activities undertaken during the past six months towards the delivery of the Council Plan 2015 – 2020.
 - ii) It was agreed that the report be referred to Cabinet on 9 February 2016.

Chair.....