

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMUNITIES AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MEETING

Monday, 11 March 2019

PRESENT: Councillor N Weatherley (Chair)

Councillor(s): T Graham, D Burnett, B Clelland, S Dickie,
A Geddes, F Geddes, H Haran, S Hawkins, M Hood,
H Kelly, P Maughan, J Turnbull and A Wheeler

APOLOGIES: Councillor(s): K Dodds, M Graham and J Simpson

CPL26 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2019 be approved as a correct record.

CPL27 CABINET REPORT - AIR QUALITY PLAN FOR GATESHEAD, NEWCASTLE AND NORTH TYNESIDE

The Committee were advised that with regards to the Cabinet report on the Air Quality Plan for Gateshead, Newcastle and North Tyneside taken to Cabinet on 26 February 2019. The Chair of this Committee and the Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance have agreed that this item is exempt from Call In by this Committee. This is because of reasons of urgency and the Secretary of State has directed that this Local Authority with others produce a plan. The directive comes with a timetable attached and if Call In was allowed this Council and the other Local Authorities would be potentially subject to Judicial Review. The report is about assessing options and there will be further Cabinet reports once options are proposed which will provide the Committee with the opportunity for Scrutiny.

RESOLVED - that the information be noted.

CPL28 OSC REVIEW -WORK TO ADDRESS SKILL SHORTAGES AND INCREASE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES - EVIDENCE GATHERING

The Committee received a report and presentations as part of the fifth evidence gathering session on the review to address skills shortages and increase employment opportunities.

The Committee were reminded that previous sessions have included information on the importance of early years, careers progression and skills gaps. This session is about focussing on what is being done now.

Gateshead Council have recently launched, as part of National Careers Week, Work Inspiration Gateshead, a programme which will enable young people to be educated, informed and inspired about the careers and opportunities available to them. Work Inspiration is a partnership between the Council, Gateshead College and local businesses.

The main aims of the programme are:

- Employability Skills Development
- Applying for career opportunities and interviews
- Hands on work tasks on employer premises
- Insights into progression routes – FE, HE etc
- Real life challenges

The Committee were also informed about the launch of a new partnership with Gateshead Council, Gateshead College, Northumbria University and DWP – Gateshead Works. The Project will:

- Extend our current service to wider Gateshead businesses
- Broaden and maximise opportunities for residents
- Engage more proactively with employers around job quality
- Prepare early for opportunities resulting from development

The Committee then heard from Neil Pilkington. Neil is an Employment Adviser based at Greensfields Business Centre. Neil works with Gateshead residents who need additional support to get back into work. The people Neil is working with may have a number of barriers such as health, finance, being a single parent or other issues.

Neil introduced Michaela who was previously a user of the services he provided. Michaela advised the Committee that she was a care leaver, was now 26 and had been in care from the age of 4. She explained to the Committee that Neil arranged for her to attend different courses and she started on an SSU Programme where she was made to feel very welcome. The course had group activities and she was gutted when it ended. Neil also helped Michaela with her CV and she put her CV into Burger King and was interviewed and got the job. Michaela is a single parent and Neil helped her work out her finances in terms of whether she would be better off in work or not. The service also provides financial support for travel to and from work in the initial stages until a service user is on their feet and received some wages. Michaela advised the Committee that she also suffers from a pro-lapsed disc in her back.

The Committee then heard from Claire Cook, Claire advised that as part of her role she will be involved in the delivery of the Gateshead Works Model.

Claire advised that her role is to identify barriers to employment for unemployed residents, to identify recruitment needs for employers and deliver an appropriate level of support and work in partnership with other council services, key stakeholders and employers to ensure that residents have access to opportunities.

The service is currently involved in partnership with several contracts including:

- BBO – Building Better Opportunities
- Generation North East (18-29 year old)
- Links to Work Programme
- Syrian Resettlement Programme
- Families Gateshead
- GATES – Gateshead Access to Employment Service
- Direct Payments Team
- Looked After Children Team
- DWP
- External Partners

Claire advised that Committee that recruiting people isn't just about the qualifications or experience, it is about personality, talent and culture.

The bespoke services offers a co-ordinated recruitment and skills package including:

- Labour market information
- Advice and guidance on the recruitment process
- Pre employment training
- Advertising of vacancies
- Pre screening of applicants prior to submission
- Premises to conduct interviews
- Recruitment events
- Dedicated point of contact throughout recruitment process

The service has been involved in recruitment events for Teleperformance, Taco Bell, Burger King and KFC, to name a few.

The Committee were advised that in the last year there have been 106 opportunities with 80 positions filled and 56 residents into employment.

The Committee queried whether it was possible to have Michaela or others to act as mentors. It was noted that there are plans to formalise the work of the Inspiration Champions as part of Work Inspiration Gateshead.

It was noted that Follingsby is quite an exciting development and it was queried how we can guarantee the job opportunities for Gateshead residents. It was noted that at the Follingsby development Section 106 powers will be used during the planning process to make sure. It was also noted that as part of projects where the Council has contributed funding it has been written into the funding contract.

It was queried if the service works with other teams / services in the Council, such as Early Help. It was noted that the service works with other services across the Council, in particular when a job becomes available.

It was queried, given the construction / building work ongoing whether we were

working with companies to establish what their requirements would be to take on apprentices / local tradesman.

It was noted that we will be doing some targeted recruitment and training. It was also noted that it will be written within the development agreement with a specific number of jobs and to work with the Council to take on Gateshead residents.

RESOLVED - That the views of the Committee on the presentation and report be noted.

CPL29 OSC REVIEW OF ROADS AND HIGHWAYS - HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE PROGRESS UPDATE

The Committee received a report to provide an update on the position on highway maintenance following from a recommendation of the Review of Roads and Highways which took place in 2017/18.

The Committee were advised that more than 18000 defects were detected in total in 2018. The 2 highest categories were footway trips and potholes. This equates to a 10% increase on the previous year, although the numbers dropped off towards the end of the year. It is thought that the increase was in part due to the extreme weather in February 2018. It is also thought that the good summer weather has been a factor in the numbers decreasing towards the end of the year.

The service is undertaking the work following a risk-based approach and Highway Inspectors are inspecting the roads on a regular basis and if the risk identified is high they are repaired within 10 days, lower risks are repaired within 40 days.

There is a proposal to trial micro asphalt which is easier to repair. The service has been successful in receiving £1m from of funding from a National Government Scheme. This is because we have a Highway Asset Management Plan and based on how we score in the plan can allow us to access additional funding.

Work is ongoing to look at funding we can bid for. However, if we continue to invest at the current level the effects will likely come more evident.

Further updates will be provided to the Committee following a review of policy on inspection and repairs which was revised in November 2018. Trials on the new approach known as 'Micro Asphalt' with the aim of extending the life of surface are likely to begin in the new financial year. Details of this will also be reported back to future meetings of the Committee.

RESOLVED - (i) that the update report be noted.
(ii) that further updates be reported to Committee in due course.

CPL30 FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT ACT 2010 - ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received a report to provide a progress update on the implementation of the duties and responsibilities of Gateshead Council as Lead Local Flood Authority.

Following the introduction of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 the Committee has received annual reports outlining:

- The Council's statutory responsibilities and duties in relation to local flood risk management (FRM), following the introduction of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (F&WMA).
- The duties for local authority scrutiny committees to review work by public sector bodies and essential service providers in order to manage flood risk and to prepare an annual report on local actions to manage flood risk and to implement the Pitt Review.

The implications of the legislation for local authorities are:

- Preparing, maintaining and publishing a local FRM strategy to link to the Environment Agency's (EA) national and local strategies;
- Preparing, maintaining and publishing a register or third party FRM infrastructure assets;
- Investigating reported flooding incidents and publishing a register of investigations;
- Statutory consultee to the local planning authority (LPA) for sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).
- Consenting of ordinary watercourse works (diverting, culverting, restricting flow);
- Cooperation with and oversight of other FRM bodies.

The flood and risk management strategy was approved by full Council in January 2017. A review and possible update is planned for the 2019/20 financial year.

No formal flooding investigations have been undertaken in 2018.

RESOLVED - (i) that the statutory responsibilities of Gateshead Council for local Flood Risk Management be noted.
(ii) that the Committee will receive an annual progress report in March 2020

CPL31 ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee were advised of the current position with regards to the Annual Work Programme. The Committee were advised that the Beamish / TWAM Update will be brought to the next meeting in April.

RESOLVED - that the information contained within the report be noted.

Chair.....