

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

Monday, 20 January 2020 at 10.00 am in the Bridges Room - Civic Centre

From the Chief Executive, Sheena Ramsey

Item	Business
1	Apologies
2	Minutes (Pages 3 - 8) The Committee is asked to approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2019.
3	The Work of the Tackling Poverty in Gateshead Board (Pages 9 - 12) Report of the Strategic Director, Housing, Environment and Health Communities
4	Corporate Complaints Procedure - Annual Report - 2018/19 (Pages 13 - 30) Report of the Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance
5	Annual Health and Safety Performance Report (Pages 31 - 40) Report of the Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance
6	Progress on Implementation of the Council's Workforce Plan (Pages 41 - 48) Report of the Strategic Director Corporate Services and Governance
7	Annual Work Programme Report (Pages 49 - 52) Report of the Chief Executive and the Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance

This page is intentionally left blank

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, 2 December 2019

PRESENT: Councillor John Eagle (Chair)
Councillor(s): S Ronchetti, J Wallace, D Bradford,
T Graham, S Green, M Hall, R Mullen and J Simpson

APOLOGIES: Councillor(s): L Caffrey, P Foy, B Oliphant, C Ord and
N Weatherley

CR20 MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 October 2019 be approved as a correct record.

CR21 CORPORATE ASSET MANAGEMENT - DELIVERY AND PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Committee received a report providing an update on the progress made against the Council's Corporate Asset Strategy and Management Plan and the year on year performance of the property portfolio.

The CASMP, together with the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Workforce Strategy, is one of three main corporate strategies that support the Thrive agenda.

The establishment of the role of Corporate Property Officer (a role held by the Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance since 2010 but which will transfer to the Strategic Director Economy Innovation and Growth), along with the subsequent creation of the Corporate Asset Strategy Team, continues to work well; and has the ability to take a more strategic approach to the way the portfolio is managed overall, and has enabled the Council to deliver budgetary savings through the reduction of its operational portfolio and by way of rationalisation and consolidation.

The following areas were highlighted for the Committee.

Gp2 – significant progress has been made in developing the corporate property data base; Gp2 which is now being used extensively across the Council. The database holds information on the Council's property portfolios and is bringing together the existing, disparate asset management data sources into a single co-ordinated system, which is able to synchronise with other corporate data systems. The Corporate Asset Strategy Team (CAST) methodically tailors Gp2 for the specific needs of various users, developing new modules, updating and improving systems

and creating reports to help Services make more effective use of resources and make savings.

There have been some key achievement, in particular with the completion of some major works to the Civic Centre as part of the workspace strategy improvements in the Civic Centre, including a number of areas delivering services to the public (Registrars, Cemeteries & Crematoria) or the workforce (Occupational Health). Also improved existing use of the building such that space has been freed up for partner agencies (recently Harrogate & District Foundation Trust (Health Visitor services) and Regional Transport Strategy).

Energy related projects have also been delivered: taking advantage of various external funding sources as well as the Capital Programme, and also further investment in our own district heating network, including completion of the Gateshead Energy Centre.

Community Asset Transfers have continued, with Barley Mow Village Hall, Gladstone Terrace and Springwell Village Hall completed last year.

With regards to the efficiency of the portfolio, the picture is again positive overall, starting with condition and maintenance: although the total cost of backlog maintenance has increased, this is only in the lowest priority level, and the percentage of buildings (by floorspace) in the top condition category has increased, with only one building now in the lowest (Saltwell Cemetery Garage).

In terms of energy efficiency and utilities, a particular priority for the Council of course, following the declaration of a climate emergency, we have seen a significant reduction in gas consumption, due in part to a less severe winter than the previous year, but also the transfer of the Gateshead Leisure Centre on to the District Heating Network, and also a reduction in water consumption. Electricity usage has unfortunately seen a small increase; however, you will note this is attributable primarily to former leased properties returning to the Council, and a temporary breakdown in the photovoltaic infrastructure at the Leisure Centre.

The Committee were asked to note that total electricity usage has reduced by 24% over the last eight years. The question was asked last year about whether that was simply due to the reduction in the size of the portfolio, the number of Council buildings, rather than an increase in efficiency. We are therefore now recording gas and electricity consumption per sq metre.

Also included is some detail on another measure of energy efficiency in the context of climate change, carbon emissions. Again, a very positive story supported by the data, including a 56% reduction since 2007/8. All credit to the Council's Energy Services Team who have delivered a number of projects over the year.

The report also provides an update on the suitability and accessibility of buildings in the operational portfolio, and refers to the subsequent closure of a number of buildings in the lowest suitability categories, and that now 80% of the Council's buildings meet the Disability Equality standard (that's the buildings themselves: the services provided from them are still accessible).

Part 3 of the report covers income and capital from the portfolio over the year, the last year prior to the transfer of the tenanted portfolio to the Council's partnership with PSP plc. Members will note that although there was an increase in the number of vacancies, there was a 2.6% increase in the net income from the portfolio, up to £2,360,000.

With regards to disposals, the report notes a similar sum £2.36M, which was generated from sales of Council land over the year. Significant building disposals are listed in the report as well as a detailed update on the sites developed by the Council's Hosing Joint Venture partnership, GRP, including the number of affordable houses delivered.

Part 4 covers how the portfolio supports service delivery, including details of investment in the schools' estate. There is nothing specific to highlight in this part of the report for the Committee.

Part 5 identifies future actions which are expected to form delivery of the Corporate Asset & Management Plan over the next year, much of which is already well under way.

The work of the team was highlighted to the Committee who deliver a great deal with ever-diminishing resources.

RESOLVED - That the information provided in the report be noted.

CR22 PSP MONITORING REPORT

The Committee received a report which provide an overview of the current arrangements in place with Public Sector PLC ("PSP"), details of the workstreams underway and gives an update on performance.

PSP is a private sector company, set up in the 1990s to assist public sector organisations to meet their aims and objectives, through the delivery of property-based projects and solutions.

PSP has established a Limited Liability Partnership with 20 Local Authorities in England. In January 2017, Gateshead Council and PSP established PSP Gateshead LLP ("the LLP"). On 1 April 2019, the Council transferred the majority of its Tenanted Non-Residential Portfolio ("TNRP") by way of a 7 year lease, the Limited Liability Partnership is managed by 2 Boards, the operational board is chaired by Keith Purvis and the Partnership Board is chaired by Councillor Donovan.

The LLP now undertakes the day to day management of the TNRP including, lettings, rent reviews, lease renewals, surrenders and debt management. The Council seconded a number of staff from the Property Services team, to the LLP, to ensure continuity of the property management function.

The idea is that at the end of the 7 year arrangements the Council get back a more

valuable property portfolio, better rent and poorly performing assets are traded out.

The Council gets a guaranteed rent as if we had managed the portfolio ourselves with no risk to the Council, anything above is shared through a profit arrangement. The LLP has currently generated £2.3m between 1 April and 30 September and the Council is covered with its rent of £1.15m to the half year. The LLP has actioned 29 rent reviews, 4 of which have been completed and 30 lease renewals have been actioned with 4 completed. The LLP has also progressed plans for the development of new industrial floorspace at Team Valley Business Centre.

The LLP has also made progress on the following projects:

Nest Road Felling – a vacant 5 acre site in Council ownership. Proposals are being developed for the creation of a new investment asset. Ideas include a new Energy based facility (Solar Farm, Fuel from Waste Plant, Hydrogen Production Plant) or traditional industrial floorspace.

Clasper Village – a vacant 1 acre site adjacent to the proposed residential development, which now has planning approval. The LLP is progressing feasibility for a new small supermarket development and has engaged Agents to attract an operator on new leasehold terms.

Modular Housing – the LLP is undertaking a Viability Assessment for the development of a new 15 unit residential scheme on the former Front Street school site in Whickham. The scheme is predicted on off-site modular construction, in partnership with PSP's sister company, Net Zero Buildings. The house types are carbon neutral and highly energy efficient. The proposed tenure is Affordable Rent.

Social Care – the LLP is currently in discussions with the Council to develop a property solution for the Independent Living service.

It was queried how this fits in with the social aims of the Council. It was noted that this is an ongoing agenda item at the Board meetings.

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

CR23 HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

The Committee received a presentation on the new Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The Health and Wellbeing Board has recognised that the current strategy which was written in 2013 needs to be refreshed.

It was reported that there was a need to update the strategy due to a number of new challenges, for example austerity and welfare reform and continuing inequalities. A significant proportion of Gateshead residents are in need or are vulnerable and it was reported that once a child is born into deprivation a number of other inequalities follow, the Health and Wellbeing Board recognise the need to more directly influence the wider determinants of health.

Five pledges have been developed to help guide decision making:

- Put people and families at the heart of everything we do
- Tackle inequality so people have a fair chance
- Support our communities to support themselves and each other
- Invest in our economy to provide sustainable opportunities for employment, innovation and growth across the borough
- Work together and fight for a better future for Gateshead

The aim is to:

- Give every child the best start in life, with a focus on the first 3 years of a child's life
- Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives
- Create the conditions for fair employment and good work for all
- Ensure a healthy standard of living for all
- Create and develop sustainable places and communities
- Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention

An action plan is being developed and further engagement is underway, it is anticipated that the strategy will be finalised in December and approval sought from the Health and Wellbeing Board with a launch in Spring 2020.

RESOLVED - That the Committee's views on the proposed strategy be noted.

CR24 CORPORATE RESOURCES 6 MONTH PERFORMANCE MONITORING

The Committee received a report providing the six-month assessment of performance and delivery for the period 1 April 2019 to 30 September 2019 in relation to the Council's Thrive Agenda.

The Committee were advised that it is proposed that a full review is undertaken of the performance assessment and for the OSC to consider measuring priorities which are relevant and timely and which will allow the OSC to scrutinise areas which are under-performing.

With regards to performance over the last six months of the 15 targets which have been measured, 10 have improved, 4 have no data and 1 is below the target.

The following areas were highlighted to the Committee.

- Services for Schools – currently the council sells over 50 services to 60 schools, but the costs are increasing, last year the income was approximately £13m and this year it has rose to £13.5m. The pay award is increasing the costs but it is difficult to pass on the costs to schools and we are finding that we are losing building cleaning and catering contracts.

- Volunteering – Gateshead recently held the World Transplant Games with participants from over 70 different countries. The volunteer programme, Team 19, was brilliant with over 900 volunteers taking part in the games.
- Sickness – this is an area which is currently below target, the target is 8 day and current sickness levels are 11.67 days. There are some things which can be done, including making sure managers are following processes and policy.

It was noted that the performance management framework needs to be more focussed so that Councillors can see where resources need to be focussed.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That Committee was satisfied the activities undertaken during April to September 2019 are supporting delivery of the Thrive agenda.
 - (ii) That Cabinet will consider a composite performance report at its meeting on 21st January 2020.

CR25 ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received it's Annual Work Programme Report. The report highlights any changes to the work programme for the municipal year.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) that the provisional programme be noted.
 - (ii) that further reports on the work programme may be brought to the Committee to identify any issues which the Committee may be asked to consider.

Chair.....

20 January 2019**TITLE OF REPORT: The Work of The Tackling Poverty in Gateshead Board****REPORT OF: Colin Huntington, Strategic Director Housing,
Environment and Healthy Communities**

Summary

This report sets out work completed to date and future priorities of the Tackling Poverty in Gateshead Board. The work identified and influenced by the board seeks to mitigate the impact of poverty across Gateshead by encouraging place based and partnership approaches to delivering interventions across Gateshead and its communities.

The views of the Committee are being sought on this report and welcomes any feedback or recommendations for 2020 and beyond.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Following the first Gateshead Poverty Conference in February 2018 steps were taken to create a strategic board made up of senior figures from within the Council and its partners from the private and third sectors. The board is chaired by Deputy Leader Councillor Catherine Donovan, with Alison Dunn, Chief executive of Citizens Advice Gateshead in the role of Vice Chair.
- 1.2 The board sits bi-monthly although agreement was made at the time of inception to reduce or increase this frequency as required.
- 1.3 The role of the board is to direct the poverty mitigation work across the seven key themes of poverty as identified by the conference attendees at conference one, and to influence partners to adopt areas of work, change ways of working and/or support collaborative efforts to address poverty in Gateshead.
- 1.4 Seven key themes: Food Poverty, Fuel Poverty, Child Poverty, Housing, Financial Inclusion, Financial Education and Employment Skills and Wages.
- 1.5 The board also influences the work of the Council's Poverty Lead, Michael Walker on an ongoing basis.

2. Work to Date

- 2.1 Since the initial conference in February 2018 a great deal of intervention has taken place to tackle many of the injustices associated with poverty, and in particular the key themes identified, including;
 - Successfully bid for £204K from the DfE to deliver a Holiday Activities & Food programme in Gateshead, enabling Gateshead to offer over 12,000 free places on holiday and food clubs across Gateshead.
 - Planned and hosted Gateshead's second poverty conference with 10 respected speakers and over 150 delegates in attendance.

- Creation of the Gateshead Community Food Network
- Designed and released the 'Gateshead Food Map' highlighting all the emergency food provision available in Gateshead
- Creation of a third Gateshead Food Co-op in Felling
- Red Box Project, now Project TOM via the Gateshead Youth Council
- Introduction of LEAP & ECHO supporting fuel poor households (the only LA in the North East at the time of launch)
- Delivery of Fuel Poverty Awareness Training to several frontline Council employees and external partners plus further delivery of accredited City & Guilds qualification 'Fuel Debt Advice in the Community' for the Council's THRIVE team and further courses planned for 2020
- Financial Education in Primary Schools via Newcastle Building Society and their annual charity boardroom challenge
- Two planned talks on finance and poverty to be delivered to students in year 11 and above at Heworth Grange and St Thomas More secondary schools, and a further talk for teaching staff within Heworth Grange.
- Retirement talks for Council employees via Newcastle Building Society
- Frauds and Scams awareness sessions in partnership with Barclays and Northumbria Police
- Ongoing work with Gateshead schools and educationGateshead to offer poverty proofing the school day resources free of charge to all schools in the borough
- Created a Gateshead Poverty Truth Commission in partnership with the Methodist Church in Blaydon, to ensure the voices of those residents with lived poverty experiences are both heard and considered when creating future policy. An official launch event is to be held on 5th March 2020.
- Worked closely with NEFirst Credit Union to facilitate a move to prominent new shop front premises on Jackson Street, with a likely late January opening
- Also with NEFirst Credit Union, continue to work in partnership to grow their Gateshead presence across communities, encourage more employees to save via salary deduction (payroll saving), and embed the credit union in all financial inclusion related intervention going forward, including the relationship with the England Illegal Money Lending Team

3. **Priorities for 2020**

- 3.1 The Board agree that the following areas of work are priorities for 2020, to run alongside the work already ongoing;
- Financial Inclusion
 - Financial Education & Poverty Proofing Schools
 - Employment Skills & Wages
- 3.2 In addition to the three key areas above, the board also seeks to align its work to the six priorities in the new Health & Wellbeing Strategy, particularly the pledges around 'fair employment and good work for all' and 'ensure a healthy standard of living for all'
- 3.3 Financial Inclusion encompasses money, debt and credit which are significant areas of focus for 2020. Tentative plans are already being made to bring together a range of financial institutions with a view to hosting a 'financial summit' in Gateshead. This would include banks, building societies, debt support agencies,

charities and credit unions coming together to start unpicking the issue of problem debt in Gateshead and start identifying practical solutions. In addition to that a significant portion of resource will go into Credit Union growth in Gateshead to ensure affordable and fair financial products are freely available to everyone.

- 3.3 Financial Education provides an opportunity to begin working closely with Gateshead schools to develop how children of all ages can learn about money and finance in an age appropriate way. It also allows work to continue with schools on the poverty proofing agenda in which work is underway with educationGateshead in the shape of producing poverty proofing guides and materials to be used in all Gateshead schools.
- 3.4 Employment Skills & Wages is a further focus for 2020 and will see collaboration between Economic Development, learningSkills and academic researchers to explore this theme to identify steps to take in addressing many of the issues both currently known and hidden.
- 3.5 The board will also consider hosting a further major poverty event for 2020 following the success of both conferences in 2018 and 2019. This may not take the traditional conference format used previously and could be a different style event designed to bring about action.
- 3.5 The board will also be responsive to need and will direct and allocate priority and/or resource as and when it is deemed appropriate.

Contact: Michael Walker ext. 2842

This page is intentionally left blank

TITLE OF REPORT: Annual Report - Corporate Complaints and Compliments Procedure 2018/19

REPORT OF: Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance

Summary

The report provides an analysis of complaints and compliments recorded by the Council and the Gateshead Housing Company in the year ended 31 March 2019.

Background

1. The Cabinet has referred the report to the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the performance management process, in order to ensure that the process is operating satisfactorily.
2. The Council sees comments, complaints and compliments as an important part of performance management. To make it easier for people to express their views we have a corporate complaints and compliments procedure and it is publicised in the Council News, leaflets in council facilities and on both the internet and intranet. The Gateshead Housing Company has its own complaints and compliments procedure.

Procedure

3. The procedure has three steps, the first of which 'problem solving', relies on the quick resolution of complaints by employees and their managers and does not require the complaint to be recorded. At the second step the complaint is recorded, there is a formal investigation into the complaint and a written response is sent to the complainant usually within twenty working days. The final step enables those complainants who remain dissatisfied to request the Chief Executive (or Managing Director of the Gateshead Housing Company) to carry out an independent review of the matter.
4. The report focuses upon recorded complaints and compliments with information about the distribution of complaints and compliments across the Council and the categories of complaints.

5. This does not include complaints about statutory Social Services and Children's Services matters which are investigated under their own separate legal requirements.

Complaints Received

6. Over the year 1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019:
 - 191 complaints were recorded
 - 593 compliments were recorded
 - 31 complaints were the subject of an independent review by the Chief Executive of the Council and the Managing Director of the Gateshead Housing Company undertook 17 reviews.

Issues Arising

7. A number of points can be noted arising from the statistics for 2018/19:
 - 191 complaints were recorded in 2018/19 compared with 258 in 2017/18 a decrease of 67.
 - 593 compliments were recorded for the year 2018/19 compared to 466 in 2017/18 – an increase of 127.
 - The number of complainants requesting a review of their complaint by the Chief Executive increased by 4 to 31 in 2018/19. The Managing Director of the Gateshead Housing Company carried out 17 reviews in 2018/19 compared to 14 in 2017/18.
 - There were 129 complaints regarding quality of service. This is the largest of the six categories although a complaint can fall into more than one category.
 - The proportion of complaints found to be fully justified decreased from 36.6% in 2017/18 to 24.2% in 2018/19.
 - In addition, the proportion of complaints found to be partially justified decreased from 24.7% in 2017/18 to 17.6% in 2018/19.
 - Most importantly, the Council's managers used the information gained through the monitoring of complaints to improve the provision of services.
 - The computerised recording system made it easier to track and respond to complaints. However, this system now requires an upgrade that reflects the new structure of the Council and provides improved statistical interrogation and analysis. A new corporate complaints system is currently being developed using the case management features of the Council's Digital Platform to handle corporate complaints.
 - There has been a decrease in the number of complaints recorded by the Council during 2018/19. Additionally, there has been a decrease in performance of the percentage of complaints resolved within target timescales for the both the Council and the Gateshead Housing Company from 75.2% in 2017/18 to 64.9% in 2018/19.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

8. During the course of 2018/19, the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman investigated 28 complaints. Of these 16 were closed after initial

enquiries, 6 were not upheld and 6 were upheld partially or fully. Councillors will note that a summary of those cases upheld has been presented to the Cabinet. Each case has provided learning opportunities in terms of reviewing policy, maintenance of records, the operation of systems and the provision of guidance and training to staff. The Council maintains a good working relationship with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and all cases have now been settled to their satisfaction and the complainants.

Supporting Local Scrutiny

9. Councillors may be aware that throughout the year the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman has produced a number of focus reports. These highlight particular subjects or systemic issues coming from casework. They draw on lessons learned from complaints and have included recommendations on good practice. These reports may be used to inform reviews and case studies undertaken by the Council's overview and scrutiny committees. The Ombudsman also has an Advisory Forum comprising members of the public who have used their service, representatives from Local Authorities and those who act as advocates for the public. The Ombudsman has also, in consultation with the Local Government Association (LGA), produced a workbook for Councillors that can be accessed via the LGA's website.

The Housing Ombudsman

10. From 1 April 2013 the Localism Act 2011 extended the jurisdiction of the Housing Ombudsman to cover all social landlords, including Councils. The Housing Ombudsman is able to consider complaints in so far as they relate to the provision or management of housing. The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman continues to investigate complaints about allocations and the lettings policy.

During 2018/19, the Council has been contacted by the Housing Ombudsman in respect of 7 cases as presented to the Cabinet.

Recommendation

11. The Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to endorse the information in the Annual Report and satisfy themselves that the Corporate Complaints and Compliments Procedure is operating satisfactorily.

Contact: Brian Wilson

Ext. 2145

This page is intentionally left blank

TITLE OF REPORT: Corporate Complaints and Compliments Procedure - Annual Report 2018/19

REPORT OF: Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance

Purpose of the Report

1. The report asks the Cabinet to consider and endorse an analysis of the complaints and compliments recorded by the Council during the year 2018/19.

Background

2. This report focuses on complaints and compliments that the Council deals with under its Corporate Complaints and Compliments procedure. It provides a statistical analysis of the complaints and compliments received for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019.
3. Appendix 2 to this report details:
 - The number of complaints recorded in the year 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019
 - The categories of complaints (note: a complaint may fall into more than one category).
4. Appendix 3 to this report details:
 - The number of complaints resolved in the year 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019
 - The number of complaints resolved within the target time of twenty working days
 - The number of complaints closed (ie dealt with as issues other than complaints)
 - The number of complaints open (ie unresolved at 31 March 2019)
 - The number of resolved complaints that were found to be justified or part justified.
5. Appendix 4 provides an analysis of the compliments received and complaints recorded and resolved across all Council services and the Gateshead Housing Company.
6. Appendix 5 provides information about the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman.

Proposal

7. It is proposed that the analysis provided for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 be agreed.

Recommendations

8. It is recommended that the Cabinet
 - (i) Agrees the Corporate Complaints and Compliments Procedure Annual Report for 2018/19 as detailed.
 - (ii) Notes the report will be considered by the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

For the following reason:

To have an effective and timely complaints procedure.

CONTACT: Brian Wilson extension 2145

APPENDIX 1

Policy Context

1. The corporate complaints and compliments procedure supports Vision 2030 and the Council Plan in that it helps the Council to assess its service provision and improve where necessary.

Background

2. The Council aims to respond positively to complaints. The corporate complaints and compliments procedure is widely publicised across the Borough through a complaints/compliments form which is available at Council facilities and on its website. The Gateshead Housing Company operates its own procedure as the body responsible for the day to day management and maintenance of council housing in Gateshead.
3. The Council operates the corporate complaints and compliments procedure to handle complaints and compliments to make it easier for members of the public to raise issues of concern, ensure that complaints are responded to quickly and in a consistent manner and to enable the Council to learn from the issues raised and amend procedures and practices as necessary.
4. The report focuses on complaints that the Council deals with under its corporate complaints procedure. Excluded from the procedure are:
 - most Social Services and Children's Services matters - for which there are separate statutory procedures
 - matters for which there is a statutory system of appeal/redress eg planning
 - most complaints about schools
5. The current procedure enables people to express their views and register their complaint or compliment in person at a Council office, by telephone, letter, fax, e-mail or complaints/compliments form. It can also be done through a Councillor, someone acting on their behalf, with the assistance of other organisations or via social media.
6. The procedure has the following three steps: -

Step 1 - problem solving – by Services trying to sort it out quickly and informally by providing information or taking appropriate action

Step 2 - investigation – the complaint is recorded and investigated by a Senior Manager within Services who will aim to respond within twenty working days

Step 3 - review – the Chief Executive (or Managing Director of the Gateshead Housing Company) to look again at a complaint and aim to respond within twenty working days.
7. Computerised recording of Step 2 complaints was designed to ensure a consistent method of response to complaints across the Council. A designated officer oversees and monitors the operation of the corporate complaints procedure and the

system as a whole on behalf of the Chief Executive who has ultimate responsibility. This includes the collation and analysis of the statistics for the Council and the conduct of the Step 3 reviews. The officer is also the Council's link officer with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman.

8. The current corporate complaints system is to be replaced in the near future by utilising the case management features of the Digital Platform to handle corporate complaints. The Digital Platform hosts and delivers the Council's website, intranet, Go Gateshead and other websites plus key online services such as the report fly tipping facility.

Increasingly, members of the public now prefer to submit complaints via an online form. Currently that information then needs to be inputted into the corporate complaints system along with information received via the other ways outlined in section 5 above which can be time consuming. The aim would be to encourage residents to submit complaints via a form on the Council's website, while still retaining the ability to submit complaints in the other ways outlined for those that do not have internet access. One of the benefits of capturing the information via an online form is to ensure the Council has all the information needed to proceed without having to request further information from the complainant.

The website will be updated to direct people to service requests wherever appropriate eg. to report fly tipping or a missed bin collection to ensure only genuine complaints are submitted to the designated officer through the corporate complaints system. The complainants after registering on the new system will be able to view the progress of their complaint, submit further information and will receive e mail notifications on information and updates and the Council's formal response to their complaint. All contact with the complainant will be recorded within the new system making it easier for staff managing the corporate complaints process to track and monitor the complaints process, manage all the system users and provide performance data and statistics on complaints received in the Service areas.

The system also records the number of compliments received which recognises the good work of the Council and its officers. The number of compliments received have always well exceeded the number of complaints received.

The new system will be more flexible to reflect changes in Council structures, staff and other key information. The replacement of the current system with the new proposed system will allow new officers within Services to be identified and trained to improve the Council's approach to dealing with complaints more effectively and avoid the escalation of complaints to stage 3 and on to the Ombudsman.

Consultation

9. There has been no external consultation undertaken in the preparation of this report.

Alternative Options

10. There are no alternative options.

Implications of Recommended Option

11. **Resources:**
 - a) **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Corporate Resources confirms that there are no new financial implications arising from this report.
 - b) **Human Resources Implications** – The Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance confirms that there are no human resources implications arising from the report.
 - c) **Property Implications** – The Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance confirms that there are no property implications arising from this report.
12. **Risk Management Implication** – Potential failure to act on complaints received is minimised through regular monitoring.
13. **Equality and Diversity Implications** – The corporate complaints and compliments procedure contributes to the implementation of the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.
14. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.
15. **Health Implications** – There are no health implications arising from this report.
16. **Sustainability Implications** – There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.
17. **Human Rights Implications** – There may be human rights implications in a number of complaints made to the Council. Therefore, having a corporate complaints procedure will assist the Council in carrying out its duties under the Human Rights Act 1988.
18. **Area and Ward Implications** – None.
19. **Background Information** – Corporate complaints and compliments policy and procedure.

This page is intentionally left blank

Service Area	Category of complaint						
	Total No of Complaints	Access to service	Damage/Injury	Quality of service	Employee	Policy	Other
Communities & Environment							
Waste Services & Grounds Maintenance	3	-	-	-	-	1	3
Development & Public Protection	14	1	-	5	2	-	10
Transport & Highways	10	-	-	4	2	5	1
Environmental health	3	-	1	2	1	1	1
Council housing, design & technical	12	1	-	10	2	6	2
Corporate Services & Governance							
Litigation	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Corporate Resources							
Customer & Financial Services	10	-	-	5	5	2	-
Culture, leisure & sport & libraries	23	8	-	12	4	1	3
Care Wellbeing & Learning							
Learning & schools	1	-	-	1	1	-	-
Gateshead Housing Company							
Central	27	2	2	24	2	1	1
East	29	1	2	24	8	2	2
Inner West	9	1	1	6	1	-	1
South	30	3	2	22	7	1	4
West	19	7	8	14	-	4	3
TOTAL	191	24	16	129	35	24	32

Please note that a complaint may fall into more than one category

COMPLAINTS RESOLVED 1 APRIL 2018 to 31 MARCH 2019

APPENDIX 3

Service Area	No. of Complaints resolved	No. resolved within 20 working days	No. not resolved within 20 working days	No. of unresolved complaints	No. of complaints closed	No. fully justified complaints	No. partly justified complaints	No. not justified complaints
Communities & Environment								
Waste Services & Grounds Maintenance	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	3
Development and Public Protection	9	-	9	-	5	-	2	7
Transport & Highways	8	2	6	1	1	-	1	7
Environmental health	3	2	1	-	-	-	-	3
Council housing, design & technical	8	4	4	2	2	-	2	6
Corporate Services & Governance								
Litigation	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Corporate Resources								
Customer & Financial Services	9	5	4	-	1	2	1	6
Culture, leisure and sport & libraries	15	12	3	-	8	6	1	8
Care Wellbeing & Learning								
Learning & Schools	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Gateshead Housing Company								
Central	26	21	5	-	1	9	4	13
East	29	19	10	-	-	8	4	17
Inner West	9	7	2	-	-	4	1	4
South	28	20	8	1	1	4	7	17
West	18	12	6	-	1	7	6	5
TOTAL	165	107	58	6	20	40	29	96

NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS

During the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 the Council recorded 191 Step 2 complaints (compared to 258 during 2017/18). An analysis of these complaints reveals the following:

Category of complaints

The subject matter of complaints varies considerably. However, the resolved complaints have been broadly summarised into the following six categories:-

Category of Complaint	Number of Complaints 2018/19
Access to services	24
Injury/ damage to person or possession	16
Quality of service	129
Employee	35
Policy	24
Other	32

(It must be noted, however, that a complaint can fall into more than one category)

Closed Complaints

The total number of closed complaints is 20. These are complaints recorded on the system and subsequently identified and dealt with as issues other than complaints.

Resolution of complaints within target timescales

The Council's target timescale to resolve step 2 complaints is within 20 working days of receipt. The Council aims to resolve the majority of complaints at step 1 - sorting problems out quickly. The procedure and recording system allows service managers to review actual performance at any time and identifies those areas where improvements in response times are necessary. 107 complaints were resolved within the target timescale of 20 working days. This represents 64.9% of recorded complaints less the closed and open complaints. Of the 114 received by the Gateshead Housing Company, 3 were closed, 1 was open and 79 were resolved within the target timescale. This represents 71.8% resolved within the target timescale compared with 74.7% in 2017/18. Of the 77 complaints recorded by the

Council, 17 were closed, 5 were open and 28 were resolved within the target timescale. This represents 50.9% resolved within the target timescale compared with 76.9% in 2017/18.

Number of Complaints that were justified

Of the 165 complaints resolved, 40 (24.2%) were fully justified and 29 (17.6%) were partly justified and appropriate remedies were offered to the complainants. This compares with the position in 2017/18 when of the 235 complaints resolved, 86 (36.6%) were fully justified and 58 (24.7%) were partly justified.

Service Group Analysis

An analysis of the complaints received and resolved by each service group reveals the following:

Communities and Environment

- Recorded 42 complaints, 22% of all complaints recorded
- Development and Public Protection received 33.3%, Transport and Highways received 23.8%, Waste Services and Grounds Maintenance received 7.1%, Council housing, design and technical received 28.6% and environmental health received 7.1% of complaints in this service group
- 50% of complaints concerned quality of service.
- 8 complaints were closed and 3 were unresolved.
- 29% of the remaining complaints were resolved in target timescales
- None of the resolved complaints were fully justified
- 16.1% of resolved complaints were partly justified.

Corporate Services and Governance

- Recorded 1 complaint, 0.5 % of all complaints recorded
- The complaint was unresolved.

Corporate Resources

- Recorded 24 complaints, 12.6% of all complaints recorded.
- Culture, leisure and sport and libraries received 62.5% and customer and financial services received 37.5% of complaints in this service group.
- 70.8% of complaints concerned quality of service.
- 9 complaints were closed and none unresolved.
- 70.8% of the remaining complaints were resolved within target timescales
- 33.3% of resolved complaints were fully justified
- 8.3% of resolved complaints were partly justified.

Adult Social Care and Independent Living and Children's Services operate their own separate complaints recording system

Gateshead Housing Company

- Recorded 114 complaints, 59.7% of all recorded complaints
- 78.9% of complaints concerned quality of service.

- 3 complaints were closed and 1 was unresolved.
- 71.8% of the remaining complaints were resolved within the Council's target timescales
- 29% of resolved complaints were fully justified
- 20% of resolved complaints were partly justified

Reviewed Complaints

Complainants who are dissatisfied with the outcome of their Step 2 complaints can request an independent review by the Chief Executive (or the Managing Director of the Gateshead Housing Company). The Chief Executive undertook 31 reviews of complaints in 2018/19 compared to 27 in 2017/18. The Managing Director of the Gateshead Housing Company undertook 17 reviews in 2018/19 compared with 14 during 2017/18.

Using Complaints to improve performance

The information gained through the monitoring of complaints should be used to improve the provision of the services throughout the Council reflecting the Council's overall approach to value for money and continuous improvement. There were several occasions where the resolution of a complaint led to additional instructions being given to employees to reinforce existing procedures. Changes to the provision of services have also been made as a result of complaints received or the opportunity to improve has been identified.

Compliments received by the Council

The total number of compliments received in 2018/19, as outlined below, is 593, compared to 466 received in 2017/18.

Communities and Environment	130
Corporate Services and Governance	21
Corporate Resources	57
The Gateshead Housing Company	385

This page is intentionally left blank

APPENDIX 5

EXTERNAL REVIEW BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL OMBUDSMAN AND THE HOUSING OMBUDSMAN

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman provides a free independent and impartial service to the public. They provide an initial point of contact for those wishing to make a complaint through a telephone contact centre in Coventry, or if a person remains dissatisfied following the examination of a particular matter by the Council. Protocols are in place between the Council and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman that provide for the majority of cases to be considered through the Council's own procedures before any investigation is considered by their office.

Leaflets and information about the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman are available at Council offices and all those who exhaust the Council's and the Gateshead Housing Company's procedures (where appropriate) are provided with the leaflet. The day to day management of the relationship with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman is undertaken by a dedicated officer who acts on behalf of the Chief Executive in this respect.

During the year the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman investigated twenty eight complaints. Of these, sixteen were closed after initial enquiries and six were not upheld. A summary of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's findings and the actions taken by the Council for each of the six cases upheld partially or fully is detailed below:-

Case	Ombudsman's Decision	Remedy
1.	The Council incorrectly sent an attachment of earnings order to the complainant's employer.	The Council agreed to pay £150 to the complainant.
2.	There was fault in the information and advice the Council provided to the complainant and her son.	The Council apologised and agreed to pay £300 to the complainant and review the special educational needs advice it gave to parents and children to ensure that they are aware of their rights.
3.	There was fault in the Council's assessed fees for residential care for the complainant's aunt.	The Council apologised, agreed to reduce the fees for six weeks and to pay the complainant £100.
4.	The Council did not properly consider a request for home to school transport for a fostered child	The Council apologised, agreed to pay the identified and future costs of home to school transport and £750

		to the complainant and reviewed its policies for the provision of home to school transport to looked after children with independent fostering agency placements.
5.	The Council did not confirm it had amended details about the complainant's nephew's report as promised.	No remedy justified.
6.	The Council was at fault for not posting a site notice to advertise a planning application.	The Council apologised and agreed to pay the complainant £100.

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman now monitors his specific recommendations to remedy any fault he finds and follows up with Councils to seek evidence that the recommendations have been implemented. The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman has confirmed that the Council complied with his recommendations on time for all of the above cases in 2018/19.

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Annual Review is available on their website at www.lgo.org.uk.

The Housing Ombudsman

From 1 April 2013, the Localism Act 2011 extended the jurisdiction of the Housing Ombudsman to cover all social landlords, including Councils. The Housing Ombudsman is able to consider housing complaints in so far as they relate to the provision or management of housing. The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman continues to investigate complaints about allocations and the lettings policy.

During 2018/19, the Council was contacted by the Housing Ombudsman in respect of seven cases. Of these:

- Three cases had not exhausted the Housing Company's complaints procedure.
- One case was not within the Housing Ombudsman's jurisdiction.
- One case awaiting Housing Ombudsman's response
- One case there was no maladministration after investigation.
- One case, satisfactory redress had been offered to the complainant.

TITLE OF REPORT: Annual Health and Safety Performance Report

REPORT OF: Mike Barker, Strategic Director

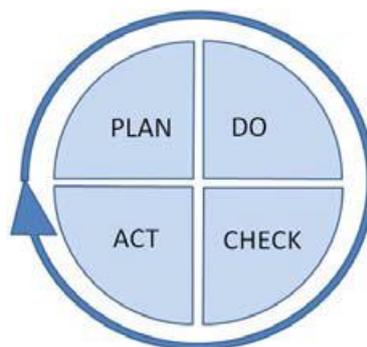
SUMMARY

This report reviews the health and safety performance for 2018/2019 of Gateshead Council and identifies key priorities for 2020.

Introduction

1. Gateshead Council is committed to providing its employees with safe conditions of work as far as is reasonably practicable and has structured arrangements in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff and others who may be affected by our activities. Our aim is to minimise the adverse impacts to individuals and the business from ill health and injury.
2. The Council continues to use the principals of the HSE guidance *HSG 65, Managing for Health and Safety*. The key principals are Plan, Do, Check, Act. These principals underpin the Council’s safety management system and operational processes and procedures as detailed in the Corporate Health and Safety Policy and arrangements.

PLAN AND DO - Gateshead Council’s Approach to Managing Health and Safety Risks



The approach taken to demonstrate how the Council evidences the management of health and safety risks is set out below:

3. **General Health and Safety Advice** – from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 Health and Safety Officers from carried out 95 (94 in 17/18) advisory visits, 34 (28 in 17/18) incident investigations and 143 (135 in 17/18) inspections and audits.
4. **Fire Safety Advice** – the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 places responsibility for fire safety on the “responsible person” i.e. the employer and/or the person who has control of the premises. Under this legislation, the “responsible

person” must ensure a fire risk assessment (FRA) is carried out to determine whether the premises are safe to use and ensure that all necessary fire precautions are properly implemented.

The Health and Safety Team has developed a spreadsheet which holds the following information: name and address of premise; type of premise; name of fire risk assessor; target and completion dates; FRA status (high, med or low); date next FRA due and dates of reviews; any Fire Service intervention and upload onto the GP2 system. This is an essential tool to keep track of progress.

The FRA programme is an ongoing process with annual reviews and re-assessments required at determined frequencies. During the reporting period the Council’s Health and Safety Officers completed 51 out of a target of 55 (71 from a target of 76 in 17/18) fire risk assessments and reviews. The delay in completing the target figure was due to a site being refurbished; dates postponed at the request of Head Teachers; and other work priorities.

Support, advice and training is made available to premises managers in all Council buildings regarding fire safety, and particularly the technical aspects of fire risk assessments.

Regular and close liaison with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS) continues and has proven to be an effective way of dealing with issues which arise from their audits of Council premises and schools. This has helped to ensure that to date no enforcement notices or prohibition notices have been served.

5. **Occupational Health** - A summary of the work carried out is set out in the tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1 - Occupational Health Appointments

Type	Year			Comments
	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	
Health Surveillance	503	551	551	
Driver Medical	106	49	63	
Vision Screening	67	57	54	
Medical Referral – OHA	157	553	531	
Medical Referral – OHP	407	123	134	
Pre-employment questionnaires	1088*	1232*	926*	Employees – * desk top exercise
Pre-employment questionnaires	298*	196*	153*	Volunteers – * desk top exercise
Physiotherapy	585	554/106	602/115	115 Medical referrals
Counselling Sessions	1040	1384	2169	
Total	4251 (2865*)	4805 (3377*)	5298 (4219*)	Note gradual increase in demand on service

*Denotes pre-employment questionnaires carried out for employees/volunteers which is a desk top exercise, rather than an appointment

Table 2 - Occupational Health Non-attendance

Type	Year		
	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019
Health Surveillance	47	46	47
Driver Medical	7	2	5
Vision Screening	3	3	2
Medical Referral – OHA	7	56	66
Medical Referral – OHP	41	14	12
Physiotherapy	43	35	29
Counselling	33	61	115
Total	181 (6.3% excl*)	217 (4.5% excl*)	276 (5.2% excl*)

**Figure excludes desk top exercise for pre-employment questionnaires*

6. **Health and Wellbeing** - throughout the year the task and finish groups set up to act on findings from the Health Needs Assessment have continued to focus on losing weight; reducing stress levels; increasing physical activity; improving sleep; getting a better work-life balance and reducing back pain. Through the work of the focus groups, several campaigns and activities have taken place including mental health awareness; step challenge; Nordic walking and healthy eating options in Bewicks. There have also been some local success stories where small teams have participated in weight loss and exercise programmes

The Committee may wish to refer to the report presented to the OSC meeting on 17 June 2019 for a more detailed update on the progress in relation to 'Health and Wellbeing'.

7. **Health and Safety Training** – this is delivered by internal and external trainers. Individual service areas are responsible for relevant specialised safety training and hold appropriate training records. Service Managers are also responsible for ensuring mandatory training is up to date and records are kept. Figures in table 7 detail the number of employees who have attended corporate health and safety training in 18/19.

Wherever possible, the Council directs staff to e-learning which is a more efficient method of delivering training. Over the last year, 593 health and safety e-learning modules were accessed across the Council. Whilst this a decrease from 1239 in the previous year, it is linked to the decommissioning of the external e-learning platform 'Safety Media' which supports a wide range of generic modules, and the transfer/development of more targeted, relevant, modules to the Council's Knowledge Net platform. There is no indication that the decrease in accessing the courses is having an impact on the Council; all service areas have confirmed that their training is up to date. The Workforce Development team continues to promote the health and safety training and will continue to do so throughout the year.

8. **Corporate Procedures and Codes of Practice** – these form part of the overall health and safety policy; providing safe systems of work for employees to follow and adapt, as required, for their service areas as appropriate. During this reporting period, one new policy has been adopted; 20 new procedural documents were developed; and, 42 documents have been revised. All new documents and those with significant changes are presented to the Corporate Health and Safety Committee as part of the consultation process. Minutes of meetings which outline discussions and outcomes are available on the intranet ([Gateshead Intranet - Safety alerts, briefings and minutes](#)).
9. The new policy adopted is [LCS-HS-26](#) '*Management of Violence and Aggression towards Employees*'. This was developed to reinforce the Council's commitment to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all its employees, and as an umbrella document to reinforce information given to employees in other guidance documents.

CHECK - Checks to Ensure Things are Happening Through:

10. **Reporting to the Corporate Health and Safety Committee** - quarterly updates are presented on new legislation and guidance; the corporate health and safety action plan; the health and safety training strategy; and, health and wellbeing. The committee meeting provides all service areas with an opportunity to discuss other relevant health and safety issues. Trade unions are represented at all meetings.
11. **Senior Management Group (SMG) Health and Safety Update Reports** - quarterly reporting by the OH&S Manager to SMG, Services and Performance, advising on the status of the health and safety management system and hazards that have been identified, recommending to SMG any reasonable actions to be taken. This also provides an opportunity to share information and lessons learnt from any incidents or near misses that may have occurred.
12. **Monitoring hazards** – Health and Safety Officers utilise a spreadsheet for the recording of hazards identified by employees. Checks are carried out to ensure appropriate action has been taken by the relevant manager to address concerns. This ensures that compliance is maintained and, where appropriate, improvements are implemented.
13. **Incident Investigations** – where necessary, incidents are investigated with findings and recommendations communicated to responsible managers. Managers are responsible for taking appropriate action to prevent a reoccurrence. Health and Safety Officers ensure that incidents are followed up appropriately.
14. **Annual Reporting on Corporate Health and Safety** – annual reports are produced for SMG, Services and Performance and this Overview and Scrutiny Committee to inform senior managers and councillors of the work undertaken in the previous 12-month period. These reports include details on health and safety performance and incident statistics.
15. **Internal Assurance**

Asbestos Management

The Asbestos Management Team (AMT) is responsible to the Strategic Director, Communities and Environment, within Council Housing, Design and Technical

Services. The team works closely with the Health and Safety Team have achieved the following in this reporting period:

- Continued to carry out the asbestos re-inspections, update and deliver registers.
- Provided technical advice to schools which have bought into the asbestos management package via services to schools.
- Reviewed the corporate asbestos management plan and provided changes that were required.
- Input asbestos data into the GP2/Amis system for in-house re-inspections
- Arrange asbestos refurbishment/demolition surveys as and when required.

Contractor Management

During the reporting period the Health and Safety Officers visited all schools and other sites when they were notified that contractors would be working (104). This enabled activities to be monitored and risk assessments, method statements, and training records to be checked. There were no major issues identified.

A small number of non-compliance issues were identified relating to: personal protective equipment (PPE) not being worn; health and safety documentation not being available for inspection; scaffolding not being erected to correct standards; asbestos registers not being checked prior to work commencing; and poor vehicle management. When the necessary standards were not being achieved, the work was temporarily stopped until corrective action was taken; the building surveyor informed; and, the issues discussed at the Shearlegs Road operational management meeting attended by senior managers. More significant concerns are also raised at the Communities and Environment Group Management Team meetings chaired by the Strategic Director, who can ensure appropriate action has been taken to ensure non-compliances do not re-occur.

Educational Visits

Council Health and Safety Officers (under the banner of the Educational Visits Advisory Team) provide advice and support to teachers, youth workers and other Council employees who are responsible for young people on educational and out-of-centre visits. They are also responsible for the implementation and monitoring of compliance with appropriate policy and procedures to ensure the Council meets its statutory responsibilities for the safety of such activities. The team maintain the EVOLVE on-line visit planning, recording and approval system for Gateshead.

EVOLVE also provides the Council with a clear picture of the great range of learning outside the classroom opportunities being provided for Gateshead children. In the academic year 2018/19 5500 visits were recorded (5996 in previous year) visits. Of these, 350 (443 in previous year) involved residential stays, adventurous activities or travel overseas to countries including Italy, Iceland, Croatia, Shanghai, France, Northern Ireland, Holland, Uganda, Japan, USA and Germany.

Legionella Management

The Water Hygiene Team is responsible to the Strategic Director, Communities and Environment, within Council Housing, Design and Technical Services. The team

works closely with the Health and Safety Team have achieved the following in this reporting period:

- In all buildings visited or audited no significant issues were found and ensured that all Council buildings continue to have their risk assessment documentation updated.
- 195 water samples were taken in the reporting period with no positive legionella results returned. At the same time samples were taken for pseudomonas with 6 positive samples returned and Ecoli with no positive results. Remedial action was taken, and the properties resampled. All buildings came back with negative results demonstrating that our control methods are robust and where positive results have been identified they have been dealt with quickly.
- Resignation from the Legionella Control Association Accreditation; the Council now adopts the North East Council Legionella Focus Group (NECLFG) guidance for best practice.
- Continued to carry out risk assessments on water systems in domestic properties owned by Gateshead Council as part of a ten-year scheme. 6896 properties have been assessed so far. An increase of 1514 from previous report.

16. **Performance Indicators** - The tables set out below details the performance indicator data for 2018/19 and how this compares to previous years. These are common indicators for occupational health and safety and help to track performance and compare against other organisations.

Table 3 - Incidents / Industrial Diseases (ID)

Type	Year			Comments
	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	
RIDDOR	8	18	21	Injuries resulting in over 7 days absence reported to HSE
Specified Injuries	7	4	8	Significant injuries such as fractures, amputation, loss of sight, crush injury, significant burn injury and degree of scalping
ID	6	7	0	Industrial diseases reported to the HSE
> 3 day	12	3	7	Injuries > 3 days but < 7 days noted for rmination

Table 4 - Incidence Rates

Type	Year			Comments
	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	
RIDDOR	1.44	3.34	3.57	Incidence Rate for over 7-day injuries (number of over 7-day injuries per 1000 employees).
Specified Injuries	0.54	0.74	1.19	Incidence Rate for specified injuries (number of injuries per 1000 employees).

The statistics (which include the Council's maintained schools) show the following compared to the previous year:

- Total number of incidents increased from 484 to 581 (this includes near misses where no injury was sustained).
- Specified injuries increased from 4 to 5.
- Non-employees sent direct to hospital increased from 4 to 6.
- Increase in near miss reporting from 100 to 174 which includes 96 reports of threatening behaviour and verbal abuse.

The main causes of over 7-day incidents are slip/trip/fall and handling/ lifting/carrying. The specified injuries were a result of slip/trip/fall and equipment failure. These occurred in various locations at different times of the year, and analysis of the data found no links to any trends. Detailed quarterly reports are provided to Groups on the recorded incidents to enable them to take relevant action to help reverse any local trends, identify training needs etc.

Table 5 – HSE Enforcement Action

Type	Year			Comments
	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	
Prosecution	0*	0	0	
Prohibition Notice	0	0	0	
Improvement Notice	0	0	0	
Fee for Intervention (FFI)	1*	0	0	*(£1,277.10)

Table 6 – Sickness Absence (Stress / Work Incidents)

Type	Year			Comments
	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	
Sickness Absence	55,561	53,543	47,494	Total sickness absence days excluding schools 36,253 for 18/19
Stress	26.33%	28.29%	31.50%	Percentage of total days lost due to stress, depression and mental health including work related stress
Work incident	0.67%	1.28%	3.5% (1690)	Percentage of total days lost due to work related injury and ill health

Table 7 – Training

Type	Year			Comments
	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	
Corporate	168 15 courses 79% average attendance rate	385 32 courses 81% average attendance rate	177 16 courses 66% average attendance rate	Number attending corporate health and safety training courses (Accident investigation, Asbestos Management, DSE, Fire Warden, H & S for Managers, Risk assessment and Stress Management). Additional courses were delivered to schools on request.
e-learning	1164	1239	593	

ACT - We Act on the Findings Through:

17. **Auditing and performance review** are the final steps in the health and safety management control cycle. They constitute the feedback loop which enables the Council to reinforce, maintain and develop its ability to reduce risks and to ensure the continued effectiveness of the health and safety management system. Two out of four scheduled audits were carried out during the reporting period. The two not completed were in respect of '*Response to Violent/Aggressive Incidents at Civic Centre Receptions and Public Areas*'. These were postponed, as agreed by SMG on 1 April 2019 as the information relating to this issue is now incorporated into [LCS-HS-79](#) '*Management of Violence and Aggression towards Employees – Policy supporting guidance*'. Postponing the audit will provide an opportunity for the new policy and guidance to be embedded before auditing takes place. Steps are in place to review the internal emergency response alarms, which may impact on the scope of the audit.
18. **Review of policies and procedures** – considerable ongoing review of the Health and Safety policy, corporate procedures and guidance takes place. New documents are developed, or others amended. See paragraphs 8 and 9 for details.

Health and Safety Executive

18. To the best knowledge of the Health and Safety Team there were no prosecutions or enforcement notices issued by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). The HSE did visit and make contact several times in the reporting period to look at the management of hand arm vibration, and to carry out site inspections with no further action being taken.

Service Level Agreements

19. The Occupational Health and Safety Team has developed contracts through Service Level Agreements (SLA's) with schools, academies, TGHC, NEPO, Regent Funeral Services and several community establishments and private organisations. Occupational Health also provide services to these organisations and operate a pay as you use service, where appropriate, and resources permitting. These have proved beneficial to both the team and the organisations involved.

Summary

20. As detailed earlier in this report, the Council's approach to health and safety management continues to follow the guidance document HSG65 – '*Managing for Health and Safety*'. Commitment from senior management is strong, and substantial progress has been made in delivering improvements.
21. Throughout the last year there has been continued focus on fire safety management.
22. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in this reporting period visited several Council sites, with no action taken.

What Will We Do Next?

23. The Health and Safety team will work with the Group Management Teams to continually improve health and safety management systems including policies, procedures and arrangements.
24. Deliver the corporate audit programme.
25. Deliver the fire risk assessment programme.
26. Occupational Health to meet all statutory requirements by fulfilling health surveillance programmes.
27. Continuation of the co-ordination of employee wellbeing events throughout the year with emphasis being placed on the principles of THRIVE.
28. Group Management Teams and Head Teachers will be informed of any significant changes to the Council's corporate health and safety policies and procedures or when action is necessary because of any health and safety failing via a health and safety briefing note.
29. Senior Management Group will be advised on a quarterly basis on the progress being made and any issues to address.

Recommendation

30. The views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are sought on:
 - Whether the Committee is satisfied that the actions taken are appropriate and effective to maintain or improve the Council's health and safety management system

Contact: Susan Smith

Ext. 2272

This page is intentionally left blank

TITLE OF REPORT: Progress on Implementation of the Council's Workforce Plan.

REPORT OF: Mike Barker, Strategic Director Corporate Services & Governance

Summary

To update the Committee on progress made in relation to implementation of the Council's Workforce Plan.

Background

1. The purpose of the Council's Workforce Strategy and Plan is to ensure the Council has a workforce that can support delivery of services our residents want and need – services that provide value for money, are fit for purpose, flexible and customer focused. The strategy outlines how the Council aims to ensure it has the right people, with the right skills and behaviours, working in the right jobs, at the right time.
2. The workforce strategy is based on five themes: **skills and behaviours; recruitment and retention; pay, reward and recognition; wellbeing and engagement; and, performance and change.**
3. A workforce plan provides a detailed delivery plan for each of the five themes. The plan is a dynamic document which is continually developed to respond to the Council's current workforce requirements, and to prepare for future changes.
4. This report provides an update on the progress made since the last Overview and Scrutiny report presented in October 2018 and follows the themes set out in the workforce strategy and plan.

SKILLS AND BEHAVIOURS

Gateshead Leadership Development Programme (GLDP)

5. The Council seeks to maintain and develop strong, diverse and competent leaders who can deliver its corporate and public service ambitions. Therefore, a key priority is to invest in the development of our employees as leaders of the organisation, so they are equipped to deliver services to support the Thrive Agenda.
6. The content of a new leadership development programme is currently being drafted; once finalised, it will be rolled out to the leadership team, service managers and all other managers within the Council. Ultimately, if resources allow, the ambition is to provide leadership development to those employees who are not yet in management positions but are 'ready' to step up i.e. developing leadership

potential. Providing development at an early stage should enable stronger performing managers who are confident to take the next step, which is particularly important where an employee may be very strong and competent in their professional area, but who may not have had an opportunity to develop their overall management and leadership skills.

7. The aim of the programme is to develop a visionary and enabling leadership culture that will drive change to meet the challenges of the future. The content of the programme has been developed taking into account views from across the Council with specific emphasis on:
 - building leadership and management capacity throughout the Council;
 - developing a consistent and coherent approach to a leadership culture within the Council, moving away from 'command and control' to 'empowerment and responsibility';
 - equipping leaders with the competencies and confidence to take ownership and responsibility relevant to their own role, and across the wider Council, making appropriate autonomous informed decisions and undertake appropriate actions.
8. An external provider, Eliesha Training, has been commissioned to work closely with the Council to design and deliver the programme. Eliesha will provide an external focus on the requirements of the 'workforce of the future' as well as some assurance that the content of the programme captures national best practice whilst also focusing on delivering the Council's priorities. The programme is scheduled to be rolled out to leadership team from April 2020, with the service manager programme scheduled to commence in July 2020.

Coaching Culture

9. The modern employer is expected to support and engage its staff in the work they do, to help unlock their potential and maximise the overall performance of the organisation. One driver for this is to adopt a coaching style in the conversations we have with each other and in the way we work. To ensure that such an approach is embedded within the Council, a coaching culture will be promoted across all employees, which will ensure that people at all levels are given the opportunity to speak up, be listened to, be heard, be open to constructive challenge, and be committed to both their personal development and the development of their organisation. Work is ongoing to develop this approach which will be a consistent strand throughout the GLDP.

Learning and Development Framework

10. A learning and development framework is available on the intranet as a one-stop shop for managers and employees to access information on courses and other resources and guidance to support their development. The framework has been in place for some time and the Workforce Development Team is currently evaluating its content, with a view to streaming the available modules and move to a greater emphasis on e-learning as a flexible, cost effective way of providing training. Engagement with other employers with a view to sharing resources is taking place, including the potential to 'passport' some core skills/learning across the care integrated system if possible.

Mentoring and Coaching

11. One of the initiatives identified in the Council's Workforce Plan which will build leadership capacity is to provide opportunities for employees to access mentoring to support their development. Mentoring is a development technique based on the use of one-to-one discussions to enhance an individual's work skills, behaviour, performance and/or knowledge and involves a more experienced employee using their greater knowledge, experience and understanding of the work or the workplace to support the development of a more junior or less experienced employee. The Council's Leadership Team has undertaken mentoring training and it is anticipated that as mentoring training is rolled out further, mentoring opportunities will be available at all levels within the organisation.
12. Mentoring and coaching will be a component part of the Gateshead Leadership Development Programme (see above).

Apprenticeships

13. Apprenticeships are government funded work-based training programmes for people aged 16 to 65, combining on and off-the-job training. Recruiting apprentices and using apprenticeship programmes for current employees helps organisations to grow their own talent by developing a motivated, skilled and qualified workforce
14. The HR/Workforce Development team is leading on the Council's apprenticeship programme, with the development of an apprenticeship strategy and delivery plan which aims to:
 - Embed a positive apprenticeship culture
 - Maximise workforce capability by identifying and promoting a range of suitable apprenticeship opportunities for new apprentices and existing employees;
 - Provide advice and support to managers on apprenticeships;
 - Negotiate apprenticeship training programmes on behalf of the council;
 - Support and reflect the council's wider responsibilities e.g. as a corporate parent and achieving targets for care leavers entering apprenticeships.
 - Engage with training providers and other local authorities to maximise apprenticeship provision within the region
15. The HR/Workforce Development team is also working in partnership with the Local Government Association (LGA) as part of their Apprenticeship Accelerator Programme. The main aim of this programme is for the LGA to support the Council with the implementation of a workforce planning-led approach to apprenticeships and the development of career pathways. A focus is on using apprenticeships in those services facing recruitment and retention difficulties, or where there are succession planning issues which could be addressed using apprenticeships. It also provides some external assurance and a wider national perspective to the Council's approach.
16. The Council (including schools) currently has 124 employees undertaking an apprenticeship. These are across a wide range of services from social worker to paralegal. A detailed report regarding apprenticeships was presented to this committee in October 2019.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

17. The Council has adopted the TUC's [Great Jobs Agenda](#) which consists of six themes, each with a description of why it matters, along with what the TUs wants employers to do, and what it asks politicians to do. The themes include having voice at work; fair and decent pay; and, learning and progression.
18. The recent report of the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) 'Community Wealth Building in Gateshead' also refers to '*fair employment and just labour markets*' and the opportunities for the Council to be an exemplar employer in terms of pay, recruitment from amongst local communities, and influencing other employers in good employment and HR practices.

PAY, RECOGNITION AND REWARD

Employee Recognition

19. Options for how the Council recognises the good work of its employees are being developed including a review of the current arrangements for long service awards to ensure these are valued and worthwhile. Feedback from the focus groups established to consider employee recognition identified that other than the long service awards scheme, there are no formal procedures or processes to recognise employees within the Council, and this sends a negative message to the workforce.
20. Feedback from employees focussed on the need for the culture in the Council to be one where employees are praised for the good things they are doing, rather than formal 'schemes'. Therefore, a visible recognition framework will be developed that can be consistently applied in a cost-effective way. This will be something simple, that can be built into normal management practice, which acknowledges work well done.
21. The framework will predominantly focus on the informal and informal recognition tools that managers should use i.e. a simple thank you or saying "well done" when it is merited in supervision sessions or 1:1 discussions, or good work being recognised in a more formal email or letter. Employees also value acknowledgment of individual or a team achievements at team meetings, group management team meetings, corporate management team meetings or directly with councillors, and the acknowledgment of personal and professional achievements in a positive and supportive way such as celebrating employees' significant birthdays, completion of qualifications or sporting challenges or charitable events.

Holiday Pay

22. The Council has changed the way it calculates holiday pay following case law which confirmed that all types of regular voluntary overtime must be included in the calculation of statutory holiday pay.

Terms and Conditions

23. The Council's fresh approach to strategic budget management for 2020 onwards includes a commitment to considering how terms and conditions of employment can be modernised to ensure that the Council recruits and retains a highly motivated and committed workforce of the future. Whilst recruitment and retention are important, cognisance must also be taken of the Council's commitment to social values, providing decent wages and good employment contracts, and to community wealth building. The Council must be able to provide value for money services but also be a good employer, especially since over 70% of its workforce also live in Gateshead.
24. When considering terms and conditions, a wider context of the Council as an employer and as an anchor organisation within the borough will be taken. As always, such considerations will be made in partnership with recognised trade unions.

Review of the flexi-time Scheme

25. A review of the Council's flexi time scheme in 2018 widened the bandwidth of a working day; increased the maximum flexi credit balance; and, reduced the maximum flexi debit balance. These were positive changes for employees, providing them with more flexibility in terms of work-life balance.
26. The scheme is regularly reviewed, and to ensure the calculation of part time employees' flexi leave entitlement is fair and not open to challenge, further amendments have been made. These amendments provide for the calculation of flexi to be based on the number of occasions (days) someone is at work, rather than on the number of hours worked. This methodology is more robust in relation to employment regulation in respect of part-time workers and again provides part time employees with flexibility to support work-life balance.
27. In addition, the application of the flexi time provisions to employees who work a compressed working week was also reviewed. This enables employees with a standard working day of less than 8 hours 30 minutes, as part of a compressed hours arrangement, to accrue time to take as flexi leave. Such employees were previously excluded from taking flexi-leave.

Employee Benefits – Neyber Scheme

28. Staff wellbeing is usually concerned with the physical and mental health of staff, however, financial wellbeing is an emerging strand to the wellbeing agenda. It recognises the significant adverse impact on staff productivity and mental wellbeing brought on through stress and anxieties relating to an individual's personal financial situation. That can relate to bad debt, mortgage arrears or simply the inability to meet financial day to day needs.
29. Work is on-going to introduce a staff financial wellbeing scheme through partnering with Neyber, a financial management service. The scheme will include:

- a financial wellbeing HUB – a free on-line service which will provide advice and guidance on understanding credit ratings, budget planning tools and personal finance stress tests, including debt management advice over loans and saving schemes;
 - webinars on finance related subjects - free to join for all employees;
 - a freephone telephone support line;
 - financial education and on-site support - face to face sessions for employees with Neyber financial educators to privately discuss finances and support available; and,
 - low cost loans from £500 to £25,000 – whilst the focus is on good financial management, Neyber can offer loans at nil cost to the Council with deductions taken directly from salary, with repayment of up to four years.
30. As an organisation, Neyber have good relationships with a number of credit unions and any agreement with Gateshead Council is dependent on Neyber establishing a relationship with NEFirst Credit Union and working in partnership with them.

Implementation of a car leasing salary sacrifice scheme

31. The Committee will recall, as detailed in the previous update, that the Council was considering offering a car leasing salary sacrifice scheme which would allow employees to give up part of their salary in return for a non-cash benefit i.e. a car. Depending on the type of non-cash benefit provided, employees could make savings on tax and national insurance contributions.
32. Further work has been undertaken on this proposal, however, further risks were identified which led CMT to conclude that since the risks outweighed the benefits, the scheme would not be taken forward. As an alternative, the employee benefits offer in relation to the purchase of cars now includes an option to take part in 'My Club Nissan' and 'Lookers Personal Contract Hire' (which both offer similar benefits to employees). Both of these schemes offer significant discounts on the purchase or leasing of new cars. Both have proved a success, with a very positive response to date.

Low Pay

33. Following the national agreement to a new pay spine, the Council implemented a revised pay and grading structure in April 2019.
34. This resulted in the Council's lowest hourly rate being £9.18 from 1st April 2019 which continued to be well above the 2019 National Living Wage rate of £8.21, and also above the UK Living Wage rate of £9 per hour. This enabled the Council to refer to itself as an employer who matches pay rates with the UK Living Wage. Although the UK Living Wage rate increased in November 2019 to £9.30 per hour, the Council will have the opportunity to look further at what can be done to improve its lowest hourly rate once the 2020 pay negotiations have concluded.
35. The revised pay spine was considered very carefully to ensure a balance between employee reward and the challenges faced by the Council in the current financial climate.

36. Work is ongoing to identify suitable options to further improve low pay which will align with the Council's Thrive agenda, bearing in mind 73% of the Council's employees live in the Gateshead borough and around 50% of those employees are within grades A to D.
37. The Council's wider strategic priorities provide a link or a direct commitment to fair and decent pay e.g. the Thrive agenda; the Health and Wellbeing Strategy; the social value commitments; a commitment to reduce poverty, and the Great Jobs Agenda and these will be taken into account when considering pay and grading in 2020.

Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs) Salary Sacrifice Scheme

38. An employee of the Council who is a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) can increase their pension benefits by paying additional voluntary contributions. AVCs build up a pot of money which is used to provide additional benefits to an employee's LGPS benefits.
39. To further enhance the Council's employee benefits package, a salary sacrifice arrangement for AVCs is being implemented from January 2020, which will result in employees, and the Council, making national insurance contributions savings.

Cycle to Work Scheme

40. The Council's 'Cycle 2 Work' scheme was first introduced in September 2009 and has been a popular initiative. The scheme enables employees to purchase a bike and bike accessories, up to the value of £1000, to use for their commute to and from work. There are previously had four 'windows' each year when employees have the opportunity to join the scheme. Limiting the opportunity to purchase bikes only during the narrow window opening has been criticised as overly restrictive and unnecessary, and also limits the savings that can be achieved by the Council. Therefore, after working with the scheme provider, the scheme is now open continuously, without the 'window' restrictions.

WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT

41. Throughout the year the Council's Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinator has worked jointly with the Public Health Team and the Communications Team to promote various health and wellbeing campaigns.
42. The Council continues to maintain its 'continuing excellence' rating for the North East Better Health at Work Award and we are confident that the improvements made during this year will allow the Council to remain an employer who is 'continuing excellence' which is the highest rating available.
43. A refreshed brand of 'Zest'  has been adopted for employee health and wellbeing activity across the Council and a plan for 2020 health and wellbeing campaigns is presently being drafted.

PERFORMANCE AND CHANGE

44. The workforce strategy and workforce plan link to, and support, the Council's strategic priorities by identifying what the workforce needs to look like and how it needs to operate to deliver good outcomes for the residents of Gateshead and make Gateshead a place where everyone thrives. They make sure that we have the right people, with the right skills, in the right place, at the right level and at the right cost.
45. In light of the Council's strategic approach 'Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives', the workforce strategy and plan are currently under review to ensure they remain current and support this approach. The HR/Workforce Development Team has engaged with service directors to identify their key workforce issues which will inform the workforce strategy and plan. The main themes which have emerged from the discussions are:
- succession planning and how apprenticeships might support this;
 - recruitment and retention to key roles;
 - the ageing workforce, particularly in frontline services.
 - how the public sector reform work can support the identification of core skills of the workforce of the future.
46. A refreshed workforce strategy and plan will be drafted in 2020.

Recommendations

47. The Committee is asked to consider the progress made in implementing actions from the workforce plan and its effectiveness in delivering the aims of the workforce strategy.

Janice Barclay – Service Director HR and Workforce Development

Ext 32101

TITLE OF REPORT: Annual Work Programme

REPORT OF: Sheena Ramsey, Chief Executive
Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Services and
Governance

Summary

The report sets out the provisional work programme for Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2019/20.

1. The Committee's provisional work programme was endorsed at the meeting held on 1 April 2019 and Councillors have agreed that further reports will be brought to future meetings to highlight current issues / identify any changes/additions to this programme.
2. Appendix 1 sets out the work programme as it currently stands. Any changes proposed to the programme will be set out in bold and italics for ease of identification.

Recommendations

3. The Committee is asked to
 - a) Note the provisional programme;
 - b) Note that further reports on the work programme will be brought to the Committee to identify any additional policy issues, which the Committee may be asked to consider.

Contact: Angela Frisby

Extension: 2138

This page is intentionally left blank

Corporate Resources OSC 2019/2020	
17 June 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution/role/remit (to note) • Making Gateshead a place where everyone thrives – Year End Assessment and Performance Delivery 2018-19 • Sickness Absence / Health of the Workforce - Annual Update • Brexit – Progress Update – agreed to be slotted in to work programme as appropriate • Review on Helping to Increase Support / Capacity of the Voluntary Sector – Interim Report (Findings) • Freedom of Information - Annual Report 2018 • OSC Work Programme
9 Sept 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review on Helping to Increase Support / Capacity of the Voluntary Sector – Final Report (Recommendations) • Gateshead Fund - Annual Update • Resilience and Emergency Planning Performance Framework – six monthly progress update • OSC Work Programme
14 Oct 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of Gateshead Volunteers Plan – Annual Report • Support to Voluntary and Community Sector – six monthly progress update • Gateshead Fund – Annual Update • <i>Apprenticeships Update</i> • OSC Work Programme
2 Dec 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making Gateshead a place where everyone thrives – Six Monthly Assessment of Performance and Delivery 2019-20 (Including Thrive) • Corporate Asset Management – Delivery and Performance Report • <i>Health & Wellbeing Board Strategy Refresh</i> • PSP Performance Monitoring • Brexit Update / Lessons Learned • OSC Work Programme
20 Jan 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Health and Safety Performance Report • <i>Implementation of Workforce Strategy – Annual Update – moved from September meeting with permission of the Chair</i> • Corporate Complaints Procedure - Annual Report 2018-19 • Work of Poverty Board – Annual Update • OSC Work Programme
2 March 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Governance Report – Annual Update • Resilience and Emergency Planning Performance Framework – six monthly progress update • Brexit Update • Welfare Reform / Universal Credit • OSC Work Programme
30 March 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom of Information - Annual Report 2019 • Impact on place shaping partnership work as a result of establishment of two Combined Authorities in NE • Support to Voluntary and Community Sector – six monthly progress update • OSC Work Programme Review

Issues to Slot in

Brexit to move to new year work programme

This page is intentionally left blank