



HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

Monday, 4 December 2023 at 1.30 pm in the Bridges Room - Civic Centre

From the Chief Executive, Sheena Ramsey

Item	Business
1	Apologies for Absence
2	Minutes of the last meeting (Pages 3 - 8)
3	Performance Management and Improvement Framework – Six Month Update – 2023-24 (Pages 9 - 28) Report of the Strategic Director, Resources and Digital
4	Housing Performance Monitoring Q2 (Pages 29 - 42) Report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Healthy Communities
5	Housing Complaints Update (Pages 43 - 48) Report of the Strategic Director of Environment and Healthy Communities
6	Council Voids Update (<i>Presentation</i>) On behalf of the Strategic Director of Environment and Healthy Communities
7	Work Programme (Pages 49 - 52) Joint report of the Chief Executive and the Strategic Director of Corporate Services & Governance

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GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, 23 October 2023

PRESENT: Councillor B Clelland (Chair)

Councillor(s): T Graham, D Burnett, H Weatherley, H Kelly, J Turnbull, K Dodds, S Dickie, V Anderson, P Maughan, A Wintcher, S Gallagher, P Burns, D Welsh, K Walker and L Brand

APOLOGIES: Councillor(s): A Geddes and F Geddes

CPL83 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last Committee held on 11 September 2023 were agreed as a correct record.

CPL84 CONSTRUCTION SERVICES UPDATE - REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE

The Committee received a report providing an update on outcomes from the repairs and maintenance service review.

From the report, the Committee were advised of the following:

- 111 new posts have been recruited to across Construction Services. This includes 53 new trade operatives. 6 new Building Technicians and 7 additional Customer Operations Staff.
- Trade operatives no longer have a rigid set time for each job. Operatives can request additional work when a job takes less time than expected in standard minute values or stay longer at a property to complete newly identified work.
- A new process for damp, mould and condensation was introduced in April this year. This has enabled more accurate diagnosis and quicker responses to customers. A dedicated Building Technician is in place to coordinate and investigate reports of damp mould and condensation and treats this as a repair issue rather than a housing management function.
- Changes to void processes have increased productivity and decreased delays in work streams. 576 properties were made ready to let in the period April to end of September 2022. 619 properties were made ready to let in the same period for 2023.

It was proposed that repair and void processes, performance and productivity remain under review with changes made as necessary. The Committee also noted

that there are options to move away from contractors to in-house staff being explored; it was highlighted that this is intended to improve responsiveness, quality and customer service.

The Committee welcomed the updates from the report. A query was raised in relation to customer wait times for repairs; officers advised that wait times vary depending on the repair required but that wait times are reducing. It was also noted that tenants awaiting planned repairs and maintenance may wait the longest but that new measures are in place to maintain communication with tenants to provide timely updates on their repairs. Officers also advised that the new processes would reduce the number of times a tenant may feel the need to contact the Council to chase up a repair.

The Committee noted concern of staff shortages in the customer service teams in repairs. A comment was made noting that many tenants are still struggling to get through to speak to someone about a new repair or an ongoing issue. The Committee were advised that across the service there are approximately 300 roles to be filled, this included trades. It was also explained that the Council has had difficulty in recruiting contractors that can work on a reactive basis which is why it is the service's overall aim to have trades brought in-house.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee noted the report.

CPL85 DAMP & MOULD COMPLIANCE

The Committee received a report providing an overview of the Council's approach towards ensuring that homes in Gateshead are compliant with statutory and regulatory requirements relating to damp and mould.

It was reported that following the Housing Ombudsman's Spotlight Report on Damp and Mould, a review of Gateshead Council's response to reports of damp and mould was undertaken to ensure compliance with guidance highlighted in the report. The Committee were also provided with an overview of the extent of damp and mould hazards identified in the Council's housing stock.

The Committee were advised that when a customer contacts repairs to report damp mould or condensation, Construction Services raise an emergency order to wash down the mould and eliminate or reduce the risk to the customer. It was further explained that this would be done within 3 working days. It was also explained that simple repairs will be raised on a 20-working day priority order. The Committee also noted that for those properties where it is difficult to diagnose, or appears to be more complex, a Building Technician/ Building Surveyor will attend depending on the severity.

It was explained to the Committee that all planned works orders are placed on a 40 working day priority order and that the Council will commission from time to time a specialist damp contractor to provide further reports and facilitate required works.

An update on damp, mould and condensation reporting was also provided from the report. It was noted that current repair systems and its collation of damp mould or condensation data will be used to produce a live report within Power BI software. It was noted that this will enable borough wide accurate and current reports adding an additional layer to identifying trends as they occur. The Committee were also advised that the Council has reviewed its online literature and guidance around damp, mould and condensation and that training workshops for customers are to be introduced.

The Committee requested a further deep dive on the extend of damp, mould and condensation within the Council's housing stock in addition to data on tenant wait times for their issues to be resolved. The Committee expressed concern that some Council practises had been used to gas-light tenants into having them take the blame for their damp, mould and condensation issues. The Committee noted that it understood that some lifestyle choices had contributed to damp in homes in some cases but that a lot of cases are a consequence of poorly built and insulated properties. Officers provided assurances that processes are robust and fair for tenants, it was also explained that properties with sloping roofs were particularly vulnerable to damp, mould and condensation.

It was explained to the Committee that the Council conducts stock condition surveys which are compared to the 'decent homes' standard. It was noted that this informs services where investment is needed in the Council's stock and that investment is made only when a property has a long term, viable future as a suitable home to let.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee considered and noted the report.

CPL86 LOCALITY WORKING

The Committee received a report and presentation providing an update on the locality working model which includes the alignment of emerging Family Hub model within the broader locality working approach.

From the report, the Committee were advised that a work programme has been developed that will:

- Align the Family Hub model to the broader locality model to support the "whole family / all age" approach and align the activity to VCS partners who will be commissioned to support/ develop the network and the community development approach.
- Implement a locality-based case management approach within the Early Help Service and develop a programme to embed the links with Housing services and neighbourhood management teams/ partners in localities.
- Develop a locality-based plan for the South with the aim that it has synergy with the Primary Care Network plan to tackle health inequalities.
- Incorporate learning activity and opportunities that pave the way for further

development of the locality-based approach across Gateshead.

- Recognise the importance of schools and the contribution made to the locality approach and locality working models are mapped to schools to ensure a network of wrap around support for schools to support integrated early help and prevention services which is easy to access and seamless.

From the presentation the Committee were provided with a map displaying priority neighbourhoods in Gateshead and a summary of emerging workstreams to support these communities. This included:

1. Connected communities
2. Connected partners/services
3. Data, evaluation and learning
4. Governance and communication

An overview of next steps was provided as follows:

- Work with Housing, Early Help, Family Hubs and Mental Health to embed the approach in the south of the borough.
- Work with Learning & Skills and Economic Development to determine a joint approach starting in the south.
- Adult Social Care to develop the locality model.
- Ongoing conversations with Primary Care Networks and Police.
- Develop the internal support available from workforce development colleagues.
- Realign the Neighbourhood Management Team into Localities team.
- Induct the Project Manager into the locality agenda and develop the programme.

The Committee expressed its support to locality working and the progress that has been made so far. The Committee were also advised that a Member's Seminar has been scheduled to provide a deeper understanding of the adult social care offer as part of locality working.

A query was raised in relation to the use of volunteers in locality working and the sustainability of this (noting that many voluntary sector organisations are struggling – particularly with the cost of living crisis ongoing). Officers acknowledged the challenges within the voluntary sector but noted that the Council has strong, long established relationships with providers and where support is needed, a partnership approach would be taken to lessen the burden.

The Committee also noted that locality working had been particularly effective within the Lamesley Ward, notably via the safer streets funding scheme.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee noted the update.

CPL87 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received a report which provided details on development of the work programme for OSC's and the provisional work programme for Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities OSC for the municipal year 2023/24.

The Committee agreed to defer the scheduled update on economic development, physical development and regeneration to the March 2024 meeting.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee noted the Work Programme.

Chair.....

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TITLE OF REPORT: Performance Management and Improvement Framework 6-Month Performance Report 2023/24

REPORT OF: Darren Collins, Strategic Director, Resources and Digital

SUMMARY

This report provides the Committee with the Council's Performance Management & Improvement Framework, reporting performance on the delivery of Council priorities for the period 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023. It also provides an overview of performance relevant to the role and remit of this committee.

Purpose of the Performance Management and Improvement Framework (PMIF)

1. The Performance Management and Improvement Framework (PMIF) enables the Council to know how it is delivering on its Thrive policy. It has a clear focus on priorities, delivery, measurement, and analysis of impact. It is based on Thrive and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and incorporates an organisational 'health check' Balanced Scorecard.

Background

2. The Council's performance framework was reviewed, and a new approach was agreed by Council on 27 May 2021. The draft measures were considered and agreed by Cabinet in October 2021, with further updates to several measures agreed by Cabinet in subsequent reporting cycles. The reporting of 2022/23 performance was considered by Overview and Scrutiny Committees in June and agreed by Cabinet in July 2023.
3. The PMIF aims to:
 - Enable the Council to know whether it is achieving its priorities (Thrive Policy).
 - Ensure that the Council's resources are being deployed effectively.
 - Make both short- and long-term effective decisions, and the Council's approach to resource allocation and budget setting.
 - A whole systems approach – embedded in our partnership working to deliver the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

6-month reports

4. The analysis of performance for 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023, against each of the 6 policy objectives of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Balanced Scorecard is set out at Appendix 1. Areas of relevance to this Committee are highlighted in this report, however, the entire Performance Management & Improvement Framework is provided to enable members to see the full picture of performance across all priority areas at Appendix 1.

5. Please note that the current version attached at Appendix 1 is a draft, as the performance data and analysis is regularly being updated due to the iterative nature of the framework.
6. The performance reports outline the challenges, achievements, actions, and resources for each policy objective. It also contains performance data including strategic and operational measures and is informed by qualitative and quantitative assessment to inform policy and resource decisions.
7. Some data is not available at 6-month stage. Indicators are released throughout the year, some annually which do not coincide with this reporting cycle. Where provisional data is available this has been provided. The report sets out the current performance for the strategic and operational measures, where data is available, at the 6-month stage.
8. Cross-cutting key emerging areas already being highlighted are:
 - Budget pressures continue to provide a significant challenge.
 - Continuing demand pressures being faced by services, which are compounded by the ongoing recruitment and retention issues.
 - The cost-of-living and high interest rates are impacting the financial challenges facing many residents.
 - The economic climate continues to make things difficult for many businesses in the borough.
9. An overview will be provided at the Committee meeting, however, other key areas to highlight include:

Challenges include:

 - The Repairs and Maintenance Improvement Plan Progress is updated regularly to HEHC. The purpose of the review was to improve productivity and performance, challenge convention and ensure that the form of the service is fit for purpose.
 - With changes to staff designation in the Joint Local Agreement all trade operatives can move between the different areas of work as needed. New processes for each area have addressed this. Reports on progress will continue to be presented to HEHC OSC.
 - The percentage of Stage 3 complaints to the Chief Executive has increased significantly over the period from April 2021. This coincides with the incorporation of The Gateshead Housing Company figures into reported council data.
 - More demand for housing from applicants with a high level of priority, including those with a homeless priority. Reduced availability of suitable single persons properties has led to increased use of temporary accommodation. Properties for larger households also rarely become available.
 - There are more incidences of private sector tenants being served eviction notices, and then requesting a council house in the same area (as the family have support networks, or schooling considerations).
 - There has been a 6% increase in the number of crimes recorded in Q1 of 2023/24 in Gateshead, and an increase of 7% across the Northumbria Police Force area.

Areas of excellence and improvement include:

- The number of housing properties vacant for 6 months or longer was 0.66% of housing stock at the end of Quarter 2. Due to the need to reduce numbers in temporary accommodation (mostly single persons) the focus has been on letting suitable single persons properties rather than on the oldest vacant properties. To be on target, the number would have needed to be thirty fewer. Over fifty of the vacant properties were in the process of being advertised, offered and let.
- Thirty-two properties are held in connection with major work, including structural work and work to ensure compliance and health and safety. This includes fifteen flats at Angel Court that are hoped to be let in the second half of 2023/24, and seven flats at Melbourne Court where roofing work is required.
- Rent collection of 97.31% at the half-year stage is very close to target of 97.50%. This is before the non-debit weeks in second half of the year when collection rate usually increases.
- Feedback from some of the sheltered schemes about their neighbourhood and estates has led to an estate tour to be undertaken by the Highways service to understand the issues and impact they are having, directly on the customers.

Actions include:

- Review new allocations policy now that it has gone live and some of the impacts can be evidenced.
- Prepare for managed migration of tenants on legacy benefits to Universal Credit from Jan 2024
- Data for Council Tax support has gradually increased over a period of time due to the knock-on effect of resources being used to deal with SIP and Energy Rebate Scheme. The resultant backlog of CTS claims is now being impacted on and performance has started to improve assisted by the service returning to a full staffing establishment for processing.

Further development

10. Measures are being continuously reviewed to understand where changes may be needed to ensure the PMIF remains robust and relevant. The development of the Corporate Plan may influence and inform future priorities of the Council which would then inform the performance content of the framework. It is important the PMIF is flexible and able to evolve to ensure it remains relevant. Work continues to develop the framework further to ensure it is best placed to enable the Council to understand its performance against priorities.

Office of Local Government

11. In July 2023, the Government announced the establishment of a new government function, Office for Local Government (Oflog). The aim of this is to improve transparency and accountability. Oflog will be a new performance body for local government. Its aim is to provide authoritative and accessible data and analysis about the performance of local government and support its improvement.
12. There is a new online tool called Local Authority Data Explorer which brings together a selection of existing metrics across a subset of service areas for data that is available at

different levels of local government. Oflog plan to add further service areas and expand existing areas, as the metrics are developed.

13. The initial metrics in July 2023 looked at by Oflog are in the areas of:

- Adult Social Care;
- Adult Skills;
- Finance; and
- Waste Management.

14. Future areas identified in November 2023. include:

- Mayoral Combined Authorities (covering Business and Economic Growth, and Roads)
- Waste Management (Fly-tipping);
- Corporate & Finance;
- Children's Social Care;
- Homelessness and Rough Sleeping;
- Public Health;
- Youth Justice & Accommodation; and
- Planning.

15. The Commercialisation and Improvement Team are continuing to monitor and discuss the development and expansion of metrics, as further information is released, and this will be incorporated into the ongoing development and evolution of the PMIF.

Digital

16. An online/digital format is currently in development. This will aim to cluster measures around key priority areas and allow users to filter performance information dependent on their area of interest, as well as presenting a visual representation of the performance data to be used alongside the analysis. This is a complex task and involves the Council's Digital Team but will aim to provide performance data at different levels from strategic to operational in an easily accessible way.

Recommendations

17. Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- Comment on the 6-month report at Appendix 1 and identify any areas for further scrutiny.
- Recommend the performance report to Cabinet for consideration in January 2024.

Contact: Lindsay Murray

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DRAFT

Please note this document is regularly being updated

GIVE EVERY CHILD THE BEST START TO LIFE – POLICY OBJECTIVE 1

Strategic performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target		Operational performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target		
% of pupils eligible for free school meals	26.44% Oct 2021	28.37%	28.64%	Tracking		% take up of free school meals in primary schools	72% (2021)	76.9%	72%	Maintain / increase		
Gap in Life expectancy at birth male/female Inequality in life expectancy at birth Males/Females	10.7 (M) 9.6 (F) 2017-19	10.8 (M) 8.8 (F) 2018-20	<i>Annual</i>	Tracking		% of Gateshead local authority schools graded good or outstanding in relevant categories	<i>Reporting to be developed</i>					
Children in relative low-income families (under 16s) compared to England Average	19.1% 2019/20	24.2% 2021/22	<i>Annual</i>	Tracking		% of Early Help cases closed with 'all needs met' as an outcome	55.36%	61.04%	58.54%	Maintain / Increase		
% of state funded Gateshead schools graded good or outstanding	93% (21)	91.4%	93%	Tracking		% of cases closed to early help which remain out of statutory services at 6 months and 12 months	88.83% / 81.59%	90.71% / 88.15%	91.54% / 88.81%	Increase		
Hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries in children (0-14 years)	113.3 per 10,000 (2019/20)	111.4 per 10,000 (2021/22)	<i>Annual</i>	Reduce		Increase in the number of families who are offered the opportunity to be part of a Family Group Conference	163 referrals submitted for FGC	468 referrals submitted for FGC	544 referrals submitted for FGC	Increase		
Reduction in number of children who need to be taken in to care	184 / 46.7 per 10,000 (31/03/21 for previous 12 months)	229 / 59.5 per 10,000 (31/03/23 for previous 12 months)	219 / 56.9 per 10,000 (30/09/23 for previous 12 months)	Reduce		Increase in the number of families to take up the offer to be part of a family group conference	79 closures with outcome 'FGC Successful'	192 closures with outcome 'FGC Successful'	293 closures with outcome 'FGC successful'	Increase		
Reduction in number of children who need to become the subject of a Child Protection Plan	287 / 72.8 per 10,000 (at 31/03/21 for previous 12m)	300 / 77.9 per 10,000 (@31/03/23 for previous 12 months)	286 / 74.2 per 10,000 (30/09/23 for previous 12 months)	Reduce		Increase in the number of families supported through the FDAC (Family Drug and Alcohol Courts)	5 families supported (End Sept 21)	13 Families being supported (March 23)	21 families supported (Sep 23)	Increase		
Reduction in the rate of children who need to be referred to Children Social Care services	1,621 / 411.6 per 10,000 (31/03/21 for previous 12m)	2,054 / 535.5 per 10,000 (31/03/23 for previous 12 months)	1,930 / 501.3 per 10,000 (30 Sep 23 for previous 12 months)	Reduce		Reduction in the average time between a child entering care and being made subject of a Special Guardianship Order	427 Days (as at 31/03/2022)	357 days (as at 31/03/23)	380 days (as at 30/09/23)	Reduce		
School readiness: % of children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception and maternal health	73.4% (2018/19)	63.8%	<i>Annual</i>	Increase		The percentage of children assessed by Children Social Care, where 3 or more ACE (Adverse Childhood Experience) factors were identified	<i>Reporting to be developed</i>					
School readiness % of children with free school meals achieving a good standard of development at end of reception	52.7% (2018-19)	49.1%	<i>Annual</i>	Increase		Reduction in the average time between a child entering care and placed for adoption	416 days (at 31/03/21, previous 12 months)	395 days (@ 31/03/2023) for previous 12 months	386 days (@ 30/09/23) for previous 12 mths	Reduce		
No of permanent exclusions from Gateshead schools	42 (2019/20)	50 (2021/22)	94 (2022/23)	Reduce		% smoking at time of delivery	12.58% (2018/19)	11.0% (2022/23)	<i>Annual</i>	Reduce		
No. of children looked after by the local authority	435 (2021/22)	529 (2022/23)	512	Reduce		6-8-week breastfeeding rate	38.7% (2019/20)	40.9% (2022/23)	<i>Annual</i>	Increase		
						Pupils who have missed 10% or more of school sessions during an academic year (known as Persistent Absentees)	13.3% (20/21)	24.3% (21/22)	21.2% (Autumn 22 & Spring 23)	Reduce		

Investment Strategy & Resources		
Revenue 2023/24 (20% of total gross budget)		5yr Capital
Gross £000	Net £000	£000
139,384,464	54,135,352	36,383

Figures based on 2023/24 budget setting

- Risks to Achievement rated after mitigation**
- Failure to safeguard vulnerable children & adults **Amber**.
 - Non-compliance with statutory requirements resulting in prosecution & subsequent penalties **Amber**.
 - The Council is hit by a Cyber-attack that compromises confidentiality, integrity & availability of information **Amber**.
 - Failure to address financial gap in the Council's budget & systems **Amber**.

Geographic Impact

The latest available LIoN data can be found online – [Explore the data](#)

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE? – Our Outcomes

All children start school ready to learn
All permanent school exclusions are prevented

The circumstances which result in adverse childhood experiences are prevented
Parents can access support proportionate to meet their needs, to be the best parents they can be

CHALLENGES / AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Strategic

- Whilst there has been a reduction in the number of children who need to be taken into care in last 12 months, the overall rate per 10,000 remains higher than regional comparators and statistical neighbours.
- There continues to be a challenge in ensuring sufficient placements for children in care locally.
- There has been an increase in the numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals to 28.6% from 27% the previous year with take up of FSM from those eligible in primary schools steady at 72%, with seasonal increases during the autumn/winter terms. 24.2% of under 16's lives in relative low-income families with 19.5% in absolute low-income families.

Operational

- There has been an increase in the number of children who have been closed to early help and not required statutory services for 6 & 12 months.
- Special Guardianship Orders for children requiring care from family members have seen an increase in the average time taken.
- Children who are persistently absent from school currently matches the national average and this is monitored closely.
- There has been a significant increase in the number of children permanently excluded from school in the last year with persistent disruptive behaviour cited as the reason for 43% of these.

AREAS OF EXCELLENCE / IMPROVEMENT

Strategic

- The overall rate of children in care is falling as Edge of Care strategies including the work of the pre-birth; FDAC and family group conferencing teams are being seen to have impact. Less children are entering care and more children are leaving care, which is bringing the rate back in line with comparators.
- September saw the launch of the regional fostering hub, which will bring combined marketing and initial on-boarding of proposed foster carers across all 12 NE local authorities to support increased sufficiency.
- Gateshead chosen as one of 4 local authorities to pilot the new Family Network Project announced by DFE in July 23. This comes with significant new investment to help to build on the Edge of Care strategies and work to support families to care for children within their own networks and reduce the risk of children coming into local authority care.
- Number of schools graded as Good or Outstanding exceeds 90%.
- Year 1 & 2 phonic screen outcomes are beginning to return to pre pandemic levels nationally and for Gateshead. The widest gaps between Gateshead and national are for children whose home language is not English.
- KS1 assessments at age 7 -- schools have focussed on the basics of reading, writing and mathematics to support children to catch up. Outcomes are slowly beginning to return to levels seen pre pandemic nationally and for Gateshead. Gateshead outcomes are not significantly different from national other than for children whose home language is not English.
- In KS2 assessments at age 11- pupils outperformed their peers nationally in all subjects. Reading outcomes have returned to pre pandemic levels nationally with Gateshead outcomes higher than this. There has been a significant work in schools to close gaps in reading. The impact on writing outcomes continues to be seen at a national and local level.

Operational

- There has been an increase in the number of children who have been closed to early help and not required statutory services for 6 & 12months.
- The launch of the new kinship ready training programme for new Kinship carers and the launch of the young people's kinship kids' group.
- Gateshead children's teams and foster carers were recognised for their outstanding achievements at this year's National Children and Young People Awards. Two foster carers, our Social Work Academy and the Kinship Team were all successful in winning awards.

ACTIONS

Strategic

- Work on the sufficiency strategy is progressing to target and updated strategy will be completed in December 2023.
- An Alternative Provision Strategy is being developed in order to reduce the number of Permanent Exclusions.
- The Working Together to Improve Attendance Strategy document will be launched with schools / parents to support school attendance.

Operational

- Family Hubs launched across the council which will increase opportunities for early identification of needs and reduce the number of families escalating into statutory services for support.
- We are currently in the process of registering one solo residential children's home and one three bedded children's home to support sufficiency or children in care.
- Continued focus on embedding the Edge of Care and reunification strategies to support the continued reduction of children needing to come into care.
- Work is ongoing to increase free school meal take up within primary schools including social media promotions for themed days and working with unit managers to develop the new menu. A themed day calendar is being created for the new academic year which will offer alternative themed menus.

SUMMARY

What is this telling us about how we are performing across Gateshead?

The rate of referrals into social care has decreased over the last 12 month, as well as the rate of children becoming subject to a child protection plan and the rate of those becoming cared for. We have seen that the numbers of children coming into our care are more likely to be between the age of 10 to 15 (41%) compared to 31% the previous year. The % of Early help cases that were closed with an outcome of "all needs met" has increase from 60.79% in March 2022 to 61.04% in March 2023.

Children in the primary years continue to achieve well in comparison to their peers nationally. However, it is not as positive in key stage 4. Secondary schools are permanently excluding at a higher rate than historically.

What will we be doing in response?

Strengthening the edge of care response and intensifying work with families in crisis is a priority. Through the development and implementation of a reunification strategy, tackling the issue of reunification will ensure that children are not remaining in care for long than is necessary.

Future Direction of Travel and Expectations over the next six months

We anticipate that the rate of children in our care will continue to fall over the next 6 months as the edge of care strategies embed.

RESOURCES

As part of the budget approach and MTFS there is a clear plan of interventions to support a reduction in areas relating to placement costs for children in our care and the need for home to school transport - both areas of budget pressure. This includes a revised & refreshed Placement Sufficiency Strategy and a new SEND Strategy & Improvement Plan.

ENABLE ALL YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS TO MAXIMISE THEIR CAPABILITIES AND HAVE CONTROL OVER THEIR LIVES – POLICY OBJECTIVE 2

Strategic performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target		Operational performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target	
Year 6: Prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity) Child and Maternal Health	38.5% (2019/20)	24.1% (2022/23)	No new data	Reduce		Households with dependent children owed a duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act Child and Maternal Health	To be set	New measure for 2023/24	216	Reduce	NEW
Gap in life expectancy at birth male/female Inequality in life expectancy at birth males/female (Annual)	10.7 (M) 9.6 (F) (2017-19)	10.8 (M) 8.8 (F) (2018-20)	Annual	Tracking		Hospital admissions caused by unintentional & deliberate injuries in young people (aged 15-24 per 10,000)	155.8 (England 2020/21)	149.3 per 10,000 pop (2021/22)	Annual	Reduce	
						Children 5-17 years attending holiday activities	126 (Summer 2020)	624 (Full year 2022)	474 (Apr-Sept 23)	Increase	
People reporting low life satisfaction % (compared to England Average)	6.1% (20/21 Eng Avg.)	5.6% (2021/22)	Annual	Reduce		Inequality in attainment between children looked after by the local authority & those not KS4 Attainment 8 score	CLA 21.8 NCLA 47.2 (2018/19)	CLA 20.4 NCLA - 50.2%	CLA = 21.9 NCLA = 47.9 (Oct 23)	Reduce	
16-18-Year-olds not in education, employment, or training (NEET)	5.2% (Dec 19-Feb 20)	4.7% (Dec-Feb 22/23)	4.8% (Mar-Aug 23)	Reduce		Education Health and Care Plans issued within 20 weeks (Including / Excluding exception) 97% Inc exception	97% Incl. exceptions. 93% Excl. exceptions (2021)	92.2% incl. exceptions. 89.5% excl. exceptions	89.1% inc. exceptions. 89.1% exc. Exceptions	Increase	
19-24 year olds NEET % (Marmot)	To be set	50.8 per 100,000 (18/19-20/21)	Annual	Reduce	NEW						
GCSE achieved 5-9 including English & Maths (%)	To be set	16.3% (2021/22)	Annual	Increase	NEW	Successful completions from substance misuse treatment	Opiates 20%. Non-Opiate 41%. Alcohol 61%. Non-Opiate & Alcohol 43% (2020/21)	Opiates 22%. Non-Opiate 46%. Alcohol 57%. Non-Opiate & Alcohol 39%	Annual	Increase	
Inequality in attainment between children eligible/ not eligible for FSM KS1 Expected Level	FSM 46% NFSM 70% (2018/2019)	FSM 33.2% NFSM 58.1%	FSM 40.8% NFSM 61.9%	Reduce							
Inequality in attainment between children eligible for and not eligible for free schools KS2 (RWM Expected Standard)	FSM 52% NFSM 73% (2018/19)	FSM 40.0% NFSM 67.8%	FSM 46.5% NFSM 71.0%	Reduce		% of 16- & 17-year-olds taking part in education and training that meets the Governments Raising the Participation Age (RPA) requirement	91% (2021)	New measure for 2023/24	Annual	Increase	NEW
% of physically inactive adults compared to England Baseline*(Musculo-skeletal conditions)	22.9% (England 2019/20)	27.4% (2021/22)	Annual	Reduce		Smokers that have successfully quit at 4 weeks compared to England Average	1,808 (2019/20 Eng Avg)	1661 (2019/20)	Annual	Increase	
Admission episodes for alcohol-specific conditions - Under 18s per 100,000	50.5 per 100,000 (17/18 - 19/20)	50.8 per 100,000 (18/19 - 20/21)	Annual	Reduce		% of eligible adults with a learning disability having a GP health check	52.3% (England 2018/19)	66.2% (2018/19)	Annual	Increase	
Smoking Prevalence in adults compared to England Average Baseline	14.7% (2019/20)	16.3% (2021/22)	Annual	Reduce		Adult Social Care Self-reported user experience: ASCOF 3A Overall Satisfaction of people who use services with their care and support	64.2% (2019/20)	65.4% (2022/23)	Annual	Increase	
Those with learning disabilities in suitable accommodation & supported into paid employment	8.88% (2020/21 provisional)	9.2% (March 23) (provisional)	5.3% (cumulative at 6m stage)	Increase		ASCOF 3B overall satisfaction of Carers with social services	43.6% (2018/19)	42.8% (2021/22)	Annual	Increase	
						% of adaptations fitted to a client's home, and which have made a positive difference to their life	100 (2022/23)	100 (2022/23)	100	Increase	
Proportion of adults with a learning disability who live in their own home or with their family	82.94% (2020/21)	80.2% (Mar 23)	38.1% (cumulative at 6m stage)	Increase		Social isolation % of adult social care users who have as much social contact as they would like	52.3%	47.0% (2022/23)	Annual	Increase	
Total no. of accessible and adaptable homes built from 1st April 2021/22 baseline	10	3	10 (2022/23)	Increase		% of social care users aged 18+ with personal budgets / direct payments: ASCOF 1C part 1a (receiving self-directed support)	98.29% (20/21)	97.09% (22/23)	96.5% (Sept 23/24)	Increase	
Number of volunteers recruited through the Volunteer Centre	To be set	326	Annual	Increase	NEW	ASCOF 1C part 1b (carers receiving self-directed support)	98.61% (20/21)	100.00% (22/23)	97.1% (Sept 23/24)	Increase	
Number of organisations supported to provide/improve volunteering experiences	To be set	139	Annual	Increase	NEW	ASCOF 1C part 2a (receiving direct payments)	20.5% (20/21)	17.8% (22/23)	18.1% (Sept 23/24)	Increase	
Number of new volunteer roles created	To be set	60	Annual	Tracking	NEW	ASCOF 1C part 2b (carers receiving direct payments for support direct to carer)	63.89% (20/21)	77.14% (22/23)	76.5% (Sept 23/24)	Increase	

Investment Strategy & Resources

Revenue 2023/24 (28% of total gross budget)		5yr Capital
Gross (£000)	Net (£000)	£000
192,638,012	99,447,357	19,891

Figures based on 2023/24 budget setting

Risks to Achievement rated after mitigation

- Failure to safeguard vulnerable children & adults **Amber**
- Non-compliance with statutory requirements resulting in prosecution & subsequent penalties **Amber**
- The Council is hit by a Cyber-attack that compromises confidentiality, integrity & availability of information **Amber**
- Failure to manage demand and expectations could result in the Council not achieving its Thrive agenda **Amber**
- Failure to address financial gap in Council's budget & systems **Amber**

Geographic Impact

The latest available LIoN data can be found online –

[Explore the data](#)

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE? – Our Outcomes

All young people are resilient, with good physical and mental health and wellbeing
Gateshead is a positive place in which everyone’s mental health and wellbeing can flourish
communities and networks

All young people are ready and appropriately skilled for the workplace
Everyone is able to be an active part of their community and feel connected to

CHALLENGES / AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Strategic

- We recognise that the percentage of people receiving direct payments for social care in comparison to commissioned services (18.1%) is below the national average (24%). More work is needed to increase accessibility and availability of direct payments to meet national averages.
- The number of people awaiting a Care Act assessment or reassessment is still high but are routinely risked assessed for complexity of needs. Options are being explored to find both a short-term solution to reduce waiting list numbers but also consider the long-term solution to avoid a build-up of waiting lists in future.
- We have seen the total number of people in residential care reduce however the number of new admissions to residential care remains at previous levels.
- There remains a lack of suitable specialist accommodation for people with complex care needs.
- People with learning disability supported into suitable paid employment was 5.3% and this is down from this time in the previous year when the figure was 7.6 %
- Recruitment and retention issues continue to be a challenge across the Adult Social Care workforce.
- There is a large volume of Adult Safeguarding Concerns being referred into ASC, of which 46.4% do not meet the criteria for Safeguarding Duty to apply.

AREAS OF EXCELLENCE / IMPROVEMENT

Strategic

- A significant reduction in the amount of people waiting for availability of a care service.
- Capacity and performance have also increased in our in-house reablement services which has helped prevent people needing long term social care support.
- The overall number of people in residential/nursing care has reduced to its lowest levels since prior to the pandemic. This has resulted in a noticeable reduction in ASC’s expenditure on residential/nursing care.
- Integrated Adults and Social Care Services department have produced a new departmental strategy for the next 5 years and developed an action plan which will be reviewed and updated annually. The annual review of the action plan will feed into the publication of a Local Account for the service.

Operational

- Trainee models for Social Work and Occupational Therapy has brought in new recruits to our assessment teams and work for the service whilst undertaking a degree apprenticeship. This has helped with recruitment and capacity issues whilst growing our professionally registered workforce for the future.
- Our Trainee models have been recognised as national best practice by DHSC.
- The development of the Dementia Care specific apartments at Watergate Court has been recognised in the Nursing & Residential Care journal.
- The work the Council sponsors on Digital Inclusion has been nominated for a Dynamo NorthEast tech sector award.
- All of the Councils in house care services continue to be recognised as Outstanding or Good by the Care Quality Commission.

ACTIONS

Strategic

- We want people to live as independently as possible with as little restriction on their liberty. We have a range of housing with care options that allow people to choose to live with their own front door, whilst having support on hand, however we want to do more:
 - continue to explore the existing and future needs of our population and develop further housing options which focus on the home first principle.
 - work closely with our housing & planning to future proof the offer with additional extra care facilities and other alternatives, including how we can use technology.
 - a Domiciliary Care market that focuses on enablement and reducing people's need for support, with direct payments more accessible to use as they wish to meet their needs.
 - Work with NHS and VCSE colleagues to ensure that the needs of Caregivers are fully embedded within Discharge processes.
- We want to continue to explore the existing and future needs of our population and develop further housing options which focus on the home first principle.
- Work closely with our housing and planning colleagues to future proof the offer with additional extra care facilities and other alternatives, including how we can use technology.
- Have a vibrant domiciliary care market that focuses on enablement and reducing people's need for support, with direct payments more accessible for people to use as they wish to meet their needs.
- Work with NHS and VCSE colleagues to ensure that the needs of Caregivers are fully embedded within Discharge processes.
- Funding ringfenced for a direct payment support service. A project between finance and social care has started to implement a direct payment support service which will aim to increase the number of people accessing direct payments.
- An LGA Peer review scheduled to seek to help the Council deliver good support to local people and assist with preparation for a CQC Inspection.
- NDTi development programme to commence which will include development support, research, change, leadership development and evaluation.
- Reablement - Sister Winifred Laver Promoting Independence Centre to open.
- A service restructure and creation of new heads of function will provide a greater support to manage and implement strategic change and policies.

Operational

- Implementation of the new adult social care system, Mosaic, continues to bring significant amounts of change across the area.
- The creation and appointment of CQC posts within the ASC Development Team will assist ASC in its preparation for CQC Inspection.
- The SAB is developing a system wide data set and there will be targeted interventions to address below threshold referrals.
- Relaunch of the Voiceworks programme will address the reduction in people with a learning disability supported into paid employment.

SUMMARY

What is this telling us about how we are performing across Gateshead?

The density of needs presented by people continues to increase. This complexity is requiring increasing levels of support and significantly impacts on budgets and the funding from adult social care required. Waiting lists for assessments and packages of care are monitored and robust risk management arrangements are devised and put in place.

What will we be doing in response?

We are working to address the waiting times for assessments. The increasing technological progress in assistive technology within in-house care services will be explored with the aim of reducing the numbers in residential care.

Future Direction of Travel and Expectations over the next six months

This is a challenging time for Adult Social Care nationally with many competing demands and priorities. The response to these challenges will be managed through the work we are doing and the longer-term impacts and emerging pressures around budget, staffing and complexity of need continue to be monitored and responded to.

RESOURCES

A zero-based budget review is being undertaken with a specific focus on Older People Residential Care, Hospital Discharge to Assess, Mental Health and Section 117 funding, Complex Learning Disability community packages, Transforming Care, transitions, and Provider Services.

We are aiming to increase the number of people utilising a Direct Payment, carers accessing support, capacity in the commissioned home care service and reduction in residential care admissions.

CREATE THE CONDITIONS FOR FAIR EMPLOYMENT AND GOOD WORK FOR ALL – POLICY OBJECTIVE 3

Strategic performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target		Operational performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target	
Unemployment rate %	5.5% (2019/20)	4.7%	4.3%	Reduce							
Apprenticeship starts	1,760 (2018/19)	1,440 2022/23	1,110 (cumulative at 6m stage)	Increase		Individuals helped into work	266 (2021/22)	508 (2022/23)	269 (cumulative at 6m stage)	Increase	
Apprenticeship completion	940 (2018/19)	620 (2022/23)	480 (cumulative at 6m stage)	Increase		Jobs created	443 (2022/23)	443	293 (cumulative at 6m stage)	Increase	
Business births in Gateshead	800 (2019)	765 (2021)	<i>Annual</i>	Increase							
Total no of enterprises in Gateshead	5,270 (2019)	5,610 (2021)	<i>Annual</i>	Increase		Jobs safeguarded	370 (2022/23)	370	188 (cumulative at 6m stage)	Increase	
Jobs density in Gateshead	0.81 (2019)	0.85 (2021)	<i>Annual</i>	Increase							
Sustain Gateshead's working age population at a minimum of 2018 baseline of 128,300	128,300 (2018)	121,800 (2022)	<i>Annual</i>	Tracking		Start-ups commenced trading	87 (2022/23)	87	28 (cumulative at 6m stage)	Increase	
Employment Rate	73.3% (2019/20)	70.6%	70.9%	Increase							
Economic Inactivity Rate	22.9%	26.6%	26.00%	Reduce							
Staying visitors to Gateshead	665,080 (2019)	645,000	<i>Annual</i>	Increase		Business improvement & expansion projects completed	67 (2022/23)	67	40 (cumulative at 6m stage)	Increase	
Visitors to Gateshead attractions	3.01m (2019)	4.129m	<i>Annual</i>	Increase							
Gap in life expectancy at birth male/female: Slope index of inequality	2017-19 10.7 (M) 9.6 (F)	2018-20 10.8 (M) 8.8 (F)	<i>Annual</i>	Tracking		Inward investment success	14 (2019/20)	12	6 (cumulative at 6m stage)	Increase	

Investment Strategy & Resources

Revenue 2032/24 (1% of total gross budget)		5yr Capital
Gross £000	Net £000	£000
6,919,516	2,349	127,384

Figures based on 2023/24 budget setting

- Risks to Achievement rated after mitigation**
- Failure to attract inward investment and deliver sustainable economic growth **Amber**
 - The Council is hit by a Cyber-attack that compromises confidentiality, integrity & availability of information **Amber**
 - Failure to address financial gap in the Council's budget & systems **Amber**

Geographic Impact

The latest available LIoN data can be found online –

[Explore the data](#)

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE? – Our Outcomes

All working age residents have access to good quality, sustainable work with decent pay and conditions

All people in low paid, low skilled jobs have opportunities to improve their skills base so they can more easily achieve personal progression and attain an improved standard of living

CHALLENGES / AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT	AREAS OF EXCELLENCE / IMPROVEMENT	ACTIONS
<p>Strategic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The economic climate continues to make things difficult for many businesses. Government increased the support to be awarded to retail, hospitality and leisure businesses by increasing the rates discount for these businesses from 50% in 2022-23 to 75% in the current financial year. The business rates multiplier was also frozen meaning that many businesses would not have more to pay in rates for this year. Economic inactivity has fallen to 25% of the working age population in Gateshead but still remains higher than pre-pandemic levels and long-term sickness continues to be the primary reported reason. A new 'Universal Support' programme has been launched to help long-term sick and disabled people who face barriers to employment. <p>Operational</p> <p>Rising cost of doing business resulting in delays in business investment activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong demand for support from residents wanting to explore business start-up and self-employment - rising cost of living making people explore additional means of boosting income. Demand for business workspace outstripping supply. Disruption in provision of business support programmes due to transition from EU funding to UKSPF. 	<p>Operational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanded Strategic Account Management Programme engaging key employers to attract and retain investment and jobs and to promote responsible business practices. Business Centres operating with high levels of occupancy. Coordinated approach with LA partners to achieving a consistent NE UKSPF funded business support offer. 490 residents benefited from information advice and guidance to help them access good work and develop new skills. Over 500 residents took up the offer of ongoing, intensive employment support from Working Gateshead to help them prepare for, return to and progress in work. Launched the 'Live Well, Work Well' challenge fund to help VCSE organisations invest in tackling economic inactivity in communities. Helped 49 refugees start work by delivering specialised employment support designed to identify transferable skills, boost work experience and understand employer expectations in the UK. 	<p>Operational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the rate of business formation particularly among underrepresented groups. Launch of UKSPF funded Business support programme. Capitalise on strengths in immersive technologies: Launch of IMMEX City Programme and Advanced Media Production Studio at PROTO. Help reduce the employment gap for more marginalised groups through specialist employment support for people with multiple barriers to employment and care experienced young people. Match labour market supply to demand by engaging employers and promoting the recruitment of residents disadvantaged in the labour market. Join-up local employment support with new regional and national employability programmes for refugees and asylum seekers.

SUMMARY
<p>What is this telling us about how we are performing across Gateshead?</p> <p>The wider economic conditions nationally continue to impact locally on many businesses and consumers. Economic inactivity has fallen but is still above re-pandemic levels.</p> <p>What will we be doing in response?</p> <p>Work is continuing to support all areas of the workforce including more marginalised groups with links being established between specialist local support for employment and regional and national programmes.</p> <p>Future Direction of Travel and Expectations over the next six months</p> <p>The strong demand for support from residents wanting to explore business start-up and self-employment will continue and areas where support can be targeted will continue to be identified and provided.</p>

RESOURCES
<p>Council lead for The Growth Fund, a £4.5m grant programme operating across Gateshead, Sunderland and South Tyneside to support business investment.</p> <p>Managed £11.8m UK Shared Prosperity Fund commissioning projects to increase businesses formation, resilience, and growth, tackle economic inactivity, improve skills and deliver community regeneration.</p>

Strategic performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target		Operational performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target	
All residents have the opportunity to thrive: % residents who are vulnerable	39.5%	34.1%	<i>Annual</i>	Reduce		Number of people/ families helped through locality partnership support to maximise household income	1,143	2241	1576 (cumulative at 6m stage)	<i>To be set</i>	
% residents who are just coping	29.5%	40%	<i>Annual</i>	Tracking							
% residents who are managing	13.3%	15.9%	<i>Annual</i>	Tracking		Rent collected from tenants as a % of rent due in the financial year	98.78% (2020/21)	97.79%	97.31%	98% +/- 2%	
% residents who are thriving	17.7%	10%	<i>Annual</i>	Increase		Households in Council Tax arrears	6,991 (Baseline 2021/22)	8,329	<i>Annual</i>	Reduce	
% of population income deprived (IMD)	16.7% (2019)	<i>National data - every 4 years</i>		Reduce							
£ Gap in average household income between highest and lowest areas of need in Gateshead	£27,043 (2021)	£28,302	<i>Annual</i>	Reduce		No of domestic properties supplied by District Energy Scheme	0	389	<i>Annual</i>	10,000	
Households in Fuel Poverty (%)	15.1% (2019)	14.2%	<i>Annual</i>	Reduce		Average number of days taken to process Housing Benefits claims and changes	8.91 (Sep 20)	5.96 (2021/22)	<i>Annual</i>	Reduce	
Gap in life expectancy at birth male/female Inequality in life expectancy at birth for Males / Females	10.7 (M) 9.6 (F) (2017-19)	10.8 (M) 8.8 (F) (2018-20)	<i>Annual</i>	Tracking		Average days taken to process Council Tax support claims and changes	13.98 (Sep 20)	11.29 (2022)	<i>Annual</i>	Reduce	

Investment Strategy & Resources

Revenue 2023/24 (7% of total gross budget)		5yr Capital
Gross £000	Net £000	£000
49,718,216	539,000	127,323

Figures based on 2023/24 budget setting

Risks to Achievement rated after mitigation

- Failure to attract inward investment and deliver sustainable economic growth **Amber**.
- The Council is hit by a Cyber-attack that compromises confidentiality, integrity & availability of information **Amber**.
- Failure to address financial gap in the Council's budget & systems **Amber**.

Geographic Impact

The latest available LIoN data can be found online –

[Explore the data](#)

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE? – Our Outcomes

Affordable childcare is accessible to those who need it

All working age residents receive a wage that considers the true cost of healthy living

Individuals & families are supported to have the best possible financial well-being to access debt and social welfare advice to maximise household income and improve financial management skills

CHALLENGES / AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Strategic

- **Household Income Gap** - Using LIoN data and CACI Household Income data for 2022 you get average household income in the:
 - 10% most in need areas = £26,031
 - 10% least in need areas = £54,333
 - Gap = £28,302

Operational

- We have seen more residents in higher banded properties than ever before contacting the Revenues Team, to report that they are struggling to pay which is an indication of how hard the cost-of-living crisis is having on people who were normally able to pay without ever contacting the team.

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AREAS OF EXCELLENCE / IMPROVEMENT

Operational

- The cost of living and energy cost increases have had an impact on tenants' ability to pay rent, leading to increased demand for debt advice, and support on issues such as emergency top-ups for prepayment meters. The Rent and Income Team (RAIT) continue to assist tenants to access to financial advice and support.
- 6,975 tenants are in receipt of Universal Credit (UC) as at the end Qtr 2 & 3,192 of these have an Alternative Payment Arrangement in place either because of their vulnerability or a history of debt/arrears.
- The DWP made a change at the end of Qtr 2 in the landlord portal that limits our ability to request direct housing costs on some accounts.
- 1,081 tenants are known to have benefit reductions for under-occupation and 93 are affected by the benefit cap.
- There have been 7 evictions this year for rent arrears.
- For a large part of the year resources were focussed on delivering financial support to our residents and the team paid out more than £13.5 million in Govt support to help our residents meet their rising energy and food costs.
- The team continues to work closely with Citizens Advice Gateshead in order to ensure residents receive any additional specialist support that they may need. The team were part of a data sharing pilot under the Digital Economy Act to help to reduce council tax arrears; HMRC provided employer information to the council to allow us to set up attachments of earnings. However, the number of matches was disappointingly low. The team will feed this back to central Government collection.
- Citizens Advice Gateshead have seen 1,339 clients in the 6 community hub venues, and a further 237 in outreach/drop-in venues.

ACTIONS

Operational

- **Council Tax Support** - this figure gradually increased over a period of time due to the knock-on effect of resources being used to deal with SIP and Energy Rebate Scheme. Management was aware of this earlier in the year and the resultant backlog of CTS claims. Performance has started to improve and now the service is staff fully following the appointment of three new processing staff at the end of February 2023.

SUMMARY

What is this telling us about how we are performing across Gateshead?

Overall, rent collection remains robust at over 99% of rent owed collected but national economic conditions are affecting families with enquiries for debt advise increasing and contact made with residents who previously paid but are now struggling.

What will we be doing in response?

Continue to work with external partners such as Citizen's Advice to offer practical advice and support especially around the continued implementation of DWP changes and the impacts for those who are vulnerable.

Future Direction of Travel and Expectations over the next six months

Performance across all service areas continue to be monitored and support will continue to ensure that those who need advice support and guidance receive appropriate assistance.

RESOURCES

Household income data indicator is dependent on continued purchase of LSOA level income data (Current supply is from CACI Paycheck)"

CREATE AND DEVELOP HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES AND PLACES – POLICY OBJECTIVE 5

Strategic performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target		Operational performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target	
% of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	32.3% (Jun 21)	31.6% (2022/23)	Annual	Towards 50%		% of Council homes empty for 6 months or more	0.55%	0.73%	0.66%	Reduce	
Net additional homes built (against annual housing requirement)	301 (2019/20)	468 (2022/23)	Annual	Increase		Activity to support community capacity building	New measure to be defined 2022/23				
% of new homes built that are affordable	13.8% (2020/21)	35.47% (2022/23)	Annual	Increase		No. of private dwellings identified as having a Category 1 hazard, and No. had this hazard removed	137	82	Annual	Tracking	
% of homes (remaining tenures) empty for 6 months or more	2.3% (2019)	2.24%	Annual	Reduce			87	56			
Gap in life expectancy at birth male/female: Slope index of inequality	10.7 (M) 9.6 (F) (2017-19)	10.8 (M) 8.8 (F) (2018-20)	Annual	Tracking		% of Council commercial fleet operating on electricity	2%	5%	12%	100%	
% of Council homes that meet the Decent Homes Standard	94.46% (2020/21)	96.3% (2022/23)	Annual	Increase		Progress towards GMBC being carbon neutral by 2030 (% achieved as per annual audit external assessment)	70%	70% (2022)	Annual	100% by 2030	
% of functional green space amenable to healthy lifestyles in the 25% most deprived wards	New measure to be defined 2023/24 – based on Marmot					No of trees planted on Council land per annum towards target	0	>20,000 cumulative	>21,000 cumulative	100,000 by 2030	
Number of public transport passenger journeys in Gateshead (millions)	26.749 (2020/21)	20.714 (2022/23)	Annual	Increase		% repairs completed within timescales: Highways (within 10 days)	71% (21/22)	82% (22/23)	86%	> 90%	
Gateshead areas compliance with Local Air Quality Management Framework	Compliant	Compliant	Annual	Compliant		% repairs completed within timescales: Streetlights (within 5 days)	91% (21/22)	88% (22/23)	95%	> 90%	
Total recorded crime in Gateshead	91.2 crimes per 1,000 pop (2021/22)	99.1 crimes per 1,000 pop (2022/23)	27 crimes per 1,000 pop (Jun 2023)	Reduce		Council emissions reduction from 2008 baseline	0% (2008)	63.6% (2021/22)	Annual	100%	
Recorded instances to the police of violence against the person - crimes	43.7 per 1,000 pop (2021/22)	44.4 per 1,000 pop (2022/23)	12.9 crimes per 1,000 pop (Jun23)	Reduce		% of the overall tonnage in recycled waste collected that is contaminated with non-recyclable materials	15.8% (20/21)	16.74% (22/23)	Annual	Increase	
Serious acquisitive crime incidents (excluding shoplifting)	4.8 per 1,000 pop (2021/22)	7.1 per 1,000 pop (2022/23)	Annual	Reduce		% of homes with SAP energy rating score above 65	64%	62.75%	Local Auth 90% Housing assc 72% Owner-occ 41% Private rent 48%	65 (+/- 3%)	
Anti-social Behaviour (All incidents)	38.4 per 1,000 pop (2021/22)	26.6 per 1,000 pop (2022/23)	15.8 per 1,000 pop	Reduce							
Anti-social Behaviour (All incidents NOT youth related)	40.1 per 1,000 pop (2021/22)	20.6 per 1,000 pop (2022/23)	14.7 per 1,000 pop	Reduce							
Anti-social Behaviour (All incidents youth related)	31.5 per 1,000 pop (2021/22)	30.0 per 1,000 pop (2022/23)	20.4 per 1,000 pop	Reduce							

Investment Strategy & Resources

Revenue 2023/24 (25% of total gross budget)		5yr Capital
Gross £000	Net £000	£000
170,579,794	34,245,786	160,8202

Figures based on 2023/24 budget setting

Risks to Achievement rated after mitigation

- Failure to address financial gap in the Council's budget & systems **Amber**.
- Failure to provide a response during major incident impact on ability to deliver critical services or impact on a community. **Green**.
- The implications of EU Exit potentially affecting availability of resources to deliver services which may impact on communities **Amber**.
- Failure to manage demand/expectations could result in the Council not achieving its Thrive agenda **Amber**.

Geographic Impact

The latest available LIoN data can be found online –

[Explore the data](#)

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE? – Our Outcomes

Local communities and social networks are strong

All communities have access to good quality natural environment

All residents have access to a high quality, affordable, warm and energy efficient home

CHALLENGES / AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Strategic

- **Crime:** iQuanta crime figures available to Q1. Recorded crime is increasing in Gateshead. There has been a 6% increase in the number of crimes recorded in Q1 of 2023/24 in Gateshead, and an increase of 7% across the Northumbria policing area.
- **Housing:** The Repairs & Maintenance Improvement Plan Progress is updated regularly to HEHC OSC. The purpose of the review was to improve productivity and performance, challenge convention and ensure that the form of the service is fit for purpose.
- Staff designation changes in the Joint Local Agreement means all trade operatives can move between the different areas of work as needed. Reports on progress will continue to be presented to HEHC OSC.
- More demand for housing from applicants with a high level of priority, including those with a homeless priority. Reduced availability of suitable single persons properties has led to increased use of temporary accommodation.
- There are more incidences of private sector tenants being served eviction notices, and then requesting a council house in the same area (as the family have support networks, or schooling considerations).
- “Managed migration” to UC of residents on legacy tax credits will commence in Tyne & Wear from January 2024. Cost of living crisis continues to have significant impact on council tenants’ ability to thrive and sustain tenancies.

Operational

- **Home Choice lettings system** implemented, with an issues log being worked through following go live. Most single person properties have been let directly to those in temporary accommodation or in need of direct lets. Fewer properties generally advertised as demand for direct lets is increasing.
- Vacant property levels remain high. Some property types are in less demand and more difficult to let, including flats reserved for those aged 50+ and older persons properties generally where access is poor. Options to reduce age restrictions for certain schemes are being explored. Two bed general needs flats are also becoming difficult to let once again because of affordability / benefit eligibility and under occupation benefit restrictions.
- **Rent arrears:** increasing linked to more tenants claiming UC & receiving benefits in arrears. DWP have recently added an extra step in the process when we request direct housing costs which now requires the resident to first confirm (in their online account) the amount we have asked for. This may lead to delays in setting up these payments.
- The Customer Involvement Team engaged about the **Tenant Satisfaction Survey** visiting 14 diverse community groups, gathering feedback from them about their homes & neighbourhoods, which have been reported to GMT and other service managers. Themes of the feedback focused around; R&M, customer contact, comms and environment & neighbourhood, which reflected the key themes in the satisfaction survey feedback and highlighted that these remain issues for people.

AREAS OF EXCELLENCE / IMPROVEMENT

Strategic

- Assistance to tenants in response to rising energy bills and cost of living issues, working in partnership with agencies such as 2 Way Tenancy Solutions.

Operational

- **Decent Homes Standard** - The improvement in performance is linked to further increases in stock condition data for the Council's domestic properties + the completion of investment work in the 2022/23 Capital Programme.
- **Housing** - The number of properties vacant for 6 months 0.66% of the housing stock at the end of Quarter 2 2023/24. Due to the need to reduce numbers in temporary accommodation (mostly single persons) the focus has been on letting suitable single persons properties rather than on the oldest vacant properties. Fifty-six of the vacant properties were in the process of being advertised, offered and let.
- 32 are held in connection with major work, including structural work and work to ensure compliance and health and safety. (This includes 15 flats at Angel Court that are expected to be able to let in second half of the year, and 7 flats at Melbourne Court where roofing work is required).
- Rent collection of 97.31% at the half-year stage is very close to target of 97.50%. This is before the non-debit weeks in second half of the year when collection rate usually increases.
- Feedback from some of the sheltered schemes about their neighbourhood and estates has led to an estate tour to be undertaken by the Highways service, to understand the issues and impact they are having, directly on the customers.

ACTIONS

Strategic

- Ongoing contribution to council response to cost of living and energy bills.
- Review new allocations policy now that it has gone live and some of the impacts can be evidenced.

Operational

- Address Home Choice issues log.
- Respond to review of vacant property activity.
- Prepare for managed migration of tenants on legacy benefits to Universal Credit from Jan 2024
- Advice and support and referrals for tenants struggling to pay bills.
- **EVs** - 40 out of the owned 350 vehicle fleet are now electric, but there are 685 vehicles in use in total including the hires.

SUMMARY

What is this telling us about how we are performing across Gateshead?

Rent collection result at the half year stage is close to target despite the ongoing challenges of cost-of-living crisis and UC roll-out. However, rent arrears continue to increase and the further roll-out of Universal Credit planned for 2024 will increase arrears again. Management of property lettings has been challenging with the implementation of a new lettings system and an increasingly complex pattern of demand for properties. There has been a need for more single persons accomm to reduce use of temporary accommodation, whilst at the same time some other property types are becoming more difficult to let. Vacant property rent loss (3.46% of rent roll at half-year stage) still very high overall.

What will we be doing in response?

Specific support for tenants affected by managed migration to Universal Credit and a range of support measures for residents in relation to energy charges (see areas of excellence above). Review of void activity supported by external consultants carried out. Detailed actions to be developed. Recruitment for temporary additional capacity in lettings team to help with planned increase in vacant property repairs (i.e., more “Ready to Let” properties). Options to reduce age restrictions for certain schemes are being explored. Increasing the proportion of property adverts placed with preference to those applicants for housing with an assessed housing need. Registered Providers are being “onboarded” to new Home Choice lettings system. Housing Agreement (with providers) to be reviewed.

Future Direction of Travel and Expectations over the next six months

Rent collection is expected to remain a significant challenge. More vacant properties to be repaired and made ready to reduce vacant property rent loss and enable rehousing of applicants with housing needs.

RESOURCES

- Demand for debt advice is increasing; With partnership activity underway with Citizens Advice Gateshead.
- 111 new posts have been recruited to across Construction Services. This includes 53 new trade operatives. 6 new Building Technicians and 7 additional Customer Operations Staff. 6. This has enabled additional resource to manage the ‘front end’ of repairs.
- Recruitment of 2 x New Tenancy Assistants to help reduce vacant property levels.

ILL HEALTH PREVENTION – POLICY OBJECTIVE 6

Strategic performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target		Operational performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target	
Gap in life expectancy at birth male/female: Slope index of inequality (Annual)	10.7 (M) 9.6 (F) 2017-19	10.8 (M) 8.8 (F) 2018-20	Annual	Tracking		Population vaccination coverage - Flu (aged 65+) <i>Compared to England rate as baseline</i>	83.5% (2019/20)	82.0% (2022/23)	82.0% (Sept 23)	Increase	
Suicide rate Public Health Profiles <i>Compared to England rate as baseline</i>	10.4 per 100,000 (England 2018-20)	9.6 Per 100,000 (England 2019-21)	Annual	Reduce		Age standardised mortality rate for deaths related to drug misuse - persons by local authority	11.3 per 100,000 - England (2018-2020)	11.5 per 100,000 - Gateshead (2019-2021)	Annual	Reduce	
Admission episodes for alcohol-specific conditions - Under 18s <i>Compared to England rate as baseline</i>	50.5 per 100,000 (2017/18 - 2019/20)	50.8 per 100,000 (2018/19 - 2020/21)	Annual	Reduce		Chlamydia detection rate / 100,000 aged 15 to 24 <i>Compared to England rate as baseline</i>	1,532 per 100,000 (2020)	2,046 per 100,000 (2022)	2,520 per 100,000 (Sept 23)	Tracking	
Under 75 mortality rate - Cancer considered preventable- <i>Compared to England rate as baseline</i>	51.5 per 100,000 (England 2020)	66.7 per 100,000 (2021)	Annual	Reduce		The proportion of older people (aged 65 and over) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/ rehabilitation services	77.97% (2020/21)	75.3% (2022/23)	71.3% (Some data from STROKE Team has not been supplied)	Increase	
Total households assessed who are owed a duty, who were sleeping rough at the time of application	35	24	8	Reduce		% of clients using technology assisted care	Reporting to be developed – data available from January 2024				
(A) % of households where homeless prevention duty ended that maintained / secured accommodation for 6+mths.	(A) 54%	(A) 47%	(A) 46.16%	Increase		Total households initially assessed as owed a homeless duty	824 (2020/21)	1,690 households assessed / 1,588 owed homeless duty	714 (Cumulative at 6m stage)	1,750	
(B) % of these identified maintained/secured accommodation that remained in existing accommodation.	(B) 15%	(B) 17%	(B) 13.19%	Increase		% of council dwellings with a valid gas safety certificate	99.80%	100%	100%	100%	

Investment Strategy & Resources

Revenue 2023/24 (4% of total gross budget)		5yr Capital
Gross £000	Net £000	£000
25,026,828	17,198,947	1,775

Figures based on 2023/24 budget setting

Risks to Achievement rated after mitigation

- Failure to safeguard vulnerable children & adults **Amber**
- Non-compliance with statutory requirements resulting in prosecution & penalties **Amber**
- Council suffers Cyber-attack that compromises confidentiality, integrity & availability of information **Amber**
- Failure to manage demand & expectations could result in the Council not achieving Thrive agenda **Amber**
- Failure to address financial gap in the Council's budget & systems **Amber**
- Failure to provide a response during a major incident impacting on ability to deliver critical services or an impact on a community. **Green**

Geographic Impact

The latest available LIoN data can be found online –

[Explore the data](#)

ILL HEALTH PREVENTION – ANALYSIS

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE? – Our Outcomes

To prevent and end homelessness, in all forms in Gateshead

All preventable ill health is reduced, to end the gap in inequalities within the borough

All residents will be able to access flexible health and care support, when and where they need it

CHALLENGES / AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Strategic

- Implementation of actions as set out for each of the four key aims within the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- Delivery of the Homelessness and Allocations Review.
- Remodelling and recommissioning of homelessness accommodation and support.

Operational

- Lack of accommodation options and support for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness including direct access into appropriate emergency and crisis accommodation.
- Increased length of time people spend in emergency B&B placements & in dispersed Temporary Accommodation due to system pressures.
- Significant overspend on B&B budget.
- No current 'gateway' system to manage and monitor supported housing provision, placements and throughput.
- Operational risks in sexual health have been listed corporately concerning the budget allocation on procurement, the agenda for change uplifts and the pressures being felt in the main service due to the impact of the Newcastle implementation of a new contract with a new (non-NHS) provider.

AREAS OF EXCELLENCE / IMPROVEMENT

Strategic

- Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy agreed by Cabinet January 2022.
- Homelessness Charter launched in March 2022.
- Campbell Tickell contracted and progressing Homelessness and Allocations Review.
- Successful bids for Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI), Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP) and Supported Housing Improvement Programme (SHIP) funding and funding allocated to improve response for victims of domestic abuse.
- Single homelessness accommodation programme (SHAP) funding bids submitted for over 25s- and 18–25-year-olds new build schemes.
- Completion of specialist and supported housing needs assessment and strategy and approval of both documents by Cabinet and Full Council in September 2023.
- Monthly partnership meetings established with housing providers of commissioned and non-commissioned accommodation to build relationships and monitor contracts and performance.

Operational

- Housing Safety - At Q2, 2023/24. 16,618 properties required a gas service and all 16,618 properties have a valid gas safety certificate. At Q2 - 16,734 properties required a gas service and one was outstanding at the end of September. This property entered the warrant process and has now been serviced as at 14.10.22.
- Proactive approach to homelessness prevention.
- Excellent partnership working established linked to homeless pathway for offenders and ex-offenders; delivery of private rented sector funded project for ex offender, and prevention pathways for hospital discharge and mental health.
- Strong partnership arrangements with Oasis Community Housing supporting those at risk of homelessness and rough sleeping with multiple or complex needs= low numbers of rough sleepers.
- Fortnightly rough sleeper action group – coordination of the rough sleeper pathway in Gateshead, including case management.
- Delivery of existing RSI and Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP) and RSAP funded accommodation programmes.
- Coordination and delivery of regional armed forces outreach service.
- Domestic abuse outreach work, including security and sanctuary measures preventing homelessness and increasing safety.

ACTIONS

Strategic

- Implementation of actions outlined in Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, which sets out our four key strategic aims with associated actions to tackle homelessness.
- Completing actions within the Homelessness and Allocations Project Plans including remodelling and recommissioning of homelessness accommodation and support and developing a homelessness Gateway.
- Implementation of action plan resulting from Temporary Accommodation review.
- With the addition of additional investment in Substance Misuse Services to support the 10-year drug strategy, developments continue to add capacity, diversity, and quality to the drug and alcohol treatment system in order to improve outcomes for those experiencing difficulties with substances in Gateshead.
- We continue to work collaboratively with NHS and wider partners on our comprehensive multi strand approach to reducing smoking prevalence. Working towards our aim of achieving an adult smoking prevalence of 5% by 2030.

Operational

- Development of a Gateway model and system.
- Reviewing approach to temporary and emergency accommodation including operational practice.
- Operational Service Plan 2023-25 underway including - review of policies and procedures, development of dashboards, integrating new projects into existing pathways.
- Creation of a Fixed Term Homeless Prevention Officer post supporting the development of the Refugee Pathway.
- Continue to embed and develop partnership working.
- The Integrated Sexual Health Service is undertaking research with UKHSA to understand the relatively recent and worrying increase in syphilis case – to be published next year.
- The Council is publishing a sexual health survey (Nov 23) to understand current opinions, issues, and unmet need in sexual health.
- Locality Working roll out underway in the South with the aim of supporting early intervention by Council services and developing partnership and community based working.

RESOURCES

- Earlier intervention can help to reduce health inequalities faced in later life and improve health and wellbeing outcomes, which can help to reduce demand for services.
- Two of the Priority Based Transformation Areas as part of the budget approach are ASC and Housing Improvement which will directly inform this priority objective.
- £1.2m PHWB savings 2021/22 of which £0.300m has been delivered after savings mitigation (£0.900m). Long term proposal is to transform Leisure & Library services to better meet local needs.
- Difficult challenges for Leisure services in year and 2022/23. Projected loss of Fees & Charges income is £4.2m due to impact of the pandemic.
- Homelessness funding confirmed from Housing Prevention Grant for the next two years (£563,834 2023/24 and £594,390 2024/25). Annual/bi-annual grant allocations make long term investment decisions difficult.
- Successful funding bid for accommodation for ex-offenders for 2023-25 - £156,670 over two years.
- RSI funding secured until March 2025 (joint bid with South Tyneside) Gateshead allocation - £1.85m over three-year period.
- RSAP funding secured to 2024 to deliver 4 units (in partnership with Tyne Housing) with support for rough sleepers with complex needs. This is additional to the 15 NSAP properties already provided through a previous successful funding bid.
- SHIP funding of £574,096 secured for a three-year period to March 2025.

SUMMARY

What is this telling us about how we are performing across Gateshead?

The homelessness and rough sleeping strategy will support the Council and partner agencies to respond to the needs of those facing homelessness and rough sleeping by addressing the underlying causes of homelessness and providing appropriate accommodation and support. Ill health prevention by its nature considers the longer-term impacts of health and tackling issues that can result in poorer outcomes over the course of a lifetime. This means it can take a while for changes at population level to be seen.

What will we be doing in response?

Delivering on the four key aims and associated actions within the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, which include remodelling and recommissioning accommodation and support as well as developing a gateway to support any new model. This will continue to be delivered in 23/24 through the Homelessness and Allocations Review. We are continuing to develop our response and therefore the full impact in the longer term still needs to be determined.

Future Direction of Travel and Expectations over the next six months

A new Allocations Policy and Tenancy Strategy have been developed as part of the Homelessness and Allocations Review and were approved by Cabinet in October 2022. We have also launched Gateshead's own choice-based lettings system 'Gateshead Home Choice' in June 2023. We are recommissioning supported accommodation and developing a 'marketplace' and 'homelessness gateway'.

ORGANISATIONAL HEALTHCHECK – BALANCED SCORECARD – SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

Ensuring the organisation is in the best position to deliver Council Priorities

EMPLOYEES	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target		CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target	
Employee survey – The Council is a good place to work (<i>new measure in future on employee morale and Covid-19 impact</i>)	64% (2016)	73% (2018)	Planned for Q4 2023/24	90%		% Residents satisfied with Gateshead as a place to live	64% (2016)	64% (2018)	<i>No new data</i>	Increase	
No. of apprentices as a % of total employee headcount (as @ 31 March)	2.38%	2.91% (Mar 22)	<i>Annual</i>	6.5%		% satisfied with the Council	52% (2016)	42% (2018)	<i>No new data</i>	Increase	
% Apprenticeship levy spent (incl transfers) – towards March 2023	50%	71% (Mar 22)	<i>Annual</i>	70% by 2023		% residents who are vulnerable	39.5%	34.1%	31.8%	Reduce	
No. of Employee resignations as % of headcount	6.08% (2020/21)	5.11% (2022/23)	<i>Annual</i>	2.50%		% residents who are just coping	29.5%	40.0%	45.5%	<i>None set</i>	
Average Sickness Absence days per FTE	10.58	13.22 days (2022/23)	<i>Annual</i>	9 days		% residents who are managing	13.3%	15.9%	15.7%	<i>None set</i>	
Agency worker costs	<i>To be set</i>	1.85% (2022/23)	<i>Annual</i>	<i>To be set</i>		% residents who are thriving	17.7%	10%	7.0%	<i>None set</i>	
% employees completed GDPR training	0%	62.64% (Oct 22)	70.67%	95% by 23/24		% of stage 3 corporate complaints upheld	15% (2021)	24% (6/25) (Apr-Sep 22)	62.5% (25/40) (Apr-Sept 23)	10%	
% employees reporting their protected characteristics	35% 2020/21	55% 2022/23	<i>Annual</i>	70% by 2023		% of complaints upheld by the LG Ombudsman	12% (2020)	58% (2022/23)	9.09%	10%	
						No of complaints upheld by the ICO	1	0	0	1	
						No of compliments received about Council services	78 (2021)	276 (2022/23)	177 (6-month)	<i>None set</i>	
						Digital Customer Experience % of transactions online for Garden Waste; Birth/Deaths; Fly-tipping	76%	84%	82%	Increase	
						Number / £ of online payments	98,961 / £12.5m	104,583 / £14.17m	118,795 / £16.020M	Increase	
						Telephony contact response answer rate (Average of Customer Contact Unit; Revs & Bens; Housing; ASCD)	86% (2021)	82%	81%	Increase	
FINANCE, GOVERNANCE & RISK	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target		EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target	
Revenue Budget position % over/ under	£281.9m (2023/24)	£1.1m over (0.39%) (Q1)	£2.8m over (0.99%) (Q2)	+/- 5%		CQC Council Registered Schemes (10 total)	Good	Good (2022)	9 Good / 1 Outstanding	Achieving	
Capital Programme Position £ Outturn	£112.1m 2023/24	£113.5 +1.2% (Q1)	£106.6m - 6.1% (Q2)	+/- 10%		Ofsted Learning Skills	Good	Good	<i>Every 4-6 years</i>	Achieving	
% Council spend with Gateshead based organisations	14.5% (2021/22)	15.82%	18%	Increase		Ofsted Children's Social Care Services	Good	Good	<i>No update</i>	Achieving	
% Invoices paid within 30 days	87.32% (2021)	75.25% (Sept 22)	86.61% (Sept 23)	95%		Ofsted SEND (Narrative assessment)	Significant strengths. No priority action	Strong & effective support provided	<i>No update</i>	Achieving	
% Council Tax collected	94.1% (20/21)	52.4% (cumulative)	51.87% (cumulative)	Increase		Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards	-	Compliant: 5 Progressing: 3 Noncompliant: 2	<i>Annual</i>	Achieving	
% Business Rates collected	88.4% (20/21)	53.9% (cumulative)	54.92% (cumulative)	Increase		Housing Health & Safety Compliance (New White Paper)	Progressing	Progressing	Compliant: 2 Progressing: 3 Noncompliant: 0	Achieving	
Financial Assessments and social care finance - % of debt in year collected	92.89% (20/21)	91.04%	54.56% (cumulative)	Increase		HSE Enforcement Actions	0 (2021)	1 FFI	0	Achieving	
Value of Services provided by the Council to schools	£11.2m	£12.2m	<i>Annual</i>	Increase		Council working in partnership (Survey VCS; Private and Public sector partners)	<i>Baseline to be set</i>	<i>No update</i>	<i>No update</i>	-	
No of serious data breaches reported to ICO	0 (2020/21)	2	8	Tracking		External Audit (Mazars)	Unqualified	Unqualified (2021)	<i>Annual</i>	Achieving	
Health & Safety near miss / hazard reports Council: Schools:	116 (45%)	116 of 362 (32%)	16 of 84 (13%) 149 of 250 (60%)	Increase							
Audit High Priority Recommendations made; and those outstanding	28 0	3 0	4 0	Tracking							

ENSURING THE ORGANISATION IS IN THE BEST POSITION TO DELIVER COUNCIL PRIORITIES – WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE? – Our Outcomes

Employees

- Employee satisfaction – Gateshead Council a great place to work
- Diverse & inclusive workforce
- Maximising Employee Potential – opportunities to learn, develop and aid succession planning the Council (right first time)

Finance, Governance & Risk

- Revenue Budget, Capital Budget; HRA; Income received, Risk Housing); Compliance; Partners

Customer Experience

- Thrive – reduce the number of residents vulnerable or just coping
- Resident’s satisfaction with Gateshead and Gateshead Council
 - Improved customer experience through better contact with

External Assessment

- External Audit; Regulators Assessment (Ofsted, CQC,

CHALLENGES / AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- **Data Protection** – there has been increase in breaches reported to DPO team (66 at this point last year, 123 this year), linked to increased profile of DP team and better awareness of staff:
 - 2 email address error linked to autocomplete resulting in sensitive data being shared with unconnected parties; 1 posted data to wrong address (typo in house number); 2 paperwork left behind at location visited by council officers; 1 Occ. Health record lost within dept, subsequently found and wouldn’t have been reportable; 1 social media post by employee which ICO deemed not a breach as business rather than personal information; 1 allegation of employee misconduct, not proven on investigation.
- There were 40 Chief Executive Reviews completed - 15 were not upheld with 25 upheld and compensation offered; £14,117.88 compensation agreed for 20 people. The value was determined by the Services in accordance with the circumstances of the complaints and the Local Government and Social Care and Housing Ombudsman’s’ guidance.
- Despite improved online functionality there is still a growth in volumes of incoming calls reflecting growing demand for Council services. Overall, the number of incoming calls has increased by 18,000 (7%) since the same period in 2022/23.
- Average call duration is longer than in the same period in 2022: calls to Repairs, Benefits, Revenues and Customer Services are typically 30 to 90 seconds longer.
- The team received an additional 2.5k telephone calls in the first 6m of this year in comparison to last year.
- Historically most payment enquiries were from residents living in properties in the lowest council tax band A whereas now we regularly receive contact from residents living in bands B, C, D and E who are finding it hard to maintain their council tax instalments.
- The cost-of-living crisis is also limiting the ability for people to pay for care. In terms of priority debts, a service user is more likely to pay for a service which can cut off (energy) than a service the Council has a duty to provide.

AREAS OF EXCELLENCE / IMPROVEMENT

- **DPO** – all areas highlighted in the audit report have now been met.
- There was 1 final decision made by the Ombudsman following the investigation of 11 complaints against the Council which was upheld – a significant decrease from the previous year.
- For most residents contacting the Council for transactional services, online has become the channel of choice. Typically, it is now the norm for well-designed online services to achieve a 70-90% uptake in comparison to the telephone. There are now over 100 processes that have a consistent customer experience via self-service which are also supported via the contact centre.
- There has been a 13% increase in the volume of online payments compared to the previous period last year. The strategy continues to be to make online payments available for all payment processes. New online payment processes have been added for Planning, building control and licensing over the last 12 months which has aided the increase of take up.
- Telephony – improvement has been seen in the answer rate within ASCD.
- A higher proportion of near misses is positive and a sign of a safety culture. Work related incidents only. Data also now includes schools, which was reported separately for 2023/24.
- No HSE enforcement action received for the last 6 months.

ACTIONS

- The Council is currently assessing when and how to bring forward a 'borough-wide' survey. This would incorporate how we currently work in partnership with our key stakeholders.
- Proposal to undertake an employee survey between Jan and March 2024, subject to approval.
- **DPO** - proposal to turn off autocomplete function in Outlook, 5 service specific training sessions delivered since May 2023.
- A large proportion of the staff who haven’t completed GDPR training are casual staff and those without network logins. WD are actively working with services to ensure they understand the need for all staff to complete the module (whether this is the eLearning module or a handbook) and how this can be facilitated.
- Standard Debt recovery procedures due to restart this year after having been paused during 2020/21-2022/23.

SUMMARY

What is this telling us about how we are performing across Gateshead?

The cost-of-living challenges, high interest rates and economic climate are impacting many residents and businesses. Although the % rate of collection has fell, in cash terms we have collected more as have an extra £7m in council tax to collect in the current financial vs 2022-23. Residents who received council tax support saw their council bills reduced by £50 during 2022-23 but following a reduction in government funding this amount reduced to £25 in 2023-24 which means that residents with the lowest incomes now have more to pay.

What will we be doing in response?

We continue to issue reminders, court summonses and other recovery documents promptly when a resident fails to pay and have already issued more recovery documents in 2023-24 than in any of the previous 3 financial years. The Revenues team remain ready to offer help and flexibility to residents to help them to pay, we also continue to refer residents to Citizens Advice Gateshead for further specialist advice. Recovery action continues to be taken promptly against businesses who do not pay, and our team remain ready to help any business that needs extra support or flexibility to pay their business rates.

RESOURCES

- For 2023/24 the baseline revenue budget is £281.885m. Qtr1 was 1.107m over 0.39% Qtr2 is 2.775m over 0.98%. This is well within the +/- 5% tolerance.
- In year savings for 2023 is £13.084m, we have achieved £12.394m. This equates to 94.7% of savings targeted.
- The MTFS position assumes all prior year budget savings will be achieved going into 2024/25.
- The intention is to deliver an outturn within budget. Senior management will ensure proactive budget management through regular monitoring will continue to take place with accountable intervention with the aim of containing spending within budget.

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Housing Performance Report - Quarter 2 2023/24.

Purpose of the Report

1. To update members of the Housing, Environment and Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HEHC OSC) on Housing Performance results at the end of quarter 2, 2023/24, see appendix 1.

Background

2. A Performance Management Information Framework (PMIF) has been developed across the Council to support the achievement of the Thrive outcomes and performance measures have been developed in line with this new approach.
3. In addition, a separate suite of performance measures has been developed for the Housing, Environment and Healthier Communities (HEHC) directorate. These indicators have been developed to underpin delivery of the Council's strategic priorities across all tenures and not just limited to Council Housing.

Housing Performance Management Indicators Quarter 2

4. The performance results are colour coded, comparing performance against the targets for 2023/24. The Appendix 1 shows those performance measures that are achieving target (green), not achieving target (red), not achieving target but improving on 2022/23 performance results (amber) and those performance measures that are not yet reported or baseline for 2023/24 (grey).
5. Narrative is provided for each performance measure that details performance progression, actions to be taken to improve future performance and, where appropriate, an explanation regarding performance indicators that are in development or that will be reported later in the financial year.

Key Performance Indicator Summary

6. There are currently 43 KPI's that are reported on a quarterly basis.
7. At quarter 2 our performance shows:
 - Five indicators are traffic lighted green. This shows that we have achieved the annual targets for these indicators.
 - Four indicator is traffic lighted amber. Amber indicators show that we have not met the target set but performance has increased on the previous year.

- 13 indicators are traffic lighted red. Red indicators show that we have not met the target set and performance has decreased compared to the previous year.
 - 21 indicators are not measurable. Of these indicators:
 - 13 are Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) and will be reported traffic lighted when the survey results are reported in quarter 4 2023/24.
 - Two indicators are measured and will be traffic lighted at year-end.
 - Two indicators are new for 2023/24, reported quarterly and is set with a baseline target. Data collected in 2023/24 will be used to set targets for 2024/25.
 - Of the remaining four indicators all reported reported quarterly with annual targets set for 2023/24. The KPI's are measured via a numeric count and will be traffic lighted at year-end.
8. The performance results therefore indicate that at quarter 2, performance relating to 9 out of the 22 measureable performance indicators can be traffic lighted as on target or improving, which relates to 41% of our measureable indicators.

Recommendations

9. The views of HEHC OSC are sought on the Key Performance Indicator results at the end of the second quarter 2023 24.

Contact: Martin Poulter ext 5380.

Housing Environment and Healthy Communities - Key Performance Indicators 2023/24

	Quarter 2
	2023/24
Not on Target	13
On Target	5
Not on Target but Improved	4
Baseline Information/No Targets Set/No Activity	21

KPI No	Performance Measure	2022/23	2023/24	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Comments
		Year End	Target			
1	% of self-service transactions - responsive repairs	11.60	13.00		12.20	The online repair reporting service was suspended from 9 January 2023 to upgrade the system. This was to address the duplication of works orders and misdiagnosis of repairs by tenants using the MyHousingAccount which impacted on the delivery of the service. The system was relaunched on 21st June 2023 and performance information was not reported in quarter 1 due to insufficient data. Since resuming the service 1,345 works orders have been raised using the online service. We have set a target of 13% for annual performance. Further phase of development is underway to incorporate improvements in diagnostic and the addition of more customer friendly video guides. A further customer communications campaign will run alongside this.
2	Total households initially assessed as owed a homelessness duty	1588.00	1750.00	367.00	714.00	Housing Solutions offered advice and assistance to 1664 households who either presented or were referred to us as being homeless or at risk of homelessness. Of these, we assessed 726 households, of which 714 were initially assessed as owed a homeless duty. If this rate continues for the remainder of the year then we are likely to not reach the annual target set at 1750. This would be a positive outcome of less cases however this will need to be monitored during the next two quarters which includes the winter period. This annual target has been set based on previous years figures, it is not a performance target, it is a measure of demand on the service which is difficult to predict therefore quarterly targets have not been set. In this period we have also placed 256 household into nightly paid accommodation (220 into B&B and 36 into holiday lets) this will be new and existing cases. 75 of these households had children. This is 54 more placements than the same period last year and 100 more than the year before that in 2021/22. The placements for households with children is double that than same period last year. A review of the approach to Temporary Accommodation including the use of B&B is underway and a number of actions have been identified to be progressed and shared with CMT and Portfolio. It is not likely that we will see the benefits of these actions in the immediate short term however this will be monitored and further updates provided as part of quarterly performance monitoring.

KPI No	Performance Measure	2022/23	2023/24	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Comments
		Year End	Target			
3	% of households that remained in existing accommodation	17.00	20.00	12.00	13.19	<p>Of the 235 households where prevention duty ended by maintaining or securing accommodation for at least 6 months, 31 households (13.19%) where prevented from becoming homeless by maintaining their existing accommodation.</p> <p>If this maintains although an improvement since last quarter, it is unlikely to reach the target set. Being able to secure households existing accommodation is very much circumstantial and a case-by-case basis. It depends on whether it is reasonable to do so considering suitability, safety and affordability.</p> <p>We are continuing to link in with Citizen Advice Bureau CAB) to try and work with them to negotiate with private landlords as well as working with the neighbourhood relations team to look at legal powers we have to help households feel safer in their home so they can remain.</p> <p>Family and friend exclusion are a large reason for homelessness and we are looking at ways we can improve our prevention methods around this so they are able to remain in the household.</p>
4	% of households where homelessness prevention duty ended that maintained or secured accommodation for 6+mths	47.00	52.00	45.00	46.16	<p>The Homeless Reduction Act 2017 Act requires a clear focus on prevention and early actions; strong referral routes and joint working with other statutory agencies and that all clients who are assessed are provided with a personal housing plan. The number of households assessed in quarter 2 was 726. Of these households 714 were owed a duty. 534 were owed a prevention duty and 180 were owed a relief duty. In this period, 235 (46.16%) households had their prevention duty ended due to the household maintaining or securing alternative accommodation for at least 6 months. To try and reach the target we continually raise the awareness of the duty to refer with the statutory and non-statutory agencies as the earlier we can work with households increases the prevention options available. For example, we have a direct referral route into CAB who can help liaise with private landlords and offer debt advice and support. We have also introduced a pathway for households who are being asked to leave accommodation provided by Home Office as asylum support. Part of this pathway is to work with the many voluntary and community groups involved with this cohort to try and increase the prevention options available. It is unlikely we will meet the target, this is linked to the huge pressures on social housing, especially for single households. This is for some resulting in prevention not being possible and they are becoming homeless and moving into the relief duty and often temporary accommodation. This can be seen in the large increase in temporary accommodation placements.</p>
5	Households with dependent children owed a duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act Child and Maternal Health		22.00	4.72	9.54	<p>Of the 726 households assessed as owed a duty, 216 were households with dependent children. This means that 9.54 Gateshead households with dependent children were owed a duty per 1000 Gateshead families. This indicator has been established by Public health and is not a measure of performance but shows the impact on families being affected by homelessness. It is difficult to predict a target as this number is based on demand on the service; achieving less than the annual target is a positive outcome as this means less families have been affected by homelessness. The annual target has been set at 22 in anticipation of possible increased impacts on families as a result of the cost of living crisis although at this stage in the year we are not seeing this in the data at this point.</p>

KPI No	Performance Measure	2022/23	2023/24	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Comments
		Year End	Target			
6	Total households assessed and owed a homelessness duty who were sleeping rough at time of application	24.00	29.00	6.00	8.00	<p>Of the 714 households assessed as owed a duty, 8 were recorded as sleeping rough in the judgement of assessor at the time of the assessment. This is a decrease from the previous quarter. This figure does not include households who are believed to be at risk of rough sleeping or those we know frequently sleep rough.</p> <p>The decrease is linked to the pro-active work we do to prevent households sleeping rough and our accommodation of non-priority households if they are at risk of rough sleeping. If this trend continues we will not be on target however this will be a positive outcome of less rough sleepers. This target has been set based on previous years data. It is an indicator of demand on the service based on an individuals circumstances therefore difficult to predict and for these reasons quarterly targets have not been set.</p>
Page 33	New homes built in the Borough in the period 2022-2027	New for 2023/24	500.00		468.00	<p>The KPI relates to the number of homes delivered in 2022/23 which has become available this quarter following updates to Council Tax records and notifications from Housing developers and Registered Housing providers for this period.</p> <p>This is 32 below the target, which will be directly attributable to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - nervousness in the development market following increase in interest rates impacting on mortgage payments, - increased costs of materials and labour over the period - the difficulty in progressing sites within the borough due to ground conditions and visibility. <p>The number of new homes projected to be built within the period 2022/27 is detailed in the Housing Development Strategy and Programme.</p> <p>As part of the strategy and programme, to overcome some of these barriers, Council officers will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Look to bring forward Council owned sites for housing development as soon as practicable, - Apply for grant funding where appropriate to overcome viability issues on sites and - Continue to work with developer partners to optimise site development across the borough <p>It is anticipated that 3500 homes will be built during this period. Achieving this is dependent upon a buoyant housing market.</p> <p>A staggered delivery will be delivered for future years with 500 being expected in 2023/24.</p>

KPI No	Performance Measure	2022/23	2023/24	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Comments
		Year End	Target			
8	% of planned repairs	48.80	48.80			<p>This performance will be reported at the end of the financial year.</p> <p>It is best practice to have a higher proportion of work delivered in a planned way rather than responsively. At year end of 2022/23 48.4% of work was delivered in a planned way and 51.6% responsively.</p> <p>Work is ongoing to increase the proportion of work delivered in a planned way. Changes are being made to the way the 5 year HRA capital programme is delivered and additional support has been added. A planned review took place in September to look at some areas of work that are commonly delivered responsively, but are best suited to a planned capital approach. Agreement was collectively reached on the transferring of a several repair activities from responsive to planned works. For example, this included the replacement of garage doors. Historically a repair cost, but as a whole building element, replaced as a planned repair this should be classified as planned work.</p>
9	% of residents satisfied with planned/investment works	94.87	97.00	100.00	100.00	<p>At the end of quarter 2, 101 customers had returned a satisfaction survey following improvements to their home. 95 customers responded to the survey question. All responses were following works to replace the central heating boiler or remove a redundant gas fire. 100.00% of customers who responded were satisfied with the work. This result is 3.12% higher than for the same period 2022/23.</p>
10	% stock with a negative Net Property Value (NPV)	10.40	10.00	8.00	8.00	<p>The Net Present Value (NPV) of Council owned homes is the value of future rents and income, less the projected costs to manage and maintain those properties over the 30 years of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan.</p> <p>Properties with expected management, maintenance and investment costs in excess of their projected total income, or with high levels of low demand, will have a negative NPV rating. Properties with a negative NPV will undergo an 'options appraisal' to examine why they are performing poorly and what measures could be implemented to arrest it. Those measures could include interventions like investment, change of use, remodelling or demolition.</p>
11	% of tenants satisfied with the condition of their new Council home	New for 2023/24			62.85	<p>Data for this KPI is collected via text message that is sent to customers one week after tenancy commencement. For this transactional survey indicator the number of customers who answered the question 'very & fairly satisfied', 'very & fairly dissatisfied and 'neither satisfied/nor satisfied' are all valid responses used to calculate this performance result. To date 35 responded to the survey 22 customer were satisfied, 7 dissatisfied and 6 were neither satisfied/nor satisfied.</p> <p>2 elements of dissatisfaction raised by customers related the communal areas outside of the property and adaptations to the property that weren't need by the new tenant which results in a charge to replaster when the tenant removed them. Neither reasons relate to the Void Delivery process.</p> <p>We will continue to evaluate this KPI for its relevance to Void Management as we progress through 2023/24 and discuss with colleagues in Customer Services.</p> <p>This KPI target is set at baseline as it is new for 2023/24. Data gathered will be used to develop targets for 2024/25.</p>

KPI No	Performance Measure	2022/23	2023/24	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Comments
		Year End	Target			
12	Average days to let a home	109.00	100.00	123.00	124.00	<p>The average time to let a home has increased from 106 days in quarter 2 2022/23 to 124 in quarter 2 2023/24.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Average 90 days from Void date to Ready to Let (80, 2022/23). - Average 34 days from Ready to Let to Let (26, 2022/23). <p>457 properties unavailable for letting (including undergoing works). 162 Properties were in the process of being let at the end of the quarter. Performance is currently 24 days over the 100 day target set for the year. Although achieving 100 days may now be difficult it is the aim to reduce the average time as much as possible in the second half of the year. To help achieve this a comprehensive review is looking at vacant property processes, classifications / standards and performance is being carried with external support from consultants Campbell Tickell. Construction Services are preparing a business case to increase in-house trade capacity to reduce the number of void works in progress by the end of the year. The business case, which is subject to CMT approval, is predicated on reducing the reliance on external contractors. In addition, two temporary tenancy assistants will be recruited to support the letting of available properties. Properties undergoing major repair work are not included in this performance indicator.</p>
13	Percentage of council homes empty for 6 months or more	0.73	0.50	0.61	0.66	<p>The number of properties vacant for 6 months or longer was 120 at the end of quarter 2. (0.66% of the housing stock).</p> <p>Due to the need to reduce numbers in temporary accommodation (mostly single persons) the focus has been on letting suitable single persons properties rather than on the oldest vacant properties. This is likely to continue into the second half of the year. To be on target, the number would have needed to be 30 fewer (i.e. 90 properties). 56 of the vacant properties were in the process of being advertised, offered and let. 32 are held in connection with major work, including structural work and work to ensure compliance and health and safety. (This includes 15 flats at Angel Court that we would expect to be able to let in second half of the year, and 7 flats at Melbourne Court where roofing work is required) 32 are undergoing general repair work.</p> <p>As mentioned above, Construction Services are preparing a business case to increase in-house trade capacity to reduce the number of void works in progress by the end of the year. The business case, which is subject to CMT approval, is predicated on reducing the reliance on external contractors. In addition, two temporary tenancy assistants will be recruited to support the letting of available properties.</p>

KPI No	Performance Measure	2022/23	2023/24	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Comments
		Year End	Target			
14	Rent lost due to empty properties as a % of rent due	2.98	2.00	3.33	3.46	<p>Void rent loss stands at £1,712,513.30 at the half year stage and as a % of annual rent roll has been increasing by around 0.05% each month. Clearly the target is out of reach this year, but reducing void loss in the remainder of the year is a priority.</p> <p>A comprehensive review looking at vacant property processes, classifications / standards and performance is being carried with external support from consultants Campbell Tickell.</p> <p>As mentioned above, Construction Services are preparing a business case to increase in-house trade capacity to reduce the number of void works in progress by the end of the year. The business case, which is subject to CMT approval, is predicated on reducing the reliance on external contractors. In addition, two temporary tenancy assistants will be recruited to support the letting of available properties.</p>
15	Rent collected from tenants as a percentage of rent due to date in the financial year (excluding arrears brought forward)	97.79	97.50	94.33	97.31	<p>£46,163,268 of rent was collected up to the end of quarter 2 out of a total of £47,830,988 charged to tenants. Despite the challenges, rent collection of 97.31% at the half-year stage is very close to target of 97.50%. This is before the non-debit weeks in second half of the year when collection rate usually increases.</p> <p>The cost of living and energy cost increases have had an impact on tenants' ability to pay rent, leading to increased demand for debt advice, and support on issues such as emergency top-ups for prepayment meters.</p> <p>6,975 tenants are in receipt of Universal Credit (UC) as at the end quarter 2 and 3,192 of these have an Alternative Payment Arrangement in place either because of their vulnerability or a history of debt/arrears.</p> <p>The DWP made a change at the end of quarter 2 in the landlord portal that limits our ability to request direct housing costs on some accounts.</p> <p>1,081 tenants are known to have benefit reductions for under-occupation and 93 are affected by the benefit cap.</p> <p>There have been 7 evictions this year for rent arrears.</p> <p>The Rent and Income Team (RAIT) continue to assist tenants to access financial advice and support.</p>
16	% of properties where damp and mould has been successfully resolved	New for 2023/24		71.17	74.77	<p>During this quarter, the total number of damp and mould cases raised was 1597. The total number of damp and mould cases resolved was 1194. This marks an improvement from quarter 1 2023/24.</p> <p>Changes in the process of how we diagnose damp and mould have been implemented to make the process quicker, more accurate, and more user friendly online reporting tool. We are continuing to work with a specialist contractor to carry out mould wash downs for first reports. We are recruiting additional Building Technicians to increase our capacity of inspecting properties and provide post inspections. We continue to carry out the installation of Positive Input Ventilation Units (PIVs) in properties to help customers manage high humidity in their home.</p> <p>Due to the limited KPI data collected in 2022/23 we were unable to develop targets that met the SMART methodology. 2023/24 data will be used to develop targets for 2024/25.</p>

KPI No	Performance Measure	2022/23	2023/24	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Comments
		Year End	Target			
17	% of repairs completed right first time	71.60	83.00	72.06	74.09	This quarter, of the 25,134 works orders completed, 18,621 were completed first time. 74.09% of repairs were completed right first time, marking an improvement from the previous quarter. Changes that have been made to the Online MyAccount Portal with more detailed diagnostics for customers. We have further improvements to our website and online reporting in development. Multi-skilling of our tradespeople has led us to expand van stock, so parts are more readily available. Analysis is being carried out to repairs requiring further actions to ensure van stocks are adequate and continually monitored. We expect to see further improvements throughout the financial year.
18	Appointments kept as a percentage of appointments made	92.70	94.00	93.72	93.01	During this quarter, 23,210 appointments made, 21,588 were kept. The repairs service continues to go through a change process to make repairs delivery more efficient. To facilitate some of these changes we needed to free up some of the diaries by holding some appointments until the new process was in place. As a result there was a minor decline in performance during the quarter. The changes is now complete, and we hope to return to demonstrating improvements in the next quarter. Breakdown: Emergency Repairs – 1,416 appointments made, 1,349 were kept = 95.27%. Urgent Repairs – 8,204 appointments made, 7,713 were kept = 94.02%. Routine Repairs – 13,590 appointments made, 12,526 were kept = 92.17%.
Page 37	% of tenants satisfied with their most recent repair (transactional repairs)	83.58	80.00	84.17	84.37	This indicator is measured by a text survey. In this quarter, of the 4,121 returned surveys 3,213 were very satisfied and 264 fairly satisfied with the most recent repair. Overall satisfaction has improved since quarter 1, 2023/24. The increase in satisfaction from customers could be attributed to changes in service. We are reviewing and learning from complaints to identify key trends and issues that will help inform service improvements going forward.
20	% of residents satisfied with how their anti-social behaviour case is handled (transactional ASB case)	54.55	62.00	28.59	40.00	During this period 322 customers were linked to cases that were closed (some cases had no customer and others had more than one). Of these, 72 customers had opted in to receiving a satisfaction survey by text message and a total of 15 responded to the satisfaction question. Of the 15 responses, eight expressed dissatisfaction with the service provided and they were then contacted to discuss further. When contacted, one customer said they were very happy with the service received from Gateshead Council, their dissatisfaction related to Northumbria Police. If the satisfaction was amended to reflect this, the result would be 46.67% satisfaction. Customer feedback highlighted the need to update customers on ASB case management progress and this has been shared with Managers. There have been discussions with ICT and Senior Housing Managers in relation to satisfaction levels. It has been agreed that changes will be made to NEC processes which will be complimented with training to investigating officers.

KPI No	Performance Measure	2022/23	2023/24	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Comments
		Year End	Target			
21	Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect	47.00	77.00			This indicator is measured by a perception satisfaction survey and reported to the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) on an annual basis. The survey will be carried out by telephone to ensure that we hear from a sample of tenants that reflects our customer profile. An external provider Kwest Research Ltd have been appointed to carry out the survey on behalf of the Council in 2023/24 and 2024/25. The survey will be completed in two phases each year, October and March. The combined results will then be reported to the RSH. A communications plan will support delivery of the survey, feedback of results and our response to the results.
22	Overall satisfaction, taking everything into account	44.00	73.00			Please refer to KPI 'Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect' for comment.
23	Satisfaction that the home is safe	51.00	65.00			Please refer to KPI 'Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect' for comment.
24	Satisfaction that the home is well maintained	36.00	60.00			Please refer to KPI 'Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect' for comment.
25	Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained	55.00	63.00			Please refer to KPI 'Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect' for comment.
26	Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them	45.50	71.00			Please refer to KPI 'Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect' for comment.
27	Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them	29.00	57.00			Please refer to KPI 'Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect' for comment.
28	Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods	34.00	56.00			Please refer to KPI 'Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect' for comment.
29	Satisfaction with repairs	52.00	80.00			Please refer to KPI 'Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect' for comment.
30	Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour	31.00	47.00			Please refer to KPI 'Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect' for comment.
31	Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling complaints	21.00	41.00			Please refer to KPI 'Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect' for comment.
32	Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair	42.00	60.00			Please refer to KPI 'Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect' for comment.
33	Satisfied that their housing landlord, Gateshead Council, is easy to deal with	44.00	70.00			Please refer to KPI 'Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect' for comment.
34	Anti-social behaviour (ASB) cases relative to the size of the landlord	New in 2023/24	56.00	17.64	31.21	During this period 568 new ASB cases were opened. This is a decrease of 3% when compared to the same period last year when 584 new cases were opened. Of the new cases, 553 (97%) cases related to general ASB and 15 (3%) cases related to Hate Crime. An ASB review is on-going and outcome of the review, will lead to changes to ASB reporting procedures and improving access to service for customers experiencing ASB. ASB cases relative to the size of the landlord's housing stock provides the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) with the number of complaints received per 1000 properties. This, alongside data from other Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's) provides an indication as to how effective the current ASB Policy is.

		2022/23	2023/24			
KPI No	Performance Measure	Year End	Target	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Comments
35	Complaints relative to the size of the landlord	New in 2023/24	13.00		7.58	<p>Complaints relative to the size of the landlord's housing stock provides the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) with the number of complaints received per 1000 properties. This alongside data from other Tenant Satisfaction Measures provides an indication as to how effective a landlord's complaint policy is being implemented.</p> <p>The Council has adopted a simpler two stage process for housing complaints to reflect the Housing Ombudsman complaint handling code requirements. This has been supported by Team Briefs, good practice guidance and complaint handling training for almost 100 employees. As a result there has been an increase in the number of stage 1 complaints registered from 22 in quarter 1 to 92 in quarter. 2. This should be viewed as a positive improvement. Of the 92 stage 1 complaints, 73 (79%) related to repairs and maintenance and 15 (16%) related to Neighbourhood Housing Services. We also received a total of 15 stage 2 complaints during quarter 2 a slight increase from 14 in quarter. When compared to the overall number of complaints registered it reflects a smaller proportion that are now being escalated to the next stage. Of the 15 stage 2 complaints, 9 (60%) related to repairs and maintenance and 6 (40%) related to Neighbourhood Housing services. In total we received 107 complaints during this period.</p> <p>The results are reported annually to the RSH as part of a suite of TSM indicators.</p>
Page 39 36	Complaints responded to within Complaint Handling Code timescales	New in 2023/24	66.00	55.00	52.50	<p>This KPI is reported annually to the Regulator of Social Housing as part of the new set of Tenant Satisfaction Measures. The KPI measures compliance with a requirement of the Complaint Handling Code (Housing Ombudsman).</p> <p>The target for Stage 1 complaints is 10 days and in Qtr 2 we received a total of 92 stage 1 complaints and responded to 46 (50%) within the target of 10 working days. We received a total of 15 stage 2 complaints in quarter 2, with 100% being answered within the target timescale of 20 working days.</p> <p>The 10 day target is challenging and we are not yet meeting our target. To support officers we have delivered complaint handling training to almost 100 employees and issued Team Briefs and Good Practice Guides. New complaints monitoring reports will help us to monitor performance closely and will highlight any complaints that are approaching target dates.</p>
37	Asbestos safety checks	New in 2023/24	100.00	100.00	99.83	<p>3525 asbestos safety checks are required and 3519 have been carried out.</p> <p>There are 2 blocks overdue and have access issues. The asbestos team are currently arranging access to these blocks with housing management to ensure the blocks are surveyed as soon as possible.</p> <p>The asbestos team continue to utilise the asset management system and planned maintenance programme to ensure all asbestos reinspections are issued, residential blocks surveyed and reports are received. All surveys are then reviewed and actions processed to ensure any remedials are carried out in the correct timescales to maintain the safety of the residential blocks.</p>

KPI No	Performance Measure	2022/23	2023/24	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Comments
		Year End	Target			
38	Water safety checks	New in 2023/24	100.00	42.53	42.56	The total number of checks where risk assessments are required is 18518 made up of 18455 domestic dwellings and 63 communal areas. A total of 7882 risk assessments were carried out by end of quarter 2 made up of 7819 domestic dwellings and 63 communal areas. A new water hygiene and legionella risk assessor has been employed by the building safety team and interviews are being held for an additional risk assessor. They will assist in a full review of the processes and procedures whilst also carrying out the high risk domestic legionella risk assessments as a priority. The water hygiene process will also be moving to a new dedicated compliance management database which will help to streamline and improve the process. The new software should help to improve productivity and assist with reporting.
39	Fire safety checks	New in 2023/24	100.00	100.00	100.00	In review of all domestic blocks requiring an Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) it was found 4 blocks were outstanding. This was due to a change in procedure for recording FRA's. The fire team had carried out the FRA's in time and had progressed any urgent or high risk actions. As with the other areas of compliance, the FRA process is currently under review and will be moving into a new dedicated compliance database in the coming months. This will help to streamline the process and improve reporting.
40	Gas safety checks	New in 2023/24	100.00	100.00	100.00	Of the 16613 gas services required 100% had been serviced by the end of quarter 2. The gas servicing team continue to perform well and achieve full compliance. Where a non access is identified a robust non access process is enforced which would culminate in a warrant if required to ensure compliance and gas safety. The gas safety manager also has a full audit process in place to maintain the high standards of both the operational work on site and the quality of the certification, data and documents.
41	Lift safety checks	New in 2023/24	100.00	82.81	62.01	There are 2219 dwelling units across 15 blocks. OF these blocks lift safety checks effect 843 dwelling units. (1376/2219 = 62.01%). Management of passenger lifts will be moving out of the existing database and into a dedicated compliance management software solution database. This has now been procured and will improve the management of lifts, contractors and improve the reporting of passenger lift compliance moving forward. This is expected to take between 3 to 6 months to implement. Meetings are taking place with the lifting contractor in relation to current performance, contractor performance will be monitored through monthly performance meetings to improve performance.

KPI No	Performance Measure	2022/23	2023/24	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Comments
		Year End	Target			
42	Proportion of homes that do not meet the Decent Homes Standard	3.70	3.20			<p>Performance for this indicator is measured annually and will be reported at quarter 4. Capital investment work is on site across the borough delivering improvements that will make homes 'decent' and prevent others from becoming 'non-decent'. By the end of the second quarter six investment schemes are nearing completion and a further 44 are either onsite or about to start on site.</p> <p>The housing capital investment programme has been developed to deliver improvements that will make some homes decent and prevent others from becoming non-decent. Some work is currently on specific sites and will be delivered across the year to improve the stock. A five year investment plan is also in place to forecast and steer future investment in the stock. The housing capital programme is aligned to the priorities in the HRA Housing Asset Management Strategy.</p>

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Housing Complaints Update

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek the views of the Housing, Environment and Healthier Communities OSC on Gateshead Councils Housing complaints performance for the first six months of 2023/2024.

Background

2. The Housing Ombudsman (HO) Complaint Handling Code (CHC) sets out its expectations that social landlords develop a positive complaint handling culture and that accountability and transparency are key elements.
3. The code states that governing bodies of social landlords should receive regular updates on complaint performance to allow for scrutiny. It has therefore been agreed with the Chair of HEHC OSC that officers will present a housing complaint's update to OSC on a six-monthly basis. In addition a complaints update will also be taken to HEHC Portfolio on a six monthly basis.
4. Reports will include data on the volume, category, and trends from complaints. It will also include performance data on complaints investigated by the HO and compliance with any HO orders and findings.

Housing Complaints performance April 2023 – September 2023

5. To ensure compliance with the HO Complaint Handling Code the Council in July 2023 adopted a simplified two-stage process for Housing complaints. In addition, a target of 10 working days to respond to stage 1 complaints and 20 working days for stage 2 complaints were adopted.
6. The table below sets out the number of formal complaints registered in the first six months of 2023.24 compared to 2022.23. Whilst the number of complaints registered has increased this should be viewed as a positive improvement. The HO is clear that anything that meets its definition of a complaint must be registered as such and that they will monitor the number of complaints registered.

Complaint stage	April – September 2022.23	September 2023.24
Stage 1 Formal complaint	46	115
Stage 2 Review	11	29
Totals	57	144

7. During this period, the council responded to 53% of formal complaints within the target of 10 working days.

8. Of the 29 complaints escalated to stage 2, 83% were responded to within the target of 20 working days.
9. The change to a target of 10 working days for stage 1 complaints has been challenging. To help manage performance a complaints dashboard has been recently developed that provides data on all open complaints. The complaints dashboard will also provide insight into common complaint trends and recurring issues.
10. In addition to the performance information presented above, the Regulator of Social Housing requires that social landlords collect and report on a set of Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) from 2023.24. These include TSM's specifically relating to complaint handling:
 - Complaints relative to the size of the landlord
 - Complaints responded to within Handling Code timescales.
 - Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling complaints
11. The first two indicators are collected from management information and the third is collected via a tenant satisfaction survey. All three indicators are Housing key performance indicators and updates are provided in the Housing Performance report brought to HEHC OSC. All TSM indicators will be reported to the RSH after the 31 March 2024.

Complaint Themes

12. A total of 77 stage1 complaints received during this period related to Repairs and Maintenance. The key themes of repair related complaints were:
 - Time taken to complete the repair.
 - Poor communication
 - Failing to keep appointments.
13. The service with the second highest number of complaints registered was Neighbourhood Services. Key themes from the 22 complaints included:
 - Anti-Social Behaviour – handling of cases
 - Damage to property
 - Service Charges
 - Condition of estate/external areas
14. There is a similar pattern with stage 2 complaints. The majority related to Repairs and Maintenance and Neighbourhood services. In these cases, tenants requested a review of their stage 1 complaint because they weren't satisfied with the outcome of the initial investigation.

Compliments

15. In addition to complaints, we encourage employees to record compliments that they receive about colleagues and services. This is important as it also provides valuable insight into what tenants appreciate and helps us to improve the services we provide. It can also help to boost morale highlighting the positive impact we can make to our

tenants and residents. When a compliment is registered the relevant line manager is notified.

16. During this period a total of 48 compliments were registered with the two services receiving the most:

- Neighbourhood Housing Services - 24
- Repairs and Maintenance - 19

17. The remainder included praise for colleagues in Lettings, Neighbourhood Relations Team and Planned Investment.

18. A reoccurring theme in compliments related to customer service and a feeling that employees were very helpful when dealing with an enquiry or problem. Examples of direct quotes from compliments received is provided in Appendix 1.

Housing Ombudsman Annual Report 2022.23

19. Each year, the HO produces an annual report that summarises the key themes and figures from the previous year across all activity in the housing sector. In the 2022.23 report it highlighted:

- An increase of 27% in complaints received compared to previous year.
- Over 6,500 orders and recommendations made to landlords.
- £1.1 million in compensation awarded.
- An increase in maladministration findings, where service requests or complaints are not handled reasonably.
- A decrease in findings of no fault, over half found in the tenant's favour.
- 323% increase in the number of severe maladministration findings from 31 to 131. Of these 112 related to landlords with over 10,000 homes.

20. The HO also provides each social landlord with their own Annual Performance report. In 2022.23 Gateshead Council's performance was as follows:

- Four determinations (the number of cases decided upon by the Ombudsman).
- Four maladministration findings in two of the determinations.
- No cases of severe maladministration.
- £1,100 awarded in compensation.

21. Of the four findings of maladministration, two related to the way complaints had been handled and two related to the handling of repair issues.

22. Gateshead Council's maladministration rate of 50% was below the national average of 55% for all social landlords with over 10,000 properties. It is also below the national average of 62% for local authorities and ALMO's of a similar size.

Housing Ombudsman April – September 2023.24

23. In the first six months of 2023.24 the HO accepted three complaints to investigate. These three cases had been through the Councils complaints process. The Council has received the determination for one of those complaints, in which no maladministration was found. We are waiting for the outcomes of the further two complaints.

24. The HO also referred 21 complaints to the Council to progress through our complaints process. This is where tenants have gone direct to the HO without raising the complaint first with the Council.
25. In addition, the Council received one severe maladministration determination from the HO relating to a case dating back to 2018. The complaint was about the Council's handling of damp and mould at the tenant's home. The finding also related to the Council's complaint handling and record keeping.
26. An extensive review of our approach to how we manage reports of damp and mould has been carried out and a new process agreed and implemented. This has been communicated to tenants across a range of communication channels including a dedicated page on our website.
27. The new process also adopts best practice from the HO Spotlight Report on damp and mould that sets out what is expected of landlords in relation to such issues.

Complaint Handling Code – self assessment

28. Each year, social landlords are required to complete a self-assessment against the HO's complaint handling code. The purpose of the self-assessment is to ensure landlords are fully compliant with each aspect of the code.
29. This year, officers worked with a focus group of tenants to complete our self-assessment for 2023/2024. The completed self-assessment has been published on the Council's website.
30. There is a consultation underway at present regarding the Housing Ombudsman and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) adopting a joint complaint handling code.
31. The aim of the joint code is to bring a consistent approach to complaints handling and will see the LGSCO adopt the key principles of the HO's complaint handling code, including a mandatory two stage complaints process and a 10-working day response target.

Future development - learning from complaints.

32. Following the implementation of a new, compliant complaints process our focus will be on how we, as a landlord, can use complaint feedback for service improvement and develop a culture of continuous learning.
33. Over the coming months, we'll be working with tenants and leaseholders in our Resident Influence Panel to discuss and plan our approach including and how we can involve tenants in that process.

Officer Support and Training

34. To support employees, regular Complaint themed team briefs are circulated. In April 2023, a team brief provided an update on the complaints process, including the new two-stage process for housing complaints, and a 10-working day response target for stage 1 complaints.

35. This team brief was followed up in November 2023, with information about the Councils performance data for Housing complaints and updates from the HO's Annual Complaints report.
36. There are also good practice guides available for employees on the intranet, which are kept up to date.
37. Complaint handling training focused on compliance with the HO's complaint handling code has been delivered to almost 100 employees over the last 6 months, both in person and via Teams. The training has been delivered to every service responsible for recording and investigating complaints.
38. Further training on effective complaint handling is in development and will be delivered in the coming months.
39. The HO provides regular updates on findings and investigations across the housing sector, which we share with colleagues to improve the service we provide to our tenants.

Recommendations

40. The Housing, Environment and Healthier Communities OSC is asked to provide its views on performance for complaints and compliments for the period April 2023 – September 2023.

Contact: Andrew Dodds, andrewdodds@gateshead.gov.uk – Customer Feedback and Insight Officer.

Appendix 1

Thank you for really listening to me and taking the time to understand. It really feels like you are trying to do something for me to fix the problem I'm having.

Susan was very helpful. She was very calm and helpful at a rather stressful time for me.

Staff are excellent. They try and help you any way they can first class well done. Thank you!

The resident has stated that on the two occasions she has spoken to Jennifer, and she was understanding, polite, informative and a pleasure to speak to.

I want to thank the garden team for a fantastic service. The team have done the best job I have ever seen and can't believe the fantastic service I have received today.

TITLE OF REPORT: **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 the Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2023/24.

1. The Committee's provisional work programme was endorsed at the meeting held on 19 June 2023 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 and highlights proposed changes to the programme 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: Melvyn Mallam-Churchill

Extension: 2149

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DRAFT Housing Environment & Healthy Communities OSC Work Programme 2023-24	
19 June 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Management and Improvement Framework – Year End Performance 2022-23 • Housing Design and Energy Efficient Standards • Housing Key Performance Indicator Target Setting 2023/24 • Changing Futures, MCN and Homelessness (<i>focus on linkages and impacts and join up</i>) • Work Programme
11 September 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Safety priorities update / progress • Lifelong Learning (<i>focus on;</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>what is available academically and physically</i> - <i>Is there a clear picture of provision across the borough</i>) • Parking enforcement – Update (<i>focus on;</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>what can be done to prevent pavement parking</i> - <i>how can we better enforce / do we need additional powers?</i> - <i>Plan / projected timescales / measuring success</i>) • Brexit Update (Information Only) • Work Programme
23 October 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction Services Update - Repairs and Maintenance Improvement Plan Progress Update • Damp & Mould Compliance • Locality Working (<i>focus on progress and any impacts</i>) • Work Programme
4 December 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Management and Improvement Framework – Six Month Update – 2023-24 • Housing Complaint Update • Housing and Compliance Performance Monitoring Q2 • Council Voids (<i>deep dive into whole end to end process</i>) • Work Programme
29 January 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Safety priorities update/progress • Update on Allotments • Street lighting in relation to Community Safety • Building Safety Compliance and Assurance in Council Homes • Update on new approach to anti-social behaviour • Work Programme
11 March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Flood and Water Management Act 2010: Annual Progress Report • Housing Development Programme Update (<i>focus on;</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Progress reporting / breakdown of tenure</i> - <i>Risks issues and challenges to deliver</i> - <i>Gateshead’s vision re fall in local population / housing development to facilitate more sustainable living / redevelopment of brown field sites</i>) • Affordable Housing (<i>to include;</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Profile of existing stock</i> - <i>Housing in pipeline / proposed housing</i> - <i>Organogram showing affordability based on income</i> • Tenant Satisfaction Survey Results 2023 • Economic Development/Physical Development and Regeneration • Work Programme

13 May 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing and Compliance Performance Monitoring Q4 (<i>to include;</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>Operational Performance</i> b) <i>Compliance Performance</i> c) <i>Regulatory Self – Assessment</i>) • Housing Complaint Update • Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (<i>to include;</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Fleet, community EV provision and infrastructure</i> - <i>School catering (plant based alternatives to meat / cheese</i> - <i>Impact of domestic fires / log burning</i> - <i>Local transport networks and encouraging connectivity without car dependency</i> - <i>Public transport and connectivity</i> • Work Programme
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Issues to slot in:

- **Street Scene Investment Impacts**
- **Housing Regulatory Standards (Self-Assessment)**

Issues for 2024/25 Work Programme

- ***Housing Allocations – May / June 2024***
- **Update on Environmental Enforcement – Sept 2024**