



COUNCIL MEETING

20 July 2017

GATESHEAD COUNCIL

REPORT FROM THE CABINET

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This is the report from the Cabinet. Its purpose is to report on issues for the period June to July 2017.

PROGRESS ON KEY ISSUES

2. PEOPLE

Children and Young People

Joint local area SEND inspection

In February 2017, a team of inspectors from Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission undertook a joint inspection of the local area of Gateshead to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the disability and special educational needs reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014.

The main findings included recognition and evidence of:

- senior leaders having a strong commitment to implementing the reforms and ensuring that children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities are safe and achieve the best outcomes;
- close working partnerships between health, social care and education services which are developing into a well-integrated multi-agency approach to meet the needs of the children and young people;
- multi-agency work is well developed and effective for babies and children aged 0-4 years old, for children and young people with complex needs and disabilities, and for children in the care of the local authority;
- services being jointly commissioned at the outset of the reforms;
- the information, advice and support provided by Parents in Power and Barnardo's are a valuable resource for those seeking additional help and guidance;
- parents and carers are positive about the work taking place to support their children while at school and at times of transition from nursery to primary and on to secondary school and college;
- the local offer being clear, easy to follow and signposts families to other sources of help and information.

Key areas for development as a result of the inspection team's findings include:

- implementing a stronger focus on early help so that children and young people receive the support they need at the earliest point possible to prevent them from needing more specialist help e.g. support with mental health and emotional and behavioural issues;
- working with health services to improve assessment, referral and pathway processes to ensure that children and young people receive the kind of support they need as quickly as possible;

- rolling out more independent travel training for young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to help develop their independence and life chances.

Gateshead and South Tyneside Music Education Hub

The Council holds a contract with Arts Council England (ACE) for the delivery of a Music Education Hub. The Hub aims to work in partnership with all schools (around 150 in total - maintained and academies), and other key partners to provide young people with access to high quality music experiences in and out of school. These experiences include singing, playing a musical instrument, performing together and high quality, large scale events. A key feature of the provision is the delivery of a minimum of a term of whole class instrumental tuition to every young person in Gateshead and South Tyneside.

Over the last five years there has been a 60% reduction in the Department for Education (DfE) grant for music, as well as reduced council funding which led to the restructuring of the services. Despite this, the Schools' Music Services in each borough continue to trade successfully with schools. In the last year (2015-16) the total income recovered through trading (£475k) nearly equalled the level of the grant (£476k). ACE now considers the Hub to be a "low risk" organisation which is resilient, well managed and capable of self-improvement.

Musical instruments are provided as part of the service and participation in all borough-wide ensembles is free of charge. Our major asset is the quality of the teaching staff who are highly regarded, understand schools and are able to respond to their various music needs. We are also working very successfully with Sage Gateshead's Music Education arm to ensure that the local offer makes best use of their world class strengths in the delivery of community and inclusive music making.

DfE funding has been confirmed until 2020. Work will continue with our partners to increase resilience and focus effort upon helping more young people with social, economic and other barriers to participate in music.

Adult Social Care

Think Ahead

The Council's Adult Social Care Service has been selected as a partner by Think Ahead, who provides a Mental Health Social Work training programme, aimed at ambitious graduates, similar to the Frontline and Step Up programmes in Children's Services. Gateshead will be one of the few North East authorities to be taking part in the second cohort of the programme, which will see four graduates being placed with the Council, for an intensive Student Social Work Unit placement, alongside academic input. The Council will also receive funding to employ a Consultant Social Worker who will lead the Student Social Work Unit, and we have successfully appointed one of our team into this post. At the end of the first year, the students are all guaranteed a minimum one year contract, however it is hoped that they will have very successful placements with the Council and seek to develop their longer term social work future in Gateshead.

Top 20 Care Homes in North East England 2017

Both Southernwood and Shadon House have been included in the Top 20 Care Home Groups Awards 2017 for the North East region. The awards are based on a review

score which includes the number of positive ratings given by recipients of the service, and their friends and relatives. The Care Home website operates in a 'trip advisor' style in which people can rate care home elements on their quality of care, level to which dignity was given, staff, management, facilities, cleanliness, and rooms on a scale from 'Very Poor', 'Poor', 'Satisfactory', 'Good' through to 'Excellent' levels.

Each Care Home in England is given a quality rating out of 10. From a total of 59 reviews, both Southernwood and Shadon House have a current score of 9.8 out of 10, from 59 reviews. Shadon House and Southernwood are the only care home establishments in the whole of Gateshead and Newcastle who make the top 20 list. Eastwood Promoting Independence Centre narrowly missed out on making it a clean sweep of the PICs within the top 20 list with a 9.6 out of 10 rating.

National Learning Disability and Autism Awards

The Council has six individuals/services shortlisted as finalists in a number of categories of the National Learning Disability and Autism Awards:

- New Vision enterprise for the 'Breaking Down Barriers' award
- Both Angling 4 All and Special Olympics Gateshead Tyne & Wear for the 'Sporting Chance' award
- Julie Todd (GATES) for the 'Support Worker' award
- Sarah Turner (Marquisway) for the 'Making a difference' award
- Marquisway Wheelchair Dance group for the 'People's' award

Winners of each category will be announced at the awards gala night in Birmingham on 21 July 2017.

Employment success

GATES employment service has secured paid employment for eight people with disabilities since April 2017. The positions that have been gained range from an Administrative Assistant role of two hours per week through to a 30 hours per week Assistant Caretaker role. Posts have been secured in a wide array of employers including the NHS, Primark and Wetherspoons.

National Games Selection

38 Special Olympics Gateshead Tyne & Wear athletes have been selected to represent the Northern region at the Special Olympics Great Britain National Games in Sheffield from 7 - 12 August 2017. Gateshead Tyne & Wear athletes will represent the region in the 8 sports of Aquatics, Athletics, Boccia, Cycling, Football, Judo, Powerlifting and Ten Pin Bowling.

In addition, David Martin, one of the Special Olympics Gateshead Tyne & Wear powerlifters has been chosen to represent the Special Olympics GB team at the Commonwealth Powerlifting Championships, which is being held in South Africa in September 2017.

Special Olympics Gateshead Tyne & Wear have a fundraising page for those wishing to support their endeavours <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/charity-web/charity/finalCharityHomepage.action?charityId=1012186>

3. PLACE AND ECONOMY

Housing

TGHC Annual Activity Report 2016/17

A report was presented to portfolio to provide an update on the annual activity of the housing company for the year to 31 March 2017.

There were two areas of focus as follows:

- The continual loss of family homes due to right to buy (149 homes were sold through the right to buy in 2016/17 – nearly 600 of the past 4 years)
- The significant change in customer behaviour around paying their rent. There are now over 40% of customers who pay their rent online or by direct debit.
- The housing company continue to work with their customers to support and encourage them to pay their rent electronically, where appropriate.

4. COMMUNITIES

Communities and Volunteering

Volunteers Month 2017

Throughout June 2017 Gateshead Council hosted the 5th Gateshead Volunteers month. This year each week of June had a different focus these included:

- Week 1 – Older People. This involved a full programme of events across all of Gateshead's sheltered Accommodation Schemes.
- Week 2 – Young People. This involved volunteer roles and projects supporting young people and volunteer opportunities for young people.
- Week 3 – corporate Volunteer and the Great Get Together. This involved corporate volunteer projects as well as events under the Great Get Together initiative.
- Week 4 – Environmental Volunteering. This involved community litter picks and general environmental volunteer roles

Events and activities were not limited to the focus of the week, however the promotional activity of volunteering focussed on each of topics.

In a positive move this year the Volunteers Month grant returned, however this was managed by the Community Foundation. A total of 45 applications were made to the fund with a total recommended amount of funding at £9,279.

Activities and events took place across the borough throughout the month. A total of 55 registered events were promoted on the Council's Volunteers month online programme which were open to all members of the public. There were a large number of closed events as well giving thanks to current volunteers and promoting new volunteer opportunities.

Volunteers month also seen the return of the volunteers totalizer with 106,109 estimated hours of volunteering recorded for the whole month. This is the highest amount of recorded volunteer hours since 2012 when volunteers month began.

The 106,109 estimated hours equates to £1,379,417 economic value into Gateshead's Community.

Our Villages – Local Environment Group (Crawcrook and Greenside)

"Our Villages" Crawcrook and Greenside Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) has finally been successfully registered as a Charity with the Charity Commission.

Charitable registration will now recognise and enhance Our Villages excellent work to improve the local environment.

Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour Update

Since 2014, the level of recorded crime reported in the Borough has increased steadily. In the first two-months of 2017/18, recorded crime increased by 21% (+586 crimes). This is in line with levels of crime reported across Northumbria, while increases have also been noted across England and Wales, particularly within Gateshead's Most Similar Family Group of Community Safety Partnerships.

Improved compliance with the National Crime Recording Standards (NCRS) has leading to a greater proportion of reported crimes being recorded by the Police and has contributed to the 21% increase reported in Gateshead. Increases have been experienced across most major crime categories: violent crime (+19%; 167 crimes), burglary (+39%; 58 crimes), vehicle crime (36%; 48 crimes) and shoplifting (+56%, 155 crimes). Reports of anti-social behaviour fell by 13% (-177 incidents) with youth-related ASB reducing by 17% (-54 incidents) when compared to the same period last year.

Multi Agency Operation Axel: Old Fold

Community Safety and Enforcement Teams coordinated a multi-agency disruption operation in the Old Fold estate on 22 May 2017 to combat a number of concerns linked to: unsafe/un-roadworthy vehicles, illegal businesses, illegal waste operations, fly tipping, arson attacks, violence and community tensions.

Over 30 staff from Gateshead Council, Northumbria Police, The Gateshead Housing Company, Her Majesties Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the Driver Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) took part in the early morning operation – which resulted in vehicles being checked for road worthiness, red diesel, tax, MOT and insurance compliance; while properties were also checked for tenancy compliance and garages and outbuildings were searched for illegal activity.

The operation successfully caused a large amount of targeted disruption on the estate and was welcomed by residents and partner agencies.

Culture, Sport and Leisure

Water Safety Week

During week commencing 3 July, Go Gateshead Sport and Leisure delivered water safety activities to over 2500 children, who attend swimming lessons across the Council's five swimming pools. The activity, delivered just prior to the children breaking for their summer holidays, is aimed at improving children's knowledge and understanding of the dangers of open water, in which over 400 people each year die from drowning. All children who attended the water safety week activities received a certificate.

Central Library – Heritage Lottery Fund Award

The Council's first round application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for funding to improve access to our Local Studies collection has been successful. Housed at Gateshead Central Library, this collection comprises over 40,000 items including unique and rare newspapers, maps, books, photographs and pamphlets. A development phase will now begin to work up the project in more detail and to secure delivery phase funding. The total grant requested is for £561,200 and will deliver a 3 year project which includes three key strands:

- A programme of capital works to create a much improved, larger public facility within the Reference section of the Central Library;
- A programme of digitisation and conservation of the local studies collections – this will greatly improve access;
- An outreach element, promoting access to and use of the collection with communities across Gateshead.

Filming at Dunston Leisure Centre

On 18 July the BBC filmed the show 'Dumping Ground' in reception and the large pool at Dunston Leisure Centre.

The Dumping Ground is a BAFTA Award Winning British children's drama series that focuses on the lives and experiences of young people and their care workers in care filmed around Tyne and Wear.

The film crew have confirmed footage will be for a 5 – 10 minute segment of one of the episodes.

5. CONCLUSION

The Council is asked to note this report.