



COUNCIL MEETING

23 November 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 September to November 2017.

PROGRESS ON KEY ISSUES

2. PEOPLE

Children and Young People

Child Protection Information Sharing (CP-IS)

The Council has now gone live with this new joined up approach to improving outcomes for vulnerable children.

The Child Protection-Information Sharing project is connecting IT systems together so that local authorities and the NHS can share child protection information securely.

It means that when a child who is Looked After or on a Child Protection Plan attends an unscheduled care setting, like an emergency department or minor injury unit:

- the health team is alerted that they are on a plan and has access to the contact details for the social care team;
- the social care team is automatically notified that the child has attended, and
- both parties can see details of the child's previous 25 visits to unscheduled care settings in England.

CP-IS is currently being rolled out to local authorities and healthcare organisations across England and is endorsed by the Care Quality Commission.

Gateshead's implementation process was ratified by NHS Digital and went live in September 2017. Automated notifications come into the Council's CareFirst system via accident and emergency departments, walk-in centres and maternity departments.

Independent Travel Training

The Council now employs a full time Travel Trainer who works four days per week with children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and one day per week in Adult Social Care, supporting adults with disabilities to travel to their place of work or volunteering.

In academic year 2016/7 16 young people achieved independent travel and no longer required home to school or college transport. Since January 2017, the focus of ITT has been much more focused (in conjunction with assessment from school), with the aim of targeting and reducing taxi contracts. This has been done by successfully training

students and amalgamating transport contracts. It has also reduced the overspend on the Home to school and college transport budget.

In January 2017, Children North East were procured to also deliver their 'Bus Buddy Scheme' in Gateshead which they established in Northumberland. To date they have successfully travel trained 9 young people. As they had experience of travel training young people over large distances their first cohort was a group of Cedars students living in the west of the borough, all of whom required 2-3 buses. They had 100% success rate (7/7) and are making progress on their second and third cohort. They have assessed one person as being unsuitable, we recognise that due to their level of anxiety some people are not always ready for independent travel.

A group of young people participated in a DVD 'Journey to Independence' to tell their story to others. Their journeys show that independent travel has led to friendships, employment and even independent living. This has been used as a part of a training session to parents, Learning Support Assistants in schools and colleges and Gateshead Council's Youth Service to encourage everyone working with young people to support the use of safe public transport.

There has been a positive reaction overall to the training:

"Children North East were brilliant, he thoroughly enjoyed it. Due to his autism he is great with numbers and times and loves looking at bus timetables. He is more confident in travel and has managed to get 3 buses".

"He once walked to Gateshead with a school friend and I was beside myself. He has now done the journey to school on his own and went to a friend's house on the bus. He met a girl from school in Gateshead at the weekend. He now has a mobile phone and it's given him loads of confidence."

"Travel training is good, it finally gets me out the house. It helped me a lot. I can now go and meet up with my friends in my own time. I am going to arrange to go to the cinema."

Digital Me

Digital Me is a partnership project between the Council and Digital Voice for Communities, a Gateshead based community interest company.

The ragdoll foundation (creators of Rosie and Jim and the Teletubbies) granted approximately £21,000 to carry out this project, with an additional £4,000 in funding from the Council.

The project was completed over the summer holidays and twenty four looked after children took part. The participants were aged between 6-14 years old.

The children created timelines of their lives, took part in a photography workshop, completed a creative writing session, drew avatars which would tell their stories, wrote scripts and recorded their stories and ultimately created digital storybooks which include messages to professionals and other children.

As well as five one day workshops, the children also spent a full week at Sage Gateshead writing and recording songs that share their messages.

The project was about sharing messages from the children about their experiences. The final pieces as well as the photography created will be displayed as part of the Freedom City, our time exhibition at St Mary's Heritage Centre in October.

The work will also be used in the training of new foster carers.

A screening is being organised and elements of the project were shared at the Looked After Children celebration event on 9 November.

National Adoption Week – 16- 22 October 2017

Every year a national campaign is ran to both raise the profile of adoption and recruit prospective adoptive families. The campaign is led by First4Adoption, the national information service for people interested in adopting a child in England, and this year's campaign focussed on raising awareness of the need to find adoptive families for brothers and sisters to stay together. There are over 2000 children waiting to be adopted in England and 61% of these children having brothers and sisters who need to find their forever family. Furthermore, in the North East of England, that figure rises to 68%.

New research, by Adoption Match and based on data from the Adoption Register for England also reveals that:

- 53% of sibling groups awaiting adoption in the North East are children aged under 4
- 53% of these groups awaiting adoption are made up of boys
- 11% of these sibling groups awaiting adoption are Black and Minority Ethnic children.

Gateshead Council Adoption Service recruits adopters all year round to meet the needs of the service. We always fully support the national campaign in order to further raise our profile locally and increase the impact of the national message.

This year our campaign activities included:

- display banners on civic centre perimeter fencing,
- information published in Council Info/Intranet/website,
- information on homepage of "Our Gateshead Website",
- a week long promotional stand in Gateshead Civic Centre Atrium,
- promotional advert on plasma screen in Gateshead Civic Centre,
- information included in "Gateshead Now" direct email, and
- a social media campaign.

The Adoption Service does not typically experience an immediate increase in enquiries following National Adoption Week, as prospective adopters often spend time reflecting and researching adoption prior to seeking further information. That said, all promotional activities are beneficial as they raise awareness of the need for adopters and promote how to get in touch with the service when the time is right.

The Adoption Service will continue its recruitment activities in order to increase the number of adoptive families available.

Adult Social Care

Assurance visit to Eastwood Promoting Independence Centre

Eastwood Promoting Independence Centre has received a joint commissioner led assurance visit as part of Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group's (CCG) annual rolling programme of commissioner visits to provider sites. This programme is one element of the CCG's approach to obtaining assurances in relation to the delivery of safe, high quality services.

The commissioner led assurance visits provide the CCG with the opportunity to meet with staff and service users to gain their views and also to obtain first hand evidence of care delivery. Such visits focus upon core themes of user experience, general cleanliness and infection control, staffing/workforce, training, development and support, reporting concerns, service user safety and governance and facilities and environment.

Eastwood's multi-disciplinary social and health care team received very positive feedback from the Commissioners with their report stating "the visit was positive and staff demonstrated commitment and passion in delivering a bespoke service for intermediate care patients". The team were impressed with what they observed during the visit, especially "the strong and passionate commitment to work together in order to provide the best care possible".

Delayed Transfers of Care

The latest published data relating to delayed transfers of care (DTOCs) shows that Gateshead is performing well in relation to the average number of delays per day per 100,000 population at 6.89. This is lower than the national target of 8.2.

	Average delays per day per 100,000 September 2016	Average delays per day per 100,000 September 2017
Social care	7.59	1.30
NHS	5.88	5.59
Overall total	13.47	6.89

The figures are based on social care and the NHS, with 3 Trusts informing the Gateshead picture: Gateshead Foundation Trust, Newcastle Foundation Trust and Northumberland Tyne and Wear Foundation Trust.

For the same period last year, Gateshead position was averaging 13.47. Since then, there has been a steady improvement in the numbers.

The DTOC data is published nationally two months behind.

3. PLACE AND ECONOMY

Environment and Transport

SIGOMA

The Council has joined other northern authorities in writing to the transport minister urging him to ensure equitable investment in northern transport infrastructure through transport for the North.

Stella Riverside

Following damage by a resident to the wildlife buffer between the development and the River Tyne, a number of community outreach activities have been carried out by the Council. The aim of the activities was to deliver key messages about the importance of the wildlife buffer and included wildlife walks and children's events involving bird watching and bug hunts. It also supported the cohesion of a new community by bringing residents together. It is hoped that similar activities will take place in the future.

Local Plan

The Council has now published part 3 of its Local Plan - Making Spaces for Growing Places (MSGP) – for a 6 week consultation period. This is a draft Plan setting out detailed policies, site allocations and designations across a number of themes:

- Economic Prosperity,
- Homes,
- Transport & Accessibility,
- People & Place, and
- Minerals & Waste.

The proposals in MSGP will ensure that the Council delivers housing and jobs growth as proposed and accepted in the Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan (2015). The Council has published an up to date evidence base to underpin the plans proposals (including a housing land availability assessment, and employment land review) and an interactive version of the Policies Map is available on the “Have Your Say on Planning Policy” page of the Councils website. The Plan will be re-consulted next year prior to being submitted for examination

Rapid Chargers

NECA has been successful in securing ERDF funds to implement a network of approximately six rapid charging locations across the region. Gateshead has secured two locations - one at Prince Consort Road/Gateshead Leisure Centre car parks and the other at Intu Metrocentre. Each location will have two rapid chargers able to charge up to four vehicles at a time. Cars can charge in about 20-30 minutes at a rapid charger. The Council is working with NECA on the arrangements for the Prince Consort Road/Gateshead Leisure Centre location.

Pool Car Update

The Council has 23 pool cars supplied by Co-wheels to facilitate local staff trips and provide a sustainable alternative to personal car use. Two are based at Shearlegs Road, the rest (including three electric cars) at the Civic Centre (the Civic Centre cars can be used by members of the public out of office hours).

In addition, seven Co-wheels cars are provided as a car club for members of the public. They provide an alternative to buying a car and help us to manage congestion. Over

the summer four cars that are either electric or hybrid were introduced; two at the Gateshead Leisure Centre car park and two at Cross Keys Lane car park. These cars were funded by an Air Quality Grant from DEFRA and are intended to support the Council's aim to reduce NO2 pollution in and around the town centre.

Economy

Gateshead Energy Company

The Gateshead District Energy Scheme is nearing completion. The heat network was completed and handed over by the contractor in October, following completion of works to move a water main on Gateshead High Street to accommodate the final section of heating pipe.

The Council is now flushing and commissioning the network, ready to start supplying heat to customers prior to Christmas. Future capacity on the network is to be reserved for Trinity Square, Gateshead Quays and other new development on and around Baltic Business Quarter, and commercial discussions are ongoing in these areas.

Emerging Technology Sector

Gateshead has a long-standing reputation as a hub for digital and technological industries and is experiencing significant growth in the immersive technology sector (augmented reality, virtual reality and mixed reality); home to Europe's only industry led cluster of companies in this field.

Virtual Reality (VR) is on the brink of becoming mainstream with technology companies like Oculus VR Sony, Google and Samsung all bringing hardware to the consumer market in 2016 and working with developers on cutting edge content. These technologies have the potential to significantly disrupt traditional industries, creating new products/services and helping to digitise the wider economy.

The Council worked closely with organisers Secret Sauce to bring the VRTGO Conference to Gateshead on 1-2 November. VRTGO is one of Europe's leading specialist VR and AR events with an international audience of over 300 VR decision makers, developers and innovation managers.

Earlier this year the Council also secured ERDF Funding and Local Growth Funding to develop PROTO: The Emerging Technology Centre project on Baltic Business Quarter to support the emerging technologies sector, and development of new product/services. The Centre is currently under development and will open mid-2018.

PROTO has already be selected to host one of Digital Catapult's four Immersive Labs, the only one North of London, that will provide businesses with access to state of the art equipment that would not otherwise be available to them. The Lab is temporarily housed at Northern Design Centre and was launched by Digital Catapult on 1 November 2017.

4. COMMUNITIES

Communities and Volunteering

Agreement with Newcastle CVS

In April 2016, the Council agreed to enter into an Agreement with Newcastle Council for Voluntary Service (NCVS) for the provision of support, development, networking and representation to the voluntary and community sector in Gateshead. The Agreement with NCVS was extended, as provided for with the Agreement's terms, until 31 March 2018 at this October's meeting of Cabinet whilst the Council explored the possibility of a joint procurement approach with Newcastle City Council, with Gateshead Council acting as lead partner.

Work with Newcastle City Council is now at an advanced stage and the procurement process will commence imminently. Work is continuing to develop the OurGateshead website; the site is Gateshead's Community Web site and includes lots of information about what's going on in wards with news, events and regular activities posted by over 1000 groups and organisations working in Gateshead. To find out more or to give it a try go to www.ourgateshead.org

Culture, Sport and Leisure

Library Service Update – Children and Young People Activities

Work with children and young people remains a key priority for the Library Service. A series of recent activities with this target group of service users include Bookstart, Bookstart Week, Summer Reading Challenge, Summer Activities Programme, Hello Baby Pre-natal Project, Professional Library Services to Schools, Artsmark, Read North East, Reading Hack, Time to Read, Baltic Artists and Fill the Holiday Gap.

Rural Gateshead Marketing Campaign

Since the beginning of the year work has been undertaken in conjunction with NGI to plan and delivery a marketing campaign for the rural area to tie in with the busy summer period. The target audience was identified as day visitors from the local area and the region, with the intention to raise the profile of key rural assets and businesses. It was recognised that Gateshead's rural tourism offer is less defined and developed than the existing NewcastleGateshead urban offer. This distinct marketing approach would ensure that there was no dilution of the strong and successful NewcastleGateshead brand at a national and international level.

Bonfire Night Organised Displays 2017

As in previous years, various services within the Council worked with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service, The Gateshead Housing Company and Northumbria Police in the run up to Bonfire Night with the aim of prevention, detection and removal of illegal bonfires throughout Gateshead, and therefore reduce deliberate anti-social fires.

Further partnership working was predominantly through the Safety Advisory Group Process. The key aim was to co-ordinate an informed partnership approach for the safe and high quality delivery of Bonfire activities in Gateshead. To complement the work that was undertaken by partner agencies in the prevention of anti-social behaviour and illegal bonfires, the Fire Service encouraged people to attend organised displays on 5 November. This year the displays took place at Saltwell Park, Blaydon Rugby Club, Rutherford FC, Barmoor Hub and Gateshead Rugby Club.

Enchanted Parks

The annual evening event, now in its 12th year returns to Saltwell Park this from 5-10 December. The after-dark arts 'light trail' remains a flagship event for the region's cultural calendar and continues to be delivered in partnership with NewcastleGateshead Initiative

5. CONCLUSION

The Council is asked to note this report.