



COUNCIL MEETING

22 March 2018

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 January to March 2018.

PROGRESS ON KEY ISSUES

2. DEPUTY LEADER

Trading

Lead Association for Catering in Education (LACA) Awards

These awards are open to all education catering organisations in both the private and public sector, and aim to acknowledge individuals and teams of people who continue to make a real difference in education catering.

The Council's School Catering Service was shortlisted for six awards in the LACA Annual North East & Scotland awards, which were held on Friday 2 March at Ramside Hall.

- Catering management team of the year (*runners up – highly commended*)
- Catering operation award for innovation
- Employee of the year, golden rolling pin – Alison Hopper, Fellside Primary
- Secondary school catering team of the year – Sedgefield Community College
- Primary school catering team of the year – Gibside School (*runners up – highly commended*)
- School catering employee (unit based) outstanding achievement award – Sarah Sinclair, Mobile Unit Manager

3. PEOPLE

Children and Young People

Digital Me

At the regional 2018 Awards for the Royal Television Society a Technology Innovation Award was presented to Digital Voice for Communities for a project commissioned by the Council's Children's Rights Service.

The award was given because of its pioneering and creative techniques to "give a digital voice" to people who need to retain anonymity.

More than 400 people from the media industry saw the trophy presented by Sky Television's Pete Graves to Julie Nicholson, DV Director, along with project developers Ronnie Johnston and Robin Cowings.

The judges said: Digital Me is "A lovely, humanising project and the clear winner of the category." "An ingenious and affecting method of motivating children with tough stories to raise awareness of their experiences and get policymakers inside..." "An excellent use of technology — anonymity of users to produce creative interaction/engagement."

Adult Social Care

Special Olympics – World Championships

Three of our Special Olympics Gateshead Tyne and Wear athletes, who use the Council's in-house Adult Social Care Provider Services, have been selected to represent Great Britain in the Special Olympics World Championships in Abu Dhabi, in March 2019. Sandra Armstrong (Phoenix Community Base) will compete in swimming and David Martin and Mark Proctor (both Shared Lives support) will compete in powerlifting.

The Special Olympics World Summer Games are held once every 4 years and the Abu Dhabi games will be the first time that the week-long games are to be held in the Middle East. Over 7,000 athletes from over 170 countries will take part. Sandra, David and Martin's swimming and powerlifting competitions will take place at the Zayed Sports City Stadium, the largest sports venue in the Gulf. The event will be a life changing experience for these athletes as they represent Gateshead and their country, going up against the very best Special Olympics athletes in the world.

Achieving Change Together (ACT) Team

The Council is part of the North East and Cumbria Transforming Care Partnership, one of six fast track areas in England to support change in learning disability and/or autism services. NHS England has committed to a programme which will see the closure of all inappropriate inpatient provision and to build support in communities to enable people to lead active lives within those communities and to live in their own homes. Support in the community will need to reflect the diversity of people who have a learning disability and /or autism, some of whom display behaviour that challenges.

Building the Right Support (BRS) outlines a national plan spanning 3 years to facilitate the closure of inpatient beds and the development of a community model. This will require a change of culture and practice, upskilling of the workforce and changes to the infrastructure, data collection/sharing and performance management of all organisations involved. There are nine principles that underpin the National Service Model of BRS:

- i. People have a good and meaningful life;
- ii. Care and support is person centred, planned, proactive and coordinated;
- iii. People have choice and control about their care and support;
- iv. People are supported to live in the community with the support they need;
- v. People have choice about where they live and who they live with;
- vi. People get good care and support from mainstream NHS services;
- vii. People can access specialist support when they need it;
- viii. People get support to stay out of trouble; and
- ix. Where needs cannot be met in the community, people can access high quality hospital services, staying no longer than they need to

Funded through the Better Care Fund, the ACT team is made up of existing council employees from across social care assessment, in house provider and commissioning services, with the overall objective being to promote independence and reduce dependency on long term statutory services. The first phase of their work is to review high cost packages and work with other council services to provide a unified approach to achieving better outcomes for Gateshead residents.

4. PLACE AND ECONOMY

Environment and Transport

Young People's Travel

Research has been undertaken nationally into a trend of decreasing travel among young adults under 30. Since the millennium the number of trips undertaken by people in this age band has fallen by 28% for men and 24% for women. Most of this decline has been in car use, with levels of public transport use and cycling remaining almost static.

The research identifies a number of factors underlying this trend, including higher levels of participation in education, lower disposable income and less job security, as well as an increasing tendency to live in urban areas. While some of these trends may eventually change, the conclusion is that car use among the young is unlikely to return to former levels.

These changing patterns are something that will need to be taken into account when considering policy and identifying the best way to meet future travel needs within Gateshead.

Clean Bus Technology

As previously reported, the Council submitted a bid for just over £1.5 million from the Government's Clean Bus Technology Fund in November 2017. In February, it was announced that the bid has been successful in full. The project will involve the fitting of improved exhaust technology to 79 vehicles operating 9 routes in Gateshead.

This technology will reduce the exhaust emissions of older buses down to the levels of the newest diesel buses (Euro VI). This will help to improve air quality across the Borough, but with a particular focus on the Nitrogen Dioxide exceedances identified by DEFRA.

Economy

Super-fast Broadband and Wi-Fi

Superfast broadband is currently available to over 96% of premises Gateshead. This has increased from 68% in 2011 through a combination of Government and Council investment, together with the providers' commercial upgrade plans.

More work is planned over the next 18 months to extend this coverage even further. The main areas for investment so far have been in the west of the Borough and Kibblesworth. The coverage in Gateshead is above the UK average. Free Wi-Fi is now available in public areas of most Council buildings including Libraries, Leisure Centres and Bewicks. Free Wi-Fi is also available in the town centre and on Gateshead Quays. Both the in-building and on-street Wi-Fi service is being well used

Employee Event – Salary Deduction Saving via Credit Union

The Credit Union employee membership event was aimed at increasing the number of Council employees saving via salary deduction and thus helping to increase the financial wellbeing of the workforce.

The event resulted in 14 new Credit Union members and 2 current savers increasing their savings amounts.

As a result of the event 260 employees are saving £241,484 per year at an average of £928 per employee with NEFirst Credit Union via salary deduction. This is approximately 5.7% of all non-school employees.

Fairtrade Town Status

The Gateshead Fairtrade Partnership has been successful in retaining Fairtrade Town Status for another two years.

Despite limited resources, the Partnership has refocused its efforts to encourage more young people via schools to get involved in raising awareness of the financial struggles farmers and workers who grow Fairtrade products have in developing countries.

The Borough has been a Fairtrade Town since February 2007. The partnership is chaired by Cllr Mary Foy and has representatives from primary and secondary schools, Gateshead College, Traidcraft and Gateshead Youth Assembly.

Briefing on the Plevin Case and a New Direction to the Financial Ombudsman

A recent Supreme Court decision means that people who have had cases rejected for mis-selling of Payment Protection Insurance (PPI) are now likely to have a valid claim.

The Financial Ombudsman did not take into account grounds for mis-selling that related to the issue of undisclosed commission, and the court found that this was wrong.

All such cases will now be reconsidered, and a large amount of people will receive letters from the Financial Ombudsman advising they will be entitled to redress. People who have never made a claim for mis-selling now have an additional valid ground for complaint.

It seems likely that around 1.2 million people will benefit from the court ruling.

5. COMMUNITIES

Communities and Volunteering

Chase Park Heritage Lottery Fund Project

The partnership between the Council and the Friends of Chase Park has completed the construction phase of the improvements to Chase Park. The project is now entering the activity plan phase of delivery. Funding was provided in the original Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) award to create a three year activity programme and to employ a community worker. In January the partnership successfully recruited Clare Ross to deliver the activity plan which will introduce a range of activities agreed by HLF as part

of original bid. Clare will be managed by the Waste Services and Grounds Maintenance Service working 18 ½ hours per week in the park.

Diverse activities are planned to engage local people including an oral history project and a time capsule, the creation of a demonstration video involving skate boarders, environmental projects and delivery of a wide range of themed events. Volunteers will assist Clare in the delivery of the plan. This is important as each volunteer hour contributes to the £25,000 target for match funding under the agreement with HLF. So far volunteer interest has been received from local schools, the Prince's Trust and the National Volunteers Service, as well as local people who have attended the first open volunteering session. As this plan rolls out further updates will be provided.

Culture, Sport and Leisure

Angel20

The Angel of the North is one of the most successful pieces of public art in Britain, viewed by millions and an iconic image representing Gateshead and the wider North East of England. Angel20 is a programme of art, library, heritage and media activities marking the 20th anniversary of the artwork which launched on the Angel's birthday on 15 February and will run for a year until February 2019. Angel20 will ensure Gateshead residents, schools and visitors to the borough have an opportunity to engage and celebrate the Angel of the North.

Angel20 includes exhibitions, workshops and events alongside a social media campaign using #Angel20 to encourage public engagement in sharing memories, photographs, and stories on their life with the Angel over the last 20 years. Media coverage for the 20th birthday was extensive with regional and national press and TV. #Angelofthenorth was trending on twitter throughout the day on 15 February and Ant and Dec retweeted a Chronicle post with #Angel20. To maximise impact, profile and resource, Angel20 is connecting with regional and national partners including Historic England, Go North East, Great Exhibition of the North, Media19, Late Shows, Thought Foundation and 64Million Artists.

Land of Oak & Iron and Tourism in the West of the Borough

There are a number of site specific schemes and project wide schemes that are beneficial to Gateshead as part of the Land of Oak & Iron initiative. The Heritage Centre at Winlaton Mill is under construction and is expected to open in June this year. Access improvements totalling more than £100,000 are being delivered and local groups have secured £27,000 from the Land of Oak & Iron grants scheme. A marketing campaign ran in 2017 titled, 'Gateshead's Great Outdoors' resulted in more than 1 million engagements with range of communication tools used from a leaflet highlighting key attractions to competitions on Heart FM. The combination of these activities on the back of the Rural Economic Strategy seeks to raise the profile of the west borough as a destination for day trips and tourists.

HELP - Healthy Emotional Lives Programme

This programme will employ a professional youth mental health worker alongside an artist in residence for four terms to explore how arts based interventions designed for each school and for the transition phase between the primary and secondary schools, can reduce anxiety and stress, build resilience and confidence in the young people leading to the general improvement of their mental health.

The funding has been raised through the commitment of the schools participating matched pound for pound by the Culture Bridge NE Partnership Investment Challenge £88,000 in total. However as the programme progresses related activities in Gateshead will add value to the investment. The programme will build lasting relationships between the regions cultural providers and the participating schools. It will show how the arts and culture can support improved mental health and share training in mental health first aid and creative project planning. The shared learning and experience of the schools and arts based organisations participating in the programme will create a legacy of data and offer direction to further planning.

The whole programme will be evaluated using research based evaluation techniques and full reporting will take place at the end of the programme. Call for artist proposals and recruitment to the Mental Health Post began in late February 2018 to appoint by the Easter Holidays. It is anticipated that the schools programme will commence in May 2018 and run until Autumn 2019.

6. CONCLUSION

The Council is asked to note this report.