

**TITLE OF REPORT:**           **Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives**

**REPORT OF:**               **Sheena Ramsey, Chief Executive**

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### **Purpose of the Report**

1. Cabinet is asked to endorse and recommend the Council to approve its new strategic approach Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives.

### **Background**

2. The Council is operating in an ever-changing policy landscape, both nationally and locally. The levels of uncertainty and the impact of government decisions are significant, for example, Universal Credit, homelessness, mental health, significantly reduced local government funding as well as the potential adverse economic impact of Brexit. The challenging local context of austerity and increasing demand on council services has compelled the Council to refocus on what matters most.
3. With two years left on the lifespan of the current Council Plan 2015-2020, the opportunity was taken to undertake a mid-term review to ensure the Council continues to get the best outcomes for local people and remains a viable and sustainable organisation into the future, despite the challenging policy and budgetary context.
4. A new strategic approach Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives was developed with the Council's purpose and beliefs in mind, along with what matters most to the people of Gateshead.
5. The new strategic approach is not intended to cover everything that the Council does in detail, but does provide a framework to demonstrate how the Council will work and make decisions in the future which will be policy and priority led.
6. Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives is aligned to the timeframe of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and is predicated on the following council pledges:
  - Put people and families at the heart of everything that we do
  - Tackle inequality so people have a fair chance
  - Support our communities to support themselves and each other
  - Invest in our economy to provide sustainable opportunities for employment, innovation and growth across the borough
  - Work together and fight for a better future for Gateshead

Cabinet agreed to consult on the new approach from 21 November to 21 February 2018.

7. The Director of Public Health also published the Annual Report –“It never rains but it pours” which focussed on inequality. The data and analysis contained within the report fully complements the new strategic approach.

## **Engagement**

8. A range of mechanisms were used to communicate and engage people over the last three months. Led by Cabinet members, various conversations, meetings and events were held across the borough with partners, community and voluntary organisations, businesses, residents, trade unions and employees. (See Appendix 2)
9. The overall response to Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives has been very positive with the vast majority of people supporting the new approach. Many found the strategic approach very easy to understand and could relate to the ambition of the Council as well as the rationale to drive forward this new agenda.
10. It was clear from conversations with partner organisations that they recognised the issues raised and they are keen to work with the Council to improve outcomes for local people and reduce inequality. This builds on the strong working relationships already in place and the appreciation that the key issues are shared issues and the vision is a shared vision.
11. The response from trade unions and employees was also extremely positive. A high level of commitment to do the right thing for the people of Gateshead was evident as was the recognition that the Council would need to change the way it works. Employees were positive about the common goal of making Gateshead a place where everyone thrives and it was felt that the approach gave clear direction for the future.
12. The consultation stimulated a number of ideas and suggestions from local people, partners, trade unions and employees on how Gateshead can work together to make it a place where people thrive. Ideas and suggestions have been forwarded to the relevant Service Director to explore and responses have been sent where possible.
13. Whilst the overall feedback was positive the consultation did highlight the need for a continued effort in clear communication. Many respondents were unaware of the full extent of the impact of austerity and the major inequality issues affecting some of the local people in Gateshead.

## **Next steps**

14. There are huge financial pressures on not just council resources, but those of partners, local businesses and residents. To deliver on the new strategic

approach over the next five years, the Council will need a radical rethink about how it works, how resources are spent, how the Council works with partners, organisations, businesses, trade unions, employees and the local people and communities of Gateshead.

15. To build on the momentum there are some key areas of transformation which will help the Council to develop and deliver against the new approach. These include:-
- ensuring tackling inequalities is a primary consideration of all our policies
  - taking a holistic approach, with our partners, to achieve better outcomes for local people especially vulnerable children and adults
  - taking a place shaping approach to attract investment, facilitate growth and foster pride among local people
  - improving the customer experience
  - generating income to help support a viable and sustainable Council.

Work has already commenced in a number of areas and the diagram in Appendix 3 aims to highlight the emerging themes where work can be co-ordinated and accelerated across the whole of the Council.

## **Proposal**

16. It is proposed to supersede the Council Plan 2015-2020 with the new strategic approach, Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives. (Appendix 4).
17. It is proposed to further develop the next steps, detailed in paragraph 15, and report back to Cabinet as appropriate.
18. It is proposed that the Council's corporate performance management framework is reviewed to ensure appropriate measures are in place to ensure delivery through service business plans and monitoring through Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

## **Recommendations**

19. Cabinet is asked to endorse Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives and recommend it to Council for approval.

For the following reason:

To ensure the Council is well placed to respond to the needs of the borough and achieve positive outcomes for the people of Gateshead.

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**CONTACT: Marisa Jobling extension: 2099**

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Policy Context**

1. The new strategic approach will set the major policy directions for the Council, redressing the imbalance of inequality, championing fairness and social justice.

### **Background**

2. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment demonstrates the levels of inequality Gateshead residents are experiencing. There are increasing numbers of people attending foodbanks, high numbers of looked after children, and poor health outcomes for men and women compared to other areas of the country. These examples are just a few of the factors that show there needs to be a different approach taken by the Council and others to overcome these difficulties.
3. In November 2016, the Local Government Association undertook an independent Peer Challenge of the Council, the recommendations of which have been used to inform the Council's thinking around future policy and direction.
4. With two years left on the lifespan of the current Council Plan 2015-2020, the opportunity was taken to undertake a mid-term review to ensure the Council continues to get the best outcomes for local people and remains a viable and sustainable organisation into the future, despite the challenging policy and budgetary context.
5. A new strategic approach Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives was developed with the Council's purpose and beliefs in mind, along with what matters most to the people of Gateshead.
6. The new strategic approach does not cover everything that the Council does in detail, but does provide a framework to demonstrate how the Council will work and make decisions in the future which will be policy and priority led.

### **Consultation and Engagement**

7. Cabinet agreed in November 2017 to a period of consultation and engagement on this new strategic approach. A range of mechanisms were used to communicate and engage people over the last three months. Led by Cabinet members, various conversations, meetings and events were held across the borough with partners, community and voluntary organisations, residents, trade unions and employees. (Appendix 2)
8. Several pledges have already been made by residents, organisations and council employees via the Council's website, stating what they think they can do to make Gateshead a place where everyone thrives. Pledges include wanting to manage and improve the health of the population of Gateshead; attracting funding to the region; being a good neighbour; giving up time to

support community engagement projects and support local initiatives; supporting creative businesses to thrive; encouraging people to grow their own food, flowers and plants; cutting down on food waste; and wanting to find solutions to the problems people are experiencing in their lives eg providing post 16 educational opportunities and IT support to enable people to get back into work.

9. People also identified what matters most to them, for example, keeping streets clean, providing support for people with health conditions to manage their own conditions; improvements to road structures; tackling social isolation; shopping locally; people being treated fairly and having access to the same opportunities; living in an environment where people care for each other and look after the less fortunate; eradicating poverty; having a safe, clean environment; eliminating anti-social behaviour and tackling littering.

### **Alternative Options**

10. Cabinet could decide not to agree the new strategic approach and to maintain the current Council Plan 2015-2020, however the review has highlighted there is uncertainty as to how outcomes were to be achieved.

### **Implications of Recommended Option**

11. **Resources:**
  - a) **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Corporate Resources confirms that there are no financial implications arising directly from the recommendations of this report. Costs incurred arising from implementing specific proposals would be accommodated from within existing budgets and be consistent with the financial position as identified in the MTFS.
  - b) **Human Resources Implications** – There are no HR implications arising from this report.
  - c) **Property Implications** - There are no property implications arising directly from this report.
12. **Risk Management Implication** - There is a significant risk in not having an updated strategic planning framework in place to agree priorities and make decisions.
13. **Equality and Diversity Implications** - The new strategic approach has been developed recognising there is a need to address inequality across the borough.
14. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – There are no implications arising directly from this consultation.

15. **Health Implications** – The new strategic approach has been developed recognising there is a need to improve the health and wellbeing of Gateshead residents.
16. **Sustainability Implications** - The new strategic approach has been developed recognising there is a need to address sustainability issues in the borough.
17. **Human Rights Implications** - There are no human rights implications arising directly from this report.
18. **Area and Ward Implications** - The new strategic approach will cover all wards in Gateshead.

**Background Information:**

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Economic Assessment,  
ACORN data (CACI),  
Residents' Survey 2016 & Consultations

### Engagement Activity

#### Councillors

- Information packs were made available for discussions with residents and partner organisations
- Council discussions
  - Advisory Group
  - Cabinet
  - Council
- Councillors have introduced the new approach at meetings within their wards
- Councillors have discussed the new approach at partner meetings and have publicised the new approach and consultation through, for example, face to face conversations and social media

#### Partnership engagement

- The Leader wrote to the Gateshead Strategic Partners introducing the new strategic approach, providing a copy of the consultation report, information leaflets and extending an invitation for partners to discuss the new approach
- There were several meetings held over the course of the consultation period: talked with over 400 partners and stakeholders through 30 events including scheduled meetings as well as organised events such as
  - Learning Disabilities Partnership,
  - Health and Wellbeing Board,
  - Gateshead Youth Assembly
  - Talking Heads
  - Gateshead Older Peoples Assembly
  - Head Teachers
  - Jewish Community Council of Gateshead
- The Council has also received written responses from some partners e.g. Newcastle Council for Voluntary Service

#### Trade Union discussions

- Unison
- GMB
- NASUWT

#### Council Facebook – information launching the consultation

- Reach 5,410

#### Video launching the consultation

- 1,700 views

#### Council Twitter

- 11,000 impressions
- 280 engagements

#### Gateshead Now – email

- Open rate 13,000
- Pledge clicks 629

#### Council website

- Total page views to date 2,615 of Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives
- The home page has 75% of all views, with the 'your pledges' next largest with 259 views.
- The peak time was the month after launch of the consultation: 1,744 views

#### Intranet site

- Page view to the 'home page' since live: 5,234
- Page views to the 'Make your pledge page' since live: 876
- Again peak time was during the first month although we did have a small spike on the 9 January.

#### Council News

- Article in the December issue – delivered to every household

#### Employee engagement

- Over 250 employees directly involved in senior managers session which were held with the Leader and Chief Executive, and a further eight Chief Executive drop in sessions
- Employee Forum - Chief Executive presentation
- Team Briefs
- Team Talks including video
- A Talk to Sheena email – a direct and confidential email address for employees to ask questions, share experiences and make suggestions for improvements

#### Leaflets

- Leaflets were made available in council leisure facilities and libraries, as well as the volunteer-run libraries.
- Leaflets were also available to councillors to pass on to their constituents.

#### Other channels used to encourage participation

- Posters
- Pop ups
- TV screens



## Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives

### Council pledges

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

### Emerging Council Themes

1. Tackling inequality –building on the existing work around Health and Financial inequality and ensuring tackling inequalities is a primary consideration of all our policies.
2. Place shaping – attracting investment, facilitating economic and housing growth and fostering pride among local people
3. Transformation – proactively working with partners through public service reform to achieve positive outcomes particularly for our vulnerable children and adults.
4. Customer experience – particularly looking at our frontline services and how we engage and work with local people.
5. Income generation – increasing revenue and taking a more commercial approach

Medium Term Financial Strategy	Organisation improvement	Communications and engagement
<p>A strategy that outlines the pressures and describes the financial direction of the Council to ensure that all resources are directed towards the delivery of “Making Gateshead a Place where everyone thrives”.</p>	<p>A council culture where everyone:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• works together and with partners to deliver the best outcomes for local people</li> <li>• is empowered to use their initiative to do what is right</li> <li>• takes personal responsibility to achieve great results</li> </ul>	<p>A programme of activity which will help to:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inform and engage</li> <li>• promote good behaviour and reduce bad behaviour</li> <li>• call people to action</li> <li>• lobby for better outcomes for local people</li> </ul>

# Making Gateshead a place where everyone thrives



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## Foreword by the Leader of the Council

Gateshead is a fantastic place with amazing people and I'm very proud to say that Gateshead is my home.

Gateshead is a vibrant place and residents have a strong sense of community and local pride. Gateshead people are compassionate, warm and generous. They are willing to share and there is a great sense of belonging. **It's a place where people really care for each other.**

The Council wants the best possible outcomes for the people of Gateshead. We want to make sure we listen and understand what matters most to local people whilst **always standing up for the most vulnerable and those in need.**

The Council has always been ambitious and the borough has a reputation for innovation and vision with economic regeneration, culture and art firmly putting Gateshead on the map.

However, these **achievements sit alongside significant levels of poverty and inequality.** I have seen the vast government cuts and radical changes in government policies making negative and disproportionate impacts on the people of Gateshead.

Tackling inequality is not new, this Council has always focused on fairness and social justice. **We know that if we can narrow the inequality gap people will live longer, healthier and happier lives.**

# We want Gateshead to be a place where everyone thrives.

If we are to achieve this a **radical rethink is needed about the way we work as a council**, the way we spend the money, the way we work with partner organisations, businesses and how we work with our local people and communities. **Big change is needed and fast.**

**We want everyone in Gateshead to be involved in this transformation.** We know we can do it, but only if we do it together. We need to know what matters most to you and what you think you can do to make sure Gateshead is a place where everyone thrives.

**This is the start of a new era for Gateshead, we've made our pledges for a fairer Gateshead, we want to hear yours**

For our part **we have developed FIVE pledges** to help and guide us when we make decisions.

You can find out how you can get involved on page 14.

## We pledge to:

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

**Martin Gannon**  
Leader of Gateshead Council



# Background

“There is immense pride in Gateshead as a place.... people talk readily of the achievements the council has made to the physical environment. There is also considerable pride in the Council's values and it is widely acknowledged as wanting to care for its communities.”

*LGA Peer Challenge Report, November 2016*

The Council has always been fiercely ambitious for the people of Gateshead. The Council and its partners have a reputation for achievement, innovation and vision.

Quality services and targeted interventions for those people most in need have formed the backbone of the Council's approach.

Developments like the Angel of the North, Gateshead Quayside and the MetroCentre along with Saltwell Park and the Gateshead International Stadium have put Gateshead firmly on the map.

The ambition and aspiration for the people and the borough has not changed.

## Changing context

What has changed is the context within which the Council is working. There have been 10 years of austerity and major government policy changes including Welfare Reform, Housing Reforms, National Living Wage, duties through the Care Act and changes to the education system forcing speedy and sometimes counterproductive change.

Uncertainty still lies ahead both locally and nationally with the impact of Universal Credit, implications of Brexit, Business Rate retention and Funding Formula changes.

Since 2010 budgets have significantly reduced across all of the public sector providing services to the people of Gateshead. The Council alone has had to make savings of over £143 million since 2010 and is looking at a funding gap of a further £88 million in the next five years.

## Demand for services

Demand for all services is high including services that help to keep the place looking clean, tidy and attractive. Demand for some council services has greatly increased.

The number of children with protection plans and the numbers of looked after children are increasing month on month. As our population ages we are seeing an increase in the number of older people needing support to live independently at home, particularly when discharged from hospital.

With reduced resources and increased demand for services the Council will not be able to make ends meet. The Council is proud of how much it does and cares for its residents however this has created expectations in communities that can no longer be met by the existing approach.

In the current context it would not be sustainable for the council to operate or maintain all services in the same way as they are currently provided.

## Developing a new approach

The new leadership of the Council has taken the opportunity to take a step back and reflect on the core purpose of the Council and very importantly what matters most to the people of Gateshead.

Work so far includes a high level analysis of the Borough's profile to ascertain future demand pressures, a refresh of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Local Government Association undertaking a fundamental and independent look at the Council through their Peer Challenge review programme.

The following sections of this document explain the rationale and the main elements of the new approach. It also gives details of how everyone who has an interest in Gateshead can get involved to...

## ...Make Gateshead a place where everyone thrives.



# The key issue | Tackling Inequality

National and international research shows that narrowing the gap of inequality would result in people living longer, healthier and happier lives. Data shows that problems including those in poor health, mental illness, obesity, drug addiction, unequal opportunities, poorer wellbeing for children, violence and imprisonment are more common in unequal societies.

Internationally indexes of quality of life, wellness and deprivation tend to show a correlation between a country's economic inequality and its social outcomes.

Locally as councillors, we see and hear the struggles of our local residents on a daily basis. We have to face the facts - too many of our people and families are just not coping or are in need.

## It's just not right that in Gateshead:

- Government grant funding has halved since 2010
- one in five of our children live in poverty
- over 5,000 people rely on foodbanks
- over 10,000 people struggle to heat their homes
- over 3,000 people need support and advice to prevent or deal with homelessness
- over 7,500 people need social care help
- an average man only lives 57 years in good health (6.4 years less than England average)
- an average woman only lives 59 years in good health (5 years less than England average)
- over 9,000 people can't work because of long term illness
- nearly 13,000 only earn £15,000 a year
- children on free school meals will not achieve as good a level of development at age 5
- nearly 25% of people live in the 20% most deprived areas in England
- the number of people on out of work benefits is 3% higher than elsewhere and just over 10% of claimants are younger than 25.
- average earnings are still well below the national average (£490.90 compared to England median of £544.20 (2016)
- 330 young people are not in education, employment or training
- educational attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in Gateshead is at -14.6% (2015/16)

**We don't believe that in 2017 it is acceptable that there is such inequality in our Borough**



**We know that the vast majority of people in Gateshead care about the community they live in. They don't want to live in a community along side people who are struggling and they want to help and support and do something about that!**





# We want Gateshead to be a place where everyone thrives

We know that over 50% of people and families in Gateshead are either managing or just coping and over 30% are in need or in vulnerable situations. We want to change those statistics and aim to make Gateshead a place where everyone thrives.



## Thriving - what do we mean by thriving?

### Flourishing, prosperous, successful, faring well

We know there are people and families in Gateshead who are already thriving. People and families who can be seen to have good jobs, good homes, good health, good support networks and can afford to take advantage of opportunities whether it be cultural, leisure or educational.

There is normally very little interaction between these people and families and the Council.

**We'd like to see a year on year increase of thriving people & families**

## Managing - what do we mean by managing?

### Coping, doing OK, making ends meet, fairly resilient, getting by but may be feeling the pinch

We know there are people and families in Gateshead who are managing. People and families who have a more stable income and can pay their bills but don't have much in the way of spare cash.

People and families who are managing tend to need less support from the Council or other organisations and have strong family and friend support networks.

**We'd like to see more people & families using their own and community support networks**



## Just coping - what do we mean by just coping?

**Just about getting by, surviving, subsisting, just about keeping their heads above water**

We know there are people in our communities who don't have regular income or are unemployed and are just about keeping their family together.

Many of these families may not have the strongest support networks. They may face different issues at different times which they need help from the Council and others to deal with them.

**We'd like to work with partners so that there are earlier, effective interventions trying to prevent just coping people and families from having more complex needs and becoming vulnerable**

## In need - what do we mean by in need?

**Vulnerable, in difficulty, in adversity, not coping**

We know there will always be some people and families that have complex and multiple needs and will need more of our care and support than others. The Council has always given priority to those in the greatest need. We look after children, provide social care for older people, support those people who have found themselves in really vulnerable situations.

Supporting such complex needs is not easy – funding social care takes all the council tax we get... and more. We need to ensure the support we provide for people is helping them to fulfil their potential and independence where possible.

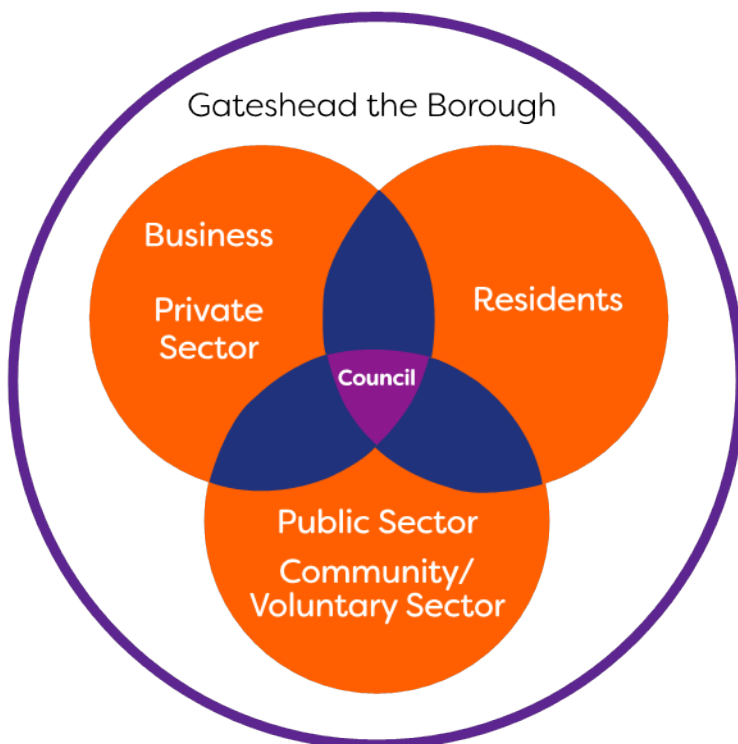
**We'd like to ensure there are appropriate and effective interventions, that have more sustainable impact and help more people cope**

# How can we make Gateshead a place where everyone thrives?

If we are going to achieve our goal it will mean a radical rethink about the way we work as a council, the way we spend the money, the way we work with partner organisations and how we work with our local people, families and communities.

The diagram below aims to illustrate the different interactions residents, businesses, partners and the community and voluntary sector will have with the Council.

## How the Council works



- Council at the heart / co-ordinating
- Provider of services to vulnerable people and universal services
- Key influencer and democratic voice

Some interventions needed

Collaboration & support

# THE NEW APPROACH

The new approach is built on the key principles of:

- Fairness and treating people with dignity and respect
- People and families being at the heart of everything we do; and
- Getting the best outcomes for local people.

We have developed FIVE pledges to help and guide us when we make decisions.

## Our pledges

We pledge to:

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

## Do you want Gateshead to be a place where everyone thrives?

This new approach gives everyone in Gateshead the opportunity to determine what matters most and the opportunity to contribute and work together to make Gateshead a place where everyone thrives.

It is the start of a different conversation with anybody and everybody who has an interest in Gateshead, people and families, partner organisations, employees, other local councils, and national influencers. We intend to develop this approach WITH everyone who has an interest in Gateshead.

# Making Gateshead a place where everyone thrives



## We pledge to:

- Put people and families at the heart of everything we do
- Tackle inequality so people have a fair chance
- Support our communities to support themselves and each other
- Invest in our economy to provide sustainable opportunities for employment, innovation and growth across the borough
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## WE WILL (The Council)

- Understand the needs of our communities better
- Attract investment to increase the number of high quality jobs, pay and housing
- Target our resources on those most in need
- Focus on tackling problems sooner to prevent things getting worse
- Work to maximise the potential in businesses, communities and employees

## YOU CAN (Residents)

- Help us understand what really matters to you
- Play your part by getting involved in your community
- Lead an active and healthy life
- Look after and take pride in your local environment
- Support your local economy by shopping local
- Help us save money by going online



## YOU CAN (Employees)

- Use your initiative, do what you think is right, and take personal responsibility for achieving great results
- Work with colleagues across the Council and partner organisations to deliver the best outcomes
- Be creative and don't be afraid to try new approaches



## TOGETHER WE CAN

### (Partner organisations)

- Recognise that issues cross different organisations
- Share expertise, information and knowledge
- Integrate services into co-ordinated packages and focus on those most in need

### (Other local councils)

- Lobby together
- Plan together
- Work together



## I CAN...

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