

Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Delivery & Performance – Six Month update 2018/19

3 December 2018

Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

Corporate Resources

Chair:

Councillor John Eagle

Vice Chairs

Councillor Bill Dick

Councillor Jonathan Wallace

OSC Role and Remit:

- The management of the Council's financial, human and physical resources
 - Support for the democratic process;
 - Social inclusion
 - Equalities and Diversity
 - Efficiency, value for money and procurement
 - The involvement of local people and communities of Gateshead in the work of the Council
 - Capacity building in communities, volunteering and resilience
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Overview

1. This report relates to how well the Council is achieving against the strategic approach of Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives.
2. Progress of strategic indicators, future focus and areas requiring improvement in line with the Committee's remit, have been assessed over the period April 2018 to September 2018. A table highlighting the performance of the indicators is provided at Appendix 1.
3. Appendix 2 provides a summary of the current position relating to implementation of budget proposals that have previously been highlighted as potentially having a disproportionate impact in relation to equalities.

The Management of the Council's Financial, Human & Physical Resources

4. Council Tax collection

Ref 1: Percentage of council tax collected which was due to be paid in that year

At this six-month stage, Council Tax collection of 53.3% is 0.7% below the first half year performance at 2017/18, however the amount of Council Tax collected in the first six months of the year is £6 million higher than the corresponding period last year.

To improve collection rates, we are continually reviewing business processes and given the financial challenges faced by many of our customers, we continue to make affordable, realistic payment arrangements subject to individuals' circumstances.

5. Business Rates Collection (NNDR)

Ref 2: Percentage of business rates collected

Actual collection is 55.7% which is just below the figure of 56.5% reported in the corresponding period last year. However, collection is on target for year end, despite an increase of £780,000 in the amount of business rates to be collected. We continue to maximise collection by reviewing working practices and proactively challenging business rates avoidance tactics.

6. Invoices

Ref 3: The percentage of undisputed invoices paid on time

The Council paid 82% of undisputed invoices within 30 days for the first six months of this year, compared to 77% for 2017/18. This increased performance is due to ongoing improvements in processes and further introduction of purchasing cards.

7. Benefit Claims

Ref 4: Speed of housing benefit claims (processing) – average time to process new claims and changes in circumstances.

For the first six months of the year housing benefit claims have been processed in 9 days which represents an improvement of 2.19 days for the equivalent period last year. This performance is despite the challenges faced by the council in supporting

universal credit claimants. The focus for the remainder of the year will be to further improve performance.

The Council has an annual service level agreement with the Department for Work and Pensions to provide Universal Support (assisted digital support and personal budgeting and support). However, from April 2019 following recent government announcements, Gateshead Citizens Advice will assume responsibility for providing universal support to Universal Credit claimants. The role of the Council in supporting residents and how we work jointly with Citizens Advice needs further clarification.

8. **Staff Sickness**

Ref 5: Working days lost due to sickness (excluding school staff)

The rate of sickness absence at the six-month stage for 2018/19 is 5.93 days (per FTE). This is an improvement compared to the same period in 2017/18 which, due to a system error previously reported to Committee, was recalculated to 6.41 days lost.

A separate monitoring report regarding sickness absence is presented on this agenda for the Committee's attention.

9. **Employee Engagement**

Ref 8: Employee engagement e.g. Gateshead Council is viewed as a good place to work

In the recent employee survey, 73% of employees agreed with the statement that the Council is a good place to work. This figure is up 9% compared to the 2016 survey figure of 64%.

The corporate employee survey was undertaken in August 2018, with 1,585 responses received which equates to 39% of the council's workforce. Out of 35 questions asked, 16 were new for 2018. Of note is that 75% of employees who responded indicated their awareness of the Council's Thrive agenda and 70% understood how their role contributed to Thrive.

The remaining questions when compared to the 2016 survey, show increases in all but 4 questions. The decreases, whilst not significant, do highlight there are still areas for improvement with communication within teams, employees not having the materials and equipment to do their work, having the right balance between home and work life and line managers not being approachable.

Corporately, work is ongoing to develop an action plan to improve in these areas. Service Directors are sharing the results with their staff and will be reviewing their own practices to see where improvements can be made.

The corporate Employee Forum, which is chaired by a Service Director, currently has 38 members and during this six-month period, they have considered several topics such as the Thrive agenda, thinking differently about how to deliver services, an update on the Workforce Plan and the findings from the Employee Health Needs Assessment. The forum has also taken the opportunity to feedback on the

implementation of the Microsoft Office 365 and issues affecting individual employees.

10. **Workforce Plan**

This Committee received a comprehensive update relating to the implementation of the Workforce Plan, at their meeting in October 2018. The areas of focus for the next 6 months include:

- Refresh of the Council's workforce strategy and plan
- Implementation of 2019 pay awards; considering budget impact, impact on trading and commercialisation, and Living Wage aspirations
- Maximising the apprenticeship levy
- Demonstrating actions have been taken because of the employee survey
- Further consideration of employee terms and conditions
- Further roll out of i-Trent and e-learning to provide for more efficient ways of working
- Conducting fire risk assessments on behalf of TGHC for all Gateshead Council Housing
- Development of a Leadership Development Programme (subject to budgetary constraints)
- Consideration of the adoption of a salary sacrifice car leasing scheme
- Development of a Financial Wellbeing initiative for employees

Social Inclusion, Equalities & Diversity

11. **Superfast Broadband**

Ref 9: Improve Superfast Broadband connectivity-Increase coverage in Gateshead to 98.9% by June 2019

The six-month performance of Broadband Delivery UK (part of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport) stands at 97.28%. which is showing a steady rise compared to this time last year, towards the overall target of 98.9%.

12. **Diversity Forum**

During this six-month period, the Diversity Forum has met twice and received presentations and information on a range of topics, including Mate Crime, Community Safety priorities, the Integrated Communities Green Paper, the Roma community in Gateshead, and voluntary sector work with the diverse Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities in Newcastle and Gateshead.

13. **Employee disability survey**

An employee survey relating to disability was undertaken during March/April 2018. There were 374 employees who responded to the survey and just under a third of those respondents (32%) considered themselves to have disability.

71 employees felt they received adequate backing from the Council to do their job. Whilst just over half of 89 respondents said they knew where in the Council they could access support and guidance.

The survey also asked if employees had experienced disability discrimination - 78% of 82 respondents said they had not suffered discrimination from managers; 81% of

79 said they had not suffered discrimination from other staff; and 91% of 79 said they had not suffered discrimination from service users.

The findings of this survey, along with the results of the corporate employee survey, will be used to inform the development of an action plan designed to improve the knowledge and understanding of employees and managers so that disabled employees feel supported and able to fully contribute in the workplace.

14. **Equality impact monitoring of budget proposals**

Appendix 2 summarises the assessments provided by services of the impact of budget proposals following implementation. Subject to these assessments, it is proposed to cease monitoring of the following proposals:

- Cross-cutting proposal – Voluntary and Community Sector
- Post 16 Home to School Transport
- Adult Social Care Demand Management model
- Sport and Physical Activity
- Labriut Centre
- Independent Supported Living Schemes
- Early Help Service
- Review of the Toy Library
- Community Links
- Review Domiciliary Care Packages

The Committee will receive an update on the remaining 5 proposals in the year end performance report, expected in June 2019.

15. **Tackling poverty**

Following the Thriving for All Conference in February 2018, a 'Tackling Poverty in Gateshead Board' was created comprising of leaders from cross sector organisations to take strategic oversight of approaches to tackling poverty in Gateshead. The board is chaired by Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor Catherine Donovan and vice chaired by Alison Dunn, Chief Executive of Citizens Advice Gateshead. Committee will be aware that Alison joined the Council in October 2018 on a secondment arrangement, as strategic lead for tackling inequality and poverty in the borough. Alison will continue to undertake both roles.

The 'Gateshead Community Food Network' has now formed, bringing together over 50 community organisations and businesses to explore ways in which they can work together to have a greater impact on food poverty in Gateshead.

The 'Gateshead Child Poverty Network' was launched in July bringing together over 70 cross sector delegates to a themed discussion to identify steps to take to reduce child poverty in Gateshead. The network aims to bring innovative ideas and practical solutions to frontline delivery across Gateshead.

Fuel poverty remains a significant issue across Gateshead, particularly for older residents. Work is underway on a 'switching campaign' aimed at reducing energy bills for residents. Further work is being done to explore additional energy saving advice and cost-free modifications for vulnerable households.

The Council recognises that a more holistic approach to the collection of resident debts, and a wider view of a household's ability to pay should be considered. Development of a corporate debt policy is currently being explored.

The Council is working alongside the Blaydon Methodist Church to bring about a 'Poverty Truth Commission' in the west of the borough. There are many successful examples of Poverty Truth Commissions across the UK whereby residents with lived experiences of poverty can work alongside decision makers from parliament, local government, charitable and business sectors in order to influence local policy in relation to tackling poverty where they live.

A second annual conference will be hosted in February 2019, to hear of progress to date, and to allow those organisations supporting the poverty agenda to have their voices heard once more and allowing approaches to be shaped by those delivering on the frontline.

Capacity Building in Communities, Volunteering & Resilience

16. On 1 August 2018, the Council recommissioned Newcastle Council for Voluntary Service to provide an infrastructure support service to voluntary and community organisations across Gateshead for the next 3 years.
17. Committee will recall receiving an annual update on the Council's volunteers plan "Helping Out", at their meeting on 15 October 2018.
18. A progress update on Resilience and Emergency Planning Performance Framework is provided as part of this Committee's agenda.

Increase the levels of ambition and aspiration of vulnerable groups across Gateshead

19. Young people leaving care

Ref 10: Ensure young people leaving care are supported to have an opportunity in the Council for an apprenticeship

This indicator is reported on an annual basis. However, the current position at the six-month stage is positive in that there are now 5 apprentices who are care leavers, working in the Office of the Chief Executive, Care, Wellbeing and Learning and Corporate Services and Governance. Opportunities will continue to be explored to increase this number year on year.

The Council's arrangements for securing efficiency and money; and the development and operation of the Council's procurement strategy

20. Trading

As the Council is seeking to increase income through developing its approach to trading and commercialisation, it would be prudent to include traded activities performance in future Overview and Scrutiny performance reports. This reflects the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy objective to generate income, which can be used to support the Council's priorities to make Gateshead a place where everyone thrives. Specific indicators are in the process of being developed but are

likely to include the amount of traded income achieved as well as some service specific traded activities. This will enable performance against trading and commercial activities to be considered by the Committee. It is intended that the new indicators will be included for the 2019/20 performance reporting cycle beginning in April.

21. Statement of Accounts

This year, the Statement of Accounts was finalised in accordance with the earlier statutory deadlines of draft accounts by 31 May 2018 (previously June) and audited accounts by 31 July 2018 (previously September).

On Monday 27 July 2018, Mazars issued an unqualified opinion on the Council's 2017/18 Statement of Accounts. The key messages from Mazars Independent Auditor's Report are:

- [the accounts] give a true and fair view of the financial position of Gateshead Council as at 31 March 2018 and of its expenditure and income for the year;
- have been prepared properly in accordance with the CIPFA/LASAAC Code of Practice; and
- the Council has put in place proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources for the year.

The early closure in line with the first year of the revised deadlines is a significant achievement and should not be underestimated. The previous two years dry runs and early preparation has contributed positively to the outcome. All Groups and Services have contributed to this success by adhering to the deadlines in the Final Accounts timetable.

A review of the 2017/18 process will be the starting point for the 2018/19 work and the approach will include opportunities for feedback and contributions from all employees, external partners and Mazars to enable further improvements to be delivered on the existing framework.

22. Budget

The Council is operating in an ever-changing policy landscape. The levels of uncertainty and the impact of government decisions are significant. The challenging local context of reduced funding and increasing demand on council services has compelled the council to refocus on what matters most.

The likely continuing requirement and scale of budget savings, over and above the £157m already taken from budgets since 2010, represents an increasing challenge for the Council. There will be more pressure on the income the council gets from council tax and business rates to fund vital services. To strengthen its financial position, the Council will have to consider other ways to generate income and be self-sufficient.

As demand for our services increases and government funding decreases, the Council faces the challenge of an estimated financial gap of £42.7 million over the next two years.

The Council is responding to the financial challenges in a planned way through an approach based around four inter-related areas: economic growth, income

generation, managing demand, and identifying savings/efficiencies. The council will have to make very difficult choices in the years ahead about which services to prioritise.

23. General Data Protection Regulation

The Council is working with 263 schools, colleges and charities within and external to the borough, as well as partners such as NEPO and Gateshead Housing Company. This has generated income into the Council. Over 500 training sessions have been delivered to council employees, councillors, partners and schools including governors. Officers have also been asked to speak at national data protection conferences.

Involvement of local people and communities of Gateshead in the work of the Council

24. During this six-month period, 13 consultations have been undertaken using the Council's consultation portal in relation to local transport schemes, Adoption North East, Coatsworth Conservation Area Shopfront Design, Gambling Statement of Principles and You and Your Local Area Survey.

25. You and Your Local Area Survey 2018

This survey was undertaken between June and August 2018. The survey was completed by 910 Viewpoint ONLINE members and 1,137 members of the public, totalling 2,047 respondents.

Highlights to note:

- 64% of respondents were satisfied with their local area as a place to live. This is a decrease on the satisfaction level in 2016 which was 75%.
- 91% of respondents felt that people in their local area usually get on well together.
- 28% of respondents said they regularly volunteer (at least once a month), 27% said they volunteered less often and 45% said they had never volunteered.
- 13% of respondents said they had heard of the Council's Thrive agenda, however 88% indicated they were supportive of the 5 pledges.
- 41% of respondents stated that their personal financial circumstances are either only just coping or are really struggling. This is particularly an issue for those of working age, with fewer (30%) of those aged 65+ experiencing difficulties.
- 42% of respondents are satisfied with the way the Council runs things, which is 9% lower than in 2016. However, this reduction in satisfaction has not resulted in a corresponding increase in dissatisfaction. 29% of respondents are dissatisfied (up 1% from 2016) and a further 29% are neither satisfied or dissatisfied.
- 39% of respondents are confident that the Council will provide the best possible services it can within its available budget. A further 27% neither agree or disagree.

26. Digital

Since the new version of www.gateshead.gov.uk was launched on 17th May 2018 the data recorded for page views is no longer comparable to previous years. However, since the site was relaunched it has received over 4 million page views of which 53% were via a SmartPhone, 12% on a tablet and 35% on a computer which demonstrates the importance of delivering websites that function seamlessly on

mobile devices. We now have access to improved demographics data for the website, for instance 27% of the website's audience are aged between 25-34 with over 10% of the audience aged over 65. Statistics show that 55.3% of the people accessing our site are female.

Due to the improvements that have been made to online payments we have again seen a significant rise in card payments on the website. In the last 12 months the website has processed £17.5m in income, which is a 22% increase compared to the previous year.

Due to the difficulty in providing baseline data for all Council transactions by phone call, face to face and online we propose that we begin reporting on specific measurable transactions instead. This could include:

- Online payments
- Fly tip reports
- Garden waste bin subscriptions
- Registrars appointment booking
- Adult social care forms

It is intended that the new indicators will be included for the 2019/20 performance reporting cycle beginning in April next year.

The implementation of the new digital platform is near completion. New websites and services delivered on the platform in the last 6 months as well as www.gateshead.gov.uk include [online payments](#), [Gateshead JSNA](#), [Gateshead Goes Local](#), [PROTO](#), [Beacon Living](#), [Safeguarding in Gateshead](#), [Reporting Hate crime](#) and [Smokefree Gateshead](#).

Areas of focus over next 6 months:

- Complete the implementation of a digital platform to support the delivery of the digital strategy, including the following websites and digital services;
 - An appointment booking system for the Registrars Service by January 2019
 - Online forms for social care requests that aim to reduce call level volumes for Adult Social Care Direct in November 2018
 - Online forms to support Landlord licensing
 - New website for Business Gateshead
 - A Customer Account so residents can log in to view payment history, track progress of completed forms, appointment bookings etc
 - A consolidated online system for both Corporate Complaints and Members enquiries by April 2019
 - Increase the number of online payments e.g. car park permits
 - A new digital news and events service
 - A location-based reporting tool that builds on the success of the report fly tipping service
 - Improved digital services for Waste and Recycling
- Supporting the review of individual services to transform how services can be delivered digitally to deliver savings and efficiencies, income generation and contribute to an improved customer experience.

The Council recently signed up to the Local Digital Declaration which is intended to support local government to design and build good digital public services. Through

the Local Digital Fund, the Council was successful at the expressions of interest stage to submit a final bid by 15 November 2018, to support research for an online Taxi Licensing solution, in partnership with Sunderland, Northumberland and Sheffield local authorities. Successful bidders will be notified by 3 December 2018.

PERFORMANCE AT A GLANCE

Strategic Indicator			Year End		Six Month		Trend	Target
			2016/17	2017/18	2017/18	2018/19		
<i>Maximising Growth:</i>								
Ref 1	% of Council Tax collected that was due to be paid	Higher is better	95.8%	95.9%	54%	53.3%	↓	96.6%
Ref 2	% of Business Rates collected	Higher is better	97.3%	98.6%	56.5%	55.7%	↓	97%
Ref 3	% of undisputed invoices paid on time	Higher is better	71.44%	77.1%	77.2%	82%	↑	95%
<i>Reducing Costs:</i>								
Ref 4	Speed of housing benefits claims (processing) - average time to process new claims and changes in circumstances	Lower is better	7.75 days	7.72 days	11.19 days	9 days	↑	7.5 days
Ref 5	Staff sickness (excluding school staff) per FTE	Lower is better	9.9 days	12.75 days	6.41 days	5.93 days	↑	8.0 days
Ref 6	% increase in digital based transaction/contact from established baseline	Higher is better	Baseline year	Not available	Annual Indicator	To be reviewed		TBC
Ref 7	Percentage increase in online transactions	Higher is better	Baseline year	Not available	Annual Indicator	To be reviewed		TBC
<i>Increasing collective responsibility:</i>								
Ref 8	Employee engagement: e.g. good place to work	Higher is better	64% 2016 survey	Survey not undertaken in 17/18	Survey not undertaken in 17/18	73% 2018 survey	↑	70%
Ref 9	Improve Superfast Broadband connectivity - increase coverage in Gateshead to 98.9% by June 2019	Higher is better	94.3%	96.41%	95.26%	97.28	↑	98.9%
<i>Equality Objective: To increase levels of ambition and aspiration of vulnerable groups across Gateshead</i>								
Ref 10	Ensure young people leaving care are supported to have an opportunity in the Council for an apprenticeship	Higher is better	1	4	Annual Indicator	Annual Indicator		TBC

Monitoring of equality impact relating to previously agreed budget proposals

Cross-cutting proposal – Voluntary and Community Sector

The monitoring of impact on the community and voluntary sector in relation to equalities has continued:

- Neighbourhood Management and Volunteering Team continue to work with over 200 community groups and charities across Gateshead, from grass roots groups to key charitable partners. The team, along with Newcastle CVS provides advice and support with action planning, funding, development, risk assessment, health checks and governance. In addition to capacity building, the team is supporting a number of key projects supporting communities with large scale projects; Chopwell, Beacon Lough East and Bensham and Saltwell, Teams and Birtley.
- The Council no longer provides a weekly-bulletin providing details about new funding opportunities. Instead the Council has subscribed to an online tool called *Grantfinder*. The licence for this is available to all employees and councillors with a gateshead.gov.uk email address.
- The Neighbourhood Management and Volunteering Team, along with the Community Safety Team and Northumbria Police have delivered 4 “World Café” style community engagement events in Beacon Lough East, Chopwell, Bensham and Birtley. The events brought together over 150 residents in total to discuss local issues and how the community can work closely with the Council and Northumbria Police to respond to the priorities raised by residents. The event is based around participants having a conversation whilst having something to eat, each “course” involves a question and residents use the table cloths to record their views which are then collated into a community plan. The Safer Gateshead Partnership will be reviewing the progress of the plans throughout 2019/20.
- So far in 2018/19 the Council has allocated £108,000 through the main Gateshead Thrive Fund to 11 community organisations delivering activities in Gateshead. Round 2 of the fund opened on 29 October and will close on 11 January. The Council has also launched the Innovation and Development Fund. The fund has a specific focus on supporting organisations that are looking to make a significant change, something that is not "business as usual". Examples include:
 - carrying out market research / feasibility studies to establish an evidence base for a new service;
 - launching a new service in a new neighbourhood;
 - investing in new equipment or other capital to help deliver more effective or efficient services.
- A proportion of the Innovation and Development Fund will be ring fenced to develop and run a Gateshead VCS Enhanced Leadership programme. This will provide a valuable complementary resource to both the main Investment Fund and the Gateshead Fund, specifically designed to establish of pool of upskilled staff, and trustees / board members.
- Local Community Fund - since the Fund was first introduced, over 900 voluntary and community groups and projects have now been funded and supported.

This committee has agreed the scope of a Review of the Council Support to the Community and Voluntary Sector at its meeting on 15 October 2018. The review will help the committee understand what support is currently provided to the sector, what impact this support has and what needs to change to ensure the support meets the needs of the sector in the future.

As the issues that affect the sector will be picked up as part of the review, it is proposed that monitoring of this budget proposal is no longer undertaken within this performance report.

2014/15 – Post 16 Home to School Transport

Following a consultation exercise between October and December 2013, the Council agreed to introduce a charge for post-16 home to college transport for learners with SEN, to be implemented from September 2016. However, the decision has since been reviewed and a financial contribution to Post-16 transport in the academic year 2016-17 was not introduced. The Council reviewed its decision during 2017 and agreed to implement a charge from September 2017.

Between September 2017 and 2018 15 young people have been successfully travel trained by the Council's Independent Travel Trainer (ITT) and 11 by the procurement of Children North East's 'Bus Buddy Scheme'. Some of those successes have also participated in a DVD and presentations to members highlighting their powerful stories of ITT leading to employment and independent living.

In the academic year 2017/18 – 13 children were eligible for the charge and 16 in the academic year 2018/19. There have been no complaints or appeals in relation to the charge and Looked After Children and households with maximum working tax credit remain exempt from the charge.

It is recommended that continued monitoring is no longer required.

2014/15 – Sport and Physical Activity

As part of the Leisure Service review in February 2017, Cabinet approved a new service structure which would combine the resources from within the Sport, Physical Activity & Health Development Team, and Leisure facilities. The services rebranded into one service as GO Gateshead Sport & Leisure and completed a Service Structure Review, which complimented an earlier service rebrand (Go Gateshead). This rebrand was designed to align the service to become more commercially focused and invest in income generating roles. The review provided specific resource to ensure that an 'Operations' and 'Business & Community Development' functions are adequately resourced.

Following the implementation of the review, the service is now able to provide more commercially focused activity to generate income whilst continuing to grow activity aimed to the Council's Thrive Agenda such as;

- Developing the commercial approach;
 - Improving sales in key products such as;
 - Go Memberships
 - Clip n Climb
 - Go Bears Den
 - Aquatics
 - Improvements in technology such as the website and digital marketing.
 - Increasing Income through events.
 - Investing in employees, to improve in key areas such as customer service, whilst embedding a sales culture.

- Capital Investment in 3G Pitch and Athletics Track at Blaydon and Gateshead International Stadium.
- Development of a community engagement plan which includes;
 - Supporting over 100 voluntary sports clubs operating across Gateshead and many in the most deprived neighbourhoods, many engaging 200 plus members.
 - Targeting activities and initiatives in areas of deprivation,
 - Supporting communities of interest such as looked after children and children with a disability, to increase physical activity levels.
 - Working with local groups including GP's to improve access to physical activity.

It is recommended that continued monitoring is no longer required.

2016/17 – Adult Social Care Demand Management model

Managing demand across Adult Social Care, and with individual clients, is a function which is embedded within The Care Act (2014) in terms of reducing and delaying the need for care and support. Any changes to packages of care are managed via an individual assessment or review of need, and should adhere to the requirements of the Care Act in terms of being satisfied that the proposed care meets the individuals' needs. This also enables people the opportunity to appeal should they not agree with the outcome of the assessment. Officers do not feel that this proposal requires any further corporate overview or scrutiny.

2016/17 - Labriut Centre

The 'Labriut Healthy Living Centre' is being supported to access funding through the MECC programme to help embed the 'Making Every Contact Count' (MECC) approach over the next year. A dedicated MECC lead is working with the Jewish Community to identify how the MECC approach can be best delivered and embedded with the support of key community leads. Initial health needs have been identified by the community in relation to nutrition and physical activity and further work will look at training staff in these areas and adapting resources and information to help deliver key messages. To sustain the approach a 'Train the Trainer' model will be adapted and supported by the MECC team going forward. Throughout the grant process the MECC team will work alongside key community leads and the programme will be evaluated to capture key outcomes of the approach.

The newly commissioned 0-19 service by Public Health (Health Visiting and School Nursing Service) continues to provide support around the Healthy Child Programme. NHS England continues to provide support and monitor vaccination uptake rates within this community. It is recommended that in relation to the monitoring of the equalities impact of the budget decision made in 2016, no further updates are required.

2016/17 - Reduction in funding for NHS Health Checks

The NHS Health Checks Programme is a mandatory Public Health function and local authorities have a duty to ensure a NHS Health Check is offered to all eligible residents aged between 40 and 75. NHS Health Checks are currently delivered by 30 GP practices in Gateshead and 15 pharmacies. The national target is for 20% of the eligible population to be invited, and of those invited 50% uptake. In 2017/18 in Gateshead 15,478 (26.4%) eligible people were invited for a NHS Health Check and 10045 (64.9%) people received a NHS Health Check.

For the 2017/18 contract specification, the following information was added for local authorities to tailor the delivery of the programme in a number of ways to achieve the objective of reduced health inequalities. Although local authorities have a duty to offer the NHS Health Check to all eligible people, Public Health England is supportive of approaches prioritising invitations to those with the greatest health risk. For example, by prioritising invitations to people with an estimated ten-year cardio-vascular disease (CVD) risk score greater than 10% or those living in their most deprived areas. Discussions on how best to undertake this prioritisation continue with GP practices through the local NHS Health Check implementation group. It is recommended that continued monitoring is required.

2016/17 – Independent Supported Living Schemes

The framework for the provision of support at home and in the community for adults with learning disabilities has been in place since 1 April 2017 with a new contract, specification and pricing schedule. There has been no negative impact raised or identified because of the framework, which now has 28 providers and 4 who currently have pending applications to join. As the framework is a dynamic purchasing system, providers can come on to the framework at any time and work will continue to attract new providers. A new specification is also being developed which will be for Mental Health and Complex needs support within the framework. Continued improvements are being made to effectively measure on outcomes that are being delivered. It is recommended that in relation to the monitoring of the equalities impact of this budget decision, no further updates are required.

2016/17 – Early Help Service

The Early Help service has been remodelled and restructured. This is a targeted service and the introduction of thresholds for early help in line with statutory Children's Services has enabled mitigation against the savings which were attached to the restructure. It is recommended that continued monitoring is no longer required.

2017/18 - LiveWell Programme

Following the decommissioning of the LiveWell integrated lifestyle service a small amount of money was retained to establish a new approach. Making Every Contact Count (MECC) provides a sustainable approach in Gateshead and supports the opportunistic delivery of consistent healthy lifestyle information and enables individuals to engage in conversations about their health at scale across organisations in Gateshead.

Three MECC Development Leads are now in post with responsibilities for; substance misuse, lifestyle advice (healthy weight, nutrition and physical activity) and public mental health. The MECC team have established links with Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS) organisations and have made significant progress in the roll out of the MECC grant funding. The MECC team are working closely with the 20 CVS grant organisations to help them further embed MECC principles within their organisational policies, thereby sustaining the approach into the future.

A comprehensive MECC training programme on health and wellbeing topics has been developed and is available for CVS organisations in Gateshead to access and to further develop their skills. To further increase sustainability there has been a focus on the delivery of a 'Train the Trainer model'. This approach helps to ensure that training and information can continue to be delivered within organisations by identified trainers and that skills and expertise are embedded within organisation and communities in Gateshead. Whilst phase one of the MECC project has focussed on the CVS grant

recipients, the next phase is currently targeting 3 Council Services (Library services, Adult Social Care and Gateshead Housing Company) and further work is being undertaken to identify additional groups and communities who have been identified as a priority but have not yet accessed MECC training and information.

The MECC programme is continuing to be evaluated in the short and medium term against the aims and objectives of the programme. An independent external evaluation of the MECC programme in Gateshead is currently being planned and therefore continued monitored is proposed.

2017/18 & 2018/19 - Review of commissioned arrangements/supporting people voluntary organisations

A new supported housing model for Young People, aged 16 – 25 was procured in March 2018 and commenced in July 2018. SAILS (Supported and Independent Living Service) is providing a range of services via four organisations. Two Care Leavers were directly involved with the evaluation of tenders as part of the procurement process. One element of the SAILS service includes on-site psychological interventions, provided by clinicians.

Since the initial review of supported housing in 2016, all other supported housing contracts were extended until 31st March 2019. Supported housing services for people aged 26 and over will be commissioned in 2019 following final consultation with experts by experience, who will be involved in the drafting of an outcome focussed specification. It is therefore recommended that continued monitoring is required once the new service commences.

2018/19 Recommissioning Learning Disability Care Packages

As part of the project to review commissioning arrangements for people with learning disabilities, a small Achieving Change Together team has been established under the service manager for Adult Social Care. Specifically designed to fit in with the Council's Thrive agenda of ensuring people reach their full potential, the team assesses high cost packages in depth to ensure the package is appropriate to need and assists in helping users maximise their potential.

This approach enables users and support staff to help build up the skills and confidence to help change their lives and improve their outcomes. This can often lead to less support and the generation of savings. In the six-month period to October 2018 savings have been generated on the back of improved outcomes with several residential care providers seeking to deregister and deliver more independent supported living arrangements instead.

By the end of the financial year 2018-19 it is hoped all the two hundred cases initially identified will have been reviewed. It is recommended that continued monitoring is required.

2018/19 – Review of the Toy Library

The Council was able to relocate the toy library from Chowdene Children's Centre to Deckham Children's Centre and achieve economies of scale. The work of the toy library has been integrated with the children's centre staff based in Deckham, which has made it possible to extend the opening hours, attract more members and generate a small increase in income. The outreach work has also been able to continue. It is recommended that no further monitoring is required.

2018/19 – Review of Carers Services

Due to a legal challenge received in relation to the tender for this service, the Council has not been able to formally award the ‘Supporting Carers Together in Gateshead’ contract. As the legal challenge is ongoing, current contracts in Gateshead have been extended to ensure carers continue to be supported. It is recommended that continued monitoring is required.

2018/19 - Community Links

Following the decision to implement this proposal, the service has sought to integrate the support of volunteers who are “linked” to specific services, into the day to day running of those services. For example, the volunteers who support people at Marquisway Day Centre, are now supported by the staff team at Marquisway. In recognition of the fact that some volunteers do not provide support into a specific service, there was an agreement reached with Your Voice Counts, that for volunteers not linked to a specific service/resource, they would take on the coordination, support and recruitment of new volunteers going forward. Thus far both approaches are working well and are becoming embedded as mainstream business.

As part of the consultation on this proposal, a significant number of representations were received, both from volunteers and people who were supported by volunteers; all were expressing concerns regarding the proposals. The fact that we have not received any concerns or further representations since the change to the model, provides a degree of assurance that it is working well in its new form. It is therefore requested that ongoing monitoring is no longer required.

2018/19 - Review Domiciliary Care Packages

This proposal incorporated a range of options in terms of reducing reliance on long term domiciliary care services. As each person requires an individual reassessment with the client, and changes would only be made where it was evidenced that it was possible and safe to do so, there has been a very individualised and personalised approach to implementing this proposal. Additionally, since the proposal was developed, there has been a significant turnover in terms of new clients coming into the adult social care system, and existing clients leaving the system. Going forward officers do not feel it is necessary to continue to monitor this budget saving.