

Corporate Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives – Year-end Assessment of Performance and Delivery 2018/19

17 June 2019

Portfolio:	Leader
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Martin Gannon
OSC Chair:	Councillor John Eagle
Lead Officers:	Andrea Tickner, Service Director, Corporate Commissioning and Procurement Marisa Jobling, Service Director, Policy, Performance & Communications John Jopling, Service Director, Customer and Financial Services

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This report relates to how well the Council is achieving against the strategic approach of Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives and the Council Pledges:

- ❖ 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

1.2 Progress and achievements of strategic indicators, in line with the committee's remit, are provided along with areas of future focus.

1.3 Tables highlighting an update to the six-month performance and the performance of the strategic indicators are provided in section's B and C.

1.4 Appendix 1 provides a summary of the current position relating to the implementation of budget proposals that have previously been highlighted as potentially having a disproportionate impact in relation to equalities.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 The committee is asked to consider:

- (i) whether the activities undertaken during October 2018 to March 2019 are supporting delivery of the Thrive agenda;
- (ii) any areas they feel they require more detail on or require further scrutiny;
- (iii) no longer monitoring four out of six budget proposals for equality impact having been satisfied there has been no disproportionate impact following implementation (identified in Appendix 1); and
- (iv) note that Cabinet will consider a composite performance report at their meeting on 16 July 2019.

Section A

3.0 Performance Overview

3.1 The committee receives performance data relating to 15 strategic indicators. Of these, 7 are new indicators to capture performance due to transactional digital improvements, and trading and commercialisation activities. Of the 15 indicators, 10 are reportable at year end with 8 indicators showing improved performance and 2 underperforming. There are 5 indicators that will be establishing a baseline during 2019/20.

4.0 Putting people and families at the heart of everything we do

Performance

4.1 We have identified two strategic indicators linked to the Council pledge of putting people and families at the heart of everything we do:

- Performance relating to the speed of processing housing benefit claims has shown further improvement at 6.2 days, compared to the previous year's performance of 7.5 days. This has primarily been due to the volume of new claims reducing following the full service roll out of Universal Credit and improvements in the use of IT.
- To support the Council's role as corporate parents to children and young people who are looked after, the Council has a strategic indicator to achieve a year on year increase in the number of young people leaving care who are supported to have an opportunity in the Council for an apprenticeship. The year-end figure for 2018/19 has reduced from 4 apprenticeships to 2.

Further information is provided in section C of this report.

Achievements, Challenges and Actions

4.2 Research commissioned by Gateshead Council to understand the impact of the roll out of Universal Credit (UC) in Gateshead and Newcastle upon Tyne was published in November 2018. The study concluded claimants found the experience overwhelmingly negative. Amongst vulnerable people claiming, research discovered high levels of anxiety and depression, as well as physical problems and social isolation exacerbated by hunger and destitution, undermining efforts to prevent ill-health in two of the UK's most deprived areas.

4.3 To support and manage better the implementation of UC, the Council agreed a Delivery Partnership Agreement with DWP up to 31 March 2019, to provide Universal Support, which mainly included assisted digital support and personal budgeting support. As part of this agreement the Council together with Gateshead Housing Company provided a range of services offering support and advice to claimants.

4.4 The migration of existing Housing Benefit claimants to Universal Credit is now scheduled to be completed by June 2024. To provide support with this, from April 2019, Citizens Advice has become responsible and is funded by DWP for "Help to Claim" support, which is to assist applicants with their online claim to the first payment

stage. Both the Council and the Gateshead Housing Company continue to work with Citizens Advice Gateshead to optimise the use of resources to provide the necessary support to claimants.

- 4.5 There is the intention to recruit a further 2 LAC apprentices to be based in the Office of the Chief Executive and Care, Wellbeing and Learning directorates. Additionally, the process of recruiting an Apprenticeship Co-ordinator is underway and part of their role will be to explore apprenticeships for LAC and care leavers.

5.0 Tackle inequality so people have a fair chance

Performance

- 5.1 This committee does not monitor strategic indicators relating to this Council pledge.

Achievements, Challenges and Actions

- 5.2 The purpose of gender pay reporting is to show the difference between the average earnings of men and women. Under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, we have a legal duty to report on gender pay. The regulations require us to publish key information based on an agreed methodology.
- 5.3 The mean hourly rate of pay for all male full-pay relevant employees is £13.94. The mean hourly rate of pay for all female full-pay relevant employees is £12.59. The mean gender pay gap equates to 9.68% which is an increase from 8.47% in 2017. The median hourly rate of pay for all male full-pay relevant employees is £12.52. The median hourly rate of pay for all female full-pay relevant employees is £11.01. The median gender pay gap therefore equates to 12.06% which is an increase from 11.53% on 2017.

	Number of males	% of males	Number of females	% of females
Lower quartile	182	18.4	805	81.6
Lower middle quartile	379	38.4	609	61.6
Upper middle quartile	345	34.9	643	65.1
Upper quartile	443	44.9	544	55.1

For the purposes of this data (as specified in the regulations) a pay period of one month equates to 30.44 days. The calculations are based on 'full-pay relevant employees'.

- 5.4 Future action to address the gender pay gap includes a focus on learning and development at all levels within the organisation. The implementation of a revised Appraisal & Development (A&D) scheme and a new toolkit for maximising employee potential have been designed to enable every employee to have the opportunity to maximise their potential and progress within the organisation. Although recent financial challenges have impacted on recruitment and promotion opportunities, discussions about career aspirations are providing scope to develop employees for potential future roles that support succession planning and retains talent within the organisation.

- 5.5 Due to unforeseen circumstances, the Diversity Forum has met once in the last six months, out of a possible three occasions. The forum received a presentation by the Regional Counter Terrorism Security Advisor and information was shared on the Council's preparedness for when the UK withdraws from the European Union.
- 5.6 During 2018/19, the Council provided a wide range of equality and diversity training for employees and partner organisations. Courses ranged from Hate/Mate Crime to Honour Based Violence to training on cultural awareness. During 2018/19, 211 council employees attended one or more of these courses.
- 5.7 Appendix 1 summarises the assessments provided by services of the equality impact of budget proposals following implementation. Four of the six proposals currently monitored by this committee are being recommended by services that they no longer require monitoring, and are identified below:
- Sport and Physical Activity
 - Recommissioning Learning Disability Care Packages
 - Reduction in funding for NHS Health Checks
 - LiveWell Gateshead Programme
- 5.8 This means two of the proposals will still need to be monitored along with new budget proposals agreed for the 2019/20 Budget. The Committee will receive an update on the proposals agreed in the Budget for 2019/20 at six-month report stage in December 2019.

6.0 Support our communities to support themselves and each other

Performance

- 6.1 New strategic indicators relating to the Council's Digital Programme and the Council pledge to support our communities to support themselves and each other, can be reported as follows:
- Percentage increases in online transactions have improved on the previous year. Online payments saw an increase of 18.7% in income and the amount of garden waste subscriptions paid for online increased by 3.86%.
 - 2018/19 will be a baseline year for three indicators relating to fly tip reports, registrars' appointments and adult social care forms.

Further information is provided in section C of this report.

Achievements, Challenges and Actions

- 6.2 There are three workstreams which define the Digital Programme. These workstreams are:
- **Digital Customer** - making it easy for customers to report, book, pay, be paid, attend and to get a decision online.
 - **Digital Ways of Working** - making it easy for employees and Councillors to work mobile, collaboratively, to simplify our policies and processes, to merge and optimise frontline mobile processes, to develop key systems and make them easy to use, to support employees to use digital solutions and work together to solve problems creatively.

- **Digital Skills** - We aim to engage, enthuse, empower and enable residents, employees and councillors to make best use of, and benefit from, technology and digitally supported services.
- 6.3 We aim to increase the number of online transactions so that those residents who can, are able use online solutions to serve themselves. In doing so, this releases capacity for employees to provide services to residents who require more support or to those who need to access services in a different way.
- 6.4 As part of the ongoing work with the Council's digital inclusion project, officers are engaging with a range of residents and carry out activities to priority groups who are least likely to have competent ICT skills. The Library Digital Team will work to improve digital skills amongst Gateshead residents to enable them to benefit from positive outcomes including financial savings, reduced isolation, better employment prospects and improved health and well-being. The Council's digital engagement programme also enables residents to access new technologies and build new skills including coding. Activities like these are aimed primarily at children and families.
- 6.5 We are supporting our employees to work in an agile way using technology. We aim to optimise frontline services enabling employees to carry out their day to day role regardless of location. In doing so, this allows employees to have the relevant tools to provide services to residents from any location.
- 6.6 We are supporting our employees to work in a collaborative way using technology. We aim to optimise collaboration working with our partners, in doing so, enables employees and partners to work together digitally to support residents.
- 6.7 The www.gateshead.gov.uk website received 4,186,349 views over the past 6 months of which 49% were viewed on a smartphone, 13% on a tablet and 28% on a computer.
- 6.8 Demographics - 24.5% of the website's audience are aged between 25-34 with 11.2% of the audience aged over 65. Statistics show that 53.1% of the people accessing the Council's website are female.
- 6.9 In 2018-19, the Council received £18.48m in income from online payments which is a 18.7% increase from the previous year. This figure is expected to rise as work continues to increase the number of payments that can be made via our websites at a rate of 5-10% per annum. In the past 6 months we have introduced online payments for car park permits, fixed penalty charge notices and leisure centre bookings.
- 6.10 In continuation of support in the delivery of the digital strategy we will look to deliver the following new digital services within the next 6 months;
- A consolidated online system for both Corporate Complaints and Members enquiries
 - New website for Business Gateshead to be delivered by June.
 - Online forms to support Landlord licensing by July.
 - Pest control booking and payments
 - A new Gateshead Housing Company website
 - Continue to increase the number of online payments

- A location-based reporting tool that builds on the success of the report fly tipping service- work has already started on the project but will be ongoing throughout the year.
- Improved digital services for Waste and Recycling - work has already started on the project but will be ongoing throughout the year.
- Launch a new self-service room booking system.
- Implement intranet authentication for employees so they only sign in once to use intranet services.
- Progress the next stages of ASC Front Door programme.
- M365 Collaborative Working - Continue the migration programme and launch MS Teams and SharePoint Online tools council wide
- Continue to provide support to the adoption of Microsoft 365 products
- Continue to support our employees to be able to work remotely;
- Continue to deliver ongoing projects in this workstream.
- Implement MS365 bring your own device project
- Implement Contact centre Home working project
- Discovery piece of work on MS365 unified communications to include telephony
- Continue to support the review of individual services to transform how they can be delivered digitally to provide savings and efficiencies, income generation and contribute to an improved customer experience.
- Continue to invest in our employees by accessing training and improving upon their skillset.
- Continue to work with our residents to build their digital skills so digital services are accessible to them.

6 Invest in our economy to provide sustainable opportunities for employment, innovation and growth across the borough

Performance

- 7.1 There are 6 strategic indicators identified for this Committee to monitor in support of the Council pledge of investing in our economy:
- Performance relating to council tax collection is slightly down at 95.7% compared to the previous year of 95.9%.
 - For 2018/19 the indicator relating to business rates collection achieved 98%, which is 1% above the 2020 target, however this is slightly down on the previous year's performance which ended at 98.6%.
 - There has been significant improvement in the Council's performance regarding the percentage of undisputed invoices paid on time, up from 78.9% in 2017/18 to 87.7%.
 - The direction of travel continues to be positive in improving Superfast Broadband connectivity, which now stands at 97.5% (up more than 1% from the previous year).
 - Two new strategic indicators relating to Trading, will establish a baseline year in respect of:
 - The amount of traded income achieved
 - £ increase in new Services to Schools business generated.

Further information is provided in section C of this report.

Achievements, Challenges and Actions

- 7.2 Committee will be aware that due to the Council's own budgetary pressures the Council Tax payable by householders has been increasing over recent years. This has led to some residents finding it more challenging to pay their council tax as well as other household bills.
- 7.3 Performance around Council Tax collection has also been impacted on by the rollout of Universal Credit (UC), which has resulted in UC claimants not fully maximising support while delays in payments to UC claimants from DWP has reduced disposable income to claimants and affected collection rates. Within the borough there are just under 10,000 households claiming UC. Some of those households are experiencing periods of time when they have little or no income due to the way that UC is assessed and paid.
- 7.5 Promotion of help and advice to residents is offered via council correspondence. Some residents are also unaware of the need to claim Council Tax Support in addition to UC. This is an ongoing area of work to maximise the take-up of Council Tax Support.
- 7.6 To support and assist our customers to pay their Council Tax, employees are encouraged to work with customers, always show empathy and understanding and arrange payment schedules with residents that are affordable. Although challenges remain, customer satisfaction is high with continued receipt of positive feedback from residents who have received and appreciated how we have been able to support them. In the future, the use of new technology will help improve our performance and service to our residents with the introduction of online forms and SMS texting will improve how we communicate with residents.
- 7.7 The progress made with superfast broadband connectivity is welcome and it is it now intended to amend the reporting of the measure with an intention to increase annually rather than set a specific target beyond 2020.
- 7.8 Committee received the corporate asset management annual delivery and performance report in December 2018. This report provides an update on the progress made against the Council's Corporate Asset Strategy & Management Plan and the year on year performance of the property portfolio.
- 7.9 The Council's Tenanted Non-Residential Portfolio (TNRP) transferred to PSP LLP, the limited liability partnership jointly owned by the Council and Public Sector plc. Three property staff have been seconded to the partnership and are based within the Civic Centre. The official start date was 1st April 2019, albeit the agreement was reached prior to this.
- 7.10 Around £2.4m of capital receipts has been secured from the disposal of surplus assets with £2.75M of net revenue income received from the TNRP (unaudited figure). The Council continues to invest in the stock, to address disrepair and improve energy efficiency measures.
- 7.11 Websites were established for the disposal of Gateshead Quays, Baltic Quarter & the Rigs, speculative office block and several properties were acquired to support service aims and provision and housing growth including:
- Longside House, Blaydon;

- Kent & Langford House;
- Autotrader House; and
- Derwent St, Chopwell & Teams Medical Centre.

- 7.12 The major works to the Civic Centre, as part of the Workspace Strategy, is currently focused on the remaining areas on the ground floor and the public spaces and reception areas. The work in the Registrars area and facilities available for wedding ceremonies has recently been upgraded. Cemeteries and Crematories, IT Business Support and Occupational Health and Health and Safety are currently being upgraded with completion date targeted within the next six-months.
- 7.13 The ongoing review has highlighted the opportunity for the Council to develop the Civic Centre as a public sector hub, whereby vacant office accommodation can be offered to other public sector/partner organisations. This will enable the Council to secure an income, reduce its running costs for the building and provide the opportunity for enhanced service delivery through partnership and cross-organisational working.
- 7.14 Lettings to external partner organisations in the Civic Centre have continued funded, in part, from monies from the One Public Estate (OPE). This has generated income for the Council and contributed to increasing synergies between partners and internal council services. New tenants include North East Combined Authority, Unison, Northumbria Police and Harrogate & District NHS Foundation Trust who are delivering the Growing Healthy Gateshead 0-19 service.
- 7.15 Additionally, work has continued with the Community Asset Transfer programme and Assets of Community Value. To date, approximately 22 former community centres have been transferred to charitable incorporated organisations or sports clubs.

8.0 Work together and fight for a better future for Gateshead -

Performance

- 8.1 There are two strategic indicators identified that support the Council pledge to work together, as follows:
- As reported at the six-month stage, the 2018 staff survey saw an increase in council employees feeling that the Council is a good place to work, with responses showing a rise from 64% in 2016 to 73% in 2018.
 - The 2018-19 year-end performance for the strategic indicator reporting on the number of days staff sickness absence per FTE (excluding school staff) has been recorded as 11.4, which is an improvement on the previous year's figure of 12.75 days.

Further information is provided in section C of this report.

Achievements, Challenges and Actions

- 8.2 Following on from the 2018 Employee Survey, Service Directors have been analysing the results and developing actions plans where appropriate. Examples of some of the actions being instigated by senior managers with their service are set out in Section B of this report. A further employee survey is scheduled for the 2019/20 period which

will begin to shape data sets on whether the measures undertaken are beginning to have a positive impact.

- 8.3 Several challenges remain on further reducing staff absence. One of the key areas is around development and application of any management action across the Council in a consistent and fair manner.
- 8.4 The Tackling Poverty in Gateshead Board meets bi-monthly and has strategic oversight of approaches to tackling poverty in Gateshead, which include:
- development of a year-long fuel poverty and switching campaign, aimed at maximising household income;
 - the 'Red Box Project', launched as a response to period poverty in young adults;
 - working with NEFirst Credit Union to grow its presence/reach in Gateshead, particularly in the west of the borough, where there is currently no presence;
 - working alongside the Blaydon Methodist Church to launch a 'Poverty Truth Commission' in Gateshead; and a
 - second poverty conference will be hosted on 15 July 2019, with a themed focus on food & fuel.
- 8.5 A key deliverable over the next six-month period is a review of advice, information, guidance and advocacy to include the services which the Council and The Gateshead Housing Company deliver, as well as those they commission.
- 8.6 In addition, other key pieces of work that are ongoing within the Council will be considering how to alleviate poverty and improve health and wellbeing, these include:
- refresh of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy;
 - creation of a new Mental Health Partnership Strategy;
 - creation of a new Advice Strategy for Gateshead;
 - a fuel poverty campaign;
 - Poverty Fund guidance to target this resource to priority need (alleviation of poverty);
 - leadership development programme; and
 - customer experience.
- 8.7 On 21 February 2019, Council agreed the Budget and Council Tax Levy for 2019/20. The Budget in 2019/20 included £13.113m of savings and income growth, which closes the funding gap for the year, in response to Government funding reductions and increased service demand pressures. The Budget outturn will be finalised in the Spring with a report to Cabinet in June 2019.
- 8.8 The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) was updated and agreed by Cabinet in July 2018. It is based on a financial forecast over a rolling five-year timeframe to 2023/24. The MTFS sets the financial context for the Council's resource allocation process and budget setting. The MTFS will be fully reviewed in late summer 2019.
- 8.9 The hugely challenging financial context is predicted to continue over the medium term and the high levels of uncertainty around future funding reforms and the economy likely to add to the potential for financial volatility and risk.
- 8.10 Providing mechanisms for the involvement of local people and communities of Gateshead in the work of the Council is a core aim. To facilitate these conversations the Council undertakes various consultation exercises each year, including the

annual public consultation on the Council's Budget which received a high level of interest compared to previous years, for instance:

- Council budget webpage views totalled 33,361. The Bowling Green's web page was viewed 5,145 times, Gateshead Fund 1,262 times and Pest Control 1,085 times.
- Gateshead Now email featured the budget consultation on three occasions, with a total of 2,296 clicks.
- Council Budget video viewed on YouTube 1,092 times.
- Three Twitter posts received 2,500 impressions and 65 engagements
- Five Facebook posts achieved a reach of 43,030 people (9,746 liked, commented or shared the posts).
- 370 people accessed the budget quiz with over 79% indicating they were more informed of the financial challenges facing the Council.
- There were 950 respondents to the question regarding Council Tax. 53% said they would support an increase in Council Tax (Council's element) to assist in the funding of services next year with 47% saying they would not.
- There were 1,118 responses received via the consultation portal.
- A petition relating to the proposal affecting Mental Health Matters was received by the Council on 11 February 2019.
- Written responses from a range of the Council's partners and stakeholders.

8.12 There were a further 12 public consultations completed between 1st Oct 2018 and 31st Mar 2019, attracting 4,735 responses. A survey about the current and future use of Gateshead Town Centre attracted the largest single response (3,204). Four further consultations were completed with specifically targeted groups of service users/customers, attracting 528 responses, and 13 local traffic schemes were consulted on, attracting 139 responses.

8.13 Over the previous six months the corporate employee forum received presentations on the outcomes of the Employee Survey, Residents Survey and an update on the new room booking system and corporate warning alerts from the Digital Project. Additionally, forum members have had the opportunity to input into the development of the new Gateshead Leadership Development Programme.

8.14 Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive regular updates on the Council's resilience and emergency planning. An update was provided on 3 December 2018. Highlights from the remainder of 2018/2019 include:

- Extensive monitoring of the potential local impact of EU Exit planning, considering the implications for Gateshead and assessing the Council's readiness to respond until a final outcome is known. This has included:
 - The Council's Corporate Risk and Resilience Group identifying any relevant mitigations and controls using existing Business Continuity; Resilience and Emergency Planning; Financial plans and processes; and the management of concurrent risks
 - Nationally participating in Government teleconferences and exit planning workshops, coordinated by MHCLG, alongside the LGA (Local Government Association), SOLACE (Society of Local Authority Chief Executives), Core Cities, Key Cities, the County Councils Network and SIGOMA (Special Interest Group of Municipal Authorities) to influence contingency planning and post Brexit policy making.
 - Regionally engaging with a network of Chief Executives throughout the region to share information on preparations to support an orderly exit

- Locally liaising closely with neighbouring local authorities on our approach and co-ordinating joint collaborative action where necessary, including taking a lead role within the Northumbria Local Resilience Forum
- Undertaking a specific EU Exit Members Seminar in January 2019
- Presenting an update report on EU Exit Preparations to Cabinet in March 2019
- Consideration of longer-term outcomes within the Council and working with regional partners to understand the future requirements and plan for these potential impacts.
- The implications of EU Exit potentially affecting the availability of Council's resources to deliver services which may impact on communities.
- Understanding the implications for Gateshead response arrangements from the findings of the *Kerslake Report*, following the Manchester bombings.
- Increased scrutiny of event plans to ensure compliance with both resilience and Crowded Places Guidance.

8.15 Over the immediate short term there will a focus on:

- Mitigating the local impacts of EU Exit and ensuring the Council is prepared for all eventualities strengthening resilience and develop any necessary contingency plans.
- Developing greater coordination of emergency responses to incidents and issues.
- Coordination of pre-planned operations led by the emergency services on a broad range of subjects including modern slavery, trafficking and exploitation issues.
- Further development of arrangements for sharing/mapping information about vulnerable people, the use of the Cabinet Office Resilience Direct system, the prioritisation of assistance and identification of support that needs to be provided during and after an incident.
- Developing an approach to explore and utilise spontaneous volunteering in an emergency or incident situation. Regionally, principles have been developed but this now needs to be translated and implemented to a Gateshead approach.
- Reviewing the Council's approach in relation to the revised CONTEST guidance and continue to assess risk of terrorism occurring.
- Reviewing our humanitarian assistance arrangements and continuing to develop relationships with voluntary organisations and community facilities, utilising the national Human Aspects Guidance.
- Developing a further Strategic Emergency Response Table Top Exercise.

8.16 As reported at the six-month stage, trading and income generation activities will be included within the 2019/20 reporting cycle. This reflects the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy objective to generate income which can be used to deliver priorities that make Gateshead a place where everyone thrives. Indicators for traded income and activities are being developed with baseline data and targets to be reported at the six-month stage, along with an overview of how this area is performing.

Section B: Update on actions from previous report

Action	Thrive Pledge	Service Area	Update
Employee Engagement	Work Together	Policy, Performance & Communications	<p>2018 Employee Survey: Service Directors have been identifying actions from the survey where they feel they can make improvements, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service managers attending other team meetings to raise the profile and promote their teams work; • Introduction of regular 6:1 meeting's with strategic director and employees from across the group; • Ensuring Achievement & Development discussions are complete • Training plan included as part of service business planning, along with succession planning. • Regularly emailing the whole service providing regular updates and information. • Locating teams together where possible/feasible. • Developing and rolling-out a Gateshead Leadership Development Programme. • Regularly reviewing flexible working practices • Encouraging employees to identify new ideas/ways of working that will enhance work-life balance and encourage managers to consider new ways of working which support employees work life balance.
Workforce Plan	Work Together	Human Resources & Workforce Development	<p>Workforce Plan Refresh –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions with Service Directors and their management teams will take place over the next reporting period, to ascertain the needs of each group and their workforce requirements. This information will inform the content of a refreshed workforce plan. • The 2019 pay award was implemented on 1st April. In partnership with trade unions, the Council intends to consider its pay and grading structure to ensure it remains fit for purpose, equality proofed and affordable. • The uptake of apprenticeships remains low in comparison with the Council's apprenticeship levy. A modest temporary resource has been allocated to enable the Council to focus on apprenticeships, including working with colleges, other local authorities and external partners, and to consider the procurement implications with a view to streamlining the offer available to managers. • Good progress has been made on developing a Leadership Development Programme. Some 'all manager' modules are currently being piloted and draft Leadership Team modules are in an advanced stage of development. The programme is scheduled to be rolled out during 2019. • Employee salary sacrifice schemes and a financial wellbeing resource have been reviewed over the past months. Due to the nature of changes in relation to vehicle emissions and taxable benefits, the Council has concluded that car leasing through a salary sacrifice scheme would not be beneficial to employees, however, other options to acquire vehicles are available through schemes adopted by the Council. A financial wellbeing resource is being progressed and should be implemented later this year. • The Ways of Working Board has supported further consideration of agile working across the Council, with emphasis being on business cases, which support agile working principles and provide benefits to the Council. Leadership Team will be working together over the coming months to develop further this concept.

Action	Thrive Pledge	Service Area	Update
Equality Impact Monitoring	Tackle Inequality	Policy, Performance & Communications	<p>Equality Impact Budget proposals</p> <p>Assessments of the budget proposals impact on equality characteristics have been made, with four out of six budget proposals currently monitored by this committee now being recommended by services to no longer require monitoring. The remaining two proposals still need to be monitored along with the identified 2019/20 Budget proposals highlighted in Appendix 1. Committee will receive an update in the six-month performance report 2019/20.</p>
Tackling Poverty	Tackle Inequality	Poverty & Inequality	<p>Tackling Poverty</p> <p>The Tackling Poverty in Gateshead Board continues to sit bi-monthly and take strategic oversight of approaches to tackling poverty in Gateshead. Highlights include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A closed Facebook group has been created giving all partners a full 24 hour, all year-round communication channel to announce, share or support efforts to circulate much needed food across all areas of Gateshead. • secured £204K from the DfE to fund the summer 2019 holiday activities and food programme (fill the gap - holiday hunger). • The Board is developing a year-long fuel poverty and switching campaign, aimed at maximising household income. • Launched the 'Red Box Project' as a response to period poverty. Schools reported that girls would regularly miss school because they couldn't afford sanitary products. • Work is ongoing with NEFirst Credit Union to grow its presence and reach in Gateshead, particularly in the west of the borough where there is currently no presence. • Working in partnership with Newcastle Building Society to bring the delivery of financial education into Gateshead Primary Schools. • Working alongside the Blaydon Methodist Church to launch a 'Poverty Truth Commission' in Gateshead. • Second poverty conference will be hosted on 15 July 2019, with a themed focus on Food & Fuel.
Digital Programme	Work Together	<p>Corporate Programme:</p> <p>Policy, Performance & Communications</p> <p>IT Services</p> <p>Exchequer Services</p>	<p>Digital Customer Indicators</p> <p>As proposed in our report of December 2018, we have provided specific measurable data linked to the increasing number of online transactions. We do not hold a full year of comparable data for all five indicators, but we have provided an analysis of the current data we have available in section C.</p> <p>Gateshead.gov.uk website received 4,186,349 views over the past 6 months, of which, 49% were viewed on a smartphone, 13% on a tablet and 28% on a computer. 24.5% of the website's audience are aged between 25-34, with 11.2% of the audience aged over 65. Statistics show that 53.1% of the people accessing our site are female.</p> <p>Local Digital Declaration</p> <p>The Council signed up to the Local Digital Declaration in October 2018 to support Local Government to design and build good digital public services. Through the Local Digital Fund, the Council (working collaboratively with Northumberland Council and Sunderland City Council) were successful in their bid for funding of £75,865 to carry out a research project to look for an online solution for Taxi Licensing application processes. You can view outputs from the project here.</p>

Action	Thrive Pledge	Service Area	Update
Digital Programme	Work Together	Corporate Programme: Policy, Performance & Communications IT Services Exchequer Services	Digital Gateshead Work Programme Over the last 6 months the following projects have been delivered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduced online processes for car park permits, fixed penalty charge notice payments and leisure centre booking online payments. • a new appointment booking system for the Registrars Service and the promotion of weddings in Gateshead. • Adult Social Care front door working group – including online forms for social care requests that aim to reduce call level volumes for Adult Social Care Direct. • Supporting Independence Service Review – reviewing customer contact. • Gateshead Now – an online news and events service. • My Gateshead customer account – a customer account so residents can log in to view payment history, track progress of completed forms, appointment bookings etc • The launch of a new room booking system for the Civic Centre with the outlook to make this self-service currently scheduled for June 2019. • New collaborative meeting room presentation equipment - standardised presentation equipment has been put into a further 31 rooms. • Launch of a new Corporate Warning Alert system. • The adoption of Microsoft 365 products. • Encouraging collaborative working using M365 SharePoint online & Teams • Supporting our employees to work remotely; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Voice to Text Project. ▪ Digital Signatures. ▪ Direct access to CareFirst. ▪ One number dial – OSMO solution. ▪ Deployment of mobile working for Domiciliary Care service (implementation of new mobile system for work allocation and rotas. Personalised training provided).
Trading	Work Together	Trading and Commercialisation	Services to Schools A key area that will be included is the work being undertaken to improve the delivery of services to schools. The Council's approach has been reviewed with several improvements being made. This includes introducing new technology and an online ordering system which has been well received by schools both in Gateshead and beyond, as they can now purchase services, book training and access on-line resources through this new system.

Section C: Performance Overview

Indicator	Thrive pledge	Service Director Lead	Target 2020	Most recent performance Year End 2018/19	Direction of Travel	Comments and Actions
% of Council Tax collected that was due to be paid	Invest in our economy	J Jopling	96.6%	95.7%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the year 2018/19, council tax collection of 95.7% is slightly below the previous year's performance of 95.9%. Performance has been impacted on by the roll out of Universal Credit, which has increased customer demands on Revenues, resulted in UC claimants not fully maximising council tax support and, delays in payments to UC claimants from DWP, has reduced disposable income to claimants affecting council tax collection rates. To assist customers, staff are encouraged to make realistic, flexible and affordable payment arrangements and the use of technology continues to be reviewed to improve collection rates.
% of Business Rates collected	Invest in our economy	J Jopling	97%	98%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the year 2018/19 business rates collection of 98% was slightly below the previous year's performance of 98.6% but above the in-year collection target of 97.4%. Collection and recovery processes are continually reviewed to further improve collection and address rates avoidance.
% of undisputed invoices paid on time	Invest in our economy	J Jopling	95%	87.7%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the year 2018/19 there has been a significant improvement from the previous year's performance of 78.9% which has largely been achieved from the further roll out of purchase cards and the review of business processes to allow speedier payment of invoices.
Speed of housing benefits claims (processing) – average time to process new claims & changes in circumstances	People and families	J Jopling	7.5 days	6.2 days		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance for 2018/19 again shows further improvement compared to previous year's performance of 7.7 days. Following Universal Credit full service roll out, the volume of new claims has reduced allowing for quicker processing times. IT improvements have also been introduced to allow further automation of changes of circumstances and customer self-service.
Employee engagement e.g. a good place to work	Work together	M Jobling/ J Barclay	70%	73%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2018 staff survey saw an increase in council employees feeling Gateshead is a good place to work from 64% in 2016's survey to 73% this year and surpassing the target for 2020.

Indicator	Thrive pledge	Service Director Lead	Target 2020	Most recent performance Year End 2018/19	Direction of Travel	Comments and Actions
Staff sickness (excluding school staff) per FTE	Work together	J Barclay	8.0 days	11.4 days		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The average sickness days per FTE for the period 2017-18 was 12.75 meaning a reduction has been seen for 2018-19. Corporate Management Team previously received a report focussing on how sickness is managed. A review of the management of sickness absence was initiated across Care Wellbeing and Learning. This review included consideration of how individual managers are being held to account for management of absence within their own teams. As a result: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR will continue to provide performance dashboards and detailed data to services and provide advice/support, so managers can take appropriate action. The review of the Council's Sickness Policy & Procedure will be progressed with suggestions for improvements being discussed with Trade Union partners. As part of the North East Better Health at Work Award the task and finish groups established continue to develop and take forward wellbeing initiatives around priority areas identified by employees. Strategic Directors & Service Directors will continue to monitor and address absence.
Improve Superfast Broadband connectivity-increase coverage in Gateshead to 98.9%	Invest in our economy	R Sheehan	98.9%	97.5%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The direction of travel continues to remain positive with a further increase in coverage of over 1% made during the year. Superfast broadband is now available to 97.5% of premises in Gateshead which compares favourably against the UK average figure of 96%. Progress is good however, it seems unlikely that the stretch target of 98.9% will be reached when the current phase of the project ends in June 2019 as stated in the indicator. However, each new project phase is about to commence to increase superfast broadband coverage further in Gateshead and it is therefore proposed to retain the indicator but to amend the wording to remove the fixed timescale, so that it becomes "Increase the coverage of superfast broadband connectivity."

Indicator	Thrive pledge	Service Director Lead	Target 2020	Most recent performance Year End 2018/19	Direction of Travel	Comments and Actions
Ensure young people leaving care are supported to have an opportunity in the Council for an apprenticeship	People and families	Janice Barclay/ Elaine Devaney	Year on year increase	2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the year 2017/18 there were 4 Care Leavers in a council apprenticeship. This number has reduced to 2. (1 left after 3 months for personal reasons therefore did not complete their apprenticeship; 1 completed in-year and has secured further employment with the Council; and 2 are due to complete their apprenticeship and of those, 1 has secured further employment with the Council. The other apprentice is leaving to pursue a different career path). The Council is looking to recruit a further 2 LAC apprenticeships to the Office of the Chief Executive and Care Wellbeing and Learning directorate. Additionally, there is an intention to recruit an Apprenticeship Co-ordinator. Part of their role will be to explore apprenticeships for LAC and care leavers.
Amount of traded income achieved	Invest in our economy	Lindsay Murray	New	Baseline year	Not available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As reported at the six-month stage, trading and income generation activities will be included within the 2019/20 reporting cycle with a baseline set.
£ increase in new Services to Schools business generated	Invest in our economy	Lindsay Murray	New	Baseline year	Not available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As reported at the six-month stage, trading and income generation activities will be included within the 2019/20 reporting cycle with a baseline set.
Percentage increase in online transactions: a) Online payments	Supporting our communities	Marisa Jobling	New	18.2%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2018-19, we received £18.48m in income from online payments which is a 18.7% increase from the previous year. We expect this figure to rise substantially as we continue to increase the number of payments that can be made on our websites at a rate of 5-10% per annum.
Percentage increase in online transactions: b) Fly-tipping reports				Baseline year		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5,003 fly tips reported by the public in 2018/19, 57.4% reported online and 42.65% recorded over the telephone.
Percentage increase in online transactions c) Garden Waste subscriptions				3.86%		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16,275 garden waste subscriptions paid for online in 2018/19, compared to 15,793 in 2017/18.

Indicator	Thrive pledge	Service Director Lead	Target 2020	Most recent performance Year End 2018/19	Direction of Travel	Comments and Actions
Percentage increase in online transactions d) Registrars appointments	Supporting our communities	Marisa Jobling	New	Baseline year		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online Registrars birth and death appointments were launched on 13 March 2019. Up until 26 April 2019, out of 479 appointments 48% were online and 52% over the telephone. As the service continues to be promoted we anticipate the online figure to increase.
Percentage increase in online transactions e) Adult social care forms				Baseline year		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since the Adult Social Care online forms were launched in November 2018 we have received 1,891 online contacts and enquiries made up of 546 initial care assessments; 450 care and support reviews, 544 adult safeguarding reports and 351 general enquiries.

1.0 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.1 The Council's strategic approach of making Gateshead a place where everyone thrives identifies a commitment to reduce the levels of inequality that are apparent within the borough.
- 1.2 To achieve a balanced budget in 2019/20, the Council reviewed all areas of spend which, in some instances, resulted in budget proposals that reduced service provision that directly supports the protected characteristics as defined under the Equality Act 2010. The Council's role is to mitigate the levels of disproportionate impact identified in the equality impact assessments, wherever possible, following implementation of proposals.

2.0 Monitoring the impact of budget proposals

- 2.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010; advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups; and foster good relations between people from different groups.
- 2.2 Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) on the individual budget proposals identifies any disproportionate impact in relation to the protected characteristics as described within the Equality Act 2010. The assessments also identify mitigation where applicable.
- 2.3 Several budget proposals were considered as having a positive or neutral impact. However, the following proposals where potential disproportionate impact was highlighted, along with possible mitigation, are set out below:

2014/15 – Sport and Physical Activity

- 2.4 Following a review in 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).
- 2.5 The service now provides more commercially focused activity to generate income, whilst continuing to grow activity aimed to the Council's Thrive Agenda. The measures contained in the proposal and implemented are considered to have had no detrimental effect on equality characteristics. It is recommended that continued monitoring is no longer required.

2016/17 - Reduction in funding for NHS Health Checks

- 2.6 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.
- 2.7 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, the current uptake is 50%.
- 2.8 In 2018/19 the NHS Health Check Programme service specification included changes to reflect national best practice guidance, the introduction of a standardised invitation and results letter, and a new data collection approach. The specification includes guidance for providers on targeting invitations and offering NHS Health Checks in keeping with the

Equality Act 2010. There was a further reduction in funding in 2018/19, which was achieved by the reduced demand for health checks, which is a trend also seen nationally. A Gateshead Council internal audit on the health checks programme was completed in 2018/19, with recommendations made and completed with none relating specifically to equalities.

2.9 The NHS Health Check programme uptake is monitored quarterly by Public Health with annual monitoring of uptake by age, gender and ethnicity. This is reported to the NHS Health Check Implementation Group. It is recommended that no further monitoring is required.

2017/18 - LiveWell Programme

2.10 Following the decommissioning of the LiveWell integrated lifestyle service, funding was allocated to establish a Making Every Contact Count (MECC) programme. The aim was to provide a sustainable approach in Gateshead and support the delivery of consistent healthy lifestyle information and enabling individuals to engage in conversations about their health, at scale, across organisations in Gateshead. In 2017, Council agreed temporary mitigation funding, initially until 31 March 2019, which was later extended to 30th September 2019.

2.11 Development of the programme included appointment of four team members to develop and deliver a MECC training offer and to allocate grant funding for capacity building for the approach in the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS). The programme is due to close at the end of September 2019, and an exit strategy is in the process of being actioned.

2.12 The MECC team of three MECC development leads plus a resource and information assistant have been in post since early 2017, taking forward a programme of work with a wide range of VCS providers as part of the grant funding, as well as supporting the embedding of MECC within two council services; Adult Social Care (Domiciliary Care) and Library Services, as well as The Gateshead Housing Company.

2.13 The MECC development leads have responsibilities for delivery and development in the areas of; substance misuse, lifestyle advice (healthy weight, nutrition and physical activity) and public mental health. A comprehensive MECC training programme on health and wellbeing topics has been developed and is being delivered to VCS organisations in Gateshead to support further skills development. They are working closely with the 19 VCS grant organisations to help them further embed MECC principles within their organisational policies, thereby sustaining the approach into the future. Work has also been undertaken to identify additional groups and communities who have been identified as a priority but have not yet accessed MECC training and information. These included the Jewish community, LGBTQ groups, veterans and Grandparents Plus.

2.14 MECC is currently being developed at a regional level as part of the Integrated Care System (ICS) arrangements and because of the success of the programme in Gateshead, the local MECC Team are heavily involved in the development and delivery of the programme across the region. Work includes the development of a 'Train the Trainer' programme, development of resources and training programmes and input into social media developments. The regional programme will help increase the sustainability of the approach in Gateshead with all areas benefitting from regional leadership on the

programme. It is likely that some of the current team will move over at the end of their contract to regional roles.

- 2.15 The Council will also benefit and contribute to the sustainability of the programme with a team member returning to their substantive post at the end of the contract, in a position to continue the delivery of the model in this substantive role.
- 2.16 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 is being undertaken by Northumbria University with findings published later in 2019. The findings from the evaluation and the progress of the regional model will be taken to the Care, Health & Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their consideration. It is therefore recommended that monitoring is no longer required by this committee.

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

- 2.17 Since the new SAILS - supported and independent living services for young people Housing pathway for people aged 16 to 25 years commenced in July 2018, the following outputs up to the 18th February 2019 include:
- a total of 113 young people accessed the service, covering 119 total referrals;
 - 18 young people were successfully referred to the High Needs, Clinical intervention, Shared Living Service;
 - 2 young people were successfully referred to the Medium Needs, Semi Independent Living Service;
 - 14 young people were successfully referred to the Taster Flats Service;
 - a young person was referred to the Supported Lodgings Service;
 - of 119 referrals, 53 young people have moved outside the pathway, i.e. not homeless or in custody;
 - of 119 referrals, a total of 8 young people returned home; and a
 - total of 14 young people have been evicted for a variety of reasons, including arson and threats to staff. Though evicted, work with these young people is continuing.
- 2.18 All 6 services that constitute the SAILS Pathway are under ongoing review and scrutiny via KPI returns, Outcomes Scoring Data, the functioning of the multi-disciplinary panel, individual contact with care management, Psychologically Informed Environments/ Psychologically Informed Practice self-assessment reviews, and quality assurance visits by a dedicated contract management officer.
- 2.19 The Council is working with Durham University to prepare an outline proposal for further funding - via Public Health Practice Evaluation Scheme - to enable a comprehensive practice evaluation of the services. As key elements of the services include on-site or mobile psychological interventions, a proposal has been submitted to Economic & Social Research Council for further research funding linked to wellness. It is recommended that continued monitoring remains necessary.

2018/19 Recommissioning Learning Disability Care Packages

- 2.20 As part of the project to review commissioning arrangements for people with learning disabilities, a small multi-disciplinary team (Achieving Change Together team) was established under the service manager for Adult Social Care. Specifically designed to fit

in with the Thrive Agenda of ensuring people reach their full potential ensuring packages are appropriate to need and assists in helping service users maximise opportunities to fulfil their potential.

2.21 The ACT team is focusing on:

- Revisiting the depth of assessment and review - staff to assess individual needs.
- Looking at process/procedures, why things are done can they be done better.
- Focus on Independent Supported Living (ISLs) - developing clear pathways from residential into and out of ISL-reablement officers to go into ISL's and observe to build up an in-depth knowledge of service users to improve assessment.
- Work with providers on maximising the development of independence, particularly to the extent that support needs may be reduced by opportunities for example in paid employment, volunteering and independence.
- Re-commissioning (including decommissioning where appropriate) of specialist learning disabilities health resources.
- Challenging providers by using the additional time allocated to get to know the case history of the service user to better understand, observe and ensure care charged for by providers is needed and being provided.

2.22 By the end of the financial year 2018-19, 132 cases (including 25 placed out of borough) have been or are in the process of being reviewed. Case studies of improved outcomes are being compiled and savings identified in partnership with service users, families and providers. A second cohort is in the process of being selected. It is recommended that continued monitoring is no longer required by this committee.

2018/19 – Review of Carers Services

2.23 The carers contracts have been awarded and a mobilisation period is currently underway. The two organisations awarded the contracts are working together to migrate staff where TUPE applies as well as carers who are transferring between the outgoing and incoming service provisions. The new services will commence on 1 May 2019 as follows:

- Carers Trust Tyne and Wear will be responsible for delivering services and support to Young Carers aged up to 18 years. They will also offer carers some time away from their caring role by providing personal and emotional support to any adults aged 18 years and over who they care for.
- Gateshead Carers Association will be responsible for delivering services and support to Adult Carers aged 18 years and over.

2.24 All services will be monitored by Commissioning to ensure service provision meets the quality requirements set out in the relevant Quality Service Review frameworks. Within the initial first year of the contract the services will receive a light touch review at three and six months and then a full review up to 12 months. Reviews will include action plans where necessary. Providers will also be submitting quarterly performance monitoring information. As the contract has only recently been awarded, continued monitoring is recommended.

2019/20 Budget Proposals

2.25 The budget proposals identified as potentially affecting protected characteristics as part of the 2019/20 budget setting process will be reported in the next six-month performance report to this OSC later in the year.

- Deletion of posts in the Early Help Service.

- Deletion of posts in the Children and Families Service.
- No longer providing maintenance for bowling greens and football pitches
- New or increased charges for adult social care services:
 - Day services; and
 - Meals in day centres and promoting independence centres.
- New accommodation charge for aftercare post discharge from hospital.
- New charge for Guidepost drop-in service.
- Reduction in the standard allowance of Disability Related Expenditure.
- Removal of contribution to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.