

**GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**COMMUNITIES AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**  
**COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Monday, 7 March 2016**

**PRESENT:** Councillor P Dillon (Chair)

Councillors: T Graham, L Caffrey, B Coates, P Craig,  
D Davidson, S Dickie, F Hindle, M Hood, K McCartney,  
J McClurey and A Wheeler

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Councillors J Wallace

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors K Dodds, K Ferdinand, J Graham, H Hughes,  
C McHugh and J Simpson

**CPL30 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

**CPL31 REVIEW OF OPPORTUNITIES TO PROMOTE RURAL GATESHEAD - INTERIM REPORT**

The Committee considered a report that set out the initial findings of the review which has examined opportunities to enhance the promotion of rural Gateshead as both a tourism and business location.

For the review, four evidence gathering sessions were undertaken and evidence was heard from:

- Officers from the Council – Economic and Housing Growth Service, Culture, Communities, Leisure and Volunteering
- NewcastleGateshead Initiative (NGI) – Destination Marketing Organisation
- The National Trust – Property Manager, Gibside Estate
- Newcastle University – Centre for Rural Economy
- A Rural Business Panel – Private Sector Businesses

As a result of the evidence gathering sessions, the following emerging issues were identified:-

- The untapped potential of many of the boroughs rural assets and a lack of visitor accommodation
- The need to work with the private sector to maximise the investment in the tourism businesses and infrastructure
- The lack of suitable, affordable business space in rural areas
- The need to improve business communication and collaboration and ensure access to business support
- The need to continue to work with local, regional, national and international

- partners to grow the number of day visitors and overnight stays
- Recognition of the impact of the rural area on health and wellbeing
- Recognition of the need for enhanced partnership working to maximise the economic benefit for rural communities

The Committee welcomed the recommendations which summarised the key findings of the review, as detailed within paragraph 19 of the report.

Reference was made to recommendation (vii) and the desire for NGI to take a more proactive role in rural destination marketing. The Committee recognise that NGI market the central area of Gateshead and Newcastle but felt that the recommendation should reflect that marketing should be for the whole of Gateshead, and that this include rural destination marketing.

It was also suggested that where there may be increased employment/tourism opportunities, potential conflicts for example increased traffic on local roads, needs to be considered and that a recommendation be included to recognise this and the need for impact assessments for any potential developments to be undertaken.

- RESOLVED -
- i) That the comments of the Committee on the interim report be noted
  - ii) That the draft recommendations, including the proposed changes outlined by the Committee, be agreed as the basis for the final report

## **CPL32 IMPACT OF THE EARLY WORK ON PLACE SHAPING FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

Consideration was given to a progress report that provided an update on the Impact of the Early Work on Place Shaping for Health and Wellbeing.

The Committee were reminded that the goals for improving health and life expectancy require a transformational approach over a period of 20 years.

The Committee were informed of progress during 2015/16 as follows:-

### **Take Away Nutrition Project**

The Council have worked with Public Health England to identify legal barriers to controlling the proliferation of unhealthy food outlets. Gateshead has become the first area in the North East to introduce tighter controls on the basis of health on where and how many fast food outlets can be opened. The Council's Supplementary Planning Document was adopted in March 2015 and since this time, three new planning applications for hot food takeaways have been refused. The number of this type of planning applications has also reduced.

### **Active Travel**

There has been further implementation and development of the Government funded 'Schools Go Smarter' and 'Go Smarter to Work' projects. Funding for these projects

runs out at the end of 2015/16 and work is underway on developing legacy projects to take forward elements of this work. Additional external funding was secured through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund and Cycle City Challenge to enable additional investment in improvements to cycle routes in Gateshead town centre. There is also continued investment in cycle and pedestrian networks using Local Transport Plan and other funding.

### **Financial Inclusion**

The Gateshead Financial Inclusion Partnership has continued to take a multi-agency approach to addressing financial exclusion. Welfare Reform changes and the introduction of Universal Credit are being closely monitored by the partnership to identify any potential support requirements at an early stage.

In addition to the work of the Partnership, the Council's Economic and Housing Growth service have also delivered two internal Credit Union events for employees offering savings via salary reduction. In partnership with Barclays and Northumbria Police, the service has delivered Fraud and Scam Awareness Workshops aimed at Gateshead's most vulnerable residents. Sanction Prevention Workshops have also been delivered in partnership with Jobcentre Plus and Citizens Advice Bureau. Work is also ongoing with Tyne and Wear Fire & Rescue which will see a Financial Inclusion support leaflet distributed to vulnerable residents during Fire Officers regular visits to vulnerable households.

The Committee queried if there would be a move to standardise the size of takeaway food containers however they were informed that this would be unlikely and that there is little work being done to tackle the nutritional value of takeaway meals.

The Committee welcomed the policies which are in place regarding the number of hot food takeaways but commented that smartphone apps can increase the use of such premises if they provide a delivery service.

The Committee were advised that the three planning applications for hot food takeaways which were refused have all been appealed. To date there has been one decision from the Planning Inspectorate and that was to dismiss the appeal.

The Committee queried if any new applications were to come forward could there be scope to place a time limit on any permission granted but they were advised that this information would need to be clarified. The Committee were however informed that should a hot food takeaway premise close, this could be re-opened without a new planning permission as it would already have the required planning use class.

In relation to active travel, the Committee queried if there were any up to date maps available that informed of the cycling routes across the borough. The Committee were informed that this would be looked in to along with more up to date figures for those people that are now cycling or walking to work.

The Committee welcomed the work being undertaken to inform residents about illegal money lending and highlighted the importance for this work to be ongoing. The Committee also asked that where successful prosecutions have taken place against illegal money lending, the communications around such issues be reviewed

and increased.

The Committee suggested that as there are many councillors which are also school governor reps, it may be beneficial to include information relating to financial inclusion within school information packs.

- RESOLVED -
- i) That the comments of the Committee and the progress made on the Place Shaping strand of work be noted
  - ii) That the activities outlined within the report be continued and that the Committee receive a further progress report in April 2017

### **CPL33 THE FLOOD AND WATER MANAGEMENT ACT 2010 - ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT**

Consideration was given to a report that informed of progress in the implementation of the duties and responsibilities of the Council as lead local flood authority.

The Committee were reminded of the lead local flood authority duties that include:

Preparing, maintaining and publishing a local flood risk management (FRM) strategy to link to the Environment Agency's (EA) national and local strategies

Preparation of the strategy is ongoing and the draft document has been through consultation with FRM partners and is expected to be approved by Cabinet in April

Preparing, maintaining and publishing a register of third party FRM infrastructure assets

The register has been established and work is ongoing to identify critical culverts

Investigating reported flooding incidents and publishing a register of investigations

A register of reported flooding incidents has been established. Storms in December 2015 and January 2016 were significant but were not on the same magnitude as those in 2012 which were exceptional and well beyond the design capacity of typical piped drainage systems.

Over 50 minor infrastructure improvements to highway/land drainage to reduce the risk of future flooding have been carried out since 2012. In addition, twelve flooding locations required detailed investigations to determine the precise mechanism of the flooding and possible improvements to drainage systems

Statutory consultee to the local planning authority (LPA) for sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)

In April 2015 the government introduced regulations requiring major developments to incorporate SuDS as part of the site surface water management systems. The Highway and Flood Risk Management team has added a dedicated SuDS engineer to respond to SuDS approval processes.

Consenting of ordinary watercourse works (diverting, culverting, restricting flow etc)  
Consenting procedures have been developed in conjunction with the EA and to date six applications for works have been received

Co-operation with and oversight of other FRM bodies

Quarterly liaison meetings have been established by officers from the Transport Strategy FRM team with colleagues from the EA and Northumbrian Water

The Committee queried information within the schedule of detailed flooding investigations (appended to the report) and why this did not include details of flooding incidents from 2015/16. The Committee were informed that following incidents of flooding in 2015/16 a programme of small improvement works was established. The schedule appended to the report contains information relating to significant flooding incidents (including flooding to properties) and large scale schemes that includes joint working with Northumbrian Water.

Reference was made to two flooding incidents within the west of the borough and the Committee were informed that communication with the residents affected has taken place.

The Committee queried if Defra are intending to release any information/regulations regarding run-off, in particular from farmer's fields. The Committee were informed that run-off from fields can be for a number of reasons but there are no regulations in place to date.

Reference was made to the One Core Strategy and the number of greenbelt sites which could now be developed and the Committee queried how potential issues relating to flooding (where there would not be a history of flooding) would be dealt with. The Committee were informed that this is something which would be addressed if a planning application was received but that this would also need to be raised with the relevant service director in relation to staff resources.

- RESOLVED -
- i) That the statutory responsibilities of the Council for local flood risk management and the measures taken to comply with these duties, and the comments of the committee be noted
  - ii) That the local flood risk management outcomes of all local agencies be reviewed and that an annual progress report be received in March 2017