

TITLE OF REPORT: The Council Plan – Six Month Assessment of Performance and Delivery 2016/2017

**REPORT OF: Mike Barker, Acting Chief Executive
Paul Dowling, Strategic Director, Communities and Environment**

SUMMARY

This report provides the six month assessment of performance and delivery for the period April to September 2016 in relation to the Council Plan 2015-2020.

Background

1. The report forms part of the Council's performance management framework and gives an overview of progress for the priorities appropriate to the remit of Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC).
2. The Council Plan 2015-2020 was approved by Cabinet on the 14 July 2015, to enable the Council, along with partners, to be better placed to achieve positive outcomes for the people of Gateshead and deliver the ambition of Vision 2030.
3. Gateshead's Sustainable Community Strategy Vision 2030 was also refreshed and approved by Cabinet on 3 November 2015.

2020 Target Setting

4. As part of the Council's performance management framework, five year targets were replaced with a single 2020 target with strategic indicators identified as either target or tracker indicators. These targets were approved by Cabinet on 12 July 2016.

Delivery and Performance

5. This report sets out the achievements, key actions for the next six months as well as areas that require improvement in relation to the outcomes of Prosperous Gateshead, Live Well Gateshead and Live Love Gateshead.
6. Where performance is available at the six month stage for relevant strategic indicators relating to this OSC, this has also been provided.
7. Progress as to how well the Council is performing in relation to the equalities objectives where information is available at this stage is also provided in this report.

Recommendation

8. It is recommended that the Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
 - (i) consider whether the activities undertaken during April 2016 to September 2016 are achieving the desired outcomes in the Council Plan 2015-2020;
 - (ii) agree that the report be referred to Cabinet on 24 January 2017, with the recommendations from the Community and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their consideration.

Communities and Place Overview and Scrutiny Committee

April to September 2016

Council Plan – Six Month Assessment of Performance and Delivery 2016/17

Portfolio:

- Economy – Councillor G Haley
- Environment & Transport – Councillor M Brain
- Housing – Councillor L Twist
- Communities & Volunteering – Councillor L Green
- Culture, Sport & Leisure – Councillor J McElroy

Lead Officer: Paul Dowling, Strategic Director, Communities and Environment.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

Communities and Place OSC

Chair – Councillor P Dillon

Vice Chair – Councillor T Graham

The committee undertakes scrutiny and review in relation to:

- Economic Development and Lifelong learning
 - Culture, including leisure, arts, sport and recreation
 - Housing, physical development and regeneration
 - Transport planning and public transport
 - Local environment including climate change
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Summary

This report sets out the six month performance for the period 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2016 in line with the Council's performance management framework. The focus of this report is the new Strategic Outcome Indicators (SOIs) listed below that fall within the remit of the OSC Communities and Place.

Where there is a measurable six monthly performance update available, it is set out in the report with a red, amber or green rating, depending on current performance. Where a performance update was unavailable at year end 2015/16, it will also be set out in the report with a red, amber or green rating.

Due to changes to the reporting frequency of the SOIs from 2016-2020, all but two of the SOIs are now targeted to 2020 and therefore, where data frequency allows, a trend analysis and geographical comparison has been given rather than a traffic-light performance update. All further performance updates/results will be reported at the year-end 2016/2017 where possible.

Delivery of the Council Plan 2015-2020
New Strategic Outcome Indicators 2016 - 2020



The following strategic outcome indicators for Communities and Place OSC have been devised going forward from 2016-2020:

- PG1 – Working age population – number of residents aged 16-64
 - PG2 – Increase Overall Housing Supply
 - PG3 – Proportion of Long-term Empty Homes
 - PG4 – Number of Enterprises in Gateshead
 - PG5 – Employment Rate – people economically active in employment aged 16-64
 - PG6 – Economic Activity Rate - % of all people aged 16-64
 - PG7 – Proportion of Residents receiving Main-Out-of-Work Benefits
 - PG8 – Gross Average Weekly Pay of Residents (not self-employed)
 - PG9 – Residents employed in occupations requiring Higher Skills Levels
 - PG10 – Number of Jobs in Gateshead Council
 - PG11 – Proportion of Residents Self-employed
 - PG12 – Gross Weekly Pay of Jobs in Gateshead
 - PG13 – Proportion of Gateshead Jobs paying less than the Living Wage
 - PG14 – Proportion of Residents with No Qualifications - aged 16-64
 - PG15 – Proportion of Residents qualified to NVQ3 or above
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- LL2 – Consulted/Engaged Population
 - LL3 – Communities Get On Well Together
 - LL5 – Increase Formal Volunteering
 - LL6 – Increase the Number of Visitors to Gateshead
 - LL7 – Number of New VCS Organisations Supported
 - LL8 – Number of Visits to Libraries per 1,000 population
 - LL9 – Improve the Recycling Rate
 - LL10 – Increasing Homes in the Highest Energy Efficiency Bands
 - LL11a – Reduce Council Carbon Emissions – actual
 - LL11b – Reduce Council Carbon Emissions – weather corrected
 - LL12 – Percentage of Renewable/Low-carbon Energy Generated Locally
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- LW1 – Increase the Number of Affordable Homes
 - LW26 – Number of people undertaking Sport and Activity Recreation – aged 16+
 - LW35a – Access to Main centres – daytime
 - LW35b – Access to Main Centres – evening
 - LW35c – Access to Key Employment – daytime
 - LW35d – Access to Key Employment – evening
 - LW36a – People Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI) in Road Traffic Collisions
 - LW36b – Children Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI) in Road Traffic Collisions

Year End Performance 2015/2016

At the 2015/16 year end stage the following three strategic outcome indicators were not reported in the Year End 2015/16 performance report due to delays in validation of the figures. Following validation of the figures, a performance update for each of these can be seen below:

CP10 - Council Carbon Emissions (Contributes to Live Love Gateshead)

Indicator	2014/15 Figure	Traffic Light	Trend
CP10a Reducing Council Carbon Emissions, A) Actual Figure	26.1% (Reduction)		↑
CP10b Reducing Council Carbon Emissions, B) Weather Corrected Figure	27.2% (Reduction)		↑


Actual greenhouse gas emissions from Gateshead Council operations are 12.8% lower than last year and 26.1% lower than in 2007/8.

Accounting for variability in annual temperatures, weather-corrected emissions also fell 14.5% on last year and are now 27.2% down on 2007/8.

Breaking this down into the main areas of energy and fuel use, we can see where progress is being made, as follows:

- Gas consumption decreased by 3.4%
- Electricity consumption in buildings fell by 5.8%
- Streetlights electricity use fell by a further 12.5% as the effect of further energy efficiency lighting replacement took effect.
- Business travel has remained steady down 54% since 2007/08.
- Fleet transport dropped minimally by another 1%
- Landfill gas emissions have dropped substantially, since the problems in 2013/14 and are now down by 49% on 2007/08, as the gas produced significantly reduces.

CP12 - Housing Growth (Contributes to Prosperous Gateshead)

Indicator	2015/16 Figure	2015/16 Target	Traffic Light	Trend
CP12 Housing Growth - increase the number of homes across Gateshead	251	538		↑

There has been a decrease in the number of new builds this year, when compared with 2014/15 (653). This may be due to lack of confidence in the local market and inability to address viability issues associated with the brownfield land developments.

However, the number of demolitions has reduced significantly from 2014/15 (611). It is anticipated that the net completions will continue to grow in 2016/17, as developments across the Borough progress.

CP13 - Accessibility to service by Public Transport
(Contributes to Live Love Gateshead)

Unfortunately there has been a further delay with the figures for this indicator due to changes in the way that it is recorded. As soon as the figures are validated they will be reported.

UPDATE:

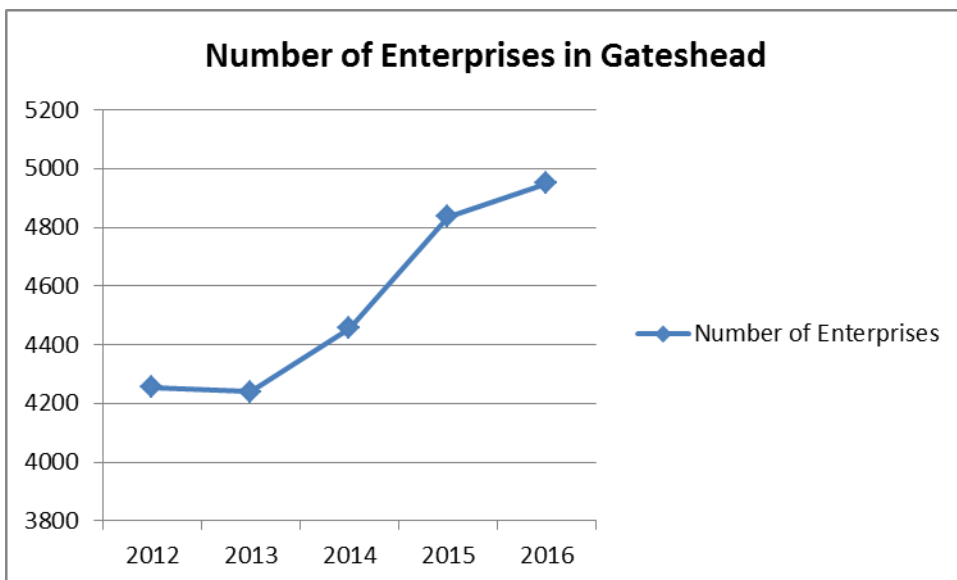
LW1 – Increase the Number of Affordable Homes
(Contributes to Live Well Gateshead)

Please note that the 2020 target for LW1 has now been set at 543.

Six Month 2016/17 Performance

A tracking time-series of performance up to 30 September 2016 for the following strategic outcome indicators is noted below. Where possible a comparison with the NE region and GB average are also shown.

PG4 – Number of Enterprises in Gateshead
(Contributes to Prosperous Gateshead)

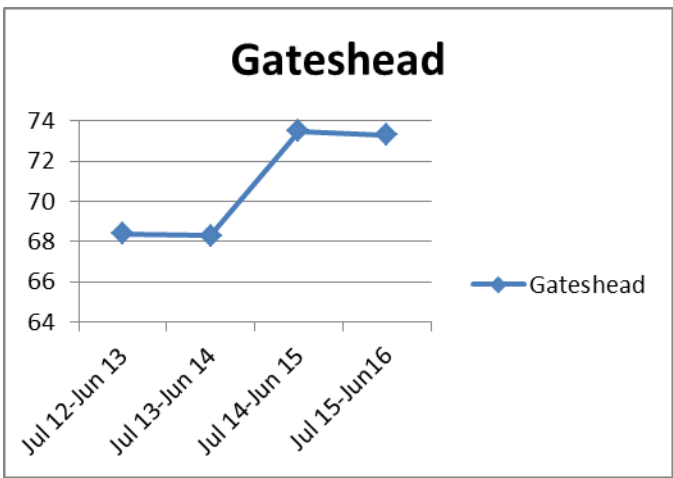
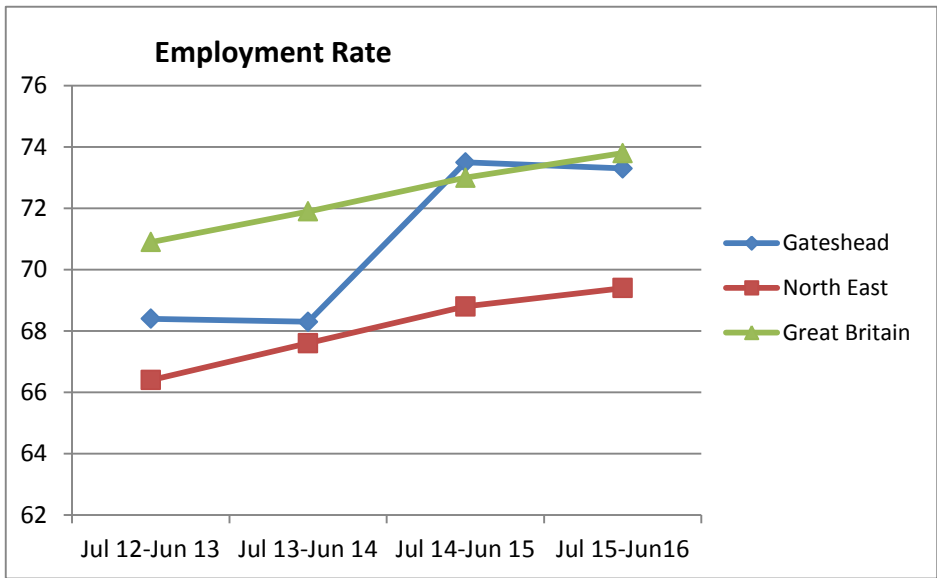


The number of enterprises in Gateshead continues on an upwards trend.

Most recent figures show that for 2016 there are 4,950 enterprises in Gateshead compared to 4,835 in 2015. This represents a 2.4% increase year on year. In 2014 there were 4,455 enterprises in Gateshead, compared to 4,240 in 2013. This shows that there was a 5% increase in the number of businesses from the previous year.

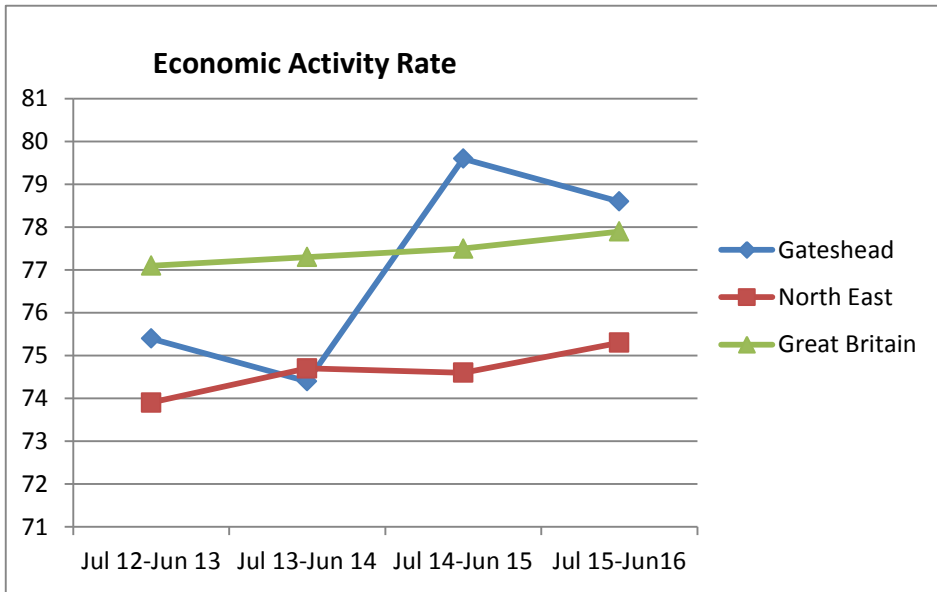
A target of 4,835 active enterprises was set for 2015/16. This target has been met as the actual number of enterprises was higher than anticipated. The next release of business data will be June 2017.

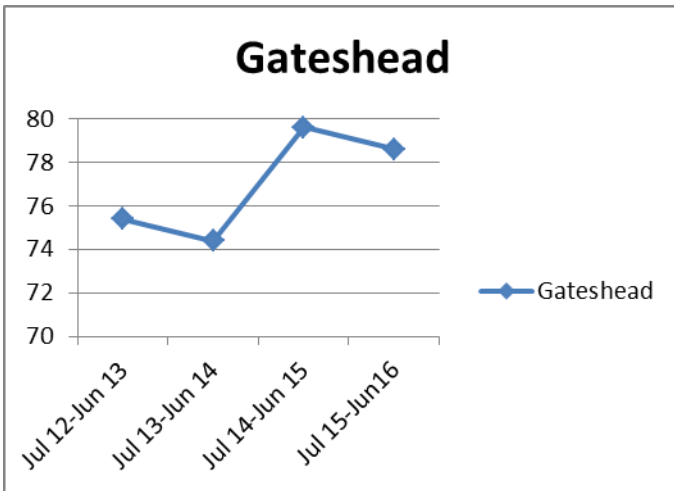
PG5 – Employment Rate – people economically active and in employment aged 16-64
(Contributes to Prosperous Gateshead)



As displayed in the graphs above, most recent data shows that although Gateshead is significantly outperforming the NE region for the Employment Rate, it has recently fell back below the GB average, although only slightly. There has been a marginal reduction of 0.3% on the same period of 2014-15. Like many of the Labour Market statistics, Gateshead appears to be less consistent than both the NE region and the GB average as figures seem to change quite rapidly at times and plateau at others. This highlights an issue with sustainability in Gateshead.

PG6 – Economic Activity Rate - % of all people aged 16-64 (Prosperous Gateshead)



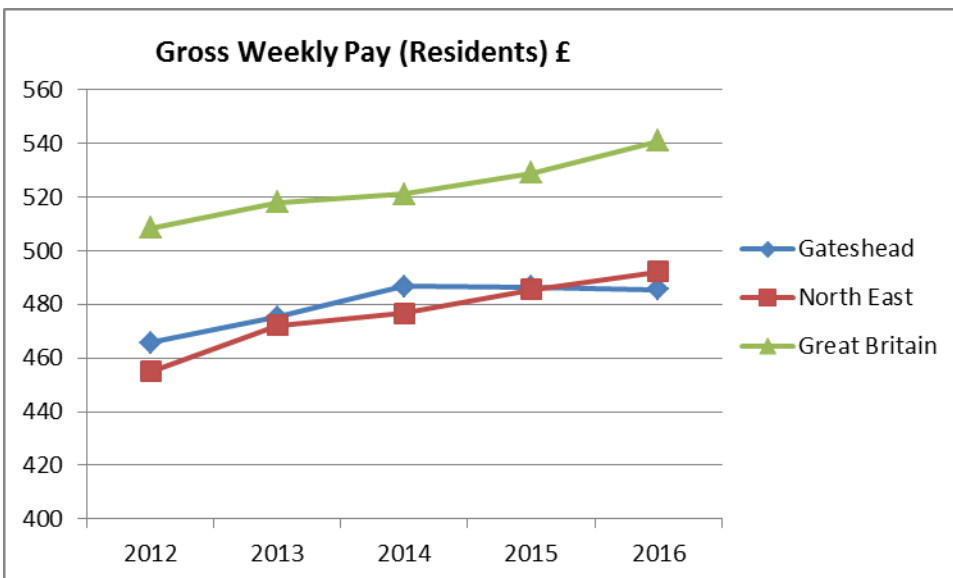


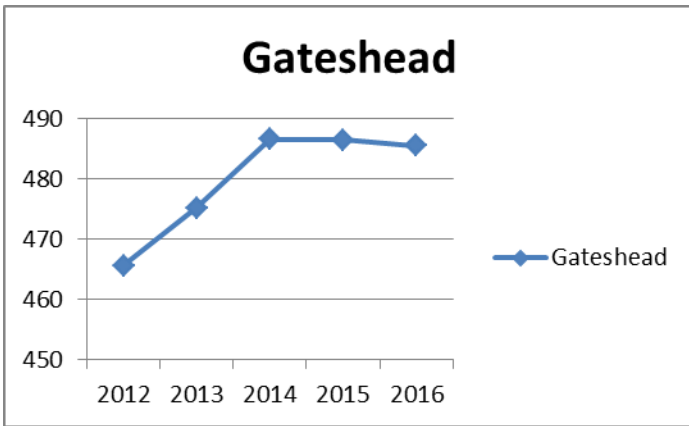
The trend for the Economic Activity Rate in Gateshead follows the trend for the Employment Rate and so the same commentary and analysis applies to both. Gateshead appears to struggle with sustaining Economic Activity levels and has seen a reduction of 1.3% when compared to the same period of 2014-15. It does, however, still remain significantly above the NE region and, unlike the Employment Rate; it currently remains above the GB average as well.

PG7 – Proportion of Residents Receiving Main Out-of-work Benefits
(Contributes to Prosperous Gateshead)

Please note that due to a delay with ONS, PG7 is unable to be reported at this moment in time as the data has not been updated at its source since February 2016 – this data was provided in the Year-end report.

PG8 – Gross Average Weekly Pay of Residents (not self-employed)
(Contributes to Prosperous Gateshead)

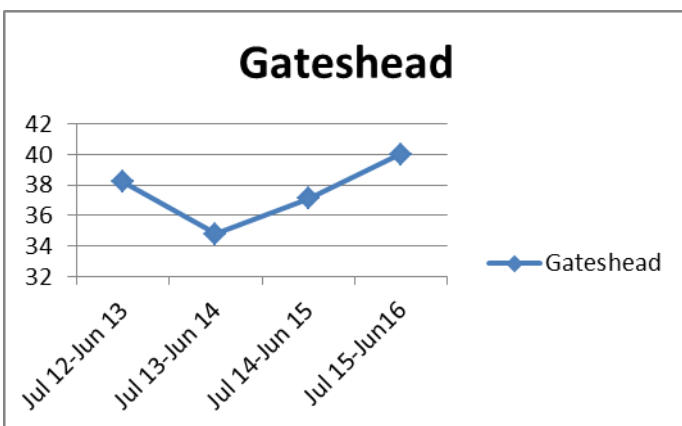
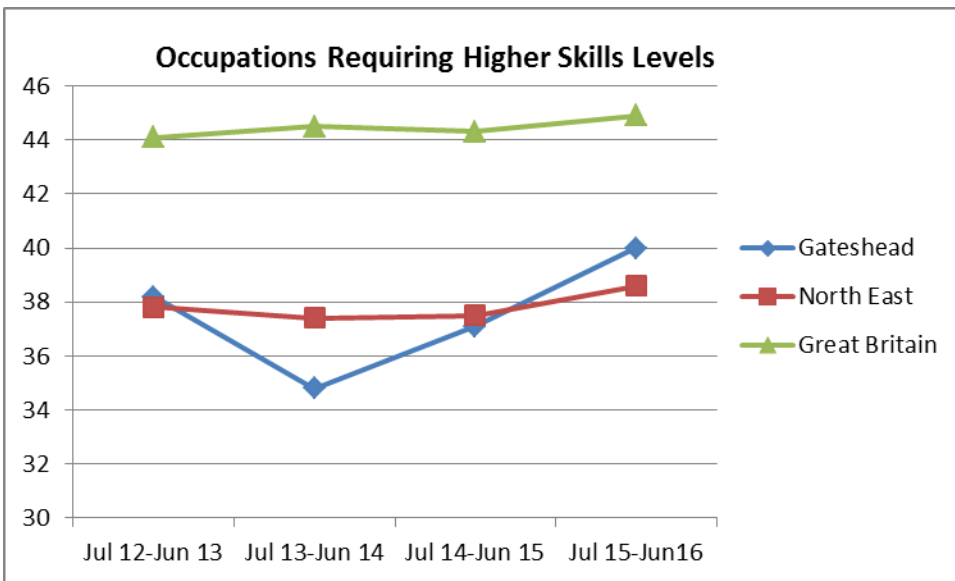




As shown above, most recent data shows that wages for Gateshead Residents have actually decreased (marginally) in 2016 to £485.50 from £486.50 in 2015. Although this is only a 0.2% decrease, it means Gateshead has fallen below the NE average for the first time since 2010 for this indicator.

Where the GB average and the NE region appear to be quite consistent across the time-series, Gateshead appears to have had a steep upwards trend between 2012 and 2014 but then seems to have almost plateaued in the last 2-3 years. The NE region and GB appear not to have done so and continue to consistently increase year-on-year.

PG9 – Residents Employed in Occupations Requiring Higher Skills Levels
(Contributes to Prosperous Gateshead)



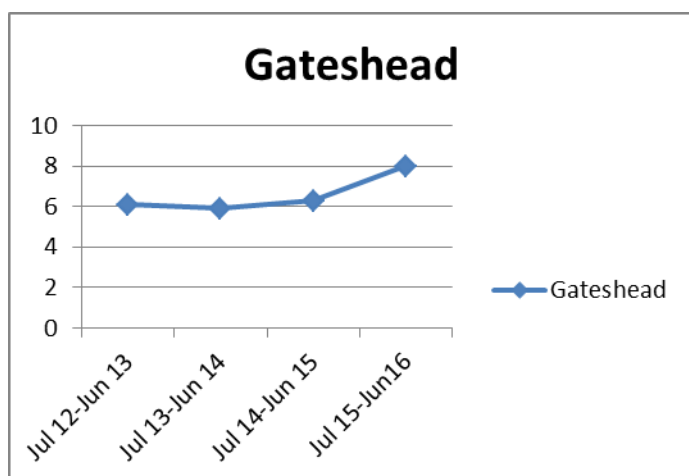
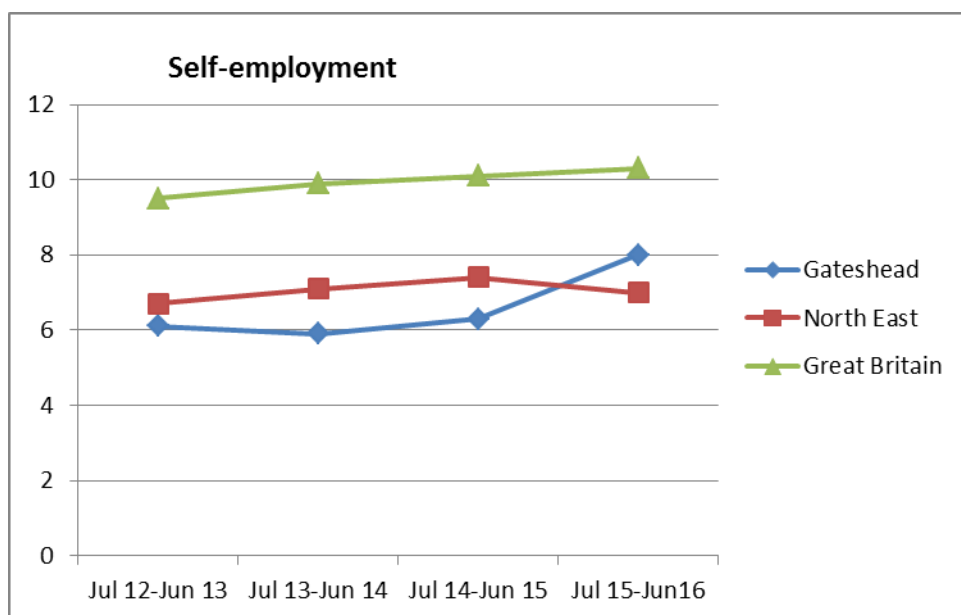
Most recent data shows that for 2015-2016 the proportion of residents employed in occupations requiring higher skills levels is now at 40%; up from 37.1% for the same period in 2014-2015.

Gateshead is now performing better than the NE region for this indicator for the first time in three years and this, following a dip in 2013-2014, has been consistently increasing.

Despite both the region and Gateshead continuing to perform at a substantially lower level than the GB average, it must be noted that, over the whole period shown, Gateshead's figures have increased by 1.8% where the GB average has only increased by 0.8%.

It is also important to consider that, although residents employed in higher skilled occupations is increasing, the gross weekly pay of residents (as shown previously in the report) is actually decreasing which means it is likely that Gateshead residents are travelling outside of Gateshead to work.

PG11 – Proportion of Residents Self-employed
(Contributes to Prosperous Gateshead)

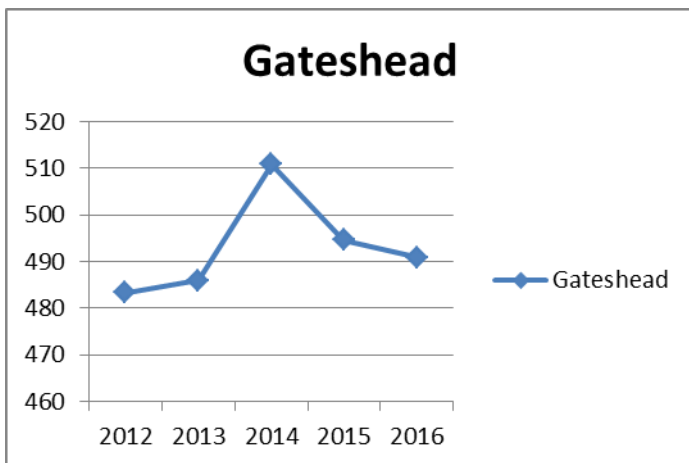
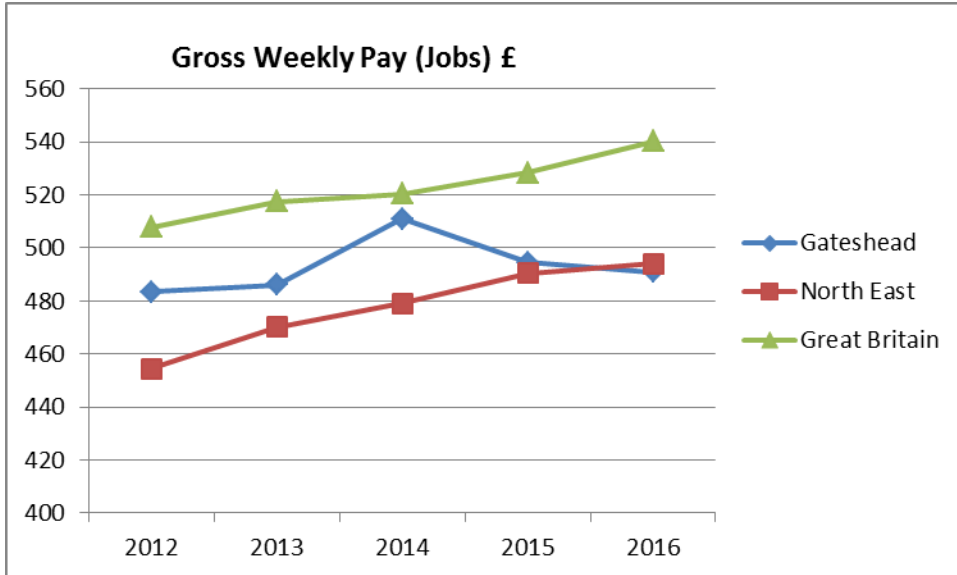


Most recent data shows that Gateshead's proportion of self-employed residents has significantly increased by 21.3% compared to the same period in 2014-15. This has resulted in Gateshead performing better than the NE region for the first time since the same period of 2012-13. The GB average is still significantly higher than both Gateshead and the NE region at 10.3% compared to

Gateshead's 8% though the gap has narrowed substantially since this period in 2014-15 where Gateshead were at 6.3% and GB at 10.1%.

Gateshead also appears to be more consistent with self-employment as levels show a gradual upward trend, however, much steeper in the past 12 months than prior.

PG12 – Gross Weekly Pay of Jobs in Gateshead
(Contributes to Prosperous Gateshead)



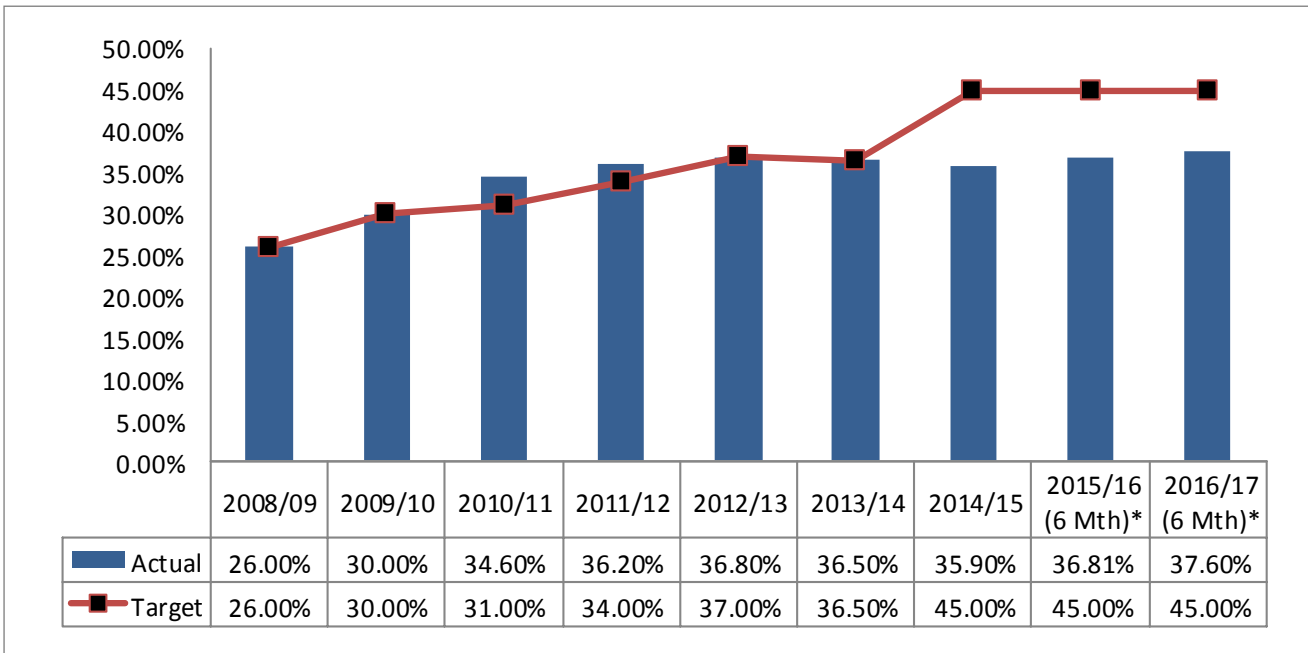
Most recent data shows that for 2016 the gross weekly pay of full time jobs in Gateshead was £490.90; this is compared to £494.60 in 2015 and represents a 0.7% decrease year-on-year.

In 2014 the gross weekly pay was £510.90 compared with £486.00 in 2013, which constitutes a 5% increase in the gross weekly pay of full time jobs in Gateshead from the previous year. This is shown on the graph as the sharp peak in 2014 but looks anomalous as all other years in the time-series have had more gradual increases year-on-year. If the peak is disregarded then the gross weekly pay of jobs in Gateshead is following an upwards trend on a gradual basis.

For 2016 Gateshead wages have fallen below the NE region for the first time since 2010.

The next release of data should be June 2017.

LL9 – Improve the Recycling Rate
(Contributes to Live Love Gateshead)



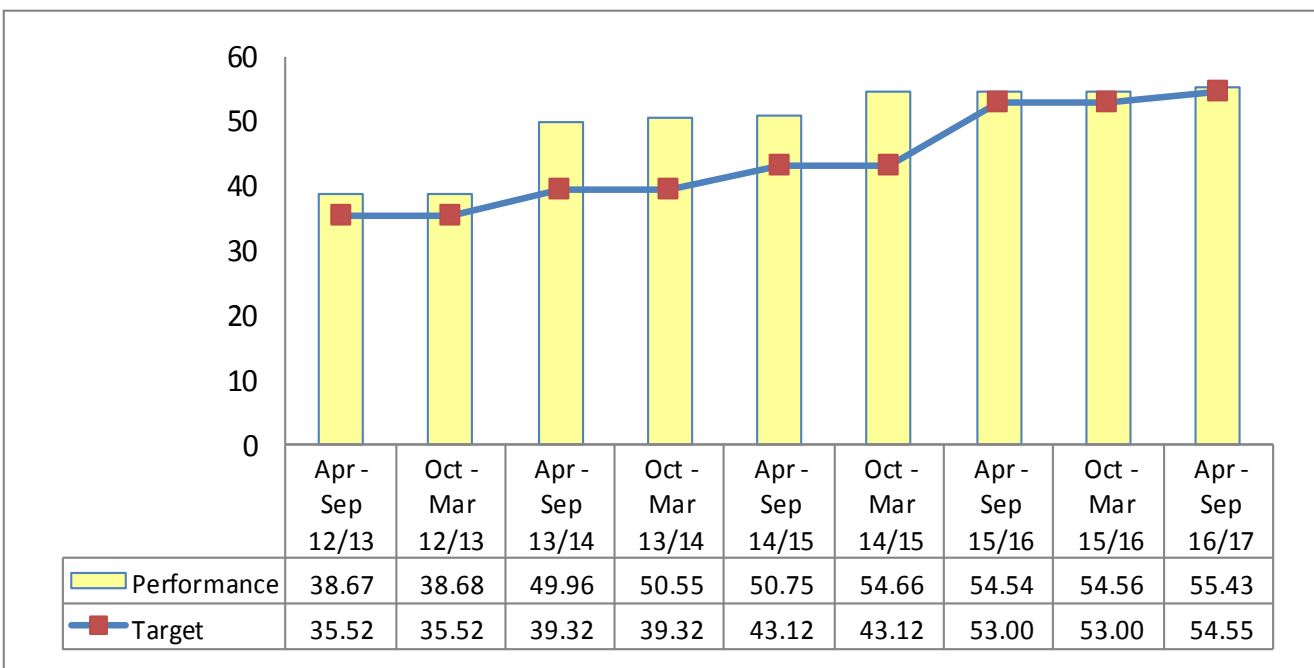
Recycling is being actively promoted through targeted promotion to work towards the recycling target of 50% by 2020. This includes a team of behavioural change officers visiting poor recycling areas to encourage the use of recycling collections by residents.

The management contract for the Household Waste and Recycling Centres has continued to yield higher recycling rates with a reduction in the amount of waste being sent for disposal.

The amount of garden waste collected in the first six months of 2016/2017 continues to be at a much lower level than prior to the introduction of charging.

The continued garden waste charging along with national levels for recycling stagnating mean it is unlikely that the recycling target of 45% will be met in 2016/17.

LL10 – Increasing Homes in the Highest Energy Efficiency Bands
(Contributes to Live Love Gateshead)



Recent Energy Efficiency measures in all residential sectors have resulted in an increase in SAP and performance remains on course to meet the 2020 target of 60%. Although not clear in the graph due to the scale, the target of 54.55 has actually been exceeded at the six-monthly stage and sits at 55.43, as shown in the data table attached.

These works include improvement works by private sector landlords working in conjunction with the Gateshead Private Landlords Association in order to meet the Councils Voluntary Accreditation Standard.

A large number of properties managed by TGHC have received external wall insulation in the east of Gateshead which has targeted non-traditional housing. Energy Efficiency measures have also been secured through the Warm up North Scheme operated by British Gas which the Council is still a partner of.

Additional works in private sector housing are also captured, utilising information recorded by building regulations via competent persons schemes. The Council continues to explore the potential for refurbishment opportunities in conjunction with TGHC.

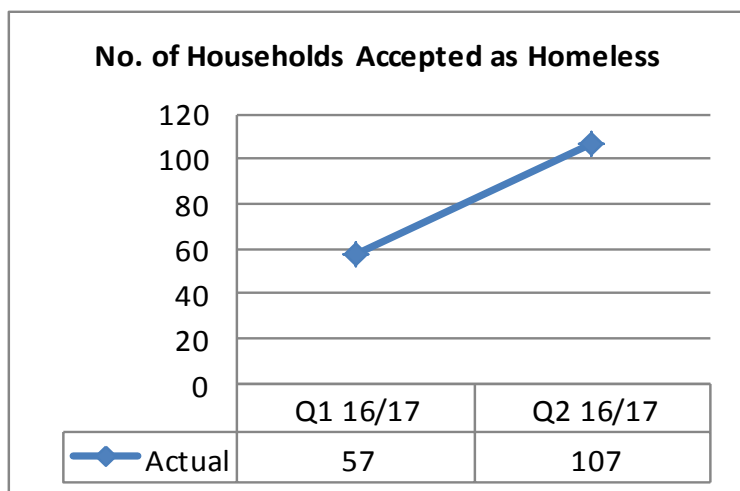
Homelessness Indicators

From April 2016, the following homelessness indicators were archived as Strategic Outcome Indicators following the transfer of the delivery of this function to The Gateshead Housing Company (TGHC). Monitoring of these indicators has been reported via the TGHC Board and their Customer and Communities Committee:

- Number of Households Accepted as Homeless - (previously CP20a)
- Number of Households Prevented from Becoming Homeless - (previously CP20b)

However, to ensure the Communities and Place OSC fulfils its scrutiny role in relation to housing, it is considered appropriate that these indicators are reinstated as Strategic Outcome Indicators. An update on progress over the first two quarters of this year has therefore been provided below, and the process for reinstating them as Strategic Outcome Indicators will be undertaken in the new financial year.

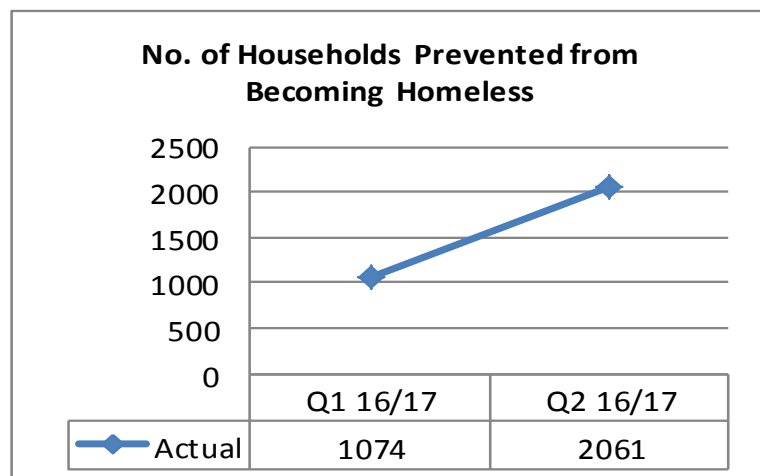
Number of Households Accepted as Homeless



Year to date there have been 107 accepted homeless cases which continues to remain low in comparison to the number of households that approach the service as homeless (1,475). For the second quarter the total number of households approaching the drop in service was 669 (Quarter 1 806). Of the 669 households, the service was able to relieve homelessness in 609 cases by offering advice or support (however, the organisation is not owed a duty to secure accommodation under homelessness legislation for these households). The total

number of accepted homeless cases to be re-housed was 60 which is comparable to quarter 1 when 57 cases were accepted.

Number of Households Prevented from Becoming Homeless



Year to date 2,061 households have been prevented from becoming homeless. For the second quarter there were 987 homeless preventions which is a decrease when compared to quarter 1 (1,074). The reduction is a result of challenges faced by the service to operate effectively due to vacant posts. Data will continue to be closely scrutinised during 2016/17 to assist in service development. As previously mentioned, TGHC take steps to relieve homelessness in cases where someone has been found to be homeless but is not owed a duty to secure accommodation under homelessness legislation in all cases.

Delivery of the Council Plan 2015-2020 Progress Made

This section gives additional detail on the progress that has been made against the three shared outcomes within the Council Plan 2015-2020.

Achievements

Prosperous Gateshead – a thriving economy for all

More and better paid jobs and more people into work

In April, the Council and partners secured funding of £40,000 (including match) to develop a Local Development Strategy. The aim of the strategy was to identify the barriers to employment and enterprise within the most disadvantaged areas of central Gateshead and outline an approach to address the issues that were highlighted.

The aim of the resulting approach is to enable 1700 economically inactive people to progress into work, training or self-employment or develop social enterprises. In addition, some capital funding is available to support the development of training or enterprise facilities to support economic growth activities.

In addition to this, the Kibblesworth Village Millennium Centre, which opened a new enterprise hub in March 2016 with funding from the Rural Growth Network's Strategic Economic Infrastructure Fund (SEIF), is now fully occupied. As well as creating new (and securing existing) jobs by helping the businesses to expand, the facility has created new services for the area whilst the income generated by the units will help the long term sustainability of the centre.

Daniel Farm near Crawcrook received the Rural Small Business Start-up Award at the NE Rural Awards held in July 2016 and further new jobs have been created as the business continues to expand.

The Council has also been working with a range of partners to develop a successful partnership application for Big Lottery ESF Building Better Opportunities Funding. There is a total of £7.2 million in funding available to address “Multiple Barriers to Employment” across the Tyne and Wear sub region with an intended delivery start date of between March and August 2016. The Wise Group have been successful in their partnership application for their Wise Steps Programme and the Council are a full, end-to-end employment support provider in the programme.

The Wise Steps programme will be targeted at those furthest away from the labour market (mapped to a range of identified needs, such as addiction, physical and learning disability, support for those with protected characteristics and including provision for the over 50s). It will include signposting and referral on to mainstream support services and other Social Inclusion provision. Twenty percent of the activity will be to address digital and financial exclusion.

This will secure over £480,000 in funding to provide additional employment support for 210 Gateshead residents over the next 3 years.

More private, public and social investment

Major improvements to the A1 between the Team Valley and the Metro Centre have now been completed. Initial consultation on possible improvements to the Birtley to Team Valley section took place in September but, as this was carried out by Highways England rather than the Council, the detail of this consultation has not been seen. The main concerns, however, were around local issues of increased traffic noise and pollution.

Since April 2016, the Council has worked with over 165 businesses, delivering a number of successful investment projects, which has led to the creation of over 860 new jobs and safeguarded a further 85. This includes over 25,000 sqft of commercial floorspace being occupied, delivering in excess of £128,000 of business rate income to the Council; per annum. The Council has also worked with the North East Combined Authority’s Inward Investment Team, the Department for International Trade’s (DIT) Investment Services and other partners to support inward investment activities, resulting in the creation of a further 226 jobs.

Highlights of some of the businesses supported include:

- Handelsbanken, one of Sweden’s leading banks, opened its first branch in Gateshead in Keel Row at The Watermark Business Park, creating 10 new jobs.
- Prism Tech, a Taiwanese Software company, has expanded its operation on Team Valley in the sales division.
- Diamond Business Services, a tech sector service provider, relocated from South Tyneside to Team Valley creating 21 jobs in Gateshead.
- Northern Power and Gas, an energy broker for the commercial sector located at the Council’s Baltimore House on Baltic Business Quarter, was supported to grow taking additional space at Baltic Place within the Council’s Accelerated Development Zone (ADZ), leading to the safeguarding of 55 jobs and creating a further 135.
- Vertu Motors on Team Valley, extended its operation taking additional space, leading to the creation of 65 new jobs.

Targeted interventions have included working with NELEP, business support agencies and the private sector to increase business performance, competitiveness and resilience across the business community in key areas including access to finance, innovation, export, regulation, technology adoption and energy efficiency.

This has included working with external organisations to support the proposed North East JEREMIE 2 Fund, providing access to finance to SMEs. It is expected that this will provide access to up to £120m of loan/repayable finance to businesses in the North East, support for an estimated 600 businesses creating an estimated 3,500 jobs over the next five years.

Earlier this year Newcastle and Gateshead Council jointly commissioned a review providing an in depth analysis of the digital sector, with particular consideration of its skills, business support, innovation, accommodation and infrastructure requirements. The report's recommendations set out areas where Gateshead Council and Newcastle City Council can support private sector growth in order to realise the potential for an additional 6,900 jobs to be created over the next three years. Newcastle and Gateshead Councils will develop an action plan to address the recommendations and work with the private sector to ensure barriers to growth are overcome.

Furthermore, the Council submitted a funding proposal to the North East Local Enterprise Partnership for funding for the Northern Centre for Emerging Technologies project. The application was subsequently endorsed and the Council was invited to submit a full application. If successful this will secure an additional £1m and help to lever in £3.25m ERDF funding to support this £8m scheme that will provide workspace and R&D facilities to ensure local industry is able to harness emerging technologies to create competitive advantage for the region.

In October 2015, Gateshead Council and Sunne Municipality, based in Region Värmland, Sweden signed a 'Commitment to Collaboration' setting out an intention to develop mutually beneficial trade and investment activity. Four Gateshead-based digital technology companies visited Region Värmland in November 2015 securing work packages supporting a number of digital projects.

The Council went on to host six visitors from Region Värmland during May 2016, providing the participants with an overview of the North East's economic climate, market sectors, in particular the digital and tech sector, business aid schemes and details on establishing an office in Gateshead.

The Council has also continued to support the start-up and growth of the social enterprise and small business sector, recognising the role enterprise plays in community resilience and the social and economic regeneration in line with the objectives of the Council Plan and Change Programme.

A two day Town Drive was hosted in conjunction with Social Enterprise UK in July and celebrated Gateshead's Social Enterprise Places status and showcased the sector. The Town Drive included a social enterprise showcase safari, a celebration dinner held at the Nest Café and Community Rooms CIC, and culminated in the Social Enterprise Summit, which was attended by over 100 people drawn from social enterprise, private sector, higher education and social enterprise support agencies.

Further progress includes the Gateshead Financial Inclusion Partnership, which has continued to take a multi-agency approach to tackling financial exclusion within a difficult economic climate having recently expanded its membership to include a wider network of Gateshead support organisations.

Welfare Reform changes and cuts to key support services have impacted on both residents and local agencies operating in the borough. In particular the reduction to the Benefit Cap to take effect from 7 November 2016 has seen a 'Flexible Support Fund' application made to Jobcentre Plus to cover the costs of additional intensive engagement to households affected by the cap. The outcome of the bid will not be known until 24 October.

Other actions taken include:

- Establishing networking and information awareness events to strengthen and share information between agencies to ensure front line staff and residents are able to access the appropriate services for their needs.
- Supporting the growth and development of the credit union movement. This includes hosting a range of internal and external events to increase credit union membership. The Council has recently secured the use of Trinity Square for a large scale event for International Credit Union Day, a major event in the calendar of NEFirst Credit Union on Thursday 20 October 2016 where a financial incentive will be offered to new members following a successful application to the England Illegal Money Lending Team for Proceeds of Crime funding. This incentive is £25 per new account for the first 50 accounts opened that day.
- Building upon existing links with the NECC discussions are ongoing to offer a salary deduction facility via the NEFirst Credit Union to all of their members by embedding it into the prestigious 'North East Better Health at Work Award'.
- Building upon the partnership forged with Barclays, the council has co-delivered two Fraud & Scams Awareness workshops in the community together with Northumbria Police.
- Barclays are now round the table to discuss the implementation of a financial education pilot to be taught in primary schools in partnership with NEFirst Credit Union and The Big Local.
- Approached Care, Wellbeing & Learning with the offer of designing and delivering financial education courses to children in care and care leavers, and a further financial education course for social workers and personal advisers. The design of the courses will be finalised late October with potential delivery commencing in November or December 2016.
- Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue now have leaflets containing financial inclusion support messages on all fire appliances and distribute them to vulnerable residents when crews are conducting home visits across Gateshead.

Live Love Gateshead – a sense of pride and ownership by all

Gateshead people who care about their local area and share responsibility for making and keeping our environment the best it can be

Construction of the Gateshead District Energy Scheme continued over the first six-months of this financial year. The Energy Centre progressed to completion, with power on by the end of September 2016. In addition, the northern section of the heat and private wire network was close to completion by September 2016, ready to connect the first electrical customers in October 2016. The scheme continues to receive regional and national attention and was visited by representatives from the Department of Energy and Climate Change in May.

Outline funding bids for 2 further district energy schemes were approved by ERDF – for an extension of the town centre network to the Leisure Centre area, using a novel plastic pipe system, and for various heat and/or power networks for 7 high rise social housing blocks. Final applications were submitted in August, and the Council awaits the outcome of these.

The Council's energy and carbon emissions continue to fall, thanks to significant investment in solar PV schemes in the previous year, and ongoing energy efficiency investment. Notably, in September 2016, the Council completed delivery of a 2-stage, £900k scheme to upgrade energy efficiency in conjunction with a full asbestos removal at Joseph Swan Academy. The Council secured the grants and loans for the scheme, and then managed and delivered the works.

In addition, the North East Combined Authority (NECA) has submitted a bid to the Government's Access fund for Sustainable Transport. This would allow continuation of existing 'Go Smarter' initiatives aimed at promoting sustainable travel to work and school.

Further improvements have been made to infrastructure provision to support pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. These include corridor based work at the north end of Durham Road, and improvements to cycle routes in Gateshead town centre.

The Council has also published its draft Flood Risk Management Strategy. This will provide the framework for action to minimise the future risk of flooding in Gateshead.

A community who take pride in Gateshead the place and enjoy and engage in world class culture and heritage that contributes to a sense of belonging and wellbeing

NewcastleGateshead were successful in bidding to host the World Transplant Games in 2019, in which over 5000 people will visit the area and compete in a week of sporting activity, which is also aimed at increasing the profile of organ donation.

They also successfully bid to host the Great Exhibition of the North in 2018, which will showcase the great creative, cultural and design sectors in the city and across the whole of the North of England. The event will celebrate the creativity of Northern England, help boost investment and tourism in the region and leave a lasting cultural legacy. The Government is contributing £5 million towards the exhibition itself and a further £15 million into a legacy fund to attract further cultural investment in the Northern Powerhouse.

Live Well Gateshead – a healthy, inclusive and nurturing place for all

The destination of choice for families with a range of excellent and affordable housing options

In order to strengthen the Council's approach towards the disposal and development of land, a draft Land Development and Disposal plan is being produced. It is proposed that those sites which would be available for market sale will be included in the Plan, which the Council intend to publish later this year. The plan will act as a clear and consistent tool for us to engage with the developer and investor market, and will also stimulate interest and competition for sites in order to maximise the contribution of the assets to the delivery of the Council's economic and housing ambitions and the financial stability of the Council.

Active engagement with a range of housebuilders and development industry intermediaries are leading to several potential pipeline projects in the urban core and other priority sites. A further indication of this is the firm and indicative bids for Rent-to-Buy submitted by Housing Associations to the HCA Shared Ownership and Affordable Housing Programme.

Following engagement with stakeholders, the site of the former Victoria House Aged Persons unit has been sold by the Council and is now being developed by ISOS housing to provide a mix of ten houses and bungalows for affordable rent.

The Council continues to progress the proposed development of 15 homes for people with learning disabilities having secured £532,500 grant funding to facilitate development. It is expected that works will start on site next year with the homes completed in July 2018. This will enable the Council to make significant savings to the Adult Social Care budget by ensuring residents are able to access homes which best suit their needs and enable them to live independently.

To date this financial year, there have been 189 housing completions comprising 106 houses and 83 flats. Of these completions, 150 are 2-3 bedroom properties. There have also been a total of 330 Disabled Facilities Grant/Adaptations carried out during the six-month period to September 2016. The breakdown is as follows:

- Adaptations to Council Properties – 155
- Adaptations to Council Properties (DFG Funded) – 44
- Adaptations to Private Properties (DFG Funded) – 131

Areas for improvement / Actions to take in the next 6 months

Prosperous Gateshead – a thriving economy for all

- A further round of funding from the Rural Growth Network will open in January
- The Council will continue to bring forward sites through the Land Development Group, to maximise land assets to enable development.
- Continuing to safeguard investment and jobs and secure reinvestment through effective account management and building long-term relationships with employers and businesses.
- Where appropriate working with partners to develop and commission initiatives to stimulate private sector investment, entrepreneurialism, competitiveness, innovation and productivity where this will accelerate economic growth or address market failure.
- Developing the capacity and capabilities of small businesses to enable them to benefit from business opportunities.
- Implications of limited budgets for future road maintenance and bus service support to be assessed.

Live Love Gateshead – a sense of pride and ownership by all

- Town Centre District Energy Scheme will become operational, and be formally opened. Work will continue on completing the initial network, and securing the commercial customers to the scheme, which are required to make the initial scheme commercially viable.
- Subject to successful ERDF grants, works will commence on delivering the next district energy schemes for Gateshead. In addition, we expect to receive feasibility studies that indicate what district energy schemes may be viable on Team Valley and Metrocentre.

Live Well Gateshead – a healthy, inclusive and nurturing place for all

- The Council will continue to bring forward sites through the Land Development Group to maximise land assets to enable development.
- Strategic Outcome Indicators will be developed to cover the two Homelessness indicators that are now reported by The Gateshead Housing Company.
- Complete Stage 3 of the Leisure and Culture review to consider the development of a single leisure and culture offer and assesses the relevant management options.
- Complete and implement a Leisure Service structure review which will embed the work of the Sport, Physical Activity and Health Development into the Leisure facility environment.
- Completion of the following strategic planning documents to provide an evidence base for the Local Plan to identify the sporting facility needs in the Borough and attract external funding;
 - Gateshead Built Sports Facility Strategy
 - Gateshead Playing Pitch Strategy
 - Gateshead Football Plan