

# *HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA*

**Monday, 18 October 2021 at 1.30 pm in the Bridges Room - Civic Centre**

---

From the Chief Executive, Sheena Ramsey

---

Item	Business
<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Minutes of the Last Meeting</b> (Pages 3 - 8)  The Committee is asked to approve as a correct record the minutes of its last meeting held on 5 July 2021.  <u><b>Items for Information</b></u>
<b>3</b>	<b>Covid-19 Update</b>  Report of the Strategic Director of Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities
<b>4</b>	<b>Community Safety Priorities update/progress</b> (Pages 9 - 16)  Report of the Director of Public Health and Wellbeing  <u><b>Items for Discussion and Comments</b></u>
<b>5</b>	<b>Programme of Improvement of Green Spaces within the Borough</b> (Pages 17 - 36)  Report of the Strategic Director of Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities
<b>6</b>	<b>Housing Performance and Compliance Monitoring</b>  Reports of the Strategic Director of Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities
<b>6a</b>	<b>Housing Regulatory Standards Self-Assessment (Report &amp; Presentation)</b> (Pages 37 - 44)
<b>6b</b>	<b>Repairs and Maintenance Improvement Plan (Presentation)</b>
<b>6c</b>	<b>Housing Compliance</b> (Pages 45 - 62)
<b>7</b>	<b>Work Programme</b> (Pages 63 - 66)  Joint report of the Chief Executive and the Strategic Director of Corporate Services and Governance

*Contact: Melvyn Mallam-Churchill, Tel: 0191 433 2149,  
E-mail: [melvynmallam-churchill@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:melvynmallam-churchill@gateshead.gov.uk),  
Date: Friday, 8 October 2021*

## **GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Monday, 5 July 2021**

**PRESENT:** Councillor(s): T Graham, A Geddes, A Wheeler, D Burnett, F Geddes, H Weatherley, H Kelly, Reay, J Green, R Waugh, S Dickie, S Hawkins, Anderson and P Maughan

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor(s): B Clelland, J Turnbull and K Dodds

#### **CPL82 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) The minutes of the last meeting held on 8 March 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

#### **CPL83 CONSTITUTION**

The Committee received a copy of the constitution setting out the remit and the terms of reference of the Committee.

The Committee noted the constitution and welcomed new members to the meeting. A discussion took place on the Thrive agenda and noted frustration on behalf of constituents that many of them are not thriving; particularly those who reside in the most deprived wards of the borough.

The Committee requested additional support and training from officers to ensure that the role of the Committee is fulfilled as per the constitution. It was noted that the remit/terms of reference for the Committee is extremely broad and that there may not be equal opportunity to give each area appropriate time for scrutiny, particularly with a reduced number of meetings across the municipal year.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) The Committee noted the constitution.

#### **CPL84 HOUSING PERFORMANCE & COMPLIANCE MONITORING**

The Committee received a report and presentation providing an overview of housing performance and compliance monitoring.

From the presentation the Committee were advised that there had been a need to change the governance and reporting arrangements for housing services; an overview of regulatory requirements, the White Paper: The Charter for Social Housing Residents and the Building Safety Bill was also provided.

It was reported that tenant involvement and empowerment was a key consideration.

The Committee noted that a new Resident Influence Panel is to be established to scrutinise services. It was also highlighted that a new buildings assurance board is to be established with reports from this meeting being presented to the Committee.

A summary of performance reporting and compliance reporting was presented; it was stated that the Committee would receive quarterly reports covering factors such as fire safety, electrical safety and data management. The Committee were further advised that updates would be presented on the Transformation Programme which would include updates on risks and issues arising.

The Committee requested support and training from officers so that they could fulfil their role appropriately when scrutinising housing services and new developments. Officers advised that this could be arranged in the coming months.

A discussion took place on the Housing Revenue Account; it was stated that this account does not have enough funds in the long-term but that this is largely due to the Council not having control over rent rates. It was also noted that existing housing stock needs a lot of improvement in terms of fire safety and compliance. The Committee were also provided with further details on the role of the Strategic Housing Board in managing housing issues such as voids and performance.

It was asked whether the Council's bidding process for housing allocations was under review; officers advised that this was happening. The Committee also requested a list of officer contacts within Housing Services who could be contacted directly; it was noted that a directory is being developed for Councillors.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee noted the contents of the report and presentation.

#### **CPL85 PROPOSED APPROACH TO PROGRAMME OF IMPROVEMENT OF GREEN SPACES**

The Committee received a report with an update on the improvement of green spaces for Gateshead.

From the report, the Committee noted that the borough of Gateshead stretches almost 13 miles and covers 55 square miles making it the largest of the five Tyne & Wear authorities. It was highlighted that there are 28 parks and 120 fixed play sites with various facilities managed by Gateshead Council. The Committee also noted that the Council works with partners such as Durham Wildlife Trust, Forestry Commission and local conservation groups.

The Committee received a verbal update on the programme of improvements to green spaces within the borough. Further details of the programme were appended to the report.

The Committee asked whether there was to be a review of allotments in Gateshead; a comment was made that the waiting lists are extremely high and that some allotment sites are not being used. Officers advised that a review of the current waiting list is underway. It was further noted that the service now has a dedicated

allotments officer to ensure that allotment sites are being used appropriately.

A comment was made highlighting The Queen's Commonwealth Canopy; officers advised that they were aware of the initiative. The Committee also noted that open and green spaces have a positive impact on the mental health of residents and that open spaces are being blighted by off-road motorcyclists. It was noted that Northumbria Police are working with the Council's Community Safety Team to improve the problem which is not unique to Gateshead.

A question was asked about the leasehold of Chase Park; the Committee were advised that a collaborative approach is being taken with planners so that suitable access can be maintained to the park.

The Committee noted that the handover of some of Gateshead's Bowling Greens to local clubs had been successful.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee noted the planned programme of improvement to green spaces.

## **CPL86 NEW PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK - UPDATE**

The Committee received a report and presentation providing an update on Performance Management & Improvement Framework (PMIF) Implementation.

The Committee were provided with a reminder of the aims of the PMIF; it was highlighted that the framework aims to enable effective delivery of the Council's Thrive policy and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

A summary of themes and measures was provided; the Committee noted that there were several cross-cutting themes. It was also reported that the policy objectives would aim to:

- Create fair employment and good work for all
- Ensure a health standard of living for all, in accordance with international law on economic and social rights and;
- Create and develop health and sustainable communities and places

From the presentation, the Committee were taken through a summary of the PMIF balance scorecard. The Committee also received information on the importance of continued engagement with employees and partners. It was highlighted that consideration would also be given to the Health & Wellbeing Strategy, Health and Care Systems Board framework and the voluntary and community sector.

Officers advised the Committee that there is to be a gradual implementation of the framework from April 2021 with 6-monthly reporting to Cabinet and quarterly reporting to OSC.

The Committee noted its frustration that they were not seeing evidence of what has been achieved through the Council's Thrive policy. A comment was made noting that

there are increasing levels of deprivation across Gateshead and that dependence on services such as foodbanks was rising. The Committee also noted disappointment at the loss of youth services throughout Gateshead over the years and that anti-social behaviour across the borough was still prevalent.

The Committee acknowledged the efforts of the Council and officers in developing the framework. It was noted that the work being undertaken is valuable but that more needs to be done in the short term to support the most vulnerable residents.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) The Committee noted the contents of the report and presentation.
- (ii) The Committee agreed to receive additional updates on the PMIF at a future meeting.

**CPL87 COVID -19 UPDATE**

The Committee received a presentation providing an update on the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

From the presentation, a summary of support to businesses was provided. It was reported that over £55 million in Retail Discount rate relief had been provided and that 12,790 payments totalling £35,628,079 had been issued across a variety of schemes for businesses impacted by the pandemic.

The Committee noted that support had been provided via a Support Hub with dedicated web pages and online resources; it was highlighted that the page had received over 30,000 visits. It was also noted that 1-2-1 support, advice and guidance in relation to financial entitlement, discounts and other financial support had been provided to over 2,500 businesses.

A summary of the Shop Local Shop Safe campaign was provided; the Committee also acknowledged that the ability of businesses to survive or thrive during the pandemic was heavily influenced by the sector in which the business operated. It was reported that businesses within the leisure and hospitality industries had been impacted significantly due to national and local restrictions.

From the presentation, the Committee received an update on support for individuals in terms of employment support and skills. The Committee also received a summary on the support provided to young people via the DWP Kickstart 'Gateway' to help businesses access funding to create job placements for 16–24 year-olds.

The Committee noted that there has been an increase in demand for Class 1 drivers nationally; it was stated that to achieve Class 1 status it could cost individuals up to £1,000. The Committee asked whether the Council were able to provide support to Gateshead residents who would like to achieve their Class 1 status. Officers advised that this demand has been exacerbated by the growth of companies such as Amazon; officers acknowledged that support was needed to enable individuals to achieve this license and that discussions with the DWP and partners are taking place.

A discussion took place on the use of furlough; concern was noted that some residents could lose their employment when this scheme ends. The Committee were advised that employment support officers are working with many residents who are currently furloughed to explore their options.

The Committee thanked officers for all of their hard work throughout the pandemic; the Committee noted that the support received by both businesses and individuals had been extremely valuable.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee noted the update.

## **CPL88 HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES & FOOD**

The Committee received a report providing an update on the delivery of the Easter Holiday Activities and Food Programme.

The Committee received a summary of the scheme for context; it was highlighted from the update that DfE funding to the value of £850,000 had been allocated for use over the Easter, Summer and Christmas school holidays for benefits-related Free School Meal recipients and vulnerable children.

From the report it was noted the current plan of confirmed summer clubs is to be delivered in 44 venues providing 21,000 places across 6 weeks to approximately 1,450 children per day. The Committee also received further details of the activities available from the report; this included sports, work-skills, cooking and cycling.

The Committee were shown how free school meal eligible households had been mapped to allow for efficient planning of the schemes. It was highlighted that 95% of households eligible were within a short commute of a summer programme location.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee noted the contents of the report.

## **CPL89 WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee received the annual work programme report 2021-22. The report set out the current programme for the year with the schedule of meetings and topics appended.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The Committee noted the work programme report.

This page is intentionally left blank



**TITLE OF REPORT:**        **Community Safety Priorities – 6 Month Update**

**REPORT OF:**                **Alice Wiseman, Director of Public Health – Care,  
Wellbeing and Learning**

---

## **Summary**

This report provides Housing, Environment and Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) with a brief overview of the key activities that have been co-ordinated and delivered by Gateshead Community Safety Board within the last six-months to address the strategic priorities outlined within the strategic Partnership Plan 2020/23. The report also highlights the impact of, and some of the potential emerging themes, Covid-19 in relation to crime and disorder within Gateshead.

---

## **1 Background**

1.1 The Community Safety Board is a standalone statutory partnership made up of five Responsible Authorities – namely: Gateshead Council, Northumbria Police, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service, the National Probation Service and NewcastleGateshead Clinical Commissioning Group. The Board's purpose is to 'ensure partner agencies and services work together to make Gateshead a safe place for everyone'. Its core functions are to:

- address crime and disorder (including anti-social behaviour and behaviours which adversely affect the environment);
- combat the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances; and
- reduce re-offending.

1.2 The Board has a statutory duty under the Crime and Disorder Act to produce an annual intelligence-led Strategic Assessment (an assessment of need based on data) along with a Partnership Plan (which formally sets out the areas that will priorities and the activity that will be undertaken locally by the Board). A copy of the Partnership Plan 2020-23 has been attached as Appendix 1.

1.3 As a reminder, the strategic themes that were agreed by the Community Safety Board for delivery in 2020-23 are:

### **(1) Violence, Exploitation and Abuse**

- Serious Violence (including Criminal Exploitation and Knife Crime)
- Domestic Abuse (including Violence Against Women and Girls)

### **(2) Thriving Neighbourhoods and Communities**

- Anti-Social Behaviour (Youth, Adult and Place-based ASB)
- Locality-based Tasking and Problem Solving Arrangements

### **(3) Community Cohesion and Resilience**

- Hate Crime and Tension Monitoring
- Preventing Violence Extremism, Radicalisation and Terrorism

1.4 These are the areas in which the Board felt we can collectively make a bigger impact by working together; however, the Board also remains flexible enough to be able to respond proactively to any new and emerging risks and threats not linked to these priority areas. Covid-19 has meant partners have had to react to presenting need, which has led to reconfiguring and re-prioritising of services to ensure the continued delivery of important frontline services.

## **2 Crime Performance**

2.1 The table set out in Appendix 2 shows performance of crime and disorder within Gateshead from 1st April through to 30th September 2021.

2.2 In the first six-months of 2020/21, recorded crime in Gateshead has reduced by 1% (-131 fewer reported crimes) compared a 3% increase across Northumbria (1,728 additional crimes). Crime levels in Gateshead continue to remain on par with local authority areas across South of Tyne and Wear and the rate of crime per 1,000 population remains comparable to our 15 Most Similar Family Group national average.

2.3 Crimes against the person have increased on last year – with violence rising by 4% (+140), robbery increasing by 15% (+7) and sexual offences up 30% (+77). Violence against the person accounts for more than a third of all recorded crime in Gateshead during the period; albeit, most offences are classified as violence without injury. Theft-related offences such as vehicle crime has fallen by 38% (-238), burglary reduced by 3% (-14) and pedal cycle thefts down 35% (-41).

2.4 Demand-related calls to Northumbria Police relating to public safety-type issues (such as mental health, suicides and substance misuse has increased in the last 12 months) with more complex and multiple needs being identified. Police and Council have also seen increased reporting of anti-social behaviour.

2.6 Feelings of safety and perceptions of how the Council and partners work together to tackle community safety issues remains positive. Public confidence surveys have shown local people have a positive perception of how the Police and Council are working together to tackle issues alongside increased numbers of people who feel ASB is being taken seriously. In addition, the numbers of people reporting positive perceptions of Police visibility in their community has also increased in recent months.

### **Thrive**

2.7 A review of the locations in which crime and ASB incidents are committed has shown more than half of all crime that takes place in those neighbourhoods that are classified 'Extremely' or 'Very Vulnerable' under Thrive agenda categories – and has increased proportionally compared to last year.

Crime	Vulnerable - Extremely	Vulnerable - Very	Just Coping - Only Just	Just Coping - Getting By	Managing	Thriving
2020	22.97%	27.26%	14.39%	15.05%	10.72%	9.61%
2021	25.25%	26.44%	14.90%	14.59%	9.98%	8.84%

In addition, there has been increased complaints of anti-social behaviour within those neighbourhoods that are deemed 'Thriving' and 'Managing' areas under Thrive agenda (with many complaints relating to potential tolerance issues such as noise, young people gathering in street/parks and lower-level ASB).

ASB	Vulnerable - Extremely	Vulnerable - Very	Just Coping - Only Just	Just Coping - Getting By	Managing	Thriving
2020	24.20%	28.84%	14.98%	15.06%	9.18%	7.73%
2021	23.31%	27.26%	14.58%	15.67%	10.17%	9.01%

### 3 Progress to date

3.1 A snapshot of some of the key activities that have been undertaken this year by partners to address the priorities of the Board include:

#### Violence, Exploitation and Abuse

##### Serious Violence (including Criminal Exploitation and Knife Crime)

- Supported Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit with the refresh of the regional Insight Report and Violence Reduction Strategy for Year 3. The Insights Report highlights takes an evidence-led approach to identifying harm hotspots within our community around serious violence.
- Knife Crime Serious Violence GRIP Funding will be used high visibility targeted patrols and problem solving within specific harm hotspots within Inner West and Central Gateshead with an aim of to implement a step change in activity to suppress and reduce serious violence through
- Developing Problem Orientated Policing Plans (POP) for harm hotspot areas – working closely with Neighbourhood Inspectors to deliver local interventions.
- Knife Crime Awareness sessions have been delivered by the VRU Education Team to young people and practitioners in various settings – including schools – which has been well received.
- Implementation of Year 1 Project ADDER (including drug testing upon arrest) is progressing well. A Gateshead referral pathway is currently under consultation.
- A partnership analytical hub has been created to support the analysis of drug-related deaths to help steer partnership activity and enhance our approach to placed-based harm.
- Continue to support disruption of Serious and Organised Crime activity through delivery of Operational Sentinel interventions.

##### Domestic Abuse (including Violence Against Women and Girls)

- Gateshead Strategic Domestic Abuse Forum has been re-established and has started to progress some key areas of work required as part of the Domestic Abuse Act. This includes the ongoing development of draft Needs Assessment and Strategy to improve our support offer linked with Safe Accommodation.
- We continue to offer in-house Domestic Abuse Services in Gateshead providing specialist support to safeguard victim and children affected by domestic abuse. In addition, a local Behaviour Change Programme has been established that works directly with perpetrators to break the cycle of domestic abuse.
- Secured additional funding to deliver specialist Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) and Independent Stalking Advocacy Caseworker (ISAC) training to upskill our Domestic Abuse Workers.

- Created a 'Moving On' Groupwork programmes developed specifically to help parents to understand impact of domestic abuse and strengthen relationships with their children. The programme is scheduled alongside existing Freedom and START Groupwork programmes.
- Continue to develop project with Accident and Emergency to support victims of domestic abuse and to upskill health staff to spot the signs of abuse.
- Continue to hold MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) and MATAAC (Multi-Agency Tasking and Co-ordination) meetings to safeguarding high-risk victims of domestic abuse.
- Started to explore how we can extend our community outreach in relation to domestic abuse with Edberts House, Beacon Lough Hub and GP surgeries.
- Produced a short film, working in partnership with Digital Voice, to empower local children to tell us how they have been impacted by domestic abuse and how their lives could be improved. This will be utilised in awareness raising, training and to inform future service delivery.

### **Thriving Neighbourhoods and Communities**

#### **Anti-Social Behaviour (Youth, Adult and Place-based ASB)**

- Started to plan our and undertake a multi-agency review of anti-social behaviour to ensure victims receive the best possible service.
- Commissioned EdgeNE and Platform, voluntary sector organisations, to deliver targeted Youth Outreach and Engagement activities in hotspot areas.
- Northumbria Police continue to address issues linked with motorbike disorder – and a range of activities have been carried out (including encouraging residents to report and test purchases at fuel stations alongside enforcement action).
- Started to develop a standardised approach in relation to Community Triggers which will allow victims to demand an independent review of their case if they feel no action has been taken by agencies to address their concerns.
- Funding has been secured, working with the Police and Crime Commissioner, for interventions designed to improve perceptions of safety (especially women) within transport hubs, parks and open spaces within the Borough.

#### **Locality-based Tasking and Problem-Solving Arrangements**

- Operational Planning and Tasking Group continues to operate effectively with strong representation from a range of statutory partners and Council services. In addition, Community Safety now regularly attend Northumbria Police's Threat, Harm and Risk Meetings to ensure that we are aware of broader crime and disorder issues affecting Central Area Command.
- Commissioned time-limited outreach work targeting hotspot locations for youth-related ASB, secondary deliberate fires, criminal exploitation and substance misuse issues. Harm hotspot locations identified by partners based on data, intelligence and historic seasonal trends.
- Continue to make best use of legislation to ensure that we are taking swift action when dealing with perpetrators and problem premises – this includes the use of Closure Orders, Community Protection Notices/Warnings (CPN/Ws) and Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs).
- Produced in-depth Problem Profiles to highlight specific crime issues in hotspot communities and neighbourhoods. These profiles provide data to help support the development of place-based prevention activity within the area.

- Undertaken a range of activity associated with seasonal trends (such as Darker Nights campaign, Bonfire Night etc) and responded to specific crime patterns (such as pedal cycle thefts, motorbikes etc).

### **Community Cohesion and Resilience**

#### **Hate Crime and Tension Monitoring**

- Continued to deliver actions outlined in the Hate Crime Strategy and Action Plan for Gateshead 2019-22 focus on: increasing awareness of reporting, increasing referrals to victim support services and promoting hate crime education.
- Continue to roll out and support the Gateshead Hate Crime Champions Network to increase local knowledge on how to report hate crime and raise awareness of support available for victims. The network includes schools and colleges within Gateshead as well as public transport providers and private sector organisations – and is commended as best practice nationally.
- Northumbria Police's Central Engagement Team delivers a rolling programme of bespoke training to schools and education settings. In addition, Hate and Mate Crime training is provided for staff and frontline professionals within Council.
- Reviewed and improved our Online Hate Crime Reporting and Referral Forms to ensure a timelier response to individuals reporting hate crime.
- Funding has been received by Police and Crime Commissioner to commission Lawnmowers Theatre Group to develop a production to promote hate crime and Preventing Violent Extremism for those with learning disabilities.
- Ongoing relationship development with key community groups in Gateshead to increase confidence in Police and Council's approach to hate crime (especially in relation to asylum and migration multi-agency partnership work).

#### **Preventing Violence Extremism, Radicalisation and Terrorism**

- Carried out a comprehensive self-assessment relating to Prevent to help further reduce the risk of vulnerability to radicalization. This includes refreshing our risk assessments, offer targeted training and community engagement activities and re-establishing a local working group to oversee compliance with statutory duty.
- Embedded the new Channel Panel Guidance (published in November 2020) and returned our first annual Assurance Statement to Home Office.
- Continued to roll our various training sessions to raise awareness of Prevent, referral routes and to upskill frontline staff. Prevent training is now part of the corporate induction process within the local authority
- Special Branch have also carried out some targeted work in Gateshead schools to raise awareness of the signs of radicalization with teaching and support staff.
- Ran a further Channel HYDRA session with North-East Counter Terrorism Unit which provides a simulated scenario of a real-life Prevent referral to test local approaches and ability to address the case.
- Raised awareness of different ideologies, groups and risks linked with counter terrorist narratives with Council staff and supported Special Branch to establish a Prevent Champion Network across Northumbria

## **4 Recommendation**

### **4.1 Members are asked to:**

- (i) Comment on the activities undertaken in relation to the strategic priorities of the Community Safety Board;
- (ii) Continue to receive six-monthly Community Safety updates;
- (iii) Identify any issues/areas that OSC may want to scrutinise in detail at a future Committee meeting.

---

**Contact:** Adam Lindridge, Community Safety Manager

**Tel:** 07535 200 777

## Appendix 1

### Gateshead Community Safety Board – Partnership Plan 2020-23



Partnership Plan  
2020-23

## Appendix 2

### Crime Performance – LALO Report

1 April 2021 to 30 September 2021

<b>Gateshead</b>	2021-22	2020-21	Change compared to 2020/21	
Total crime	9,164	9,295	- 131	- 1%
Violence against the person	3,508	3,368	+ 140	+ 4%
Violence against the person - With injury	1,048	920	+ 128	+ 14%
Most serious violence against the person	101	70	+ 31	+ 44%
Less serious violence against the person	947	850	+ 97	+ 11%
Violence against the person - Without injury	2,460	2,448	+ 12	+ 0%
Robbery	53	46	+ 7	+ 15%
Sexual offences	330	253	+ 77	+ 30%
Vehicle crime	396	634	- 238	- 38%
Vehicle interference	53	126	- 73	- 58%
TFMV	232	393	- 161	- 41%
TWOC	111	115	- 4	- 3%
Criminal damage	1,462	1,402	+ 60	+ 4%
Burglary	447	461	- 14	- 3%
Burglary dwelling	322	323	- 1	- 0%
Burglary OTD	125	138	- 13	- 9%
Theft and handling	1,403	1,453	- 50	- 3%
Shoplifting	541	491	+ 50	+ 10%
Theft from the person	57	56	+ 1	+ 2%
Theft of a pedal cycle	77	118	- 41	- 35%
Other theft and handling	728	788	- 60	- 8%
Drug crime	196	210	- 14	- 7%
Fraud and forgery	2	6	- 4	- 67%
Public disorder	1,232	1,293	- 61	- 5%
Miscellaneous crime	135	169	- 34	- 20%
Possessions of weapons	106	98	+ 8	+ 8%

This page is intentionally left blank



**TITLE OF REPORT:** Programme of Improvement of Green Spaces within Gateshead

**REPORT OF:** Colin Huntington, Strategic Director, Housing, Environment & Healthy Communities

---

## SUMMARY

This report provides a full update on the current and planned programme of improvement of green spaces in Gateshead. An overview report outlining this programme was brought to OSC earlier in the year for their consideration and scrutiny.

---

### Background

1. OSC have requested as part of their 2021-22 work programme a report on the programme of improvement of green spaces within Gateshead.
2. In July 2021, OSC received an introductory report outlining the areas and themes that will be covered in detail in this report. Scrutiny committee members were asked the particular areas of interest they would want included or a particular focus on.
3. This report provides a full update detailing the current and planned programme of improvement to green spaces in the borough, along with named contact officers for each activity if scrutiny committee members require further information.

### Programme of Improvement to Green Spaces

4. The borough of Gateshead stretches almost 13 miles along the south bank of the river Tyne and covers 55 square miles, making it the largest of the five Tyne and Wear authorities. Around two thirds of the borough is rural. The definition of Green spaces referred to in this report includes;
  - general open green spaces owned or managed by the council across the borough, including estate greens,
  - 28 parks and 120 fixed play sites, with a range of facilities, managed by Gateshead Council,
  - over 20 Countryside sites including meadows, woodlands, local nature reserves and sites of special scientific interest, and
  - the green spaces owned and/or managed by our partners such as Durham Wildlife Trust, Forestry Commission, local conservation groups, the National Trust and Woodland Trust.
5. *Appendix 1* to this report provides the detailed update on the current and planned programme of improvement of green spaces.

6. OSC will receive a full report and presentation including;
- update on the current programme of improvements already underway for 2021-22,
  - planned improvements or projects which are in development, subject to approval of external funding bids or that require permissions to proceed, and
  - future plans and longer term ambitions to further improve our green spaces in Gateshead.
7. Members will see from the breadth and depth of activities covered in Appendix 1, that there is a significant amount of work underway and planned across the borough to improve our green spaces, with resource commitments in place for 2021-22 and beyond. Any additions or revisions to these activities will have a resource impact including capacity to deliver the existing work programme.

### **Recommendation**

8. It is recommended that the Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities OSC:
- (i) consider the update provided and invite views and comments from members on the current programme of improvement to green spaces and the future plans outlined in Appendix 1
  - (ii) identify any areas they feel they require more detail or require further scrutiny to be added to the OSC future work programme

---

**Contact: Phil Hindmarsh**

**Ext: 7445**

## Programme of Improvement of Green Spaces within the Borough

### Theme - External Funding:

#### 1. Riverside Park Development

A partnership between the Council, National Trust, Tyne and Wear Building Preservation Trust (who own Dunston Staiths) and Newcastle University is exploring options and opportunities to enhance and revitalise Riverside Park and Dunston Staiths. The partnership has grown from the Vision document for the park produced by Colour Architects, and a need for a sustainable future for Dunston Staiths.

We are awaiting the outcome of a Community Renewal Fund (CRF) bid which will cover spatial masterplanning, scheme design and costing, business planning, and community and audience development. Separate to this, we have secured funds via Newcastle University to map stakeholders and develop a common vision. Newcastle University are leading a research project to examine carbon neutral modular construction which would be showcased through development in the Park and on/around Dunston Staiths. Northumbria University are sourcing funding to follow up the successful Creative Mapping in Gateshead project to help the creative community address impact of Covid-19. An extensive programme of events is in development around the Park and Staiths, around the art pieces, the heritage, the nature and opportunities for health and wellbeing. Work is progressing to link the Park into the Town Centre and Metrogreen areas, and to housing sites at Askew Road and Clasper Village.

At present there is no back up plan for the necessary spatial planning, scheme development and business planning needed, should the CRF bid be unsuccessful.

Contact officer: Clare Richardson

#### 2. Trees – NE Community Forest

A successful bid was submitted to England's Community Forests and DEFRA to establish the [North East Community Forest | Newcastle City Council](#) (NECF). The initiative, in which Gateshead Council is a lead partner, will support the delivery of increased tree planting and woodland creation across the NECF area to deliver environmental, social and economic improvements. This will be achieved through the development and implementation of a Community Forest Plan, the establishment of a NECF team, access to increased Government funding (e.g. Trees for Climate), and extensive engagement with local communities, businesses and public and private landowners.

The Partnership aims to deliver 500ha of new tree planting by 2025, with a long-term goal to increase canopy cover across the NECF area to 30% by 2050. This planting season, the partnership will deliver 25ha of new tree planting, of which c.5ha will be in Gateshead – locations to be determined. Funding had also been secured to deliver the planting of nearly 350 new standard and heavy standard trees, of which 76 will be in Gateshead. To date the NECF has secured over £800K for tree planting projects this planting season.

Contact officer: Neil Wilkinson

#### 3. Trees – Whitehills

Groundwork Trust in partnership with the Council was unsuccessful in consecutive bids to DEFRA's Green Recovery Challenge Fund. Despite receiving positive feedback and both

bids scoring highly, the programme is known to have been heavily oversubscribed and very competitive. It is now the Council's intention to deliver a pared-down but significant programme of environmental improvements on site in 2021/22 using existing internal resources and external funding through the North East Community Forest (NECF). The measures include access improvements, including the resurfacing of public rights of way, the removal of fly-tipping, habitat restoration and enhancement, boundary treatment works and woodland creation. Options are currently being explored to bridge a funding gap for boundary treatment works to defend the site against motorbike disorder which is seen as a major barrier to local residents accessing and enjoying the site.

Contact officer: Neil Wilkinson

#### 4. Tyne Estuary Partnership

The partnership submitted an Expression of Interest to Defra Investment Ready Fund, they are awaiting feedback from Defra whether they have been successful. However, Groundwork Trust, with support from the other members of the Tyne Estuary Partnership, including the Council, has been successful in securing over £800K in funding through the Green Recovery Challenge Fund for the Revitalising Our Estuaries project

From 2021, the project will see Groundwork working with its partners to deliver an ambitious programme of environmental improvements and community engagement across six of the region's estuaries, including the Tyne.

Contact officer: Neil Wilkinson

### **Theme – Investment / Service improvement:**

#### 5. Allotments

In November 2020 the management of the council's allotments became part of the remit of Public Health and Well-being. With this transfer a dedicated Allotments officer was appointed, Collette Davies. Collette brings 12 years of allotment management expertise.

##### Waiting lists.

There is a significant demand for the council's 1200 allotments in Gateshead. In December 2020, there were 1123 waiting list applications across all sites. A review of this process shows there are currently 1051 residents remaining on waiting lists, this includes 253 new applications received from December 2020 to date.

There have been 115 waiting list applicants assigned to a new allotment between December 2020 and Aug 2021. Where possible larger plots are being split into more manageable sizes in order to reduce waiting lists.

The Council is progressing the procurement a new allotment management system. This software will improve the effectiveness of service and will speed up the process of offering plots.

Historically unlettable plots are being identified with a view to bringing them back into lettable condition. Overgrown plots are being offered out with a rent free period as an incentive to accept.

The Allotments Officer has contacted any outstanding invoices, and where appropriate issued notice to quit. This has allowed waiting list applicants to be allocated plots in the

newly vacant plots. Regular site visits to ensure current tenants are complying with their Tenancy agreement.

#### Allotment fires

During the first national lockdown the Council took the decision to issue a blanket ban on allotment fires, recognising that fires were more likely to result in complaints with residents confined to home. Allotment Associations who manage allotments on behalf of the Council generally choose to forbid fires between April and October. The Council manages approximately 50% of allotments directly. On these sites there is no restriction on fires. Tenancy agreements do however inform allotment occupiers that they should be considerate when having fires.

Historically there been always been complaints relating to fires. The Council is now also progressing actions to reduce air pollution and tackle climate change. It is timely to consider the banning of fires on allotments and OSCs views on this would this are welcomed.

Contact officer: Collette Davies

#### 6. Bridle paths and PROW additional funding

The additional funding this financial year will be used for the resurfacing and improvement of approximately 3600m of bridleway. The works planned are as follows: -

No.	Path No	Location	Details of work	Programmed
1	Lamesley 72	Access from Kibbleworth Bank.  One section towards Greenford Lane and one section towards Kibblesworth Bank.	Resurfacing  Drainage	September
2	W300	Path through Sunnyside Park	Resurfacing	October  Post nesting season
3	Felling 44	Lingey Lane to Leam Lane	Timber pin edge  Resurfacing  Drainage	October/November
4	Felling 41	Whitehills	Resurfacing  Access upgrades  Drainage	Awaiting quotations  Works to be completed by end February 2022
5	Felling 42 & 43	Whitehills	Resurfacing  Access upgrades  Drainage	Awaiting quotations  Works to be completed by end February 2022

6	Felling 44	Lingey Lane to South Tyneside boundary	Resurfacing Drainage	October/November
---	------------	--	-------------------------	------------------

Contact officer: Zoe Jones

#### 7. Cycle path cleansing and winter maintenance scheme

A full-time member of staff has been recruited into this new post and scheme which will include the targeted removal of encroaching vegetation, fly-tipping, grass cutting and removal of glass and debris on the borough's main cycleways. The scheme will also include operations over the winter period to clear cycleways of snow and ice using a brine derived product and applied using bespoke machinery. The scheme will be supported, when needed, from our other specialist teams to help with the removal of waste, vegetation and tree maintenance etc. The presence of invasive weeds will be recorded and passed to the appropriate team to arrange scheduled treatment. The cycle network is vast and spreads across the borough and will be a challenge to service it all, but we will be directing the service to those cycleways which are well used and have generated complaints from users in the past.

Contact officer: David Charlton

#### 8. Dog warden

With only one Dog Warden covering the whole of the borough it can be a challenge to address issues such as dog fouling and irresponsible dog ownership.

The priority of the Dog Warden is to remove stray dogs from the street and with approximately 200 collected per annum, this ensures our open spaces and highways are kept safer and cleaner. Most of these dogs are reunited with their owners.

Whilst the Dog Warden will patrol hotspots as much as possible it is also vital to promote responsible dog ownership through community engagement. This is delivered through the following ways:

- Attending local community events held in parks such as, Chase Park Dog Show where the Dog Warden engaged with community groups and dog walkers;
- New signage designed and ordered for fixed play area, advising owners to keep their dogs out;
- 30,000 dog poo bags handed out to dog owners this year.

Contact officer: Kevin Hills

#### 9. Environmental Investment Scheme

The Environmental Investment Scheme is a 3 year project to invest resource into designated areas and locations to not only improve the current infrastructure and street scene landscape but also to reduce demand on future street scene services and revenue budgets. The improvements will help areas to 'Thrive' and attract inward investment and involvement by local communities.

The scheme commenced in April 2021 and improvements so far have included extensive vegetation, shrub and tree maintenance and weed control. To date, 23 large schemes have been completed and a full programme is planned. Photographic evidence is recorded for each project and is available on request. Future schemes will also include deep

cleansing of paths and decorative surfaces, detritus removal, graffiti and flyposting removal and improvement to street furniture such as litter bins, grit bins. To assist with climate emergency objectives, tree planting will also be supported.

7 local people have been employed on the scheme for a 3-year period with 5 Horticultural apprenticeships being created within the team. Local voluntary groups and schools are being encouraged to support the initiative and help ensure a legacy. A joint working group has been established to help work with councillors and partners to identify suitable task areas and to help change behaviour towards littering and flytipping. The team are also working with our Natural Environment team on site selection and support for tree planting and Walking with the Wounded charity who will help to plant the trees (separate report provided on this).

Contact officer: Phil Hindmarsh

#### 10. More and Better Woodlands & Trees

A new Woodland Officer post is to be created to drive forward the Council's ambitious tree and woodland planting proposals, and to secure the improved protection, restoration, enhancement and positive management of the approximately 900ha of woodland already owned by the Council. In comparison, Durham County Council which covers an area of 862sq./miles, compared to Gateshead's 55sq./miles, owns/is responsible for approx. 1800ha of woodland; that's just 10% of the total woodland resource of the County. Having regard to the Gateshead: More & Better Woods Action Plan, the Woodland Officer will work closely with other Council services and external partners to secure the necessary permissions and funding required to successfully deliver the creation of new woodland on Council land where it will deliver the greatest benefit. They will also lead on the production of a UK Forest Standard approved Woodland Management Plan for the Council's existing circa. 900ha woodland estate, providing access to funding to deliver much needed improvements for both people and wildlife. Once established, the Woodland Officer will also work closely with the new North East Community Forest team to coordinate efforts to maximise opportunities for sustainable woodland creation on private land, helping bolster the efforts of the Council in achieving the planting of 100,000 trees by 2030 and increasing woodland cover within the borough from 15% to 17% (approx. 250ha) by 2050.

A job description and person specification for the Woodland Officer post has been produced. This has been issued to HR to progress. Appointment of the Woodland Officer is anticipated to take place this Autumn/early winter.

Contact officer: Neil Wilkinson

#### 11. Open space and parks events

Community and commercial events in parks and on open spaces can bring many benefits to the local community, the council and the areas they are held in. They promote community cohesion, help local businesses and initiatives, bring visitors into the area and also maintain a vibrancy and presence in parks, encouraging their greater use. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, teams in Street Scene and the Events team worked closely together with community groups, charitable organisations and commercial enterprises to bring a wealth and range of events to our parks and open spaces, with over 100 events held in 2019. Events ranged from food markets, races and charity runs, fetes, smaller group events, funfairs and remembrance events to major events such as the Tour of Britain. There were plans to increase this further until Covid struck in 2020 which led to the cancellation and postponement of a large number of the established and proposed new events.

The events and hospitality industry have been one of the most affected by the pandemic and as lockdown measures and restrictions eased during 2021, there has been a significant resurgence in holding events albeit in a revised and Covid secure format. The teams have continued to work with events' organisers to help ensure that events can recommence and in a safe manner and the number of events held and proposed in our parks is continuing to grow significantly. It is unclear what future impact Covid may have but when restrictions allow, we will continue to promote our parks and open spaces as attractive and safe locations to hold events.

Contact officer: Chris Strong

## 12. Parks maintenance fund, fixed play facility renewals and parks and countryside sites improvement plans

Three new capital and revenue fixed term funding investments have been allocated from April 2021 for parks, and parks and open spaces car park improvements and maintenance. A summary of the funding is detailed below. This is in addition to existing capital funding for fixed play renewals also included below.

Project Title	Brief Project Description	Contact Name	Capital Funding 21/22	Revenue Funding 21/22	Capital Funding 22/23	Revenue Funding 22/23	Capital Funding 23/24	Revenue Funding 23/24	Capital Funding 24/25	Revenue Funding 24/25	Capital Funding 25/26	Revenue Funding 25/26	Total Capital Funding	Total Revenue Funding
			£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Additional Capital and Revenue funding														
Improvements to Access Roads and Car Parks	Improvements to access roads, car parks and parks and open spaces to encourage their use.	Kevin Hills	100	30		30		30		30		30	100	150
Parks and Open Spaces	Investment in parks and open spaces, promoting health and wellbeing.	Kevin Hills	340	-	370	-	370	-	360	-	360	-	1,800	-
Parks' Maintenance	Revenue funding to maintain current facilities at an acceptable and safe standard.	Kevin Hills		150		150		150		150		150	-	750
Existing Capital Funding														
Fixed Play Facility Renewals	Programme of renewal and replacement of fixed play equipment throughout the Borough.	Kevin Hills	350	-	350	-	350	-	-	-	-	-	1,050	-
Total			790	180	720	180	720	180	360	180	360	180	2,950	900

Detailed proposed and ongoing spend for the 3 new and 1 current funding streams have been identified (although not all funding has been allocated at this stage to provide a contingency for unforeseen urgent works during the remainder of the year and further refinement of cost estimates). Works have been collated in response to councillor and public requests, inspection records for the facilities and the level of use and priority of the sites. Works commenced in April 2021 and include renewal of existing fixed play equipment, a range of improvements in parks infrastructure and facilities and repairs and renewals of parks' car parks and access roads and paths.

Whilst the additional annual funding is extremely welcome, it is not sufficient to satisfy all requests and demands although the 5 year timescale for the funding will go a long way to improve existing facilities over this timescale. The funding has also been used as leverage in bids to help secure additional funding (Whitehills carbon park, Defra Treescape fund) and also working in partnership with other schemes and services including the Environmental Investment Scheme and the Public rights of Way service.

Contact officer: Phil Hindmarsh

## 13. Saltwell park concessions



Early Discussions are taking place with the service to engages potential suppliers in the future planned concessions for Saltwell Park. This will inform the specification for the tender process that will follow.

Contact officer: Andrea Tickner

#### 14. Web and ICT developments

Included in the Digitising Customer Experience (DCE) programme several new online services have been launched since June 2021 that allow the public to report environmental issues. These have included the reporting of graffiti, pests on open land, over hanging trees, damaged bins and littering. This is following the launch of the report fly tipping digital service which has proved popular with residents. In the last 12 months, the public have reported 9,885 incidents of fly tipping, 84% of which have been reported online. As the DCE programme continues, a system to report arboriculture issues will be going live in December 2021 with the following services to be scoped out over 2021/22 - fixed play equipment, grounds maintenance and damage to fence, walls or buildings in parks.

Contact officer: Roger Abbott

### **Theme - Partnerships & projects:**

#### 15. Angel of the North site development

Historic England outlined a proposal to designate the Angel as a listed building. In response, North of England Civic Trust were commissioned to investigate the significance of the Angel. This highlighted that the setting of the Angel, specifically the tree growth, significantly obscured the views of, and experience of the Angel. A view supported by the artist, Sir Antony Gormley. Southern Green was commissioned to examine the landscape setting and produced three options – do nothing, fully reveal the Angel and a hybrid. Subsequent to consultation with the Leader, Chief Executive and artist agreed the fully reveal option was the most appropriate.

Phase 1 - The Highways England scheme to widen the A1 between Birtley and Coal House roundabout has been approved and work started on site in July to prepare for construction. As part of this scheme parts of the woodland surrounding the Angel will be removed to allow for construction of the new road. In response to the proposal to reveal the Angel the scheme will replace the lost tree cover at the Angel with species rich grassland and shrubs. Replacement tree planting has been secured at Beggar's Wood resulting in no net loss of trees.

Phase 2 – the wider site (that not affected by the A1 scheme) – a partnership discussion between the Council, Highways England as majority land owner, and the artist is scheduled for the autumn to progress discussions.

Timeline – the A1 scheme is due to complete early 2024. The landscaping is the last element of works and the intention would be, working with Highways England, to secure the landscaping scheme across the whole Angel site as one scheme, by one contractor. The timing allows for public engagement and detailed discussions. A report is going to Environment and Transport Portfolio at start of October to progress this.

Contact officer – Clare Richardson

#### 16. Countryside sites management

To date Durham Wildlife Trust (DWT) owns, leases and manages an unparalleled seventeen nature reserves in Gateshead. This is more than in any other single local authority area, including County Durham. With the exception of three of these sites, all were previously owned/leased and/or managed by the Council.

The most recent sites to be transferred to DWT are Ousbrough Wood near Beamish and Shibdon Pond West Local Wildlife Site which adjoins Shibdon Pond SSSI (also managed by the Trust).

In 2021, DWT took a management interest in The Folly, Chopwell East Fields and land at Beggars Wood Recreational Ground. The Trust's Defra funded Healing Nature project is seeing the delivery of habitat improvements, community engagement and volunteering across these and two other Gateshead sites.

Previously the opportunity to transfer land to DWT was closely linked with those sites for which the Council had secured external grant income via Defra's Higher Level Stewardship scheme. More recently, however, it has been s106 monies secured for the delivery of offsite ecological compensation that has facilitated the transfer of sites and the delivery of biodiversity enhancements.

In addition to working with the Council, DWT also recently took on management responsibility for 13ha of ecological grassland, wetland and riverside habitat created/restored as part of the new development at South Follingsby, now occupied by Amazon. The Council was instrumental in facilitating the arrangement between the developer and the Trust; and is seen as an exemplar of best practice.

Again, with links to the planning system, the Council is now pursuing the transfer of its Burdon Moor site to DWT to ensure the successful delivery of a range of significant ecological enhancements, its long-term positive management and a reduction in the Council's maintenance liabilities, allowing it to better focus its resources on managing its remaining assets.

Contact officer: Neil Wilkinson

#### 17. Crawcrook park master plan

With support from the council, Our Villages community group commissioned Gradon Architecture to undertake an appraisal of the opportunity and preparation of a number of concept studies to enhance the public amenity of Crawcrook Park.

The appraisal takes into consideration other proposed housing developments outside the scope of the park. Consideration will be given to an integrated scheme which connects and "secures by design" with the park and its community activities.

Further discussions will take place with the council and Our Villages to consider the feasibility of the studies and develop a plan to improve the park using funding available for fixed play renewals along with funding obtained by Our Villages.

Our Villages have expressed an interest in a community asset transfer of the bowling pavilion and bowling green. The appraisal looks at how these areas can be developed to include refreshments and changing and welfare facilities. The council will continue to work with Our Villages in the development of their proposals and any asset transfer.

Contact officer: Kevin Hills

#### 18. Cross Council initiatives – housing

Street Scene services and The Gateshead Housing Company have for many years worked closely and in partnership. To improve this further and to support the re-integration of

housing services with the council, a joint working group was established including officers from a range of environment, waste and highways services and neighbourhood housing managers. Workstreams include; grounds maintenance, tree management, fixed play, pest control, waste collections and trade waste, highways. The cross-council teams have met regularly to identify opportunities for service improvement and to develop plans and implement the improvements on day to day issues. Some examples of improvements include:

- Waste/recycling (high and low rise blocks) - a number of schemes were approved to replace individual refuse/recycling bins with large communal alternatives. The reduction in the amount of bins has improved the appearance of the local environment; reduced the number bin thefts/contents strewn across estates; improved waste collection and recycling rates. It has also reduced bin arson/improved fire safety within the blocks.
- Pest control, repairs and housing colleagues have worked more closely to resolve issues. A more joined up approach to traditional pest control treatment, building repairs and resident engagement/education has been used. Learning is now being applied to inform future working practices and IT systems.

The teams will continue to meet and develop service improvements as part of each workstream.

#### Estate Walkabout Programme (tenant engagement on estate development)

122 estate walkabouts were carried out in Apr-Jun 2021 (69% with customer involvement). A total of 1321 issues were identified, and actions put in place to resolve – the most common related to overgrown/untidy gardens (566), fly tipping (220), trees (114), pavements (89). Issues relating to graffiti, grass cutting, street lighting, general repairs, unauthorised alterations and vehicles nuisance were also identified and responded to. Estate walkabouts will continue and increase in numbers and customer involvement as Covid restrictions continue to ease.

#### Pooled Funding

Housing and Street Scene colleagues continue to work closely together utilising existing sustainable community fund, responsive grounds maintenance and arboricultural budgets to tackle environmental/estate-based issues. Throughout the year, a number of initiatives have taken place including:

- Small fencing schemes to improve security, protect green spaces, provide defensible space.
- Estate clean ups – one off initiatives to incorporate litter picks, removal of fly tipping.
- Creation of seating, tables, patios, planting areas, mini allotments in communal spaces, particularly around multi storey and older persons accommodation.
- Designing out environmental problems by removing/building walls, fencing, planting areas etc.

Contact officer: Phil Hindmarsh and Neil Bouch

## 19. Enforcement

The Council currently takes enforcement action through its private sector housing powers and selective landlord licensing to ensure residents do the right thing in terms of waste. As part of the selective landlord licensing scheme, there was a recent campaign and focussed work on a particularly problematical back lane in Bensham. This has included face to face contact with every household within the area and revealed a majority of residents support

enforcement action against neighbours. This has yielded promising results 4 weeks into the scheme, with clean yards and lane for the first time in years.

The planning and highway enforcement team have been working full time on COVID business enforcement from March 2020 until July this year but additional resources have been recruited recently in an attempt to work through the backlog of cases until March 2022. Cases are being prioritised on the basis of risk to public safety and it is estimated it will take some time to recover to the pre pandemic service. The environmental enforcement team was disbanded and there is currently no enforcement of littering instead funding has been made available to directly clean any problem areas. Teams across the Council work together to try and address issues where they can and are reviewing what improvements may be necessary to provide a service in the future given changing behaviours.

Contact Officer: Elaine Rudman

## 20. Environmental Volunteers

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, Street Scene supported around 35 environmental voluntary groups with around 400 active members. Groups were wide ranging and varied from parks' friends of groups, gardening and litter picking groups to special interest groups. Groups were coordinated by the Technical & Development Officer in Street Scene along with support through the council's volunteering offer. Volunteers received assistance from operational teams by providing advice, loan of equipment, sacks, gloves and waste collection.

The outbreak of Covid-19 in March 2020 meant that almost all volunteering initiatives had to cease and this situation continued through most of the year and into 2021. With the relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions, volunteering support has gradually resumed, and the Technical & Development Officer has worked closely with groups to identify and implement volunteering tasks in a Covid secure manner. Some examples include;

- Countryside volunteers continue to run small self-led task days including litter picks, minor fencing repairs, scrub clearance.
- Friends of Groups have resumed meetings and activities such as the Saltwell Park User Group and small events such as Love your Parks week, heritage and nature walks, volunteer 'try it' sessions, and general park improvement tasks.

The Technical & Development Officer continues to support the establishment of new groups e.g. Friends of Calderwood Park and acts as a point of contact for anyone or group interested in starting a new volunteering group.

It is unclear what further challenges Covid will bring but the team continue to encourage and support volunteering groups where activities can be safely undertaken. Volunteering has many benefits for the environment and the individual and community and our aim is to grow this further. Should volunteering return to pre-Covid levels and with the aim of growing the number of groups, the challenge will be to find the resource to adequately support groups in terms of coordination and technical support.

Contact officer: Kevin Hills

## 21. Friends of Ferndene park/ Brighten Ryton

The groups are currently working towards a community asset transfer of the bowling green and pavilion within Ferndene Park, Ryton with support from the council. The premises are

to be used as a community facility for the provision of bowls and additional activities for park users.

The Friends of Ferndene Park group undertake general grounds maintenance within the park including grass cutting, litter picking, flower/shrub maintenance. The group work with the council on any proposed improvements or suggested changes to the management of the park. The council has been working closely with the group and with their help we have recently refurbished the fixed play provision in the park.

The Lawn Tennis Association are working with council officers to develop a Parks' Tennis Strategy for Gateshead. Local Tennis coaches have engaged with the group this year to launch free coaching activities in parks across the borough. The council are supporting the group to provide a new information board in Ferndene park so the group can raise awareness and promote their activities.

Contact officer: Ian Stevenson and Kevin Hills

## 22. Joint working initiatives - External partners

- **North East England Nature Partnership (NEENP)**

Following recent personnel changes and a perception that it is a failing partnership, the NEENP is to undertake a review of its aims, governance and funding arrangements. Among the issues being considered is the role of the NEENP, emerging interest from the LEP in unlocking environmental funding, the future Environment Bill, and the potential sharing of resources with other groups such as the North East England Climate Coalition.

- **North East England Climate Coalition (NEECCo)**

North East England Climate Coalition (<https://neecco.org.uk>) is a cross-sector initiative bringing the region together to tackle climate emergency, reverse ecological collapse and deliver an urgent and just transition. Gateshead Council is an active member and sits on the Agriculture and Land Use (led by North East England Nature Partnership) and Housing Retrofitting (led by Northern Housing Consortium) workstreams.

- **Northumbria University**

Working with the Department of Geography and Environmental Sciences on potential research projects.

- **National Trust**

The Council is working closely with the National Trust (NT) to reinvigorate Riverside Park and Dunston Staiths. NT are providing experience and expertise to the Tyne and Wear Building Preservation Trust and Council to develop the Staiths and Park as a visitor attraction, and lessons learnt from their Future Parks programme. They are actively leading on stakeholder engagement across both sites.

- **Durham Wildlife Trust (DWT)**

The Council continues to work successfully with DWT across a number of areas including project development and delivery (e.g. Healing Nature), the transfer and management of Council sites, the delivery of ecological compensation relating to the planning system, and the development of emerging strategies incl. More and Better Woods Action Plan.

- **Woodland Trust (WT)**

Further to the recent transfer of Council land to the WT for the creation of a new community woodland near Path Head, and previous support given by the Council to extend the Trust's flagship 90ha Hedley Hall Wood site; the Council continues to work closely with the WT including in the development and delivery of new woodland planting sites.

- **Highways England and Anthony Gormley**

The Council is working closely with Highways England (rebranding as National Highways) and Antony Gormley's Studio to examine the opportunities to redesign the landscape setting of the Angel of the North. The partnership will extend as discussions progress to include wider stakeholders including Durham Wildlife Trust and Historic England.

- **Land of Oak and Iron Trust**

The Land of Oak & Iron Trust is an independent charitable organisation, working closely with the Land of Oak & Iron partnership which the Council is a member of. The trust aims to promote, celebrate and protect the heritage, culture and landscape of the Land of Oak & Iron

- **Forestry Commission (FC)**

The FC are providing increasing technical and funding support to the Council both directly and through the North East Community Forest partnership. Officers have recently met with the FC to discuss the development of a whole estate Woodland Management Plan for the circa. 900ha of existing Council owned woodland.

- **Tyne Catchment Partnership (TCP)**

The Council is an active member of the TCP which provides a forum for partner organisations to share information, develop strategies and take action to tackle issues including water quality, flood risk and ecological function. The Council is also represented on the River Team and River Don sub-catchment groups and the Tyne Estuary Partnership.

Contact officer: Neil Wilkinson

## 23. Motorbike disorder on open spaces

### Hotspot locations:

We continue to experience reports of motorcycle disorder across the Borough – with hotspot locations identified at Windy Nook and Whitehills, West Gateshead and within areas around Beacon Lough and Harlow Green. All locations are vast open spaces with most complaints coming during the early evening and on a weekend. We are unable to use physical deterrents across every hotspot location within the Borough; nor are Police able to have a presence at each site; however, we work in an intelligence-led way to ensure resources are deployed to areas of greatest harm. In some circumstances, motorbikes will be used to commit more serious offences and crime and be used to facilitate drug supply; however, most cases reported in Gateshead relate to general ASB and noise nuisance.

### Actions Taken:

Some of the actions undertaken to address the concerns include:

- Forcewide media releases to communicate the dangers of motorbike disorder and encourage intelligence from residents to help identify those responsible for committing the ASB. We know that motorbikes are being stored in homes, garages and sheds and local people will know who these people are.
- Deployment of high-powered cameras/CCTV to help identify offenders using motorbikes at hotspot locations.
- Created a database of offenders to capture intelligence and information on anti-social motorbike use across the Borough. This includes details around date, time, description of offender and access points into sites – and helps us to build up a broad picture of trends and patterns to help deploy our resources.
- Information is shared with partners (including housing) to identify if there are any tenancy enforcement aspects that can be considered to further deter offending behaviour.
- Police have issued Section 59s and seized motorbikes where they have evidence of repeated use to cause ASB.

- Disruption tactics have been deployed at petrol stations (including test purchases using the Police cadets – which has resulted in filling stations being given verbal warnings by Police). Training package and education materials have also been rolled out to petrol stations within East and West Gateshead to help minimise the potential for sale of fuel to young people.
- Signage has been provided at filling stations and if anyone attempts to purchase fuel using a jerry can, they are required to provide photographic ID, set out what they intend to use the fuel for and provide an address. This information is collected by Police and used to identify repeat buyers and can be cross-referred to the day/times of incidents etc.
- Dedicated Police action has taken place at various hotspot locations within the Borough. This has included high visibility patrols and attempts to identify and catch perpetrators.
- A Members Seminar was arranged earlier in the year to provide an update to Councillor and to highlight activity that is being carried out by Police. Councillors requested Police and Crime Commissioner to review Force Policy relating to pursuit of offending vehicles and a response has been provided by Northumbria Police.

#### Next Steps:

We will continue to monitor the level of ASB caused by motorbikes through our weekly Operational Tasking Group and will include ongoing dedicated patrols and operations within hotspot locations. It is often difficult to eradicate motorbike disorder, but we will continue to work in a problem-solving manner to help identify actions that can be done to protect victims, deter perpetrators and make it difficult to access appropriate land. We are working closely with neighbouring local authorities and Northumbria Police to explore if it is viable for the creation of a dedicated site to attract motorbike users to help reduce the level of ASB caused within our communities.

Contact Officer: Adam Lindridge

## 24. Sports pitches management

As part of the 2019/20 budget setting process the consultation included a proposal to remove the maintenance of the council maintained bowling greens and sports pitches across the borough. Following the consultation, alternative savings were identified and reserve mitigation funding was approved for a period of 3 years. Therefore, the budget has remained the same from 2019/20 to allow time to develop a plan which would include an exit strategy and a proposed sustainable model by 2022. This plan would include further rationalisation of stock, asset transfer and investment in other facilities to increase usage and generate income to mitigate the subsidy. The plan would also ensure that resource was retained to support the playing pitch provision within existing council leisure facilities.

The plan was progressing well up to March 2020 and Phase 1, which included the reduction from 26 to 14 maintained bowling greens and the transfer of management of Pelaw and Marley Hill bowling facilities, was completed. Phase 2, which included the closure or reduced maintenance of sites that were unused was completed with the exception of the asset transfer of the bowling green at Ferndene park, Ryton which was delayed.

Phase 3 was to be implemented by March 2021 (although later extended to September 2021) and aimed to address the future of the remainder of the bowling greens including the self-management option. Phase 4 was to be implemented by March 2022 and aimed to address the future of the remaining playing pitch stock (football, rugby and cricket).

Progress on the delivery of Phase 3 & 4 of the plans has continued to stall significantly due to the impact and disruption caused by Covid-19 during 2020 and 2021. Neighbourhood Management and Sports Development teams leading on supporting asset transfers and working with sports clubs have been diverted to alternative and essential Covid response

duties. For long periods, sports clubs have been inactive or it has not been possible to arrange meetings and site visits with club representatives due to restrictions or safety concerns. Many of the club representatives have not been able to engage in virtual meetings due to a lack of access or ability to use video conferencing. Other technical issues have also arisen on several sites which require further work to resolve.

The project team is currently evaluating the current position and will be seeking a steer from Cabinet members in the coming weeks on the next steps and timescale to complete the last phases of the project.

Once the project is completed, existing sports pitches will be provided and maintained in a financially viable manner with many of facilities managed by the clubs. Unused football pitches will be maintained to open space standards enabling the continued access by residents for dog walking and exercise. Alternative community and commercial uses are being sought for closed bowling greens and pavilions and there is currently interest at a number of sites. The completion of the project will help safeguard the future of sports pitch provision in the borough whilst offering greater opportunity for community buy-in and involvement in local sporting facilities

Contact officer: Chris Strong

## 25. Team Valley Flood Alleviation Strategy

The project will provide increased flood protection for the Team Valley Trading Estate (TVTE): more than 700 businesses employing 20,000 people are located on the TVTE. The project comprises a mix of engineered and natural flood management (NFM) measures and has been given outline business case approval. The Environment Agency (EA) is progressing detailed designs and full business case approval (to be submitted in November 2021).

### Eslington Park

Daylighting of approximately 150m of the culverted section of the River Team and removal of the weir to reduce flood risk, improve fish passage, biodiversity and public amenity. Low carbon designs for replacement footbridge and new cycle bridge are being investigated. Network Rail is undertaking bridge repairs at same location. The works are scheduled for completion in Spring 2022 with EA works commencing immediately thereafter.

### Black Burn - Watergate Forest Park

Increasing flood storage capacity within existing lake. The EA is investigating the possibility of increasing the lake volume (by 25,000 m<sup>3</sup> above the natural ground level) under Reservoirs Act 1975. The increased lake would result in additional legal maintenance requirements for Gateshead Council. A survey is scheduled for October to calculate volumes. Computer modelling to design the lake outfall (orifice size) is also in progress. Additional flood storage sites on or near Black Burn is being investigated.

### Lady Park Burn

The existing trash screen at Lady Park Burn culvert will be replaced and upgraded and potential bunding works are being assessed.

### TVTE



Proposed flood walls near the northern section of Queensway are under review (alignment and height) to ensure channelled flood water does not damage Lobley Hill Road bridge. Assessments are ongoing to determine the requirement for interventions to aid fish passage in Kingsway Culvert, and feasibility for baffles to control flow. Proposals for potential surface water management measures (put forward by Gateshead Council flood risk officers) will be assessed.

#### Flood warning service

Proposals are in the early stages of scoping for a potential flood warning service for residential and non-residential property owners/tenants.

#### NFM options

Options are currently being investigated for:

- Lamesley – river realignment/re-naturalisation and the introduction of features to reduce flood risk and to enhance biodiversity (challenges include archaeology);
- Coltspool Burn – enlarging the existing pond;
- Hedley Hall Woods – culvert removal, leaky dams and wetland creation;
- Urpeth Woods at Bewick Main Caravan Park – watercourse realignment/re-naturalisation (constraints include an existing Northumbrian Water public sewer)

Contact Officer: Neil Wilkinson

### 26. Walking with the Wounded

Walking with the Wounded have a health, wellbeing and community based volunteer programme to generate engagement, reduce social isolation and create a healthier environment in the region.

They work in partnership with Newcastle Council and they are looking to develop similar arrangements with Gateshead to deliver their OP-REGEN programme. As part of the programme, the Growing Together initiative aims to develop a long term volunteer programme linking with the council's tree planting objectives. Growing Together will create a focus to engage marginalised veterans and families to engage with and embrace the outside space they live in.

Walking with the Wounded are keen to explore further how they can help engage members of the armed forces community and have an impact on areas within Gateshead. We are supporting them by facilitating space for them to operate and identifying areas for tree planting.

Contact officer: Kevin Hills

## **Theme - Policy Development:**

### 27. Biodiversity net gain

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is an approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a measurably better state than before. It requires developers to provide an increase in appropriate natural habitat and ecological features over and above that being affected in such a way that the current loss of biodiversity through development will be halted and ecological networks can be restored.

The Chancellor's 2019 spring statement indicated it will be mandatory for all development in England to deliver BNG. The requirement will come into force following a two year 'transitionary period' after the Environment Bill for England receives royal assent.

BNG still relies on the application of the mitigation hierarchy to avoid, mitigate and/or compensate for biodiversity losses. It is additional to these approaches, not instead of them. It involves the use of a metric as a proxy for recognising the negative impacts on habitats arising from a development and calculating how much new or enhanced habitat, and of what types, is required to achieve net gain.

The National Planning Policy Framework and Local Plan policy MSGP37 already support the requirement for new development to delivery net gains for biodiversity. Many developers are now incorporating net gain into their development proposals and the Council is receiving an increasing number of planning applications supported by a BNG assessment.

Where it is not possible to achieve BNG onsite within the red line boundary, developers are increasingly asking the Local Planning Authority for support in delivering 'offsite' measures to address the net gain requirement. Whilst the Council has suitable land on which to deliver offsite BNG measures, and in doing so secure wider environmental benefits including carbon sequestration, flood reduction, improved air and water quality, and public amenity, the process involved in identifying a site, developing an appropriate scheme of measures, and costing those measures can be very time consuming. This can result in lengthy delays in the determination of planning applications. It is therefore proposed that a set tariff, secured via a s106 agreement, be charged where a developer is seeking to buy biodiversity credits from the Council. The monies would then be used by the Council, working with an appointed delivery partner, to implement a biodiversity offset that provides the required number of biodiversity units of the required habitat types. At the same time the Council, working with its partners, will identify opportunity areas for the delivery of BNG and develop a pipeline of net gain projects. This links with the anticipated development of Local Nature Recovery Strategies.

Contact officer: Neil Wilkinson

## 28. Health and wellbeing review – future opportunities

### **Green Social Prescribing**

Research and the personal experience of many people during the pandemic has shown that spending time in the natural environment can reduce stress, fatigue, anxiety, and depression. It can help boost immune systems, encourage physical activity, and may reduce the risk of chronic diseases.

Green social prescribing is the practice of supporting people to engage in nature-based interventions, based on what matters to them. Activities include both green and blue environments and people can be linked to a range of activities, including local walking schemes, community gardening projects, conservation volunteering, green gyms, and arts and cultural activities which take place outdoors.

There is an opportunity for Gateshead to further explore the role of green social prescribing and to link to existing programmes such as the 'Feel Good in the Forest' programme ran by the Active Forests Co-ordinator in Chopwell Wood, to look for opportunities in other areas of Gateshead.

### **Community Led**

Support engagement across the Council and the community to understand the actual and potential local benefits of green space and reveal the diverse ways green space is thought about and used in each of our wards. This will help us understand the range of benefits green space delivers to our communities in Gateshead and will provide insight for planning future work with partners.

### **University Project - Quantifying Open Spaces**

Current work involves Public Health supporting planning colleagues on a quantifying open space project with Northumbria University. This involves developing measures related to open space which looks at the health and wellbeing of the catchment population around an open space site, and a site-specific quality measure. The results will provide some indication of the relative need for quality open space and the quality of the site itself (indicating the contribution the site has to health and wellbeing, or the potential it could have if it was enhanced). This tool can support the development of opportunities highlighted.

Contact officer: Andy Graham

## **29. Planning tools/ initiatives**

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRs) are a new system of spatial strategies that will establish priorities and map proposals for specific actions to drive nature's recovery and provide wider environmental benefits. The requirement for there to be LNRs, what they are and how they should work will be established by the Environment Bill once it completes its current passage through Parliament.

LNRs will cover the whole of England and be split into roughly 50 areas, often likely to be at county-level. The area covered by each LNR will be set by the Defra Secretary of State, who will also appoint a "responsible authority" for each to lead its preparation. LNR boundaries will be based on local government boundaries to enable close connection with the land use planning system.

The Defra Secretary of State will also produce regulations on the process for preparing, publishing and reviewing a LNR and guidance on what each Strategy should contain. The regulations will set the requirements that all "responsible authorities" must follow when preparing and updating their Strategy and the guidance will describe in greater detail what they should be seeking to produce.

The Government's overall ambition is that LNRs will be a powerful new tool that will help the public, private and voluntary sectors work more effectively together for nature's recovery and enable collective effort to be focussed where it will have most benefit. Key to achieving this will be creating genuine local collaboration with a partnership of organisations and individuals working closely with each "responsible authority".

The regulations and guidance have an important role in establishing this, and in making sure LNRs are shaped to work with the funding mechanisms and decision-making processes that will drive their delivery. While LNRs will identify opportunities for habitat creation and improvement that will underpin the Nature Recovery Network (NRN) and the use of nature-based solutions to address wider environmental issues, they are not in themselves a delivery mechanism.

In anticipation of the Environment Bill the Council has been working with its neighbours south of the Tyne to agree common criteria for mapping the key ecological components of a

NRN. This has resulted in the production of a new Wildlife Corridor Network for Gateshead, Sunderland and South Tyneside; and reflects similar work undertaken by Durham County Council. The Council will continue to work with neighbours in preparing the evidence base required to help inform the LNRS process. The Environment Bill is expected to receive royal assent in the autumn.

Contact officer: Neil Wilkinson

**18<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

## **Regulatory Standards Compliance and Action Plan**

---

### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To update members on the Regulatory Standards self-assessment and action plan.
2. At the joint workshop with the Strategic Housing Board on the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021, members requested that this item was added to the agenda of the next of Housing Environment and Healthier Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting. A covering report was requested to include the required actions to achieve full compliance.

### **Background**

3. As a social housing landlord Gateshead Council must ensure that it is fully compliant with all aspects of the existing Regulatory Standards and that we have robust governance arrangements in place to provide assurance and scrutiny.
4. The existing regulatory standards comprise of four Consumer Standards:
  - **Home Standard** – sets out expectations for registered providers of social housing to provide tenants with quality accommodation and a cost-effective Repairs and Maintenance Service.
  - **Tenancy Standard** – sets out expectations for registered providers to let their homes to tenants in a fair, transparent, and efficient way.
  - **Neighbourhood and Community Standard** – sets expectations for registered providers to keep the neighbourhood and communal areas associated with the homes they own clean and safe, co-operate with relevant partners to promote the wellbeing of the local area and help prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour.
  - **Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard** – sets expectations for registered providers of social housing to provide choices, information and communication that is appropriate to the diverse needs of their tenants, a clear approach to complaints and a wide range of opportunities for them to have influence and be involved.
  - In addition, the **Economic Standard** that covers rent also applies to local authorities.
5. In March 2021 a self-assessment against each standard was completed to understand our current position. For each specific requirement we designated 'good', 'satisfactory' or 'requires improvement'.

6. To strengthen this process, Service Managers carried out peer reviews of each of the standards' self-assessments, to ensure a rigorous and independent approach was applied.
7. Our assessment showed that we achieved a 65% average compliance score across the four Consumer Standards and Rent Standard. A summary is set out in Appendix 1.

### **Next Steps**

8. Our aim is to achieve a satisfactory or good rating against all requirements of each Regulatory Standard. To support compliance an action plan has been developed which sets out the necessary actions to achieve full compliance. Of the 82 required actions, 43 have commenced, and a further 16 are now complete.
9. Each action is assigned to a lead officer, states clearly what is required to become compliant and includes an expected completion date. It is anticipated that all actions will be completed within 18 months.
10. Appendix 2 sets out what actions are required against each standard to achieve full compliance.
11. Progress updates will be reported to both this committee on a quarterly basis and the Strategic Housing Board on a six-monthly basis.
12. **Recommendations:**
  1. Members of OSC are requested to note progress to date and arrangements for future progress updates.

---

Contact: Marie John ext 7795

## Appendix 1

**Table 1 - Regulatory Standards Self-Assessment outcomes**

	<b>Consumer Standards</b>				<b>Economic Standard</b>
Rating	Tenancy Standard	Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard	Home Standard	Neighbourhood and Community Standard	Rent Standard
<b>Good</b>	56%	20%	0%	43%	88%
<b>Satisfactory</b>	20%	40%	12.5%	43%	12%
<b>Requires Improvement</b>	24%	40%	87.5%	14%	N/A

- This demonstrates 65% average score with compliance across the four Consumer Standards and Rent Standard

This page is intentionally left blank



**Appendix 2 - Table 2 - Regulatory Standards Self-Assessment Analysis and Progress to date**

	Actions identified following self-assessment	Areas where improvement still required	Key progress to date
<b>Tenancy Standard</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strengthened Strategic Housing Function</li> <li>▪ Review of Allocations Policy/Process and Strategic Tenancy Policy</li> <li>▪ Review of Homelessness</li> <li>▪ Voids Review – Pennington Choices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strategic Housing Needs</li> <li>▪ Overall we need to improve services/choices for under occupiers and make better use of our stock</li> <li>▪ We need to improve our response and offer to statutory overcrowding cases</li> <li>▪ Time empty between letting</li> <li>▪ Terms of occupation</li> <li>▪ We do not currently have clear and accessible Tenancy Management Policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Allocations Policy was not fit for purpose, appointed Campbell Tickell, to help develop a new policy, which is going to Cabinet in December.</li> <li>▪ Reviewed the Tenancy Agreement (including the terms of occupation on offer) to ensure it reflects the recent changes from the ALMO coming back into the Council.</li> <li>▪ Phase 1 of the Homelessness Review completed. Findings and recommendations for change approved by Strategic Housing Board. Draft Strategy and Charter also approved ready for Cabinet approval in the autumn.</li> <li>▪ Business Case completed to leave Tyne and Wear Homes endorsed by Strategic Housing Board.</li> <li>▪ Voids Review Underway, led by Pennington Choices with voids reduction action plan in place.</li> </ul>
<b>Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ New Strategic Housing Board that includes tenants</li> <li>▪ TPAS – Tenant Voice Strategy</li> <li>▪ New Performance Management Framework and PIs developed</li> <li>▪ New online repairs reporting system in July</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tenant involvement and influence – decision making &amp; service delivery</li> <li>▪ Performance monitoring and scrutiny by Tenants</li> <li>▪ Assurance customers treated fairly/respectfully</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A new Resident Influence Strategy has been developed based on the TPAS review of Customer Engagement recommendations.</li> <li>▪ Created new Resident Influence Panel and Strategic Housing Board. Tenant and Leaseholders appointed to both.</li> <li>▪ New suite of Performance Indicators developed reported to joint HE&amp;HC OSC and SHB. Going to SMG Performance and Services in October.</li> <li>▪ Revised Council Complaints Policy to comply with Housing Ombudsman’s new Complaints Handling Code, it is subject to Cabinet approval in October.</li> </ul>



			<p>customers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All reviews currently underway will inform how we move forward with improving and maintaining neighbourhoods.</li> </ul>
<b>Rent Standard</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ System Review – More automation/flags</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Affordable Rents – System checks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Meeting taken place with property services (valuers) and the rent and income team to discuss the process for updating affordable rented property rental values and also obtaining the 1999 formula rent as they become void. This will mean an incremental approach to the existing affordable stock.</li> <li>▪ For all new stock a market value, market rent and 1999 value will be provided to enable the formula rent to be maintained.</li> </ul>

This page is intentionally left blank

## Overview and Scrutiny Report

<b>Title: Update on the voluntary undertaking with the Regulator of Social Housing</b>		<b>Ref:</b>
<b>Date: 18<sup>th</sup> October 2021</b>		<b>Portfolio:</b>
<b>Strategic Director:</b> Colin Huntington		

### Purpose of Summary

1. To provide an update on progress to the action plan contained within the voluntary undertaking entered into with the Regulator of Social Housing (The Regulator) on 29 November 2019 and performance of landlord compliance.

### Background

2. This report follows on from previous update reports and should be read in conjunction with the monthly updated detailed action plan report that is reviewed by the Regulator at a monthly meeting. The latest meeting was 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

### Summary of Key Issues for consideration

3. A draft follow up report was received from Pennington Choices on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021. This report reviews the domestic property portfolio compliance position subsequent to the embedding of new governance arrangements and clarification of the communal area compliance data held in Northgate and Keystone. Pennington Choices have upgraded all areas to reasonable assurance.
4. In response to the risk from a lack of operational resource in Gateshead Construction Services for building safety compliance work, a further managerial role to address is being progressed. The priority of the role is to deliver operational compliance via specialist contractors.
5. At a meeting with the Regulator of Social Housing on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2021 it was agreed that the Council could submit a letter of request that the voluntary undertaking is reviewed. A position statement on progress against the agreed actions would also be sent to support the request.
6. Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service have carried out an interim visit to Redheugh and Eslington Court and are satisfied with progress on the fire action plan. A final visit is due mid-October.
7. Historical fire safety remedial works have confirmed completion dates of December 2021 for high rise blocks and March 2022 for mid and low rise blocks.
8. All high risks Asbestos works have been completed. Asbestos remedial works are affected by a lack of operational resource and are being prioritised for completion by Construction Services.
9. Domestic lift servicing and inspection continues to be intermittent. These are lifting devices provided for personal care.

10. Electrical inspections and remedial works now with contractors due to a lack in internal resource. Year three remedial works are to be subcontracted with confirmation of a start of work date and target completion dates awaited from Construction Services.

### **Compliance Audit**

11. The Compliance Recovery Review report provided by Pennington Choices had two areas of limited assurance - governance and communal areas in domestic buildings.
12. Additional information and clarification have been provided and the assurance level lifted to Reasonable Assurance.
13. Some additional actions are in progress that are expected to lift both areas to substantial assurance. This mainly consists of surveyors visiting those properties cited as without a communal area and signing these off as correct on Northgate.

### **Current Position – Fire Safety**

14. Fire safety remedial work has an expected completion date of December 2021 for high rise blocks and March 2022 for low and mid-rise blocks. Works will continue to be raised from the fire risk assessment programme and from other invasive schemes of work.
15. The fire risk assessment programme is on schedule.
16. The fire safety action plan agreed with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service at Redheugh and Elington is complete apart from some flat fire alarm connections where 22 residents have refused access. The Building Safety Manager is coordinating access with Housing Management, and legal action is likely to gain injunctions and warrants to force entry.
17. The Northgate risk assessment module has experienced further issues with how Adobe Acrobat presents the risk assessment document. This is with Northgate developers. In the interim risk assessments continue to be recorded via the iAuditor software and loaded to Northgate.
18. Procurement for an independent assessment of the external wall materials of buildings in scope has been drafted. This meets the requirements of the amended Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Current cost estimates place the high-rise block surveys at up to £0.5m. Cost avoidance options are under review for low and mid-rise block surveys in the next financial year.
19. Availability of reactive Council resource for fire safety works remains a key risk and forms part of the rationale for the use of specialist contractors.

### **Building Safety**

20. Two Building Safety Coordinator roles are to be advertised to support the Building Safety Manager (BSM).

21. Northgate have produced the first 'golden thread' reports that provide compliance data for the high rise blocks along with heat maps for the borough. These are now in the live testing phase.
22. A resident engagement strategy is in progress.

### **Asbestos**

23. The annual monitoring programme for identified asbestos containing materials is on target.
24. There are no high-risk remedial actions outstanding.
25. Completion of medium risk remedial actions have been split between contractors and Construction Services. 17 Butterfly houses/ other construction style houses with loft issues, whilst of a restricted access design, to be sealed by Construction Services. A resident involvement exercise is in progress to liaise with residents and coordinate the work programme.
26. Low and very low risk remedials from historical surveys are within a desktop review to locate completion certification or confirm as no action required.
27. As with fire safety works, availability of reactive inhouse resource for asbestos safety pre and post works remains a risk and is currently supported by subcontractors.

### **Electrical Safety**

28. The fixed wire testing programme has been moved in its entirety to contractors who will also complete any remedial works arising to prevent further backlogs.
29. Year one and year two electrical remedials are with a subcontractor and have an expected completion date of March 2022 with Year three remedials awaiting final arrangements with a contractor. All are C2 repairs and due to the age and numbers considered a risk.
30. The accumulated rewires and electrical distribution board renewals are to be contracted out. These properties have a shorter retest period to ensure safety until work is completed. This work under previous electrical regulations would have been C3 remedials rather than C2.
31. The fixed wire testing programme remains on target for year three of five.

### **Gas Safety**

32. At the end of September 2021 39 landlord gas safety records were out of time with 99.89% of Council owned properties compliant.
33. During September 2021, 2,084 gas services were completed with 784 doorstep no accesses. This is a cost to the business of £19,600 lost time, not including additional administrative time to reschedule appointments.
34. 714 emergency repairs and 71 emergency boiler replacements were completed.

35. 7 warrants were obtained from court for access.

### **Domestic Lifts**

36. Slow progress is being made to complete service and inspection of the disabled adaptation lifting devices. Access continues to be difficult and contractors experiencing multiple entry refusals.
37. Administrative delays are also affecting performance figures with Council insurers HSB Munich refusing to use the Northgate portal to upload thorough inspection certification and work order completions. This will be referred to internal audit due to the way the Council contract and pay HSB Munich.
38. Support is in place from Housing Management and Child/Adult Services.
39. As this is not an area that the Courts would grant an injunction or warrant for we are limited in our responses and this continues to be a concern. Risk is limited to those persons in the household using the adaptations provided.

### **Water Safety**

40. There is a national shortage of plumbers. The domestic property legionella risk assessments have now been put into a procurement exercise.
41. The back log of water dead leg removals is now 90% complete. The remaining 10% have had three access attempts and are now under review for housing management support.
42. Thermostatic mixing valve servicing commenced during August with contractors carrying out inspections and remedial works.

### **Data**

43. System improvements and live testing are in progress for both the Northgate risk assessment module – which is operational apart from the final presentation of the risk assessment document, and the service and inspection module.
44. The suite of Northgate reports has undergone a detailed review with simplifications and enhancements implemented to make them easier to use and understand.

### **Recommendation**

45. The note the current position on the voluntary undertaking.

---

Contact: Ian McLackland, Head of Building Safety

Tel No: (0191) 433 5313

---

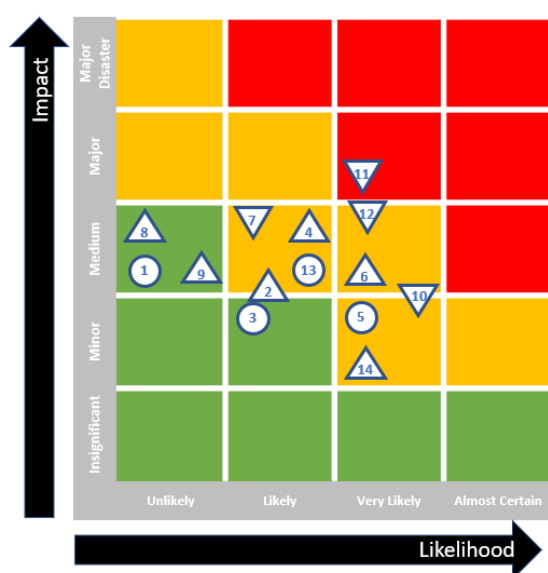


## Progress against compliance actions at month ending 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021

### Contents

<b>1. Fire Safety</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>2 Asbestos</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>3 Electrical Safety</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>4 Gas Safety</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>5 Mechanical</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>6. Water Safety</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>7 Data Management</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>RAG Table</b> .....	<b>14</b>

### HRA Compliance Risk Summary



1. Fire risk assessments
2. Fire risk assessment corrective maintenance
3. Asbestos inspections
4. Asbestos corrective actions
5. Electrical inspections
6. Electrical corrective actions
7. Gas servicing
8. Gas corrective actions
9. Passenger lift servicing
10. Passenger lift corrective actions
11. Domestic lift servicing
12. Domestic lift corrective actions
13. Water risk assessments
14. Water corrective actions

**Note:** This must be read in conjunction with full supporting reports

**Key: -**

- ▽△ = Movement in month  
○ = Unchanged risk

## 1. Fire Safety

Area	Target	Prev Month	Month End	%	Variance		RAG
FRA's (Communal) All	471.00	471.00	471.00	100.00	0.00	→0.00	G
Fire Door Inspections (Communal)	3712.00	1707.00	2100.00	56.57	1612.00	↑393.00	G
Fire Door Inspections (Domestic)	1961.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1961.00	→0.00	A
Corrective Maintenance	No	Prev Month	Month End	%	Incomplete		RAG
FRA's communal High Rise 19/20	1019.00	1005.00	1014.00	99.51	5.00	↑9.00	A
FRA's communal High Rise 20/21	120.00	91.00	113.00	94.17	7.00	↑22.00	A
FRA's communal High Rise 21/22	99.00	49.00	85.00	85.86	14.00	↑36.00	A
FRA's Communal Mid and Low Rise 19/20	2538.00	2419.00	2442.00	96.22	96.00	↑23.00	A
FRA's Communal Mid and Low rise 20/21	206.00	54.00	91.00	44.17	115.00	↑37.00	A
FRA's Communal Mid and Low rise 21/22	155.00	3.00	19.00	12.26	136.00	↑16.00	A
Fire Door replacement (High Rise)	1961.00	1421.00	1578.00	80.47	383.00	↑157.00	G

### Commentary

Remedial actions arising from FRAs for the High Rise Blocks and Low/Mid Rise Blocks have now been split into financial year for 2019/2020, 2020/2021 and 2021/2022. Table shown below (Figures as of 01/10/2021).

### High Rise

**Total: 26 actions remaining**

#### Compartmentation/Firestopping issues (x 19)

8 x Structural repairs  
 3 x Flat front doors  
 2 x Riser cupboard doors  
 2 x Communal fire doors  
 2 x bin chute  
 1 x Glazing  
 1 x Electric cable

#### Fire Safety/Security (x 7)

2 x CCTV repairs  
 1 x Plastic cable ties need replaced with metal ties  
 1 x Intumescent vent needs investigated  
 1 x Combustible materials require removing  
 1 x Defective communal lighting  
 1 x Manual call point recommended

All high-rise corrective actions arising from FRAs are within an ongoing action plan. High rise block fire remedials have a proposed completion of December 2021.

#### High Rise Actions 2019/2020

There are 5 high rise actions remaining from this time period. These are of a low-risk nature or linked to the door replacement programme or minor compartmentation action, and are in

programmed schemes.

#### High-rise actions 2021/2022

The 2021 round of high-rise FRA reviews have been completed. A total of 99 actions were recorded, with 85 having been resolved, leaving 14 to complete.

All high-rise blocks will be inspected, by TWFRS Fire Safety section, over the coming months and any recommendations will be acted upon. To date there have been 13 Building Risk Register inspections carried out, 11 of which were deemed to be 'broadly compliant' with some minor issues. These 13 blocks were deemed to be of a higher priority. A further 5 blocks have been booked in for inspection, between 04/10/21 & 09/11/21.

Following a flat fire, TWFRS audited 2 blocks (Redheugh and Eslington Court) and identified a number of work standard issues as well as some poor housekeeping points. An action plan was agreed with the fire service and all 'immediate' actions were resolved within the timescales set. This was to replace temporary coverings on resident damage to fire doors and some minor fire stopping. As a result of the TWFRS Action Plan, new FRA's were conducted on Eslington Court (23/07/21) and Redheugh Court (03/08/21).

Invasive external surveys (core drilling) have been carried out on the following blocks, to determine whether fire rated cavity wall insulation can be installed: - Adelaide, Bensham, Brisbane, Melbourne, St Cuthberts, Sydney and Warwick. The results are awaited from the Home Ownership Team, Asset manager.

Type 2 (common areas) inspections are being carried out prior to the flat door installation and any compartmentation issues are resolved before they are installed.

Ad-hoc type 4 FRA have been carried out in blocks that have had fire incidents or have had deficiencies noted. A programme for type 4 inside (flats) inspections will be formulated in early 2022.

#### High rise Fire doors –

There are currently 88 Fire doors at Crowhall Towers included in the target figures, however this block is due for demolition, once the block is empty these will be removed from the overall target figures.

#### Low/Mid-rise actions 2019/2020

All 19/20 low and mid-rise corrective actions resulting from FRAs are within an ongoing action plan. 2442 of 2538 are complete with 96 remaining. These actions are tracked regularly on Northgate and action completion breakdown records are updated whenever actions are set to 'COM' on the system.

Detail: (majority planned for completion by March 2022).

#### 96 OVERALL CURRENT ACTIONS FOR 19/20;

- 5 portable appliance tests, programme currently running.
- 35 low risk compartmentation improvements will commence after the high rise blocks have been completed.

- 14 bin chute removals (All external access hatches have now been bricked up)
- 5 electrical repairs
- 1 actions with design
- 34 general repairs (breakdown below);
  - 15 minor flat door repairs
  - 10 communal window repairs
  - 9 communal door repairs
- 2 Misc repairs

#### Low/Mid-rise actions 2020/2021

All 20/21 low and mid-rise corrective actions resulting from FRAs are within an ongoing action plan. 91 of 206 are complete with 115 remaining. These actions are tracked regularly on Northgate and action completion breakdown records are updated whenever actions are set to 'COM' on the system.

#### 115 OVERALL CURRENT ACTIONS FOR 20/21;

- 26 housing management issues. Regular H&S (with fire safety element) inspections by Housing Management now supplement FRA's.
- 31 low risk compartmentation improvements will commence after the high blocks have been completed.
- 24 electrical repairs
- 31 general repairs (breakdown below);
  - 14 minor flat door repairs
  - 1 communal window repairs
  - 16 communal door repairs
- 3 miscrepairs

#### Low/Mid-rise actions 2021/2022

All 21/22 low&mid-rise corrective actions resulting from FRAs are recorded on the Northgate system for completion, 19 of 155 are complete with 136 remaining.

A new process has been introduced to ensure actions are delivered to construction services in a better format. Actions are now uploaded onto Northgate as Business Actions for the tracking aspect of the process (for use by compliance and other applicable teams), then appropriate actions are uploaded onto Northgate as 'Service Requests' (SRQs). Service requests enable construction services to prioritise workload based on the risk rating of the action and make financial planning of the work easier through the use of 'Schedule of Rate Codes' (SORs - attached to the SRQ).

An upcoming action plan meeting with construction services (date TBC) will address outstanding actions from 19/20, 20/21 & 21/22 tax years. As part of this meeting, an approximate completion date for all actions from previous tax years will be set out and prioritised based on the risk profile (current tax year has ongoing action uploads, will also be addressed to the current position on the date of the meeting).

#### 136 OVERALL CURRENT ACTIONS FOR 21/22;

- 38 housing management issues. Regular H&S (with fire safety element) inspections by Housing Management now supplement FRA's.
- 26 low risk compartmentation improvements will commence after the high blocks have been completed
- 18 electrical repairs
- 40 general repairs (breakdown below);
  - 9 minor flat door repairs
  - 31 communal door repairs
- 7 misc repairs
- 1 PAT Testing
- 6 design actions

There are 138 fire resistant cupboard improvements and 89 emergency lights that are within a major works plan and are a recommendation of the FRA. The completion timescale is within 5 years and will be monitored annually in successive risk assessment reviews.

## 2 Asbestos

Area	Target	Prev Month	Month End	%	Variance		RAG
Asbestos (Communal)	401.00	401.00	401.00	100.00	0.00	→0.00	G
Corrective Maintenance	No	Prev Month	Month End	%	Incomplete		RAG
Asbestos Re-inspections 2020-21	132.00	128.00	131.00	99.24	1.00	↑3.00	A
Asbestos Re-inspections 2021-22	9.00	8.00	8.00	88.89	1.00	→0.00	A
Operational Asbestos Survey Remedials to July 2020	539.00	216.00	220.00	40.82	319.00	↑4.00	A
Operational Asbestos Survey Remedials July 2020 to March 2021	533.00	438.00	476.00	89.31	57.00	↑38.00	A
Operational Asbestos Survey Remedials April 2021 to Current	324.00	0.00	66.00	20.37	258.00	↑66.00	A

## Communal Management Surveys

Figures at 30th September 2021	Quarter Target	Prev Week	Current Week	Progress Within Quarter %	Variance		RAG
•Q1 (Apr-Jun) Asbestos (Communal)	48.00	48.00	48.00	100.00	0.00	→0.00	G
•Q2 (Jul-Sep) Asbestos (Communal)	90.00	83.00	90.00	100.00	0.00	↑7.00	G
•Q3 (Oct-Dec) Asbestos (Communal)	99.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	99.00	→0.00	G
•Q4 (Jan-Mar) Asbestos (Communal)	164.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	164.00	→0.00	G

### Commentary

Known asbestos containing material monitoring.

- Quarter 1 – 48 – All 48 sites due in Quarter 1 have been completed, surveys issued, Keystone updated and uploaded by the contractor into Northgate.
- Quarter 2 – 90 – All Q2 sites have been completed.
- Quarter 3 – 99 – Orders have been released to the contractor. BST are trying source keys to issue to the contractor. Works are due for completion by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021
- Quarter 4 – 164 – due for release 01/01/2022 completion March 2022
- Cumulative for 2021/22 – 147 out of 401 in line with programme schedule with all 401 within their 12 month monitoring timescale.

Progress and targets will be monitored in the northgate contract as the primary source of data.

### Remedials:

2020-21 – 131 of 132 remedials complete.

We have sourced a key for the property with the remaining action. The key is with the contractor and will be completed w/c 4<sup>th</sup> October.

### 2021-22

Q1 - 8 of 9 remedials complete. The remaining action is low risk from guttering. It is with R&M as the repair requires scaffolding and reinstatement of guttering that cant be completed by the asbestos contractor alone. This work is due to have a planning inspection on 12<sup>th</sup> October, once the planning inspection is carried out then the works can be programmed in.

Q2 – 1 of 2 remedials completed. The remaining action has been instructed and due for complete w/c 4<sup>th</sup> October

## Operational Instructed Survey Actions –

Area - Operational Instructed Survey Actions - to July 2020	Target	Prev Week	Current Week	%	Variance		RAG
By Category -	No	Prev	Current	%	Incomplete		RAG
Outstanding High risk	7.00	7.00	7.00	100.00	0.00	→0.00	G
Outstanding Medium risk	186.00	165.00	167.00	89.78	19.00	↑2.00	A
Outstanding Low risk	146.00	19.00	20.00	13.70	126.00	↑1.00	A
Outstanding Very low risk	200.00	25.00	26.00	13.00	174.00	↑1.00	A
Operations Asbestos Survey Remedials	539.00	216.00	220.00	40.82	319.00	↑4.00	G

Area - Operational Instructed Survey Actions (July 2020 - March 2021)	Target	Prev Week	Current Week	%	Variance		RAG
By Category -	No	Prev	Current	%	Incomplete		RAG
Outstanding High risk	5.00	5.00	5.00	100.00	0.00	→0.00	G
Outstanding Medium risk	104.00	95.00	95.00	91.35	9.00	→0.00	A
Outstanding Low risk	215.00	189.00	203.00	94.42	12.00	↑14.00	A
Outstanding Very low risk	209.00	149.00	173.00	82.78	36.00	↑24.00	A
Operations Asbestos Survey Remedials	533.00	438.00	476.00	89.31	57.00	↑38.00	A

Area - Operational Instructed Survey Actions (April 2021 - Current)	Target	Prev Week	Current Week	%	Variance		RAG
By Category -	No	Prev	Current	%	Incomplete		RAG
Outstanding High risk	7.00		7.00	100.00	0.00	↑7.00	G
Outstanding Medium risk	101.00		59.00	58.42	42.00	↑59.00	A
Outstanding Low risk	102.00		0.00	0.00	102.00	→0.00	A
Outstanding Very low risk	114.00		0.00	0.00	114.00	→0.00	A
Operations Asbestos Survey Remedials	324.00	0.00	66.00	20.37	258.00	↑66.00	A

<p>Commentary</p> <p>The remaining medium risk actions are;</p> <p>2019-March 21  17 Butterfly houses/ other construction style houses with loft issues to be sealed by R&amp;  14 other jobs which have been issued to a contractor to close out. Access is proving difficult and we are engaging the services of the housing officers to assist with access.</p> <p>Low and very low risk actions are still under review to establish if these actions require completion / monitoring.</p> <p>April 21 – March 22  324 actions</p>
---

7 High Risk completed out of 7  
59 medium out of 101  
0 low risk out of 102  
0 very low risk out of 114



### 3 Electrical Safety

Area	Target	Prev Month	Month End	%	Variance		RAG
Fixed Wire Test Target (Year 3)	3305.00	1197.00	1379.00	41.72	1926.00	↑182.00	A
Fixed Wire Test (Communal)	696.00	640.00	640.00	91.95	56.00	→0.00	A
Emergency Lighting Service Q2	240.00	142.00	226.00	94.17	14.00	↑84.00	A
Corrective Maintenance	No	Prev Month	Month End	%	Incomplete		RAG
Electrical Safety (Domestic) 19/20	1362.00	1016.00	1136.00	83.41	226.00	↑120.00	A
Electrical Safety (Domestic) 20/21	2297.00	811.00	862.00	37.53	1435.00	↑51.00	A
Electrical Safety (Domestic) 21/22	844.00	44.00	119.00	14.10	725.00	↑75.00	A
Electrical Safety (Communal) 19/20	373.00	135.00	135.00	36.19	238.00	→0.00	A

#### Commentary

Overall				
Corrective Maintenance	No	COM	To Do	% Complete
Total	4503	2117	2386	47.01%
19/20 Domestic Remedial Year 1	1362	1136	226	83.41%
20/21 Domestic Remedial Year 2	2297	862	1435	37.53%
21/22 Domestic Remedial Year 3	844	119	725	14.10%

Breakdown of outstanding domestic remedial actions –

- 1661 year 1 and 2 remedials currently with McVickers and FM. Expected completion March 22
- 706 Year 3 remedials allocated to new contractor AJ Keith and 19 year 3 with Mcvickers
- 345 remedials require a rewire & 65 require Distribution Board replacement. Currently being tendered for a contractor with expected completion of March 22.

Electrical remedials have a monthly review to prioritise orders by risk.

#### FWT per property

In total 19180 properties managed within the electrical contract

14332 have a condition report within 5 years 74.7 %

16765 have a condition report of any age, 85.9 %

#### 4 Gas Safety

Area	Target	Prev Month	Month End	%	Variance		RAG
Gas Servicing Outstanding	0.00	35.00	39.00	0.23	39.00	↓4.00	A
Solid Fuel Servicing	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	→0.00	G
Corrective Maintenance	No	Prev Month	Month End	%	Incomplete		RAG
Gas follow on works (non-urgent)	1509.00	746.00	838.00	0.00	671.00	↑92.00	A
Electrical (Gas Follow on Works non-urgent)	805.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	805.00	→0.00	A

#### Commentary

As of 30 September 2021, 39 LGSRs were out of time.

17 in warrant process

1 Keelman homes – New boiler installed - awaiting certification

10 Leaseholders on TGHC gas servicing scheme

10 Leaseholders that have a covenant in place to provide a gas service certificate

1 Leaseholder that has gas capped

Council Owned properties – Gas Servicing at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021

16873 properties required a gas service

16856 properties have an intime LGSR

17 properties have an out of time LGSR

99.89% compliant LGSRs

Risk assessments continue for all out of time gas services based on the following:

Age and type of appliance

Previous maintenance work and breakdown history

Presence of CO alarms

Vulnerable tenant status

Non urgent gas/electrical follow on works have been subcontracted to an electrical contractor.

All solid fuel servicing up to date – next services due October 2021.

## 5 Mechanical

Area	Target	Prev Month	Month End	%	Variance		RAG
Mechanical - Passenger Lift Service	64.00	62.00	64.00	100.00	0.00	↑2.00	G
Mechanical - Platform Lifts Service	36.00	30.00	25.00	69.44	11.00	↓-5.00	R
Mechanical - Hoists Service	102.00	60.00	63.00	61.76	39.00	↑3.00	R
Mechanical - Stair Lifts Service	596.00	372.00	355.00	59.56	241.00	↓-17.00	R
Mechanical - Bath lifts service	10.00	7.00	8.00	80.00	2.00	↑1.00	A
Mechanical - Passenger Lift Thorough	64.00	63.00	64.00	100.00	0.00	↑1.00	G
Mechanical - Platform Lifts Thorough	36.00	18.00	25.00	69.44	11.00	↑7.00	R
Mechanical - Hoists Thorough	102.00	58.00	72.00	70.59	30.00	↑14.00	R
Mechanical - Stair Lifts Thorough	596.00	335.00	384.00	64.43	212.00	↑49.00	R
Mechanical - Bath lifts Thorough	10.00	5.00	4.00	40.00	6.00	↓-1.00	R
Mechanical - Auto-Doors Service	130.00	56.00	8.00	6.15	122.00	↓-48.00	R
Corrective Maintenance	No	Prev Month	Month End	%	Incomplete		RAG
Area	Target	Prev Month	Month End	%	Variance		RAG
Mechanical - Passenger Lift	0.00	6.00	7.00	N/A	-7.00	↓-1.00	A
Mechanical - Platform Lift	0.00	2.00	4.00	N/A	-4.00	↓-2.00	A
Mechanical - Hoists	0.00	7.00	4.00	N/A	-4.00	↑3.00	A
Mechanical - Stair Lifts	0.00	45.00	53.00	N/A	-53.00	↓-8.00	A
Mechanical - Bath Lifts	0.00	1.00	1.00	N/A	-1.00	→0.00	A
Mechanical - Auto-Doors	0.00	1.00	1.00	N/A	-1.00	→0.00	A

### Commentary

- Passenger lift remedials – 7 in total currently 6 still in target.
- Platform lifts – New contract in place with TKE. Service overdue at 10 properties. Cyclical Project Manager to arrange customer letters
- Platform lifts Thorough Inspections – 11 overdue inspection. 2 lifts not in use – inspections suspended. 9 non access this month.
- Hoists service – New contract with Care-ability. 39 services overdue, 3 void properties, 19 non access events. Cyclical Project Manager to arrange customer letters
- Hoists Thorough Inspections – There are 30 overdue inspections 5 of which HSB have attempted but failed to get access this month.
- Stair lifts – 241 services currently overdue 6 of which are void and there have been 27 non access. Cyclical Project Manager to arrange customer letters.
- Stair lift Thorough Inspections – 212 overdue inspections - HSB have attempted but failed to access 98 of the 212 (4 non access this month).
- Stair lifts corrective - 53 in total 4 still in target.
- Adjustable Baths service – 1 overdue, 1 on hold. Contractor have made several attempts to contact customers without success. Cyclical Project Manager to arrange customer letter
- Adjustable Baths Thorough Inspections – HSB have attempted but failed to access 4 of the 5 overdue. 1 inspection on hold as the SU passed away.
- Auto-door – The contract has been extended with current contractor until 31<sup>st</sup> March. As the contract was not renewed before the the next services were due, orders could not be raised. Orders have now been raised for the services however some are overdue from July. Orders have been raised for contractor with a Service target date October 31<sup>st</sup>. Commercial team time to re-tender by 31<sup>st</sup> March.

## 6. Water Safety

Area	Target	Prev Month	Month End	%	Variance		RAG
Water Risk Assessments (All)	19500.00	7819.00	7819.00	40.10	11681.00	→0.00	A
Water Risk Assessments - Communal	63.00	63.00	63.00	100.00	0.00	→0.00	G
Water TMV Servicing	220.00	0.00	86.00	39.09	134.00	↑86.00	G
Corrective Maintenance	No	Prev Month	Month End	%	Incomplete		RAG
Water - dead legs	2857.00	2502.00	2553.00	89.36	304.00	↑51.00	A
Water - major works	79.00	0.00	66.00	83.54	13.00	↑66.00	A

### Commentary

The water risk assessment programme –unable to recruit plumbers, contract has now gone out to tender. Water Risk Assessment template completed and awaiting Northgate build. The initial phase will assess high risk resident properties and then an archetype approach.

Communal areas requiring water risk assessments - Due to the corruption of the Access Database for Water Hygiene we are unable to confirm/verify any remedials carried out. It is our intention to review the 63 Water Risk assessments and confirm the required outstanding remedials through site visits.

The TMV maintenance programme has commenced with 86 completed by RF Hendersons.

Water major works are currently being reviewed and prioritised by level of risk. The change in target figure is due to this now being recorded by number of orders required per site rather than individual addresses. F&E water tank replacement upgrades are now complete.

## **7 Data Management**

Risk management module testing is continuing. The module now creates a pdf risk assessment document and automates the process of raising works orders and business actions. Fire risk assessment templates are now in the process of being created for different building types ie low rise, mid rise and high rise. Full end to end FRA and Action procedure being rewritten for the new module capability. Expected completion of module and procedures ready for Jan 2022.

Servicing and Inspection module currently in development by NEC with an initial release date of September 2021. Expected completion in live for April 2022. New module will replace several of the planned maintenance contracts currently in use.

Mobile solution has been agreed and implementation into the database has commenced with NEC. Cloudbased mobile solution set up meeting with consultant taking place on 25<sup>th</sup> Oct. Following the ICT work internal set up of inspectors will be required. Full procedures to be written for use of mobile solution. This will then be able to be used for both the risk management module and servicing and inspection module. The end user, assessor or engineer, can then use either an ios or android phone/tablet on a purpose built platform that is user friendly and more efficient. Expected live use with risk module by January 2022.

Various power-bi reports are being written or revised to provide additional or new information. This will feed into the new dashboard development and golden thread data.

Property data management protocol being reviewed and rewritten to accommodate new systems and to include audit and stress testing of data. New protocol to be complete by December 2021.

## RAG Table

Area	Target	Prev Month	Month End	%	Variance		RAG
FRAs (Communal) All	471.00	471.00	471.00	100.00	0.00	→0.00	G
Fire Door Inspections (Communal)	3712.00	1707.00	2100.00	56.57	1612.00	↑393.00	G
Fire Door Inspections (Domestic)	1961.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1961.00	→0.00	A
Asbestos (Communal)	401.00	401.00	401.00	100.00	0.00	→0.00	G
Fixed Wire Test Target (Year 3)	3305.00	1197.00	1379.00	41.72	1926.00	↑182.00	A
Fixed Wire Test (Communal)	696.00	640.00	640.00	91.95	56.00	→0.00	A
Emergency Lighting Service Q2	240.00	142.00	226.00	94.17	14.00	↑84.00	A
Gas Servicing Outstanding	0.00	35.00	39.00	0.23	39.00	↓4.00	A
Solid Fuel Servicing	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	→0.00	G
Water Risk Assessments (All)	19500.00	7819.00	7819.00	40.10	11681.00	→0.00	A
Water Risk Assessments - Communal	63.00	63.00	63.00	100.00	0.00	→0.00	G
Water TMV Servicing	220.00	0.00	86.00	39.09	134.00	↑86.00	G
Mechanical - Passenger Lift Service	64.00	62.00	64.00	100.00	0.00	↑2.00	G
Mechanical - Platform Lifts Service	36.00	30.00	25.00	69.44	11.00	↓5.00	R
Mechanical - Hoists Service	102.00	60.00	63.00	61.76	39.00	↑3.00	R
Mechanical - Stair Lifts Service	596.00	372.00	355.00	59.56	241.00	↓17.00	R
Mechanical - Bath lifts service	10.00	7.00	8.00	80.00	2.00	↑1.00	A
Mechanical - Passenger Lift Thorough	64.00	63.00	64.00	100.00	0.00	↑1.00	G
Mechanical - Platform Lifts Thorough	36.00	18.00	25.00	69.44	11.00	↑7.00	R
Mechanical - Hoists Thorough	102.00	58.00	72.00	70.59	30.00	↑14.00	R
Mechanical - Stair Lifts Thorough	596.00	335.00	384.00	64.43	212.00	↑49.00	R
Mechanical - Bath lifts Thorough	10.00	5.00	4.00	40.00	6.00	↓1.00	R
Mechanical - Auto-Doors Service	130.00	56.00	8.00	6.15	122.00	↓48.00	R
Corrective Maintenance	No	Prev Month	Month End	%	Incomplete		RAG
FRAs communal High Rise 19/20	1019.00	1005.00	1014.00	99.51	5.00	↑9.00	A
FRAs communal High Rise 20/21	120.00	91.00	113.00	94.17	7.00	↑22.00	A
FRAs communal High Rise 21/22	99.00	49.00	85.00	85.86	14.00	↑36.00	A
FRAs Communal Mid and Low Rise 19/20	2538.00	2419.00	2442.00	96.22	96.00	↑23.00	A
FRAs Communal Mid and Low rise 20/21	206.00	54.00	91.00	44.17	115.00	↑37.00	A
FRAs Communal Mid and Low rise 21/22	155.00	3.00	19.00	12.26	136.00	↑16.00	A
Fire Door replacement (High Rise)	1961.00	1421.00	1578.00	80.47	383.00	↑157.00	G
Asbestos Re-inspections 2020-21	132.00	128.00	131.00	99.24	1.00	↑3.00	A
Asbestos Re-inspections 2021-22	9.00	8.00	8.00	88.89	1.00	→0.00	A
Operational Asbestos Survey Remedials to July 2020	539.00	216.00	220.00	40.82	319.00	↑4.00	A
Operational Asbestos Survey Remedials July 2020 to March 2021	533.00	438.00	476.00	89.31	57.00	↑38.00	A
Operational Asbestos Survey Remedials April 2021 to current	324.00	0.00	66.00	20.37	258.00	↑66.00	A
Electrical Safety (Domestic) 19/20	1362.00	1016.00	1136.00	83.41	226.00	↑120.00	A
Electrical Safety (Domestic) 20/21	2297.00	811.00	862.00	37.53	1435.00	↑51.00	A
Electrical Safety (Domestic) 21/22	844.00	44.00	119.00	14.10	725.00	↑75.00	A
Electrical Safety (Communal) 19/20	373.00	135.00	135.00	36.19	238.00	→0.00	A
Emergency Lighting Installs (Communal Mid Rise)	99.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	99.00	→0.00	A
Gas follow on works (non-urgent)	1509.00	746.00	838.00	0.00	671.00	↑92.00	A
Electrical (Gas Follow on Works non-urgent)	805.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	805.00	→0.00	A
Water - dead legs	2857.00	2502.00	2553.00	89.36	304.00	↑51.00	A
Water - major works	79.00	0.00	66.00	83.54	13.00	↑66.00	A
Area	Target	Prev Month	Month End	%	Variance		RAG
Mechanical - Passenger Lift	0.00	6.00	7.00	N/A	-7.00	↓-1.00	A
Mechanical - Platform Lift	0.00	2.00	4.00	N/A	-4.00	↓-2.00	A
Mechanical - Hoists	0.00	7.00	4.00	N/A	-4.00	↑3.00	A
Mechanical - Stair Lifts	0.00	45.00	53.00	N/A	-53.00	↓-8.00	A
Mechanical - Bath Lifts	0.00	1.00	1.00	N/A	-1.00	→0.00	A
Mechanical - Auto-Doors	0.00	1.00	1.00	N/A	-1.00	→0.00	A

<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>Annual Work Programme 2021-22</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>Sheena Ramsey, Chief Executive Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Services &amp; Governance</b>

---

## Summary

This report is set out in two parts. The first part highlights how the work of this Committee has helped influence / shape the development of decision making / performance improvement work during 2020-21 and the second part details the development of the work programme for Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OSCs) and sets out the provisional work programme for the Housing, Environment & Healthier Communities OSC for the municipal year 2021-22.

---

## Annual Review

1. During 2020-21 the huge challenges arising from the onset of the Covid 19 pandemic led to a more flexible approach to scrutiny which recognised the demands on services and the Council as a whole but, at the same time, ensured that we met our statutory obligations to provide an effective scrutiny function. As such scrutiny concentrated on key priority areas alongside a small number of topics already being progressed elsewhere which would deliver work that was of genuine value and relevance to the work of the wider Council during this period.
2. This involved the OSC monitoring progress on the impacts of the Covid 19 pandemic throughout the year and the lessons learned and how this affected the way the work of the Council is progressed in the longer term. It also involved the OSC scrutinising end of year performance for 2019-20 as it relates to those areas covered in the remit of this Committee and helping to shape the ongoing development of the Council's new Performance Framework.

## Development of 2021-22 Work Programme

3. Every year each Overview and Scrutiny Committee draws up a work programme based on the Council's policy framework which is then agreed by the Council as part of the policy planning process.
4. The Committee's work programme is a rolling programme which sets the agenda for its meetings. It is the means by which it can address the interests of the local community, focus on improving services and seek to reduce inequalities in service provision and access to services.
5. This year, due to the ongoing uncertainties relating to the Covid 19 pandemic and the lack of clarity on the outlook for local government finance it has been acknowledged

that the approach to developing the OSC work programmes for 2021-22 was likely to have to be similarly flexible.

6. It was also noted that a continued focus on the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic in some form or another would be likely to be a major area of focus for the OSCs at key points during 2021-22 as would the development of the Council's new performance framework.
7. With this in mind, OSC members have been involved in shaping the focus of the work of specific OSCs via email and provided with an opportunity to comment on the emerging themes at the scheduled March / April 2021 OSC meetings. The emerging themes have taken account of the need to support the Council's Thrive agenda and add value, taking account of the five priority areas outlined in the budget consultation; the development of the Council's new Performance Framework; the Gateshead Strategic Needs Assessment and the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
8. Subsequently, in line with usual practice, partner organisations have been consulted on the themes and have indicated that they are supportive of the emerging themes.
9. The attached provisional work programme (Appendix 1) has therefore taken account of the following:-
  - The New Performance Framework
  - The Thrive agenda and partnership work generally
  - The Gateshead Strategic Needs Assessment
  - The Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy
  - The five priority areas outlined in the budget consultation
  - Current issues referred to Committees
10. The work programme remains provisional as
  - Cabinet has not had the opportunity to fully review its work programme and it may wish to refer further issues to Overview and Scrutiny Committees for further consideration.
  - It does not take account of new policy issues which may be identified during the year, which Cabinet may wish to refer to Overview and Scrutiny; and
  - It does not include issues identified by members of committees on an ongoing basis during the year as a result of scrutiny decisions, call in and councillor call for action.

## **Recommendations**

11. The Committee is asked to:-
  - a) Note the information contained in the annual review and provide any comments.
  - b) Endorse the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's provisional work programme for 2021-22 attached at Appendix 1 and refer it to Council on 22 July 2021 for agreement.
  - c) Note that further reports will be brought to the Committee to identify any additional issues which the Committee may be asked to consider.

**Contact:** Angela Frisby

**Ext:** 2138



<b>Draft Housing Environment &amp; Healthier Communities OSC Work Programme 2021-22</b>	
<b>21 June 2021</b> <b>1.30pm</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>New Performance Framework – Update</b></li> <li>• <b>Covid -19 Update</b> - to include the impact on businesses, both large and small / lessons learned/ contributions and collaborative work with our community partners.</li> <li>• <b>Reorganisation and reintegration of housing services</b></li> <li>• <b>Holiday Activities &amp; Food</b></li> <li>• <b>Proposed approach to Programme of Improvement of Green Spaces</b></li> <li>• <b>Work Programme</b></li> </ul>
<b>30 September 2021</b> <b>9.00am</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Performance and Compliance Monitoring Training Session</li> </ul>
<b>18 October 2021</b> <b>1.30pm</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Covid -19 Update</b> - to include the impact on businesses, both large and small / lessons learned/ contributions and collaborative work with our community partners.</li> <li>• <b>Community Safety priorities update / progress</b></li> <li>• <b>Programme of Improvement of Green Spaces within the Borough</b> – examining condition, management and maintenance and potential sites for tree planting / sites community groups can take on to create community gardens and allotments</li> <li>• <b>Housing Performance and Compliance Monitoring</b></li> <li>• <b>Housing regulatory self-assessment</b></li> <li>• <b>Repairs and Maintenance Improvement Plan</b></li> <li>• <b>Housing Compliance</b></li> <li>• <b>Work Programme</b></li> </ul>
<b>6 December 2021</b> <b>1.30pm</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No meeting</li> </ul>
<b>31 January 2022</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>New Performance Framework – Update</b></li> <li>• <b>Covid -19 Update</b> - to include the impact on businesses, both large and small / lessons learned/ contributions and collaborative work with our community partners.</li> <li>• <b>The Council and partners approach to locality working</b></li> <li>• <b>Housing Performance and Compliance Monitoring</b></li> <li>• <b>Work Programme</b></li> </ul>
<b>14 March 2022</b> <b>1.30pm</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No meeting</li> </ul>
<b>25 April 2022</b> <b>5.30pm [Time may change to 4pm – TBC]</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>New Performance Framework – Update</b></li> <li>• <b>Covid -19 Update</b> - to include the impact on businesses, both large and small / lessons learned/ contributions and collaborative work with our community partners.</li> <li>• <b>Climate change - Update</b> – setting out Council policy and data, a review of our ambitions and how we are coordinating with other organisations</li> <li>• <b>Impact of Brexit – on businesses large and small</b></li> <li>• <b>Housing Performance and Compliance Monitoring</b></li> <li>• <b>Work Programme</b></li> </ul>

**Issues to slot in**

- **Results of Covid -19 Survey**
- **Health Check of Community Centres**
- **Holiday Activities & Food**