

FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

Thursday, 7 March 2024 at 1.30 pm in the Whickham Room

From the Chief Executive, Sheena Ramsey

| Item | Business |
|------|--|
| 1 | Apologies for absence |
| 2 | Minutes of last meeting (Pages 3 - 6) The Committee is asked to approve as a correct record the minutes of the last meeting held on 18 January 2024. |
| 3 | Preventing Youth Crime and Serious Violence (Pages 7 - 44) Presentation of Mike Batty, Interim Head of Community Safety and Emergency Planning & Resilience. |
| 4 | Annual Progress Update on Children's Social Care Improvement Plan (Pages 45 - 54) Presentation of Andrea Houlahan, Deputy Strategic Director of Childrens Social Care and Lifelong Learning |
| 5 | Overview of Virtual School Annual Report (Pages 55 - 62) Report of Linda Mason, Headtacher and Virtual Schools Lead |
| 6 | Hub Investment Changes and Service Delivery (Pages 63 - 70) Report of Rob Kitchen, Music Service Manager |
| 7 | Work Programme (Pages 71 - 74) Report of Democratic Services |
| 8 | Any Other Business |

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Public Document Pack Agenda Item 2

FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 18TH JANUARY, 2024

Present: Councillor D Burnett in the Chair

Councillors: D Burnett (Vice-Chair), L Caffrey, B Clelland, P Craig, K Henderson, H Kelly, K McCartney, R Mullen, A Ord, M Ord, D Robson and Rachel Walton

Also in Attendance: Councillors: G Haley

Officers: S Dunn, A Houlahan, J Whitehead.

Apologies: Councillors: M Hall, E McMaster, J Mohammed and L Moir

118 Minutes

119 Schools Performance Overview Report

The Committee received a detailed report detailing the position of Gateshead schools in relation to:

- Ofsted Inspection findings for September 2022 - December 2023
- Outcomes of Gateshead students in relation to tests and examinations
- Exclusions in Gateshead for the academic year 2022-2023
- Elective Home Education (Academic Year 2022-23)
- School Attendance (Academic Year 2022-23: Autumn and Spring Term)

Data included in the report relating to OSFTED scores relates to the overall scores given. It was noted that some schools also have outstanding elements and that inspections have been positive.

OFSTED inspections will be paused until the end of January and training needs need to be completed by 19 January 2024. All school inspectors need to receive mandatory training; a majority of the Gateshead School Inspections Team are serving inspectors and do additional training.

Information on permanent exclusions will be included in the next School Performance Overview Report. Concerns were raised by the Committee that permanent exclusions of SEND students are disproportionately high. An advocacy offer is available to parents to challenge permanent exclusions, although few parents challenge exclusions. There are plans to expand this into a wider advocacy offer for parental support.

The Committee discussed home education. There is an expectation that the numbers of students in home education will decrease to match pre pandemic levels. Numbers are beginning to decline, but the reasons for home schooling remain predominantly related to mental health. Prior to the pandemic, reasoning mainly related to religious motivations. Where children are removed from school due to mental health struggles, a connection is maintained with a focus on re integrating students into schooling. Extreme struggles with mental health have been exacerbated by the pandemic and coping levels in schools.

Some concerns were raised about children who are home educated being more at risk of radicalisation. Parents of children being home educated have a staff contact at the Council who reports that parents tend to be engaged with them. This staff member monitors

radicalisation risks and offers a package of support with many opportunities for children to get involved in activities outside of school that will support their education and their return to school. This package runs hand in hand with early help and social services.

RESOLVED:

- i. The Committee considered the positions of schools in relation to the listed sections of the report.
- ii. Further data on home education will be circulated to the Committee.

120 Early Years Sufficiency

A report was presented informing the Committee of the availability and sufficiency of childcare in Gateshead to fulfil the local authority duties as documented within the Childcare Act 2016.

Group early years providers and the number of early education and childcare places they offer have remained stable with only very small changes in number. However, the rate of decline in the number of childminders continues. In 2016, there were 131 Ofsted-registered childminders in Gateshead but by 2023, the number had fallen to 66. (A reduction of 50% over the seven-year period). This trend is reflected nationally. There is no current evidence that the loss of these places has had any impact on sufficiency in Gateshead.

At their most recent inspection, 94% of all Gateshead providers were judged as either good, outstanding, or met. 13 There are 13 providers not yet graded by Ofsted (2 After School Clubs and 11 Childminders). There was one day nursery (Busy Bees in Blaydon) that was graded as Inadequate at the time of the assessment, but this has been re-inspected and is now graded as good. There was also one pre-school (Lyndhurst) graded as Inadequate at the time of the assessment, but this has been re-inspected and is now graded as Requires Improvement. First inspections are usually carried out within a provider's first 30 months of operation, but there have been some delays to this timescale due to the pandemic.

The following issues were highlighted for consideration:

- Declining early years population. For example, between 2016 and 2022 the number of two-year-olds living in Gateshead fell from 2,289 to 1,897. A reduction of 17% over a six-year period. The wards most affected by the falling birth rate are Blaydon, Felling and Deckham.
- The number of two-year olds eligible for a funded place is reducing, partly due to the falling birth rate and partly because the government has not increased eligibility thresholds in line with inflation or increases in minimum wage. For example, most working parents are eligible because they claim Universal Credit. However, their annual net earned income must not exceed £15,400. There were 935 Gateshead children eligible for a funded two-year-old place in July 2018. There are now 706. (January 2023). A reduction of 24% over the last five years.
- Overall, 91% of providers report that they have vacancies and there is a direct correlation between low occupancy and the level of sustainability.
- The number of providers and the number of places on offer have generally remained stable with only relatively small changes. However, the number of childminders continues to decline. From July 2016 to July 2023, the number of childminders has reduced by 50%.
- Media articles frequently refer to a national crisis in the Early Years sector. In Gateshead, providers report that agencies are unable to provide supply staff, vacancies are not able to be filled and people with lower levels of skills and experience are being appointed into leadership roles. It seems likely that this will ultimately have a detrimental effect on quality. 90% of Gateshead's group childcare providers agreed that there was a crisis within Early Years, 77% agreed that there was a staff recruitment crisis and 51% agreed that there was a staff retention crisis.

RESOLVED:

- i. The contents of the report and Childcare Sufficiency Report 2023 was noted.
- ii. The Committee approved the publication of the Sufficiency Report on Gateshead Council's website.
- iii. The Committee agreed to bring the report to the attention of Councillors and Portfolio holders.

121 Regional Adoption Agency Annual Report

A report was given providing a summary of the work undertaken for children with plans of adoption within Gateshead Local Authority.

The reporting period 2022/2023 represents the fourth full year of operation by Adopt North East. Performance information for 2022/2023 evidences a consistent level of demand for forever families. This is consistent with the partnership's higher

than national average children in care population. Unfortunately, over the year such robust demand for adoptive placements has not been matched by stable or increasing supply of available adopters. In 2022/2023 outturn represents the lowest number of applications to adopt received by the agency since it started. The links between adoption, cost of living crisis, employment, and lifestyle changes since COVID 19 has undoubtedly suppressed interest in adopting.

The reporting period between 01/04/2022 to 31/03/2023 summaries Adopt North East overall performance:

- Match 103 children
- Placed 103 children, 19 of which were Early Permanence Placements
- Supported 105 children to be adopted
- Received 366 contacts about becoming and adopter
- Approved 59 adopters

In 2022/2023 the number of children with a plan of adoption reversed was one. The reason for reversal was that maternal grandparents presented late (at the Final Hearing) expressing a wish to care for their grandchild.

RESOLVED:

- i. The Committee considered the report.

122 Work Programme

The Committee requested that a response to child poverty be added to the Work Programme.

It was noted in the discussion of item F120 that a report would be brought to a future committee on school readmission rates.

RESOLVED:

- i. The Work Programme was agreed.
- ii. An item responding to child poverty will be added to the 2024/25 work programme.
- iii. An item on school readmission rates will be added to the 2024/25 work programme.

Thursday, 18th January, 2024

Chairman at the meeting on
Thursday, 18 January 2024

Title of Report: Serious Violence Duty

Purpose of report

1. This report is largely reproduced from a report presented to Gateshead Community Safety Board (CSB) on 19 January 2024. Over the last 12 months the CSB has been pursuing a programme of 'deep dives' into the priorities identified in the most recent Community Safety Partnership Plan. Text added to the report for Families OSC is in red.
2. This is a dual-purpose report. Section 2 explains the background to the preparation of the Gateshead Local Action Plan for Serious Violence, and Sections 3 to 5 provide additional context, fulfilling the purpose of a 'deep dive' into violent crime.

2 Statutory requirements

2.1 Members of the Board will recall that the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 (PCSC Act) introduced a Serious Violence Duty, which applies to certain 'specified bodies', i.e. Chief Constables, the National Probation Service, Youth Offending Teams, Fire & Rescue Services, Integrated Care Boards and Local Authorities, supported by the 'relevant authorities', i.e. prison authorities, youth custody authorities and educational authorities.

2.2 A local agreement was reached across Northumbria that the process would be led by the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) within the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (OPCC), in recognition of the expertise which it has amassed since its inception in 2019, and consistent with Paragraph 6 of the Statutory Guidance on the Duty issued by the Home Office in December 2022 which says that PCCs "may assist a specified authority for the purposes of the Duty". The Guidance also states that "CSPs have accountability for ensuring that a strategy to prevent and reduce serious violence is in place even if they are not the partnership arrangement chosen to deliver the Duty".

2.3 The Duty requires a Serious Violence Strategy to be agreed by 31 January 2024 and to be sent to the Home Office within seven days. Detailed guidance is set out on the contents of the Strategy, including that it should contain a section on Actions and that there should be consultation with educational authorities and prison and youth custody authorities, and that the voices and lived experiences of communities should be reflected in the work. The agreed interpretation in Northumbria is that the VRU will prepare the necessary Strategic Needs Assessment (SNA) and most of the Strategy and that the six Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) will each prepare an Action Plan, using similar formats,

following the five key priorities proposed in the draft Strategy. The Guidance states that the Strategy should be reviewed at least annually.

2.4 The Guidance leaves it to local partners to define Serious Violence. The VRU has to date adopted the World Health Organization's definition, as "The intentional use of physical force or power threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either result in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation. (WHO, 2002)". As part of the Serious Violence Duty guidance, areas were encouraged to agree on a definition that best meets local needs. It was proposed that the WHO definition should continue to be adopted and this was agreed by the Board and accepted by all Community Safety Partnerships. While this is a very broad definition, it has the advantage of being inclusive and allows partnerships to consider emerging issues. However, partners need to be mindful of the potential for spreading resources quite thinly against a broad target. It was agreed that this definition would continue to be reviewed annually to ensure that it remains fit for purpose. Some other localities have focused on crime types, e.g. 'assault with injury and above' or, even more tightly focused, 'grievous bodily harm (GBH) and above'. Clearly any experience of being a victim of violence in any form, even assault without injury, such as pushing and shoving, can be distressing or even traumatic, depending on individual circumstances and resilience. In the current iteration of Strategy and Action Plan it is far too late to re-visit the definition, but there may be merit in reconsidering it when these documents are next reviewed.

2.5 It is also noteworthy that the Home Office approach to funding VRUs to date has placed an emphasis on preventing and reducing public space violence amongst young people under 25 whereas, as set out in the next paragraph, this is a relatively small proportion of Serious Violence locally. Clearly any focus on deterring young people from engaging in violence will still have immediate benefits and may fully 'pay off' in approximately 10-20 years when they reach the peak offending age range, provided that the change in behaviour is long-lasting.

2.6 The latest version of the SNA runs to 113 pages in total and will be available on the VRU section of the PCC's website This includes a ten-page appendix relating specifically to Gateshead. Some of its key findings are that:-

(a) Levels of recorded violent crime have risen steadily over the last four years in Gateshead, as across most of Northumbria

2019/20 2,541

2020/21 2,673

2021/22 2,995

2022/23 3,174

(b) There were 149 recorded knife-related offences in Gateshead in 2021/22, and 180 in 2022/23, with 12 firearms offences in 2022/23

(c) The North East Ambulance Service had 235 call-outs to victims of violence in Gateshead in 2022/23, of which 21 (9%) were for young people under 18 and in the same year there were 84 admissions to hospital for assault injuries, of which 21 (25%) were for young people under 25.

(d) Across Northumbria, 56% of victims of violence were female and 75% of offenders/suspects were male, with 36% of Serious Violence being Domestic Abuse

(e) In Gateshead only 15% of victims were under 18 (482), with 51% being in the 25-45 age range, and only 13% (367) of offenders/suspects were under 18, with 53% being in the 25-45 age range.

2.7 The current draft Action Plan for Gateshead is attached as Appendix A. In view of the compressed timescale for preparing the Action Plan work will be continuing up to and possibly beyond the date of the Board meeting, with a view to arriving at a final version which reflects existing partner priorities in relation to Serious Violence and demonstrates 'joined up working'. This first Action Plan has been prepared on a 12 month basis but there may be merit in considering planning over a longer period, maybe three years, when the next version is prepared.

3. Strategic Needs Assessment

3.1 The SNA aims to provide an increased understanding of the types, distribution, and extent of serious violence across Northumbria, as well as an awareness of the prevalence of the underlying risk factors associated with the causes of violent crime.

3.1.1 Key findings

- A breakdown of serious violence offences shows reductions in sexual assaults (8%) and attempted murders (23%), with all other offences increasing, notably robberies (32.7%), threats to kill (19.5%), and rape (6.5%).
- As in previous periods a third of offences of serious violence in Northumbria were domestic related, with 7,367 offences. With levels of domestic abuse increased by 3.5%, with 26,527 incidents.
- The serious violence harm hotspots during the 12-months to September 2023 remain the same areas as identified in previous periods, with links to the NTE and areas of deprivation.
- Similar areas have been identified through data from both Northumberland Fire Service and Tyne & Wear Fire Service, as hotspot areas for deliberate fire incidents and attacks on crews.
- Data from NEAS (North East Ambulance Service) also shows an increase of 2% in attendances for assault incidents in Northumbria, with 1,989 call outs.
- The impact of deprivation continues to be a significant problem in Northumbria, impacted further by the current cost of living crisis. The data suggests that there is a correlation to higher levels of violent offences in neighbourhoods with the highest levels of deprivation.
- Young people growing up in deprived areas are more vulnerable to childhood adversity, poor mental health, and the risk of becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence.

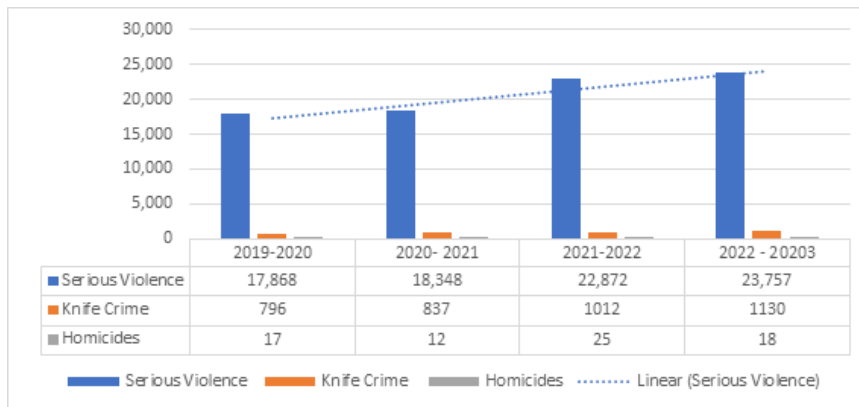
- Engagement in full time, quality education is a strong protective factor against the risk of a young person becoming involved in serious violence. However, the North East recorded the largest rate for both exclusions and suspensions in England for the 2021/22 academic year and was the second highest region for one plus suspensions.
- In Northumbria, rates of exclusions for all local authority areas were above the national rate, with four of the six areas recording a higher rate of suspensions.
- Alcohol is becoming an increasingly private harm as consumption is occurring more frequently in the home. With the number of adults in treatment for alcohol misuse above the national rate in four local authority areas. Half of local authority areas recorded an increase in young people in treatment for substance misuse.
- Whilst the levels of unemployment have decreased during the last two years nationally, in Northumbria, four local authority areas are above the national rate. The current cost of living crisis is increasing people's exposure to the risks of violence, evidenced by the increase in shoplifting and violence shown towards retail staff.
- Use of technology and social media is leading to an increased concern and risk of exposure to violence for young people, with six in 10 young people in a recent YEF survey reporting seeing real-world acts of violence on social media.
- The relationship between mental health and violence is complex. The mental health needs of children in Northumbria are higher than the national average, with self-reported well-being a cause for concern.

3.1.2 Key Performance Measures:

Over the last 12 months, serious violent crime has risen by 4 % and knife enabled serious violence has increased by 12%. Hospital admissions due to a sharp object has seen a decrease of 11% and there has been a 28% reduction on homicides.

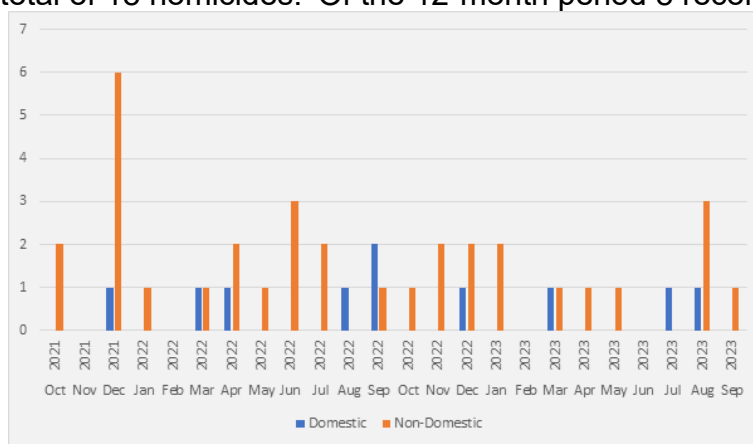
| Measure | 2022 | 2023 | %Difference |
|--|--------|--------|-------------|
| Homicides | 25 | 18 | -28% |
| Serious Violence | 22,857 | 23,757 | + 4 |
| Knife Enables Serious Violence | 1,012 | 1130 | +12% |
| Hospital Admissions for assault with a knife or sharp object | 148 | 131 | -11% |

The chart below shows trends in serious violent crime including knife crime and homicide rates across the Northumbria Police Force Area.



3.1.3 Homicides

Levels of homicides have decreased by 28% (7 offences) during 2022/23, with a total of 18 homicides. Of the 12-month period 8 recorded one or less homicides.



There were 14 non-domestic homicides, a reduction from 19 in the previous period (26%), with 4 domestic homicides accounting for 22% of homicides during the period. There was a reduction of homicides fell in half of the 6 local authority areas (Sunderland, South Tyneside and Newcastle), with Sunderland seeing the largest decrease (86%) during the period.

3.1.4 Serious Violence:

A breakdown of serious violence by crime types from 2019 – 2023 shows reductions in homicides, sexual assaults and attempted murders, with all other offences increasing, notably robberies, threats to kill and rape over the last 12 months. As in previous periods a third of offences of serious violence in Northumbria were domestic related, with 7,367 offences.

| | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 |
|---------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Homicide | 17 | 12 | 25 | 18 |
| Attempt Murder | 14 | 11 | 13 | 10 |
| Threats to kill | 993 | 1,025 | 1,228 | 1,468 |
| Assault with Intent | 852 | 963 | 1,151 | 1,225 |

| | | | | |
|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Assault with Injury | 12,480 | 12,678 | 15,744 | 16,097 |
| Sexual Assault | 1,355 | 1,543 | 2,092 | 1,922 |
| Rape | 1,423 | 1,480 | 1,808 | 1,926 |
| Robbery | 763 | 692 | 836 | 1,109 |

3.1.5 Recommendations from the Strategic Needs Assessment

- Work locally with education colleagues to understand and enhance the strategies to reduce high rates of school exclusions and suspensions and increase attendance
- Work with Local Authorities and Education Leads to ensure the roll out and evaluation of the knife crime and offensive weapons protocol for schools
- Scope the prevalence of serious violence in school and other educational settings
- Work alongside the newly established Northumbria Police Prevention Team to develop shared understanding of individuals who go missing from home and associated risks
- Continue to invest in prevention through education and campaigns to raise awareness of the impact of serious violence
- Develop educational resources for BAME communities where English may not be their first language
- Work with partners to develop pathways into the newly established hospital navigator services and evaluate its impact on reducing attendances for serious violence, including those who present for substance misuse
- Continue to fund LJMU to work with partners to gain access to datasets such as ISTV (Information Sharing to Tackle Serious Violence) data for other LA (Local Authority) areas.
- Commission an independent review of the OOC process for all six youth justice teams
- Work alongside the homicide team and NEAS to develop processes around near misses
- Re-profile spend to commission services for individuals 25+ who are offenders and victims of serious violence
- Develop an outcomes framework for all commissioned interventions to measure impact.
- Work with education and health to overcome barriers to data sharing
- Work with organisations to ensure the service user voice is at the heart of policy, decisions, and new interventions, using co-production where practice allows
- Support the education sector to ensure they have adequate provision in terms of violence prevention and additional support where young people are more at risk of being involved in violence

4. Gateshead area profile and action plan

4.1 To complement and enhance the information in the Northumbria SNA, a local profile for Gateshead has been developed. This profile is attached at Appendix 1.

4.2 Key findings

- 6% increase in serious violence offending across Gateshead in 2022/23.
- 3,174 serious violence offences were recorded for all age groups, of which 1,158 (36%) were domestic related.

- 180 knife enabled serious violence, which is an increase of 20.8% in offences; 59 offences (33%) were domestic related.
- Assault with injury has the highest rates of offences for serious violence (2,032 Offences) during the 12-month period.
- Increases in rapes (7.7%), assault with injury (3%), robbery (49%), and threats to kill (30%).
- The top three knife enabled offences are also for assault with intent (52 offences) followed by assault with injury (47 offences) and robbery (42 offences).
- 49% increase in robberies.
- Threat to kill offences increased by 30%.
- Increase in both knife possessions and other offensive weapon possession offences.

4.3 Recommendations arising from this overview will be developed with partners and feature in the local plan, mentioned below.

4.4 Following the local workshop in September, an action plan has been developed with partners. Attached at Appendix 2, the draft plan outlines how Gateshead will tackle and prevent serious violence locally. In view of the compressed timescale for preparing the action plan, work will be continuing up to and possibly beyond the date of the Board meeting, with a view to arriving at a final version which reflects existing partner priorities in relation to Serious Violence and demonstrates 'joined up working'. **The final version is now attached for Families OSC.** This first action plan has been prepared on a 12-month basis but there may be merit in considering planning over a longer period, maybe three years, when the next version is prepared.

4.5 The CSB endorsed the Local Action Plan, agreed a delegation to approve final changes, and noted that the Local Action Plan will be incorporated within the overall Community Safety Partnership Plan for 2024-2026, and subject to performance management arrangements being developed for the CSB.

5. Serious Violence Response Strategy 2024 – 2029

5.1 The draft Northumbria Serious Violence Response Strategy is attached at Appendix 3. This strategy will be presented to members of the VRU Strategic Board for sign off on 29 January, prior to it being sent to the Home Office the following week.

Recommendations

6. OSC Families are recommended to:
- (a) note and comment on the information provided in the report.

REPORT OF: Interim Head of Community Safety and Violence Reduction Director

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Serious Violence Action Plan – Gateshead February 2024 - January 2025 version 12 220124

This first Action Plan under the Serious Violence Duty covers a 12-month period. Where a multi-agency group is identified in the 'lead' column the primary accountability rests with the Chair of the group and where a list of people is identified primary responsibility rests with the first person listed. SVRB = Northumbria Serious Violence Reduction Board, CSB = Gateshead Community Safety Board.

PRIORITY 1. CREATING STRONGER SYSTEMS TO ADDRESS SERIOUS VIOLENCE

| Action | Lead | Timescales | Milestones |
|---|---|---|--|
| 1.1 All reports on this Action Plan, or relevant extracts, to be provided to Gateshead Community Safety Board, Gateshead Safeguarding Children Partnership, Gateshead Safeguarding Adults Board and Gateshead Domestic Abuse (DA) Partnership, with periodic reporting to the Health & Wellbeing Board, as required | Head of Community Safety & Safeguarding Leads | CSB dates SCP dates SAB dates dates HWB dates | Reports in Aug/Sept at 6 months Reports in Jan/Feb at 12 months |
| 1.2 Lead officers for Community Safety, Safeguarding Children, Safeguarding Adults and DA to meet monthly, with Serious Violence & Serious Youth Violence as a standing agenda item | Head of Community Safety, DA Coordinator & Safeguarding Leads | Meetings on the first Monday of each month | Not applicable |
| 1.3 VRU to develop Northumbria-wide Multi- Agency Serious Violence Charter or 'Serious violence Plan on a page' | VRU Director | 22 March 2024 | Agreed approach to be signed off by CSB and SVRB by the end of March |
| 1.4 Community Safety Board to request brief from each 'specified body' (Police, YOT, Fire & Rescue, ICB & Council) outlining their governance arrangements for the SV duty. | Head of Community Safety | 22 March 2024 | |
| 1.5 Community Safety Board to receive annual reports providing a record of attendance at its meetings (present/substitute attended/apologies) highlight and address any gaps. | Head of Community Safety | November 2024 | |
| 1.6 Map membership of multi-agency bodies with an interest in SV to highlight which agencies and individuals can provide continuity and resilience and highlight and address any gaps. | Head of Community Safety & | 22 March 2024 | |

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| | Safeguarding Leads | | |
| 1.7 Review arrangements for capturing data at hospital Emergency Departments | Director of Nursing or nominee. | | |
| PRIORITY 2. DATA, EVIDENCE AND EVALUATION | | | |
| Action | Lead | Timescales | Milestones |
| 2.1 Agree timetable for next Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment, incorporating feedback on the December 2023 draft, and allowing for completion in time to inform review of the Strategy and Action Plan, with more detailed profiling of offender/suspect and victim characteristics, to support better targeting | VRU Director | Next meeting of SVRB after January | |
| 2.2 Consider and share with partners any feedback if a Joint Targeted Area Inspection of Serious Youth Violence takes place in Gateshead | Children's Safeguarding Lead | Uncertain | |
| 2.3 Consider relevant recommendations of the Strategic Review of Domestic Abuse services (due to report to Domestic Abuse Partnership Board on 9 February 2024) | DA Coordinator, Gateshead Council | 22 March 2024 | |
| 2.4 Consider recommendations from the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's Office arising from the Domestic Homicide Oversight Mechanism local pilot scheme, and any learning direct from Domestic Homicide Reviews/Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews | VRU Director | January 2025 NB carry over to next Action Plan | |
| 2.5 Review Information Sharing Agreements for specified bodies in relation to data and information sharing in respect of the Serious Violence Duty. | VRU PH Specialist with support from Liverpool John Moores University | Via quarterly meetings of VRU Data & Insights Group | Map out additional ISA requirements by April 2024 |

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| 2.6 Develop performance monitoring for Serious Violence in Gateshead as part of overall performance monitoring of the Community Safety Strategy | Head of Community Safety & CS Analyst | July 2024 | |
| 2.7 Develop and explore opportunities for creation of collaborative research evidence which is enabling and informative towards Serious Violence policy and practice | HDRC lead | 22 March 2024 | |
| 2.8 In line with the 'Health in All Policies' approach, consider the use of tools including health impact assessment and health equity assessment to support action on inequalities | Director of Public Health | Review at next iteration of Plan – January 2025 | |
| 2.9 Promote a culture of openness and learning, based on sharing both successful and unsuccessful approaches with the VRU, other Community Safety Partnerships in Northumbria and elsewhere | All Board members | Review at next iteration of Plan – January 2025 | |
| PRIORITY 3. PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION | | | |
| Action | Lead | Timescales | Milestones |
| 3.1 Provide whole-family support to those with multiple issues and vulnerabilities, including direct work with children and young people with social, emotional and behavioural needs and using the Respect Young People's Programme (RYPP) where child to parent violence and aggression is evident and delivery of the Teen Triple P programme to parents and carers. Use Early Help Assessments (EHAs) to develop multi-agency support plans in partnership with families. Review those plans within the Team Around the Family (TAF) process. | Practice Lead for Early Help (GB) | | |
| 3.2 Audit relevant work undertaken by schools and colleges within the PHSE curriculum with a view to identifying best practice and any gaps and improving provision in 2025. | Strategic Lead for Education (VC) | December 2024 | |

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|---|---|---|--|
| 3.3 Extend work in schools on Domestic Abuse and Healthy Relationships, subject to funding bid to National Institute for Health Research (outcome expected January 2024) | DA Coordinator, Gateshead Council | | |
| 3.4 Review of Missing, Slavery, Exploitation & Trafficking (MSET) procedures with partners and response and impact to all forms of exploitation and develop contextual safeguarding of places and spaces | Practice Lead for CS (LW) | March 2024 | Identify pilot site Gather a steering group Develop model and proof of concept |
| 3.5 Appoint to a Youth Provision Lead role in February 2024 to map and develop youth activities within the borough and appoint VCS providers to deliver the youth element of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund element of the grant in January 2024. Monitor delivery of these projects. Delivery is targeted to area of high inequalities and aims to engage young people in their local area. | Advanced Practitioners, Public Health (NG/MR) & Practice Lead for Early Help (GB) | Key appointments January/February 2024 | Full project inceptions March 2024 |
| 3.6 Deliver seasonal violence programme and other VRU funded interventions, including the Community Diversion Scheme (HumanKind) and YOLO (Football Foundations) | Head of Community Safety | | |
| 3.7 Consider the progress, learning and impact from commissioned interventions (including the South Tyneside transitions worker and the Student Support Champions in Newcastle) and opportunities to mainstream good practice | VRU Director | Evaluation reports and case studies reported to SVRB and shared with CSB. Youth Endowment Fund SV Toolkit available and updated quarterly | National Evaluation findings available January 2024, Annual VRU Report circulated by end of March, local evaluation progress reported to CSB by July 2024. |
| 3.8 Ensure that there is effective support for victims of Domestic Abuse, including Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs), the Safe Accommodation duty (Refuge provision, Sanctuary schemes etc.) and IDVA provision to reduce repeat victimisation | DA Coordinator, Gateshead Council/Housing providers | | |

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|---|---|------------|--|
| 3.9 Ensure that there is effective support for victims of Sexual Violence, including Sexual Assault Referral Centre, ISVA provision and rape counselling to reduce repeat victimisation | OPCC and NHS Regional team? DA Coordinator, Gateshead Council | | |
| 3.10 Address the use of alcohol and drugs as drivers of violence via the development of pathways between criminal justice partners and the substance misuse treatment system. Utilising all current available opportunities to engage people in substance misuse treatment such as Arrest Referral, Test on Arrest (for example where trigger offences, including violence towards others, identify alcohol and drugs as a contributing factor), the use of community orders such as Drug Rehabilitation Requirement and Alcohol Treatment Requirements, and ensuring robust pathways for Continuity of Care for substance misusing offenders from prison to community are in place. To develop robust information and intelligence sharing pathways between partner agencies to police and criminal justice partners | Advanced Public Health Practitioner, Drugs & Alcohol | March 2025 | |
| 3.11 Promote awareness raising of alcohol related harms and continue to advocate for evidence-based preventative measures such as minimum unit pricing, via the commissioning of Balance - the North East alcohol programme | Advanced Public Health Practitioner, Drugs & Alcohol | March 2025 | |
| 3.12 Support any local initiatives on healthy masculinity and/or gender norms and maintain White Ribbon accreditation for Gateshead Council | Head of Community Safety & DA Coordinator | | |
| 3.13 Explore with NHS colleagues the scope to address mental health issues as drivers of violence and devise actions accordingly | Director of Nursing (RC) | | |

PRIORITY 4. CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND ENFORCEMENT

| Action | Lead | Timescale | Milestones |
|--|--|--|---|
| 4.1 Provide bespoke programmes of intervention for young people involved in violent offending. | Practice Lead – Innovation, Transformation and Vulnerable Adolescents (LW) | | |
| 4.2 IOM fixed Cohort target violent offenders who have committed Robbery, this is jointly through high OGRS score (probation) and Crime Severity Scale (Police) | Head of Probation (ST & Gateshead) & Police rep | Reviewed monthly through MAP meetings. 3 monthly in MACC meetings, (Multi Agency Case Conferences) | Review of MACC to be undertaken regionally early 2024 |
| 4.3 Ensure appropriate representation, with the right level of authority to make decisions from all statutory partners at both Level 2 and Level 3 MAPPA meetings (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements). Ensure statutory partners attend all level 1 meetings they are invited to. Responsible Authority and Duty to Co-operate agencies have a statutory obligation to engage with MAPPA at all levels, including Level 1, and will be involved in the management of the offender as necessary. Provide feedback from MAPPA Strategic Management Board (SMB) | Head of Probation (ST & Gateshead) & Police rep | Review quarterly | |
| 4.4 Deliver Operation GRIP, targeting non-domestic violence in public places through enhanced visibility patrols and problem-solving activity in Gateshead Town Centre and the Coatsworth Road area. | Chief Inspector Communities (DC) | | |
| 4.5 Through Operation Sentinel, develop 4Ps plans (Prepare, Prevent, Pursue, Protect) for each OCG operating in Gateshead, with a particular emphasis on building up preventive techniques and the position of children living with OCG members. | Police Chief Supt. for OCGs (PW) | | |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| 4.6 Ensure that there are effective programmes in place to deter and divert serial perpetrators of domestic abuse, including Multi Agency Tasking and Assessment Conferences (MATACs) | DA Coordinator, Gateshead Council, Police & Probation | | |
| PRIORITY 5. COMMUNICATION, ENGAGEMENT AND REASSURANCE | | | |
| Action | Lead | Timescales | Milestones |
| 5.1 Review the VRU Communications and Engagement Plan to develop and align with Communications Teams from partner organisations to coordinate messages and to maximise audience reach. | VRU Director | By February 2024 for report to SVRB and CSB. | VRU Comms & Engagement working group meets monthly to review their Plan and progress on actions |
| 5.2 Develop a multi-agency post incident response strategy through the VRU. | VRU Director | September 2024 | |
| 5.3 Monitor Police Insight Report for public perception of serious violence (may link to action 2.6) | Head of Comms, Northumbria Police | | |
| 5.4 Consider results of public consultation on community safety issues with particular reference to serious violence | Head of Community Safety & CS Analyst | 22 March 2024 | |

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NORTHUMBRIA SERIOUS VIOLENCE RESPONSE STRATEGY

2024 – 2029

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

WOULD PARTNERS LIKE CSP LOGOS INCLUDED OR JUST THE LA AS SHOWN BELOW?

Thank you to the following partners for contributing to the development of this strategy, which sets out our shared commitment and approach to tackling serious violence across Northumbria.





INTRODUCTION

Across Northumbria we are committed to adopting a public health approach to tackling serious violence. Violence is a symptom, often an outcome of the build-up of a number of different factors, requiring a range of different solutions and approaches. Since 2019 Northumbria has been working collaboratively to:

- Better understand what serious violence looks like across Northumbria.
- Test and adapt approaches to tackle serious violence.
- Develop and maintain strong links with key partners.
- Work towards applying a whole system approach to tackling serious violence and wider vulnerability.

The Northumbria Serious Violence Response Strategy 2024-2029 sets out our approach to continuing this work over the next five years. The strategy outlines five key priorities to take this work forward as well as the challenges we face and the measures we are committed to achieving to meet our aims.

Our vision is that Northumbria is a place where individuals, families and communities thrive, making the most of opportunities to live, learn and work, free from the fear of violence.

The VRU as system leaders led several Serious Violence Duty Consultation Workshops and two Theory of Change development sessions throughout September 2023, which brought together specified authorities and partners from different disciplines to contribute to the development of key priorities and actions to address serious violence at a local level, advocating place-based approaches to tackling serious violence. The workshops identified 5 key priority areas which are underpinned by localised action plans, which each Community Safety Partnership will monitor as part of their commitment to addressing serious violence as part of their statutory responsibilities under the Serious Violence Duty.

The priorities outlined below have been designed to address the findings of the strategic needs assessment. The actions under these will likely develop over the period of the strategy in accordance with identified need. This will also include learning from partners nationally in other VRUs that contribute to the evidence-base to tackle serious violence.

1. Create stronger systems to address serious violence.
2. Data, evidence, information sharing and evaluation.
3. Prevention and Early Intervention.
4. Criminal Justice and Enforcement.
5. Supporting communities through communication, engagement, and reassurance.



THEORY OF CHANGE

We developed a Theory of Change with partners to define milestones, determine outcomes and evaluate impact. Our Theory of Change guides the development of this strategy:

01 > DEFINITION OF SERIOUS VIOLENCE

"The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation."

02 > RATIONALE

- Increased prevalence of serious violence across Northumbria.
- Co-ordinate a strategy and intervention activity.
- Tackling serious violence and its root causes improves health and wellbeing, along with wider positives for the economy and society.
- Continue to promote and adopt a public health approach to tackle serious violence and addressing the root causes to prevent it from happening in the first place.
- Maximise limited resources to address serious violence.
- Co-ordinate data and intelligence to identify need and target resources.
- Requirement to convene a Northumbria approach as part of the Serious Violence Duty.

03 > BENEFICIARIES

- Communities
- Families
- Children and young people
- Statutory Services
- Businesses
- Individuals
- Victims of serious violence

04 > INPUTS

- Funding (e.g. Home Office funding)
- Staffing – VRU staffing structure, additional labour support and SPOCs within specified authorities.
- Strategic governance via SVRB Board.
- SVR Delivery Group (operational delivery support for the SVR Board).
- Existing partnerships, including in the 6 Local Authority areas.
- Existing needs assessment and identification of 'hot spot' areas demographics.
- Data and Insights Group supported by a Data Hub.
- Resources such as IT, work spaces and equipment.

05 > ACTIVITIES

- Commission and deliver interventions, including 6 CSP seasonal violence plans.
- Quarterly performance management of interventions and associated serious violence activity.
- Co-produce a Northumbria-wide Needs Assessment.
- Develop and embed revised governance arrangements.
- Share messaging via education, social media, campaigns and community engagement.
- Shared learning locally, regionally and nationally.
- Continued implementation and promotion of a public health approach to tackle serious violence.
- Regular contact with identified partnerships and networks.
- Develop and implement effective information sharing processes.
- Annual internal and external evaluation of progress and impact.

THEORY OF CHANGE

06 > OUTPUTS

- Revised 5-year Northumbria Serious Violence Reduction Strategy.
- Agreed quarterly performance reporting frameworks.
- Co-produced Serious Violence Needs Assessment.
- Embedded communication & community/partnership engagement plan.
- A programme of serious violence interventions with a clear commissioning framework.
- A range of co-produced education resources.
- Initiatives to improve responses to DA Perpetrators
- Embedded homicide near miss process.
- Revised information sharing arrangements including expanded use of the Serious Violence datahub.
- Annual training and awareness programme agreed with increased exposure to new opportunities.

07 > OUTCOMES

- Reduction in Homicides, knife enabled serious violence and knife enabled hospital admissions.
- Improved and sustained engagement in serious violence interventions.
- Established multi-agency data and intelligence processes.
- Established and effective governance framework for serious violence.
- Collective decision making and shared problem solving.
- Clear referral routes for individuals and families to access interventions.
- Public health approach to tackle serious violence is embedded across Northumbria.
- Improved engagement with communities & young people with clear, consistent messaging.
- Collaborative approach to commission services to support communities and reduce vulnerability.
- Improved and sustained partnerships across Northumbria.
- Improved understanding of what works and a greater evidence base of impact.
- The escalation of harm is prevented.

08 > IMPACT

- Reduction in Violence
- Hotspot areas targeted and review process defined and monitored

Success for Participants of targeted interventions;

- Improve wellbeing and self-esteem
- Reduce harm, offending and risk
- Access support services
- Improve peer and family relationships

GOVERNANCE & INTERDEPENDENCIES

WHERE SHOULD NORTHUMBRIA POLICE AND THEIR REVISED DELIVERY MODEL FIT IN THE TABLE BELOW?

Governance Arrangements:



In Northumbria, the Serious Violence Delivery Group has been established to provide oversight and governance in delivering the aims and objectives of the Northumbria Serious Violence Response Strategy. This Group supports the implementation of the Serious Violence Duty for specified authorities and will monitor performance of interventions and report to the Strategic Board. This group will contribute to the delivery and implementation of this strategy by capitalising on existing local arrangements to ensure partners work effectively across the system to avoid duplication.

To support our governance arrangements, there are two thematic working groups which will contribute to the success of achieving our identified priorities.

Each of the thematic groups have an agreed Terms of Reference and there is representation from each of the specified authorities on the Groups, which include:

- Data and Insights Group –has led the planning and co-ordination of the Strategic Needs Assessment including information sharing arrangements to obtain relevant datasets from partners.
- Engagement Group - has developed an Engagement and Communication Framework to ensure engagement work with individuals, families and communities is co-ordinated across the six local authorities.

GOVERNANCE & INTERDEPENDENCIES



This strategy and its priorities will interface with other partnerships and will need to compliment their strategic plans. Through delivery of the duty there is a need to maximise the resources available across Northumbria as well as explore opportunities to identify and apply good practice to address wider vulnerability, as well as explore the feasibility of mainstreaming interventions and practices that can make the most impact.



SERIOUS VIOLENCE IN NORTHUMBRIA

Within Northumbria, we have adopted the World Health Organisation's definition of serious violence:

The intentional use of physical force or power threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either result in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation.,

(World Health Organisation, 2002)

The definition was agreed to include the following crime types:

- Homicides
- Attempted murder
- Rape
- Sexual assault
- Robbery
- Assault with injury

Domestic abuse related offences account for a third of all serious violence across Northumbria. The impact of domestic abuse can be felt across all communities and approaches respond to this issue are varied and complex. This strategy seeks to interface with the existing partnerships and approaches across Northumbria complementing existing activity and supporting the development of interventions and emerging practice. A separate Northumbria VAWG strategy ([include link](#)) which delivers the statutory duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.



IMPLEMENTING THE DUTY

An overview of the Serious Violence Legal Duty:

01 > WHAT IS THE SERIOUS VIOLENCE LEGAL DUTY

The Government introduced the Duty through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 (PCSC), alongside Serious Violence Reduction Orders (SVRO's) and Homicide Reviews.

The Police Crime Sentencing Court Act amends the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to include a requirement for Community Safety Partnerships to formulate and implement a strategy – making Serious Violence a statutory priority. The Duty requires specified authorities to work together to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local areas.

The Duty places a twelve-month timeframe to fulfil the requirements set out to implement the Duty by January 2024.

02 > WHY IS IT NEEDED?

Serious violence impacts on the lives of individuals and communities with long lasting consequences and is causing widespread public concern. In April 2018, the Government published its Serious Violence Strategy setting out an ambitious programme of work to respond to increases in knife crime, gun crime and homicide. The Government's Strategy places a strong emphasis on a 'whole systems approach' to preventing serious violence by focusing on early intervention and prevention to tackle the root causes of violence and prevent young people from getting involved in crime in the first place. The Violence Reduction Unit, established since 2019, takes a public health approach and has been able to bring much needed funding to the region to support this agenda alongside Police Operational GRIP funding, forging strong partnerships to tackle serious violence.

03 > WHO IS THE SPECIFIED AUTHORITY?

The following authorities are all subject to the duty:

- Police
- Local authorities
- Youth Justice
- Fire and Rescue
- Health authorities
- Probation
 - Educational settings and prison / youth custodial institutions will be under a separate duty.
 - There is a requirement to consult with such institutions within their geographical area to work together to establish the local strategic needs assessment to develop and publish a local strategy.

04 > WHAT DO WE NEED TO DO?

The Northumbria VRU, as system leaders, have received approval from CSPs to coordinate the regional response to the Duty and in doing so support specified authorities to prepare, and or consider their role in the following:

- Serious Violence Needs Assessment (VRU led).
- Serious Violence Strategy (VRU led).
- Compliance - who must comply with the duty.
- Planning and collaboration within existing multi-agency arrangements.
- Engagement with local policing bodies, violence reduction units and the voluntary and community sector.
- Develop locality based Action Plans to respond to Serious Violence.
- Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the duty.

IMPLEMENTING THE DUTY

05 > WHAT IS HAPPENING NOW?

Through CSP Board meetings Specified Authorities were consulted with and agreed that the VRU would lead on the response to the Duty. We are in the process of consultation and engagement sessions with partners and key organisations such as educational settings, prisons and custody-based provision covering adults and children to inform our response to tackle serious violence. The Home Office commissioned CREST Advisory to evaluate our ability within the region to implement the Duty we were rated as 'Mature' meaning that our current understanding of violence and how to respond are good. As we continue on with our evidence based and data led approach, CSP Leads are helping us to coordinate all locality based responses. Each specified and relevant authority will be working to understand and strengthen their organisations delivery of the Duty and in doing so will contribute to the overall partnership Strategic Needs Assessment, Strategy, and their accountability for the Action Plan.

06 > MORE INFORMATION:

- [The Serious Violence Legal Duty](#)
- Northumbria VRU Briefing Pack

The Northumbria Violence Reduction Unit have been tasked by specified authorities to undertake a convening role to co-ordinate and implement the Serious Violence Duty across Northumbria.

This was achieved by adopting the 5 C's Framework which is a set of principles for multi -agency partnerships to prevent serious violence at a local level and aims to promote a public health approach to violence reduction through embedding a whole systems approach which include:

- **Collaboration** – with specified authorities and key partners
- **Co-production** – with young people and local communities
- **Co-operation** – improving the collection and sharing of data though the Data Working Group
- **Counter narrative** – create opportunities to divert people from serious violence through commissioned interventions.
- **Community consensus** – empowering communities to take a place-based approach to tackling serious violence

ADOPTING A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH

We are committed to adopting a public health approach to tackling serious violence. The principles of a public health approach provide a useful framework to develop approaches which consists of 4 key functions:

Define the Problem - through systemic data collection which will be supported by the development of our Northumbria Violence Reduction Datahub which collates data from a range of partners, including police health, Fire and Rescue local authority datasets and provides insight into trends of violence in local communities.

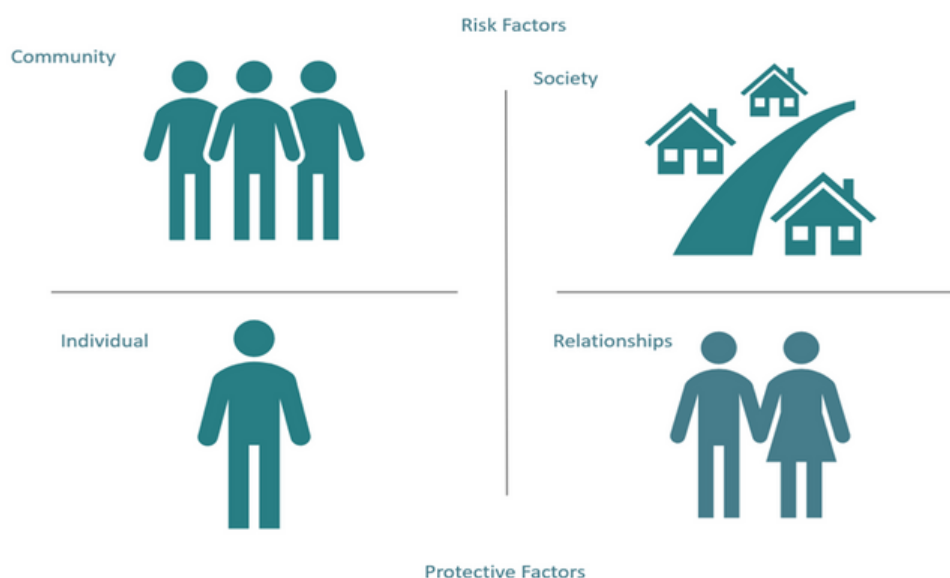
Determine Risk and Protective Factors - conduct research to find out why violence occurs and who it affects within local communities by working with people with lived experience to co-produce responses that will reduce the risk factors associated with serious violence.

Determine what works – by continuing to work with partners to develop and joint commission evidence-based primary, secondary and tertiary interventions that impact on those most at need.

Implement – scale up effective and promising interventions and evaluate their impact and cost effectiveness. Rocket Science have been commissioned to provide impact evaluations on a number of interventions to contribute to a national evidence-base as part of the Youth Endowment Fund Toolkit.

We know that Serious violence cannot be tackled in isolation and must be addressed through prevention strategies which address multiple **risk factors** which cause violence and promote **protective factors**.

Risks are factors that can predict an increased likelihood of violence occurring such as unemployment, poverty, unstable housing, homelessness, social isolation, stigma. Protective factors are those that reduce the likelihood of violence occurring in the first place, for example doing well at school, healthy relationships, positive role models, academic support, employment opportunities. These are broken down into different categories shown below:



ADOPTING A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH

Individual:

Risk factors at an individual level include psychological such as behavioural disorders, low self-esteem and being socially isolated. Education and Employment such as Not in Education, employment or training, exclusions, low educational attainment, and truancy. Behavioural risk factors include involvement in the criminal justice system and risk-taking behaviours such as substance misuse issues.

Relationships:

Personal relationships such as family, friends, intimate partners, and peers may influence the risks of becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence. For example, having violent friends may influence whether a young person engages in or becomes a victim of violence.

Communities:

Community and societal risk factors exist in local communities often in which social relationships occur, such as schools and neighbourhoods. Risk factors may include the level of unemployment, deprivation, and the existence of a local drug supply.

Society:

Societal factors influence whether violence is encouraged or inhibited, such as social and cultural norms within local communities which may endorse violence as acceptable.

Public health approaches use different types of interventions based on their target population. These include:

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Primary Prevention | Universal, aimed at the general population. |
| Secondary Prevention | To identify characteristics indicating greater risk for particular individuals. |
| Tertiary prevention | To prevent identified problems from continuing by providing targeted interventions. |

The **Youth Endowment Fund toolkit** provides a range of evidence-based interventions across each of the prevention tiers.

WHAT OUR DATA TELLS US

INCLUDE LINK TO SNA EXEC SUMMARY AT BOTTOM OF PAGE

Over the last 12 months, serious violent crime has risen by 4 % and knife enabled serious violence has increased by 12%. Hospital admissions due to a sharp object has seen a decrease of 11% and there has been a 28% reduction on homicides.

| Measure | 2022 | 2023 | % Difference |
|--|--------|--------|--------------|
| Homicides | 25 | 18 | -28% |
| Serious Violence | 22,857 | 23,757 | +4% |
| Knife Enables Serious Violence | 1,012 | 1130 | +12% |
| Hospital Admissions for assault with a knife or sharp object | 148 | 131 | -11% |

The map below provides an overview the types of violence and the number of crimes within each local authority area:

Gateshead:

- 3174 total recorded violent crimes, an increase of 179.
- 149 knife related crimes (+31)
- 3 homicides (+1)
- 18 hospital admissions for assault with a sharp object.
- 168 robberies, 42 knife related.

Newcastle:

- **6697** total recorded violent crimes, a decrease of 104.
- 335 knife related crimes (+9)
- 5 homicides (-2)
- 39 hospital admissions for assault with a sharp object.
- 468 robberies, 109 knife related.
- 5446 domestic abuse crimes (+1.1%)

North Tyneside:

- 2805 total recorded violent crimes, an increase of 218.
- 116 knife related crimes (+10)
- 4 homicides (+1)
- 22 hospital admissions for assault with a sharp object.
- 102 robberies, 31 knife related.
- 3480 domestic abuse crimes (+8.1%)

Northumberland:

- 4078 total recorded violent crimes, an increase of 225.
- 125 knife related crimes (+8)
- 4 homicides.
- 25 hospital admissions for assault with a sharp object.
- 90 robberies, 23 knife related.
- 4503 domestic abuse crimes (+2%)

South Tyneside:

- 2435 total recorded violent crimes, an increase of 220.
- 97 knife related crimes (+27)
- 1 homicide (-1)
- 11 hospital admissions for assault with a sharp object.
- 79 robberies, 20 knife related.
- 3198 domestic abuse crimes (+6.1%)

Sunderland:

- 4568 total recorded violent crimes, an increase of 147.
- 190 knife related crimes (+33)
- 1 homicide (-6)
- 16 hospital admissions for assault with a sharp object.
- 202 robberies, 48 knife related.
- 5809 domestic abuse crimes (+2.4%)

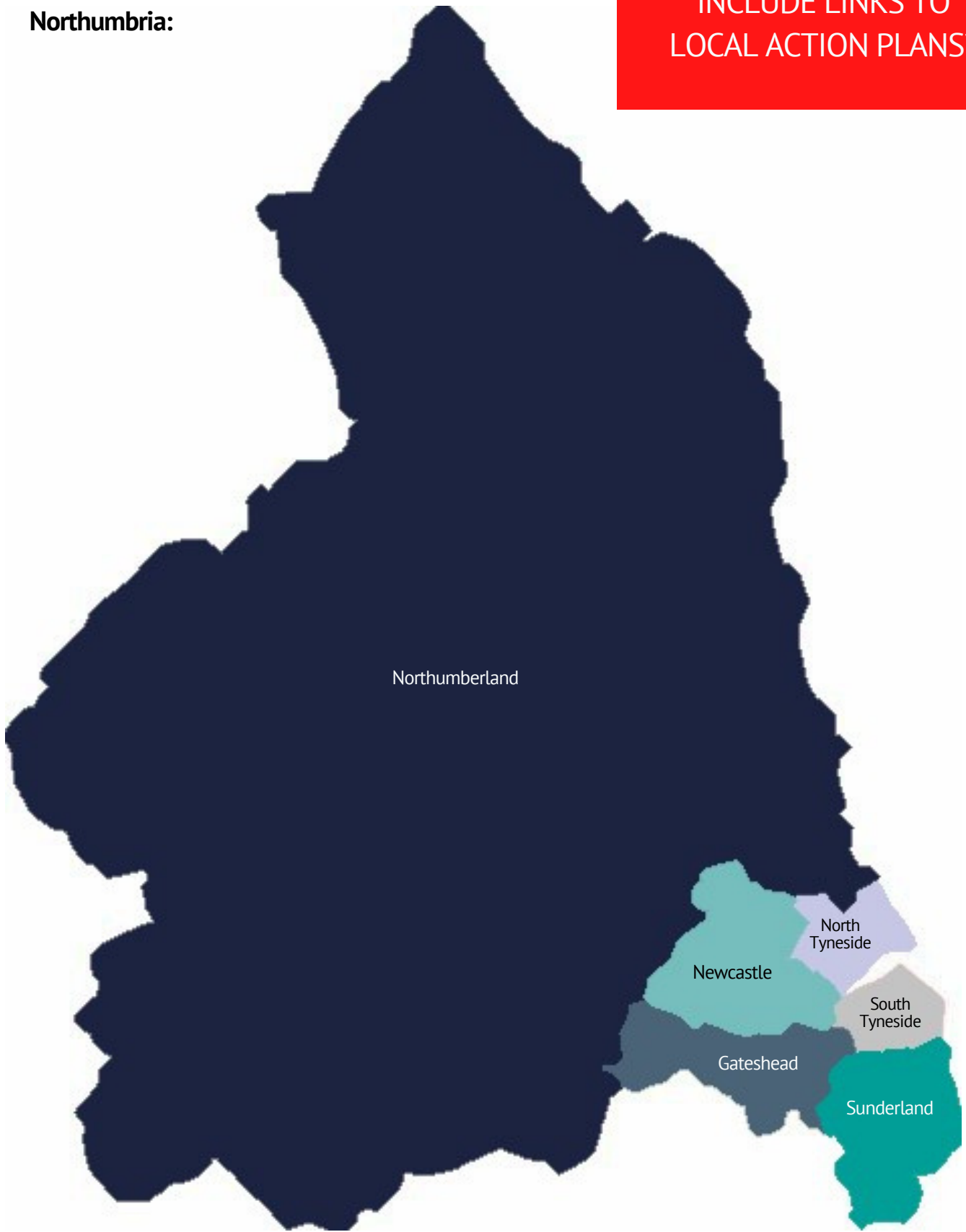
The annual Strategic Needs Assessment will provide a range of recommendations which will be used to support the development of local action plans. Further information can be found within the Strategic Needs Assessment.

LOCAL ACTION PLANS



INCLUDE LINKS TO LOCAL ACTION PLANS?

Northumbria:



WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

OVERARCHING OUTCOMES:

A reduction in Homicides.

A reduction in knife Enabled violence.

A reduction in hospital related admissions due to a knife or sharp object.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Create stronger systems to address serious violence:

We are committed to implementing a whole systems approach to tackling serious violence. We will create stronger systems which will bring stakeholders together from a broad range of backgrounds and disciplines to jointly develop and take ownership of preventing serious violence.

- Established and effective governance framework for serious violence.
- Collective decision making and shared problem solving.
- Public health approach to tackle serious violence is embedded.
- Collaborative approach to commission services to support communities and reduce vulnerability.
- Improved and sustained partnerships across Northumbria.

Data, evidence, information sharing and evaluation:

Effective use of data and intelligence are critical to understanding the nature of serious violence and has the potential to transform both our response and the impact we can have. Being data informed allows us to target resources in 'hot spot' areas and to those most in need of an intervention. By using data in this way, we can use public health approaches to commission interventions delivered at population level and carry out evaluations which will contribute to the evidence-base for tackling serious violence.

- Established multi-agency data and intelligence processes.
- Improved understanding of what works and a greater evidence base of impact.

Prevention and Early Intervention:

Violence is a symptom of wider vulnerabilities, if we can prevent and disrupt at the earliest opportunity there is a greater chance of improving the life chances for our most vulnerable communities and individuals.

- Improved and sustained engagement in serious violence interventions.
- Clear referral routes for individuals and families to access interventions.
- The escalation of harm is prevented.

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

Criminal Justice and Enforcement:

Enforcement activity remains a component of the overall strategy as a complementary element of the approach to tackling serious violence in local communities. It is essential that we pursue, disrupt, and prosecute those who commit serious violent crimes, ensuring an effective policing and criminal justice system response.

- Evidence based targeted enforcement action across hotspot locations.
- Creative use of orders and powers to disrupt, deter and reduce serious violence and wider criminal exploitation.
- Clearer pathways for offenders to access behaviour change and restorative processes.

Supporting communities through communication, engagement, and reassurance:

We aim to understand what causes violence and inform members of the public and key partners on the impact and experiences of violence across the Northumbria Police Force Area by establishing communication channels with local communities and provide reassurance that we are working to tackle serious violence.

- Improved engagement with communities and young people.
- Clear and consistent messaging on our approach to tackling serious violence.

IMPACT

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Short Term | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Marked reduction in violence in hotspot areas. |
| Medium Term | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collaborative approaches to tackling violence in place and resources pooled. |
| Long Term | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Co-produced services established.• Violence is reduced. |

SERVICE USER IMPACTS

- Improved self-awareness and self-esteem of those engaged in interventions.
- Reduced risk of offending and harm.
- Increased and sustained access to support services.
- Improved.



WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

KEY CHALLENGES:

- The Sharing of data and intelligence, particular health data.
- Engagement with education and diverse communities such as has faith based or BAME.
- Sustainability of interventions that work with reduced budgets.
- Uncertainty of VRUs beyond 2025
- The ability to identify and measure sustained outcomes from primary prevention Interventions will take time to achieve and need to be part of a long-term plan.
- Measuring impact, The challenge will be to continually develop approaches to highlight impact locally as well as reiterate the importance or targeted early intervention.

COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT

We have developed a Communications and Engagement Plan that focuses on keeping partners and members of the public informed of activity. The table below outlines how each communications channel will be used to promote the work of the VRU.

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Inform | Provide communities and partners with information on understanding the impact and consequences of Serious Violence, and any opportunities to tackle the problem in communities. |
| Consult | Consulting with communities to obtain feedback through clearly defined channels, listening to concerns and aspirations and gathering information. |
| Involve | Involve communities by working directly with them through processes to ensure there is a common understanding of the issue and that community views, concerns and aspirations are reflected in the development of options or approaches. |
| Collaborate | Collaboration is working in partnership with communities as a team, incorporating their input and advice, jointly formulating solutions and/or options, and sharing agenda setting and deliberation of issues. |
| Empower | Empowering is about placing final decision-making in the hands of the community - the community decides what will be implemented. |

Through these channels, we aim to understand what causes violence and inform members of the public on the impact and experiences across the Northumbria Police Force Area. We have therefore identified the following actions:

| | |
|---|--|
| 1 | Continue to review our Communication and Engagement Plan to ensure clear and consistent messaging around serious violence is delivered to target audiences. |
| 2 | Continue to co-produce campaigns to reflect the views of our target audience and to ensure the delivery of key messages through the communication channels they use most. |
| 3 | Build on our Engagement Working Group, which already features engagement leads from across the six Local Authority areas, by extending the membership to the VCS, ensuring the views of partners and the wider public are included in all aspects of our work. |
| 4 | A key focus on engaging with diverse communities such as has faith based or BAME. |

APPENDIX 1: CONSULTATION THEMES

Serious Violence Legal Duty Consultation

Please find below the key themes from the consultation.

- Partnership collaboration already done well, but most think it could be improved with communication around roles of each partner and data sharing/information between partners.
- Prevention, early intervention, and deterrence was a consistent theme in preventing/tackling serious violence across the region.
- A need for increased funding/resources across the partners with many citing a short fall in staff/funding.
- Partners should be evidencing their work and impact.
- Top 5 priority crimes Attempted Murder, Rape, Attempted Murder with a Knife, S.47 Assault with Injury, Rape with a Knife.

Neighbourhood Police Teams Survey:

- Neighbourhood Police Teams felt serious violence had either stayed the same or gotten worse due to more instances of knife crime and young people carrying weapons, ASB, gang related activity and drugs.
- ASB Youth was the main type of violence seen in the past 6 months, with more youth services identified as a need.
- The main drivers of violence identified were drugs, alcohol, mental health, social media, and peer pressure.

Young Person's Survey on Knife Crime and Feelings of Safety:

- Young people told us that they mostly feel safe during the day.
- However, their feelings of safety dropped significantly after dark due to seeing gang activity or large group gatherings, alcohol and drugs, unlit areas of local streets, parks and woods, ASB and the fear of other young people carrying knives.
- The majority of young people said they had not carried a knife or weapon but felt that it was becoming an issue in some areas.

Focus group at Wetherby Youth Offending Institute engaging Young People incarcerated due to serious violence or knife crime:

- Young people said more learning is needed around other potential weapons, not just knives – “tools such as screwdrivers and wrenches could be used as weapon”.

APPENDIX 1: CONSULTATION THEMES

- They said having had time to do a lot of thinking; they believe that if you take a knife out of the house, you have an intention to hurt someone, whatever the reason may be such as fear, protection, to fit in etc...
- They felt fear and peer pressure were behind most actions but also said there was a lack of support for young people – “Even when you’re at school, they don’t help you if you get kicked out. People think what’s the point; nobody is going to help me.”
- A general feeling amongst the young people were if they were to see a doctor studying for 10 years only to end up in student debt but the local drug dealer who is not much older than them is driving around in a Rolls Royce, the latter would be more appealing.
- They felt diversionary activities were a must and something that wasn’t readily available to them – “boxing clubs should be available in every area”.
- Having the opportunity to talk to people with lived experience such as those who have already been to prison or arrested for knife crime was discussed at length – “They could talk to young people and change their point of view about carrying knives”.
- In a discussion around Joint Enterprise, the young people thought that – “In some cases it’s pointless as you never know what someone’s true intentions are, they might just be there, be innocent and feel they can’t move.”
- When asked what they think would stop young people carrying knives, they said - “Take people into prisons to show them” and “Forget about your friends, they might push you to do it, but they are not really there for you. It’s your family that matters – all I think about is my family.”

NORTHUMBRIA RESPONSE STRATEGY 2024-29

WHAT SPECIFIC LINKS WOULD
PARTNERS LIKE ON BACK COVER
FOR CSP WORK/SOCIALS?



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07 March 2024

TITLE OF REPORT: Journey to Excellence...The story so far...

REPORT OF: Andrea Houlahan, Deputy Strategic Director,
Children's Social Care, Early Help and Specialist
Services

SUMMARY

This report will provide Members with an overview and progress update in relation to areas identified for improvement from inspection activity and quality assurance work and to highlight our key areas of focus for improvement following our own annual self assessment.

Purpose of Report

1. This report provides members with an overview and progress update in relation to the areas identified for development from inspection activity by Ofsted, specifically our Focussed Visit which took place in September 2021 and short ILACs inspection which took place in April 2019. The report will detail how we have taken learning from compliments, complaints, peer reviews, thematic and case file audits to improve practice and highlight key areas for priority focus in 2024-25 .

Background

2. Children's Services, as part of Ofsted's framework for inspecting local authority children services (ILACS), are required to engage in a variety of Joint Area Targeted, Thematic and Focussed Visit inspections, as well as an ILACs (Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services) which should take place every 3 years.
3. The findings of our last two inspections have been positive in relation to the services we are providing to children and families.
4. In our short ILACs inspection in 2019 Children's Services was judged an overall **Good**, with inspectors concluding:

"Children and families in Gateshead receive a good-quality service. There is good practice within most areas of the service, which has a demonstrably positive impact on improving children and family's circumstances".

(<https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50083971> - page 1)

5. In our Focussed Visit in September 2021, Ofsted found we continue to provide a good service, and that had in fact improved upon since their previous contact, with the report stating:

“Continuously strong, ambitious and effective senior leadership has resulted in sustained improvements. The well respected and experienced director of children’s services (DCS), together with her senior team, has created a culture where doing the right thing to help children and their families is embedded across teams”.

<https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50171105> - page 2)

6. While both inspections were positive about the services we are providing, as a Council we want to do more and aspire to be an Outstanding Children’s Services provider, ensuring that our children and families receive the best services and outcomes. Both inspections identified some areas of improvement and further work needed to achieve this ambition.
7. As part of the inspection cycle local authorities are required to produce an Annual Self-Assessment which identifies areas of progress and areas for further improvement and this forms the basis of our updated improvement plan and areas for development as well as the basis of our annual conversations with Ofsted which is a key part of the assurance process with the regulator.

What we know so far...

8. To build on the Ofsted reported good quality practice in Gateshead we have developed a robust Quality Assurance Framework which includes an annual schedule for auditing and learning that is used to help us benchmark ourselves against the Ofsted Framework and ensure that our services not only improve but do not decline.
9. Learning from audits is shared and implemented through a variety of forums including our Quality Improvement Board, chaired by the Director of Children’s Services, the Strategic Quality Assurance Group, chaired by the Deputy Strategic Director for Children’s Social Care and Early Help and, monthly performance and practice clinics held with team managers across all frontline teams.
10. In June 2023 an external Consultancy team conducted a review of our audit framework, and our case file audits were moderated. A number of our audits reviewed included Children in Need, Child Protection, Children in Care and a particular focus on our Children’s Care plans. The findings of this work confirmed that our audit work is of good quality and on the whole our audits findings were consistent with the external audit findings. We will continue to work on strengthening the quality of our assurance work and have invited the audit team to come back to Gateshead in the summer 2024 to conduct training with our auditors and further review the quality of our audits.
11. Another mechanism for learning is through complaints and compliments received from the families we work with. This information is shared routinely with our workforce and learning is taken forward through the various governance groups outlined. Reports are routinely provided to Overview and Scrutiny committees and the 2022/23 annual complaints and compliments report was shared in

September 2023. In summary, in 2022/23 we saw a reduction in stage 1 complaints and formal contacts received citing dissatisfaction about Children's Services and positively, 63% of all contacts relating to compliments.

12. Alongside our internal assurance activity, our safeguarding partnership board also plays an active role in supporting Children Services to develop and learn from audits. The Multi-Agency audits completed have included themes such as Domestic abuse, Child Protection Conferences and SEND. All learning is shared across the partnership and the delivery of actions and recommendations tracked through the safeguarding Partnership sub-groups.

13. Ofsted ILACs inspection are undertaken every 3 years. Given that Gateshead's last inspection was held in April 2019, the next ILACs inspection is overdue and expected imminently.

In our previous two inspections, in summary we were told we need to improve and further develop the following.

Short Inspection 2019 & Focused Visit 2021

- (i) Managers' and independent reviewing officers' challenge to the quality of social work practice, including more effective use of supervision when practice falls short.
- (ii) The quality and focus of written plans to ensure that they are specific and targeted to meet the needs of individual children, to include pathway plans that are co-produced with young people to address all risks, and life-story work to help all children in care understand their histories.
- (iii) The pace of change in relation to, and the quality of services for, disabled children.
- (iv) Access to services for those children in care who live out of the borough, including the timely return of personal education plans from schools outside of the borough.
- (v) The quality and impact of supervision and contingency planning for children in need.
- (vi) The routine inclusion of the views of children and their families in audits.

14. In relation to these areas, we have undertaken the following -

- (i)(v) Challenge of social work practice and quality and impact of supervision and contingency planning for children in need.

Our supervision policy document which underpins the way in which supervision should be delivered has been revised and relaunched. An external consultant has delivered extensive training and workshops with all managers and Independent

Reviewing Officer to support with the improvement of supervision. Our audits tell us that this area of practice has improved.

We have introduced a Child In Need scrutiny panel to review all children's Child In Need plans and ensure that the work required to support these families is timely and meeting need. Initial findings indicate that we have robust plans for children and continually ensure that contingencies are in place to avoid drift and delay.

(ii) Quality of plans and life story work

Our workforce development training plan has been reviewed and there has been a re-emphasis on ensuring that we have quality plans for children. A new training programme has been delivered to staff and our audits tell us that this work has improved, and we are now seeing SMART plans which detail the support and work required to ensure that children's needs are being addressed.

In relation to life story work, over the past 24 months we have undertaken extensive work to reinstate the importance of this work with practitioners. We have worked in collaboration with Blue Cabin, an independent provider to complete and deliver life story work to our children and we have revised policies. We now have a number of dedicated workers who are life story work champions and support our workforce to complete this work. Our work in this area is a continued priority.

(iii) The pace of change in relation to, and the quality of services for, disabled children.

In 2019 there were some concerns about the stability of the Disabled Children's team and the quality of work. A robust improvement plan has been implemented and signed off with all actions completed following the 2019 ILACs inspection.

Our audits tell us that the quality of the work being undertaken by our Children with Disabilities team is of good quality. We have an experienced manager in post who joined after the 2019 inspection, bringing a wealth of experience which has been of benefit to the service. We know that there are a small number of children's assessments require updates which will be completed by March 2024. Recently, caseloads are higher in the team than we would want due to staff progressing into senior posts. Recruitment is underway and we are confident that appointments will be achieved. Caseloads are robustly reviewed and there is robust management oversight in place to ensure that staff are supported, and all children plans are progressed.

(v) Access to services for those children in care who live out of the borough, including the timely return of personal education plans from schools outside of the borough.

Since our last inspection there has been a review of the virtual school and a restructure including the appointment of a new Virtual Head. A key priority was to ensure clarity of caseloads for the Virtual School team and that there was a single point of contact for schools, social workers, Team Managers, IROs and

carers. The restructure of the Virtual School team has enabled an increase in capacity by 2 FTEs; a Deputy Head has been appointed and clear leadership across all phases including complex SEND and CIOC who live outside of the Borough has been established. New electronic case file system for PEP's has been embedded. Recruitment for the new posts is currently underway and is expected to be concluded in March 2024. These significant changes have supported a more intensive offer to our children who live out of borough and data tells us that 96% of our children in out of borough placements have a Personal Education Plan. To further ensure a robust oversight of children living out of borough, these children are in receipt of visits from Independent Reviewing Officers.

(vi) The routine inclusion of the views of children and their families in audits.

Our quality assurance framework has been refreshed and to enhance the quality and learning from our audits we now routinely seek to gather family feedback. At times this can be a challenge when families do not wish to engage in the process. Some of the feedback we received in our Qu 3 audits include:

“Everything is better... the social worker is helping... everything was going OK and has no problems with social services involvement. ‘I am happy with the support at the moment’ and when asked if she felt anything could be improved by the social worker she said no”.

“Child was asked on a scale of 0 – 10 (where 0 is Social Worker is rubbish and 10 is she is really good) where would he put his SW, child said a 10 and when asked why, he said she listens to him.

“Mam said SW ‘does nothing but help us’ if I need her, I can ring or text her, child loves her”.

15. Priorities for 2023/2024

Having taken the learning from both previous Ofsted inspections we have extended our plans to strengthen practice and develop a Journey to Excellence plan which identifies 8 key areas of improvement that the service is currently working on. Progress against each area is outlined:

15. Expand and strengthen our Early Help Prevention

Our ambition is to expand and strengthen the Early Help prevention offer to all children and young people across the Gateshead system to ensure it is rooted in wider locality working and schools.

To achieve this we have; developed 6 family hubs across the borough which offer a range of support services to families in their local communities, revised and relaunched a new Early Help assessment framework, developed a multi-disciplinary team approach to supporting early help conversations with families at the earliest opportunity when they are in need of support and we are in the process of establishing a wider youth offer.

16. Strengthen co-production and delivery of services for children with SEND and EHCP

Through the continued strengthening of co-production and delivery of services for children with SEND and an EHCP and our collaborative work with parents, carers and young people; including improvement in the experiences of transitions for young people, we are ensuring that our families shape and redesign the services they are in receipt of. We have invested in and recruited to a new Designated Social Care Officer role which is supporting this work in children's social care. This system wide work is extensive and governed through the strengthened SEND board which is chaired by the Director of Children Services.

17. Develop a refreshed approach to supporting vulnerable adolescents.

Whilst we have had a strong offer to our families with young adolescents we have continued to strengthen and develop our approach. This work includes supporting vulnerable adolescents; those who are missing from home and care; those at risk of harm outside the home; those who are on the edge of care and experiencing complex mental health issues. Services have been reviewed and redesigned to ensure they are fully integrated under one new senior leader. We have a strong multi agency offer which is enhanced through the support of the new Trusting Hands service which includes psychologists and speech therapists and is supporting a trauma informed approach to this work.

Through a number of reviews including the partnership MSET review (multi safeguarding exploitation team) and thematic audits in relation to our missing children and the realignment of services, we have improved the quality of services for children, reduced the number of changes of lead professional, improved relational practice, ensure a robust edge of care offer for teenagers, and reduced risk of harm outside the home.

18. Support children and young people on the edge of care

Supporting our children and young people on the edge of care to remain at home and when we do need to care for them, to support a return home to birth family or connected carers at the earliest opportunity when it is safe to do so, is a high priority for us.

We have reviewed our offer to young people who are at risk of any form of harm outside the home and as a result we have developed a dedicated Contextual Safeguarding Team. This provides an assessment of need and intervention plan for every young people aged 11 + who are at risk or victims of exploitation, at risk or victim of extremism or terrorism, complex mental health or on the edge of care or homelessness due to family relationship breakdown.

A wide range of strategies have been developed in the last twelve months across the service, to safely reduce the number of new children entering care, which are

beginning to have a positive impact. These include; an intensive edge of care offer, a refreshed approach to support for new children at risk outside the home, an enhanced FGC offer, the development of a pre-birth service and the embedding of a reunification strategy.

19. Strengthen our local offer for care experienced young people.

We have built on new opportunities to strengthen our local offer alongside the work of the regional Care Leaver Board, ensuring that our care leavers have opportunities to engage in education and employment and training.

Amongst many other work activities this has included a reviewed the Care Leaver App and moved to an in-house digital App which is much more intuitive and means that young people can access vital information from the Care Leaver local offer. The IT platform enables young people to seek advice on finances, employment, training, accommodation, and many other adulthood related queries. This new platform has a recite function, allowing our Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking care leavers to have a translated service and access to advice and guidance at their fingertips.

To enable our care experienced young people to be included in their local communities and maintain healthy lifestyles, as part of the local offer all care experienced young people can access a Go Leisure pass, which enables them to use local leisure facilities free of charge. They now have access to a free travel card which has enhanced their opportunities to access family, employment and leisure activities.

20. Ensure we have sufficient homes and choice of homes

We have ambitious plans to increase the sufficiency of placements locally, given the increased numbers of children in our care. Working with council stakeholders and commissioned partners to deliver on the placement sufficiency strategy has remained a priority for us to ensure we have sufficient homes and choice of homes for our children and young people as well as sufficient short break provision.

We are proud to receive national recognition in the 2023 National Children and Young Peoples Awards, when two of our foster carers were awarded for contributions to improving the outcomes of children. Our foster carers are key in supporting our recruitment campaigns and have helped us develop new material to help prospective carers think about becoming foster carers.

A significant review of housing providers is underway which will ensure that we can recommission and provide sufficient high quality Ofsted registered accommodation and support all young people who required supported accommodation.

In 2023 we joined the DfE regional fostering hub initiative which was launched on 27th September and has allowed us to expand our advertising footprint with the ambition of attracting more prospective carers to register with Gateshead.

21. Strengthen co-production.

Extensive work is underway to continue to work with our children and young people and strengthen co production and their influence on service development and ensure that their views are consistently evident on case files. We have recruited to our second cohort of young ambassadors; these are dedicated and enthusiastic young people who were previously in our care. A workplan has been devised for this group of young adults to support with several strategic priorities.

We continue to encourage our children and young people to be part of our interview panels for new staff and participate on various innovation groups including the SEND board and Corporate Parenting Board.

22. Practice Model and Quality Assurance Framework

We are working hard to further embed our Practice Model, Quality Assurance Framework and improve the quality of plans for all children including robust Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) oversight.

Our current practice system has been updated and refreshed to support positive change for our families that can be sustained. The 'Narrative approach' ensures that our language is accessible and understood by our families. The approach is a strength based, solution focused approach to children's social work which draws on tools, techniques, methods, and models from strength-based, person-centred practice. Through this approach we support children, young people and families to recognise and build on their own strengths contributing and collaborating in their own plans and outcomes.

In 2024 with support from an external highly skills provider, we will be embarking on a significant work programme to further embed our restorative and relational practice model. Our audits are telling us that the quality of children's plans are improving and that IROs are more visible.

23. In preparation for inspection, we have improved performance reports which enable managers to scrutinise case work and ensure that files are routinely updated.

24. In March 2024 the Director of Children Services, Director of Education and the Deputy Strategic Director of Children's Social Care, Early Help and Specialist services will meet with Ofsted for our Annual Engagement meeting. This will be an opportunity to share with Ofsted how we think we are performing as a local authority. As part of this process a Self-Evaluation report is produced and shared with the Inspectors. This will assist in providing inspectors with an overview of our work, any areas for development and progress to date.

Conclusion

25. In conclusion, there is a lot of good work and practice we need to celebrate across Children Social Care, Early Help and Specialist services. As a result of assurance work in 2023/2024 we are able to demonstrate process and positive outcomes for children and families. Whilst there is always further work to be done, progress to date is positive.

26. During 2024 there will be a continual focus on the priorities outlined in this report and these will be taken forward with a renewed pace in relation to our ambition to provide the very best services to children and their families to support them achieving good outcomes.

Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to:

- Receive the report for information.

Contact: Andrea Houlahan

Ext

Title of Report: **Progress update of Outcomes for Virtual School**

Purpose of Report

This report provides a progress update on the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) of attainment outcomes, attendance, and suspensions for Children in our Care for the academic year 2022 – 2023.

Important to note there are two data sets of Key Performance Indicators for Children In Our Care (CIOC). Local Area Interactive Tool data (LAIT) includes all children in care in Gateshead's Schools including other local authority children. NCER data includes children in the care of Gateshead only.

This data can be analysed at individual child level and can demonstrate the impact of a young person's life journey for example SEND, months in care, age at start of care, placement moves. If the cohort is small, one young person's outcomes can have a significant impact on the overall performance in any year. It is therefore important to analyse CIOC at an individual level to help shape future support and intervention that schools and the Virtual School can put in place to improve individual CIOC outcomes.

Virtual School has used this data to inform the Self Evaluation and the school improvement plan. The progress against which is monitored by a new Governing Board with school head teachers from all phases, social care, ESI senior heads of service areas, foster carers, Councillor Weatherly and the Corporate Parenting Board. Both have received the full Annual Report.

1. Attendance (KPI)


a. LAIT data

The table shows the % absence from school of children who have been cared for continuously for at least 12 months (LAIT)

Local Authority, Region and England

| | | | | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|-----|------------------------|---|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 390 | Gateshead | - | - | 3.20 | 2.50 | 4.20 | - | 7.00 | 7.10 |
| 980 | North East | - | - | 4.20 | 4.30 | 4.80 | - | 8.50 | 7.00 |
| | Statistical Neighbours | - | - | 4.46 | 4.59 | 4.84 | - | 8.61 | 6.95 |
| 970 | England | - | - | 4.70 | 5.00 | 5.10 | - | 9.10 | 7.80 |

- Absence from school has shown a slight increase compared to 2021 but is lower than national absence.

| | Trend | National Rank | Quartile |
|------|---|---------------|----------|
| 2022 |  | 45 | B |

2017 – 2022, Attendance

% school-age Children in Need who missed session - through overall absence 6 Half Terms

Local Authority, Region and England

| | | | | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | | Change from previous year |
|-----|------------------------|---|---|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|---|---------------------------|
| 390 | Gateshead | - | - | 10.80 | 9.30 | 10.70 | - | 13.00 | 15.60 | - | 2.60 |
| 980 | North East | - | - | 9.50 | 10.10 | 10.50 | - | 13.00 | 15.70 | - | 2.70 |
| | Statistical Neighbours | - | - | 10.22 | 11.22 | 10.92 | - | 13.42 | 15.84 | - | 2.42 |
| 970 | England | - | - | 10.50 | 11.10 | 11.50 | - | 13.70 | 16.40 | - | 2.70 |

% of Children in Need who are persistent absentees 6 Half Terms

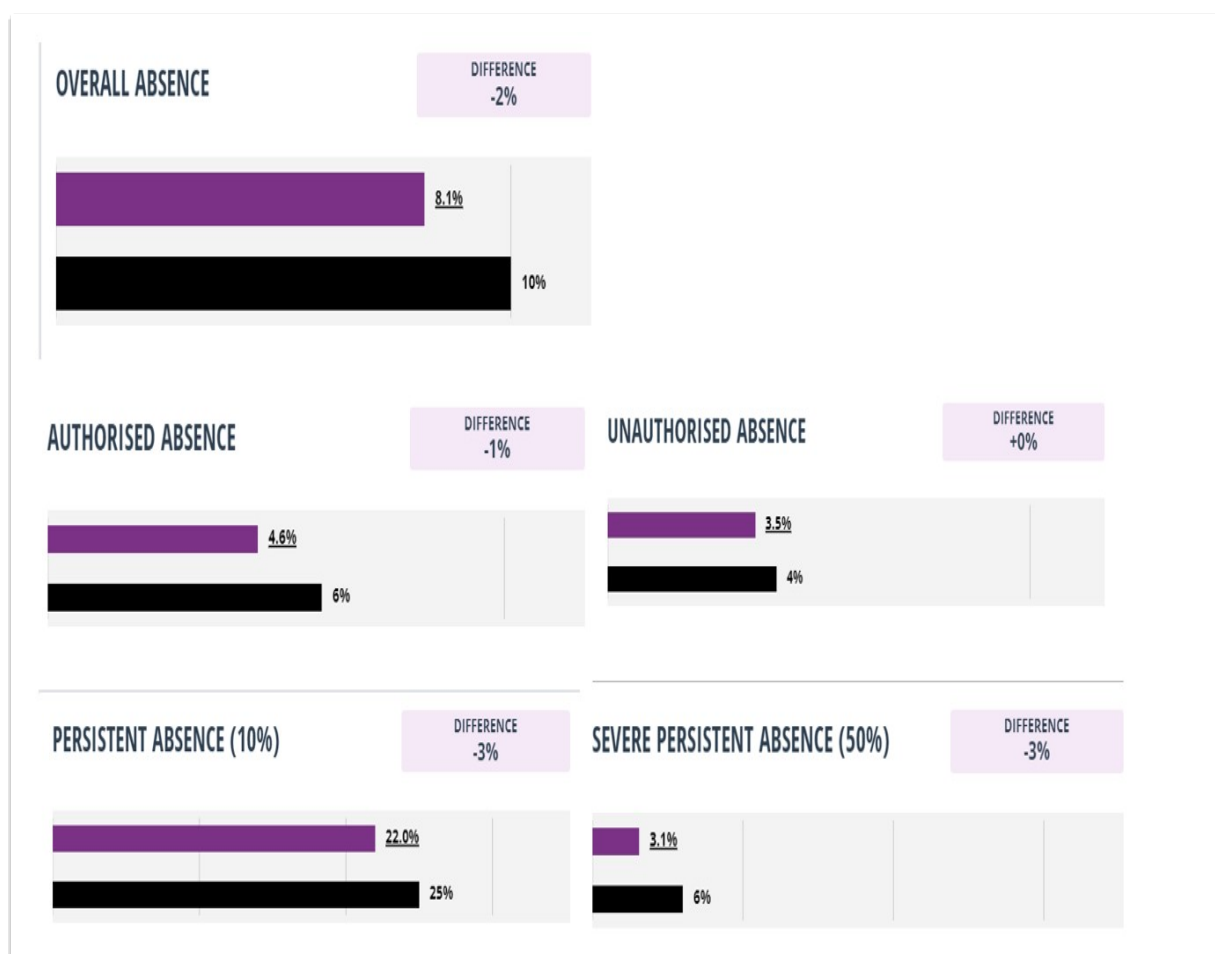
Local Authority, Region and England

| | | | | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | | Change from previous year |
|-----|------------------------|---|---|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|---|---------------------------|
| 390 | Gateshead | - | - | 31.40 | 27.20 | 31.80 | - | 37.90 | 44.30 | - | 6.40 |
| 980 | North East | - | - | 28.10 | 29.10 | 29.90 | - | 45.20 | 46.00 | - | 0.80 |
| | Statistical Neighbours | - | - | 30.88 | 32.08 | 31.17 | - | 45.53 | 46.66 | - | 1.13 |
| 970 | England | - | - | 31.50 | 32.70 | 33.40 | - | 47.30 | 48.50 | - | 1.20 |

- Gateshead's absence for children in need is better than national.
- Gateshead's persistent absence is lower than national

b. NCER 2022/23 Gateshead (purple) National (black)

- Gateshead's performance is better than National CIOC in all the indicators below.



2. Exclusion/suspensions (KPI)

a. LAIT data

% of children who have been cared for continuously for at least 12 months with at least one fixed term suspension.

Local Authority, Region and England

| | | | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 |
|-----|------------------------|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 390 | Gateshead | - | 5.42 | 8.74 | 6.74 | 12.56 | 11.43 | 12.66 |
| 980 | North East | - | 8.93 | 9.79 | 10.78 | 11.03 | 9.50 | 9.70 |
| | Statistical Neighbours | - | 10.53 | 10.76 | 10.22 | 9.33 | 9.09 | 9.43 |
| 970 | England | - | 11.04 | 11.44 | 11.25 | 11.32 | 9.35 | 9.80 |

b. NCER 2022/23

- Fixed term exclusions show a decreasing number of at least one fixed term suspension in 2022 – 2023

| | | |
|-------------|--------|---|
| 2022 - 2023 | 11.82% | ↓ |
|-------------|--------|---|

EXCLUSIONS/SUSPENSIONS - FULL YEAR

STRENGTHS

PUPILS WITH 1+ SUSPENSION (YEAR-ON-YEAR TREND)

| | | | | |
|--------------|---|--------------|---|--------------|
| V.Sch. 21/22 | | V.Sch. 22/23 | | Diff. |
| 13.68 | → | 11.82 | = | +0.03 |

The virtual school has significantly improved this year.

- 29 CIOC had more than 2 suspensions
- 18 CIOC had more than 3 suspensions of which 5 were in AP and 1 in specialist setting

c. Permanent Exclusions

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 2020 - 2021 | 0 |
| 2021 - 2022 | 0 |
| 2022 - 2023 | 0 |

- No Permanent Exclusions for the last three years.

3. Outcomes (KPI)

a. Early Years Foundation Stage



EYFSP Benchmark (CLA)

| | Eligible | CLA Matches | CLA GLD ^{1 2} |
|---|----------|-------------|------------------------|
| NCER National (CLA) | 2,220 | 101.0% | 41.0% |
| DfE Region - North East (CLA) | 210 | 100.0% | 48.0% |
| Local Authority - Gateshead (all schools) | 2,037 | - | 67.6% |
| Virtual School - Gateshead | 14 | 100.0% | 35.7% |

- 2023 EYFS outcomes are below national.

b. Key Stage 1



KS1 Benchmark (CLA) (Keypas)

2023 | Keypas | Matched p

| | Cohort ** | CLA Matches | READING | | WRITING | | MATHS | | SCIENCE | | RWM* |
|---|--------------|----------------|---------|-------|---------|-------|-------|-------|---------|-------|-------|
| | | | <EXS | ≥EXS | <EXS | ≥EXS | <EXS | ≥EXS | <EXS | ≥EXS | ≥EXS |
| NCER National (CLA) | 2,760 | 100.0% | 54.0% | 45.0% | 66.0% | 34.0% | 55.0% | 45.0% | 43.0% | 57.0% | 30.0% |
| DfE Region - North East (CLA) | 230 | 100.0% | 53.0% | 47.0% | 65.0% | 35.0% | 51.0% | 49.0% | 43.0% | 57.0% | 31.0% |
| Local Authority - Gateshead (all schools) | 2,126 | 1.2% | 32.2% | 67.5% | 40.0% | 59.6% | 29.4% | 70.2% | 22.2% | 77.2% | 55.2% |
| Virtual School - Gateshead | 26 | 100.0% | 61.5% | 38.5% | 61.5% | 38.5% | 57.7% | 42.3% | 46.2% | 53.8% | 34.6% |

- Key Stage 1 performance is below national in reading, maths, and science but above in writing. However, a combined RWM Gateshead is above national performance.

c. Key Stage 2

- LAIT data (Year on Year Comparative Data 2017 – 2022 shows Gateshead's CIOC have performed better than National CIOC across all KS2 indicators in 2022.
- Data indicates Gateshead performance is in the top two quartiles nationally, except for Maths.
- NCER data shows Key Stage 2 performance is above national across reading, maths, GPS and combined RWM, writing is close to National. (See overleaf)



| | Cohort | CLA Matches | RWM* | | READING | | | WRITING TA | | MATHS | | | GPS | | | | | |
|---|--------|-------------|-------|------|---------|-------|-------|------------|-------|-------|---------|-------|-------|-------|---------|-------|-------|-------|
| | | | ≥ Exp | High | Avg. SS | < Exp | ≥ Exp | High | ≥ Exp | GDS | Avg. SS | < Exp | ≥ Exp | High | Avg. SS | < Exp | ≥ Exp | High |
| NCER National (CLA) | 3,590 | 100.0% | 34.0% | 2.0% | 101.7 | 47.0% | 52.0% | 14.0% | 46.0% | 4.0% | 99.8 | 51.0% | 48.0% | 8.0% | 100.7 | 51.0% | 48.0% | 12.0% |
| DFE Region - North East (CLA) | 280 | 100.0% | 46.0% | 2.0% | 103.1 | 41.0% | 58.0% | 17.0% | 58.0% | 8.0% | 101.9 | 41.0% | 58.0% | 11.0% | 102.1 | 45.0% | 55.0% | 16.0% |
| Local Authority - Gateshead (all schools) | 2,221 | 1.6% | 63.1% | 6.5% | 106.0 | 22.4% | 76.9% | 31.2% | 72.8% | 10.8% | 104.5 | 23.5% | 75.9% | 22.5% | 105.7 | 23.4% | 75.7% | 31.5% |
| Virtual School - Gateshead | 31 | 100.0% | 41.9% | 0.0% | 104.4 | 32.3% | 67.7% | 9.7% | 45.2% | 6.5% | 101.7 | 48.4% | 51.6% | 9.7% | 103.0 | 45.2% | 54.8% | 19.4% |

d. Key Stage 4

LAIT Data

- Gateshead’s CIOC have performed better than National CIOC for Attainment 8* Score in 2022.
- Data indicates Gateshead performance is in the top two quartiles nationally for Attainment 8, the third quartile for the Progress 8* measure, and there is no measure or quartile for 9 -4 including English and maths (cohort was too small to report on).
- However local data shows 17.5% in 2022 and 19.5% in 2023 CIOC achieved 9-4 English and Maths which is below Gateshead’s 2021 data, but this was the year in which results were based on teachers’ judgements and there was a national rise in data for this cohort of CIOC.

NCER Data

- NCER data for 2023 indicates an Attainment 8 score of 19.4 compared with the National figure of 18.6
- The Progress 8 measure is -1.58 compared with a national figure of -1.4. 6.8% of Gateshead’s CIOC achieved English and Maths at Level 5 and above with a cohort of 44 compared to a national figure of 9.0%.



| | Cohort | CLA Matches | Attainment 8 | Progress 8 | | | 9-5 | | | EBacc | | Entry | | | |
|---|--------|-------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|---------------|------------|-----------|-------|------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------|
| | | | | Cov. | Avg. Score | Conf. Int. | EBacc Eng. LL | EBacc Mat. | EBacc E&M | Entry | APS | EBacc Slots | Other Slots | Triple Sci. | ≥2 Lang. |
| NCER National (CLA pupils) | 7010 | 100.0% | 18.6 | 78.0% | -1.40 | ±0.04 | 17.0% | 12.0% | 9.0% | 11.0% | 1.52 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 5.0% | 1.0% |
| DfE Region - North East (CLA) | 440 | 100.0% | 19.7 | 82.0% | -1.50 | ±0.15 | 20.0% | 14.0% | 10.0% | 13.0% | 1.60 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 5.0% | - |
| Local Authority - Gateshead (all schools) | 2044 | - | 47.5 | 97.4% | -0.11 | ±0.06 | 62.8% | 52.9% | 47.1% | 48.2% | 4.19 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 19.8% | 1.5% |
| Virtual School - Gateshead | 44 | 100.0% | 19.4 | 81.8% | -1.58 | ±0.46 | 20.5% | 11.4% | 6.8% | 25.0% | 1.68 | 1.6 | 1.4 | 9.1% | - |

Conclusion - Summary of strengths and key actions

Strengths

- Areas of strength include that at KS1 Gateshead children are performing above the national average in RWM combined.
- Gateshead’s CIOC have performed better than National CIOC across all KS2 indicators in 2022.
- NCER data for 2023 Key Stage 4 indicates an Attainment 8 score of 19.4 compared with the National figure of 18.6
- There have been no permanent Exclusions for the last three years.
- Gateshead’s attendance is better than National CIOC in all the indicators.

Key actions

- Fixed Term suspensions require a further reduction. Through analysis look at schools with high numbers, CIOC with more than 1 FTE, and reasons for suspension. Work with schools to reduce number of fixed term suspensions further.
- Virtual school will continue to monitor attendance of all cared for children to ensure all achieve 95%

- Virtual school new structure with additional capacity. Implemented in December 2023 in part internal recruitment and external by April 2024
- Virtual School Governing Board established with clear Terms of Reference and a range of internal and external stakeholders
- Further develop interventions in conjunction with Designated Teachers to support all key areas to maintain in line with national performance and close the gap with all children.
- Fixed Term suspensions require a further reduction. Through analysis look at schools with high numbers, CIOC with more than 1 FTE, and reasons for suspension. Work with schools to reduce number of fixed term suspensions further.
- Continue to monitor attendance of all cared for children to ensure all achieve 95%
- New EPEP implemented and used by the virtual school casework team to ensure appropriate targets are set and reviewed.

Recommendations

OSC Families are recommended to:

- Note and comment on the information provided in the report.

REPORT OF: **Linda Mason, Head of Virtual School,
Education, Schools and Inclusion**

Contact: Linda Mason (lindamason@gateshead.gov.uk)

Title of Report: Gateshead Music Service and The Music Hub Investment Programme

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Families OSC on recent changes to Gateshead Music Service including with regards to the recent Music Hub Investment Programme.

Background

2. Gateshead Music Service is the Council's music education service for schools and families in Gateshead and is currently the Hub Lead Organisation (HLO) for Gateshead and South Tyneside Music Education. As HLO we hold the music education hub grant from the Department for Education, administered through Arts Council England, of approximately £480,000, of which we devolve £220,000 to South Tyneside Council to support their music service. As a hub we also work in partnership with several key music education stakeholders based in Gateshead, including: the Glasshouse ICM, Gem Arts, Side by Side Arts, Lawnmowers Independent Theatre Company and The Soundroom. The Hub is also an active partner of the Gateshead Cultural Education Partnership and works closely with Gateshead Council's Community Art Development Team. The Music Service delivers approximately 200 hours of music tuition per week during term time, we work with over 90% of schools and over 10,000 children and young people. We deliver 3 out-of-school music ensembles for 50 children and young people. The Music Service generates approximately £400,000 of earned income, predominantly from Gateshead schools buying into the Music Service SLA.

Over the last 2 years the Music Service has undergone several changes including the appointment of a new Service Manager and in response to updated [National Plan for Music Education 2022](#) and the subsequent [Music Hub Investment Programme](#), which sees a new Music Hub area amalgamating the seven local authorities in the Northeast and Darlington.

Heading – Music Service Delivery Update

3. In response to the National Plan for Music Education, the Power of Music to Change Lives 2022, the Music Service has made several adaptations towards delivery, to make our work more inclusive and reach more children

and young people across Gateshead. Alongside maintaining the traditional music service delivery model we have introduced various new strands of work and trialled several new offers.

We have introduced new small group music lessons for children and young people who identify as having a special education need/disability (SEND). These new SEND groups are for children and young people who either struggle to access our whole class lessons, for example volume is too lowed in a large group, or for children and young people who have a passion and/or potential to take their music learning to the next level. In Gibside primary school the 1-1 SEND sessions are showing very positive signs to support children with self-regulation.

We have introduced new Musical Nurture Groups. These are small group sessions for up to 6 children/young people who a school identifies as having social emotional or behavioural challenges. In these groups children use the holistic benefits of music making to support the social and emotional development.

We have introduced a new Gateshead Music Curriculum for KS1 which provides schemes of work videos and lesson ideas for Gateshead teachers to build confidence in teaching the music curriculum.

We have repurposed one of our existing out of school music ensembles to be an open access music group supporting families who have musical aspirations for their children, but who can't afford lessons. All of our music ensembles remain free to attend.

All music staff receive annual training around inclusive music making with a focus on engagement and youth voice.

Heading – Music Hub Investment Programme

4. In June 2023 new Music Hub areas were published which saw the amalgamation of all local authority areas in the Northeast including Darlington. The existing local authority-based Hub Lead Organisations and music services made the decision to bid as a consortium, with the view that the new Hub Lead Organisation would be part of the Combined Authority. This bid was submitted in October 2023, and we await the outcome of decisions on new HLO's happening in April 2024. We do not believe anyone else in the region or nationally has bid to be the new HLO and local authorities should have been contacted if any bids were going to be submitted involving their locality.

The newly formed consortium will see Gateshead Music Service as an equal strategic partner with the other local authority music services, taking on shared responsibility for the leadership of the hub and allowing Gateshead Council to have decision making powers that affect music education for children and young people living in Gateshead. North Tyneside will act as the Hub Lead Organisation until it is appropriate to transition into the new Combined Authority set up. North Tyneside will be the legal entity that receives the Music Hub Grant from Arts Council England and will subsequently devolve grant allocations to each LA. There will be a new advisory board formed to support ratification of funding conditions set by Arts Council England and the DFE.

Being part of this consortium allows Gateshead Council to draw down £260,000 in grant funding and an additional £90,000 capital grant for new instruments, for academic year Sept 24/25. The newly formed Music Hub should reduce time resource allocation placed on our financial services as they will no longer need to provide Arts Council England with quarterly amalgamated management accounts for Gateshead and South Tyneside. We also hope the new Hub will bring new shared ways of working and central resources reducing costs. The new hub does have financial implications as we will lose our current £9,000, we receive from South Tyneside to manage the current HLO. We will also be expected to contribute a 3% grant top slice to the new HLO to support operational costs. Annual savings of approximately £18,000 will need to be made to support the new Hub Format.

Recommendations

5. OSC Families are recommended to:

- (a) Note and consider the inclusive offer to all from the Gateshead Music Service.

REPORT OF: **Rob Kitchen, Music Service Manager**

CONTACT: robkitchen@gateshead.gov.uk

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Report for OSC

Gateshead Music Service and The Music Hub Investment Programme

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ROB KITCHEN MUSIC SERVICE MANAGER



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Music Service Updates

- Working regularly with 95% of schools – in contact with all schools
- Over 200hrs of teaching/week engaging with over 10,000 Children and Young People
- Partnership working with the Glasshouse ICM, Gem Arts, Gateshead Cultural Education Partnership, Side by Side Arts, the Soundroom, South Tyneside Council and national partners.
- Bespoke, flexible and holistic approach so all children can access a music education – SEND 1-1, Musical Nurture Groups, Holiday activity and food (HAF) projects.
- Reverberate – Youth Advisory Board
- New website for families and schools with info and digital resources and Gateshead music curriculum
- Music tutors on secure teachers pay and conditions permanent contracts.
- New North East Music Hub will bring new partnerships, shared ways of working, resources and expertise.



Hub Investment Programme

- In 2022 Arts Council England (ACE) and the Department for Education (DFE) announced a new competitive bidding process to secure the Music Hub grant.
- New geographic regions announced covering North East LA7 + Darlington.
- We formed a consortium with LA partners – only viable option for a competitive bid.
- We await outcome to be announced - April 24
- We will have to financially contribute a 3% top slice of our music hub grant to the new NE Music Hub, though this will open up additional funding opportunities, resource sharing.



Next Steps

- Continue to diversify offer and ensure all schools are aware of the new inclusive approaches.
- Work with LA partners in the formation of the new NE Music Hub.
- Develop new forms of income generation, such as alternative provision models for schools and UKSPF Youth Fund.
- Continue to advocate to schools the importance of a strong music education offer.

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| TITLE OF REPORT: | Annual Work Programme 2023-24 |
| REPORT OF: | Sheena Ramsey, Chief Executive Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Services & Governance |

Summary

To provide details on development of the work programme for Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OSCs) and the provisional work programme for Families OSC for the municipal year 2023-24.

Development of 2023-24 Work Programme

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. OSC members have been involved, through consultation, in shaping the focus of the work of specific OSCs and have been provided with an opportunity to comment on the emerging themes at the April 2023 OSC meetings. The emerging themes have taken account of the need to support the Council's Thrive agenda and add value, the Council's Performance Framework; the Gateshead Strategic Needs Assessment and the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
4. Subsequently, in line with usual practice, partner organisations have been consulted on the themes identified through consultation with members and have indicated that they are supportive of the emerging themes overall. Partners have also put forward some suggested areas for scrutiny for specific OSCs as set out in Appendix 2 to the report.
5. The proposed 2023/24 work programme (attached at Appendix 1) remains provisional as:-
 - Cabinet 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

6. The Committee is asked to:-

- a) Note the information contained in the annual work programme report and provide any comments.
- b) Note that further reports will be brought to the Committee to identify any additional issues which the Committee may be asked to consider.

| Families OSC Work Programme 2023-24 | |
|--|--|
| 15 June 2023 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma Informed Care Report • Performance Management and Improvement Framework – Year End Performance 2022-23 • Children’s Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report – Plans and Emerging Priorities • LADO Annual Report • Corporate Parenting Board Annual Update • Work Programme |
| 7 September 2023 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome of Youth Justice Service Inspection with Action Plan • Social Services Annual Report on Complaints and Representations – Children • Progress on delivering Early Help and Prevention Strategy <i>(to include Family Hub development; delivery of Healthy Child Programme and Baby Box scheme)</i> • Gateshead’s Children and Young people’s mental health and emotional wellbeing local transformation plan 2023/24 update • Work Programme |
| 19 October 2023 (5.30pm) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on support to vulnerable adolescents <i>(to include those missing and exploited / on the edge of Care – impact of strategies to reduce demand for children entering care)</i> • Trauma Informed Team Update • Young Ambassadors (Care Leavers) • Preventing Homelessness for Young People • Progress Update on delivery of SEND Strategy <i>(to include progress against all 4 priorities; SEND tribunal data; pathways into EET for those with SEND)</i> • Work Programme |
| 30 November 2023 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Management and Improvement Framework – Six Month Update – 2023-24 • Delivery of Therapy Services for children - impact and outcomes • Overview of delivery of mental health services for children and young people <i>(to include the joint report for new initiatives in Gateshead looking at children’s mental health)</i> • Work Programme |
| 18 January 2024 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools Performance Overview Report <i>(including attendance, attainment and exclusion data; ofsted school outcomes)</i> • Early Years Sufficiency • Regional Adoption Agency Annual Report • Work Programme |
| 7 March 2024 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Progress Update on Children’s Social Care Improvement Plan |

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventing Youth Crime and Serious Violence (<i>invite HEHC OSC to jointly look at this</i>) • Work Programme |
| <p>18 April 2024</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response to Child Poverty in Gateshead • Health Service support in schools for children with chronic health conditions / childhood allergies (<i>to include trends, treatment, management in schools</i>) • Work Programme |