



## *CABINET AGENDA*

**Tuesday, 23 January 2024 at 10.00 am in the Bridges Room - Civic Centre**

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From the Chief Executive, Sheena Ramsey

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Item      Business

**1      Apologies for absence**

**2      Minutes** (Pages 3 - 6)

Cabinet is asked to approve as a correct record the minutes of the last meeting held on 19 December 2023.

**Recommendations to Council**

**3      Council Structure - Group/Service Review** (Pages 7 - 12)

Report of the Chief Executive

**4      Calendar of Meetings 2024/25** (Pages 13 - 32)

Report of the Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance

**5      Allocations Policy Changes** (Pages 33 - 52)

Report of the Strategic Director, Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities

**6      Capital Programme and Prudential Indicators 2023/24 – Third Quarter Review** (Pages 53 - 64)

Report of the Strategic Director, Resources and Digital

**Non Key Decisions**

**7      Revenue Budget Third Quarter Review 2023/24** (Pages 65 - 70)

Report of the Strategic Director, Resources and Digital

**8      Council Tax Base and Business Rates Forecast 2024/25** (Pages 71 - 78)

Report of the Strategic Director, Resources and Digital

**9      Performance Management and Improvement Framework - Six Month Performance Report 2023/24** (Pages 79 - 106)

Report of the Strategic Director, Resources and Digital

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| 10 | <b>Corporate Complaints and Compliments Procedure - Annual Report 2022/23</b> (Pages 107 - 118)<br><br>Report of the Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance   |
| 11 | <b>Primary Community Controlled School Admissions Arrangements and Co-ordinated Admission Schemes for Primary and Secondary Schools for 2025/26</b> (Pages 119 - 156)<br><br>Report of the Strategic Director, Childrens Social Care and Lifelong Learning |
| 12 | <b>Nominations of Local Authority School Governors</b> (Pages 157 - 160)<br><br>Report of the Strategic Director, Children's Social Care and Lifelong Learning   |
| 13 | <b>Review of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Policy and Conditions</b> (Pages 161 - 220)<br><br>Report of the Strategic Director, Economy, Innovation and Growth   |

Contact: Kevin Ingledew, Tel: 0191 433 2142, Email:  
democraticserviceteam@gateshead.gov.uk, Date: Monday, 15 January 2024

## GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

### CABINET MEETING

**Tuesday, 19 December 2023**

**PRESENT:** Councillor M Gannon

Councillors: C Donovan, J Adams, M Brain, A Douglas,  
L Green, G Haley, J McElroy, M McNestry and B Oliphant

Also in attendance: Councillors R Beadle, C Buckley and D Weatherley

#### C88 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 21 November 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### C89 **COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFERS OF GATESHEAD LEISURE CENTRE AND BIRTLEY SWIMMING CENTRE.**

Consideration has been given to progress of the community asset transfers of both Gateshead Leisure Centre and Birtley Swimming Pool.

The alternative option to that being recommended, but which was discounted, included retaining the properties.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the Birtley Swimming Pool and Gateshead Leisure Centre be declared surplus to the Council's requirements.
  - (ii) That the progression of the Community Asset Transfers of Birtley Swimming Pool and Gateshead Leisure Centre be approved in principle, subject to the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the Strategic Director Corporate Services and Governance, Strategic Director, Resources and Digital, the Leader, Deputy Leader along with Portfolio holders, being satisfied that the conditions set out in Appendix 3 of the report have been met.
  - (iii) That subject to (ii) above, the Strategic Director, Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities be authorised to grant a 50-year lease of Birtley Swimming Pool to Birtley Aquatics and Gateshead Leisure Centre to Gateshead Active pursuant to the Council's Community Asset Transfer policy.

The above decisions have been made for the following reasons:

- (A) To manage resources and rationalise the Council's assets in line with the Corporate Asset Strategy and Management Plan.
- (B) To enable the community asset transfers to progress at a

future date.

- (C) To create and develop sustainable places and communities in line with Gateshead Health and Wellbeing strategy.

C90

## **PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTS REPORT**

Consideration has been given to the procurement and award of contracts.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the Service Director, Corporate Commissioning and Procurement be authorised to invite or negotiate tenders or conduct other procurement processes (or to complete the relevant processes where they have already begun) in respect of the contracts listed in appendix 2 to the report and to award the relevant contracts to the tenderers submitting the most economically advantageous tenders (or otherwise proving successful in accordance with other procurement processes) in accordance with the Contract Procedure Rules.
  - (ii) That Cabinet continues to receive an updated report twice per year.
  - (iii) That it be noted the procurement activity set out in appendix 2 to the report will form the basis of the Council's Procurement Pipeline and will be published on the internet.

The above decisions have been made for the following reasons:

- (A) To enable the procurement of goods, works and services required for the efficient and effective delivery of services.
- (B) To enable Cabinet to be updated with progress and changes to the procurement forward plan.
- (C) To comply with the National Procurement Policy Statement.

C91

## **GATESHEAD LOCAL AREA SEND STRATEGY AND SEND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2023-2026**

Consideration has been given to recommending the Council to approve the new SEND Strategy and associated improvement plan.

- RESOLVED -
- That the Council be recommended to:
- (i) Endorse the Local Area SEND Strategy as set out in appendix 2 to the report.
  - (ii) Note the areas for development following the Local Area SEND inspection in May 2023.
  - (iii) Note the progress of the SEND improvement programme so far and its impact for children and young people with SEND



and their families.

- (iv) Endorse the focus and priorities for the programme for 2023-26 to embed and accelerate change, responding to the Local Area inspection for SEND as set out in appendix 3 to the report.

The above decisions have been made for the following reasons:

- (A) To improve SEND services across the Local Area and respond to feedback from families, carers and young people with SEND.
- (B) To appropriately respond to the Local Area Ofsted/CQC SEND inspection outcome.

C92 **FRAMEWORK FOR CONSIDERING APPLICATIONS FROM INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS APPLYING TO MOVE INTO THE MAINTAINED SECTOR**

Item deferred.

Copies of all reports and appendices referred to in these minutes are available online and in the minute file. Please note access restrictions apply for exempt business as defined by the Access to Information Act.

The decisions referred to in these minutes will come into force and be implemented after the expiry of 3 working days after the publication date of the minutes identified below unless the matters are 'called in'.

Publication date: 19 December 2023

**Chair.....**

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**TITLE OF REPORT: Council Structure Group/ServiceReview**

**REPORT OF: Sheena Ramsey, Chief Executive**

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## **Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek Cabinet agreement to proposed revisions to the Council's senior management structure which will reflect a more effective way of working across Council services to deliver the Corporate Plan 2023-28, and to recommend it for approval to full Council.

## **Background**

2. It is important in any organisation to ensure that its senior management and services structure are kept under review and redesigned as necessary to meet the needs of the organisation. This is increasingly important in local government to ensure that the services we deliver accurately reflect the changing operating context, and the priorities that drive the organisation. This is essential if we want to respond effectively to national and local policy and most importantly to the changing needs of the people of Gateshead.
3. The Council has recently agreed a new Corporate Plan 2023-28. The Corporate Plan focuses on 'The Strength of Gateshead is the people of Gateshead' and outlines policy objectives to deliver Thrive. The Council has made it clear that there needs to be a renewed focus on housing growth and securing investment in the Gateshead economy, together with a heightened need to address inequalities. These proposals reflect that objective.
4. The Council has approved its support for the creation of the new North East Mayoral Combined Authority and the Devolution Deal. This offers significant opportunity for new strategy and long-term funding that will allow us to invest in public transport, economic growth support business, improve skills and living standards while tackling the climate emergency. These proposals support that objective.

## **Proposal**

5. It is proposed that the Council's functions are restructured in and across the following service groups:
  - Office of the Chief Executive
  - Economy, Innovation and Growth
  - Resources and Digital
6. Whilst these proposals set out a standard organisational structure for the

Council, it is critical that the culture of how we work reinforces the commitment for functions to work together to facilitate outcomes, rather than the structure of the Council influencing how services are delivered.

7. Appendix 1 (para 7) provides further detail on the current and proposed structures.

### **Recommendations**

8. That Cabinet recommends to Council to approve the organisation structure and associated change to enable the proposal as detailed in Appendix1 to this report for implementation from 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

For the following reason

To enable continued improvement in the co-ordination of Council functions, the organisation of its employees, and to enable Council services to focus on delivery of the Thrive agenda and the Council Plan in a more efficient and effective way.

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**CONTACT: Michelle Brown**

**extension: 2101**

### Policy Context

1. The revised staffing and organisational structure and alignment of services resulting from these proposals will support the delivery of the Council's Thrive agenda and the Corporate Plan 2023 – 2028 and the new North East Combined Mayoral Authority and the Devolution Deal.

### Background

2. It is important in any organisation to ensure that its structures are kept under review. This is increasingly important in local government to ensure that the services we deliver accurately reflect the changing operating context, and the priorities that drive the organisation. This is essential if we want to respond effectively to national and local policy and most importantly to the changing needs of the people of Gateshead.
3. The Council has recently agreed a new Corporate Plan 2023-28. The Corporate Plan focuses on 'The Strength of Gateshead is the people of Gateshead' and outlines policy objectives to deliver Thrive.
4. The Council Plan is supported by the Health and Wellbeing Strategy, the Economic Development Strategy, the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Workforce Development Strategy. In particular one of the Corporate Plan key objectives is to invest in the economy to provide sustainable opportunities for employment, innovation and growth. These proposals support that objective.
5. The Council has approved its support in the creation of the new North East Mayoral Combined Authority and the Devolution Deal. This offers significant opportunity for new strategy and long term funding that will allow us to invest in public transport, economic growth, support business, improve skills and living standards while tackling the climate emergency. These proposals support this objective.
6. The Thrive agenda serves as our main driver, with the five pledges focussing our organisational efforts:
  - a. Putting people and families at the heart of everything we do
  - b. Tackling inequality so people have a fair chance
  - c. Supporting our communities to support themselves and each other

- d. Investing in our economy to provide sustainable opportunities for employment, innovation and growth across the borough
  - e. Working together and fight for a better future for Gateshead
7. The intention of this restructure is to align resources and provide capacity to address the priorities identified above (para 3-5) and enable more streamlined and cross-cutting working which is outcome focussed, accountable and transparent.

## Main Changes

8. The main changes are **below and in bold**:

### Economy, Innovation and Growth Group

An Economic Development and Regeneration Service is established to provide greater focus on the economic growth priorities and devolution to include the functions of:

- Economic Policy, Partnerships and Delivery (**move within Economy, Innovation and Growth group from Business Employment and Skills to Economic Development and Regeneration**)
- Strategic Funding and Programmes (**move within Economy, Innovation and Growth group from Energy, Major Projects and Development to Economic Development and Regeneration**)
- Regeneration and Major Projects (**move within Economy, Innovation and Growth group from Energy, Major Projects and Development to Economic Development and Regeneration**)
- Strategic Culture and Partnerships (**move Strategic Culture from Director of Public Health to Economy, Innovation and Growth Economic Development and Regeneration**)
- Strategic Events (**move Strategic Events from Commercialisation and Improvement Resources and Digital to Economic Development and Regeneration, Economy, Innovation and Growth**).

### Office of the Chief Executive Group

Office of the Chief Executive Group to include the functions of:

- Corporate Performance Management and Improvement (**move from Commercialisation and Improvement, Resources and Digital to Office of the Chief Executive**)
- Corporate Project Management (**move from Commercialisation and Improvement Resources and Digital to Office of the Chief Executive**)
- Corporate Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (**move from Commercialisation and Improvement Resources and Digital to Office of the Chief Executive**).

### Resources and Digital Group

Resources and Digital Group to include the functions of:

- Internal Audit, Risk and Insurance (**move within Resources and Digital Group from Commercialisation and Improvement to Financial Management**) )
- Services for Schools (**move within Resources and Digital Group from Commercialisation and Improvement to Financial Management**)
- Catering Services (**move within Resources and Digital Group from Commercialisation and Improvement to Financial Management**). Note: the Interim arrangements of this service being currently sat within Resources and Digital

having moved across from Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities to remain in place)

- **Deletion of Service Director Commercialisation and Improvement post**

### **Implementation**

9. It is proposed that these changes are implemented on 25 January 2024.

### **Consultation**

10. The Leader of the Council, Deputy Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members for Economy, EnvironCulture, Sport and Leisure and Communities and Volunteering have been consulted on this proposal. The outcome of these meetings has been very positive and supportive of the proposals as put forward.
11. We will consult with affected employees on the proposals.

### **Alternative Options**

12. The proposals put forward are deemed as the optimum response to the demands placed on the Council, as set out above. There is currently no specific alternative structure, subject to consultation and it is therefore recommended for consideration alongside the proposals.
13. While one alternative option could be to make no change to the current structure of the Council, this would not make the positive contribution toward achieving the aims as set out above.

### **Implications of Recommended Option**

14. **Resources:**

- a) **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital confirms that there are no direct financial implications of the proposals set out in this report and that the proposal will be implemented within the existing budget.
- b) **Human Resources Implications** – The human resource implications are:
  - There are no proposed redundancies as a consequence of the proposed staffing and structure changes.
  - Consultation will be required with the affected teams and individuals regarding the proposed changes where the proposal means that individuals and/or team will move within Group Services and/or across Group Services, to ensure that everyone understands what is being proposed, why the changes are being proposed and to have assurance that the employees are afforded the opportunity to outline any concerns and questions they may have or alternative ideas.
  - The consultation process is not a legal requirement, it is one of good practice and therefore is not time bound.
  - Recruitment into the new roles will be conducted in accordance with the

Council's recruitment policy and procedures.

**c) Property Implications** - there are no property implications arising directly from this report.

15. **Risk Management Implications** - there are no risk management implications arising directly from this report.
16. **Equality and Diversity Implications** – there are no direct equality and diversity implications arising from this report.
17. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – there are no crime and disorder implications arising directly from this report.
18. **Health Implications** – the restructure seeks to support the delivery of corporate priorities as set out in Making Gateshead a Place where everyone thrives and the Corporate Plan.
19. **Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications** - the proposed structure better aligns services with environmental considerations and service delivery. It therefore better supports the Council's work in mitigating its impact on the environment and delivery of the council's response to the declaration of a Climate Emergency.
20. **Human Rights Implications** - there are no human rights implications arising from this report.
21. **Ward Implications** - there are no area and ward implications arising from this report.
22. **Background Information**

None.



**TITLE OF REPORT:**           **Calendar of Meetings 2024/25**

**REPORT OF:**               **Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance**

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## **Purpose of the Report**

1. This report sets out the proposed calendar of meetings for 2024/25.

## **Background**

2. Every year a calendar of meetings is drawn up for the Council's main decision-making bodies and overview and scrutiny committees for the following municipal year. The calendar of meetings assists in the effective planning of the consideration of Council business and with the preparation of the Cabinet's schedule of decisions.
3. A draft calendar of meetings has been prepared for 2024/25 and this is attached at Appendix 2.
4. In addition to the meetings set out in the draft calendar, it may be necessary to arrange further meetings on an ad hoc basis, for instance to deal with urgent matters within prescribed timeframes.

## **Proposal**

5. It is proposed that the Cabinet agree the calendar of meetings 2024/25 (attached at appendix 2) and that it be forwarded to Council for approval.
6. Any proposed changes to the calendar of meetings will be agreed with the appropriate Chairs.

## **Recommendations**

7. The Cabinet is requested to recommend Council to:
  - (i) approve the calendar of meetings 2024/25
  - (ii) agree that, so far as possible, meetings should not be held during school holidays or on dates where the holding of religious festivals may preclude attendance and involvement at meetings; and
  - (iii) authorise the Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance, following consultation with the appropriate Chairs, to make any necessary amendments to the calendar of meetings.

For the following reason:

To assist in the preparation of the Cabinet's schedule of decisions and to allow councillors, officers and partner organisations to plan commitments in their diaries.

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**CONTACT:** Tim Briton extension 2460

### Policy Context

1. Preparing a calendar of meetings for the municipal year enables effective planning of Council business and preparation of the Cabinet's schedule of decisions; and supports delivery of the Thrive Agenda and the Corporate Plan.

### Background

2. The calendar of meetings has been prepared on the following basis:
  - As far as possible, meetings will not be held during school holidays or on dates where the holding of religious festivals may preclude attendance and involvement at meetings. The Council's multi-faith calendar may be found here - [5645-SS-Multi Faith Calendar 2024.pdf \(gateshead.gov.uk\)](#). It should be noted however that due to the frequency of meetings, it is necessary for meetings of the Planning & Development and Regulatory Committees to be arranged during the summer holiday period.
  - Eight Council meetings, including the annual meeting and special meeting to consider the budget.
  - Meetings of the Cabinet to take place once a month with breaks during school holiday periods. Additional meetings of the Cabinet to be arranged, if required.
  - Meetings of the Planning & Development Committee to be held every four weeks. There will be a longer gap over the Christmas holiday period.
  - Meetings of the Regulatory Committee to be held on a monthly basis.
  - Two meetings of the Licensing Committee per annum. These will be held immediately prior to meetings of the Regulatory Committee. Meetings of the Licensing Sub Committee will be held on a monthly basis with breaks during school holiday periods, with additional meetings arranged on an ad hoc basis where this is necessary to comply with statutory timescales (for instance in relation to Temporary Event Notices).
  - Three meetings of the Rights of Way Committee per annum.
  - Seven meetings of the Audit and Standards Committee per annum.
  - One meeting of the Accounts Committee per annum.
  - Overview & Scrutiny Committees to be held every six weeks.
  - Meetings of the Personnel Appeals Committee to be held on a monthly basis with breaks during school holiday periods.
  - Meetings of the Pensions and Pay Discretions Sub Committee on a quarterly basis.

- Gateshead Health & Wellbeing Board to be held every six weeks.
  - Four meetings of the Corporate Parenting Board per annum.
3. The Councillor Support & Development Group has previously agreed that there should be a guiding principle that most of the Council's committees and OSCs should have at least one evening meeting per year starting at 5.30pm and those meetings should have a suggested maximum duration of no more than two hours.
  4. Planning & Development Committee will continue to have some 6.00pm starts, the Audit and Standards Committee will meet at 4.00pm and the Rights of Way Committee will meet at 4.30pm.
  5. Seminars and meetings of the Corporate Advisory Group will be held at either 2.00pm or 5.30pm.
  6. If Chairs wish to change the date of the meetings starting at the later time to another date then this will be accommodated where possible.
  7. It is proposed that the Strategic Director, Corporate Services & Governance should be authorised, following consultation with the appropriate Chairs, to make any necessary amendments to the calendar of meetings.

### **Consultation**

8. The Leader of the Council has been consulted on the calendar of meetings.

### **Alternative Options**

9. The options available are –
  - a) To approve the calendar of meetings as proposed
  - b) To approve the calendar of meetings with amendments; or
  - c) Not to approve the calendar of meetings.

Option (a) is recommended, as it will support the existing decision-making cycle and enable councillors, officers and partner organisations to plan commitments in their diaries.

Option (b) is not recommended, as changes to the dates of meetings can create diary clashes and so impact on the ability of councillors and partner organisations to be able to attend and participate in decision-making.

Option (c) is also not recommended, as it would adversely impact on the advance planning of meetings which will impact on the efficient use of time and resources for councillors, officers and partner organisations.

### **Implications of Recommended Option**

#### **10. Resources**

- a) **Financial Implications** - The Strategic Director, Resources & Digital confirms that there are no financial implications arising from this report.
- b) **Human Resources Implications** – There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

c) **Property Implications** – There are no property implications arising from this report.

**11.Risk Management Implication** - There are no risk management implications arising from the recommended option.

**12.Equality and Diversity Implications** - There are no equality and diversity implications arising from the recommended option; however if changes to the proposed calendar were made such that meetings were held on religious festival dates this may have the effect of precluding attendance and involvement in decision-making.

**13.Crime and Disorder Implications** - There are no crime and disorder implications arising from the recommended option.

**14.Health Implications** – There are no health implications arising from the recommended option.

**15.Climate Emergency & Sustainability Implications** – The recommended option supports the Council's climate emergency and sustainability ambitions through the efficient use of resources and by minimising the need for ad hoc meetings to take place.

**16.Human Rights Implications** - There are no human rights implications arising from the recommended option.

**17.Ward Implications** - There are no ward implications arising from the recommended option.

**18.Background Information** - The calendar of meetings approved for the current municipal year.

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Calendar of Meetings 2024/25

MAY 2024

DAY	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME
MON				6	BANK HOLIDAY		13	HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES OSC	1.30 PM	20			27	BANK HOLIDAY	
TUE				7			14	CARE, HEALTH & WELLBEING OSC	1.30 PM	21	CABINET	10AM	28		
WED	1			8			15	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	10AM	22			29		
THU	2	LOCAL, MAYORAL & PCC ELECTIONS		9	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – SITE VISIT	10AM	16	GATESHEAD SCHOOLS FORUM	4PM	23	COUNCIL	2.30 PM	30		
FRI	3			10			17	ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING	2.30 PM	24			31		

## JUNE 2024

DAY	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME
MON	3			10	CORPORATE RESOURCES OSC	10AM	17	HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES OSC	1.30 PM	24					
TUE	4	REGULATORY COMMITTEE	1.30 PM	11	CARE, HEALTH & WELLBEING OSC	1.30 PM	18	AUDIT & STANDARDS COMMITTEE	4PM	25	CABINET  CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD	10AM  2PM			
WED	5			12	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	6PM	19	MEMBERS' SEMINAR	2PM	26	CORPORATE ADVISORY GROUP	2PM			
THU	6	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – SITE VISIT  PERSONNEL APPEALS COMMITTEE	10AM  2PM	13	LICENSING SUB COMMITTEE	10AM	20	PENSIONS & PAY SUB-COMMITTEE  FAMILIES OSC	10AM  1.30 PM	27					
FRI	7	HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD	10AM	14			21			28					



JULY 2024

DAY	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME
MON	1	JOINT ISC OSC	10AM	8			15	RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE	4.30 PM	22			29		
TUE	2			9	REGULATORY COMMITTEE	5.30 PM	16	CABINET AUDIT & STANDARDS COMMITTEE	10AM 4PM	23			30		
WED	3			10	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	10AM	17	CORPORATE ADVISORY GROUP	2PM	24			31		
THU	4	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – SITE VISIT	10AM	11	PERSONNEL APPEALS COMMITTEE GATESHEAD SCHOOLS FORUM	10AM 4PM	18	COUNCIL	2.30 PM	25					
FRI	5			12	LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE	10AM	19	HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD	10AM	26					

AUGUST 2024

DAY	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME
MON				5			12			19			26	BANK HOLIDAY	
TUE				6	REGULATORY COMMITTEE	1.30 PM	13			20			27		
WED				7	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	10AM	14			21			28		
THU	1	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – SITE VISIT	10AM	8		10AM	15			22			29	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – SITE VISIT	10AM
FRI	2			9			16			23			30		

# SEPTEMBER 2024

DAY	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME
MON	2			9	CORPORATE RESROUCES OSC	10AM	16	HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES OSC	1.30 PM	23			30	JOINT ISC OSC	10AM
TUE	3			10	LICENSING COMMITTEE FOLLOWED BY REGULATORY COMMITTEE	1.30 PM	17	CABINET  CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD	10AM  2PM	24	CARE, HEALTH & WELLBEING OSC	5.30 PM			
WED	4	MEMBERS' SEMINAR  PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	2PM  6PM	11			18	CORPORATE ADVISORY GROUP  MEMBERS' SEMINAR	2PM  5.30 PM	25					
THU	5	PENSIONS & PAY SUB- COMMITTEE  FAMILIES OSC	10AM  1.30 PM	12	PERSONNEL APPEALS COMMITTEE  LICENSING SUB- COMMITTEE	10AM  1.30 PM	19	COUNCIL	2.30 PM	26	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – SITE VISIT  ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE	10AM  2PM			
FRI	6	HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD	10AM	13			20			27					

OCTOBER 2024

DAY	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME
MON				7			14	HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES OSC	1.30 PM	21	CORPORATE RESOURCES OSC	10AM	28		
TUE	1	AUDIT & STANDARDS COMMITTEE	4PM	8	REGULATORY COMMITTEE	1.30 PM	15	CABINET  CARE, HEALTH & WELLBEING OSC	10AM  1.30 PM	22			29		
WED	2	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	10AM	9	MEMBERS' SEMINAR	2PM	16	CORPORATE ADVISORY GROUP	5.30 PM	23	MEMBERS' SEMINAR	5.30 PM	30		
THU	3			10	PERSONNEL APPEALS COMMITTEE	2PM	17	FAMILIES OSC	5.30 PM	24			31	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – SITE VISIT	10AM
FRI	4			11	LICENSING SUB- COMMITTEE	10AM	18	HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD	10AM	25					

NOVEMBER 2024

DAY	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME
MON				4			11			18	RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE	4.30 PM	25	CORPORATE RESOURCES OSC JOINT ICS OSC	10AM 2PM
TUE				5	AUDIT & STANDARDS COMMITTEE	4PM	12	REGULATORY COMMITTEE	1.30 PM	19	CABINET	10AM	26		
WED				6	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	6PM	13	MEMBERS' SEMINAR	2PM	20	CORPORATE ADVISORY GROUP	2PM	27	MEMBERS' SEMINAR	5.30 PM
THU				7	PERSONNEL APPEALS COMMITTEE	10AM	14	LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE	10AM	21	COUNCIL	2.30 PM	28	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – SITE VISIT FAMILIES OSC	10AM 1.30 PM
FRI	1			8			15			22			29	HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD	10AM

# DECEMBER 2024

DAY	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME
MON	2	HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES OSC	1.30 PM	9			16			23			30		
TUE	3	CARE, HEALTH & WELLBEING OSC	1.30 PM	10	REGULATORY COMMITTEE	1.30 PM	17	CABINET  CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD	10AM  2PM	24			31		
WED	4	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	10AM	11	MEMBERS' SEMINAR  CORPORATE ADVISORY GROUP	2PM  5.30 PM	18			25	BANK HOLIDAY				
THU	5	PERSONNEL APPEALS COMMITTEE	10AM	12	PENSIONS & PAY SUB-COMMITTEE	10AM	19	LICENSING SUB- COMMITTEE	10AM	26	BANK HOLIDAY				
FRI	6			13			20			27					

# JANUARY 2025

DAY	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME
MON				6			13	JOINT ICS OSC	4PM	20	CORPORATE RESOURCES OSC	10AM	27	HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES OSC	5.30 PM
TUE				7			14	REGULATORY COMMITTEE	1.30 PM	21	CABINET CARE, HEALTH & WELLBEING OSC	10AM 1.30 PM	28	AUDIT & STANDARDS COMMITTEE	4PM
WED	1	BANK HOLIDAY		8	MEMBERS' SEMINAR	2PM	15	CORPORATE ADVISORY GROUP	2PM	22	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS' SEMINAR	10AM 5.30 PM	29		
THU	2			9	PERSONNEL APPEALS COMMITTEE	10AM	16	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – SITE VISIT FAMILIES OSC	10AM 1.30 PM	23	COUNCIL	2.30 PM	30		
FRI	3			10	HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD	10AM	17	LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE	10AM	24			31		

## FEBRUARY 2025

DAY	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME
MON	3			10			17			24					
TUE	4			11	REGULATORY COMMITTEE	1.30 PM	18	CABINET	10AM	25					
WED	5	MEMBERS' SEMINAR CORPORATE ADVISORY GROUP	2PM 5.30 PM	12	LICENSING SUB- COMMITTEE	10AM	19	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  MEMBERS' SEMINAR	10AM  5.30 PM	26					
THU	6	PERSONNEL APPEALS COMMITTEE	10AM	13	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – SITE VISIT	10AM	20	COUNCIL	2.30 PM	27					
FRI	7			14			21	HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD	10AM	28					



# MARCH 2025

DAY	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME
MON	3	CORPORATE RESOURCES OSC	5.30 PM	10	HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES OSC	1.30 PM	17	RIGHTS OF WAY COMMITTEE	4.30 PM	24	JOINT ICS OSC	4PM	31		
TUE	4	AUDIT & STANDARDS COMMITTEE	4PM	11	LICENSING COMMITTEE FOLLOWED BY REGULATORY COMMITTEE	1.30 PM	18	CABINET CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD	10AM 2PM	25	CARE, HEALTH & WELLBEING OSC	5.30 PM			
WED	5	MEMBERS' SEMINAR	2PM	12	CORPORATE ADVISORY GROUP	2PM	19	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	6PM	26	MEMBERS. SEMINAR	5.30 PM			
THU	6	PERSONNEL APPEALS COMMITTEE FAMILIES OSC	10AM 1.30 PM	13	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – SITE VISIT	10AM	20	COUNCIL	2.30 PM	27	PENSIONS & PAY SUB-COMMITTEE	10AM			
FRI	7			14	LICENSING SUB-COMMITTEE	10AM	21			28					

# APRIL 2025

DAY	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME
MON				7	CORPORATE RESOURCES OSC	10AM	14			21	BANK HOLIDAY		28		
TUE	1			8	REGULATORY COMMITTEE  CARE, HEALTH & WELLBEING OSC	1.30 PM  4PM	15			22			29	CABINET  AUDIT & STANDARDS COMMITTEE	10AM  4PM
WED	2	CORPORATE ADVISORY GROUP	2PM	9	LICENSING SUB- COMMITTEE	10AM	16	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	10AM	23			30		
THU	3	PERSONNEL APPEALS COMMITTEE	10AM	10	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – SITE VISIT  FAMILIES OSC	10AM  1.30 PM	17			24					
FRI	4	HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD	10AM	11			18	BANK HOLIDAY		25					

# MAY 2025

DAY	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME	DATE		TIME
MON				5	<b>BANK HOLIDAY</b>		12	HOUSING, ENVIRONMENT & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES OSC	1.30 PM	19			26	<b>BANK HOLIDAY</b>	
TUE				5			13	REGULATORY COMMITTEE	1.30 PM	20	CABINET	10AM	27		
WED				6	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE	10AM	14			21			28		
THU	1	PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – SITE VISIT	10AM	7			15	LICENSING SUB- COMMITTEE	10AM	22	COUNCIL	2.30 PM	29		
FRI	2			8			16	ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING	2.30 PM	23	HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD	10AM	30		

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**REPORT TO CABINET**  
**23 January 2024**

**TITLE OF REPORT: Allocations Policy Changes**

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

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**Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek Cabinet and Council approval of proposed amendments to the Allocations Policy.
2. The amendments include several minor wording changes to improve clarity and consistency within the policy document as well as several substantial changes which have been endorsed by Strategic Housing Board on 7 December 2023 following a Members workshop on 24 November 2023.

**Background**

3. In 2021, the Council undertook an Allocations and Tenancy Review, which resulted in:
  - Cabinet agreement in October 2022 of a new Allocations Policy.
  - The establishment of 'Gateshead Home Choice' as the council's social housing allocations scheme following the disbanding of Tyne and Wear Homes in December 2022.
  - The migration of all Gateshead housing application data from Tyne and Wear Homes to the Gateshead housing management system NEC.
  - The launch of the Gateshead Home Choice platform which is used to advertise and allocate social housing using the Council's Allocation Policy on the 28 June 2023.
  - "My Housing Account" for customers to enter an application to go onto the housing register also went live on 28 June 2023.
4. There has now been a six-month settling in period of the Allocations Policy where it has been operationally tested at scale. This has identified several minor amendments which are needed to improve clarity and consistency within the policy and six proposed substantial changes.
5. The minor amendments (appendix 2) consist of a range of wording clarifications and small corrections that need to be made to the policy, for example where there is an incorrect age restriction attached to properties.
6. The substantial amendments to the policy cover six areas that affect eligibility to join the housing register, as well as the effective registration date for former members of the armed forces, and the date that an unborn child will be included in the assessment of an application.

7. A report was taken to the Strategic Housing Board on the 05 October 2023 with the following proposals:
- Provide feedback on the allocations policy update report.
  - Approve the minor amendments to the Allocations Policy or endorse these ahead of seeking formal approval from Cabinet.
  - Provide feedback on the proposal to have a Strategic Housing Board members workshop on areas for substantial change and to feedback any proposed changes to Cabinet.
8. The Strategic Housing Board endorsed all the above proposals and agreed to a workshop to look at areas for substantial change, the findings of which are detailed in this report for Cabinet's consideration.
9. The Strategic Housing Board members workshop took place on the 24 November 2023 and was chaired by the lead member for housing. Members discussed six areas which would constitute a significant change to the Allocations Policy and reached agreed recommendations to bring to Cabinet. Gateshead Council colleagues from specific operational teams attended the workshop to provide Members with detailed information on the relevant policy areas listed below:
- Armed forces
  - Joint Tenants
  - Financial Eligibility
  - Exclusion criteria
  - Unborn children
  - Local Connection

## **Proposal**

10. Members reached a consensus and proposed the following recommendations:
- i. Armed forces – the additional waiting time preference should be restricted to five years post discharge.
  - ii. Joint Tenants – allow people other than partners to become joint tenants.
  - iii. Financial Eligibility– change the financial threshold for total gross annual income for the household to restrict people coming onto the housing register from £25,000 to £50,000 for both single people and couples.
  - iv. Exclusion criteria – the threshold for debt to potentially exclude someone from the housing register will be £3000 for a single person or couple without children and £5500 for a household with children. People who are intentionally homeless due to eviction for anti-social behaviour or high debt levels would be demoted/excluded from the housing register.
  - v. Unborn children – unborn children will be recognised as part of the household from six months into the pregnancy.
  - vi. Local connection – the housing register will only be open to applicants with a local connection to Gateshead. This will be effective from April 2024.

## Recommendations

11. Cabinet is requested to recommend Council to approve:

- i. The minor amendments to the allocations policy as set out in appendix 2; and
- ii. The substantive amendments as set out in paragraph 10 above and appendix 1.

For the following reasons:

- i. To ensure we have a clear and robust Allocations Policy.
- ii. To ensure we have effective governance of the Allocations Policy.
- iii. To ensure best use of the housing register

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**CONTACT:** Lindsay Warren (Senior Project Manager) [lindsaywarren@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:lindsaywarren@gateshead.gov.uk)

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Policy Context**

1. Gateshead's strategic approach is set out in 'Making Gateshead a place where everyone thrives'. Within this strategy the Council has pledged to put people and families at the heart of everything we do and tackle inequality, so people have a fair chance.
2. Our Housing Strategy sets out key aims to improve Standards, Supply and Support. The Allocations Policy helps us deliver on all three of these strategic aims.
3. The Housing Regulatory Standards require us to let properties in a fair, transparent and efficient way, make best use of our stock reduce the amount of time properties are empty, address under occupation and overcrowding and to meet our strategic housing needs, including homelessness. This policy and strategy are therefore essential to ensuring both regulatory and statutory compliance.

### **Background**

4. In 2021, the Council undertook an Allocations and Tenancy Review, which resulted in:
  - Cabinet agreement in October 2022 of a new Allocations Policy.
  - The establishment of 'Gateshead home Choice' following the disbanding of Tyne and Wear Homes in December 2022.
  - The launch of the Gateshead Home Choice platform which is used to advertise and allocate social housing using the Council's Allocation Policy on the 28 June 2023.
  - My Housing Account for customers to enter an application to go onto the housing register also went live on 28 June 2023
5. There are several areas which have been considered for substantial changes to the Allocations Policy which were discussed in detail with Members from the Strategic Housing Board and are outlined below.

### **Armed Forces**

6. Gateshead Council is signed up to the North-East of England Armed Forces Charter and the Armed Forces Covenant. Special consideration is given to members of the armed forces (and former members) who apply for housing. Members of the armed forces who are due for discharge within 56 days will be assessed under a homeless prevention duty and those who have already been discharged under both a main (full) and relief duty.
7. To award additional preference and to give members of the armed forces the ability to accrue waiting time, the enlistment date is used as the registration date. One of the consequences of this is that an applicant can repeatedly use the additional preference gained by their enlistment date.
8. It is recommended that a statement is included within the policy to advise that this criteria only applies for up to five years of leaving service providing they haven't



found settled accommodation during this period. If a person has been left service for more than five years and has still not been able to find or successfully manage settled accommodation, they can still bring this to our attention and they will be given support and assistance.

9. As part of the Armed Forces covenant pledge, we disregard a local connection and accept a duty to refer. Former members of the armed forces will therefore be regarded as having a local connection.

## **Joint Tenants**

10. Under Part 4.2 of the policy (Registration for the Gateshead Housing Register - Qualification Rules) it states:

- *You can register alone, or jointly with your partner. In most cases where the application is joint, the tenancy will also be joint.*

11. This has impacted on people who are not partners being unable to have a joint tenancy. It is recommended to widen the criteria for joint tenancies to allow people other than partners to become joint tenants and include two or more people who have joined the housing register together. This will also require a similar amendment to the Tenancy Management Policy.

## **Financial Eligibility**

12. In section 4.3.1 (Financial Exclusion) the policy states:

- *With the exception of those showing a demonstrable hardship, vulnerability or where you may qualify for specialist accommodation, we may ask you to find your own housing solution if your savings, income, investments or equity levels exceed the thresholds in the table below. The thresholds are reviewed annually and in line with average earnings and average property prices including those sold on the open market and through the Right to Buy scheme to existing tenants. The thresholds do not apply to former members of the armed forces.*

13. The thresholds are:

- Savings - Applicants (both single persons and couples) who have total savings of £25,000 or more.*
- Income - Applicants whose total gross household income from all sources exceeds an annual income of £25,000 or more (for single persons) or joint income of £50,000 or more (for couples).*
- Investments Applicants (both single persons and couples) who have total investments including property in the UK and abroad of £50,000 or more.*
- Equity - Applicants who have equity £50,000 or more to the property.*

14. It is recommended that the income threshold for single persons of £25,000 be raised to £50,000 as this threshold is affecting single persons who are not in a financial position to find alternative provision for example through property purchase.

## **Exclusion from the housing register due to high levels of housing debt or serious anti-social behaviour / people found to be intentionally homeless.**

15. In Section 4.3 the policy sets out circumstances in which an applicant may be excluded from joining the housing register:

*We will only exclude applicants where all other viable options are unavailable. Each case is assessed to ensure that they are not the victims of behaviour that was outside of their control. Applicants with very high level of housing related debt, serious anti-social behaviour or criminal behaviour will be considered for exclusion where:*

- i. the debt or behaviour is serious enough to meet the threshold applied by courts to grant a possession order.*
- ii. the applicant refuses to engage with the council and therefore we cannot consider them for demotion under reduced preferences.*
- iii. the decision to exclude will be taken at a senior or panel level.*
- iv. where the case may be managed instead, we will consider suspension of the application first, whilst we implement a plan to reduce any risks.*
- v. we will consider all other measures before excluding an applicant who would qualify for a critical or urgent priority award.*

16. Under previous policies the thresholds of debt likely to lead to a possession order were set out in an accompanying statement of flexibility and reviewed annually. This helped in terms of engagement with applicants and added clarity to the policy.

17. It is recommended that additional information is included in the policy to advise that an amount of housing debt where there is likely to be an order granted by the court may trigger exclusion from the housing register. This information would be reviewed annually and is currently set at:

- i. Single people or couple without children: £3,000
- ii. Households with dependent children: £5,500

## **Serious anti-social behaviour / Intentionally homeless**

18. The allocations policy states that “*we will consider all other measures before excluding an applicant who would qualify for a critical or urgent priority award*”. This has the unintended consequence of effectively allowing on the housing register with a critical award due to being owed a homeless relief duty, applicants who have just been evicted by the Council for serious anti-social behaviour or high housing debt. There will be other applicants who have been evicted by other landlords for similarly serious anti-social behaviour or high housing debt.

19. After 56 days, the Council can end the relief duty even if the applicant is still homeless and issue a final homeless decision. The final homeless decision can be that the applicant is intentionally homeless. Such a decision would result in the applicant moving to a substantial award and being open to exclusion or demotion. The homeless application would be closed. So, for 56 days the applicant could get a new council tenancy even though the Council has just evicted them. However, if they remain homeless after 56 days, no further help will be provided to them because the homeless relief duty will be ended.

20. It is recommended to change the policy so that exclusions are allowed for applicants for whom the Council has issued an intentional homeless decision, or where the Council is investigating an issue of intentional homelessness. This will allow us to keep the homeless relief duty open following the intentionally homeless decision for as long as is needed to assist the applicant into appropriate accommodation – for example, supported accommodation with intensive support for occupants with complex needs. However, it will also allow us to exclude the applicant from the housing register, so they cannot get a Council tenancy.

### **Unborn Children**

21. In section 5.1.1 of the policy (Assessment of an application - Size Allowance) the policy states that a baby will only be included in a housing assessment following production of a birth certificate. This can be difficult for applicants who want to plan or need to move to a more suitable property for a baby.
22. Under the previous policy, allowance was made for assessment in terms of bed spaces required and potential overcrowding at the six-month stage of pregnancy.
23. It is recommended that the new policy return to the previous rule of including for assessment at the six-month stage of pregnancy.

### **Local Connection**

24. Applications have been accepted to the housing register from people with and without a local connection to Gateshead, although preference has been given to those with a local connection. Bids from those with a local connection are ranked ahead of those without.
25. The allocation policy states that a local connection is defined as one or more of the following:
- have lived in Gateshead for six of the previous 12 months.
  - have lived in Gateshead for three of the previous five years.
  - have a current contract of employment in Gateshead.
  - likely to be in education in Gateshead for six months or more.
  - have family residing in the borough.
  - been placed out of borough by Gateshead Council.
  - been living in supported housing in Gateshead or be living in accommodation provided by one of the agencies that the council works with for at least six months.
  - be either giving support or receiving it from someone living in the borough and it is only possible if they live in Gateshead and have evidence to support this.
  - have one of the above prior to incarceration or institutionalisation.
  - you have been discharged from the armed forces.
26. Numbers on the housing register have increased in recent years, from 6,793 in April 2020 to 13,637 in October 2023. In the last two years there has been a significant increase in the number of applicants in the two highest need bands (Critical Need and Urgent Need) from 376 in April 2021 to 1,102 in October 2023

27. This means that the likelihood of applicants without a local connection being rehoused has greatly reduced, except for hard to let, low demand properties advertised as “available now.”
28. There were around 2,700 applicants without a recorded local connection on the housing register at the start of October 2023. Registering and managing these applications takes time and resources which instead may be needed to focus on the rising number of Critical and Urgent cases on the register.
29. At the workshop on 24 November 2023 Members expressed a view that the housing register should be closed to applicants without a local connection including to existing applicants.
30. There is also the possibility that a hard to let / low demand property may be advertised outside of the Home Choice system (for example via the council website or social media). In such circumstances where there is no interest from applicants with a local connection it is recommended that with appropriate checks, consideration may be made of making an offer to a person who responds without a local connection.

## **Consultation**

31. Operational staff who use the Allocations Policy on a regular basis were consulted around how the policy was being applied and if there were any amendments or substantial considerations that needed to be addressed.
32. A report went to the Strategic Housing Board on the 05 October 2023 which gave a break down of proposed minor and substantial changes to the policy. They endorsed the proposals and agreed to a workshop to discuss the substantial changes in more detail.
33. A Members workshop took place on the 24 November 2023 to discuss six key areas of substantial change to the policy.
34. The policy change around the local connection requirement was taken to Housing and Environment portfolio on the 5 December 2023 and the proposal to exclude applicants without a local connection from the housing register was put forward. This was then taken back to the Strategic Housing Board on the 7 December 2023.
35. A communication plan will be implemented if these changes are agreed to ensure that customers and stakeholders are aware of them and the implication for accessing the housing register.

## **Alternative Options**

36. There are no alternative options. An Allocations Policy is required to ensure we are meeting our regulatory and statutory requirements.

## Implications of Recommended Option

### 37. Resources:

- a) **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital confirms there are no financial implications directly arising from this report.
- b) **Human Resources Implications** – There are no human resource implications directly arising from this report.
- c) **Property Implications** - The Allocations Policy is the principal document for how the Council and Registered Providers advertise and allocate properties in Gateshead, so we want to ensure that the policy is as robust and clear as possible.

38. **Risk Management Implication** - Integrated impact assessments are in place for the Allocations Policy. This will be reassessed considering any substantial changes to the policy.

39. **Equality and Diversity Implications** - The Allocations Policy will aim to reduce inequalities within Gateshead. An integrated impact assessment has been carried out to identify potential implications and impact related to protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010 and will be reviewed if any substantial changes are made to the policy.

40. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – The Allocations Policy will contribute to the achievement of reducing crime and disorder in Gateshead.

41. **Health Implications** – The Allocations Policy will contribute to improving health and wellbeing outcomes for local people and aim to reduce inequalities within Gateshead.

42. **Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications** - The Allocations Policy will contribute to the achievement of having sustainable communities and neighbourhoods within Gateshead.

43. **Human Rights Implications** – There are no Human Rights implications relating to this report.

44. **Ward Implications** - All wards within the borough are covered by the Allocations Policy.

## Background Information

### Appendix 2 – Minor Amends

Point	Page	Area	Type of change	Comments
3.4	11	Armed forces	Typo	Typo (additional comma) in 2 <sup>nd</sup> paragraph
4.3	13	Exclusion Criteria	Typo	Non qualification rules – one of the bullet points refers to section 4.6 but should be 4.4
4.4	14	Demotions	Typo	Wording incorrect – mixes up demotions/exclusions
4.4	14	Demotions	Typo	C Tax is an abbreviation. Change to full word
4.4	15	Applicants Demoted under reduced preference	Typo	Word missing
4.8	16	Household Splits	Wording clarification	Clarity required on household splits
5.1.1	19	Size allowance	Wording clarification	Wording to be changed to 'children' rather than 'siblings'
5.1.1	19	Size allowance	Wording Clarification	Needs to also reference appendix 3 which gives a definition of the space standard
5.1.1	19	Size Allowance	Wording Clarification	Parlours
5.1.2	20	Property allocation table	Incomplete Table	Property allocation table (which shows the type of properties that different household types can bid for) is incomplete. Update with information around split households as does not cover access arrangements and the four-night criteria is misleading. Current wording is shown in 4.8 page 16 of policy.
5.1.2	20	Property allocation table	Incomplete Table	Maisonettes in multi-story properties. Need to reflect policy on multi-story so no children under 16. Current wording is shown in 5.3.17 page 30 of policy
5.3.9	27	Overcrowding	Wording Clarification	Clarify that an urgent award is given if a child is sharing a bedroom with an adult not just 'parent'
5.3.13	29	Under occupation	Wording Clarification	Wording states 'existing tenant' – should say 'existing social housing tenant'
5.3.13	29	Under Occupation	Wording Clarification	'No breaches of tenancy' may be misleading as someone may need to downsize due to affordability issues and have rent arrears. Clarity needed on what is meant
5.3.15	29	Service Accommodation	Wording Clarification	Section here should also mention backdated waiting time (to the start of their employment date) – it is referred to on page 32 (5.6-a) but should be covered here too.

5.4	30	Housing Priority Bands	Typo	Page 30 – mix of capital and lower case – needs unifying
5.4	31	Housing Priority Bands	Wording Clarification	Urgent Priority – overcrowded by 2 bedspaces. Also needs to include that an urgent priority band will be given if an adult is sharing with a child.
5.4	31	Housing Priority Bands	Table	5.3.18 states that 'move on' applicants from supported accommodation will be given an urgent band. This needs to be clearly reflected in the table.
5.6	32	Determination of effective band dare	Wording Clarification	Section (a) to use consistent language with covenant on page 10 as here it refers to 'members of the armed forces' rather than anyone who served
6.4	34	How will you know which properties you can express an interest in?	Wording Clarification	Change 'all applicants with a housing need can bid on properties advertised as priority need' to 'all eligible applicants can bid on properties advertised as priority need.'
6.4	34	How will you know which properties you can express an interest in?	Wording Clarification	Last sentence needs clarification - if we exhaust medical bids we would consider other priorities/general needs cases current wording suggests they would not be able to bid.
6.5	35	How are applicants' bids ranked?	Take out wording	Second paragraph – take out wording 'we will also give preference for the largest families'
6.7	37	Offer of accommodation	Wording Clarification	para 3 – clarify that we require an arrangement to be set up at the point of offer around arrears?
Appendix 4	46	Property age restrictions	Formatting	Formatting on table – all over 40's should be together then all over 50's etc
Appendix 4	48	Property age restrictions	Typo	Greenfields 1 bed flat is 50 plus not 60. Should be moved to page 46 under Emmaville details
Appendix 40	48	Property age restrictions	Wording Clarification	Wording unclear: 'all other bungalows are available to anyone over the age of 50', should read 'all other one bed bungalows'
Appendix 6	50/51	Local lettings plans	Formatting	Greenfields to be included with Emmaville

## Appendix Two – Integrated Impact Assessment

Title of proposal: Allocations Policy (formerly Lettings Policy)	Age	Race	Sex	Gender reassignment	Disability	Religion or Belief	Pregnancy and Maternity	Sexual Orientation	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Description of potential mitigation
<p><b>Equality impact:</b> (✓ all that apply. The assessment should also consider impact on council employees and carers where applicable)</p> <p>Description of impact: The new allocations policy introduces the following changes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Armed forces. The 5-year cap has been removed and both honourably and dishonourably former members of the armed forces will be considered.</li> </ol>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	<p>In theory the changes have the possibility of impacting any of the groups covered by the Act. However the impact is a positive one overall.</p> <p><b>January 2024 update</b> People who apply to go onto Gateshead's housing register could potentially have any protected characteristics. However, the protected characteristics most likely to be impacted by the Jan 2024 changes to the policy are age, sex, disability and pregnancy and maternity. No disproportionate impact is expected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ By removing the 5-year cap and not discriminating between honourable or dishonourable at the point of application we have lowered thresholds and will consider priority need alone. Former members of the armed</li> </ul>



<p><b>January 2024 update</b> - The additional waiting time preference for members of the armed forces will be restricted to five years post discharge providing that they have not found settled accommodation.</p>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	<p>forces continue to benefit from the current covenants and new covenant duty being introduced at the end of the 2022.</p> <p><b>January 2024 update</b> – it was identified that removing the 5 year gap was having unintended consequences of allowing people who had been in settled accommodation for many years to have an unintended preference.</p>
<p>2. Out of Borough. The rules around OOB applicants remain unchanged for the present but we have strengthened the local connection rules in line with legislation and industry good practice.</p>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The local connection has been strengthened and places less of burden to evidence a connection. However an exercise is due to take place where we quantify the number of OOB applicants with no local connection with a view to giving consideration to continuing as we are or closing the list. This will be brought to Cabinet at a later stage once the new policy has bedded in for at least a year.</li> </ul>
<p><b>January update 2024</b> – Due to the exponential increase in the housing register people without a local connection to the area will not be able to join the housing register.</p>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	<p><b>January update 2024</b> - Applicants without a local connection to Gateshead will not be able to join the housing register and applicants currently on the register without a local connection will be removed.</p>
<p>3. Exclusions. These remain but with a formal decision</p>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exclusions have been strengthened and all viable</li> </ul>

process to consider the health and wellbeing of both the individuals and the community balance. They will not apply to bands 1 and 2 where the housing need is critical or urgent. <b>January update 2024</b> Exclusions - Debt. Clarification given on the thresholds for financial exclusion from the housing register. These are to be set at £3000 for a single person or a couple without children and £5500 for households with children.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	options will be pursued before an exclusion is agreed. This promotes Thrive and the need to explore better management of cases which might previously have been excluded. They will not apply to those in critical or urgent need.  <b>January update 2024</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If the person has met the financial threshold but has a priority award they will not be excluded from the register. Instead they will be supported to have a financial payment plan in place.</li> </ul>
Exclusion – ASB. People who are intentionally homeless due to eviction would be excluded from the housing register.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whilst a person may be excluded from the housing register due to serious ASB they will still be given support to access supported accommodation if they have a priority award.</li> </ul>
4. Financial Eligibility. This has been strengthened. Those with equity, income, savings and investments above thresholds set in line with RTB discounts, average house prices, private rents and average earnings will be expected to find their own housing solutions unless they are vulnerable or need specialist accommodation.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial eligibility will not apply to vulnerable households or those needing specialist accommodation so will not penalise those most in need.</li> </ul>

<p><b>January 2024 update</b> The financial threshold has been amended to allow single people to have an income up to £50,000 before they are excluded from the housing register.</p>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	<p><b>January 2024 update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This change has been made in recognition that the threshold of £25,000 was too low and was excluding people from the housing register who were unable to access housing through the open market.</li> </ul>
<p>5. Demotions. These will now be within the qualifying band rather than at the end of the housing register. They will not apply to bands 1 and 2 where the housing need is critical or urgent.</p>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demotions recognises the need for those in band 3 to sit above those in band 4 thereby recognising their priority need.</li> </ul>
<p>6. Overcrowding. The pressure on very large households in overcrowded accommodation has been recognised. Those needing 3 or more bedspaces will sit in band 1 (critical). Those needing 2 bedspaces will sit in band 2 (urgent) and those needing 1 bedspace will sit in band 3 (substantial).</p>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By recognising the need for large properties for overcrowded households we have sought a remedy that addresses need by bedspace shortfall.</li> </ul>
<p>7. Homeless Priority Need. This has been adjusted to recognise the need to move those in B&amp;B and temporary accommodation quickly and reduce the stress to the applicants and the cost to the Council. Full and relief duty</p>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By recognising the need to place those in B&amp;B and TA into critical need we recognise the thrive agenda and the cost to the Council. We will need to monitor the savings for a full letting year post approval of the policy to understand the full impact of</li> </ul>

<p>will now be band 1 (critical). Prevention duty will be band 2 (urgent) and intentionally homeless will be band 3 (substantial).</p> <p>8. <b>January 2024 update.</b> Joint tenants – people other than partners can become joint tenants.</p> <p>9. <b>January 2024 update</b> Unborn children will be recognised as part of the household from six months into the pregnancy.</p>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	<p>those savings.</p> <p>▪ <b>January 2024 update.</b> Will reduce overcrowding and support families being adequately housed.</p>
<p><b>Health impact: (e.g. physical, mental health, wellbeing, substance misuse)</b> We have considered the impact to health and wellbeing when introducing the changes around homeless priority, overcrowding and armed forces.</p>										NA
<p><b>Socio Economic impact: (e.g. neighbourhood, ward, area of deprivation, household group, income, wealth)</b> Overcrowded households moving to larger properties will need to find them affordable where they are not in receipt of benefit or there is a benefit cap. We will monitor the impact of releasing B&amp;B and TA quicker by awarding a critical need over the next 12 months. By introducing a financial exclusion policy for those who can afford to seek their own housing solutions we reduce the pressure on the existing housing register and those who are vulnerable or in need of specialist accommodation.</p> <p><b>January 2024 update</b> Since 2020 the demand on the housing register has doubled and this is in part due to rent increases and lack of availability in the private market and people's ability to afford their rent. It is likely that this will continue to impact on the housing register over the next 12 months</p>										<p>We will need to monitor the impact of financial hardship overall over the next year. Further changes may be introduced where there is a negative impact. However with overcrowding we are also seeking to move dependents who are 18 and over to their properties in order to alleviate the overcrowding to the main household which in itself mitigate the costs to the main household.</p> <p><b>January 2024 update</b> We will continue to monitor the impact of the policy changes and the external housing environment on the housing</p>

and we will continue to monitor the impact of this on an annual basis.	register to ensure we continue to offer a fair and transparent service which meets the needs of our customers.
<b>Environmental impact: (does the proposal impact on climate change and the Council's commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030? Is the proposal in line with the Council's Environmental Policy? Does the proposal increase natural resource use? Does the proposal increase waste? Does the proposal increase pollution? Does the proposal impact on wildlife? Does the proposal increase car use? Does the proposal increase energy use?) None</b>	NA
<b>Cumulative impact: (consider impact based on successive budgetary decisions relating to the proposal or is the proposal part of wider budgetary considerations that may collectively have an impact on service users and is potentially at odds with the Thrive agenda).</b> Where there is financial hardship, this will factor in the priority award. A further impact assessment will be undertaken once the impact analysis and savings have been monitored and completed.	A final impact analysis will be submitted 12 months after the approval and implementation of the new policy to understand the effects of savings, further work on whether to close the housing register, monitor financial hardship, monitor the effects of banding changes and demotions within qualifying bands.

### **Summary of consultation/data/research undertaken to inform the assessment:**

**(e.g. feedback and engagement with service users, trade unions, employees, partners, public, benchmarking, case studies)**

A full impact analysis is underway as follows:

1. Banding Migration. We are looking at the full effect of banding changes, for the households that move and also the impact to the band they move from and to. This work is due for completion by mid Sept and the results will be sent to Cabinet with the new Allocations Policy.
2. Demotion within Qualifying Band. We are looking at the full effect of demotion within qualifying band. This will cover the exemptions for critical and urgent, the impact to moving the demotion from the bottom of the list into the qualifying band and the impact to band 3 and 4 where there is no exemption. This is due for completion by mid Sept and the results will be sent to Cabinet with the new Allocations Policy.
3. Demotion housing related debt threshold of £250 changing to £500. The work is complete. Around 25% of applicants who are currently demoted will not be demoted with a higher threshold for housing related debt. Further this will not apply to those in critical or urgent need. Demotion will not apply to applicants who find themselves in debt through no fault of their own.
4. Financial Exclusions. We looked at the rehoused owner occupiers in the last 6 months. Data is not currently collected for savings, income or investments, it will be in the future. The threshold that was applied was £100,000 and 9 applicants were over it and would not have been rehoused. The threshold has now been revised following consultation to £50,000 and more would apply so we are revisiting the exercise which is due for completion by mid Sept.
5. We will do a costs savings exercise over the next 12 months for households owed a relief duty.
6. We will do a quantitative exercise over the next 12 months for households who are out of borough without a local connection. This is to look at the numbers of the housing register and whether by accepting them this is having a detrimental effect on rehousing transfer applicants. It is also to understand whether the original trend of housing OOB applicants with no local connection into lower demand properties has changed and needs to be further evidenced.
7. A partnership agreement is being developed with Registered Providers over the next 12 months.
8. A further liA will be submitted once all the above are complete.

We undertook public consultation between 30 June and 28 July 2022. This was undertaken with the following:

- All applicants on the housing register. We had 1750 respondents out of 9500 applicants which represents 19%.
- Residents in Gateshead via a public consultation. We are undertaking a tenants workshop on the 1 September 2022.
- Members
- Registered providers in Gateshead
- External stakeholders
- Internal stakeholders

The results on the proposed changes so far:

1. Armed forces. 83% agreed and the change has been adopted.
2. Out of Borough. 71% agreed and the comments overall were that housing should be prioritised for Gateshead residents; with out

of borough applicants having the opportunity to apply. Further discussions with staff and members resulted in retention of the current policy which states that out of borough applicants will be assessed for band 4, those with a local connection will sit above those without one. The local connection rule was strengthened in line with industry standards and retained. The main reason for retaining it is to give transfers preference over out of borough applicants without a local connection. Further work is planned as detailed in 6 above.

3. Exclusions. At the time of consultation were considering removing exclusions. 52% agreed and 43% disagreed which meant the result was inconclusive. Applicants and members felt exclusion should be rare with a formal decision process and only where there is no other viable option but that they should not be removed entirely. There should be a greater degree of management of high-risk cases and that those that engaged with the Council could be demoted; those that did not may be suspended whilst a plan was constructed to minimise any risks. A modified version of exclusions was retained.
4. Financial Exclusions. 76% agreed; although there were general comments about the thresholds. There has been further discussion internally and the thresholds have been reviewed in line with average earnings, private rents and average property prices following right to buy discounts. The change has been adopted.
5. Demotions. 74% agreed; and this only applies to bands 3 and 4, so those demoted in band 3 will sit above general needs, their priority need is therefore preserved. The change has been adopted.
6. Overcrowding. 81% agreed and this recognises severe overcrowding. The change has been adopted.
7. Homeless Priority Need. 83% agreed and this recognises the need for the Council to reduce the costs of temporary accommodation. The change has been adopted. Further work is planned see 5 above.

## January 2024 update

### Changes to the housing register

The housing register is impacted by the external housing market which has changed significantly over the last few years. This includes:

- Increased demand on the housing register
  - 13,637 applications for housing in Oct 2023, compared to 6,793 in April 2020
- More applicants with critical or urgent need
  - Increased from 376 to 1,102 in just over two years.
- Fewer council properties let each year.
  - 1,125 let in 2022/23. Around 1,400 previously
- More evictions from private sector tenancies
- More use of bed and breakfast and temporary accommodation
- Pressures on single persons accommodation and family housing
- Some flats reserved for tenants aged 50+ more difficult to let.
- Two-bedroom flats unaffordable to many applicants

This inevitably necessitates refinements to the allocations policy to ensure it meet changing needs and priorities.

**Engagement on policy changes**

During August to December 2023 engagement on the policy changes has taken place with:

- Operational teams at Gateshead Council (lettings, allocations, and housing solutions).
- Strategic Housing Board
- Cllr with responsibility for the armed forces portfolio.
- Members workshop
- Customers

**Signed: (completing officer)** Lindsay Warren (senior Project Manager) with Kevin Johnson, Head of Customer Services, Gateshead Council.

**Date:** 04 January 2024

**Service Director: (approved)** Kevin Scarlett, Director of Strategic Housing and Residential Growth

**Date:** 04 January 2024



## REPORT TO CABINET 23 January 2024

**TITLE OF REPORT: Capital Programme and Prudential Indicators 2023/24  
– Third Quarter Review**

**REPORT OF: Darren Collins, Strategic Director, Resources and Digital**

### Purpose of the Report

1. This report sets out the latest position on the 2023/24 Capital Programme and Prudential Indicators at the end of the third quarter to 31 December 2023. The report assesses reasons for the variances from the approved programme and details the proposed financing of the capital programme. In addition, the report considers the impact of CIPFA's Prudential Code on the capital programme and the monitoring of performance against the statutory Prudential Indicators.

### Background

2. The original budget for the capital programme for 2023/24, as agreed by Council on 23 February 2023, totalled £112.1m. This was increased to £113.5m at the first quarter review and decreased to £106.8m at the second quarter review to accommodate re-profiling to future years. The third quarter review of progress has resulted in a revised estimate for capital expenditure of £78.0m by the year end, £52.8m General Fund and £25.2m HRA.
3. The proposed reduction in the capital programme at the third quarter comprises of the following movements:

	£m
Additional capital expenditure	2.176
Re-profiling of capital expenditure to future years	(30.929)
<b>Total Variance</b>	<b>(28.753)</b>

4. The proposed increase of £2.176m relates to variations of less than £0.500m for a number of projects within the General Fund due to accelerated spend and £1.3m within the HRA for new home acquisitions.
5. The re-profiling of expenditure to future years of £30.929m relates to the following schemes:
  - (£8.153m) Quays – slippage due to collating final plans and costs.
  - (£7.562m) Transforming Cities - schemes have been designed and costed with some started on site.
  - (£5.000m) Flood Alleviation – schemes are being designed and costed.
  - (£3.000m) Schools Basic Need – schools are to submit their funding requests to meet the demand for places.

- (£2.000m) West Askew Road – junction works have been approved and waiting to commence on site.
- (£1.000m) Schools Special Education Needs High Needs – work is ongoing to determine how to best utilise the funding.
- (£0.750m) Local Transport Plan – Integrated Transport – slippage on some schemes which require more design and modelling work.
- (£0.650m) High Street South – work is ongoing to determine how to best progress the development.

## Proposal

6. The report identifies planned capital expenditure of £78.0m for the 2023/24 financial year. The expected resources required to fund the Capital Programme are as follows:

	£m
Prudential Borrowing	23.711
Projected Capital Receipts	0.679
Capital Grants and Contributions	28.420
Major Repairs Reserve (HRA)	19.264
Capital Grants and Contributions (HRA)	1.541
Right to Buy Receipts (HRA)	4.387
<b>Total Capital Programme</b>	<b>78.002</b>

7. CIPFA's Prudential Code advises the regular monitoring of performance against the prudential indicators which regulate borrowing and investment. Targets and limits for the prudential indicators for 2023/24 were agreed at Council on 23 February 2023 and borrowing and investment levels have remained within these limits. Performance against the indicators for 2023/24 is set out in Appendix 5.

## Recommendations

8. It is recommended that
- (i) Cabinet recommends to Council the revision to the capital programme.
  - (ii) Cabinet recommends to Council the financing of the revised programme.
  - (iii) Cabinet confirms to Council that the capital expenditure and capital financing requirement indicators have been revised in line with the revised budget and that none of the approved Prudential Indicators set for 2023/24 have been breached.

For the following reason(s)

- (i) To ensure the optimum use of the Council's capital resources in 2023/24
- (ii) To accommodate changes to the Council's in-year capital expenditure plans.
- (iii) To ensure performance has been assessed against approved Prudential Limits.

## APPENDIX 1

### Policy Context

1. The proposals within this report are consistent with the objectives contained within the Council's corporate Capital Strategy and will contribute to achieving the objectives set out by the Council's Thrive Agenda. The financial implications of the capital programme are incorporated within the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

### Background

2. The original budget for the capital programme for 2023/24, as agreed by Council on 23 February 2023, totalled £112.1m which increased to £113.5m at the first quarter review, but then reduced to £106.8m at the second quarter review.
3. The third quarter review has reprofiled the capital programme to reflect in year changes within capital schemes, resulting in a revised estimate of £78.0m.
4. All variations contributing to the £28.8m reduction since the quarter two review are detailed in Appendix 2.
5. Appendix 3 summarises the original budget and forecasted year end positions by Corporate Priority. The budget, projected year end positions and comments on the progress of each scheme are detailed in Appendix 4.
6. The prudential code sets out a range of Prudential Indicators that were agreed by Council on the 23 February 2023. Performance against the indicators for 2023/24 is set out in Appendix 5.

### Consultation

7. The Leader of the Council has been consulted on this report.

### Alternative Options

8. The proposed financing arrangements are the best available in order to ensure the optimum use of the Council's capital resources in 2023/24.

### Implications of Recommended Option

9. **Resources:**
  - a) **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital confirms that the financial implications are as set out in the report.
  - b) **Human Resources Implications** – There are no human resources implications arising from this report.
  - c) **Property Implications** - There are no direct property implications arising from this report. Capital investment optimises the use of property assets to

support the delivery of corporate priorities. The property implications of individual schemes will be considered and reported separately.

10. **Risk Management Implication** - Risks are assessed as part of the process of monitoring the programme and in respect of treasury management. The Cabinet will continue to receive quarterly reports for recommendation of any issues to Council, together with any necessary action to ensure expenditure is managed within available resources.
11. **Equality and Diversity Implications** - There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.
12. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report.
13. **Health Implications** – There are no health implications arising from this report.
14. **Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications** - The climate emergency and sustainability implications are considered as part of developing and implementing individual capital projects. Planned investment within the capital programme is expected to result in improvements throughout the Borough.
15. **Human Rights Implications** - There are no direct human rights implications arising from this report.
16. **Ward Implications** - Capital scheme investment will improve wards across the borough.

### **Background Information**

17. Report for Cabinet, 21 February 2023 (Council 23 February 2023) – Capital Programme 2023/24 to 2027/28.

Report for Cabinet 18 July 2023 (Council 20 July 2023) – Capital Programme and Prudential Indicators 2023/24 First Quarter Review.

Report for Cabinet 21 November 2023 (Council 23 November 2023) – Capital Programme and Prudential Indicators 2023/24 Second Quarter Review.

Appendix 2

Reason for movement	Portfolio	Group	Project Title	Variance £000
Other movements	Resources, Management and Reputation	EIG	Baltic Quarter Enabling Infrastructure	4
	Resources, Management and Reputation	HEHC	Installation of Electric Vehicle charging points in Council Depots	3
	Resources, Management and Reputation	HEHC	Blaydon West Primary School	1
	Resources, Management and Reputation	R&D	IT Strategic Plan	(65)
	Resources, Management and Reputation	CSC&LL	Specialist equipment to improve inclusion for Children and Young People - High incidence needs	7
	Resources, Management and Reputation	CSC&LL	Specialist IT equipment for Children and Young People with low incidence needs (hearing and vision impairment)	10
	Environment and Transport	EIG	Solar PV	67
	Environment and Transport	EIG	District Heating and Private Wire Connections	15
	Children and Young People	HEHC	School Condition Investment	200
	Children and Young People	HEHC	Schools Devolved Formula Funding	240
	Children and Young People	CSC&LL	Children's Three bed Residential Home	111
	Children and Young People	CSC&LL	Family Hubs	27
	Adult Social Care	IASCS	Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)	185
	Housing	HEHC	New Build/Acquisition - Various	671
	Housing	HEHC	Block Communal improvements	(705)
	Housing	HEHC	Building Safety Improvements	(290)
	Housing	HEHC	Contractual Obligations	(1,700)
	Housing	HEHC	ICT Refresh	239
	Housing	HEHC	Decent Homes	803
	Housing	HEHC	Aids & Adaptations	1,500
	Housing	HEHC	Lift Replacement Programme	65
	Housing	HEHC	Door & Window replacements	40
	Housing	HEHC	Stock Project Management	100
	Housing	HEHC	Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF)	648
Other movements Total				2,176
Slippage to future years	Resources, Management and Reputation	EIG	Gateshead Quays	(8,153)
	Resources, Management and Reputation	EIG	Refurbishment of Metrology Lab	(138)
	Resources, Management and Reputation	HEHC	Health & Safety	(306)
	Resources, Management and Reputation	R&D	Technology Plan: Infrastructure	(200)
	Environment and Transport	EIG	Flood Alleviation Investment	(5,000)
	Environment and Transport	EIG	Local Transport Plan - Planned Maintenance	(750)
	Environment and Transport	EIG	Transforming Cities (Tranche 2)	(7,562)
	Environment and Transport	EIG	Quays fixed and VMS signage	(350)
	Environment and Transport	EIG	Quays traffic signal upgrades	(150)
	Environment and Transport	EIG	Bensham Road Corridor	(100)
	Environment and Transport	EIG	Gateshead District Energy Scheme - Old Ford/Nest House	(200)
	Environment and Transport	HEHC	Traffic Sign Replacement	(25)
	Culture, Sport and Leisure	HEHC	Fixed Play Facility Renewals	(220)
	Communities and Volunteering	HEHC	Community Hubs	(21)
	Children and Young People	HEHC	Schools Basic Need Funding	(3,000)
	Children and Young People	HEHC	Schools SEN High Needs Funding	(1,000)
	Children and Young People	CSC&LL	Extensions and adaptations to the homes of foster carers	(150)
	Economy	EIG	Greensfield Business Centre Refurbishment	(100)
	Economy	R&D	Broadband Delivery UK	(10)
	Economy	R&D	Digital Gateshead	(41)
	Housing	EIG	High Street South	(650)
	Housing	HEHC	West Askew Road junction improvements	(2,000)
	Housing	HEHC	Digital Transformation	(305)
	Housing	HEHC	Garage Improvement Programme	(90)
	Housing	HEHC	Regeneration and Demolition	(283)
	Housing	HEHC	Housing Development	(125)
Slippage to future years Total				(30,929)
Grand Total				(28,753)

## Appendix 3

	Approved 2023/24 Allocation £000	Revised Q1 Allocation £000	Revised Q2 Allocation £000	Revised Q3 Allocation £000	Variance £000
<b>COMMUNITIES</b>					
Culture, Sport and Leisure	840	720	720	500	(220)
Communities and Volunteering	62	56	56	35	(21)
Communities - Culture, Sport and Leisure	0	85	85	85	0
<b>COMMUNITIES Total</b>	<b>902</b>	<b>861</b>	<b>861</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>(241)</b>
<b>PEOPLE</b>					
Children and Young People	14,800	9,686	9,586	6,014	(3,572)
Adult Social Care	6,053	7,918	8,260	8,445	185
<b>PEOPLE Total</b>	<b>20,853</b>	<b>17,604</b>	<b>17,846</b>	<b>14,459</b>	<b>(3,387)</b>
<b>PLACE AND ECONOMY</b>					
Environment and Transport	22,732	30,948	27,673	13,618	(14,055)
Economy	1,775	2,283	2,283	2,132	(151)
Housing	29,885	29,106	29,482	27,400	(2,082)
<b>PLACE AND ECONOMY Total</b>	<b>54,392</b>	<b>62,337</b>	<b>59,438</b>	<b>43,150</b>	<b>(16,288)</b>
<b>RESOURCES, MANAGEMENT AND REPUTATION</b>					
Resources, Management and Reputation	31,719	30,956	26,900	18,063	(8,837)
<b>RESOURCES, MANAGEMENT AND REPUTATION Total</b>	<b>31,719</b>	<b>30,956</b>	<b>26,900</b>	<b>18,063</b>	<b>(8,837)</b>
<b>LOAN</b>					
Environment and Transport	4,209	1,709	1,709	1,709	0
<b>LOAN Total</b>	<b>4,209</b>	<b>1,709</b>	<b>1,709</b>	<b>1,709</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>112,075</b>	<b>113,468</b>	<b>106,755</b>	<b>78,002</b>	<b>(28,753)</b>

Appendix 4

	Approved 2023/24 Allocation £000	Revised Q1 Allocation £000	Revised Q2 Allocation £000	Revised Q3 Allocation £000	Variance £000	Comment
<b>COMMUNITIES</b>						
<i>Culture, Sport and Leisure</i>						
Fixed Play Facility Renewals	720	720	720	500	(220)	Slippage to future years
Virtual Reality Fitness Systems	120	0	0	0	0	
<i>Communities and Volunteering</i>						
Community Hubs	62	56	56	35	(21)	Slippage to future years
<i>Communities - Culture, Sport and Leisure</i>						
Gateshead International Stadium Investment	0	85	85	85	0	
<b>PEOPLE</b>						
<i>Children and Young People</i>						
Children's Three bed Residential Home	0	237	237	348	111	Increased use of grant
Extensions and adaptations to the homes of foster carers	160	310	210	60	(150)	Slippage to future years
School Condition Investment	1,800	1,800	1,800	2,000	200	Increased use of grant
Schools Devolved Formula Funding	250	250	250	490	240	Increased use of grant
Schools Basic Need Funding	12,590	5,000	5,000	2,000	(3,000)	Slippage to future years
Schools SEN High Needs Funding	0	2,028	2,028	1,028	(1,000)	Slippage to future years
Family Hubs	0	61	61	88	27	Increased use of grant
<i>Adult Social Care</i>						
Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs)	1,950	2,211	2,211	2,396	185	Increased use of grant
Technology Enabled Care	150	100	100	100	0	
Telecare Equipment	75	75	75	75	0	
Sister Winifred Laver Centre	3,628	4,815	4,815	4,815	0	
Social Care System	250	718	1,060	1,060	0	
<b>PLACE AND ECONOMY</b>						
<i>Environment and Transport</i>						
Bensham Road Corridor	676	326	163	63	(100)	Slippage to future years
Flagged Footways	340	340	340	340	0	
Flood Alleviation Investment	5,483	5,483	5,483	483	(5,000)	Slippage to future years
Local Transport Plan - Integrated Transport	1,233	2,826	1,121	1,121	0	
Local Transport Plan - Planned Maintenance	3,288	4,997	4,961	4,211	(750)	Slippage to future years
Quays fixed and VMS signage	500	450	450	100	(350)	Slippage to future years
Quays traffic signal upgrades	241	180	180	30	(150)	Slippage to future years
Replacement Bins	130	133	133	133	0	
Riverside Park	685	722	150	150	0	
Salix Energy Efficiency Works	150	150	150	150	0	
Traffic Sign Replacement	150	175	75	50	(25)	Slippage to future years
Transforming Cities (Tranche 2)	6,904	11,298	11,562	4,000	(7,562)	Slippage to future years
Unclassified Road Resurfacing - Micro Asphalt	500	547	547	547	0	
Gateshead District Energy Scheme - Old Ford/Nest House	114	301	301	101	(200)	Slippage to future years
Street Lighting Column Replacement	1,698	1,698	1,698	1,698	0	
Traffic Signal Renewal	350	659	350	350	0	
Unveiling the Angel	290	300	10	10	0	
Greenhomes Chopwell	0	364	0	0	0	
District Heating and Private Wire Connections	0	0	0	15	15	Project completion costs
Solar PV	0	0	0	67	67	Project completion costs
<i>Economy</i>						
Baltic Quarter Remediation	0	88	88	88	0	
Blaydon Business Centre Extension	821	0	0	0	0	
Broadband Delivery UK	82	82	82	72	(10)	Slippage to future years
Digital Gateshead	790	869	869	828	(41)	Slippage to future years
Greensfield Business Centre Refurbishment	62	242	242	142	(100)	Slippage to future years
High Street North - Future Place	20	42	42	42	0	
UKSPF	0	960	960	960	0	
<i>Housing</i>						
Block Communal improvements	705	705	705	0	(705)	Other movements
Building Safety Improvements	790	8	1,736	1,446	(290)	Other movements
Communal Mechanical & Electrical Works	579	718	725	725	0	
Contractual Obligations	2,000	1,700	1,700	0	(1,700)	Other movements
Decent Homes	5,351	7,958	7,804	8,607	803	Other movements
Development Site Preparation Works	850	945	945	945	0	
Digital Transformation	700	650	650	345	(305)	Slippage to future years
Domestic Heating Improvements	2,604	2,837	2,837	2,837	0	
Fixed budget fees	550	550	550	550	0	
Garage Improvement Programme	200	259	100	10	(90)	Slippage to future years
High Street South	1,627	686	686	36	(650)	Slippage to future years
HRA Commercial Property Improvements	50	79	79	79	0	
Major Investment Scheme	1,970	328	164	164	0	
Metrogreen	73	99	66	66	0	
Safety & Security	59	59	59	59	0	
West Askew Road junction improvements	2,786	2,786	2,786	786	(2,000)	Slippage to future years
Regeneration and Demolition	1,259	1,259	1,042	759	(283)	Slippage to future years
Aids & Adaptations	1,500	1,500	1,500	3,000	1,500	Other movements
Basement Improvements	0	100	1	1	0	
Door & Window replacements	797	876	377	417	40	Other movements
Environmental & Estate Improvement	100	143	19	19	0	
ICT Refresh	40	40	40	279	239	Other movements
Lift Replacement Programme	0	590	623	688	65	Other movements
New Build/Acquisition - Various	3,295	3,651	797	1,468	671	Other movements
Passive Air Units	0	80	80	80	0	
Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF)	0	0	2,854	3,502	648	Allocation of grant
Tyne Bank	0	0	57	57	0	
Housing Development	2,000	500	500	375	(125)	Slippage to future years
Stock Project Management	0	0	0	100	100	Other movements
<b>RESOURCES, MANAGEMENT AND REPUTATION</b>						
<i>Resources, Management and Reputation</i>						
Gateshead Quays	20,377	21,153	18,153	10,000	(8,153)	Slippage to future years
Baltic Quarter Enabling Infrastructure	214	222	222	226	4	Project investigations

	Approved 2023/24 Allocation £000	Revised Q1 Allocation £000	Revised Q2 Allocation £000	Revised Q3 Allocation £000	Variance £000	Comment
Customer Experience	112	123	123	123	0	
Gateshead Quays Multi Storey Car Park	116	116	116	116	0	
Health & Safety	963	872	872	566	(306)	Slippage to future years
Major Projects - Project Management Costs	290	290	340	340	0	
Refurbishment of Metrology Lab	195	153	153	15	(138)	Slippage to future years
Replacement of Fleet and Horticultural Equipment	2,275	1,525	1,525	1,525	0	
Strategic Maintenance	1,485	1,901	1,901	1,901	0	
Technology Plan: Infrastructure	3,840	2,683	2,683	2,483	(200)	Slippage to future years
Technology Plan: Transformation Through Technology & New Ways of Working	369	500	500	500	0	
Installation of Electric Vehicle charging points in Council Depots	1,162	1,148	90	93	3	Project investigations
IT Strategic Plan	261	226	171	106	(65)	Reduction in Capital Costs
Specialist equipment to improve inclusion for Children and Young People - High incidence needs	30	15	15	22	7	Increased demand
Specialist IT equipment for Children and Young People with low incidence needs (hearing and vision impairment)	30	30	30	40	10	Increased demand
Blaydon West Primary School	0	0	7	8	1	Project investigations
<b>LOAN</b>						
<i>Environment and Transport</i>						
Loan to Gateshead Energy Company District Energy extension	4,209	1,709	1,709	1,709	0	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>112,075</b>	<b>113,468</b>	<b>106,755</b>	<b>78,002</b>	<b>(28,753)</b>	



### PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2023/24

The 2023/24 Prudential Indicators were agreed by Council on 23 February 2023 (column 1). This is now compared with the 2023/24 actual Q3 position as at the 31 December 2023 (column 2).

Certain Treasury Management indicators must be monitored throughout the year on a regular basis in order to avoid breaching agreed limits. The capital expenditure and capital financing requirement indicators have been revised in line with the revised budget and none of the other approved Prudential Indicators set for 2023/24 have been breached.

<b>Capital Expenditure</b>		
	2023/24 £000 Reported Indicator	2023/24 £000 Quarter 3
Non-HRA	89,526	52,810
HRA	22,549	25,192
<b>Total</b>	<b>112,075</b>	<b>78,002</b>
To reflect the reported capital monitoring agreed by Council during the year		

<b>Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream</b>		
	2023/24 Reported Indicator	2023/24 Quarter 3
Non-HRA	15.53%	NA
HRA	40.90%	NA

<b>Capital Financing Requirement</b>		
	2023/24 £000 Reported Indicator	2023/24 £000 Quarter 3
Non-HRA	423,998	425,591
HRA	345,505	345,505

<b>Authorised Limit for External Debt</b>	
	2023/24 £000 Reported Indicator
Borrowing	865,000
Other Long Term Liabilities	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>865,000</b>
Maximum YTD 31/12/2023 <b>£684.966m</b>	

<b>Operational Boundary for External Debt</b>	
	2023/24 £000 Reported Indicator
Borrowing	850,000
Other Long Term Liabilities	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>850,000</b>
Maximum YTD 31/12/2023 <b>£684.966m</b>	

The Council's actual external debt at 31 December 2023 was £684.966m. It should be noted that actual external debt is not directly comparable to the Authorised Limit and Operational Boundary, since the actual external debt reflects the position at one point in time.

### ***Adherence to CIPFA code on Treasury Management***

The Council has adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services.

**Upper / Lower Limits for Maturity Structure of Fixed Rate Borrowing**

	2023/24 £000 Reported Indicator		2023/24 £000 Actual Position	
	<b>Upper Limit</b>	<b>Lower Limit</b>	<b>Actual Percentage</b>	<b>Maximum YTD</b>
Under 12 months	15%	0%	2.78%	2.78%
12 months to 24 months	19%	0%	3.02%	3.02%
24 months to 5 years	22%	0%	7.69%	9.15%
5 years to 10 years	22%	0%	10.98%	11.71%
10 years to 20 years	17%	0%	5.04%	6.50%
20 years to 30 years	41%	0%	6.65%	6.65%
30 years to 40 years	42%	0%	32.73%	33.46%
40 years to 50 years	41%	0%	29.64%	33.29%
50 years and above	11%	0%	0.00%	0.00%
All within agreed limits.				

**Upper / Lower Limits for Maturity Structure of Variable Rate Borrowing**

	2023/24 £000 Reported Indicator		2023/24 £000 Actual Position	
	<b>Upper Limit</b>	<b>Lower Limit</b>	<b>Actual Percentage</b>	<b>Maximum YTD</b>
Under 12 months	16%	0%	1.46%	2.92%
12 months to 24 months	11%	0%	0.00%	0.00%
24 months to 5 years	11%	0%	0.00%	0.00%
5 years to 10 years	11%	0%	0.00%	0.00%
10 years to 20 years	11%	0%	0.00%	0.00%
20 years to 30 years	11%	0%	0.00%	0.00%
30 years to 40 years	11%	0%	0.00%	0.00%
40 years to 50 years	11%	0%	0.00%	0.00%
50 years and above	11%	0%	0.00%	0.00%
All within agreed limits.				

On 8 March 2007, Council agreed to the placing of investments for periods of longer than 364 days in order to maximise investment income before forecasted cuts in interest rates. An upper limit was set and agreed as a new Prudential Indicator.

**Upper Limit on amounts invested beyond 364 days**

	2023/24 £000 Reported Indicator	2023/24 £000 Actual Position	2023/24 £000 Maximum YTD
Investments	<b>15,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

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**TITLE OF REPORT:** Revenue Budget – Third Quarter Review 2023/24

**REPORT OF:** Darren Collins, Strategic Director, Resources and Digital

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## **Purpose of the Report**

1. This report sets out the latest monitoring position on the 2023/24 revenue budget at the end of the third quarter. Cabinet is asked to note the contents of the report.

## **Background**

2. As part of the Council's budget and policy framework Cabinet receives quarterly reports on the agreed revenue budget so that any variances can be identified and addressed at an appropriate pace with Councillor oversight.
3. Council agreed the revenue budget for 2023/24 on 21 February 2023. This was set at £289.903m. The budget includes £25.883m of Council financing from the planned use of earmarked reserves.
4. At the first quarter Cabinet agreed an amendment to the net revenue budget for 2023/24 from £289.903m to £281.885m.
5. Council agreed an HRA income budget of £88.274m to deliver a surplus budget of £1.456m in 2023/24. At first quarter a £2.440m increase in budget to reflect the increase in the depreciation charge resulted in a budgeted deficit of £0.984m which will be funded from the HRA reserve.

## **Proposal**

6. The projected revenue outturn for 2023/24 at the third quarter is £281.8m compared to the budget of £281.9m. This is £0.1m within budget alongside a £0.5m increase in financing income, resulting in an overall position of £0.6m within budget, which is an improved position on the quarter two position of £2.8m over budget.
7. The projected outturn masks a number of significant financial challenges within certain areas as group portfolio budgets are projected to overspend by £3.9m after management intervention.

## **Virements**

8. Virements have been actioned during the third quarter to reflect the operations of the Council and previously approved use of contingency.

## **Housing Revenue Account**

9. The HRA revenue budget faces several budget pressures especially in relation to repairs and maintenance and voids and is forecast to overspend by £5.1m in 2023/24.

10. Plans are being put in place to mitigate the issues associated with the overspends but the impact of savings is not likely to materialise until 2024/25.

### **Recommendations**

11. It is recommended that Cabinet notes the Council's revenue expenditure position at the end of the third quarter, as set out in Appendix 1 and 2;

For the following reason:

To contribute to sound financial management and the long-term financial sustainability of the Council.

**Contact: Darren Collins**

**Extension: 3582**

### Policy Context

1. This report meets the standards required to comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 which represent financial management good practice, recommend that councillors should receive regular reports on performance against revenue and capital budgets.
2. It is also consistent with the Council's objectives of making Gateshead a place where everyone thrives by assisting in ensuring a sustainable financial position for the long term.

### Background

3. This report sets out the latest budget monitoring position on the 2023/24 revenue budget at the end of the third quarter and projects spending and income to the end of the financial year following management intervention.
4. Appendix 2 details the budget for 2023/24 compared to an assessment of the projected outturn for the year. This position is after the application of reserves and planned management intervention in areas facing budget challenges.

### Key Budget Challenges

5. The key financial challenges to note are set out below.
  - **Children's Social Care and Lifelong Learning is £4.4m over budget**, due to an overspend of £1.7m on foster agencies, £1.1m on external residential care and £1.6m on home to school transport.
  - **Leisure is £0.350m over budget** due to an under achievement on income of £1.3m offset by a £0.9m underspend on staffing and the addition of a Sport England grant.
  - **Major Projects & Energy are £0.6m over budget** due to a £0.5m underachievement on income and £0.3m overspend on schemes, offset by a £0.2m underspend on staffing.
  - **Property Services is £0.6m over budget** due mainly to overspends on staffing £0.1m, Security £0.1m, Professional fees £0.1m and underachievement on income of £0.2m.
6. The quarter three outturn also includes some changes to Council Financing. The settlement announced a reduction in Top Up Grant (0.791m) that must be recognised in 2023. An additional Market Sustainability and Improvement Fund grant was announced in August of £1.7m and has now been received.
7. Utility budgets have been amended using contingency funding following a review of actual bills and whether budgets were assessed as being inadequate.
8. The budget and outturn impacts of the agreed pay award are not reflected in this reported position. Budgets to meet the costs will be passed to Services and met from contingency within 2023/24.

## **Housing Revenue Account**

9. The HRA continues to face several budget pressures especially in relation to repairs and maintenance and voids and is forecast at the third quarter to overspend by £5.1m in 2023/24.
10. Whilst overall there is no change from the second quarter, repairs and maintenance projections have increased by £1.2m, there has been an increase in projected income of £0.1m and a reduction in supervision and management of £1.1m this includes £0.5m related to projected use of contingency and £0.5m related to the impact on the HRA from a review of service level agreements.
11. Plans are being put in place to mitigate the issues associated with the overspends which includes reducing the use of contractors and internalising a proportion of repairs and maintenance and void capacity. Due to timing, it is unlikely that there will be a significant savings impact in 2023/24.
12. This approach will deliver a 2024/25 cost reduction and enable:
  - Better controls on work programmes.
  - Improved customer service and quality controls.
  - Reduce the levels of repeat visits to properties.
  - Improve property condition.
  - Improve customer satisfaction.
  - Reduce repair related turnover.
  - Support the wider housing policy objectives

## **Summary**

13. The projected General Fund Revenue budget position for the Council after applying reserves and planned management intervention at the end of the third quarter is £0.6m under budget.
14. The MTFS position assumes all prior year budget savings will be achieved going into 2024/25.
15. The intention is to deliver an outturn within budget. Senior management will ensure proactive budget management through regular monitoring will continue to take place with accountable intervention with the aim of containing spending within budget.

## **Consultation**

16. The Leader of the Council has been consulted on this report.

## **Alternative Options**

17. There are no alternative options proposed.

## **Implications of Recommended Option**

18. **Resources:**

- a) **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital confirms these are as set out in the report and appendices.



- b) Human Resources Implications** – There are no direct Human Resource implications as a consequence of this report. Budget savings proposals will be subject to separate reporting.
  - c) Property Implications** - There are no direct property implications as a consequence of this report. Budget savings proposals will be subject to separate reporting.
- 19. **Risk Management Implication** -  
Regular budget monitoring and the associated action planning that arise from this activity assists in reducing the risk of the Council overspending its agreed budget. This enables effective financial planning which allows the Council to deploy resources in line with priorities.
  - 20. **Equality and Diversity Implications** - Nil
  - 21. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – Nil
  - 22. **Health Implications** - Nil
  - 23. **Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications** - Nil
  - 24. **Human Rights Implications** - Nil
  - 25. **Ward Implications** - Revenue spending supports the delivery of services across the whole of Gateshead.

## Appendix 2- Revenue Monitoring Summary 2023/24

Service	Budget £'000	Projected Outturn After reserves Before Action £'000	Management Intervention £'000	Under/ Over Budget £'000
<b><u>Office of the Chief Executive</u></b>	979	974	0	(5)
<b><u>Integrated Adults and Social Care Services</u></b>				
Adult Social Care	85,663	85,431	0	(232)
Quality Assurance & Commissioning	6,302	6,125	0	(177)
<b><u>Children's Social Care and Lifelong Learning</u></b>				
Children's Social Care	46,498	49,217	0	2,719
Education, Schools and Inclusion	6,671	8,367	0	1,696
<b><u>Public Health &amp; Wellbeing</u></b>				
Public Health	17,788	17,788	0	0
Wellbeing - Leisure / Libraries	4,317	4,764	0	447
Wellbeing - Resilience & Other	311	317	0	6
<b><u>Housing, Environment &amp; Healthy Communities</u></b>				
Gateshead Construction Services	414	698	0	284
Property & Assets	3,962	4,421	(26)	433
Locality Services & Housing	1,590	1,906	0	317
Strategic Services & Residential Growth	2,959	2,967	0	8
Highways and Waste	18,399	17,112		(1,287)
Environment & Fleet Management	4,838	5,203		365
<b><u>Economy, Innovation and Growth</u></b>				
Business, Employment and Skills	1,045	527		(518)
Planning Policy, Climate Change and Strategic Transport	3,930	4,524	0	594
Major Projects and Corporate Property	(1,089)	(426)	0	663
<b><u>Corporate Services &amp; Governance</u></b>				
Legal & Democratic Services	4,329	4,497	0	169
Human Resources & Workforce Development	1,905	1,776	0	(129)
Corporate Commissioning & Procurement	621	579	0	(42)
Public Service Reform	339	173		(166)
<b><u>Resources &amp; Digital</u></b>				
Financial Management	2,380	2,283	0	(97)
Customer Experience & Digital	4,733	4,712	0	(21)
Housing Benefits	200	200	0	0
IT	4,209	3,762		(447)
Commercialisation and Improvement	2,283	1,989		(294)
School Meals & Catering	900	538		(362)
<b>NET PORTFOLIO BUDGETS</b>	<b>226,475</b>	<b>230,424</b>	<b>(26)</b>	<b>3,923</b>
<b>Other Services &amp; Contingencies</b>	15,660	14,653	0	(1,007)
<b>Corporate Budget Growth</b>	2,630	2,630		0
<b>Capital Financing</b>	32,818	31,805		(1,013)
<b>Expenditure Passed outside the General Fund</b>	(1,855)	(1,855)		0
<b>Traded &amp; Investment Income</b>	(5,865)	(7,866)	0	(2,001)
<b>Levies</b>	12,022	12,022		0
<b>NET BUDGET</b>	<b>281,885</b>	<b>281,813</b>	<b>(26)</b>	<b>(98)</b>
<b><u>Financed By</u></b>				
Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA)	(72,787)	(71,574)		1,213
Other Grants	(62,866)	(64,590)		(1,724)
Public Health	(17,787)	(17,787)		0
Council Tax	(110,473)	(110,473)		0
Collection Fund Surplus	(1,085)	(1,085)		0
Earmarked Reserves	(16,887)	(16,887)		0
<b>TOTAL FUNDING</b>	<b>(281,885)</b>	<b>(282,396)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(511)</b>
<b>PROJECTED (UNDER) / OVER SPEND</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>(583)</b>	<b>(26)</b>	<b>(609)</b>



## REPORT TO CABINET 23rd January 2024

**TITLE OF REPORT:** Council Tax Base and Business Rates Forecast 2024/25

**REPORT OF:** Darren Collins, Strategic Director, Resources and Digital

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### Purpose of the Report

1. This report asks Cabinet to agree the council tax base for 2024/25 for the Parish of Lamesley and the whole of the Borough of Gateshead. Cabinet is also requested to agree a Business Rate forecast for 2024/25.

### Background

2. The Council is required to calculate and set a new council tax base each year. This council tax base must be forwarded to the Police and Crime Commissioner for Northumbria and the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority by 31 January 2024. It is also used for the Council's own purposes in the calculation of the 2024/25 council tax level.
3. The council tax base reflects the amendments contained within the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2012. These amendments require the tax base to reflect any changes introduced from the Council's Local Council Tax Support Scheme.
4. The Business Rates retention scheme was implemented 1 April 2013, and this allows local authorities to retain 49% of the actual business rates receipts. For Enterprise Zones & New Development Deals, authorities retain 100% of growth in business rates receipts.
5. The Business Rates base for 2024/25 is required to be notified to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities using form NNDR1 and responsibility for certification of this form is delegated to the Strategic Director, Resources and Digital under the constitution of the Council (Part 3 Schedule 5) as follows:  
  
"To manage the Gateshead Collection Fund in accordance with statutory requirements, including annual approval and certification of the NNDR1 form, prior to its submission to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, setting out the local tax base for business properties for each forthcoming year".
6. Based upon the information provided by central government the business rates forecast for 2024/25 is £41.284 million. This figure will be reviewed as part of the completion of the NNDR1 form, which is due by 31 January 2024. This estimate will

then be varied by the Strategic Director, Resources and Digital under the delegation contained within the Council's constitution.

## **Proposal**

7. The factors that need to be considered in fixing the council tax base are set out in Appendix 1. The proposed council tax base for Gateshead is 54,041.1 an increase of 686.2 on the current base. This increase is due to an increase in the number of Band D equivalents after taking account of forecast numbers of newly built properties, demolitions, the estimated number of exemptions and discounts, the impact of reviewing entitlements to discounts and reflecting the impacts of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme. The proposed council tax base for Lamesley is 1227.7 an increase of 30.3 on the current base.
8. The provisional business rates forecast for 2024/25 is £41.284 million in line with government estimates.

## **Recommendations**

9. It is recommended that Cabinet agree:
  - (i) pursuant to this report and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended by Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Amendment)(England) Regulations 2012 the amount calculated by Gateshead Council as its council tax base for the year 2024/25 shall be 54,041.1.
  - (ii) pursuant to this report and in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended by Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Amendment)(England) Regulations 2012 the amount calculated as being the Parish Council of Lamesley's council tax base for the year 2024/25 shall be 1,227.7.
  - (iii) That the business rates forecast for 2024/25 is £41.284 million

For the following reasons:

- (i) To assist the Council in its financial planning and budget setting
- (ii) To set a council tax base and a business rates forecast for 2024/25 in accordance with statutory requirements.

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**CONTACT: Jennifer Forster Ext 3168**

### Policy Context

1. The proposals in this report are consistent with Council priorities and in particular ensuring that effective use is made of Council resources to support the framework for “making Gateshead a place where everyone thrives”.

### Background

2. The council tax base is the total number of Band D equivalent households in the Borough which will be liable to pay council tax in the forthcoming year.
3. The formal decision to fix the council tax base must be taken by 31 January each year.

### Consultation

The Leader of the Council has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

### Alternative Options

4. There are no alternative options proposed.

### Implications of Recommended Options

#### Calculation of Relevant Amount

5. There are 95,167 domestic properties in Gateshead, which have been placed in one of eight bands (from A to H, see Appendix 2) according to the price at which the property might reasonably have been sold on the open market on 1 April 1991, assuming vacant possession and in a state of reasonable repair.
6. For setting the level of council tax for 2024/25, the total number of properties must be recalculated into a common base of Band D equivalents and assumes that there are two or more liable adults living in each property. This recalculation and the adjustments set out in paragraph 7 below are then applied in accordance with the requirements of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as amended by Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Amendment)(England) Regulations 2012 and the resultant figure is known as the ‘relevant amount’.
7. The adjustments that need to be considered for each band of property are: -
  - i) the anticipated number of new dwellings which will be completed during 2024/25;
  - ii) the anticipated number of dwellings to be demolished during 2024/25;
  - iii) the anticipated number of exempt dwellings during 2024/25;
  - iv) the anticipated number of dwellings where the liable person qualifies for a disabled reduction during 2024/25;
  - v) the anticipated number of dwellings where the liable person qualifies for a discount or exemption during 2024/25;

- vi) reviewing entitlement to discounts and exemptions during 2024/25;
  - vii) the adjustment required in respect of the impact for the Council Tax Support Scheme during 2024/25.
  - viii) the adjustment required in respect of the impact for the proposed changes in empty property premiums commencing from 2024/25.
8. Applying the adjustments in paragraph 7 has the effect of reducing the total number of properties to a common base for each band, in terms of full year equivalents.
9. The proposed empty property premium charge changes have been adjusted for as follows to calculate the band D equivalent –
- Property empty for more than 2 years but less than 5 years charged an additional 100% council tax charge.
  - Properties empty form more than 5 years but less than 10 years charged an additional 200% council tax charge.
  - Properties empty for more than 10 years charged an additional 300% council tax charge.
10. To arrive at a common base of Band D equivalents, i.e., the ‘relevant amount’, the appropriate fraction prescribed by Regulation 4 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (Amendment)(England) Regulations 2012 is applied to each band, resulting in a Band D equivalent of 55,285 for the whole of Gateshead as set out in Appendix 3.
11. The Band D equivalent calculations for Lamesley are 1,256 and are set out in Appendix 4. The figures are relevant to the additional expenditure in this area by the Parish Council.

### **Calculation of Council Tax Collection Rate**

12. To set the council tax at a level which will realise enough income to meet the Authority’s budget requirements, an appropriate percentage collection rate must be applied to the ‘relevant amount’ for Band D equivalent properties, in Gateshead and Lamesley respectively.
13. Challenges remain for residents due to the cost of living and energy crisis. The Council has during 2023/24 been able to maintain positive collection rates. For the year 2024/25 it is proposed to retain the 97.75% collection rate.

### **Calculation of Council Tax Base**

14. To calculate the Authority’s council tax base for both precepting purposes and council tax setting purposes, the relevant amounts as shown in Appendices 3 and 4 must be multiplied by the Authority’s estimated collection rate (97.75%) which in terms of Band D equivalents equates to 54,041.1 for Gateshead and 1,227.7 for Lamesley.

## **Business Rates Forecast**

15. Gateshead receives 50% of business rates income and pays 1% of the total amount to the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Authority. The Gateshead element of the estimated business rates base for 2024/25 is £41.284 million, based on central government estimates. The final business rates figure will be assessed as part of the NNDR1 form which is due to be returned by 31 January 2024.
16. **Resources:**
  - a) **Financial Implications** – These are set out in this Appendix. The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital confirms that the agreed council tax base will be used when calculating the amount to be raised from council tax in 2024/25, and the business rates forecast submitted to government will be used for setting the Council's budget for 2024/25.
  - b) **Human Resource Implications** – Nil
  - c) **Property Implications** – Nil
17. **Risk Management Implications** – There is a risk that the tax base is set at a level which results in a shortfall of income when council tax rates are set, particularly in the current economic climate. However, this has been minimised through the work that has been carried out in estimating the adjustments described in paragraph 7 and the application of the collection rate described in paragraph 12, which is based on actual experience during the first three quarters of 2023/24.
18. **Equality and Diversity Implications** – Nil
19. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – Nil
20. **Climate Emergency and Sustainability** – Nil
21. **Human Rights Implications** – Nil
22. **Ward Implications** – The tax base covers the whole of Gateshead. The tax base for Lamesley covers the parish of Lamesley.

## APPENDIX 2

### **STATEMENT OF NUMBERS AND BANDS OF ALL DOMESTIC PROPERTIES**

#### **SHOWN IN THE VALUATION LIST FOR GATESHEAD COUNCIL AS AT**

**29 November 2023**

<b>Band</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Numbers</b>
A	Up to £40,000	56,238
B	£40,001 to £52,000	13,127
C	£52,001 to £68,000	15,806
D	£68,001 to £88,000	5,946
E	£88,001 to £120,000	2,716
F	£120,001 to £160,000	897
G	£160,001 to £320,000	388
H	Over £320,000	49
		<hr/>
		95,167



### APPENDIX 3

#### CALCULATION OF RELEVANT AMOUNT (FULL YEAR BAND D PROPERTIES)

##### FOR GATESHEAD COUNCIL

Band	No. of Properties	Adjustments (Para. 7)	No. of Properties	Appropriate Fraction	Band D Equivalent Properties
A (disabled reductions)	0	160	160	5/9	89
A	56,238	-19,872	36,366	6/9	24,244
B	13,127	-2,489	10,638	7/9	8,274
C	15,806	-1,887	13,919	8/9	12,372
D	5,946	-548	5,398	9/9	5,398
E	2,716	-209	2,507	11/9	3,064
F	897	-71	826	13/9	1,193
G	388	-21	367	15/9	611
H	49	-29	20	18/9	40
	<hr/> 95,167	<hr/> -24,966	<hr/> 70,201		<hr/> 55,285
Base after collection rate at 97.75% to 1 decimal place					<b>54,041.1</b>

**APPENDIX 4****CALCULATION OF RELEVANT AMOUNT (FULL YEAR BAND D PROPERTIES)****FOR LAMESLEY**

<b>Band</b>	<b>No. of Properties</b>	<b>Adjustments (Para. 7)</b>	<b>No. of Properties</b>	<b>Appropriate Fraction</b>	<b>Band D Equivalent Properties</b>
A (disabled reductions)	0	4	4	5/9	2
A	827	-336	491	6/9	327
B	347	-79	268	7/9	209
C	428	-52	376	8/9	334
D	203	-11	192	9/9	192
E	85	-12	73	11/9	89
F	50	-6	44	13/9	64
G	23	-1	22	15/9	37
H	2	-1	1	18/9	2
<hr/>					<hr/>
1,965					1,256
-494					
1,471					
Base after collection rate at 97.75% to 1 decimal place					<b>1,227.7</b>

<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>Performance Management and Improvement Framework – 6-Month Performance Report 2023/24</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>Darren Collins, Strategic Director, Resources and Digital</b>

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### **Purpose of the report**

1. This report sets out the 6-Month 2023/24 assessment of performance against the Council's Performance Management and Improvement Framework (PMIF) along with the comments made by Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Cabinet is asked to approve the 2023/24 6-Month performance report at Appendix 2. And note the key discussions and from the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees at Appendix 3.

### **Background**

2. The corporate approach to performance management and improvement was approved by Cabinet on 20<sup>th</sup> April and agreed by Council on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2021 with the draft measures and interventions agreed by Cabinet in October 2021. The PMIF has a clear focus on policy and priorities, delivery, measurement, and analysis of impact to support effective resource allocation and is based on Thrive and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

### **6 Month Reports 2023/24**

3. Analysis of performance has been undertaken for 1 April to 30 September 2023, against each of the six policy objectives of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Balanced Scorecard. High level analysis of performance highlighted several cross-cutting key issues which are set out in Appendix 1.
4. The 2023/24 6-Month performance report is at Appendix 2. The report outlines the challenges, achievements, actions, and resources for each policy objective. It also contains performance data including strategic and operational measures and is informed by qualitative and quantitative assessment to inform policy and resource decisions. In line with approach agreed with CMT, these have been informed by services.
5. Services provide this information and use this evidence to compare and analyse trend and craft appropriate action and responses. Where performance is highlighting a deviation from expected position this is highlighted in the analysis section with defined mitigation provided by services.
6. Each of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees considered the 6-Month performance report in its entirety and received a presentation on the development work around digital access to future PMIF data. A summary of the discussions at each OSC is also set out in Appendix 1.
7. A copy of the draft minutes from each Committee is at Appendix 3.

## **Proposal**

8. It is proposed that Cabinet consider and agree the performance report at Appendix 2 including the analysis, areas for improvement, and the key issues highlighted during discussions by Overview and Scrutiny Committees, which are summarised in Appendix 1.
9. These will be taken forward and the PMIF will be aligned to the Budget approach agreed by Cabinet. Further development will take place to address comments made by Overview and Scrutiny Committees, in preparation for the Year End performance cycle which will commence in April 2024.
10. The development of the PMIF is iterative and will be a tool used throughout the year to manage performance and improvement against priorities and see the impact of policy and resource decisions.

## **Recommendation**

11. It is recommended that Cabinet:
  - (i) Approves the 2023/24 6-Month performance report at Appendix 2.
  - (ii) Notes the key discussions and from the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees at paragraph 8 of Appendix 1 and in the minutes at Appendix 3.
  - (iii) Notes the ongoing development work being undertaken at paragraphs 9-11 of Appendix 1.

For the following reason:

- To ensure performance supports the delivery and achievements of Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives.

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**CONTACT: Lindsay Murray - Extension 2794**

### Policy Context

1. The proposal supports the Council's priorities for Thrive by setting out a framework to manage performance against its key priorities for thrive, tackle inequalities and the impact being made on delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The Performance Management and Improvement Framework (PMIF) analysis in the report informs future policy decisions as well as resource allocation to ensure these are focused on Council priorities as part of a broader evidence-based approach.
2. The Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy sets out the financial context for the Council's resource allocation process and budget setting. The proposals support the aims within the Strategy by aligning performance with the overall approach to the budget to support the financial sustainability for the Council ensuring that resources are deployed on the outcomes for making Gateshead a place where everyone Thrives.

### Background

3. Local authorities use performance management to identify how well they are delivering outcomes for local people. The Council's current performance framework has been in place for several years and has evolved over time.
4. The PMIF was agreed by Cabinet (20 April 2021) and Council (27 May 2021) that better reflects the priorities of the Council – the delivery of the Council's Thrive policy and Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
5. The engagement along with research into best practice was used to develop the PMIF and was agreed by Council in June 2021. The initial draft measures were considered and agreed by Cabinet in October 2021, with further updates to several measures agreed by Cabinet in July 2022. Since then, progress has been focused on the ongoing implementation and embedding of the framework and the reporting of performance to members, as well as working with services to ensure measures remain meaningful.

### 6-Month Performance Reports 2022/23

6. The analysis of performance for the 6-Month stage against each of the six policy objectives of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Balanced Scorecard is set out at Appendix 2. It outlines the challenges, achievements, actions, and resources for each policy objective. It also contains performance data including strategic and operational measures, resources, and risks.
7. Cross-cutting key areas highlighted by services are:
  - Budget pressures continue to provide a significant challenge.
  - Continuing demand pressures being faced by services, which are compounded by the ongoing recruitment and retention issues.

- The cost-of-living and high interest rates are impacting the financial challenges facing many residents.
  - The economic climate continues to make things difficult for many businesses in the borough.
8. Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the 6-Month performance report in its entirety and received an update on the establishment of the Office for Local Government (Oflog) and development of an additional digital approach for the presentation of PMIF data. A summary of the discussions for each OSC is set out below:

### *Corporate Resources OSC*

- Members raised several issues and discussion points including:
  - A query was raised on school exclusions, but it was agreed that this would be referred to Families OSC.
  - It was noted that the online dashboard was a very impressive, precise, and thorough piece of work, but needs to be user-friendly so more visuals and less wording would be helpful, to help interpret the themes.
  - Are there commonalities or un-commonalities between the Oflog data and the Councils PMIF, and how will this be managed.
  - The threat of cyber-attacks or a loss of IT access, and how the council would respond if we were victim to one.
  - Further detail required on the impact that the cost-of-living crisis is having on people's ability to -pay for care.
  - The government consultation on the standing charge applied to energy; residents attempting to save energy are still faced with high energy costs due to the standing charges.
  - Where the baselines are still yet to be determined by services, it was requested that this is resolved by the Year-End stage.

### *Families OSC*

- Members comments and discussions focussed around:
  - The online dashboard would be more helpful if there were less wording, and better visuals; important to remember it will be mostly used on iPads so needs to be set up for that. Members are keen to have input into the ongoing development of the dashboard.
  - The increase in the number of children eligible for free schools meals, and the decrease in the % of take up of school meals. Committee would like further detail on how we can improve this and ensure that pupils who are entitled are registered, and pupils who are receiving FSM take them up.
  - The number of pupils missing school sessions seems quite high – a breakdown showing individual schools required.
  - School exclusions has increased significantly, and it seems to be mainly due to academies – consideration needed around what can be done about this.

- Sought confirmation that the Council's still seeks to ensure that no looked after children are ever excluded from school.

#### *Housing, Environment & Healthier Communities OSC*

- Members asked for further information or clarity on:
  - A glossary of terms would be helpful within the online dashboard.
  - Oflog and homelessness / rough sleeping – would the online dashboard give us information on how many rough sleepers are in Gateshead and where they are.
  - The ongoing review of allocations policy by the strategic housing board – members were informed that there would be an update within the next few days.

#### *Care, Health & Wellbeing OSC*

- Members discussions focussed on:
  - The impact that the recent shift in government policy relating to the skill-level and salary required for migrants will have on Gateshead, and how this might affect our ability to perform.
  - Whether we are on track to meet our target in relation to the proportion of adults with a learning disability living in their own home or with their family, and how we are performing in comparison to geographical and statistical neighbours / national levels.
  - Safeguarding concerns that are raised but do not meet the criteria measure – how do we determine that they don't meet the criteria, and what happens with those reports.
  - Rough sleeping seems to be growing by the day nationally – although numbers in Gateshead are relatively low, it is still a big concern. Very challenging to help people given the current house prices.
  - Oflog seems to be yet another interference in local government which will produce no appreciable benefit.

#### **Further development and review**

9. The approach will be continually reviewed to ensure it is effective in enabling performance management and improvement towards better outcomes. The flexible, iterative approach that has been adopted to develop the PMIF, reflects the changing circumstances that the Council works within and aims to ensure that performance against priorities can be managed in the most efficient and pragmatic way being responsive to changing needs to ensure it will remain fit for purpose.
10. A review of the presentation of performance reports was undertaken with a reduction in narrative and an expansion in the number of data sets to improve trend analysis, so it meets the request of the Corporate Resources OSC for data to include as a minimum the baseline, previous, and latest data sets.
11. An online/digital format is in its development phase. This will aim to cluster measures around key priority areas and present a visual representation of the performance data

to be used alongside the analysis. This is a complex task and will involve areas across the Council, link to existing data approaches such as Local Index of Need (LloN) but will provide performance data at various levels from strategic to operational in an accessible way. It is proposed that this will be accessible via the intranet initially, and internet eventually.

### **Alternative Options**

12. An alternative option would be to identify alternative actions to address performance, however the activities recommended in the report are based on analysis of performance data and would support delivery of the Council's Thrive policy.

### **Consultation**

13. All Overview and Scrutiny Committees have considered the 6-Month performance reports. A copy of the minutes of each Committee is attached at Appendix 3. The Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council have also been consulted on the proposal.

### **Implications of Recommended Option**

#### **14. Resources**

- a. **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital confirms that the proposal will have no direct financial implications as a result of this report. The proposal aims to align performance with resources and enable better informed decision making.
- b. **Human Resource Implications** – There are no Human Resource implications arising directly from this report, although there are areas relating to employees highlighted in the report.
- c. **Property Implications** – There are no property implications arising directly from this report.

15. **Risk Management Implication** - The proposals will reduce the risk of the Council not achieving its priorities by enabling effective performance management across strategy corporate priorities.

16. **Equality and Diversity Implications** – There are no direct equalities and diversity implications arising from this report, however the framework has a focus on addressing inequalities.

17. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – There are no crime and disorder implications arising directly from this report.

18. **Health Implications** – While there are no direct health implications arising from this report, the PMIF is based on the six policy objectives within the Health and Well-being Strategy so will help to manage performance at a strategic level across a range of wider determinants of health.



19. **Climate Change and Sustainability Implications** – There are no climate change implications arising directly from this report, though the PMIF will seek to manage performance across a range of strategic priorities including climate change. There are no sustainability implications arising directly from this report.
20. **Human Rights Implications** – There are no human rights implications arising directly from this report.
21. **Ward Implications** – There are no implications for a specific ward arising directly from this report, though the framework will include a geographical focus on performance where appropriate.

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# DRAFT

**Please note this document is regularly being updated**

# GIVE EVERY CHILD THE BEST START TO LIFE – POLICY OBJECTIVE 1

Strategic performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target		Operational performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target	
% of pupils eligible for free school meals	26.44% Oct 2021	28.37%	28.64%	Tracking		% take up of free school meals in primary schools	72% (2021)	76.9%	72%	Maintain / increase	
Gap in Life expectancy at birth male/female Inequality in life expectancy at birth Males/Females	10.7 (M) 9.6 (F) 2017-19	10.8 (M) 8.8 (F) 2018-20	Annual	Tracking		% of Gateshead local authority schools graded good or outstanding in relevant categories	Reporting to be developed				
Children in relative low-income families (under 16s) compared to England Average	19.1% 2019/20	24.2% 2021/22	Annual	Tracking		% of Early Help cases closed with 'all needs met' as an outcome	55.36%	61.04%	58.54%	Maintain / Increase	
% of state funded Gateshead schools graded good or outstanding	93% (21)	91.4%	93%	Tracking		% of cases closed to early help which remain out of statutory services at 6 months and 12 months	88.83% / 81.59%	90.71% / 88.15%	91.54% / 88.81%	Increase	
Hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries in children (0-14 years)	113.3 per 10,000 (2019/20)	111.4 per 10,000 (2021/22)	Annual	Reduce		Increase in the number of families who are offered the opportunity to be part of a Family Group Conference	163 referrals submitted for FGC	468 referrals submitted for FGC	544 referrals submitted for FGC	Increase	
Reduction in number of children who need to be taken in to care	184 / 46.7 per 10,000 (31/03/21 for previous 12 months)	229 / 59.5 per 10,000 (31/03/23 for previous 12 months)	219 / 56.9 per 10,000 (30/09/23 for previous 12 months)	Reduce		Increase in the number of families to take up the offer to be part of a family group conference	79 closures with outcome 'FGC Successful'	192 closures with outcome 'FGC Successful'	293 closures with outcome 'FGC successful'	Increase	
Reduction in number of children who need to become the subject of a Child Protection Plan	287 / 72.8 per 10,000 (at 31/03/21 for previous 12m)	300 / 77.9 per 10,000 (@31/03/23 for previous 12 months)	286 / 74.2 per 10,000 (30/09/23 for previous 12 months)	Reduce		Increase in the number of families supported through the FDAC (Family Drug and Alcohol Courts)	5 families supported (End Sept 21)	13 Families being supported (March 23)	21 families supported (Sep 23)	Increase	
Reduction in the rate of children who need to be referred to Children Social Care services	1,621 / 411.6 per 10,000 (31/03/21 for previous 12m)	2,054 / 535.5 per 10,000 (31/03/23 for previous 12 months)	1,930 / 501.3 per 10,000 (30 Sep 23 for previous 12 months)	Reduce		Reduction in the average time between a child entering care and being made subject of a Special Guardianship Order	427 Days (as at 31/03/2022)	357 days (as at 31/03/23)	380 days (as at 30/09/23)	Reduce	
School readiness: % of children achieving a good level of development at the end of Reception and maternal health	73.4% (2018/19)	63.8%	Annual	Increase		The percentage of children assessed by Children Social Care, where 3 or more ACE (Adverse Childhood Experience) factors were identified	Reporting to be developed				
School readiness % of children with free school meals achieving a good standard of development at end of reception	52.7% (2018-19)	49.1%	Annual	Increase		Reduction in the average time between a child entering care and placed for adoption	416 days (at 31/03/21, previous 12 months)	395 days (@ 31/03/2023) for previous 12 months	386 days (@ 30/09/23) for previous 12 mths	Reduce	
No of permanent exclusions from Gateshead schools	42 (2019/20)	50 (2021/22)	94 (2022/23)	Reduce		% smoking at time of delivery	12.58% (2018/19)	11.% (2022/23)	Annual	Reduce	
No. of children looked after by the local authority	435 (2021/22)	529 (2022/23)	512	Reduce		6-8-week breastfeeding rate	38.7% (2019/20)	40.9% (2022/23)	Annual	Increase	
						Pupils who have missed 10% or more of school sessions during an academic year (known as Persistent Absentees)	13.3% (20/21)	24.3% (21/22)	21.2% (Autumn 22 & Spring 23)	Reduce	

## Investment Strategy & Resources

Revenue 2023/24 (20% of total gross budget)		5yr Capital
Gross £000	Net £000	£000
139,384,464	54,135,352	36,383

Figures based on 2023/24 budget setting

## Risks to Achievement rated after mitigation

- Failure to safeguard vulnerable children & adults **Amber**.
- Non-compliance with statutory requirements resulting in prosecution & subsequent penalties **Amber**.
- The Council is hit by a Cyber-attack that compromises confidentiality, integrity & availability of information **Amber**.
- Failure to address financial gap in the Council's budget & systems **Amber**.

## Geographic Impact

The latest available LIoN data can be found online – [Explore the data](#)

**WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE? – Our Outcomes**

All children start school ready to learn

All permanent school exclusions are prevented

The circumstances which result in adverse childhood experiences are prevented

Parents can access support proportionate to meet their needs, to be the best parents they can be

**CHALLENGES / AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT****Strategic**

- Whilst there has been a reduction in the number of children who need to be taken into care in last 12 months, the overall rate per 10,000 remains higher than regional comparators and statistical neighbours.
- There continues to be a challenge in ensuring sufficient placements for children in care locally.
- There has been an increase in the numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals to 28.6% from 27% the previous year with take up of FSM from those eligible in primary schools steady at 72%, with seasonal increases during the autumn/winter terms. 24.2% of under 16's lives in relative low-income families with 19.5% in absolute low-income families.

**Operational**

- There has been an increase in the number of children who have been closed to early help and not required statutory services for 6 & 12 months.
- Special Guardianship Orders for children requiring care from family members have seen an increase in the average time taken.
- Children who are persistently absent from school currently matches the national average and this is monitored closely.
- There has been a significant increase in the number of children permanently excluded from school in the last year with persistent disruptive behaviour cited as the reason for 43% of these.

**AREAS OF EXCELLENCE****Strategic**

- The overall rate of children in care is falling as Edge of Care strategies including the work of the pre-birth; FDAC and family group conferencing teams are being seen to have impact. Less children are entering care and more children are leaving care, which is bringing the rate back in line with comparators.
- September saw the launch of the regional fostering hub, which will bring combined marketing and initial on-boarding of proposed foster carers across all 12 NE local authorities to support increased sufficiency.
- Gateshead chosen as one of 4 local authorities to pilot the new Family Network Project announced by DFE in July 23. This comes with significant new investment to help to build on the Edge of Care strategies and work to support families to care for children within their own networks and reduce the risk of children coming into local authority care.
- Number of schools graded as Good or Outstanding exceeds 90%.
- Year 1 & 2 phonic screen outcomes are beginning to return to pre pandemic levels nationally and for Gateshead. The widest gaps between Gateshead and national are for children whose home language is not English.
- KS1 assessments at age 7 -- schools have focussed on the basics of reading, writing and mathematics to support children to catch up. Outcomes are slowly beginning to return to levels seen pre pandemic nationally and for Gateshead. Gateshead outcomes are not significantly different from national other than for children whose home language is not English.
- In KS2 assessments at age 11- pupils outperformed their peers nationally in all subjects. Reading outcomes have returned to pre pandemic levels nationally with Gateshead outcomes higher than this. There has been a significant work in schools to close gaps in reading. The impact on writing outcomes continues to be seen at a national and local level.

**Operational**

- There has been an increase in the number of children who have been closed to early help and not required statutory services for 6 & 12months.
- The launch of the new kinship ready training programme for new Kinship carers and the launch of the young people's kinship kids' group.
- Gateshead children's teams and foster carers were recognised for their outstanding achievements at this year's National Children and Young People Awards. Two foster carers, our Social Work Academy and the Kinship Team were all successful in winning awards.

**ACTIONS****Strategic**

- Work on the sufficiency strategy is progressing to target and updated strategy will be completed in December 2023.
- An Alternative Provision Strategy is being developed in order to reduce the number of Permanent Exclusions.
- The Working Together to Improve Attendance Strategy document will be launched with schools / parents to support school attendance.

**Operational**

- Family Hubs launched across the council which will increase opportunities for early identification of needs and reduce the number of families escalating into statutory services for support.
- We are currently in the process of registering one solo residential children's home and one three bedded children's home to support sufficiency or children in care.
- Continued focus on embedding the Edge of Care and reunification strategies to support the continued reduction of children needing to come into care.
- Work is ongoing to increase free school meal take up within primary schools including social media promotions for themed days and working with unit managers to develop the new menu. A themed day calendar is being created for the new academic year which will offer alternative themed menus.

**SUMMARY****What is this telling us about how we are performing across Gateshead?**

The rate of referrals into social care has decreased over the last 12 month, as well as the rate of children becoming subject to a child protection plan and the rate of those becoming cared for. We have seen that the numbers of children coming into our care are more likely to be between the age of 10 to 15 (41%) compared to 31% the previous year. The % of Early help cases that were closed with an outcome of "all needs met" has increase from 60.79% in March 2022 to 61.04% in March 2023.

Children in the primary years continue to achieve well in comparison to their peers nationally. However, it is not as positive in key stage 4. Secondary schools are permanently excluding at a higher rate than historically.

**What will we be doing in response?**

Strengthening the edge of care response and intensifying work with families in crisis is a priority. Through the development and implementation of a reunification strategy, tackling the issue of reunification will ensure that children are not remaining in care for long than is necessary.

**Future Direction of Travel and Expectations over the next six months**

We anticipate that the rate of children in our care will continue to fall over the next 6 months as the edge of care strategies embed.

**RESOURCES**

As part of the budget approach and MTFS there is a clear plan of interventions to support a reduction in areas relating to placement costs for children in our care and the need for home to school transport - both areas of budget pressure. This includes a revised & refreshed Placement Sufficiency Strategy and a new SEND Strategy & Improvement Plan.



ENABLE ALL YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS TO MAXIMISE THEIR CAPABILITIES AND HAVE CONTROL OVER THEIR LIVES – POLICY OBJECTIVE 2

Strategic performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target		Operational performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target	
Year 6: Prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity) Child and Maternal Health	38.5% (2019/20)	24.1% (2022/23)	No new data	Reduce		Households with dependent children owed a duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act Child and Maternal Health	To be set	New measure for 2023/24	216	Reduce	NEW
Gap in life expectancy at birth male/female Inequality in life expectancy at birth males/female (Annual)	10.7 (M) 9.6 (F) (2017-19)	10.8 (M) 8.8 (F) (2018-20)	Annual	Tracking		Hospital admissions caused by unintentional & deliberate injuries in young people (aged 15-24 per 10,000)	155.8 (England 2020/21)	149.3 per 10,000 pop (2021/22)	Annual	Reduce	
						Children 5-17 years attending holiday activities	126 (Summer 2020)	624 (Full year 2022)	474 (Apr-Sept 23)	Increase	
People reporting low life satisfaction % (compared to England Average)	6.1% (20/21 Eng Avg.)	5.6% (2021/22)	Annual	Reduce		Inequality in attainment between children looked after by the local authority & those not KS4 Attainment 8 score	CLA 21.8 NCLA 47.2 (2018/19)	CLA 20.4 NCLA - 50.2%	CLA = 21.9 NCLA = 47.9 (Oct 23)	Reduce	
16-18-Year-olds not in education, employment, or training (NEET)	5.2% (Dec 19-Feb 20)	4.7% (Dec-Feb 22/23)	4.8% (Mar-Aug 23)	Reduce		Education Health and Care Plans issued within 20 weeks (Including / Excluding exception) 97% Inc exception	97% Incl. exceptions. 93% Excl. exceptions (2021)	92.2% incl. exceptions. 89.5% excl. exceptions	89.1% inc. exceptions. 89.1% exc. Exceptions	Increase	
19-24 year olds NEET % (Marmot)	To be set	50.8 per 100,000 (18/19-20/21)	Annual	Reduce	NEW						
GCSE achieved 5-9 including English & Maths (%)	To be set	16.3% (2021/22)	Annual	Increase	NEW	Successful completions from substance misuse treatment	Opiates 20%. Non-Opiate 41%. Alcohol 61%. Non-Opiate & Alcohol 43% (2020/21)	Opiates 22%. Non-Opiate 46%. Alcohol 57%. Non-Opiate & Alcohol 39%	Annual	Increase	
Inequality in attainment between children eligible/ not eligible for FSM KS1 Expected Level	FSM 46% NFSM 70% (2018/2019)	FSM 33.2% NFSM 58.1%	FSM 40.8% NFSM 61.9%	Reduce							
Inequality in attainment between children eligible for and not eligible for free schools KS2 (RWM Expected Standard)	FSM 52% NFSM 73% (2018/19)	FSM 40.0% NFSM 67.8%	FSM 46.5% NFSM 71.0%	Reduce		% of 16- & 17-year-olds taking part in education and training that meets the Governments Raising the Participation Age (RPA) requirement	91% (2021)	New measure for 2023/24	Annual	Increase	NEW
% of physically inactive adults compared to England Baseline*(Musculo-skeletal conditions)	22.9% (England 2019/20)	27.4% (2021/22)	Annual	Reduce		Smokers that have successfully quit at 4 weeks compared to England Average	1,808 (2019/20 Eng Avg)	1661 (2019/20)	Annual	Increase	
Admission episodes for alcohol-specific conditions - Under 18s per 100,000	50.5 per 100,000 (17/18 - 19/20)	50.8 per 100,000 (18/19 - 20/21)	Annual	Reduce		% of eligible adults with a learning disability having a GP health check	52.3% (England 2018/19)	66.2% (2018/19)	Annual	Increase	
Smoking Prevalence in adults compared to England Average Baseline	14.7% (2019/20)	16.3% (2021/22)	Annual	Reduce		Adult Social Care Self-reported user experience: ASCOF 3A Overall Satisfaction of people who use services with their care and support	64.2% (2019/20)	65.4% (2022/23)	Annual	Increase	
Those with learning disabilities in suitable accommodation & supported into paid employment	8.88% (2020/21 provisional)	9.2% (March 23) (provisional)	5.3% (cumulative at 6m stage)	Increase		ASCOF 3B overall satisfaction of Carers with social services	43.6% (2018/19)	42.8% (2021/22)	Annual	Increase	
						% of adaptations fitted to a client's home, and which have made a positive difference to their life	100 (2022/23)	100 (2022/23)	100	Increase	
Proportion of adults with a learning disability who live in their own home or with their family	82.94% (2020/21)	80.2% (Mar 23)	38.1% (cumulative at 6m stage)	Increase		Social isolation % of adult social care users who have as much social contact as they would like	52.3%	47.0% (2022/23)	Annual	Increase	
Total no. of accessible and adaptable homes built from 1st April 2021/22 baseline	10	3	10 (2022/23)	Increase		% of social care users aged 18+ with personal budgets / direct payments:	98.29% (20/21)	97.09% (22/23)	96.5% (Sept 23/24)	Increase	
Number of volunteers recruited through the Volunteer Centre	To be set	326	Annual	Increase	NEW	ASCOF 1C part 1a (receiving self-directed support)	98.61% (20/21)	100.00% (22/23)	97.1% (Sept 23/24)	Increase	
Number of organisations supported to provide/improve volunteering experiences	To be set	139	Annual	Increase	NEW	ASCOF 1C part 1b (carers receiving self-directed support)	20.5% (20/21)	17.8% (22/23)	18.1% (Sept 23/24)	Increase	
Number of new volunteer roles created	To be set	60	Annual	Tracking	NEW	ASCOF 1C part 2a (receiving direct payments)	63.89% (20/21)	77.14% (22/23)	76.5% (Sept 23/24)	Increase	
						ASCOF 1C part 2b (carers receiving direct payments for support direct to carer					

Investment Strategy & Resources

Revenue 2023/24 (28% of total gross budget)		5yr Capital
Gross (£000)	Net (£000)	£000
192,638,012	99,447,357	19,891

Figures based on 2023/24 budget setting

Risks to Achievement rated after mitigation

- Failure to safeguard vulnerable children & adults **Amber**
- Non-compliance with statutory requirements resulting in prosecution & subsequent penalties **Amber**
- The Council is hit by a Cyber-attack that compromises confidentiality, integrity & availability of information **Amber**
- Failure to manage demand and expectations could result in the Council not achieving its Thrive agenda **Amber**
- Failure to address financial gap in Council's budget & systems **Amber**

Geographic Impact

The latest available LIoN data can be found online –

[Explore the data](#)

**WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE? – Our Outcomes**

All young people are resilient, with good physical and mental health and wellbeing  
Gateshead is a positive place in which everyone's mental health and wellbeing can flourish  
communities and networks

All young people are ready and appropriately skilled for the workplace  
Everyone is able to be an active part of their community and feel connected to

**CHALLENGES / AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

**Strategic**

- We recognise that the percentage of people receiving direct payments for social care in comparison to commissioned services (18.1%) is below the national average (24%). More work is needed to increase accessibility and availability of direct payments to meet national averages.
- The number of people awaiting a Care Act assessment or reassessment is still high but are routinely risked assessed for complexity of needs. Options are being explored to find both a short-term solution to reduce waiting list numbers but also consider the long-term solution to avoid a build-up of waiting lists in future.
- We have seen the total number of people in residential care reduce however the number of new admissions to residential care remains at previous levels.
- There remains a lack of suitable specialist accommodation for people with complex care needs.
- People with learning disability supported into suitable paid employment was 5.3% and this is down from this time in the previous year when the figure was 7.6 %
- Recruitment and retention issues continue to be a challenge across the Adult Social Care workforce.
- There is a large volume of Adult Safeguarding Concerns being referred into ASC, of which 46.4% do not meet the criteria for Safeguarding Duty to apply.

**AREAS OF EXCELLENCE**

**Strategic**

- A significant reduction in the amount of people waiting for availability of a care service.
- Capacity and performance have also increased in our in-house reablement services which has helped prevent people needing long term social care support.
- The overall number of people in residential/nursing care has reduced to its lowest levels since prior to the pandemic. This has resulted in a noticeable reduction in ASC's expenditure on residential/nursing care.
- Integrated Adults and Social Care Services department have produced a new departmental strategy for the next 5 years and developed an action plan which will be reviewed and updated annually. The annual review of the action plan will feed into the publication of a Local Account for the service.

**Operational**

- Trainee models for Social Work and Occupational Therapy has brought in new recruits to our assessment teams and work for the service whilst undertaking a degree apprenticeship. This has helped with recruitment and capacity issues whilst growing our professionally registered workforce for the future.
- Our Trainee models have been recognised as national best practice by DHSC.
- The development of the Dementia Care specific apartments at Watergate Court has been recognised in the Nursing & Residential Care journal.
- The work the Council sponsors on Digital Inclusion has been nominated for a Dynamo NorthEast tech sector award.
- All of the Councils in house care services continue to be recognised as Outstanding/Good by the CQC.

**ACTIONS**

**Strategic**

- **Home First** - we want people to live as independently as possible with as little restriction on their liberty. We have a range of housing with care options that allow people to choose to live with their own front door, whilst having support on hand, however we want to do more:
  - continue to explore the existing and future needs of our population and develop further housing options which focus on the home first principle.
  - work closely with our housing & planning to future proof the offer with additional extra care facilities and other alternatives, including how we can use technology.
  - a Domiciliary Care market that focuses on enablement and reducing people's need for support, with direct payments more accessible to use as they wish to meet their needs.
  - Work with NHS and VCSE colleagues to ensure that the needs of Caregivers are fully embedded within Discharge processes.
- Work closely with our housing and planning colleagues to future proof the offer with additional extra care facilities and other alternatives, including how we can use technology.
- Have a vibrant domiciliary care market that focuses on enablement and reducing people's need for support, with direct payments more accessible for people to use as they wish to meet their needs.
- Work with NHS and VCSE colleagues to ensure that the needs of Caregivers are fully embedded within Discharge processes.
- Funding ringfenced for a direct payment support service. A project between finance and social care has started to implement access and increase direct payment support service.
- An LGA Peer review scheduled to seek to help the Council deliver good support to local people and assist with preparation for a CQC Inspection.
- NDTi development programme to commence which will include development support, research, change, leadership development and evaluation.
- Reablement - Sister Winifred Laver Promoting Independence Centre to open.
- A service restructure and creation of new heads of function will provide a greater support to manage and implement strategic change and policies.

**Operational**

- Implementation of the new adult social care system, Mosaic, continues to bring significant amounts of change across the area.
- The creation and appointment of CQC posts within the ASC Development Team will assist ASC in its preparation for CQC Inspection.
- The SAB is developing a system wide data set and there will be targeted interventions to address below threshold referrals.
- Relaunch of the Voiceworks programme will address the reduction in people with a learning disability supported into paid employment.

**SUMMARY**

**What is this telling us about how we are performing across Gateshead?**

The density of needs presented by people continues to increase. This complexity is requiring increasing levels of support and significantly impacts on budgets and the funding from adult social care required. Waiting lists for assessments and packages of care are monitored and robust risk management arrangements are devised and put in place.

**What will we be doing in response?**

We are working to address the waiting times for assessments. The increasing technological progress in assistive technology within in-house care services will be explored with the aim of reducing the numbers in residential care.

**Future Direction of Travel and Expectations over the next six months**

This is a challenging time for Adult Social Care nationally with many competing demands and priorities. The response to these challenges will be managed through the work we are doing and the longer-term impacts and emerging pressures around budget, staffing and complexity of need continue to be monitored and responded to.

**RESOURCES**

A zero-based budget review is being undertaken with a specific focus on Older People Residential Care, Hospital Discharge to Assess, Mental Health and Section 117 funding, Complex Learning Disability community packages, Transforming Care, transitions and Provider Services.  
We are aiming to increase the number of people utilising a Direct Payment, carers accessing support, capacity in the commissioned home care service and reduction in residential care admissions.

Strategic performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target		Operational performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target	
Unemployment rate %	5.5% (2019/20)	4.7%	4.3%	Reduce							
Apprenticeship starts	1,760 (2018/19)	1,440 2022/23	1,110 (cumulative at 6m stage)	Increase		Individuals helped into work	266 (2021/22)	508 (2022/23)	269 (cumulative at 6m stage)	Increase	
Apprenticeship completion	940 (2018/19)	620 (2022/23)	480 (cumulative at 6m stage)	Increase		Jobs created	443 (2022/23)	443	293 (cumulative at 6m stage)	Increase	
Business births in Gateshead	800 (2019)	765 (2021)	Annual	Increase							
Total no of enterprises in Gateshead	5,270 (2019)	5,610 (2021)	Annual	Increase		Jobs safeguarded	370 (2022/23)	370	188 (cumulative at 6m stage)	Increase	
Jobs density in Gateshead	0.81 (2019)	0.85 (2021)	Annual	Increase							
Sustain Gateshead’s working age population at a minimum of 2018 baseline of 128,300	128,300 (2018)	121,800 (2022)	Annual	Tracking		Start-ups commenced trading	87 (2022/23)	87	28 (cumulative at 6m stage)	Increase	
Employment Rate	73.3% (2019/20)	70.6%	70.9%	Increase							
Economic Inactivity Rate	22.9%	26.6%	26.00%	Reduce		Business improvement & expansion projects completed	67 (2022/23)	67	40 (cumulative at 6m stage)	Increase	
Staying visitors to Gateshead	665,080 (2019)	645,000	Annual	Increase							
Visitors to Gateshead attractions	3.01m (2019)	4.129m	Annual	Increase		Inward investment success	14 (2019/20)	12	6 (cumulative at 6m stage)	Increase	
Gap in life expectancy at birth male/female: Slope index of inequality	2017-19 10.7 (M) 9.6 (F)	2018-20 10.8 (M) 8.8 (F)	Annual	Tracking							

Investment Strategy & Resources		
Revenue 2032/24 (1% of total gross budget)		5yr Capital
Gross £000	Net £000	£000
6,919,516	2,349	127,384

Figures based on 2023/24 budget setting

Risks to Achievement rated after mitigation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Failure to attract inward investment and deliver sustainable economic growth <b>Amber</b></li><li>The Council is hit by a Cyber-attack that compromises confidentiality, integrity &amp; availability of information <b>Amber</b></li><li>Failure to address financial gap in the Council's budget &amp; systems <b>Amber</b></li></ul>

Geographic Impact
The latest available LIoN data can be found online – <a href="#">Explore the data</a>



## WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE? – Our Outcomes

All working age residents have access to good quality, sustainable work with decent pay and conditions

All people in low paid, low skilled jobs have opportunities to improve their skills base so they can more easily achieve personal progression and attain an improved standard of living

### CHALLENGES / AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

#### Strategic

- The economic climate continues to make things difficult for many businesses. Government increased the support to be awarded to retail, hospitality and leisure businesses by increasing the rates discount for these businesses from 50% in 2022-23 to 75% in the current financial year. The business rates multiplier was also frozen meaning that many businesses would not have more to pay in rates for this year.
- Economic inactivity has fallen to 25% of the working age population in Gateshead but still remains higher than pre-pandemic levels and long-term sickness continues to be the primary reported reason. A new 'Universal Support' programme has been launched to help long-term sick and disabled people who face barriers to employment.

#### Operational

- Rising cost of doing business resulting in delays in business investment activity.
- Strong demand for support from residents wanting to explore business start-up and self-employment - rising cost of living making people explore additional means of boosting income.
- Demand for business workspace outstripping supply.
- Disruption in provision of business support programmes due to transition from EU funding to UKSPF.

### AREAS OF EXCELLENCE

#### Operational

- Expanded Strategic Account Management Programme engaging key employers to attract and retain investment and jobs and to promote responsible business practices.
- Business Centres operating with high levels of occupancy.
- Coordinated approach with LA partners to achieving a consistent NE UKSPF funded business support offer.
- 490 residents benefited from information advice and guidance to help them access good work and develop new skills.
- Over 500 residents took up the offer of ongoing, intensive employment support from Working Gateshead to help them prepare for, return to and progress in work.
- Launched the 'Live Well, Work Well' challenge fund to help VCSE organisations invest in tackling economic inactivity in communities.
- Helped 49 refugees start work by delivering specialised employment support designed to identify transferable skills, boost work experience and understand employer expectations in the UK.

### ACTIONS

#### Operational

- Increase the rate of business formation particularly among underrepresented groups.
- Launch of UKSPF funded Business support programme.
- Capitalise on strengths in immersive technologies: Launch of IMMEX City Programme and Advanced Media Production Studio at PROTO.
- Help reduce the employment gap for more marginalised groups through specialist employment support for people with multiple barriers to employment and care experienced young people.
- Match labour market supply to demand by engaging employers and promoting the recruitment of residents disadvantaged in the labour market.
- Join-up local employment support with new regional and national employability programmes for refugees and asylum seekers.

### SUMMARY

#### What is this telling us about how we are performing across Gateshead?

The wider economic conditions nationally continue to impact locally on many businesses and consumers. Economic inactivity has fallen but is still above re-pandemic levels.

#### What will we be doing in response?

Work is continuing to support all areas of the workforce including more marginalised groups with links being established between specialist local support for employment and regional and national programmes.

#### Future Direction of Travel and Expectations over the next six months

The strong demand for support from residents wanting to explore business start-up and self-employment will continue and areas where support can be targeted will continue to be identified and provided.

### RESOURCES

Council lead for The Growth Fund, a £4.5m grant programme operating across Gateshead, Sunderland and South Tyneside to support business investment.

Managed £11.8m UK Shared Prosperity Fund commissioning projects to increase businesses formation, resilience, and growth, tackle economic inactivity, improve skills and deliver community regeneration.

Strategic performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target		Operational performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target	
All residents have the opportunity to thrive: % residents who are vulnerable	39.5%	34.1%	Annual	Reduce		Number of people/ families helped through locality partnership support to maximise household income	1,143	2241	1576 (cumulative at 6m stage)	To be set	
% residents who are just coping	29.5%	40%	Annual	Tracking							
% residents who are managing	13.3%	15.9%	Annual	Tracking		Rent collected from tenants as a % of rent due in the financial year	98.78% (2020/21)	97.79%	97.31%	98% +/- 2%	
% residents who are thriving	17.7%	10%	Annual	Increase		Households in Council Tax arrears	6,991 (Baseline 2021/22)	8,329	Annual	Reduce	
% of population income deprived (IMD)	16.7% (2019)	National data - every 4 years		Reduce							
£ Gap in average household income between highest and lowest areas of need in Gateshead	£27,043 (2021)	£28,302	Annual	Reduce		No of domestic properties supplied by District Energy Scheme	0	389	Annual	10,000	
Households in Fuel Poverty (%)	15.1% (2019)	14.2%	Annual	Reduce		Average number of days taken to process Housing Benefits claims and changes	8.91 (Sep 20)	5.96 (2021/22)	Annual	Reduce	
Gap in life expectancy at birth male/female Inequality in life expectancy at birth for Males / Females	10.7 (M) 9.6 (F) (2017-19)	10.8 (M) 8.8 (F) (2018-20)	Annual	Tracking		Average days taken to process Council Tax support claims and changes	13.98 (Sep 20)	11.29 (2022)	Annual	Reduce	

Investment Strategy & Resources

Revenue 2023/24 (7% of total gross budget)		5yr Capital
Gross £000	Net £000	£000
49,718,216	539,000	127,323

Figures based on 2023/24 budget setting

Risks to Achievement rated after mitigation

- Failure to attract inward investment and deliver sustainable economic growth **Amber**.
- The Council is hit by a Cyber-attack that compromises confidentiality, integrity & availability of information **Amber**.
- Failure to address financial gap in the Council’s budget & systems **Amber**.

Geographic Impact

The latest available LIoN data can be found online – [Explore the data](#)

CHALLENGES / AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT	AREAS OF EXCELLENCE	ACTIONS
<div> <div>Strategic</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Household Income Gap</b> - Using LloN data and CACI Household Income data for 2022 you get average household income in the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10% most in need areas = £26,031</li> <li>10% least in need areas = £54,333</li> <li>Gap = £28,302</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <div>Operational</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have seen more residents in higher banded properties than ever before contacting the Revenues Team, to report that they are struggling to pay which is an indication of how hard the cost-of-living crisis is having on people who were normally able to pay without ever contacting the team.</li> </ul> </div>	<div>Operational</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rent Collection – 99.51% of rent was collected up to the end of Qtr 2.</li> <li>The cost of living and energy cost increases have had an impact on tenants' ability to pay rent, leading to increased demand for debt advice, and support on issues such as emergency top-ups for prepayment meters. The Rent and Income Team (RAIT) continue to assist tenants to access to financial advice and support.</li> <li>6,975 tenants are in receipt of Universal Credit (UC) as at the end Qtr 2 &amp; 3,192 of these have an Alternative Payment Arrangement in place either because of their vulnerability or a history of debt/arrears.</li> <li>The DWP made a change at the end of Qtr 2 in the landlord portal that limits our ability to request direct housing costs on some accounts.</li> <li>1,081 tenants are known to have benefit reductions for under-occupation and 93 are affected by the benefit cap.</li> <li>There have been 7 evictions this year for rent arrears.</li> <li>For a large part of the year resources were focussed on delivering financial support to our residents and the team paid out more than £13.5 million in Govt support to help our residents meet their rising energy and food costs.</li> <li>The team continues to work closely with Citizens Advice Gateshead in order to ensure residents receive any additional specialist support that they may need. The team were part of a data sharing pilot under the Digital Economy Act to help to reduce council tax arrears; HMRC provided employer information to the council to allow us to set up attachments of earnings. However, the number of matches was disappointingly low. The team will feed this back to central Government collection.</li> <li>Citizens Advice Gateshead have seen 1,339 clients in the 6 community hub venues, and a further 237 in outreach/drop-in venues.</li> </ul>	<div>Operational</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Council Tax Support</b> - this figure gradually increased over a period of time due to the knock-on effect of resources being used to deal with SIP and Energy Rebate Scheme. Management was aware of this earlier in the year and the resultant backlog of CTS claims. Performance has started to improve and now the service is staff fully following the appointment of three new processing staff at the end of February 2023.</li> </ul>
<div>SUMMARY</div> <p><b>What is this telling us about how we are performing across Gateshead?</b></p> <p>Overall, rent collection remains robust at over 99% of rent owed collected but national economic conditions are affecting families with enquiries for debt advise increasing and contact made with residents who previously paid but are now struggling.</p> <p><b>What will we be doing in response?</b></p> <p>Continue to work with external partners such as Citizen’s Advice to offer practical advice and support especially around the continued implementation of DWP changes and the impacts for those who are vulnerable.</p> <p><b>Future Direction of Travel and Expectations over the next six months</b></p> <p>Performance across all service areas continue to be monitored and support will continue to ensure that those who need advice support and guidance receive appropriate assistance.</p>		<div>RESOURCES</div> <p>Household income data indicator is dependent on continued purchase of LSOA level income data (Current supply is from CACI Paycheck)"</p>



CREATE AND DEVELOP HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES AND PLACES – POLICY OBJECTIVE 5

Strategic performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target		Operational performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target	
% of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting	32.3% (Jun 21)	31.6% (2022/23)	Annual	Towards 50%		% of Council homes empty for 6 months or more	0.55%	0.73%	0.66%	Reduce	
Net additional homes built (against annual housing requirement)	301 (2019/20)	468 (2022/23)	Annual	Increase		Activity to support community capacity building	New measure to be defined 2022/23				
% of new homes built that are affordable	13.8% (2020/21)	35.47% (2022/23)	Annual	Increase		No. of private dwellings identified as having a Category 1 hazard, and No. had this hazard removed	137	82	Annual	Tracking	
% of homes (remaining tenures) empty for 6 months or more	2.3% (2019)	2.24%	Annual	Reduce			87	56			
Gap in life expectancy at birth male/female: Slope index of inequality	10.7 (M) 9.6 (F) (2017-19)	10.8 (M) 8.8 (F) (2018-20)	Annual	Tracking		% of Council commercial fleet operating on electricity	2%	5%	12%	100%	
% of Council homes that meet the Decent Homes Standard	94.46% (2020/21)	96.3% (2022/23)	Annual	Increase		Progress towards GMBC being carbon neutral by 2030 (% achieved as per annual audit external assessment)	70%	70% (2022)	Annual	100% by 2030	
% of functional green space amenable to healthy lifestyles in the 25% most deprived wards	New measure to be defined 2023/24 – based on Marmot					No of trees planted on Council land per annum towards target	0	>20,000 cumulative	>21,000 cumulative	100,000 by 2030	
Number of public transport passenger journeys in Gateshead (millions)	26.749 (2020/21)	20.714 (2022/23)	Annual	Increase		% repairs completed within timescales: Highways (within 10 days)	71% (21/22)	82% (22/23)	86%	> 90%	
Gateshead areas compliance with Local Air Quality Management Framework	Compliant	Compliant	Annual	Compliant		% repairs completed within timescales: Streetlights (within 5 days)	91% (21/22)	88% (22/23)	95%	> 90%	
Total recorded crime in Gateshead	91.2 crimes per 1,000 pop (2021/22)	99.1 crimes per 1,000 pop (2022/23)	27 crimes per 1,000 pop (Jun 2023)	Reduce		Council emissions reduction from 2008 baseline	0% (2008)	63.6% (2021/22)	Annual	100%	
Recorded instances to the police of violence against the person - crimes	43.7 per 1,000 pop (2021/22)	44.4 per 1,000 pop (2022/23)	12.9 crimes per 1,000 pop (Jun23)	Reduce		% of the overall tonnage in recycled waste collected that is contaminated with non-recyclable materials	15.8% (20/21)	16.74% (22/23)	Annual	Increase	
Serious acquisitive crime incidents (excluding shoplifting)	4.8 per 1,000 pop (2021/22)	7.1 per 1,000 pop (2022/23)	Annual	Reduce		% of homes with SAP energy rating score above 65	64%	62.75%	Local Auth 90% Housing assc 72% Owner-occ 41% Private rent 48%	65 (+/- 3%)	
Anti-social Behaviour (All incidents)	38.4 per 1,000 pop (2021/22)	26.6 per 1,000 pop (2022/23)	15.8 per 1,000 pop	Reduce							
Anti-social Behaviour (All incidents NOT youth related)	40.1 per 1,000 pop (2021/22)	20.6 per 1,000 pop (2022/23)	14.7 per 1,000 pop	Reduce							
Anti-social Behaviour (All incidents youth related)	31.5 per 1,000 pop (2021/22)	30.0 per 1,000 pop (2022/23)	20.4 per 1,000 pop	Reduce							

Investment Strategy & Resources

Revenue 2023/24 (25% of total gross budget)		5yr Capital
Gross £000	Net £000	£000
170,579,794	34,245,786	160,8202

Figures based on 2023/24 budget setting

Risks to Achievement rated after mitigation

- Failure to address financial gap in the Council’s budget & systems **Amber**.
- Failure to provide a response during major incident impact on ability to deliver critical services or impact on a community. **Green**.
- The implications of EU Exit potentially affecting availability of resources to deliver services which may impact on communities **Amber**.
- Failure to manage demand/expectations could result in the Council not achieving its Thrive agenda **Amber**.

Geographic Impact

The latest available LIoN data can be found online –  
[Explore the data](#)

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE? – Our Outcomes

Local communities and social networks are strong

All residents have access to a high quality, affordable, warm and energy efficient home

All communities have access to good quality natural environment

CHALLENGES / AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Strategic

- **Crime:** iQuanta crime figures only available to Q1. Recorded crime is increasing in Gateshead. There has been a 6% increase in the number of crimes recorded in Q1 of 2023/24 in Gateshead, and an increase of 7% across the Northumbria Police Force area.
- **Housing:** The Repairs and Maintenance Improvement Plan Progress is updated regularly to HEHC. The purpose of the review was to improve productivity and performance, challenge convention and ensure that the form of the service is fit for purpose.
- With changes to staff designation in the Joint Local Agreement all trade operatives can move between the different areas of work as needed. New processes for each area have addressed this. Reports on progress will continue to be presented to HEHC OSC.
- More demand for housing from applicants with a high level of priority, including those with a homeless priority. Reduced availability of suitable single persons properties has led to increased use of temporary accommodation. Properties for larger households also rarely become available.
- There are more incidences of private sector tenants being served eviction notices, and then requesting a council house in the same area (as the family have support networks, or schooling considerations).
- “Managed migration” to UC of residents on legacy tax credits will commence in Tyne & Wear from January 2024. Cost of living crisis continues to have significant impact on council tenants’ ability to thrive and sustain tenancies.

Operational

- **Home Choice lettings system** implemented, with an issues log being worked through following go live. Most single person properties have been let directly to those in temporary accommodation or in need of direct lets. Fewer properties generally advertised as demand for direct lets is increasing.
- Vacant property levels remain high. Some property types are in less demand and more difficult to let, including flats reserved for those aged 50+ and older persons properties generally where access is poor. Options to reduce age restrictions for certain schemes are being explored. Two bed general needs flats are also becoming difficult to let once again because of affordability / benefit eligibility and under occupation benefit restrictions.
- **Rent arrears:** increasing linked to more tenants claiming Universal Credit & receiving benefits in arrears. DWP have recently added an extra step in the process when we request direct housing costs which now requires the resident to first confirm (in their online account) the amount we have asked for. This may lead to delays in setting up these payments.
- The Customer Involvement Team engaged with communities/residents about the **Tenant Satisfaction Survey** feedback, visiting 14 diverse community groups, gathering insightful feedback from them about their homes and neighbourhoods, which have been reported to GMT and other service managers. Themes of the feedback focused around; R&M, customer contact, comms and environment & neighbourhood, which reflected the key themes in the satisfaction survey feedback and highlighted that these remain issues for people.

AREAS OF EXCELLENCE

Strategic

- Assistance to tenants in response to rising energy bills and cost of living issues, working in partnership with agencies such as 2 Way Tenancy Solutions.

Operational

- **Decent Homes Standard** - The improvement in performance is linked to further increases in stock condition data for the Council's domestic properties and the completion of investment work in the 2022/23 Capital Programme.
- **Housing** - The number of properties vacant for 6 months or longer was 120 at the end of Quarter 2. (0.66% of the housing stock). Due to the need to reduce numbers in temporary accommodation (mostly single persons) the focus has been on letting suitable single persons properties rather than on the oldest vacant properties. To be on target, the number would have needed to be 30 fewer. 56 of the vacant properties were in the process of being advertised, offered and let.
- 32 are held in connection with major work, including structural work and work to ensure compliance and health and safety. (This includes 15 flats at Angel Court that we would expect to be able to let in second half of the year, and 7 flats at Melbourne Court where roofing work is required).
- 32 are undergoing general repair work.
- Q1 Update - There were 59 properties that had been empty for 6 months or more. This was an improvement from the start of the year when there had been 102. Of the 59:
  - 9 held pending decisions on future use (due to property issues); 31 still undergoing repair work; and 19 were Ready to Let at the end of the year and in the process of being let and 10 of these had been made ready in March.
  - 55 council properties had been vacant for 6 months or more at the end of Quarter 1.
  - 15 were available to be let and were going through the letting process;
  - 10 were held because of property condition or because they had been earmarked for a particular use; and
  - 30 were undergoing work. At the same point in 2021/22 there had been 96 properties vacant for 6 months or more.
- Rent collection of 97.31% at the half-year stage is very close to target of 97.50%. This is before the non-debit weeks in second half of the year when collection rate usually increases.
- Feedback from some of the sheltered schemes about their neighbourhood and estates has led to an estate tour to be undertaken by the Highways service, to understand the issues and impact they are having, directly on the customers.

ACTIONS

Strategic

- Ongoing contribution to council response to cost of living and energy bills.
- Review new allocations policy now that it has gone live and some of the impacts can be evidenced.

Operational

- Address Home Choice issues log.
- Respond to review of vacant property activity.
- Prepare for managed migration of tenants on legacy benefits to Universal Credit from Jan 2024
- Advice and support and referrals for tenants struggling to pay bills.
- **EVs** - 40 out of the owned 350 vehicle fleet are now electric, but there are 685 vehicles in use in total including the hires.

SUMMARY

What is this telling us about how we are performing across Gateshead?

Rent collection result at the half year stage is close to target despite the ongoing challenges of cost-of-living crisis and UC roll-out. However, rent arrears continue to increase and the further roll-out of Universal Credit planned for 2024 will increase arrears again. Management of property lettings has been challenging with the implementation of a new lettings system and an increasingly complex pattern of demand for properties. There has been a need for more single persons accomm to reduce use of temporary accommodation, whilst at the same time some other property types are becoming more difficult to let. Vacant property rent loss (3.46% of rent roll at half-year stage) still very high overall.

What will we be doing in response?

Specific support for tenants affected by managed migration to Universal Credit and a range of support measures for residents in relation to energy charges (see areas of excellence above). Review of void activity supported by external consultants carried out. Detailed actions to be developed. Recruitment for temporary additional capacity in lettings team to help with planned increase in vacant property repairs (i.e., more “Ready to Let” properties). Options to reduce age restrictions for certain schemes are being explored. Increasing the proportion of property adverts placed with preference to those applicants for housing with an assessed housing need. Registered Providers are being “onboarded” to new Home Choice lettings system. Housing Agreement (with providers) to be reviewed.

Future Direction of Travel and Expectations over the next six months

Rent collection is expected to remain a significant challenge. More vacant properties to be repaired and made ready to reduce vacant property rent loss and enable rehousing of applicants with housing needs.

RESOURCES

- Demand for debt advice is increasing; With partnership activity underway with Citizens Advice Gateshead.
- 111 new posts have been recruited to across Construction Services. This includes 53 new trade operatives. 6 new Building Technicians and 7 additional Customer Operations Staff. 6. This has enabled additional resource to manage the ‘front end’ of repairs.
- Recruitment of 2 x New Tenancy Assistants to support work to reduce vacant property levels.

Strategic performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target		Operational performance	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target	
Gap in life expectancy at birth male/female: Slope index of inequality (Annual)	10.7 (M) 9.6 (F) 2017-19	10.8 (M) 8.8 (F) 2018-20	Annual	Tracking		Population vaccination coverage - Flu (aged 65+) <i>Compared to England rate as baseline</i>	83.5% (2019/20)	82.0% (2022/23)	82.0% (Sept 23)	Increase	
						Age standardised mortality rate for deaths related to drug misuse - persons by local authority	11.3 per 100,000 - England (2018-2020)	11.5 per 100,000 - Gateshead (2019-2021)	Annual	Reduce	
Suicide rate Public Health Profiles <i>Compared to England rate as baseline</i>	10.4 per 100,000 (England 2018-20)	9.6 Per 100,000 (England 2019-21)	Annual	Reduce		Chlamydia detection rate / 100,000 aged 15 to 24 <i>Compared to England rate as baseline</i>	1,532 per 100,000 (2020)	2,046 per 100,000 (2022)	2,520 per 100,000 (Sept 23)	Tracking	
Admission episodes for alcohol-specific conditions - Under 18s <i>Compared to England rate as baseline</i>	50.5 per 100,000 (2017/18 - 2019/20)	50.8 per 100,000 (2018/19 - 2020/21)	Annual	Reduce		The proportion of older people (aged 65 and over) who were still at home 91 days after discharge from hospital into reablement/ rehabilitation services	77.97% (2020/21)	75.3% (2022/23)	71.3% (Some data from STROKE Team has not been supplied)	Increase	
Under 75 mortality rate - Cancer considered preventable- <i>Compared to England rate as baseline</i>	51.5 per 100,000 (England 2020)	66.7 per 100,000 (2021)	Annual	Reduce		% of clients using technology assisted care	Reporting to be developed – data available from January 2024				
Total households assessed who are owed a duty, who were sleeping rough at the time of application	35	24	8	Reduce		Total households initially assessed as owed a homeless duty	824 (2020/21)	1,690 households assessed / 1,588 owed homeless duty	714 (Cumulative at 6m stage)	1,750	
(A) % of households where homeless prevention duty ended that maintained / secured accommodation for 6+mths.	(A) 54%	(A) 47%	(A) 46.16%	Increase							
(B) % of these identified maintained/secured accommodation that remained in existing accommodation.	(B) 15%	(B) 17%	(B) 13.19%			% of council dwellings with a valid gas safety certificate	99.80%	100%	100%	100%	

Investment Strategy & Resources

Revenue 2023/24 (4% of total gross budget)		5yr Capital
Gross £000	Net £000	£000
25,026,828	17,198,947	1,775

Figures based on 2023/24 budget setting

Risks to Achievement rated after mitigation

- Failure to safeguard vulnerable children & adults **Amber**
- Non-compliance with statutory requirements resulting in prosecution & penalties **Amber**
- Council suffers Cyber-attack that compromises confidentiality, integrity & availability of information **Amber**
- Failure to manage demand & expectations could result in the Council not achieving Thrive agenda **Amber**
- Failure to address financial gap in the Council’s budget & systems **Amber**
- Failure to provide a response during a major incident impacting on ability to deliver critical services or an impact on a community. **Green**

Geographic Impact

The latest available LIoN data can be found online –

[Explore the data](#)



**WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE? – Our Outcomes**

To prevent and end homelessness, in all forms in Gateshead

All preventable ill health is reduced, to end the gap in inequalities within the borough

All residents will be able to access flexible health and care support, when and where they need it

**CHALLENGES / AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

**Strategic**

- Implementation of actions as set out for each of the four key aims within the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- Delivery of the Homelessness and Allocations Review.
- Remodelling and recommissioning of homelessness accommodation and support.

**Operational**

- Lack of accommodation options and support for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness including direct access into appropriate emergency and crisis accommodation.
- Increased length of time people spend in emergency B&B placements & in dispersed Temporary Accommodation due to system pressures.
- Significant overspend on B&B budget.
- No current 'gateway' system to manage and monitor supported housing provision, placements and throughput.
- Operational risks in sexual health have been listed corporately concerning the budget allocation on procurement, the agenda for change uplifts and the pressures being felt in the main service due to the impact of the Newcastle implementation of a new contract with a new (non-NHS) provider.

**AREAS OF EXCELLENCE**

**Strategic**

- Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy agreed by Cabinet January 2022.
- Homelessness Charter launched in March 2022.
- Campbell Tickell contracted and progressing Homelessness and Allocations Review.
- Successful bids for Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI), Rough Sleeper Accommodation Programme (RSAP) and Supported Housing Improvement Programme (SHIP) funding and funding allocated to improve response for victims of domestic abuse.
- Single homelessness accommodation programme (SHAP) funding bids submitted for over 25s- and 18–25-year-olds new build schemes.
- Completion of specialist and supported housing needs assessment and strategy and approval of both documents by Cabinet and Full Council in September 2023.
- Monthly partnership meetings established with housing providers of commissioned and non-commissioned accommodation to build relationships and monitor contracts and performance.

**Operational**

- Housing Safety - At Q2, 2023/24. 16,618 properties required a gas service and all 16,618 properties have a valid gas safety certificate. At Q2 - 16,734 properties required a gas service and one was outstanding at the end of September. This property entered the warrant process and has now been serviced as at 14.10.22.
- Proactive approach to homelessness prevention.
- Excellent partnership working established linked to homeless pathway for offenders and ex-offenders; delivery of private rented sector funded project for ex offender, and prevention pathways for hospital discharge and mental health.
- Strong partnership arrangements with Oasis Community Housing supporting those at risk of homelessness and rough sleeping with multiple or complex needs= low numbers of rough sleepers.
- Fortnightly rough sleeper action group – coordination of the rough sleeper pathway in Gateshead, including case management.
- Delivery of existing RSI and Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP) and RSAP funded accommodation programmes.
- Coordination and delivery of regional armed forces outreach service.
- Domestic abuse outreach work, including security and sanctuary measures preventing homelessness and increasing safety.

**ACTIONS**

**Strategic**

- Implementation of actions outlined in Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, which sets out our four key strategic aims with associated actions to tackle homelessness.
- Completing actions within the Homelessness and Allocations Project Plans including remodelling and recommissioning of homelessness accommodation and support and developing a homelessness Gateway.
- Implementation of action plan resulting from Temporary Accommodation review.
- With the addition of additional investment in Substance Misuse Services to support the 10-year drug strategy, developments continue to add capacity, diversity, and quality to the drug and alcohol treatment system in order to improve outcomes for those experiencing difficulties with substances in Gateshead.
- We continue to work collaboratively with NHS and wider partners on our comprehensive multi strand approach to reducing smoking prevalence. Working towards our aim of achieving an adult smoking prevalence of 5% by 2030.

**Operational**

- Development of a Gateway model and system.
- Reviewing approach to temporary and emergency accommodation including operational practice.
- Operational Service Plan 2023-25 underway including - review of policies and procedures, development of dashboards, integrating new projects into existing pathways.
- Creation of a Fixed Term Homeless Prevention Officer post supporting the development of the Refugee Pathway.
- Continue to embed and develop partnership working.
- The Integrated Sexual Health Service is undertaking research with UKHSA to understand the relatively recent and worrying increase in syphilis case – to be published next year.
- The Council is publishing a sexual health survey (Nov 23) to understand current opinions, issues, and unmet need in sexual health.

**RESOURCES**

- Earlier intervention can help to reduce health inequalities faced in later life and improve health and wellbeing outcomes, which can help to reduce demand for services.
- Two of the Priority Based Transformation Areas as part of the budget approach are ASC and Housing Improvement which will directly inform this priority objective.
- £1.2m PHWB savings 2021/22 of which £0.300m has been delivered after savings mitigation (£0.900m). Long term proposal is to transform Leisure & Library services to better meet local needs.
- Difficult challenges for Leisure services in year and 2022/23. Projected loss of Fees & Charges income is £4.2m due to impact of the pandemic.
- Locality Working pilot underway in Birtley. In short term it will support early intervention with longer term goal of improving life chances and reducing dependence on council services.
- Homelessness funding confirmed from Housing Prevention Grant for the next two years (£563,834 2023/24 and £594,390 2024/25). Annual/bi-annual grant allocations make long term investment decisions difficult.
- Successful funding bid for accommodation for ex-offenders for 2023-25 - £156,670 over two years.
- RSI funding secured until March 2025 (joint bid with South Tyneside) Gateshead allocation - £1.85m over three-year period.
- RSAP funding secured to 2024 to deliver 4 units (in partnership with Tyne Housing) with support for rough sleepers with complex needs. This is additional to the 15 NSAP properties already provided through a previous successful funding bid.
- SHIP funding of £574,096 secured for a three-year period to March 2025.

**SUMMARY**

**What is this telling us about how we are performing across Gateshead?**

The homelessness and rough sleeping strategy will support the Council and partner agencies to respond to the needs of those facing homelessness and rough sleeping by addressing the underlying causes of homelessness and providing appropriate accommodation and support. Ill health prevention by its nature considers the longer-term impacts of health and tackling issues that can result in poorer outcomes over the course of a lifetime. This means it can take a while for changes at population level to be seen.

**What will we be doing in response?**

Delivering on the four key aims and associated actions within the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy, which include remodelling and recommissioning accommodation and support as well as developing a gateway to support any new model. This will continue to be delivered in 23/24 through the Homelessness and Allocations Review. We are continuing to develop our response and therefore the full impact in the longer term still needs to be determined.

**Future Direction of Travel and Expectations over the next six months**

A new Allocations Policy and Tenancy Strategy have been developed as part of the Homelessness and Allocations Review and were approved by Cabinet in October 2022. We have also launched Gateshead's own choice-based lettings system 'Gateshead Home Choice' in June 2023. We are recommissioning supported accommodation and developing a 'marketplace' and 'homelessness gateway'.

# ORGANISATIONAL HEALTHCHECK – BALANCED SCORECARD – SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE

Ensuring the organisation is in the best position to deliver Council Priorities

EMPLOYEES	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target		CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target	
Employee survey – The Council is a good place to work ( <i>new measure in future on employee morale and Covid-19 impact</i> )	64% (2016)	73% (2018)	Planned for Q4 2023/24	90%		% Residents satisfied with Gateshead as a place to live	64% (2016)	64% (2018)	<i>No new data</i>	Increase	
No. of apprentices as a % of total employee headcount (as @ 31 March)	2.38%	2.91% (Mar 22)	<i>Annual</i>	6.5%		% satisfied with the Council	52% (2016)	42% (2018)	<i>No new data</i>	Increase	
% Apprenticeship levy spent (incl transfers) – towards March 2023	50%	71% (Mar 22)	<i>Annual</i>	70% by 2023		% residents who are vulnerable	39.5%	34.1%	31.8%	Reduce	
No. of Employee resignations as % of headcount	6.08% (2020/21)	5.11% (2022/23)	<i>Annual</i>	2.50%		% residents who are just coping	29.5%	40.0%	45.5%	<i>None set</i>	
Average Sickness Absence days per FTE	10.58	13.22 days (2022/23)	<i>Annual</i>	9 days		% residents who are managing	13.3%	15.9%	15.7%	<i>None set</i>	
Agency worker costs	<i>To be set</i>	1.85% (2022/23)	<i>Annual</i>	<i>To be set</i>		% residents who are thriving	17.7%	10%	7.0%	<i>None set</i>	
% employees completed GDPR training	0%	62.64% (Oct 22)	70.67%	95% by 23/24		% of stage 3 corporate complaints upheld	15% (2021)	24% (6/25) (Apr-Sep 22)	62.5% (25/40) (Apr-Sept 23)	10%	
% employees reporting their protected characteristics	35% 2020/21	55% 2022/23	<i>Annual</i>	70% by 2023		% of complaints upheld by the LG Ombudsman	12% (2020)	58% (2022/23)	9.09%	10%	
						No of complaints upheld by the ICO	1	0	0	1	
						No of compliments received about Council services	78 (2021)	276 (2022/23)	177 (6-month)	<i>None set</i>	
						Digital Customer Experience % of transactions online for Garden Waste; Birth/Deaths; Fly-tipping	76%	84%	82%	Increase	
						Number / £ of online payments	98,961 / £12.5m	104,583 / £14.17m	118,795 / £16.020M	Increase	
						Telephony contact-response answer rate (Average of Customer Contact Unit; Revs & Bens; Housing; ASCD)	86% (2021)	82%	81%	Increase	
FINANCE, GOVERNANCE & RISK	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target		EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT	Baseline	Previous	Latest	Target	
Revenue Budget position % over/ under	£281.9m (2023/24)	£1.1m over (0.39%) (Q1)	£2.8m over (0.99%) (Q2)	+/- 5%		CQC Council Registered Schemes (10 total)	Good	Good (2022)	9 Good / 1 Outstanding	Achieving	
Capital Programme Position £ Outturn	£112.1m 2023/24	£113.5 +1.2% (Q1)	£106.6m - 6.1% (Q2)	+/- 10%		Ofsted Learning Skills	Good	Good	<i>Every 4-6 years</i>	Achieving	
% Council spend with Gateshead based organisations	14.5% (2021/22)	15.82%	18%	Increase		Ofsted Children's Social Care Services	Good	Good	<i>No update</i>	Achieving	
% Invoices paid within 30 days	87.32% (2021)	75.25% (Sept 22)	86.61% (Sept 23)	95%		Ofsted SEND (Narrative assessment)	Significant strengths. No priority action	Strong & effective support provided	<i>No update</i>	Achieving	
% Council Tax collected	94.1% (20/21)	52.4% (cumulative)	51.87% (cumulative)	Increase		Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards	-	Compliant: 5 Progressing: 3 Noncompliant: 2	<i>Annual</i>	Achieving	
% Business Rates collected	88.4% (20/21)	53.9% (cumulative)	54.92% (cumulative)	Increase		Housing Health & Safety Compliance (New White Paper)	Progressing	Progressing	Compliant: 2 Progressing: 3 Noncompliant: 0	Achieving	
Financial Assessments and social care finance - % of debt in year collected	92.89% (20/21)	91.04%	54.56% (cumulative)	Increase		HSE Enforcement Actions	0 (2021)	1 FFI	0	Achieving	
Value of Services provided by the Council to schools	£11.2m	£12.2m	<i>Annual</i>	Increase		Council working in partnership (Survey VCS; Private and Public sector partners)	<i>Baseline to be set</i>	<i>No update</i>	<i>No update</i>	-	
No of serious data breaches reported to ICO	0 (2020/21)	2	8	Tracking		External Audit (Mazars)	Unqualified	Unqualified (2021)	<i>Annual</i>	Achieving	
Health & Safety near miss / hazard reports Council:	116 (45%)	116 of 362 (32%)	16 of 84 (13%)	Increase							
Schools:			149 of 250 (60%)								
Audit High Priority Recommendations made; and those outstanding	28 0	3 0	4 0	Tracking							





ENSURING THE ORGANISATION IS IN THE BEST POSITION TO DELIVER COUNCIL PRIORITIES – WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE? – Our Outcomes

Employees

- *Employee satisfaction – Gateshead Council a great place to work*
- *Diverse & inclusive workforce*
- *Maximising Employee Potential – opportunities to learn, develop and aid succession planning the Council (right first time)*

Finance, Governance & Risk

- *Revenue Budget, Capital Budget; HRA; Income received, Risk Housing); Compliance; Partners*

Customer Experience

- *Thrive – reduce the number of residents vulnerable or just coping*
- *Resident's satisfaction with Gateshead and Gateshead Council*
  - *Improved customer experience through better contact with*

External Assessment

- *External Audit; Regulators Assessment (Ofsted, CQC,*

CHALLENGES / AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- **Data Protection** – there has been increase in breaches reported to DPO team (66 at this point last year, 123 this year), linked to increased profile of DP team and better awareness of staff:
  - 2 email address error linked to autocomplete resulting in sensitive data being shared with unconnected parties; 1 posted data to wrong address (typo in house number); 2 paperwork left behind at location visited by council officers; 1 Occ. Health record lost within dept, subsequently found and wouldn't have been reportable; 1 social media post by employee which ICO deemed not a breach as business rather than personal information; 1 allegation of employee misconduct, not proven on investigation.
- There were 40 Chief Executive Reviews completed - 15 were not upheld with 25 upheld and compensation offered; £14,117.88 compensation agreed for 20 people. The value was determined by the Services in accordance with the circumstances of the complaints and the Local Government and Social Care and Housing Ombudsman's' guidance.
- Despite improved online functionality there is still a growth in volumes of incoming calls reflecting growing demand for Council services. Overall, the number of incoming calls has increased by 18,000 (7%) since the same period in 2022/23.
- Average call duration is longer than in the same period in 2022: calls to Repairs, Benefits, Revenues and Customer Services are typically 30 to 90 seconds longer.
- The team received an additional 2.5k telephone calls in the first 6m of this year in comparison to last year.
- Historically most payment enquiries were from residents living in properties in the lowest council tax band A whereas now we regularly receive contact from residents living in bands B, C, D and E who are finding it hard to maintain their council tax instalments.
- The cost-of-living crisis is also limiting the ability for people to pay for care. In terms of priority debts, a service user is more likely to pay for a service which can cut off (energy) than a service the Council has a duty to provide.

AREAS OF EXCELLENCE

- **DPO** – all areas highlighted in the audit report have now been met.
- There was 1 final decision made by the Ombudsman following the investigation of 11 complaints against the Council which was upheld – a significant decrease from the previous year.
- For most residents contacting the Council for transactional services, online has become the channel of choice. Typically, it is now the norm for well-designed online services to achieve a 70-90% uptake in comparison to the telephone. There are now over 100 processes that have a consistent customer experience via self-service which are also supported via the contact centre.
- There has been a 13% increase in the volume of online payments compared to the previous period last year. The strategy continues to be to make online payments available for all payment processes. New online payment processes have been added for Planning, building control and licensing over the last 12 months which has aided the increase of take up.
- Telephony – improvement has been seen in the answer rate within ASCD.
- A higher proportion of near misses is positive and a sign of a safety culture. Work related incidents only. Data also now includes schools, which was reported separately for 2023/24.
- No HSE enforcement action received for the last 6 months.

ACTIONS

- The Council is currently assessing when and how to bring forward a 'borough-wide' survey. This would incorporate how we currently work in partnership with our key stakeholders.
- Proposal to undertake an employee survey between Jan and March 2024, subject to approval.
- **DPO** - proposal to turn off autocomplete function in Outlook, 5 service specific training sessions delivered since May 2023.
- A large proportion of the staff who haven't completed GDPR training are casual staff and those without network logins. WD are actively working with services to ensure they understand the need for all staff to complete the module (whether this is the eLearning module or a handbook) and how this can be facilitated.
- Standard Debt recovery procedures due to restart this year after having been paused during 2020/21-2022/23.

SUMMARY

What is this telling us about how we are performing across Gateshead?

The cost-of-living challenges, high interest rates and economic climate are impacting many residents and businesses. Although the % rate of collection has fell, in cash terms we have collected more as have an extra £7m in council tax to collect in the current financial vs 2022-23. Residents who received council tax support saw their council bills reduced by £50 during 2022-23 but following a reduction in government funding this amount reduced to £25 in 2023-24 which means that residents with the lowest incomes now have more to pay.

What will we be doing in response?

We continue to issue reminders, court summonses and other recovery documents promptly when a resident fails to pay and have already issued more recovery documents in 2023-24 than in any of the previous 3 financial years. The Revenues team remain ready to offer help and flexibility to residents to help them to pay, we also continue to refer residents to Citizens Advice Gateshead for further specialist advice. Recovery action continues to be taken promptly against businesses who do not pay, and our team remain ready to help any business that needs extra support or flexibility to pay their business rates.

RESOURCES

- For 2023/24 the baseline revenue budget is £281.885m. Qtr1 was 1.107m over 0.39% Qtr2 is 2.775m over 0.98%. This is well within the +/- 5% tolerance.
- In year savings for 2023 is £13.084m, we have achieved £12.394m. This equates to 94.7% of savings targeted.
- The MTFS position assumes all prior year budget savings will be achieved going into 2024/25.
- The intention is to deliver an outturn within budget. Senior management will ensure proactive budget management through regular monitoring will continue to take place with accountable intervention with the aim of containing spending within budget.

## **Appendix 3**

Below are the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees which each considered the year-end Performance Management and Improvement Framework reports.

### **Corporate Resources OSC – 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

#### **CR16 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT & IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK 2023-24**

The Committee received a report on the Council's Performance Management & Improvement Framework, reporting performance on the delivery of Council priorities for the period 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023. An overview was given of performance relevant to the role and remit of Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The framework has been put together to support Gateshead Council's THRIVE strategy. It was noted that some metrics included in the report are annual measures which are reporting figures at a six-month mark.

A presentation was also given to the Committee on making data accessible for scrutiny, including a demonstration of Power BI and how this can be used to track data for the Office for Local Government.

The Committee noted that a more visual view of the data would support better public and scrutiny understanding of the presented content.

There was discussion by the Committee of the consideration of cyber-attacks and other impacts to online systems and the effect this would have on residents. This issue is high on the Council's strategic and operational register and these risks are being assessed. It was noted that Gateshead Council has a particularly robust IT security infrastructure.

#### **REVOLED:**

- i. The OSC commented on and discussed the report.
- ii. The OSC recommended an item on school exclusions be discussed by Families OSC.
- iii. The OSC recommended the performance report to Cabinet for consideration in January 2024.

### **Families OSC – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

The Committee received a report and presentation on the Council's Performance Management and Improvement Framework, reporting performance on the delivery of Council priorities for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023. It also provided an overview of performance relevant to the role and remit of this committee.

#### **F113 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK - SIX MONTH UPDATE - 2023-24**

The Committee received a report on the Council's Performance Management & Improvement Framework, reporting performance on the delivery of Council priorities for the period 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023. An overview was given of performance relevant to the role and remit of Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The framework has been put together to support Gateshead Council's THRIVE strategy. It was noted that some metrics included in the report are annual measures which are reporting figures at a six-month mark.

A presentation was also given to the Committee on making data accessible for scrutiny, including a demonstration of Power BI and how this can be used to track data for the newly established Office for Local Government. The Committee felt that the presentation of the data was not very accessible, as the text and graphics were too small to read properly.

The Committee queried the decrease in use of free school meals for primary school children. There is cross Council work ongoing with Services for Schools, the Education Team, and Schools Team. This work includes a survey on auto enrolment; some families feel that there is a stigma in accessing free school meals, there is work being done to address this culture. While auto enrolment would be a preferred option, the scheme is national and would have to be identically implemented across all participating local authorities. Gateshead is trying to be at the forefront of a pilot of this.

Further data breakdown was requested on the 10% of pupils who have missed significant numbers of lessons. It was noted that there is a lag in this data, as numbers for Autumn terms had not yet been reported. Attendance is a national priority, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic. National and regional solutions to this issue are being pursued. A detailed report is expected by Families OSC at the next meeting which will focus on looked after children.

RESOLVED:

- i. The Committee noted the report.

## **Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities –4<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

### **CPL89 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK – SIX MONTH UPDATE – 2023-24**

The Committee received a report on the Council's Performance Management & Improvement Framework, reporting performance on the delivery of Council priorities for the period 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023.

An overview was given of performance relevant to the role and remit of Housing, Environment & Healthy Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The framework has been put together to support Gateshead Council's THRIVE strategy. It was noted that some metrics included in the report are annual measures which are reporting figures at a six-month mark.

The data identifying key areas already, those being:

- Budget pressures continue to provide a significant challenge.
- Continuing demand pressures being face by services, which are compounded by the ongoing recruitment and retention issues.
- The cost-of-living and high interest rates are impacting the financial challenges facing many residents.
- The economic climate continues to make things difficult for many businesses in the borough.

A presentation was also given to the Committee on making data accessible for scrutiny, including a demonstration of Power BI and how this can be used to track data for the Office for Local Government. The Committee noted that a more visual view of the data would support better public and scrutiny understanding of the presented content. The Committee were advised measures are being continuously reviewed to understand where changes may be needed to ensure PMIF remains robust and relevant.

RESOLVED -

- i) Comment on the 6-month report at Appendix 1 and identify any areas for further scrutiny. That the information be noted
- ii) The OSC recommended the performance report to Cabinet for consideration in January 2024.

## **Care, Health, and Wellbeing OSC – 5<sup>TH</sup> December 2023**

The Committee received the year end performance report for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

CHW15

### **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND IMPROVEMENT FRAMEWORK - SIX MONTH UPDATE - 2023-24**

The Committee received a report on the Council's Performance Management & Improvement Framework, reporting performance on the delivery of Council priorities for the period 1 April 2023 to 30 September 2023. An overview was given of performance relevant to the role and remit of Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The framework has been put together to support Gateshead Council's THRIVE strategy. It was noted that some metrics included in the report are annual measures which are reporting figures at a six-month mark.

A presentation was also given to the Committee on making data accessible for scrutiny, including a demonstration of Power BI and how this can be used to track data for the newly established Office for Local Government.

The Committee was concerned about the impact of recent salary level changes for migrants working in the care sector. It was noted that any changes in policy can affect the workforce and that this will be monitored.

The Committee queried a strategic performance item in Policy Objective 2: “Proportion of adults with a learning disability who live in their own home or with their family”. The target for this item is a rolling target throughout the year. While the latest figure is 38.1% and the target is 82.84%, the Council is currently on trajectory to meet this target.

The Committee was concerned that 46.4% of Adult Safeguarding Concern referrals to Adult Social Care do not meet the criteria for Safeguarding Duty to Public Document Pack apply. There was discussion about some services not implementing appropriate actions prior to referrals to ensure individuals meet the criteria. It was explained that this indicated a training need around referral routes, criteria and appropriate reporting channels.

Concerns were also raised about the latest figure of the total households initially assessed as owed a homeless duty (714).

#### RESOLVED

- i. For the Committee to be presented with further data at the next meeting on how Gateshead performs regionally and nationally on supported living.
- ii. For further information on the Office for Local Government to be circulated via email.
- iii. To recommend the performance report to Cabinet for consideration in January 2024.
- iv. To note the report.

**TITLE OF REPORT:** Corporate Complaints and Compliments Procedure - Annual Report 2022/23

**REPORT OF:** Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance

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### **Purpose of the Report**

1. The report asks the Cabinet to consider and endorse an analysis of the compliments and Chief Executive Review complaints recorded by the Council and complaints against the Council considered by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman in 2022/23.

### **Background**

2. This report focuses on compliments and the Chief Executive Review complaints dealt with by the Council under its Corporate Complaints and Compliments procedure for the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.
3. Appendix 2 to the report details the number of compliments and complaints that required a Chief Executive Review received from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.
4. Appendix 3 provides information about the complaints against the Council considered by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman in 2022/23.

### **Proposal**

5. It is proposed that the Corporate Complaints and Compliments Procedure – Annual Report 2022/23 be agreed.

### **Recommendations**

6. It is recommended that the Cabinet agrees the Corporate Complaints and Compliments Procedure Annual Report for 2022/23 as detailed.

For the following reason:

To have an effective and timely complaints procedure.

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**CONTACT:** Brian Wilson extension 2145

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Policy Context**

1. The corporate complaints and compliments procedure supports Thrive and the Corporate Plan in that it helps the Council to assess its service provision and improve where necessary.

### **Background**

2. The Council aims to respond positively to complaints. The corporate complaints and compliments procedure is publicised across the Borough through a complaints and compliments form which is available at Council facilities and on its website.
3. The Council operates the corporate complaints and compliments procedure to make it easier for members of the public to submit compliments and raise issues of concern, ensure that complaints are responded to quickly and in a consistent manner and to enable the Council to learn from the issues raised and amend procedures and practices as necessary.
4. The report focuses on complaints that the Council deals with under its corporate complaints procedure. Excluded from the procedure are:
  - most Social Services and Children's Services matters - for which there are separate statutory procedures
  - matters for which there is a statutory system of appeal/redress eg planning
  - most complaints about schools
5. The current procedure enables people to express their views and register their complaint or compliment in person at a Council office, by telephone, letter, e-mail, complaints and compliments form or online. It can also be done through a Councillor, someone acting on their behalf, with the assistance of other organisations or via social media.
6. A designated officer oversees and monitors the operation of the corporate complaints procedure and system on behalf of the Chief Executive. This includes the collation and analysis of the statistics for the Council and the conduct of the Chief Executive Reviews. The officer is also the Council's link officer with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and the Housing Ombudsman.
7. Residents are encouraged to submit complaints via a form on the Council's website, while still retaining the ability to submit complaints in the other ways outlined for those that do not have internet access. The website has been updated to direct people to service requests wherever appropriate eg. to report fly tipping or a missed bin collection so that only genuine complaints are submitted to the designated officer through the corporate complaints system. The complainants after registering on the system can view the progress of their complaint and submit further information and they will receive e mail notifications on information and updates and the Council's formal response to their complaint.



## **Consultation**

8. There has been no external consultation undertaken in the preparation of this report.

## **Alternative Options**

9. There are no alternative options.

## **Implications of Recommended Option**

### **10. Resources:**

- a) **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital confirms that there are no new financial implications arising from this report.
  - b) **Human Resources Implications** – The Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance confirms that there are no human resources implications arising from the report.
  - c) **Property Implications** – The Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance confirms that there are no property implications arising from this report.
11. **Risk Management Implication** – Potential failure to act on complaints received is minimised through regular monitoring.
  12. **Equality and Diversity Implications** – The corporate complaints and compliments procedure contributes to the implementation of the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.
  13. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.
  14. **Health Implications** – There are no health implications arising from this report.
  15. **Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications** – There are no climate emergency and sustainability implications arising from this report.
  16. **Human Rights Implications** – There may be human rights implications in a number of complaints made to the Council. Therefore, having a corporate complaints procedure will assist the Council in carrying out its duties under the Human Rights Act 1988.
  17. **Ward Implications** – None.
  18. **Background Information** – Corporate complaints and compliments policy and procedure.

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## APPENDIX 2

### COMPLIMENTS AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE REVIEW COMPLAINTS – 2022/23

#### Compliments received by the Council

The total number of compliments received in 2022/23, as outlined below, is 276:-

Benefits	19
Bins and recycling	93
Births, deaths and marriage	3
Business	1
Council	48
Council Tax	12
CSU	27
Environmental issues and parks	55
Housing	2
Leisure culture and events	3
Parking, roads and transport	8
Planning or building control	4
Schools learning and childcare	1
TOTAL	276

There were 284 compliments received by the Council in 2021/22 and 150 in 2020/21.

#### Chief Executive Review of complaints – 2022/23

Complainants who are dissatisfied with the outcome of complaints can request that a Chief Executive Review of their complaints be undertaken. The Chief Executive undertook 57 reviews of complaints in 2022/23. Details of the complaints are outlined below:-

SERVICES	COMPLAINT SUBJECT	UPHELD
Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities	- Housing issues	Upheld – compensation of £1,550
	- Tree issues (3)	Not upheld
	- Barriers on public rights of way	Not upheld
	- Housing repairs (3)	Not upheld
	- Housing repairs (17)	Upheld – compensation of £2,000, £150, £400, £450, £6,500 £100, £400, £250, £650, £600, £350, £600, £650, £600, £400, £500, £500
	- Housing warden issues	Not upheld
	- Driveway damage	Not Upheld
	- Wiring and bathroom replacement	Upheld – compensation of £150
	- Bin collections (2)	Not upheld
	- Public space protection order	Not upheld
	- Tree and plant removal	Not upheld

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Road resurfacing</li> <li>- Private landlord enforcement (3)</li> <li>- Anti-social behaviour</li> <li>- Fly tipping enforcement</li> <li>- Domestic vehicle crossing application</li> <li>- Hoist design</li> <li>- Boundary fence</li> <li>- Road signage</li> <li>- Homeless application</li> <li>- Noise abatement notice</li> </ul>	Not upheld Not upheld Not upheld Not upheld Not upheld Not upheld Not upheld Not upheld Upheld – compensation of £650 Upheld – compensation of £150
Economy, Innovation and Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Planning application issues (3)</li> <li>- Building works issues</li> <li>- Parking and loss of trees</li> <li>- Planning breach</li> <li>- Prior approval application</li> </ul>	Not upheld Not upheld Not upheld Not upheld Not upheld
Public Health and Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Allotment hedge (2)</li> </ul>	Not upheld
Childrens Social Care and Lifelong Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- School application and assessment</li> <li>- Child safety issues</li> <li>- Education provision</li> </ul>	Not upheld Not upheld Not upheld
Integrated Adults and Social Care Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- School transport</li> </ul>	Not upheld

Of the 57 Chief Executive Reviews undertaken in 2022/23, 21 (36.8%) were upheld, and 36 (63.2%) were not upheld.

53 Chief Executive Reviews were undertaken in 2021/2, 10 (18.9%) were upheld and 43 (81.1%) were not upheld.

### Using Complaints to improve performance

The information gained through the monitoring of complaints is used to improve the provision of the services reflecting the overall approach to value for money and continuous improvement. Additional instructions to employees to reinforce existing procedures or changes to the provision of services could be made as a result of complaints received or the opportunity to improve has been identified.

#### Examples of service improvements

- The Council's repairs staff was reminded of the importance of keeping a clear audit trail of all repairs and the complaints policy's timescales and exclusions.

- Record keeping and communication with care home residents and their families have been improved.
- Improvements to informing members of the public who have reported planning consent breaches that the investigations have been closed and why have been made.
- Training has been delivered to staff responsible for recording or investigating complaints against the Council as social landlord and new training materials developed.

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**EXTERNAL REVIEW BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL OMBUDSMAN AND THE HOUSING OMBUDSMAN**

All complainants who exhaust the Council's procedures are provided with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman contact details. The day to day management of the relationship with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and Housing Ombudsman is undertaken by a dedicated link officer who acts on behalf of the Chief Executive in this respect.

**The Housing Ombudsman**

From 1 April 2013, the Localism Act 2011 extended the jurisdiction of the Housing Ombudsman to cover all social landlords, including Councils. The Housing Ombudsman is able to consider housing complaints in so far as they relate to the provision or management of housing. The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman would investigate complaints about allocations and the lettings policy.

The Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code was revised in April 2022. The Code aims to enable landlords to resolve complaints raised by their residents quickly and to use the learning from complaints to drive service improvements. Landlords must comply with some elements of the code and it is recognised that this will mean adapting complaints policy and practice to ensure compliance. Following the reintegration of Housing Services into the Council, a revised Council complaints policy was agreed. Complaints relating to the Council's role as social landlord are dealt with in line with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code under a two stage process.

During 2021/2, the Housing Ombudsman issued three determinations in regard to complaints made against the Council. In one determination, there was no maladministration by the Council and in the other three, the Council took the required actions.

During 2022/23, the Housing Ombudsman issued four determinations in regard to complaints made against the Council. In one determination, there was no maladministration by the Council and a summary of the Housing Ombudsman's other three determinations and the actions taken by the Council is detailed below:-

<b>Case</b>	<b>Housing Ombudsman's Decision</b>	<b>Remedy</b>	<b>Category</b>
1.	There was maladministration in the Council's handling of repairs at the property and in its complaint handling and record keeping	The Council agreed to apologise for the failings identified, re-offer £150 decoration vouchers and £180 if not previously accepted, pay £550 compensation for distress and inconvenience, inspect	Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities

		the property to ensure previous repairs were carried out to an acceptable standard, ask the resident if they wished to raise a complaint about issues during a specified period and remind staff of the importance of keeping a clear audit trail of all repairs and the complaints policy's timescales and exclusions	
2.	There was service failure in the Council's response to the request for remedial action to the trees overhanging their property and maladministration in respect of its complaint handling	The Council agreed to pay £400 compensation comprising £100 for poor communication, £100 for inconvenience caused in raising the complaint and £200 for poor complaint handling	Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities
3.	The Council's offer of redress regarding the delays in rewiring the property resolved the complaint satisfactorily	The Council agreed to pay £150 compensation and give an update on the completion date for the rewiring	Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities

The Council has a maladministration rate of 50% compared to the national maladministration rate of 55%

### **The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman**

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman provides a free independent and impartial service to the public. Protocols are in place between the Council and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman that provide for the majority of cases to be considered through the Council's own procedures before any investigation is considered by their office.

Complaints, not relating to the Council's role as social landlord, are dealt with in line with the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's Effective Complaint Handling for Local Authorities guidance under a three stage process.

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman has recently carried out consultation on its Joint Complaints Code with the Housing Ombudsman. The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman is now considering the responses received with the Housing Ombudsman.

In 2021/22, the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman investigated eight complaints against the Council, six were not upheld and two were upheld.



In 2022/23, the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman investigated fourteen complaints against the Council. Of these, six were not upheld and a summary of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's findings and the actions taken by the Council for the eight cases upheld is detailed below:-

<b>Case</b>	<b>Ombudsman's Decision</b>	<b>Remedy</b>	<b>Category</b>
1.	No evidence to show care provider considered a resident's inconsistency in using a call buzzer when stopping overnight checks	The Council should ensure the care provider keeps sufficient records to show what factors it considered, including the risks, when making decisions to stop overnight checks and its reasons for the decision	Integrated Adults and Social Care Services
2.	Poor record keeping and communication from both the Council and the care provider caused uncertainty and distress	The Council had apologised, written off some advance care charges and acted to improve its services and agreed to pay £200 for the distress and uncertainty caused	Integrated Adults and Social Care Services
3.	Recommended the Council apologise to complainant and family and pay them £250 to recognise the distress the incident caused them	An apology and payment was made to the complainant and family	Integrated Adults and Social Care Services
4.	Complaints process had taken too long but was very thorough	The Council agreed to pay £250 and take steps to tighten up the future operation of the complaints process	Childrens Social Care and Lifelong Learning
5.	Fault in delaying consideration of complaint at Stage 2 of the statutory procedure for children's services complaints	Stage 2 initiated and a payment of £100 to reflect the Stage 2 delay and uncertainty caused was agreed	Childrens Social Care and Lifelong Learning
6.	The Council failed to address all the injustice caused to the complainant and family by the faults identified	The Council agreed to pay £500 to reflect the missed opportunity to consider and act on the concerns raised, arrange a meeting with the complainant and provide evidence that the Stage 2 and 3 recommendations had been carried out	Childrens Social Care and Lifelong Learning

7.	The Council failed to tell the complainant that its investigation of their report of a breach of planning consent was closed and delayed responding to some of the correspondence	The Council agreed to apologise and remind officers of the need to inform members of the public reporting planning consent breaches of its decision to end an investigation and why	Economy, Innovation and Growth
8.	The care provider accepted it should have been more proactive with the administration of medication	The Council agreed to pay £500 to remedy the injustice caused	Integrated Adults and Social Care Services

57% of the complaints against the Council investigated by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman were upheld. The complaints upheld rates in the neighbouring Authorities were between 50-91%

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman now monitors his specific recommendations to remedy any fault he finds and follows up with Councils to seek evidence that the recommendations have been implemented. The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman has confirmed that the Council complied with all his recommendations on time.

**TITLE OF REPORT:**        **Primary Community Controlled School Admissions Arrangements and Co-ordinated Admission Schemes for Primary and Secondary Schools for 2025/26**

**REPORT OF:**                **Helen Fergusson, Strategic Director, Children's Social Care and Lifelong Learning**

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### **Purpose of the Report**

1.     The purpose of this report is to request Cabinet to: approve the following:
  - proposed Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary Schools Admission Policies, 2025
  - proposed Co-ordinated admission schemes for Infant, Junior, Primary schools and Secondary Schools 2025
  - and to note the following:
  - proposed Planned Admission Numbers (PAN's) for Community schools for 2025/26.

### **Background**

2.     The school admission code "the code" applies to school admission arrangements for admission in the 2025/26 academic year. It applies to all maintained schools in England. Academies, including those that are Free schools are required, to comply with the code and the law relating to admissions, though the Secretary of State has the power to vary this requirement where there is a demonstrable need.
3.     The code and the related legislation ensures that school admission authorities, whether Local Authorities (LAs) or schools and academies, must operate in a fair way that promotes fair access to school choice, social equity and community cohesion. The Code has a statutory basis and imposes mandatory provisions. Admission authorities must ensure that their school admission arrangements comply with the mandatory provisions of this Code.
4.     The proposed school admission policies for 2025/26 has regard to the code issued in September 2021. They have been formulated having taken account of the responses received from consultees in previous years.
5.     National offer dates apply for both the Secondary and Primary admission rounds.

6. The Secondary national offer date is 1 March whilst the Primary offer date is 16 April each year. In both instances where the set national offer day falls on a Saturday or Sunday or bank holiday the actual offer date will move to the first working day after that.
7. The proposed Planned Admission Numbers and the proposed Co-ordinated admission schemes in Appendix 3 contain compliance dates for the exchange of information between schools and the LA so that co-ordination of the allocation of places to parents can take place by statutory deadlines. The dates contained in the schemes largely mirror the compliance dates and timeframes set in the previous year.

## **Proposal**

8. Cabinet is asked to consider the following:
  - The proposed Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary Schools admission policies for September 2025 as attached in Appendix 2, together with their proposed Planned Admission Numbers for 2025/26.
  - The proposed separate co-ordinated admission schemes for Secondary schools and Infant Junior and Primary schools for September 2025 are contained in Appendix 3.
  - Secondary schools that are academies by this date and will formulate their own admission policies.
9. It is proposed, in accordance with statutory regulations, to adopt the closing dates of 15 January 2025 (for primary schools) and 31 October 2024 (for secondary schools) for the submission of applications for admission to schools in September 2025.

## **Recommendations**

10. Cabinet is recommended to:
  - (i) agree the Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary Admissions Policies set out in Appendix 2 are adopted for September 2025;
  - (ii) agree the approved admissions policies for September 2024 are used as a basis of consultation, if necessary, with schools and others for formulating the relevant admissions policies from September 2025/26 onwards;
  - (iii) agree the approved two co-ordinated admission schemes for Secondary, Infant Junior and Primary schools in Appendix 3 are adopted for September 2025.
  - (iv) Note that the Planned Admissions Numbers set out in Appendix 3 for all community Primary schools are to be adopted by the governing bodies of each school.

For the following reason:

To enable the Council to comply with statutory legislation as it relates to school admissions policies, admission arrangements and co-ordinated admission arrangements.

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**CONTACT:**            **Julie McDowell**            extension: 8644

### **Policy Context**

1. This report supports the Council's new strategic approach of Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives. The proposals also support the Council's Equal Opportunities policy. The report reflects the duties placed on the Council by legislation and statutory guidance.

### **Background**

2. At its meeting in April 2016, the Council agreed that the approved school admissions policies for September 2017 be used as a basis for future school admissions policies.

### **Admission Policies**

3. The revised admission policies for community and voluntary controlled primary and secondary schools are contained within Appendix 2.

### **Statutory Infant class size limit**

4. In certain defined circumstances as listed as "excepted reasons" within the admission code individual children must be admitted above the statutory infant class size limit of 30 children to a single teacher.

### **Allocation system- Equal Preference**

5. The Admissions code requires all admission authorities to implement a mandatory "equal preference" allocation system when considering parental preferences. Freedom to express choice under the Equal Preference system does not override the admission criterion that applies to applicants for admission to individual schools.

### **Fair Access Protocols**

6. The school admissions code requires all admission authorities to participate in the fair access protocol to ensure that unplaced children who move in to the borough outside of the normal admissions round. There is no duty to comply with parental preference when allocating places through the fair access protocol. Children who have been referred for admission and allocated a school through the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over all children on the waiting list with the exception of children in public care "looked after" children as defined within the policy. If appropriate to do so, the LA through the Fair Access Protocol, may determine that such children should be admitted above the planned admission number for a relevant school.

### **Waiting lists**

7. Waiting lists will be maintained for all oversubscribed community schools for the whole of the academic year.

## **Children in Public Care**

8. Children in public care **must** have top priority in school admission arrangements this definition was extended in the admission code issued on 1 February 2012, to include children who were previously looked after but immediately after being “looked after” became subject to adoption residence, or special guardianship order. Policies have been updated to include this mandatory provision. This was further extended to include those children who appear to have been in state care outside of England but ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.

## **Exceptional Social and Medical Grounds**

9. The LA considers cases from parents who have submitted the required independent evidence from a relevant health professional i.e. doctor or social worker as part of the admission process. This independent evidence must clearly demonstrate why the chosen school is the most suitable school and what difficulties would be caused if the child were to attend another school.

## **Planned Admission Numbers**

10. The proposed Planned Admission Numbers (PAN) for community primary schools are contained within Appendix 3.

## **Brighton Avenue Community Primary School**

Due to a substantial increase in requests for school places in the Bensham area with families moving in for both work and study, this has placed undue pressure on the availability of primary school places.

To increase capacity in the area, internal remodelling works to reinstate classrooms previously used for the children’s centre will enable the Brighton Avenue Primary School to increase their PAN from 50 to 60 for all year groups. It is proposed that this change will take effect from September 2024 following completion of the works.

## **Mandatory Closing dates for return of applications- Primary and Secondary**

11. Mandatory closing dates apply for the return of applications for Secondary and Primary admissions have been incorporated into the relevant admission policies.

## **Co-ordinated admission schemes 1) Secondary schools and 2) Infant, Junior and Primary schools.**

12. Both schemes contain the administrative timescales that must be met by those schools and academies who determine their own admission arrangements so that they can supply the LA with the allocation lists for their school enabling the co-ordination of the allocation of places by the LA to parents across the borough and for schools in neighbouring boroughs. The local dates contained in both schemes are similar to those set in the previous year and have regard to statutory deadlines contained in the admission code. These are contained within Appendix 3.

## **Consultation**

13. The admission code issued on December 2014 allows for exemption to consultation for up to 7 years providing the admission arrangements (admission criteria) were

consulted on immediately prior to that period and have not changed. Providing the admission arrangements are the same as those in the previous years it is not necessary to consult on the admission arrangements this is the case for 2025 as a full consultation process was completed for the 2016 admission process. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People has been consulted on this report.

### **Alternative Options**

14. There is no alternative to considering and adopting policies proposed in this report.

### **Implications of Recommended Option**

**15. Resources:**

- a) **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Finance and ICT confirms that there are no financial implications arising from this report
- b) **Human Resources Implications** – Nil
- c) **Property Implications** - Nil

**16. Risk Management Implication - Nil**

- 17. Equality and Diversity Implications** - The policies comply with equal opportunities requirements in that all persons are treated equally with criteria being applied objectively.

The Equality Act 2010 consolidates the law prohibiting discrimination, harassment and victimisation. All schools must have due regard to their obligations under the act and an admission authority must not discriminate on the grounds disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation as to who is offered admission as a pupil. All schools must have due regard to their obligations under the Act and review their policies and practices to make sure these meet the requirements of the Act, even if they believe that they are already operating in a non-discriminatory way.

**18. Crime and Disorder Implications – Nil**

**19. Health Implications - Nil**

**20. Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications - Nil**

- 21. Human Rights Implications** - School Admissions Policies have Human Rights Implications. It is a convention right that no person should be denied the right to education. The Policy pursues a legitimate aim and is proportionate. It is necessary to assist the LA and governors in distinguishing between competing applications. It is also necessary to allow parents to more accurately assess the prospects of their being able to obtain a place at the school/s they prefer.

**22. Ward Implications** - All Wards are covered by this report



## Gateshead Council Primary School Admission Policy 2025

**This policy applies to all maintained community primary schools in Gateshead,  
Kibblesworth Academy and Riverside Primary Academy**

We allocate places at Gateshead Primary, Infant and Junior Schools using this policy and co-ordinate admissions to Gateshead schools using the coordinated admission scheme.

The policy is as follows:

- Children start school at the beginning of the academic year in which they will reach the age of five. (An academic year lasts from 1 September in one year to 31 August the following year). Children are entitled to a full-time place as soon as they start school, however in most schools, the first term will include an induction period, (a period for children to get used to school life gradually, generally from September to October). Although, you may request that your child attends school part-time until later in the school year, but not beyond the point that your child reaches compulsory school age.

In addition, parents may request that their child is admitted to school later in the school year following September 2025, but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age, and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year.

- We will accept pupils up to the schools agreed Planned Admission Number for the year group unless we feel there are lawful grounds not to do so.

### **Oversubscription Criteria**

We will consider applications from parents who have named the school as any ranked preference on their application form this is called the equal preference system. If there are more applications for the number of places available at a school, we will then allocate places by using the following order of priority:

<b>Order of Priority</b>	<b>Oversubscription Criteria</b>
<b>Criteria 1</b>	Children in Public Care (and as deemed under Section 22 of the Children Act 1989) including a child who was previously “looked after” but immediately after being “looked after” became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order (see definition*). Children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
<b>Criteria 2</b>	Children who live in the school’s catchment area and who will have a brother or sister at the school, or at the feeder junior school during the coming academic year. (See definition*).
<b>Criteria 3</b>	Other children who live in the school’s catchment area.
<b>Criteria 4</b>	Other children who will have a brother or sister at the school or at the feeder junior school during the coming academic year (see definition*).
<b>Criteria 5</b>	Other children who have exceptional medical or social grounds see point 1 below.
<b>Criteria 6</b>	All other children.

(\*see definitions of our criteria in priority 1, 3 and 5 above in our parent’s information booklet and at [www.gateshead.gov.uk](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk)).

### **Point 1**

We can consider exceptional individual applications, particularly in cases involving medical or social needs. If you wish to apply on medical or social grounds, you must provide written evidence from relevant registered health professionals i.e., a doctor or social worker. The evidence must demonstrate why the chosen school is more appropriate and what difficulties would be caused if they were to travel to and attend alternative schools. We will not consider such applications if the relevant professional evidence is not provided. No assumption should be made that submission of the relevant evidence will be sufficient to allocate a place.

### **Whickham Parochial Church of England Controlled Primary School**

This school has the same oversubscription criteria as priorities 1 to 6 above except that criteria 3 and 4 above are reversed. Priority 1, 2, 5 and 6 remain in the same order however for this school their oversubscription criteria places priority 4 children above those children in priority 3.

### **Oakfield Junior School**

The school has the same oversubscription criteria as priorities 1 to 5 above, however, they have an additional criterion (7 in total). Please see below.

Criteria 1 to 5 same as criteria 1 to 5 above.

Criteria 6 children that attend Oakfield Infant School.

Criteria 7 all other children.

### **Admission of children outside their normal age group**

Parents may request a place for their child outside their normal age group, for example gifted and talented children, children that have suffered ill health or parents of summer born children (children born from 1 April 2021 to 31 August 2021).

All cases of admission of children outside their normal age group must be discussed with the Council and relevant school Head Teacher prior to the application being made.

Such requests must be made on the Common Application Form which is available from 9 September 2024. Parents must detail the circumstances of their request and include any supporting information from relevant professionals.

The Council will consider each case individually and parents will be notified of the outcome of their request before 16 April 2025. *(Please refer to the 'Admission to Primary School booklet for further information regarding deferred entry and admission of children outside their normal age group).*

### **Address**

For the purposes of deciding whether a child lives in the catchment area of a school we will use the parent or legal guardian's address or the address of a relevant adult who has parental responsibility, as defined under the 1989 Children's Act, for the child.

### **Tie breaker**

If, within any of the above criteria, there are more applicants than places available priority will be given to those children based on the distance they live from the school, measured 'as the crow flies' i.e., in a straight line from the central of the home residence to the school's main entrance. Children living nearest to the school will have priority. We measure the distance using a geographical information system (GIS). Where two or more applicants share the exact same distance, a random allocation process will be used to determine the ranked order of the applications in question.

### **Waiting list**

If places become available, we will consider all relevant applications based on a waiting list. The waiting list will be maintained by the council from the start of the academic year and be kept for the rest of the academic year. All applicants on the waiting list are placed according to the admission

criteria and priorities set out above. However, children who are the subject of a direction to admit by the LA or who have been referred for admission and have been allocated a place through the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over any child on the waiting list.

### **Application Dates**

From 9 September 2024 Gateshead residents can apply on-line at: [www.gateshead.gov.uk](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk)

On-line applications must be submitted by **15 January 2025**. Alternatively, parents can request a paper application from The School Admissions Team on 0191 433 2757. Paper applications must be returned to The School Admissions Team, Floor 2, Civic Centre, Gateshead, NE8 1HH by **15 January 2025**.

If you live outside Gateshead and want to apply to a Gateshead school, you must obtain an application form from your home Council and return it to them by their closing date, even if the schools you want to apply to are in Gateshead. However, you must still consider the information in Gateshead Council's 'Admission to Primary School' booklet so that you know what the admission arrangements are to Gateshead schools. This information is available at [www.gateshead.gov.uk](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk). Your own Council will send us notification of your application and they will let you know the final allocation of a school place for your child.

### **Offer Date – 16 April 2025**

A letter will be sent to parent's resident in Gateshead on or around 16 April 2025 informing them of the school they have been offered for their child. Gateshead residents who apply on-line are also informed by e-mail on 16 April 2025.

### **General Information and definitions**

For information on our admission arrangements and definitions of the terms used in this policy please refer to our "Admission to Primary School" booklet for 2025 available at [www.gateshead.gov.uk](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk).

Gateshead's co-ordinated admission scheme and catchment areas referred to in this policy can also be viewed online or at the Civic Centre.

## **Gateshead Council Secondary School Admission Policy 2025**

**This policy applies to the following schools: Grace College, Heworth Grange, Kingsmeadow, Lord Lawson and Thorp Academy**

We allocate places at Gateshead secondary schools using this policy and co-ordinate the admissions to Gateshead schools using the co-ordinated admission scheme.

The admission policy is as follows:

- Secondary schools will normally admit pupils between the ages of 11 and 16, or 11 and 19, depending upon the school.
- We will accept pupils up to the school's agreed planned admission number for the year group unless we feel there are lawful grounds not to do so.

### **Oversubscription Criteria**

We will consider applications from parents who have named the school as any ranked preference on their application form, this is called the equal preference system. If there are more applications for the number of places available at a school, we will then allocate places using the following order of priority:

<b>Order of Priority</b>	<b>Oversubscription Criteria</b>
<b>Criteria 1</b>	Children in Public Care (and as deemed under Section 22 of the Children Act 1989) including a child who was previously "looked after" but immediately after being "looked after" became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order (see definition*).  Children who appear to have been in state care outside of England and ceased to be in state care as a result of being adopted.
<b>Criteria 2</b>	Children who live in the school's catchment area.
<b>Criteria 3</b>	Children who will have a brother or sister at the secondary school during the coming academic year.
<b>Criteria 4</b>	Other children who have exceptional medical and social grounds see point 1 below.
<b>Criteria 5</b>	All other children.

(\*see definitions of our criteria in priority 1 and 3 above in our parent's information booklet and at [www.gateshead.gov.uk](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk))

**Point 1-** We can consider individual applications in cases involving exceptional medical or social needs. Such applications must be supported in writing from relevant registered health professionals i.e., a doctor or social worker. The evidence must demonstrate why the chosen school is the most suitable and what difficulties would be caused if the child were to attend another school. We will not consider such applications if the relevant evidence is not provided. Each case will be considered individually, and no assumption should be made that the submission of the relevant evidence will be sufficient to allocate a place.

**Tie breaker**

If within any of the above criteria there are more applicants than places available, priority will be given to those children based on the distance they live from the school, measured 'as the crow flies' in a straight line from the centre of the home residence to the school's main entrance. Children living nearest to the school will have priority. Distance is measured using a geographical information system (GIS). Where two or more applicants share the same distance, a random allocation process will be used to determine the ranked order of the applications in question.

**Sibling link**

For your child to receive priority because of an older brother or sister in the sixth form at the school, the brother or sister must have been at the school at the start of Year 11.

**Address**

For the purposes of deciding whether a child lives in the catchment area of a school we will use the parent or guardians address or the address of a relevant adult who has parental responsibility, as defined under the 1989 Children Act, for the child.

**Waiting list**

If places become available, we will consider all relevant applications using a waiting list. The waiting list will be maintained by the council from the start of the academic year and be kept for the rest of the academic year. All applicants on the waiting list are placed according to the admission criteria and priorities set out above. However, children who are the subject of a direction to admit by the LA or who have been referred for admission and have been allocated a place through the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over any child on the waiting list.

**Application Dates**

From 9 September 2024 Gateshead residents can apply on-line at: [www.gateshead.gov.uk](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk)

On-line applications must be submitted by **31 October 2024**. Alternatively, parents can request a paper application from The School Admissions Team on 0191 433 2757. Paper applications must be returned to The School Admissions Team, Floor 2, Civic Centre, Gateshead, NE8 1HH by **31 October 2024**.

If you live outside Gateshead and want to apply to a Gateshead school, you must obtain an application form from your home Council and return it to them by their closing date, even if the schools you want to apply to are in Gateshead. However, you must still consider the information in Gateshead Council's 'Admission to Secondary School' booklet so that you know what the admission arrangements are to Gateshead schools. This information is available at [www.gateshead.gov.uk](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk). Your own Council will send us notification of your application and they will let you know the final allocation of a school place for your child.

**Offer Date – 3 March 2025**

A letter will be sent to parent's resident in Gateshead on or around 3 March 2025 informing them of the school they have been offered for their child. Gateshead residents who apply on-line are also informed by e-mail on 3 March 2025.

**General Information and definitions**

For information on our admission arrangements and definitions of the terms used in this policy please refer to our "Admission to Secondary School" booklet for 2025 at [www.gateshead.gov.uk](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk)

Gateshead's co-ordinated admission scheme and catchment areas referred to in this policy can also be viewed online or at Gateshead Civic Centre.

**Gateshead Infant, Junior, and Primary School Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme  
September 2025**

**Introduction**

1. This scheme is made by Gateshead Council under the Education (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (Primary) (England) Regulations 2002 and applies to all Infant, Junior & Primary Schools in Gateshead.

**Interpretation**

**2. In this Scheme -**

**‘The LA’** means Gateshead Council acting in their capacity as local authority.

**‘The LA area’** means the area in respect of which the LA is the local authority.

**‘Primary education’** has the same meaning as in section 2(1) of the Education Act 1996.

**‘Infant, junior & primary school’** has the same meaning as in section 5(1) of the Education Act 1996.

**‘Secondary school’** has the same meaning as in section 5(2) of the Education Act 1996.

**‘School’** means a community or voluntary school (but not a special school), which is maintained by the LA.

**‘Foundation School’** means such of the schools as are foundation schools.

**‘Academy’** means such of the schools have ‘academy’ status.

**‘Voluntary controlled schools’** means such of the schools as are voluntary controlled schools, where the LA sets the admissions criteria and offers places.

**‘VA schools’** means such of the schools as are voluntary-aided schools.

**‘Admission authority’** in relation to a community or voluntary controlled school means the LA and, in relation to a VA school or Academy means the governing body of that school.

**‘The specified year’** means the school year beginning at or about the beginning of September 2025.

**‘Admission arrangements’** mean the overall procedure, practices, criteria, and supplementary information which govern the procedures and decision making for the purposes of admitting pupils to the school.

**‘Academic Year’** means a period commencing 1 September and ending 31 August

**‘Home LA’** means the local authority in which the child resides.

**‘CAF’** means the common application form that must be used by the parent to apply for a school place for normal admission round (first year of entry).

**‘Equal preference system’** means all preferences for each school listed by parents on the common application form are considered against the oversubscription criterion without reference to the parental ranking nominated on the CAF. However, where a child may be eligible for a place at more than one school ranked on their CAF, then the rankings given will be used to determine the final single offer that will be made by selecting the school that was ranked highest on the CAF for which the child is eligible for an offer.

**‘Parent or Legal Guardian’** means any person who holds parental responsibility, including carers, as defined under the 1989 Children Act and with whom the child normally resides.

**‘In Year Admissions’** means any application for a place in any year group for Infant, Junior or Primary school received during the academic year commencing in September 2025.

**‘Eligible for a place’** means that a child has been placed on a school's ranked list at such a point, which falls within the school's published admission number or is eligible following determination under the Fair Access protocol.

### **Commencement and extent**

This scheme applies in relation to the admission arrangements for schools and Academies for the admission year 2025/2026 (the specified year). The LA will include in its admission arrangements for the specified year the provisions set out in Schedule 1 of this scheme, or provisions having the same effect. The governing body of each VA schools and academies will include in its admission arrangements for the above year the provisions set out in the Schedule, so far as relevant to that school, or provisions having the same effect.

### **The Scheme**

1. The Scheme shall be determined in accordance with the provisions set out in Schedule 1 and processed in accordance with the timetable set out in Schedule 2.
2. The Scheme shall apply to every infant, junior & primary school including academies in the LA area as identified in Appendix 1 (except special schools).
3. The scheme will also include applications from parents seeking admission to Gateshead schools who live within the following neighbouring LA's:

### **Durham, Newcastle, Northumberland, South Tyneside, and Sunderland**

We will also co-ordinate our admission process with any other admission authorities where relevant.

## **SCHEDULE 1**

### **Part 1 - The Scheme**

1. A standard application form known as the Common Application Form (CAF) will be used for applications to school for normal year of entry in the specified year. A standard application form known as ‘School Transfer Form’ will be used for ‘In Year’ applications made after the commencement of the academic year in September 2025.

2. The CAF will be used for admitting pupils into the first year of infant/junior/primary education in the academic year 2025/2026.
3. The CAF must be used as a means of expressing up to 3 preferences by parent's resident in the LA area wishing to express a preference for their child:
  - a) to be admitted to a school within the LA area
  - b) to be admitted to a school located in another LA's area
4. **The Common Application Form will -**
  - a) allow parents to express up to 3 preferences by naming them in rank order of preference and where relevant for schools outside Gateshead LA area.
  - b) invite parents to give their reasons for each preference.
  - c) specify the closing date and where the application form must be returned, in accordance with paragraph 10.
5. **The LA will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that:**
  - a) the CAF is available on request from the LA and on-line at **www.gateshead.gov.uk** until the closing date and;
  - b) every parent resident in the LA area who has a child eligible to commence primary education and those transferring from infant to junior school receives a written explanation of how to apply and an explanation of the key features of the admission procedures and coordinated admission scheme and has access to the CAF on-line and paper copy (on request only).
  - c) every parent whose application falls within the category of 'in year' admission receives a copy of the School Transfer Form and an explanation of the school transfer procedures.
6. **The LA will take all reasonable steps to ensure that:**
  - (i) applicants will receive no more than one offer of a school place and
  - (ii) a place will be offered at the highest ranked school for which they are eligible under the admission criteria; and
  - (iii) if more than one school is nominated and no order of ranking is stated, or a wish expressed that they be ranked equally, the parent will be regarded as having ranked the schools in the order appearing on the form (the first-mentioned being ranked the highest); and
  - (iv) if a place cannot be offered at any nominated school, a place will be offered at an alternative school where possible.
7. All preferences expressed on the CAF are valid applications. The governing body of an academy or VA school can require parents who nominate their school on the CAF, to provide additional information on a supplementary form only where the additional information is required for the governing body to apply their oversubscription criteria to the application. Where a supplementary form is required, it will be sent to the parents by the governing body for completion and returned to the school.
8. Where a school receives a supplementary form, it will not be regarded as a valid application unless the parent has also completed a CAF and the school is nominated on it. Where supplementary forms are received directly by the school then the school must inform the LA



immediately, so it can verify whether a CAF has been received from the parent and, if not, the LA will contact the parent and ask them to complete a CAF. Under the requirements of the scheme, parents must not be under any obligation to complete an individual school's supplementary form where this is not strictly required for the academy governing body to apply their oversubscription criteria.

9. Any school which operates criteria for selection by ability or aptitude must ensure that its arrangements for assessing ability or aptitude, to enable decisions to be made on nominations, conform to the timing requirements of the scheme as set out in Schedule 2 (no school in Gateshead operates criteria for selection-based ability or aptitude).

#### **Submitting Applications (CAF)**

10. Completed CAFs must be returned to the LA by 15 January 2025. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that CAFs are returned to the LA, on-line or paper copy by the closing date.

#### **Determining offers in response to the Common Application Form**

11. The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to the CAF's received. The LA will only make any decision with respect to the offer or refusal of a place in response to any preference expressed on the CAF where:
  - (a) it is acting in its separate capacity as an admission authority, or
  - (b) an applicant is eligible for more than one place and is allocated a place at the highest ranked school, or
  - (c) an applicant is not eligible for a place at any school that the parent has nominated.

The LA will allocate places in accordance with the provisions set out in paragraph 17 of this Schedule.

12. Completed application forms must be returned to the home LA by the closing date of 15 January 2025.
13. Completed application forms that are received after the closing date will be considered as 'late' unless exceptional circumstances apply, except that the procedure must not prevent the proper processing under the Scheme, for those application forms received on time.
14. The LA will process all application forms. All ranked applications received by the closing date will be considered before any ranked applications received after the closing date unless exceptional circumstances apply.
15. **By 7 February 2025** the LA will notify the admission authority for each of the schools of every nomination that has been made for that school. Where parents have nominated a school outside the Gateshead LA area, then Gateshead LA will also notify the relevant maintaining authority by this date.
16. **By 7 March 2025** the admission authority for each school will consider all applications for their school and apply their oversubscription criteria (if appropriate) and provide the LA with a list of all potential offers in ranked order according to their oversubscription criteria.
17. **By 14 March 2025** Gateshead LA will provide neighbouring LA's information of school offers to be made at Gateshead schools for applicants living in their LA and vice versa. This notification process will continue until all offers are finalised.
18. **By 21 March 2025** the LA will match the above lists against the ranked lists of the other schools nominated and:

- Where the child is eligible for a place at the first preference school, that school will be allocated to the child.
- Where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the preferred schools, a place at that school will be offered.
- Where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the preferred schools, they will be offered a place at the school that is ranked the highest on the CAF for which they are eligible, and any lower offers will be disregarded.
- Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the ranked schools, the child will be allocated a place at their catchment school (if places are still available), or if this is not available, a place where possible, will be offered at the next nearest community school with a vacancy, measured as the crow flies from the parental residence to the main entrance of the school.
- Where possible, the LA will allocate a school place to those pupils who have not submitted a CAF after all other pupils who submitted a CAF have been considered. The LA will allocate a place at the community catchment school or if this is not available at the next nearest community school, with a vacancy, measured, as the crow flies, from the parental residence to the main entrance of the school,

**19. By 11 April 2025** the LA will inform its infant, junior & primary schools, and academies of the pupils to be offered places at their school.

## **National Offer Day**

**20. On or around 16 April 2025** Parents will be notified by email if they applied online that they are being offered a place at the allocated school. A letter will also be posted to Gateshead residents on or around this date informing them the school place allocated, this includes those that applied online.

This letter will give the following information:

- The name of the school at which a place is offered.
- The reasons why the child is not being offered a place at any higher ranked schools nominated on the CAF.
- Information about their statutory right of appeal against the decision to refuse places at the other nominated schools and waiting list procedures.
- Inform parents that their child's name has been added to the waiting list for those schools nominated on the CAF at which they were refused a place.
- Contact details to obtain an appeal form for higher ranked schools on the CAF for which they were not offered a place.

The letter will not inform parents of places still available at other schools.

## **22. Waiting Lists and reallocation of places 9 May 2025**

The LA will maintain waiting lists for all oversubscribed schools in Gateshead.

All applicants refused a school place will automatically be placed on the waiting list for any school at which they have been refused. Parents may be informed of the position their child occupies on the list, however individual positions may change on a regular basis due to the

addition or deletion of children to the list or changes in the admission criteria applied to individual applications.

A child's position on any waiting list will be determined using the admission criterion for the school in question. However, children who are the subject of a direction to admit by the LA or who have been referred for admission and have been allocated a place through the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over any child on the waiting list.

Voluntary Aided schools will inform the LA where children shall be placed on the waiting list for their school.

If vacancies arise at oversubscribed schools after 16 April 2025, the first allocation of places will take place on 9 May 2025 followed by subsequent allocations, if found to be necessary, at weekly intervals.

Where a child may be eligible for an offer from more than one school waiting list then the offer made will be for the school that was ranked highest by the parent on the CAF.

The waiting list will be compiled from those children who have been refused a place at that school. This list may include the following children:

- Those who applied late after 15 January 2025 but before 16 April 2025 and who did not receive an offer for a school choice which was ranked on the CAF. Such applicants may be placed on the waiting list for all schools nominated on the CAF at which they have been refused a place.
- Where a parent has been offered a place at a school which they did not nominate of the CAF, they may be placed on the waiting list for all schools they did nominate on the CAF.
- Those who have been offered a place at a school nominated on the CAF but were refused a place at a school ranked higher on the CAF than the school they were offered. For example, where an applicant has been offered a place at their second ranked school, they may be placed on the waiting list for their first ranked school, but their third and so on.
- Parents who have submitted a new application (accepted for exceptional reasons only i.e., moved to a new house into the area) for consideration including those for children in public care ('looked after' children as defined in the admission policy) and children requiring placement through the 'In Year' Fair Access protocol.

Parents who write to request a new school not originally named on the CAF following the allocation date on 16 April 2025 and who do not have exceptional reasons as described above, will NOT be placed on the waiting list for that new school until 23 May 2025, this is after the first reallocation of places on 9 May 2025.

From 23 May 2025 the waiting list will be opened to all new requests.

### ***Part 2 - Late Applications***

- 23.** The closing date for applications in the normal admissions round is **15 January 2025**.

As far as is reasonably practicable, applications for places in the normal admissions round that are received late for exceptional reasons only may be accepted provided they are received by 28 February 2025. Examples of what will be considered as a valid reason include: a family that has just moved into the area or is returning from abroad (proof of ownership or tenancy of a

Gateshead property will be required in these cases). Other circumstances will be considered, and each case decided on its own merits based on the evidence provided.

#### **Change of preferences received after 15 January 2025**

24. Parents submitting requests to change their preferences, from those originally ranked on the CAF, will be classed as late applications, and may only be considered if 'exceptional circumstances' apply such as those examples described in paragraph 23 above. If no such exceptional circumstances apply the LA will continue to proceed with the original preferences ranked on the CAF for the purposes of the allocation of places on the 16 April 2025. In these circumstances such applications may only be considered if vacancies exist after all on time applicants who have ranked the school on their CAF have been allocated a place.

#### **Late applications received after 28 February 2025**

25. Applications received after 28 February 2025, will not be processed until after 16 April 2025. Parents will, if possible, receive an offer of a school place on 16 April 2025 according to the terms of this scheme.

#### **No application received by 16 April 2025**

26. Where no CAF is submitted the child will, on 16 April 2025, where possible, be offered a place at their catchment school if there are places available. If no places are available at the catchment school, a place will be offered at the next nearest community school with places available, measured, as the crow flies, from the parental residence to the main entrance of the school. The LA will be aware which parents this applies to because of liaison with nursery school and private providers.

#### **Applications received after 16 April 2025 but before 9 May 2025**

27. Applications made direct to the school must be forwarded to the LA immediately. The LA will offer a place, where possible on 9 May 2025 in accordance with the scheme, at the school ranked highest on the CAF at which there is a vacancy, or if this is not possible, at their community school, or if this school is also full at the next nearest community school measured as the crow flies from the parental residence to the main entrance of the school with a vacancy. However, please note that new applications submitted during this period from parents who have already submitted a CAF in the normal admission round will not be considered until 23 May 2025 in accordance with paragraph 22 above.

#### **Applications received after 9 May 2025 but before 31 August 2025**

28. The LA will continue to co-ordinate admissions to all relevant schools in Gateshead up to 31 August 2025.

Applications received after 9 May 2025, for first year of entry must be made on the CAF and sent to the LA, who will:

- Determine any application for a community school for which it is the admission authority and
- If the application is for a voluntary aided school, refer the application to the governing body of the school, which will decide and notify the LA who will notify the parent. Parents

who are refused admission will be offered the right of appeal and informed about the waiting list procedures.

- New applications submitted after 16 April 2025 from parents who have already submitted a CAF in the normal admissions round may not be considered until 23 May 2025 in accordance with paragraph 22 above.

29. The LA will keep track of any pupils who apply for admission from 16 April 2025 but before 31 August 2025 and intervene as appropriate to ensure that they are allocated a school place without undue delay.

### ***Part 3 – In Year Applications***

30. 'In Year' applications are those applications received after 31 August 2025 for places in any year group requesting admission during the academic year 2025/2026.

31. Parents should apply for a place in a Gateshead school directly through Gateshead LA.

In Year applications must be made on the School Transfer Application Form. 'In Year' applications are those applications received after 31 August 2025 for places in any year group requesting admission during the academic year 2025/2026. Please note that parents who have been refused a place in the normal allocation round for the first year of entry to primary, infant, or junior schools for admission from 2025 and have been refused a place by the independent appeal panel may not reapply for the same year of entry unless they can demonstrate there has been a significant and material change in their circumstances that relate to the question of admission.

32. Gateshead's School Transfer Form is available from the Education Support Service, The School Admissions Team, Floor 2, Civic Centre, Gateshead, NE8 1HH or online at [www.gateshead.gov.uk](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk).

33. Gateshead Local Authority will process all School Transfer forms for Gateshead schools and inform parents of the outcome of their application even if the school is a voluntary aided school or academy.

34. The local authority is unable to process applications for schools where the date that the school place is required from, is more than 6 weeks from the date of the application (Service and Crown personnel are exempt).

35. School places cannot be allocated based on intended future changes of address unless a house move has been confirmed through the exchange of contracts or a rental agreement. The admission authority reserves the right to seek further documentary evidence to support the claim to residence.

### **Responding to School Transfer Forms**

36. If the school transfer application form is for a Voluntary Aided school, the Local authority will refer the application to the Governing Body of the school. In the case of applications for schools outside Gateshead, the LA will request that parents apply directly to the relevant admission authority. We do not process 'in year' application forms for schools outside Gateshead.

37. All primary schools within Gateshead must respond to the Local Authority (LA) within 10 days of receiving the School Transfer Form, informing the LA of the availability of a place. If there is a place available, the LA will notify parents of the outcome of the application within 5

school days of the school notifying the Education Support Service of the availability of places.

- 38 Where places are not available at the highest ranked school the LA will co-ordinate with the second and third preference schools until a place can be offered at one of the preferences, subject to the availability of places and admission criteria.
- 39 If a pupil lives in Gateshead and is not on the roll of a Gateshead school and a place cannot be offered at any of the requested schools, the parent will be informed of places available at other schools in the area.
- 40 If there are more applications than places available, the published oversubscription admission criteria must be applied.
- 41 Pupils will only be refused a place at a school if one of the statutory reasons in the school admissions code applies.
- 42 Pupils should not be placed outside the normal age group without written recommendation from a professional within Care, Wellbeing and Learning at Gateshead Council. This could include an Education Psychologist, a Professional Officer working with Gifted and Talented children etc.
- 43 The LA will keep track of any pupils who apply for 'in year' admissions and intervene as appropriate to ensure that they are placed in a school without undue delay, particularly in respect of Children in Care and disadvantaged children moving into the area i.e., Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller children.

#### **Determining Offers in response to the School Transfer Form**

- 45 Pupils living in Gateshead and applying for a school in the area (including Voluntary Aided Schools and Academies) The LA will notify the parent verbally if a place is available for Schools and Academies in Gateshead. However, if a place is not available the parent will be notified of this in writing.
- 46 **Pupils living in Gateshead applying for a school out of the area.** The home authority (Gateshead) will request that the parent apply directly to the relevant admission authority to process their request and follow their 'in year' application process.
- 47 **Pupils living outside Gateshead applying to a Gateshead school.** The home authority must ask the parent/carer to contact Gateshead LA to complete a School Transfer Form to confirm the availability of a place. Gateshead LA will liaise with the parents regarding the outcome of their request.
- 48 **Acceptance of a school place.** Parents will be expected to contact the school offered to accept or decline the offer within 2 weeks. Failure to do so may result in the school place being withdrawn and offered to the next child on the waiting list if appropriate.
- 49 **Waiting Lists.** If your child is refused a place at the school you requested, you may request that your child's name is placed on the waiting list for this school. The LA will maintain school waiting lists for reception class until the end of December 2025, following this date they will be sent to the individual schools to maintain. A child's position on a waiting list will be determined using the admission criterion for the school in question, however children who are the subject of a direction to admit, by the LA or who have been allocated a place through the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over any child on the waiting list.

### Timescales for processing 'In Year' Applications

School Transfer form received by the Education Support Service	Process commences unless place is not required until a date more than 6 school weeks away (extended for children of service personnel and crown servants).
Within 5 school days of receipt of application	The LA notifies the Governing Bodies of any request for a place at their school
Within 10 school days of the school being notified of the request	The Governing Bodies of any requested school must respond to the Education Support Service regarding the availability of places
Within 5 school days of receipt of application by the Education Support Service	The Education Support Service will notify the parent by telephone if a place is available at their requested school. If a place is not available the parent will be notified of this in writing, including information about appeals and waiting lists, where appropriate.
Within 2 weeks of the date of a school place being offered	The school must receive confirmation of acceptance of the place from the parent.

### Timetable of Primary Co-ordinated scheme 2025 First Year of Entry

- Monday 9 September 2024:** Common Application Form made available to parents online or paper copy (on request only). Schools/Academies receive information letters for distribution to parents.
- Monday 15 January 2025:** On-Line applications and paper forms to be submitted to the LA.
- Friday 7 February 2025:** Details of applications to be sent to VA schools and other LA's.
- Friday 7 March 2025:** VA schools provide the LA with ranked lists of applicants.
- Friday 14 March 2025:** The LA will provide other LAs with a list of offers and refusals for relevant children.
- Friday 11 April 2025:** By this date the LA will notify schools/Academies which applicants have been offered places at their schools.
- Wednesday 16 April 2025:** Notifications sent to parents on or around this date.
- Friday 9 May 2025:** Any places that become available are reallocated to applicants from the waiting list in accordance with paragraph 22 of schedule 1 of this scheme.

**Waiting lists maintained by the LA until end of the autumn term December 2025**

### Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary School Admission Number 2025

Primary School	DfE Number	Proposed Planned Admission Number 2025
Barley Mow Community Primary	2226	30
Bede Community Primary	2039	30
Bill Quay Primary	2197	30
Birtley East Community Primary	2163	30
Blaydon West Primary	2182	30
Brandling Primary	2200	30
Brighton Avenue Primary	2221	60
Caedmon Community Primary	2233	30
Carr Hill Community Primary	2008	45
Chopwell Primary	2235	45
Clover Hill Community Primary	2216	30
Colegate Community Primary	2228	30
Crookhill Community Primary	2219	30
Dunston Hill Community Primary	2164	60
Emmaville Primary	2167	60
Falla Park Community Primary	2198	30
Fellside Community Primary	2231	30
Fell Dyke Community Primary	2232	45
Front Street Community Primary	2184	60
Glynwood Community Primary	2225	60
Greenside Community Primary	2181	30
Harlow Green primary	2238	60
Highfield Community Primary	2186	17
High Spen Primary	2168	29
Kells Lane Primary	2234	60
Kelvin Grove Community Primary	2012	60
Larkspur Community Primary	2051	29
Lingey House Primary	2205	60
Lobley Hill Primary	2222	60
Oakfield Junior	2049	60
Oakfield Infant	2055	60
Parkhead Community Primary	2236	58
Portobello Primary	2162	30
Ravensworth Terrace Primary	2058	60
Roman Road Primary	2229	30
Rowlands Gill Primary	2239	60
Ryton Community Junior	2193	60
Ryton Community Infant	2188	60
St Aidan's C of E Primary	2237	30



South Street Community Primary	2036	30
Swalwell Primary	2172	30
The Drive Community Primary	2213	29
Wardley Primary	2224	45
Washingwell Community Primary	2194	30
Whickham Parochial C of E Primary	3001	30
White Mere Community Primary	2214	30
Windy Nook Primary	2227	45
Winlaton West Lane Community Primary	2177	45

#### Church of England Primary School Planned Admission Number 2025

Primary School	DfE Number	Proposed Planned Admission Number 2025
St Aidan's Church of England Primary School	2237	30

#### PRIMARY ACADAMIES - PLANNED ADMISSION NUMBERS 2025

##### Community Academies

Academy	DfE Number	Proposed Planned Admission Number 2025
Kibblesworth Academy	2058	29
Riverside Primary Academy	2220	60

##### Voluntary Aided Academies

Academy	DfE Number	Proposed Planned Admission Number 2025
Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School	3313	29
Sacred Heart Catholic School	4041	30
St Agnes Catholic Primary	3326	30
St Alban's Catholic Primary	3335	30
St Anne's Catholic Primary School	3322	30
St Augustine's Catholic Primary	3336	45
St Joseph's Catholic Infant, Birtley	3325	30
St Joseph's Catholic Junior, Birtley	3324	30
St Joseph's Catholic Primary Blaydon	3331	30
St Joseph's RC VA Gateshead	3317	30
St Joseph's RC VA Highfield	3327	15
St Mary and St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Primary School	3328	30
St Mary's RC Primary School	3333	30
St Oswald's Catholic Primary	3318	30

St Peter's RC VA Primary School	3319	30
St Philip Neri RC Primary	3330	30
St Wilfrid's RC VA Primary School	3339	20

## Gateshead Secondary School Co-ordinated Admissions Scheme September 2025

### Introduction

This Scheme is made by Gateshead Council under the Education (Co-ordination of Admission Arrangements) (Secondary) (England) Regulations 2002 and applies to all Secondary schools in Gateshead.

### Interpretation

#### In this Scheme

**'The LA'** means Gateshead Council acting in their capacity as local authority;

**'The LA area'** means the area in respect of which the LA is the local authority;

**'Primary education'** has the same meaning as in section 2(1) of the Education Act 1996;

**'Secondary education'** has the same meaning as in section 5(2) of the Education Act 1996;

**'Primary school'** has the same meaning as in section 5(1) of the Education Act 1996;

**'Secondary school'** has the same meaning as in section 5(2) of the Education Act 1996;

**'School'** means a community, foundation or voluntary school (not a special school) which is maintained by the LA;

**'Foundation school'** means such of the schools as are foundation schools;

**'VA schools'** means such of the schools as are voluntary-aided schools;

**'Academy'** means such of the schools have academy status;

**'CTC'** means City Technology College (Emmanuel College in Gateshead)

**'Admission authority'** in relation to a community or voluntary controlled school means the LA and, in relation to a VA school or Academy means the governing body of that school.

**'The specified year'** means the school year beginning at or about the beginning of September 2025;

**'Academic year'** means a period commencing 1 September and ending 31 August;

**‘Admission arrangements’** means the overall procedure, practices, criteria, and supplementary information which govern the procedures and decision making for the purposes of admitting pupils to the school;

**‘CAF’** means the common application form that must be used by the parent to apply for a school place for the normal admission round (first year of entry);

**‘Home LA’** means the local authority in which the child resides;

**‘Equal preference System’** means all preferences for each school listed by parents on the CAF are considered against the school’s oversubscription criterion without reference to the parental ranking nominated on the CAF. However, where a child may be eligible for a place at more than one school ranked on their CAF, then the rankings given will be used to determine the final single offer that will be made by selecting the school that was ranked highest on the CAF for which the child is eligible for an offer.

**‘Parent or Legal Guardian’** means any person who holds parental responsibility, including carers, as defined under the 1989 Children Act and with whom the child normally resides.

**‘In Year Admissions’** means any application for a place in any year group for secondary school received during the academic year commencing in September 2025.

**‘Eligible for a place’** means that a child has been placed on a school’s ranked list at such a point which falls within the school’s published admission number or is eligible following determination under the Fair Access protocol.

## **Commencement and extent**

This scheme applies in relation to the admission arrangements for the schools and Academies for the admission year 2025/2026 (the specified year). The LA will include in its admission arrangements for the specified year the provisions set out in Schedule 1 of this scheme, or provisions having the same effect. The governing body of each VA school will include in its admission arrangements for the specified year the provisions set out in the Schedule, so far as relevant to that school, or provisions having the same effect.

## **The Scheme**

The Scheme shall be determined in accordance with the provisions set out in Schedule 1 and processed in accordance with the timetable set out in Schedule 2.

The Scheme shall apply to every secondary school in the LA area including academies, as identified in Appendix 1 (except special schools and Emmanuel College).

The Scheme will also include applications from parents seeking admission to Gateshead schools who live within the following neighbouring LA’s:

**Durham, Newcastle, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland.**

We will also co-ordinate our admission process with any other admission authorities where relevant.

**SCHEDULE 1**  
**Part 1 -The Scheme**

1. A standard application form known as the Common Application Form (CAF) will be used for applications to school for the normal year of entry in the specified year. A standard application form known as a School Transfer Form will be used for 'in year' applications made after the commencement of the academic year in September 2025.
2. The CAF will be used for the purpose of admitting pupils into first year of secondary education in the academic year 2025/2026.
3. The CAF must be used as a means of expressing up to 3 preferences by parent's resident in the LA area wishing to express a preference for their child to:
  - a) be admitted to a school within the LA area
  - b) be admitted to a school located in another LA's area
4. **The Common Application Form will:**
  - a) allow parents to express up to 3 preferences by naming them in rank order of preference and where relevant for schools outside Gateshead LA area.
  - b) invite parents to give their reasons for each preference.
  - c) specify the closing date and where the application form must be returned, in accordance with paragraph 10.
5. **The LA will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that:**
  - a) the CAF is available on request from the LA and on-line at [www.gateshead.gov.uk](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk) until the closing date and;
  - b) every parent resident in the LA area who has a child eligible to commence secondary education receives a written explanation of how to apply and an explanation of the key features of the admission procedures and co-ordinated admission scheme and has access to the CAF on-line and paper copy (on request only).
  - c) every parent whose application falls within the category of an 'in year' admission receives a copy of the School Transfer Form and an explanation of the school transfer procedures.
6. **The LA will take all reasonable steps to ensure that:**
  - (iv) applicants will receive no more than one offer of a school place and;
  - (v) a place will be offered at the highest ranked school for which they are eligible under the admission criteria; and
  - (vi) If more than one school is nominated and no order of ranking is stated, or a wish expressed that they be ranked equally, the parent will be regarded as having ranked the schools in the order appearing on the form (the first-mentioned being ranked the highest); and

- (iv) if a place cannot be offered at any nominated school, a place will be offered at an alternative school where possible.

7. All preferences expressed on the CAF are valid applications. The governing body of an academy or VA school can require parents who nominate their school on the CAF, to provide additional information on a supplementary form, only where the additional information is required for the governing body to apply their oversubscription criteria to the application. Where a supplementary form is required it will be sent to the parents by the governing body for completion and returned to the school.
8. Where a school receives a supplementary form, it will not be regarded as a valid application unless the parent has also completed a CAF and the school is nominated on it. Where supplementary forms are received directly by the school then the school must inform the LA immediately, so it can verify whether a CAF has been received from the parent and, if not, the LA will contact the parent and ask them to complete a CAF. Under the requirements of the scheme, parents must not be under any obligation to complete an individual school's supplementary form where this is not strictly required for the governing body to apply their oversubscription criteria.
9. Any school which operates criteria for selection by ability or aptitude must ensure that its arrangements for assessing ability or aptitude, to enable decisions to be made on nominations, conform to the timing requirements of the scheme as set out in Schedule 2. (please note, no Community or Voluntary Aided School in Gateshead operates criteria for selection-based ability or aptitude).

#### **Submitting Applications (CAF)**

10. Completed CAF's must be returned to the LA by 31 October 2024. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that CAF's are returned directly to the LA, on-line or in a paper format by the closing date.

#### **Determining offers in response to the Common Application Form**

11. The LA will act as a clearinghouse for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to the CAF's received. The LA will only make any decision with respect to the offer or refusal of a place in response to any preference expressed on the CAF where:
  - (b) It is acting in its separate capacity as an admission authority, or
  - (c) An applicant is eligible for more than one place and is allocated a place at the highest ranked school or
  - (c) An applicant is not eligible for a place at any school that the parent has nominated.

The LA will allocate places in accordance with the provisions set out in paragraph 18 of this Schedule.

12. Completed application forms must be returned to the home LA by the closing date of 31 October 2024.
13. Completed application forms, that are received after the closing date will be considered as **LATE** unless 'exceptional circumstances' apply, except that the procedure must not prevent the proper processing under the Scheme, for those application forms received on time.

14. The LA will process all application forms. All ranked applications received by the closing date will be considered before any ranked applications received after this closing date unless exceptional circumstances apply.
15. **By 22 November 2024** the LA will notify the admission authority for each of the schools of every nomination that has been made for that school. Where parents have nominated a school outside the LA area, then the LA will also notify the relevant maintaining authorities by this date.
16. **By 10 January 2025** the admission authority for each school will consider all applications for their school and apply their oversubscription criteria (if appropriate) and provide the LA with a list of all potential offers in ranked order according to their oversubscription criteria.
17. **By 3 February 2025** Gateshead LA will provide neighbouring LA's information of school offers to be made at Gateshead schools for applicants living in their LA and vice versa. This notification process will continue until all offers are finalised.
18. **By 7 February 2025** the LA will match the above lists against the ranked lists of the other schools nominated and:
  - Where the child is eligible for a place at the first preference school, that school will be allocated to the child
  - Where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the preferred schools, a place at that school will be offered to the child.
  - Where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the preferred schools, they will be offered a place at the school that is ranked the highest on the CAF for which they are eligible, and any lower offers will be disregarded.
  - Where the child is not eligible for a place at any of the ranked schools, the child will be allocated a place at their catchment school (if places are still available), or if this is not available, a place where possible, will be offered at the next nearest community school with a vacancy, measured as the crow flies from the parental residence to the main entrance of the school.
  - Where possible, the LA will allocate a school place to those pupils who have not submitted a CAF after all other pupils who submitted a CAF have been considered. The LA will allocate a place at the catchment school or if this is not available at the next nearest community school, with a vacancy, measured as the "crow flies" in a straight line from the parental residence to the main entrance of the school.
19. **On 24 February 2025** the LA informs its secondary schools of the pupils to be offered places at their school.

### **National Offer Day**

20. **On or around 3 March 2025** parents will be notified by email if they applied online that they are being offered a place at the allocated school. A letter will also be posted to Gateshead residents on or around this date informing them of the school place allocated this includes those that applied online. This letter will give the following information:
  - The name of the school at which a place is offered
  - The reasons why the child is not being offered a place at any higher ranked school nominated on the CAF
  - Information about their statutory right of appeal against the decisions to refuse places at the other nominated schools and waiting list procedures

- Contact details to obtain an appeal form for higher ranked schools on the CAF for which they were not offered a place

The letter will not inform parents of places still available at other schools.

## **22. Waiting Lists and reallocation of places 7 April 2025**

The LA will maintain waiting lists for all oversubscribed schools in Gateshead.

All applicants refused a school place will automatically be placed on the waiting list for any school at which they have been refused. Parents may be informed of the position their child occupies on the list, however individual positions may change on a regular basis due to the addition or deletion of children to the list or changes in the admission criteria applied to individual applications.

A child's position on any waiting list will be determined using the admission criterion for the school in question however children who are the subject of a direction to admit by the LA or who have been referred for admission and have been allocated a place through the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over any child on the waiting list. Voluntary Aided schools will inform the LA where children shall be placed on the waiting list for their school. Parents, who wish to go on waiting lists for any school operating 'random allocation' in Gateshead as their tie breaker, should be clear that any single place that becomes available at such schools will be subject of a separate random selection process within each oversubscription category within the policy.

If vacancies arise at oversubscribed schools after 1 March 2025 the first allocation of places will take place on 7 April 2025 followed by subsequent reallocations, if found to be necessary, at weekly intervals.

Where a child may be eligible for an offer from more than one school waiting list then the offer made will be for the school that was ranked highest by the parent on the CAF.

The waiting list will be compiled from those children who have been refused a place. This list may include the following children:

- Those who applied late after 31 October 2024 but before 3 March 2025 and who did not receive an offer for a school choice which was ranked on the CAF. Such applicants may be placed on the waiting lists for all schools nominated on the CAF at which they have been refused a place.
- Where a parent has been offered a place at a school, which they did not nominate on the CAF they may be placed on the waiting list for all the schools they did nominate, on the CAF.
- Those who have been offered a place at a school nominated on the CAF but were refused a place at a school ranked higher on the CAF than the school they were offered. For example, where an applicant has been allocated a place at their second ranked school, they may be placed on the waiting list of their first ranked school but not their third and so on.
- Parents who have submitted a new application (accepted for exceptional reasons only i.e., moved to a new house into the area) for consideration including those for children in public care ('Looked After' children as defined in the admission policy) and children requiring placement through the in year Fair Access protocol.
- Parents who write to request a new school not originally named on the CAF following the allocation date on 3 March 2025 and who do not have exceptional reasons as described above, will not be placed on the waiting list for that new school until 14 April 2025, this is after the first reallocation of places on 7 April 2025.

From 14 April 2025 the waiting list will be opened to all new requests.

### ***Part 2 –Late Applications***

- 23.** The closing date for applications in the normal admissions round is **31 October 2024**.

As far as is reasonably practicable applications for places in the normal admissions round that are received late for exceptional reasons only may be accepted, provided they are received by 3 January 2025. Examples of what will be considered as a valid reason include: a family that has just moved into the area or is returning from abroad (proof of ownership or tenancy of a Gateshead property will be required in these cases) or for UK service personnel who have been relocated and have an intended address. Other circumstances will be considered, and each case is decided on its own merits based on the evidence provided.

#### **Change of Preferences received after 31 October 2024**

- 24.** Parents submitting requests to change their preferences, from those originally ranked on the CAF, will be classed as 'late' and may only be considered if exceptional circumstances apply such as those examples described in paragraph 23 above. If no such exceptional circumstances apply the LA will continue to proceed with the original preferences ranked on the CAF for the purposes of the allocation of places on the 3 March 2025. In these circumstances such applications may only be considered if vacancies exist after all on time applicants who have ranked the school on their CAF have been allocated a place.

#### **Late Applications received after 3 January 2025**

- 25.** Applications received after 3 January 2025 will NOT be considered until after 3 March 2025. Parents will, if possible, receive an offer of a school place on 3 March 2025 according to the scheme.

#### **No application form received by 3 March 2025**

- 26.** Where no CAF is submitted the child will, on 3 March 2025, where possible, be offered a place at their catchment school if there are places available. If no places are available at the catchment school, a place will be offered at the next nearest community school with places available, measured 'as the crow flies', from the parental residence to the main entrance of the school. The LA will be aware which parents this applies to as a result of liaison with junior and primary schools.

#### **Applications received after 3 March 2025 but before 7 April 2025**

- 27.** Applications made direct to any school or academy on the CAF must be forwarded to the LA immediately. The LA will offer a place where possible, on 7 April 2025 at the school/academy ranked highest on the CAF at which there is a vacancy, or if this is not possible at their community catchment school, or if this school is also full at the next nearest community school with a vacancy, measured 'as the crow flies' from the parental residence to the main entrance of the school. However, please note, new applications submitted during this period from parents who have already submitted a CAF in the normal admission round will not be considered until 14 April 2025 in accordance with paragraph 22 above.



### **Applications received after 7 April but before 31 August 2025**

28. The LA will continue to co-ordinate admissions to all relevant schools in Gateshead up to 31 August 2025.

Applications received after 2 April 2025 should be made on the CAF and sent to the LA, who will:

- Determine any application for a community or controlled school for which it is the admission authority; and
- If the application is for a voluntary aided academy, refer the application to the governing body of the school, which will make a determination and notify the LA who will then notify the parent. Parents who are refused admission will be offered the right of appeal and will be informed about the waiting list procedure.
- New applications submitted after 1 March 2025 from parents who have already submitted a CAF in the normal admissions round may not be considered until 2 April 2025 in accordance with paragraph 22 above.

29. The LA will keep track of any pupils who apply after 3 March 2025 but before 31 August 2025 and intervene as appropriate to ensure that they are allocated a school place without delay.

### ***Part 3 – In Year Applications***

30. In Year applications are those applications received after 31 August 2025 for places in any year group requesting admission during the academic year 2025/2026.

31. Parents should apply for a place in a Gateshead school directly through Gateshead LA.

In year applications must be made on the School Transfer Form. In Year applications are those applications received after 31 August 2025 for places in any year group requesting admission during the academic year 2025/2026. Please note that parents who have been refused a place in the normal allocation round for the first year of entry to secondary schools for admission from 2025 and have been refused a place by the independent appeal panel may not reapply for the same year of entry unless they can demonstrate there has been a significant and material change in their circumstances that relate to the question of admission.

32. The Gateshead School Transfer Form for 'in year' admissions is available from the Education Support Service, School Admissions, Floor 2, Civic Centre Gateshead, NE8 1HH and on the Council's website [www.gateshead.gov.uk](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk).
33. Gateshead Local Authority will process all School Transfer Forms for Gateshead schools and inform parents of the outcome of their application even if the school is a voluntary aided school or academy.
34. The local authority is unable to process applications for schools where the date that the school place is required from, is more than 6 weeks from the date of the application (Service and Crown personnel are exempt).
35. School places cannot be allocated based on intended future changes of address unless a house move has been confirmed through the exchange of contracts or a rental agreement. The admission authority reserves the right to seek further documentary evidence to support the claim to residence.

## **Responding to School Transfer Forms**

36. If the application form is for a Voluntary Aided school, the Local authority will refer the application to the Governing Body of the school. In the case of applications for schools outside Gateshead, the LA will request that the parents apply directly to the relevant admission authority. We do not process 'in year' application forms for schools outside Gateshead.
37. All secondary schools within Gateshead must respond to the Local Authority (LA) within 10 school days of receiving the School Transfer Form, informing the LA of the availability of a place. If there is a place available, the LA will notify parents of the outcome of the application within 5 school days of the school notifying the Education Support Service of the availability of places.
38. Where places are not available at the highest ranked school the LA will co-ordinate with the second and third preference schools until a place can be offered at one of the preferences, subject to the availability of places and admission criteria.
39. If a pupil, lives in Gateshead and is not on the roll of a Gateshead school and a place cannot be offered at any of the requested schools, the parent will be informed of places available at other schools in the area.
40. If there are more applications than places available the published oversubscription admission criteria must be applied.
41. Pupils will only be refused a place at a school if one of the statutory reasons in the school admissions code applies.
42. Pupils should not be placed outside the normal age group without written recommendation from a professional within Care, Wellbeing and Learning at Gateshead Council. This could include an Education Psychologist, a Professional Officer working with Gifted and Talented children etc.
43. The LA will keep track of any pupils who apply for 'in year' admissions and intervene as appropriate to ensure that they are placed in a school without undue delay particularly in respect of Children in public care and disadvantaged children moving into the area i.e., Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children.

## **Determining Offers in response to the School Transfer form**

44. Pupils living in Gateshead and applying for a school in the area (including Voluntary Aided Schools and Academies) The LA will notify the parent verbally if a place is available for Schools and Academies in Gateshead. However, if a place is not available the parent will be notified of this in writing.
45. **Pupils living in Gateshead applying for a school out of the area.** The home authority (Gateshead) will request that the parents apply directly to the relevant admission authority to process their request.
46. **Pupils living outside of the Gateshead authority applying to a Gateshead school.** The home authority must ask the parent/carer to contact Gateshead LA to complete a School Transfer Form to confirm the availability of a place. Gateshead LA will liaise with the parents regarding the outcome of their request.

- 47. Acceptance of a school place.** Parents will be expected to contact the school offered to accept or decline the offer within 2 weeks. Failure to do so may result in the school place being withdrawn and offered to the next child on the waiting list if appropriate.
- 48. Waiting Lists.** If your child is refused a place at the school requested, you may request that your child's name is placed on the waiting list for this school. The LA will maintain school waiting lists for year 7 until the end of December 2025, following this date they will be sent to the individual schools to maintain. A child's position on a waiting list will be determined using the admission criterion for the school in question however children who are the subject of a direction to admit by the LA or who have been allocated a place through the Fair Access Protocol will take precedence over any child on the waiting list.

### **Timescales for processing In Year Applications**

School Transfer Form received by the Education Support Service	Process commences, unless place is not required until a date more than 6 school weeks away (extended for children of service personnel & crown servants)
Within 10 days of the school being notified of the request	The Governing Bodies of any requested school must respond to The Education Support Service regarding the availability of places
Within 5 school days of the school notifying the Education Support Service of the availability of places	The Education Support Service will notify the parent by telephone if a place is available at their requested school. However, if a place is not available the parent will be notified of this in writing, including information about appeals and waiting lists, where appropriate.
Within 2 weeks of the date of a school place being offered	The school must receive confirmation of acceptance of the place from the parent.

## **SCHEDULE 2**

### **Timetable of Secondary School Co-ordinated Scheme 2025**

#### **First Year of Entry**

Monday 9 September 2024	Common Application Form made available to parents online or paper copy (on request only). Primary/Junior schools receive information packs to distribute to year 6 pupils.
Thursday 31 October 2024:	On-line applications and paper forms to be submitted to the LA.
Friday 22 November 2024:	Details of applications to be sent to VA schools and other LA's.
Friday 10 January 2025:	VA academies provide the LA with ranked lists of applicants.
Monday 3 February 2025:	The LA will provide other LA's with a list of offers and refusals for relevant children.
Monday 24 February 2025:	By this date the LA will notify schools which applicants have been offered places at their schools.
Monday 3 March 2025:	Notifications sent to parents on or around this date.
Monday 7 April 2025:	Any places that become available are re allocated to applicants from the waiting list in accordance with paragraph 22 of schedule 1 of this scheme.

Waiting lists will be maintained until end of the autumn term December 2025

#### **Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools where the LA is the Admission Authority:**

##### **Kingsmeadow Community Comprehensive School**

Market Lane  
Dunston  
Gateshead, NE11 9NX

#### **The Scheme applies to the Governing Body as the Admission Authority for the following Academies:**

##### **Heworth Grange School**

High Lanes  
Heworth  
Gateshead, NE10 0PT

##### **Grace College**

Saltwell Road South  
Gateshead, NE9 6LE

**Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy**

Birtley Lane  
Birtley, DH3 2LP

**Thorp Academy**

Main Road  
Ryton  
NE40 3AH

**Whickham School and Sports College (Academy Trust)**

Burnthouse Lane  
Whickham, NE16 5AR

**XP Gateshead**

Former Thomas Hepburn Site  
Swards Road  
Felling  
NE10 9UZ

**The Scheme applies to the Governing Body as the Admission Authority for the following Voluntary Aided Academies:**

**SECONDARY SCHOOL PLANNED ADMISSION NUMBER - 2025****ACADEMIES PLANNED ADMISSION NUMBERS**

<b>Academy Name</b>	<b>DfE Number</b>	<b>Proposed Planned Admission Number 2025</b>	<b>Proposed Sixth form Admission Number 2025</b>
<b>Heworth Grange School</b>	4002	210	
<b>Grace College</b>	4003	210	130
<b>Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy</b>	4027	240	226
<b>Whickham School</b>	4029	266	383
<b>Thorp Academy</b>	4001	330	270

**COMMUNITY SCHOOL PLANNED ADMISSION NUMBER**

<b>Secondary School</b>	<b>DfE Number</b>	<b>Proposed Planned Admission Number 2025</b>
<b>Kingsmeadow Community School</b>	4041	180

**FREE SCHOOL PLANNED ADMISSION NUMBER**

<b>Secondary School</b>	<b>DfE Number</b>	<b>Proposed Planned Admission Number 2025</b>
<b>XP Gateshead</b>	4004	50

**VOLUNTARY AIDED ACADEMY PLANNED ADMISSION NUMBERS**

<b>Secondary School</b>	<b>DfE Number</b>	<b>Proposed Planned Admission Number 2025</b>
<b>Cardinal Hume Catholic School</b>	4605	260

<b>St Thomas More Catholic School</b>	4606	260
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**TITLE OF REPORT:**           **Nomination of Local Authority School Governors**

**REPORT OF:**               **Helen Fergusson, Strategic Director, Children**

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## **Purpose of the Report**

1. Cabinet is asked to Nominate Local Authority Governors to schools seeking to retain their Local Authority governor in accordance with The School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations.

## **Background**

2. Schools - The School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations require all governing bodies to adopt a model for their size and membership. The regulations prescribe which categories of governor must be represented and what the level of representation is for each. The Local Authority's nomination is subject to the approval of the governing body. If approved, the nominee is appointed by the governing body.

## **Proposal**

3. It is proposed that Cabinet approves the nominations to schools as shown in appendix 1.

## **Recommendations**

4. It is recommended that Cabinet approves the nomination for appointment/reappointment of a Local Authority Governors as set out in appendix 1 and notes the term of office as determined by the schools' Instrument of Government.

For the following reason:

To ensure the School Governing Body has full membership.

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**CONTACT:** John Finch

extension: **8626** ([Johnfinch@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:Johnfinch@gateshead.gov.uk))

### Policy Context

1. In accordance with The School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations, local authorities can nominate any eligible person as a Local Authority governor. Statutory guidance encourages local authorities to appoint high calibre governors with skills appropriate to the school's governance needs, who will uphold the school's ethos, and to nominate candidates irrespective of political affiliation or preferences. A person is disqualified as a Local Authority governor if they are eligible to be a Staff governor at the same school.

### Background

2. As above.

### Consultation

3. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People has been consulted.

### Alternative Options

4. The alternative option would be to make no nomination/appointment to the vacancies, leaving governing bodies under strength and less likely to demonstrate the correct configuration.

### Implications of Recommended Option

#### 5. Resources:

- a) **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital confirms there are no financial implications arising from this report.

- b) **Human Resources Implications** – None

- c) **Property Implications** - None

6. **Risk Management Implication** - None

7. **Equality and Diversity Implications** - None

8. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – None

9. **Health Implications** - None

10. **Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications** - None

11. **Human Rights Implications** - None

12. **Ward Implications** - None

## Background Information

### 13. The School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations.

In accordance with the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012, the following Local Authority governors are nominated for a period of four years (as stipulated in the individual Instruments of Government) with effect from the dates stated below:

School	Nomination	Date from
Brandling Primary School	Cllr William Dick	9 <sup>th</sup> June 2024
Barley Mow Primary School	Cllr Hazel Weatherley	16 <sup>th</sup> June 2024
Colegate Community Primary School	Mr Barry Turnbull	16 <sup>th</sup> June 2024

### Notes

- Cllr William Dick is a reappointment that is supported by the school
- Cllr Hazel Weatherley is a reappointment that is supported by the school
- Mr Barry Turnbull is a reappointment that is supported by the school

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**TITLE OF REPORT: Review of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Policy and Conditions**

**REPORT OF: Peter Udall, Strategic Director, Economy, Innovation and Growth**

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**Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek Cabinet's approval to undertake a public consultation on proposed policy and conditions, relating to the licensing of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles.

**Background**

2. The Council has previously adopted a policy and attached conditions to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire vehicle licences under section 47(1) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 with the purpose of promoting public safety.
3. The policy and conditions have been reviewed incrementally since 2007, most recently in November 2022. While they remain effective in promoting public safety there have been changes in national, regional and local priorities and guidance, and technological advances in vehicles and booking systems that necessitate a wider review.
4. The draft revised policy and conditions incorporate into one document the proposed
  - Hackney Carriage Vehicle policy
  - Private Hire Vehicle policy
  - Hackney Carriage Driver policy
  - Private Hire Driver policy
  - Private Hire Operator policy; and
  - (existing) Byelaws

and the document is a therefore a wholesale replacement of the existing (separate) policies that have been in place for some time.

5. An executive summary of the draft revised policy is attached in Appendix 2. The proposed policy and conditions are available at <http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/>.

**Proposal**

6. It is proposed to conduct a widespread public consultation on the proposed policy and conditions for a minimum of 8 weeks throughout Spring 2024 and hold a Members Seminar as part of the consultation process and to ask that the results

of that consultation be considered by a Policy Advisory Group before returning to Cabinet with a final statement for approval by Council in Summer 2024.

### **Recommendations**

7. It is recommended that the draft policy and conditions be consulted upon during spring 2024, including a Members Seminar and that a Policy Advisory Group be asked to consider the results of that consultation and give their comments to Cabinet so that a final version of the policy and conditions can be recommended to Council in summer 2024 for approval.

For the following reason

So that the policy and conditions relating to Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle licences can be updated to take into account changes to national, regional and local priorities and guidance and technological changes in vehicles and booking systems.

**Policy Context**

1. The main purpose of licensing vehicles for hackney carriage and private hire use in Gateshead is to protect public safety. This review of policy and conditions ensures that public safety continues to be promoted.
2. The adoption of a revised policy and conditions for hackney carriage and private hire vehicles will contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan 2023 – 2028 Making Gateshead Thrive, Gateshead Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Gateshead Economic Development Strategy and Gateshead Community Strategy Partnership Plan 2020-2023
3. The revised policy and conditions for hackney carriage and private hire vehicles introduces measures which will contribute to the Council's Climate Change Strategy (2022).
4. The proposed policy and conditions incorporate the Department for Transport's Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards (Revised 25 November 2022) and the Department for Transport Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing: best practice (revised 17 November 2023)
5. The proposed policy and conditions for hackney carriage and private hire vehicles contributes to the Vision for Sustainable transport set out in the North East Transport Plan 2021-35

**Background**

6. The Council is the licensing authority responsible for the licensing of hackney carriage and private hire vehicles in Gateshead. Currently 119 hackney carriages and 366 private hire vehicles are licensed. The current conditions and policy have been in place since 2007 and have been amended incrementally as necessary over the years.
7. The current policy and conditions can be found on the Council's website at <https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/3117/Taxi-licenses>. They remain effective in ensuring public safety but have become out of step in some respects with recent changes to guidance, developments in vehicle design and technology and the way that passengers make bookings for services. The draft revised policy and conditions propose a number of changes to take these developments into account.
8. The proposed changes aim to make the policy more understandable and accessible for applicants, licensees, the travelling public and enforcement bodies such as the police and neighbouring authorities.

**Proposal**

9. It is proposed to conduct a widespread public consultation on the revised policy and conditions, and to ask that the results of that consultation be considered by a Policy Advisory Group before returning to Cabinet with a final policy and conditions for approval by Council.

10. Consultation will be widespread including all Council Members, the hackney carriage and private hire trade in Gateshead, neighbouring licensing authorities, relevant Council services and relevant stakeholders. The consultation will make it clear that while the document contains proposed amendments and new proposals, comments on any aspect of the policy and conditions will be welcomed.

### **Consultation**

11. The Leader and Deputy Leader, Portfolio Holder for Environment & Transport, the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Volunteering, and Chair and Vice Chair of the Regulatory Committee have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

### **Alternative Options**

12. This report sets out a number of reasons why the current policy and conditions need to be reviewed. The alternative would be to continue with the current policy and conditions.

### **Implications of Recommended Options**

#### **13. Resources**

- a. **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital confirms that there are no additional financial implications arising from this report.
  - b. **Human Resources Implications** - There are no human resource implications arising directly from this report.
  - c. **Property Implications** - There are no property implications arising directly from this report
14. **Risk Management Implications** – There are no risk management implications arising directly from this report
  15. **Equality and Diversity Implications** – An Integrated Impact Assessment of these proposals has indicated a neutral impact.
  16. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – There are no crime and disorder implications arising directly from this report.
  17. **Health Implications** - There are no health implications arising directly from this report
  18. **Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications** – The proposals will contribute to the Council's Climate Change Strategy (2022) and to the actions the Council committed to when declaring a Climate Change Emergency on 23 May 2019.
  19. **Human Rights Implications** - There are no human rights implications arising from this report



20. **Ward Implications** - This report affects all wards equally.

21. **Background Material**

The following documents that have been considered in preparation of the report:

- Council's Corporate Plan 2023 – 2028 Making Gateshead Thrive
- Gateshead Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Gateshead Economic Development Strategy
- Gateshead Community Strategy Partnership Plan
- Council's Climate Change Strategy (2022)
- Department for Transport's Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards (Revised 25 November 2022)
- Department for Transport Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing: best practice (revised 17 November 2023)
- North East Transport Plan 2021-35

## **Executive Summary**

The Draft Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy provides a cohesive document that brings together all policies, procedures, conditions and standards relating to hackney carriage and private hire licensing.

The primary and overriding objective of the policy is the protection of the public.

The draft policy has been developed alongside the core policies of Gateshead Council including the Council's Corporate Plan 2023 – 2028 Making Gateshead Thrive, Gateshead Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Gateshead Economic Development Strategy, the Community Strategy Partnership Plan and the Climate Change Strategy and the regional North East Transport Plan 2021-35

The draft policy reflects the Department for Transport's Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards (Revised 25 November 2022) and Department for Transport Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing: best practice (revised 17 November 2023.) and the format has been aligned as far as possible.

Consideration has also been given to the policies of neighbouring authorities and bringing all of the individual documents together will make the policy more understandable and accessible for applicants, licensees, the travelling public and our partner enforcement bodies.

The draft policy sets out the process for application, the eligibility requirements for licensees, how Gateshead Council will exercise its powers when making decisions about new licence applications, renewal applications and current licences and the conditions, standards and expectations that are placed on licensees.

The main changes set out in the draft policy include:

- Changing the maximum age for a newly licensed vehicle to 4 years from 3 years which will make the licensing of affordable low emission vehicles more accessible
- Removing maximum age restriction on vehicles that are fully electric / zero emissions at source
- Proposing mandatory exploitation and disability training for licensees in line with DfT standards and guidance
- Proposing a colour policy for Hackney Carriages to enhance the ability of users to distinguish between hackney carriages and private hire vehicles
- Changes to the relevance of convictions to align our policy with DfT standards

## **HACKNEY CARRIAGE ('TAXI') & PRIVATE HIRE POLICY**

**DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION – JANUARY 2023**

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## **Foreword (to be developed during consultation)**

The North East region is going through a period of change, with Gateshead at its heart.

Many of the people who live in Gateshead work elsewhere in neighbouring cities and Boroughs; and vice versa.

Transport is a vital part of keeping our region moving.

Bringing in national standards for taxis has helped to achieve much greater consistency in our approach.

We recognise the important role taxis have in helping to improve our air quality (and the Council has, alongside Newcastle City Council, introduced a Clean Air Zone); and the vital role drivers have in identifying exploitation of vulnerable children and adults and enabling the Council and its partners to help those in need.

We recognise with the changing future of Gateshead our hackney and taxi drivers will have an important role to play as ambassadors for Gateshead and in helping to support our growing visitor economy.

## **1.0 Introduction**

The hackney carriage and private hire trade have a specific role to play in an integrated transport system. They are able to provide services in situations where public transport is either not available, for example in rural areas or outside normal hours of operation, such as in the evenings or on Sundays, or to those with mobility difficulties.

Gateshead Council recognises the increasingly important role the taxi and private hire trade plays in improving accessibility to all social groups; and the essential support it provides for home to school transport in the region.

In setting out its policy, Gateshead Council seeks to promote the following objectives

- (1) Public safety
- (2) Preventing crime and disorder
- (3) Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults
- (4) Promoting health and wellbeing; by enabling access to an efficient, effective and inclusive transport service
- (5) Maintaining and promoting a professional and respected hackney carriage and private hire trade
- (6) Protecting the environment and helping to tackle climate change; and
- (7) Promoting the role of the hackney carriage and private hire trade in the economic development of the Borough and the region.

This document sets out how Gateshead Council will exercise its powers when making decisions about new licence applications, renewal applications and current licences.

The Council's overarching objective in its approach to hackney carriage and private hire licensing is to protect the public. The onus is on applicants and licensees to satisfy the Council that they are (and remain) 'fit and proper' to hold a licence – or to put it in plain English, 'safe and suitable'. Applicants will not be given 'the benefit of the doubt'. If the officer or Councillors are unsure as to whether someone is safe and suitable to hold a licence, the application should be refused or the licence revoked.

## **1.1 Area and Impact**

(geography, demographics, vehicle journeys, impact on air quality – to be developed during consultation)

## **1.2 Policy Context**

This policy has been considered alongside the following strategies and policies –

- Council's Corporate Plan 2023 – 2028 Making Gateshead Thrive
- Gateshead Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Gateshead Economic Development Strategy
- Community Strategy Partnership Plan 2020-2023
- Climate Change Strategy 2022
- North East Transport Plan 2021-35
- Department for Transport's Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards (Revised 25 November 2022)

- Department for Transport Taxi and private hire vehicle licensing: best practice (revised 17 November 2023)

This policy recognises that the above strategies may be subject to change and this policy will consider any changes.

### **1.3 Working in partnership**

Gateshead Council recognises the vital role that partnership working plays in achieving our shared objectives; and to this end we work closely with –

- Northumbria Police
- HMRC
- Department for Transport
- UK Border Agency / Home Office (Immigration)
- DVLA
- DVSA
- DWP
- DBS
- Neighbouring Transport and Licensing Authorities (including through the North East Strategic Licensing Group)
- Local Government Association
- National Anti-Fraud Network
- Institute of Licensing; and
- Lawyers in Local Government

### **1.4 Equality**

Gateshead Council is committed to promoting equal treatment for all and will vigorously comply and promote all legislation that governs discrimination for race, age, sex, disability, religious beliefs, and sexual orientation. The Council will make reasonable adjustments where necessary to assist service users who may have difficulties due to their disability or language.

Drivers of licensed vehicles, however, must be able to:

- Communicate with their passengers
- Be able to understand instructions and requests
- Be able to respond appropriately

It is therefore essential that drivers have a good understanding and command of the English language which is the predominant language used in Gateshead and the North East. Drivers of license vehicles also have a responsibility to comply with the relevant equality and diversity legislation.



Gateshead Council recognises its public sector equality duty as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and will have regard to this duty when exercising its licensing functions stated in the policy. The Local Authority maintains a list of wheelchair accessible vehicles (or designated vehicles) The Equality Act 2010 requires the drivers of such designated vehicles to carry passengers in wheelchairs, to provide reasonable assistance to passengers and the Act prohibits any extra charges. It is a criminal offence for drivers of designated vehicles to refuse to carry, not provide assistance or charge extra unless the driver has been issued with an exemption certificate as set out in the Act.

All drivers (both taxi and private hire) are under a legal duty to carry any guide, hearing or assistance dogs in their vehicles and there cannot be additional charges. Any refusal to carry or additional charge could result in a £1,000 fine. Drivers may be granted an exemption only on medical grounds if an application is supported and evidenced by your own G.P. Drivers must be issued with a certificate before they are exempted from this responsibility. The certificate must be displayed at all times.

### **1.5 Policy consultation**

Gateshead Council's policy was introduced in 2007 and has been regularly updated since then. This (*draft*) policy has been updated to take account of the Department for Transport's National Standards and Best Practice Guidance.

The following organisations, groups and individuals (will be) consulted on the amendments to this policy -

- Current licensees
- Service users
- Northumbria Police
- Local businesses/ chamber of commerce
- Night time economy groups
- Local transport providers
- Inclusivity groups
- Councillors
- Council Services including Planning, Children's Services, Adult Services, Climate Change & Transport
- Neighbouring authorities

### **1.6 Implementation**

The policy will take effect on (*date TBC*) and will be subject to review at least every 5 years.

Minor changes to the policy may be made under delegated powers in accordance with the Council's Constitution. Any such changes shall have immediate effect and an updated version of the policy will be published on the Council's website at [www.gateshead.gov.uk](http://www.gateshead.gov.uk).

### **1.7 Eligibility**

### **Age and experience**

Applicants must be at least 21 years of age and have held a full UK or European Economic Area (EEA) and Vehicle Licence Agency (DVLA) driving licence or other European Union (EU) licence for at least 12 months.

Please note however, upon application a DVLA driving licence must be held even if the relevant qualifying experience has been obtained under an EEA or other EU licence.

### **Right to Live and Work in the UK**

Under the Immigration Act 2016, all new individual applicants for private hire operators and private hire and hackney carriage driver licences are required prove they have the right to work in the UK before being considered for a licence; and are required to produce documentation when submitting their application. A list of suitable documentation may be obtained from the Council's Licensing Service. No licence will be granted or renewed until the applicant is able to satisfy this requirement. If leave to remain in the country is less than 3 years a shorter licence will be issued.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**

All new applicants for driver licences must have an enhanced criminal records check through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before a licence will be issued.

The Council uses an online DBS application system which must be completed before an application is submitted to the Licensing Service.

All drivers are required to subscribe to the DBS Update Service. This allows the Licensing Service to carry out an online status check to ensure that the applicant's DBS certificate is current and valid.

If a status check indicates that an applicant has failed to register with the Update Service or that your subscription has lapsed, a new DBS application will be required at the applicant's expense. Information is available at –

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>.

### **Applicants who have spent time abroad**

Applicants who are new residents in the UK must still apply for the enhanced disclosure regardless of the time they have spent in the UK. If an applicant has been out of the country for more than 3 months an enhanced disclosure will not in itself satisfy the fit and proper test. In cases like these an applicant would need a certificate of good conduct or equivalent document from the country they have been resident.

The licensing authority is entitled to approach the relevant embassy to verify documents. Costs involved in any verification can be passed on to the applicant.

### **Medical**

All new applicants and licensed drivers are required to pass a medical to Group II DVLA Medical Standards of Fitness.

Medicals are required upon application and then at the age of 45, 50, 55, 60 and 65. Upon reaching 65 a medical is required every year.

A medical must be carried out by your own GP or a GP who has access to your medical records (including digital).

### **National Register of Taxi Licence Refusals and Revocations (NAFN)**

Gateshead Council has signed up to the National Register of Taxi Licence Refusals and Revocations (NR3S). The register will be checked on receipt of all driver applications. Details of all refusals, suspensions and revocations will be added to the register.

### **Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults**

Licensed drivers are in a position of trust and can play an important role in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. It is compulsory that drivers undergo awareness training that assists in the prevention of exploitation. Training is a mandatory part of the application process and must be completed before a licence is granted. Refresher training will also be provided from time to time, and must be completed before a licence is renewed.

### **Disability Awareness**

Drivers should be trained in disability awareness and/or have their knowledge and skills assessed. Training must be completed before a licence is granted and from time to time as required by the licensing authority

### **HMRC Tax Conditionality**

No decision on a grant or renewal application can be made without the applicant completing a tax check and providing the authority with the relevant code so that the Council can confirm that you are registered for tax, if necessary.

## **Section 2**

### **PROCEDURE**

#### **2.1 Application Process - Drivers**

Drivers must satisfy the authority that they are fit and proper people to be licensed drivers. The licensing authority will consider all applications for drivers' licences on their own individual merits.

Before the Licensing Service can determine suitability the applicant must satisfy the Council regarding the following points:

- Application form
- Application fee and any associated fees
- DVLA Driving Licence and DVLA check code
- Group II - Medical standards of fitness to drive and additional medical information (if required)
- Satisfactory completion of 'knowledge'/locality test
- Satisfactory completion of exploitation awareness training
- DBS enhanced disclosure certificate and additional information where applicants have lived abroad
- HMRC tax conditionality check code
- Evidence of right to live and work in UK
- Additional information (if required)

Applications that do not include all of the relevant documentation and information as above will not be complete and as such cannot be granted - or indeed refused.

Gateshead Council aims to ensure that hackney carriage and private hire services delivered within the Borough are of the highest standards. The application procedure is designed to ensure these standards are maintained and continually monitored for improvement. The Council may decide that further information is necessary to consider an application. If this is the case the applicant will be asked to provide this information in the appropriate format.

#### **2.2 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**

All new applicants must have an enhanced criminal records check through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before a licence will be issued.

The Council uses an online DBS application system which must be completed before an application is submitted to the Licensing Service.

All drivers are required to subscribe to the DBS Update Service. This allows Licensing Officers to carry out an online status check to ensure an applicant's DBS certificate is current and valid.

If a status check indicates that an applicant has failed to register with the Update Service or that their subscription has lapsed, a new DBS application will be required at the applicant's expense.

Applicants and licence holders are required to submit an online Enhanced DBS check and must register the check with the online service within 28 days of issue of the certificate.

### **2.3 Licence Renewal**

If a current licensee wishes to renew their licence upon its expiry they must submit the following –

- Application form
- Application fee and any additional fees
- Any medical certificate that may be required

On receipt, the Council shall carry out a number of checks including with the DBS, DVLA and NAFN which can take a number of weeks to be returned.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that their renewal is submitted in sufficient time for the process to be completed prior to the expiry of their current licence. Failure to do so may result in a period where the current licence will have expired and the renewal has not yet been issued – during which time it would be an offence to provide licensed services and you may invalidate your insurance.

Applicants (this includes those renewing a licence) who have spent more than 3 months outside of the UK since the issue of their existing licence (if applicable) will be required to produce a certificate of good conduct authenticated and translated by the relevant embassy before any application can be made to this licensing authority.

### **2.4 Policy for determining the relevance of criminal convictions**

Licences for drivers of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles will only be granted where the Council is satisfied that the applicant is a ‘fit and proper’ person to hold such a licence; and their licence will be suspended or revoked if the Council is no longer satisfied that they remain ‘fit and proper’. The Council has adopted a policy which provides guidance relating to the relevance of convictions, to determine if an applicant is safe and suitable.

Hackney carriage and private hire driving are Excepted Occupations and are therefore exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Applicants must declare all previous convictions (traffic and criminal) including convictions classed as spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 – other than those that are deemed to be ‘protected’. Applicants who are unclear whether their convictions are ‘protected’ should seek independent legal advice.

Applicants are also required to declare any formal police cautions (which are not ‘protected’ as above) and all endorsable fixed penalty tickets.

Applicants must also provide details of any pending investigation or prosecution they are currently the subject of.

The Council can and does check with Northumbria Police, the DBS and the DVLA for the existence and the content of any criminal record or motoring offences.

Any applicant who is refused a driver's licence on the grounds that they are not a 'fit and proper' person has a right of appeal to the Magistrates Court. These guidelines will also be considered when dealing with an application for the renewal of an existing driver's licence when considering whether to renew, suspend or revoke such a licence.

## **2.5 'Knowledge'/locality test**

In determining suitability an applicant must undertake a knowledge/locality test. This involves a series of questions in relation to the Gateshead area as well as questions on licence conditions, byelaws, legislation, and relevant highway code questions. If a licensee leaves the trade but returns within a 2-year period they will not be required to re-sit the test. Details about the knowledge test can be obtained from the Licensing Service upon request.

The test also challenges an applicant's English language proficiency.

Licensees are expected to be able to hold conversations, convey safety information and understand what is being said by passengers to identify indicators of concern, for example safeguarding issues.

Whilst basic English language skills are essential for routine job-related functions such as understanding directions and discussing fares, the National Standards expect language skill levels to a higher level.

Licensees are expected to be able to understand the local accent and dialect; and to familiarise themselves with place names used locally which may differ from official place names used on GPS systems.

## **2.6 Medical fitness**

All new applicants and licensed drivers are required to pass a medical to Group II DVLA Medical Standards of Fitness.

Medicals are required upon application and then at the age of 45, 50, 55, 60 and 65. Upon reaching 65 a medical is required every year.

A medical must be carried out by the applicant's own GP or a GP who has access to their medical records (including digitally).

All licence holders must inform the licensing service of any illness or condition that affects their ability to drive or carry out the duties and responsibilities of a licensed driver within 7 days of the start of such a condition/illness.

All costs associated with obtaining the relevant medical certificate or letters are to be met by the applicant.

## **2.7 Duration of licence**

The Council issues licences for a maximum of 3 years. The Council has the discretion to issue licences for a shorter duration if it considers this to be necessary.

## **2.8 Conditions**

The Council has no powers to attached conditions to a hackney carriage driver's licence, however does have a code of conduct which it expects all licensees to abide by. Byelaws are used to control hackney carriages and their drivers. The existing hackney carriage byelaws are set out in this handbook and will be reviewed from time to time. The Council attaches standard conditions to all private hire driver licences and may attach such other conditions as considered appropriate in the individual circumstances.

## **2.9 Medical exemptions**

Licensed drivers are under a legal duty to carry guide, hearing and other prescribed assistance dogs in their vehicles without additional charge. Drivers who have a medical condition which is aggravated by exposure to dogs may apply to the council for exemption from the duty on medical grounds.

If an application for an exemption is successful, the applicant will be issued with a certificate and notice. The notice of exemption must be exhibited in the vehicle in a prominent position. The Council cannot exempt a driver from carrying guide and assistance dogs for any other reason than medical grounds.

## **2.10 Dress code**

The Council encourages a smart dress code in order to portray a positive image of the Borough of Gateshead to customers. A dress code enhances a professional image of drivers licensed by the Council. Many Operators have their own dress code for drivers in the form of dress trousers or skirts, polo shorts, jumpers, jackets and dress shoes. This practice is positively encouraged by the Council.

## **2.11 Driver qualification**

The Council may introduce additional training for new and existing drivers to improve the standards of customer care offered to the travelling public and to enhance the knowledge, skills and professionalism of drivers.

## **2.12 Smoking in a licensed vehicle**

Drivers need to be aware that it is a criminal offence to smoke tobacco in a licensed vehicle whether or not a driver is on duty. Council Officers will issue drivers with a fixed penalty fine if they are found to be smoking in a licensed hackney carriage or private hire vehicle.

Drivers must also not 'vape' in or around their vehicle or permit passengers to 'vape'.

## **2.13 Exploitation awareness training**

Exploitation awareness training is mandatory and must be completed before a driver or operator licence is granted.

## **2.14 Right to Live and Work in the UK**

All new applicants must prove they have the right to work in the UK and are required to produce documentation when submitting their application.



## **Section 3**

### **CODE OF PRACTICE FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENCE HOLDERS**

#### **Foreword**

The Council considers that holders of hackney carriage and private hire licences are responsible for the safety and welfare of their clients as well as the public in general and are expected to act responsibly at all times.

Drivers of licensed vehicles are considered to be vocational (professional) drivers. In common with other vocational drivers, they should adopt passive driving technique and set an example to other road users.

This code of practice outlines the standards of conduct the Council expects of licensees and should be read in conjunction with the conditions of licence and hackney carriage byelaws.

If the code is followed by all licensees, then this should enhance the image of the trade by promoting it's professional standing, improving service to the public and reducing the potential for complaint.

#### **3.1 Responsibility to the trade**

Licensees will endeavour to promote the image of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire trade by:

- (a) complying with this code of practice
- (b) complying with all conditions of licence and byelaws
- (c) behaving in a civil, orderly, and responsible manner at all times

#### **3.2 Responsibility to passengers and users**

Licensees will:

- (a) maintain their vehicles in a safe and satisfactory condition at all times
- (b) keep their vehicles clean and suitable for hire to the public at all times
- (c) attend punctually when undertaking bookings
- (d) reasonably assist where necessary passengers into and out of vehicles
- (e) offer passengers reasonable assistance with luggage

#### **3.3 Responsibility to residents**

To avoid nuisance to residents Licensees will:

- (a) when attending a pre booked hiring or standing or waiting in residential areas:
  - a. not sound the vehicle's horn
  - b. keep the volume of radios or other electronic equipment to a minimum
  - c. switch off the engine if required to wait
  - d. take whatever additional action as is necessary to avoid disturbance to residents of the neighbourhood

- (b) at places where taxis ply for hire by forming queues Licensees will:
  - a. rank in an orderly manner and proceed along the rank in an orderly fashion
  - b. remain in the vehicle
- (c) at private hire offices licensees will:
  - a. not undertake servicing or repairs to vehicles
  - b. not allow their radio or electronic equipment to cause disturbance to residents of the neighbourhood
  - c. take whatever additional action as is necessary to avoid disturbance to residents of the neighbourhood which might arise from the conduct of their business

### **3.4 General**

Drivers will:

- (a) pay attention to personal hygiene and dress so as to present a professional image to the public
- (b) be polite, helpful and fair to passengers
- (c) drive with care and due consideration for other road users and pedestrians
- (d) obey all traffic regulation orders and directions at all times; and
- (e) treat all Council officers and Councillors with respect at all times.

## **Section 4**

### **POLICY ON THE RELEVANCE OF CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS AND CONDUCT**

#### **4.1 General**

1. This policy shall apply to applicants for and holders of –
  - hackney carriage vehicle licences
  - hackney carriage driver licences
  - private hire operator licences
  - private hire vehicle licences; and
  - private hire driver licences.
2. The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 imposes a 'fit and proper requirement for private hire operators and for hackney carriage and private hire drivers. There is no statutory 'fit and proper' test for hackney carriage and private hire vehicle proprietors, however it is the policy of this Council to have regard to the conduct of vehicle proprietors and where it impacts or could impact on the trust that the travelling public have in the licensed trade, then in those circumstances the Council can and will take it into consideration when deciding –
  - a. whether or not to issue or renew a vehicle licence; and
  - b. whether or not to revoke a vehicle licence.
3. Each case will be considered on its own merits and applicants / licensees are entitled to a fair and impartial consideration of their application. Where a period is given below it should be taken to be a minimum in considering whether a licence should be granted or renewed in most cases.
4. Cautions will be treated as convictions for the purposes of considering an applicant's / licensee's conduct under this policy.
5. Matters which do not result in criminal conviction may also be taken into consideration where they indicate concern as to the individual's conduct or behaviour, including where they result in fixed penalty notices, community protection notices, civil injunctions, restraining orders, etc.
6. Applicants should be aware that the making of false statements and provision of falsified documents is taken particularly seriously and will result in an application being refused or licence being revoked; and is likely to also result in prosecution of that individual.
7. All refusals, suspensions and revocations will be recorded on the National Register of Taxi and Private Hire Refusals Suspensions Database (NR3S). All convictions for prosecutions brought by the Council will be recorded on the Police National Computer (PNC) and may be disclosed as part of future DBS checks.

8. Where an existing licensee's conduct during the period that they hold a licence is such that, were they to be applying for a licence that application would generally be refused, they should expect their licence to be suspended or revoked. Such suspension or revocation may be with immediate effect if this is considered necessary for public safety.
9. Passenger safety is the priority, recognising that past offenders should be able to sufficiently evidence that they have been successfully rehabilitated so that they might obtain or retain a licence.

#### **4.2 Crimes resulting in death**

Where an applicant or licensee has been convicted of a crime which resulted in the death of another person or was intended to cause the death or serious injury of another person, they will not be licensed.

#### **4.3 Exploitation**

Where an applicant or licensee has been convicted of a crime involving, related to, or has any connection with abuse, exploitation, use or treatment of another individual, irrespective of whether the victim or victims were adults or children, they will not be licensed. This includes slavery, child sexual abuse, exploitation, grooming, psychological, emotional or financial abuse, but this is not an exhaustive list.

#### **4.4 Offences involving violence against the person**

Where an applicant has a conviction for an offence of violence against the person, or connected with any offence of violence, a licence will not be granted until at least ten years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

#### **4.5 Possession of a weapon**

Where an applicant has a conviction for possession of a weapon or any other weapon-related offence, a licence will not be granted until at least seven years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

#### **4.6 Sexual offences**

Where an applicant has a conviction for any offence involving or connected with illegal sexual activity, a licence will not be granted. In addition to the above, the Council will not grant a licence to any applicant who is currently on any Sex Offenders Register or on any barred list.

#### **4.7 Dishonesty**

Where an applicant has a conviction for any offence where dishonesty is an element of the offence, a licence will not be granted until at least seven years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

#### **4.8 Drugs**

Where an applicant has any conviction for, or related to, the supply of drugs, or possession with intent to supply, or connected with possession with intent to supply, a licence will not be granted until at least ten years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

Where an applicant has a conviction for possession of drugs, or related to the possession of drugs, a licence will not be granted until at least five years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed. In these circumstances, any applicant may also have to undergo drugs testing for a period at their own expense to demonstrate that they are not using controlled drugs.

#### **4.9 Discrimination**

Where an applicant has a conviction involving or connected with discrimination in any form, a licence will not be granted until at least seven years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence imposed.

#### **4.10 Motoring convictions**

Hackney carriage and private hire drivers are professional drivers charged with the responsibility of carrying the public. It is accepted that offences can be committed unintentionally, and a single occurrence of a minor traffic offence would not prohibit the granting of a licence. However, applicants with multiple motoring convictions may indicate that an applicant does not exhibit the behaviours of a safe road user and one that is suitable to drive professionally.

The Council may consider it appropriate to refer the applicant to a professional driving assessor appointed by the Council at the expense of the individual, in order to provide additional evidence of concerns over driving related issues.

The Council will take into account the findings of the independent assessment as one of the factors to be considered in relation to the determination of the application. Completion of the assessment does not guarantee the grant of a licence. In addition, it should be noted that where an applicant is invited to undertake an independent assessment and declines to do so the Council will draw an adverse inference and attach whatever weight they deem appropriate to that refusal.

Any motoring conviction while a licensed driver demonstrates that the licensee may not take their professional responsibilities seriously. However, it is accepted that offences can be committed unintentionally, and a single occurrence of a minor traffic offence may not necessitate the revocation of a

hackney carriage or private hire driver licence providing the Council considers that the licensee remains a fit and proper person to retain the licence.

Driving assessment as above may be offered to an existing licensee where the Council consider that the assessment will assist in the consideration of whether suspension / revocation of the licence is necessary for public safety.

#### **4.11 Drink driving / driving under the influence of drugs**

Where an applicant has a conviction for drink driving or driving under the influence of drugs, a licence will not be granted until at least seven years have elapsed since the completion of any sentence or driving ban imposed, whichever is the later. In the case of driving under the influence of drugs, any applicant may also have to undergo drugs testing at their own expense to demonstrate that they are not using controlled drugs.

#### **4.12 Using a hand-held device while driving**

Where an applicant has a conviction for hand-held mobile telephone or hand-held device while driving, a licence will not be granted until at least five years have elapsed since the conviction or completion of any sentence or driving ban imposed, whichever is the later.

#### **4.13 Public order and anti-social behaviour**

Where an applicant has a conviction for any public order or anti-social behaviour offence which is not covered by the categories set out above, a licence will not be granted until at least three years have elapsed since the conviction or completion of any sentence imposed.

#### **4.14 Licensing offences and non-compliance with conditions**

Where an applicant has a conviction for a licensing-related offence, a licence will not be granted until at least five years have elapsed since the conviction or completion of any sentence imposed.

The conditions attached to licences are important safeguards to ensure that the objectives of this policy are upheld and promoted. Where a licensee has failed to comply with the conditions of their licence, this will call into question whether they remain fit and proper to continue holding that licence and they should expect to be called before the Council's Regulatory Committee who may suspend or revoke the licence. Where necessary for public safety, a licence may be suspended or revoked with immediate effect under powers delegated to officers.

## **Section 5**

### **LICENSING POLICY HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES**

#### **5.1 Legal Framework**

Before issuing a licence in respect of a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle the Council must be satisfied that the vehicle is suitable in size, type and design, in a suitable mechanical condition, safe and comfortable and that there is in force a suitable policy of insurance.

Thereafter the Council and its Officers in certain instances are empowered to suspend, revoke or refuse to renew licences in instances where the vehicle is considered to be unfit for use or for any other reasonable cause.

#### **5.2 General**

The Council cannot limit the number of private hire vehicle licences it issues.

The Council currently sets a limit of a maximum of 85 hackney carriage licences that can be issued for 'saloon' type vehicles. All other hackney carriage vehicles licensed by the Council are required to be wheelchair accessible.

Comprehensive conditions are attached to hackney carriage and private hire vehicles licences covering equipment, livery, advertising and the responsibility of Licensees. You are recommended to read these conditions before applying for a licence. You are also recommended to read the "CODE OF PRACTICE FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE LICENCE HOLDERS".

#### **5.3 Hackney Carriage Licences**

The Council currently does not limit the number of hackney carriage vehicle licences it issues.

However, currently the Council will only issue hackney carriage licences for a maximum of 85 'saloon'-type vehicles. All other hackney carriages must be wheelchair accessible.

The Council will only agree to the transfer of a hackney carriage vehicle licence where the Licensee has held the Licence for a minimum period of 12 months AND :

- a. the Licensee is obliged to leave the trade on medical grounds; or
- b. the death of the Licensee when the next of kin will be allowed to dispose of the Licence.

#### **5.4 Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licences Vehicle Type**

Most manufacturer standard 4 door saloon vehicle types are acceptable for licensing as either hackney carriage or private hire vehicles.

2 or 3 door vehicles will not be licensed.

Vehicles with less than 4 wheels will not be licensed.

Vehicles commonly referred to as London Type Cabs will not be accepted for licensing as private hire vehicles.

Other vehicles such as those commonly referred to as people carriers, multi-purpose vehicles, mini-buses and adapted vans may be accepted for licensing provided they comply the appropriate type approval. Vehicles must comply with the EC M1 type approval for passenger carrying vehicles. The definition of category M1 type approval is any motor vehicle with at least four wheels designed and constructed for the carriage of passengers.

Originally-classified M1 compliant vehicles that have been modified may be considered suitable if they have relevant Individual Type Approval or Single Type Approval. Vehicles with EC N type approval will not be licensed.

### **5.5 Colour policy**

All hackney carriage vehicles licensed by the Council must be (colour to be decided) in exterior colour.

No private hire vehicle licensed by the Council shall be (colour to be decided) in exterior colour.

The colour of the vehicle must not be altered during the period that the vehicle is licensed.

### **5.6 Access / egress**

All passengers must have ready access to an exit door from their passenger seat.

### **5.7 Seats**

Every passenger seat in the vehicle must meet the following minimum dimensions:

- Individual seat width – 41cm (16")
- Bench seat width (i.e. rear seat of a saloon vehicle) – 123cm (48")

### **5.8 Licence Duration**

The options available to applicants are:

<b>Licence duration</b>	<b>Fee payable</b>	<b>Test frequency</b>
Annual (vehicle under 1 year old)	Annually	Annual for first 2 years
Annual (all other vehicles)	Annually	Every six months
Six months	Six monthly	Every six months

Note: There are cost savings for those paying fees annually.

### **5.9 Vehicle Inspection and Testing**



All vehicles are required to be inspected and tested at the Council's Testing Station prior to the issue or renewal of a licence and thereafter in accordance with the frequency shown in the table above. The Authority may choose to inspect vehicles that have been identified as poorly maintained up to a maximum of 3 times per year at the expense of the licensee.

### **5.10 Enforcement**

The Council considers that Licensees are in a position of considerable trust being responsible for the safety and welfare of the public and in particular passengers who travel in licensed vehicles. Accordingly, Licensees are expected to maintain their vehicles to a high standard at all times and not just when presenting the vehicle for inspection and testing. They are also expected to act responsibly at all times and to respond promptly to proper requests made by the Council and its Officers.

### **5.11 Condition of Vehicles**

The action taken by the Council where Licensees fail to properly maintain a licensed vehicle will be dependent upon the condition of the vehicle. In general, a first instance of failing to properly maintain is likely to result in a warning that a further occurrence within 12 months is likely to result in suspension or revocation of the Licence.

Where a vehicle is found to be in a serious state of disrepair the Licence may be suspended or revoked without warning.

### **5.12 Insurance write-offs**

Insurance write-offs will not be licensed.

### **5.13 Emissions**

No vehicle entering the trade for the first time will be granted a licence unless it is –

- Euro 6 standard or better for diesel
- Euro 5 standard or better for petrol; or
- A fully electric and zero emission at source vehicle.

### **5.14 Age policy**

No vehicle shall be licensed for the first time if it is more than four years old from the date of manufacture.

Only vehicles that are fully electric / zero emissions at source shall remain licensed if they are more than eight years old from the date of manufacture.

No vehicle shall remain licensed if it is more than ten years old from the date of manufacture.

### **5.15 CCTV in Licensed Vehicles**

Where CCTV and dashcam recording is in place in a licensed vehicle the licence holder must register their use with the Office of the Information Commissioner (ICO) in accordance with all the requirements of the Data Protection Act. The system must be in full working order and maintained to the manufactures standards.

## **Summary of CCTV Requirements**

1. The vehicle proprietor must be registered with the Information Commissioner's Office and be able to evidence continuous registration throughout the lifetime of the licence.
2. The system must not have permanent audio recording.
3. Clearly visible and readable signage advising of the system and the Data Controller's contact details, including ICO registration number, must be displayed in the vehicle.
4. Data must be stored securely and only shared when lawful. A vehicle licence may be refused, suspended or revoked where the CCTV system does not comply with this policy, or on any other reasonable grounds.

### **5.16 Tinted Glass Policy**

The vehicle must be fitted with glass which is in accordance with current Vehicle Construction and Use Regulations. The rear of the vehicle must be fitted with at least one window (or one window per rear door fitted). Factory fitted windows with a tint will be permitted, subject to approval from the Council's vehicle tester at the time of vehicle test.

### **5.17 Executive Hire**

The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 provides that a Licensing Authority may grant to a licensed private hire proprietor an exemption from the requirement to display upon the licensed vehicle the private hire vehicle licence identification plate issued by the council.

When an exemption is given to a licensed private hire proprietor, the driver of the vehicle does not need to wear the private hire driver's identification badge issued by the Council.

The Council will grant the exemption to licensed private hire proprietors engaged in the provision of an executive/chauffeur/limousine/private ambulance or other service, provided that the Licensing Manager is satisfied in each case that the specification of the vehicle and the overall level of service provision constitute such a service.

Upon written request by the licence holder the Licensing Manager can issue a formal notification of exemption to the proprietor.

The exemption shall not be granted for a period of more than one year and shall expire upon the expiry of the private hire vehicle licence or lesser period as specified.

The private hire operator, proprietor and driver operating under the provisions of an executive/chauffeur/limousine/private ambulance 'Exemption Notice', remain subject

to the requirements of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 regarding the respective licences and the standard conditions attached in each case.

Should it be the case that the Council's standard private hire operator, proprietor or driver's conditions conflict with the Council's standard 'Exemption Notice' conditions, then for the period that the said notice remains in force, the standard 'Exemption Notice' conditions shall be deemed to take precedence.

The 'Exemption Notice' is granted subject to the licensed private hire vehicle being operated in accordance with standard conditions. Failure to comply with these conditions may result in the withdrawal of the exemption notice.

## **Section 6**

### **Private Hire Operators Licensing Policy**

Although Operators generally do not come into direct contact with the public, public protection is still the main objective when considering private hire operator's licences. Operators are still entrusted to ensure that the vehicles and drivers they use to carry passengers are appropriately licenced.

The Council will take in to account the effect of any convictions or cautions which are not considered to be spent under the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. Private hire operators are not identified as an exempt profession under that Act and therefore the provisions of that Act relating to convictions becoming spent after a certain amount of time will apply in full.

The Council will request a basic disclosure with any application for an Operator's licence. This basic disclosure will reveal unspent convictions which can be considered when applying the fit and proper test. Unspent conviction relating to dishonesty, violence or safeguarding will be viewed with particular seriousness.

If an Operator's licence is applied for in the name of a business, company or partnership then the Council will require a basic DBS check from every director or partner.

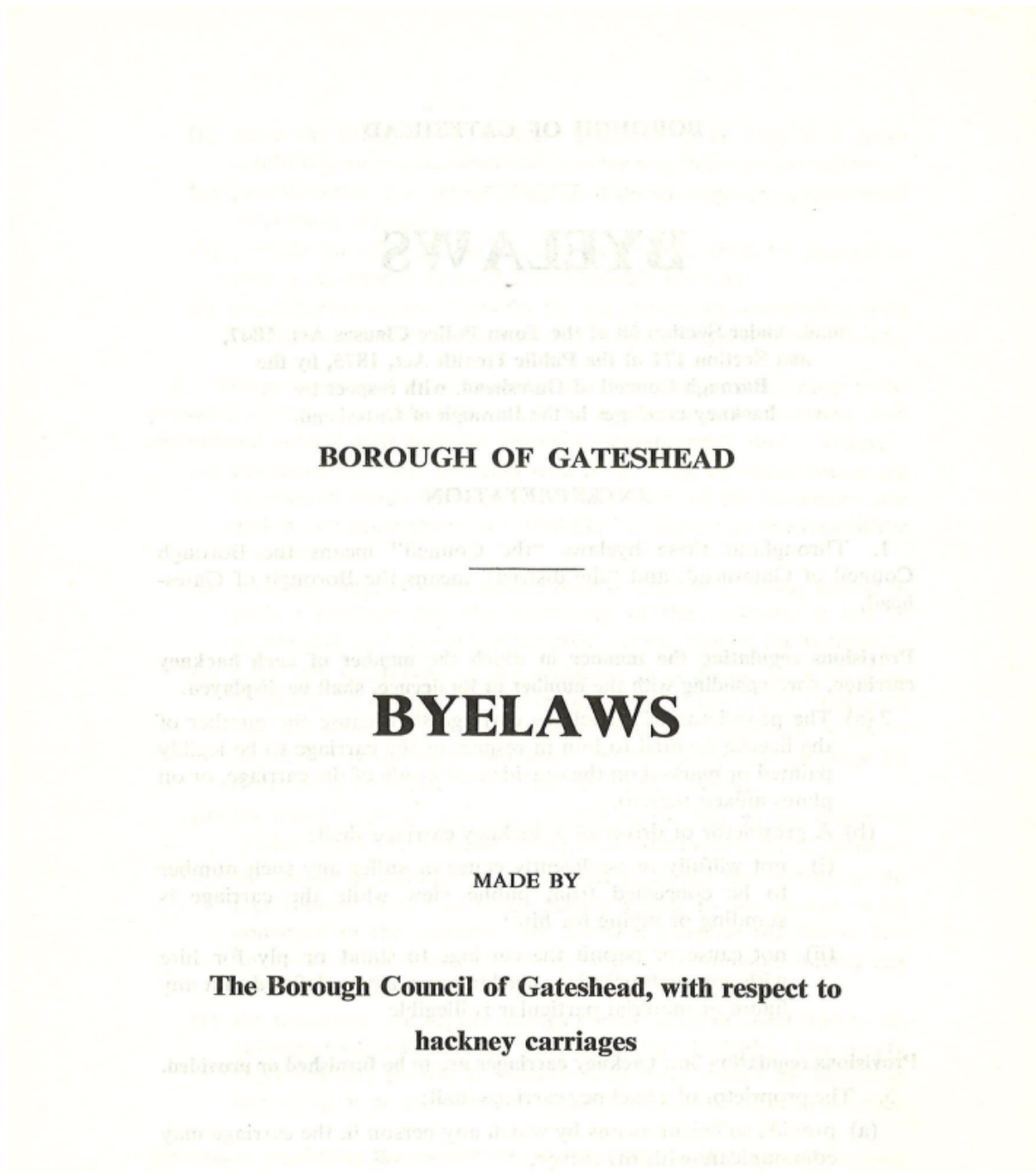
In many cases private hire operators are also licensed drivers who have been subject to an enhanced DBS check. Where this is the case it will not be necessary to obtain a basic DBS check.

Licences can have a duration of up to 5 years.

Upon grant of an operator's licence the Council will specify the address or addresses from which the operator may operate.

An operator premises address must be in the Borough of Gateshead. Operators must seek approval from the Council if they change their premises address.

## HACKNEY CARRIAGE BYELAWS



**BOROUGH OF GATESHEAD**

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**BYELAWS**

**made under Section 68 of the Town Police Clauses Act, 1847,  
and Section 171 of the Public Health Act, 1875, by the  
Borough Council of Gateshead, with respect to  
hackney carriages in the Borough of Gateshead.**

**INTERPRETATION**

1. Throughout these byelaws "the Council" means the Borough Council of Gateshead, and "the district" means the Borough of Gateshead.

**Provisions regulating the manner in which the number of each hackney carriage, corresponding with the number of its licence, shall be displayed.**

- 2.(a) The proprietor of a hackney carriage shall cause the number of the licence granted to him in respect of the carriage to be legibly painted or marked on the outside and inside of the carriage, or on plates affixed thereto,
- (b) A proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage shall:
- (i) not wilfully or negligently cause or suffer any such number to be concealed from public view while the carriage is standing or plying for hire;
  - (ii) not cause or permit the carriage to stand or ply for hire with any such painting, marking or plate so defaced that any figure or material particular is illegible.

**Provisions regulating how hackney carriages are to be furnished or provided.**

3. The proprietor of a hackney carriage shall:
- (a) provide sufficient means by which any person in the carriage may communicate with the driver;
  - (b) cause the roof or covering to be kept water-tight;
  - (c) provide any necessary windows and a means of opening and closing not less than one window on each side;
  - (d) cause the seats to be properly cushioned or covered;

- (f) cause the fittings and furniture generally to be kept in a clean condition, well maintained and in every way fit for public service;
- (g) provide means for securing luggage if the carriage is so constructed as to carry luggage;
- (h) provide an efficient fire extinguisher which shall be carried in such a position as to be readily available for use;
- (i) provide at least two doors for the use of persons conveyed in such carriage and a separate means of ingress and egress for the driver.

4. The proprietor of a hackney carriage shall cause the carriage to be provided with a taximeter which shall be so constructed, attached, and maintained as to comply with the following requirements, that is to say,

- (a) the taximeter shall be fitted with a key, flag, or other device the turning of which will bring the machinery of the taximeter into action and cause the word "HIRED" to appear on the face of the taximeter;
- (b) such key, flag, or other device shall be capable of being locked in such a position that the machinery of the taximeter is not in action and that no fare is recorded on the face of the taximeter;
- (c) when the machinery of the taximeter is in action there shall be recorded on the face of the taximeter in clearly legible figures a fare not exceeding the rate or fare which the proprietor or driver is entitled to demand and take for the hire of the carriage by distance in pursuance of the byelaw in that behalf;
- (d) the word "FARE" shall be printed on the face of the taximeter in plain letters so as clearly to apply to the fare recorded thereon;
- (e) the taximeter shall be so placed that all letters and figures on the face thereof are at all times plainly visible to any person being conveyed in the carriage, and for that purpose the letters and figures shall be capable of being suitably illuminated during any period of hiring;
- (f) the taximeter and all the fittings thereof shall be so affixed to the carriage with seals or other appliances that it shall not be practicable for any person to tamper with them except by breaking, damaging or permanently displacing the seals or other appliances.

**Provisions regulating the conduct of the proprietors and drivers of hackney carriages plying within the district in their several employments, and determining whether such drivers shall wear any and what badges.**

- 5. The driver of a hackney carriage provided with a taximeter shall:—
    - (a) when standing or plying for hire, keep the key, flag or other device fitted in pursuance of the byelaw in that behalf locked in the position in which no fare is recorded on the face of the taxi-
-

- (b) as soon as the carriage is hired by distance, and before beginning the journey, bring the machinery of the taximeter into action by moving the said key, flag or other device, so that the word "HIRED" is legible on the face of the taximeter and keep the machinery of the taximeter in action until the termination of the hiring;
  - (c) cause the dial of the taximeter to be kept properly illuminated throughout any part of a hiring which is during the hours of darkness as defined for the purposes of the Road Traffic Act 1972, and also at any other time at the request of the hirer.
6. A proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage shall not tamper with or permit any person to tamper with any taximeter with which the carriage is provided, with the fittings thereof, or with the seals affixed thereto.
7. The driver of a hackney carriage shall, when plying for hire in any street and not actually hired,
- (a) proceed with reasonable speed to one of the stands fixed by the byelaw in that behalf;
  - (b) if a stand, at the time of his arrival, is occupied by the full number of carriages authorised to occupy it, proceed to another stand;
  - (c) on arriving at a stand not already occupied by the full number of carriages authorised to occupy it, station the carriage immediately behind the carriage or carriages on the stand and so as to face in the same direction;
  - (d) from time to time when any other carriage immediately in front is driven off or moved forward cause his carriage to be moved forward so as to fill the place previously occupied by the carriage driven off or moved forward.
8. A proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage, when standing or plying for hire, shall not, by calling out or otherwise, importune any person to hire such carriage and shall not make use of the services of any other person for the purpose.
9. The driver of a hackney carriage shall behave in a civil and orderly manner and shall take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of persons conveyed in or entering or alighting from the vehicle.
10. The proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage who has agreed or has been hired to be in attendance with the carriage at an appointed time and place shall, unless delayed or prevented by some sufficient cause, punctually attend with such carriage at such appointed time and place.
11. The driver of a hackney carriage when hired to drive to any particular destination shall, subject to any directions given by the hirer,
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12. A proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage shall not convey or permit to be conveyed in such carriage any greater number of persons than the number of persons specified on the plate affixed to the outside of the carriage.

13. If a badge has been provided by the Council and delivered to the driver of a hackney carriage he shall, when standing or plying for hire, and when hired, wear that badge in such position and manner as to be plainly visible.

14. The driver of a hackney carriage so constructed as to carry luggage shall, when requested by any person hiring or seeking to hire the carriage,

- (a) convey a reasonable quantity of luggage;
- (b) afford reasonable assistance in loading and unloading;
- (c) afford reasonable assistance in removing it to or from the entrance of any building, station, or place at which he may take up or set down such person.

**Provisions fixing the stands of hackney carriages**

15. Each of the several places specified in the following list shall be a stand for such number of hackney carriages as is specified in the list:—

	<i>Vehicles</i>
(a) Front Street, Winlaton, approx. 34m. East of junction with Church Street (South side) .. .. .	2
(b) Blaydon Bus Station .. .. .	2
(c) Back Row Whickham, approx. 10m. from channel line of Front Street (North Side) .. .. .	2
(d) Armstrong Street, Gateshead, approx. 5m from junction with Saltwell Road (North Side) .. .. .	2
(e) Hudson Street, Gateshead, approx. 5m from junction with Wellington Street (North Side) .. .. .	2
(f) West Street, Gateshead, approx. 45m. south from junction with Wylam Street (West Side) .. .. .	2
(g) Swan Street, Gateshead, approx. 5m from the junction with High Street (South Side) .. .. .	2
(h) Bewick Road, Gateshead, approx. 8m. from the junction with High West Street (South Side) .. .. .	2
(i) High West Street, Gateshead, approx. 5m south from junction with Bewick Road (West Side) .. .. .	2
(j) Burdon Street, Gateshead, approx. 5m. from junction with High Street (South Side) .. .. .	2
(k) Old Durham Road, Gateshead, approx. 60m. south from Split Crow Road (East Side) .. .. .	2
(l) Durham Road, Low Fell, Gateshead, approx. 5m. north	

*Vehicles*

(m) Adjacent to the un-named road leading from Durham Road, Birtley, to the car park at the rear of the North End Havaton Terrace, approx. 50m. from the junction with Durham Road (South Side) .. .. .	2
(n) Wrekenton Row, Wrekenton, 5m. to the south of junction with Springwell Road (East Side) .. .. .	2
(o) Hollyhill, Felling, 30m. to the East of junction with High Street (North Side) .. .. .	2
(p) Cotemedede, Felling, 75m. to the north of junction with Wealcroft (East Side) .. .. .	2

**Provisions fixing the rates or fares to be paid for hackney carriages within the district, and securing the due publication of such fares.**

16. The proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage shall be entitled to demand and take for the hire of the carriage the rate or fare prescribed by the following table, the rate or fare being calculated by distance unless the hirer express at the commencement of the hiring his desire to engage by time.

Provided always that where a hackney carriage furnished with a taximeter shall be hired by distance the proprietor or driver thereof shall not be entitled to demand and take a fare greater than that recorded on the face of the taximeter save for any extra charges authorised by the following table which it may not be possible to record on the face of the taximeter.

**FARES FOR DISTANCE**

**(i) MILEAGE**

*New Pence*

If the distance does not exceed 1,600 metres (1,750 yds.) for the whole distance .. .. .	20
If the distance exceeds 1,600 metres (1,750 yds.) for the first 1,600 metres (1,750 yds.) .. .. .	20
For each subsequent 400 metres (437 yds.) or uncompleted part thereof .. .. .	5

**(ii) WAITING TIME**

For each period of 3 minutes 20 seconds or uncompleted part thereof .. .. .	5
---	---

**(iii) FARES FOR TIME**

When the time does not exceed one hour .. .. .	100
When the time exceeds one hour for each quarter of an	

(iv) EXTRA CHARGES

For hirings begun between midnight and 7 a.m. and all day on bank holidays .. .. .	12½% of the above rate or fare.
For each person in excess of two in number .. .. .	5
For each item of hand luggage carried outside the carriage .. .. .	5
For each dog or other animal .. .. .	10
For each bicycle or perambulator .. .. .	5

- 17.(a) The proprietor of a hackney carriage shall cause a statement of the fares fixed by the byelaw in that behalf to be exhibited inside the carriage, in clearly distinguishable letters and figures.
- (b) The proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage bearing a statement of fares in accordance with this byelaw shall not wilfully or negligently cause or suffer the letters or figures in the statement to be concealed or rendered illegible at any time while the carriage is plying or being used for hire.

**Provisions securing the safe custody and re-delivery of any property accidentally left in hackney carriages, and fixing the charges to be made in respect thereof**

18. The proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage shall immediately after the termination of any hiring or as soon as practicable thereafter carefully search the carriage for any property which may have been accidentally left therein.

19. The proprietor or driver of a hackney carriage shall, if any property accidentally left therein by any person who may have been conveyed in the carriage be found by or handed to him;

- (a) carry it as soon as possible and in any event within 48 hours, if not sooner claimed by or on behalf of its owner, to a police station in the District, and leave it in the custody of the officer in charge of the station on his giving a receipt for it;
- (b) be entitled to receive from any person to whom the property shall be re-delivered an amount equal to five pence in the pound of its estimated value (or the fare for the distance from the place of finding to the police station, whichever be the greater) but not more than five pounds.

**PENALTIES**

20. Every person who shall offend against any of these byelaws shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding .. .. .

and in the case of a continuing offence to a further fine not exceeding five pounds for each day during which the offence continues after conviction therefore.

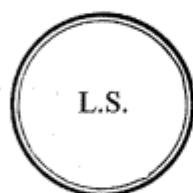
### REPEAL OF BYELAWS

21. The byelaws relating to hackney carriages referred to in the Schedule hereto are hereby repealed.

### SCHEDULE

<i>Date of Byelaws</i>	<i>By Whom Made</i>	<i>Date of Confirmation</i>	<i>By Whom Confirmed</i>
6th January, 1962	The County Borough Council of Gateshead	7th March, 1962	One of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State
21st July, 1970	The Urban District Council of Blaydon	12th October, 1970	One of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State
5th July, 1972	The County Borough Council of Gateshead	11th September, 1972	One of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State
17th September, 1974	The Borough Council of Gateshead	30th October, 1974	One of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State
31st December, 1974	The Borough Council of Gateshead	7th February, 1975	One of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State

GIVEN under the Common Seal of the Borough Council of Gateshead this 2nd day of April 1975.

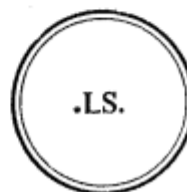


JOHN C. S. WHEATLEY,  
*Mayor*

J. W. DAVIES,  
*Director of Legal Services*

The Secretary of State this day confirmed the foregoing byelaws and fixed the date on which the byelaws are to come into operation as the 9th day of May 1975

K. P. WITNEY,  
*An Assistant Under Secretary of State  
Home Office Whitehall*



## **Section 8**

### **HACKNEY CARRIAGE DRIVERS LICENCE - Guidance**

Note : The Council have no powers to attach conditions to Hackney Carriage Drivers. The following are guidance.

Failure to comply with the guidance may call into question a licensee's fitness and propriety.

In this guidance the term "you" means the Licensed Driver.

#### **Guidance**

If you move house, you should return your Licence to the Council within seven days. An amended licence will be issued.

You should return the Licence to the Licensing Section of the Council on the expiry, revocation or suspension of the Licence.

The Licence and Driver's Badge remain the property of the Council at all times.

You should report the loss of the Licence or Driver's Badge to the Licensing Section of the Council as soon as such loss becomes known.

You may obtain a duplicate Licence or Badge on payment of the current fee.

You must carry a guide or assistance dog belonging to a passenger free of charge. If you have a medical condition that precludes you from close contact with dogs, you must make application to the Licensing Section of the Council for an Exemption Certificate. You must display the Exemption Certificate Permit in the vehicle. It is an offence to refuse to carry a guide or assistance dog accompanied by a passenger unless you can produce your exemption certificate and/or permit issued by the Council.

You shall: -

- a. not, without the express consent of the hirer, play any radio or sound reproduction instrument or equipment in the vehicle other than for the purpose of sending or receiving messages in connection with the operation of the vehicle.
- b. at no time cause or permit the noise emitted by any radio or other equipment as mentioned in a) above to be a source of nuisance or annoyance to any person, whether inside or outside the vehicle.
- c. provide a written receipt if requested by the hirer of the vehicle.

- d. not cause the fare recorded on the face of the taximeter to be cancelled or concealed until the hirer has had reasonable opportunity of examining it and has paid the fare (unless credit is to be given).
- e. not convey in the vehicle any animal belonging to or in the custody of the driver.

You should notify the Council within 48 hours any arrest and release, charge or conviction.

All drivers must attend any relevant training or awareness raising events as deemed necessary by the Council. Drivers will be notified in writing at least 7 days in advance of such training and events. Failure to attend without reasonable cause may prevent renewal of your licence.

The licence does not permit the holder to drive any vehicle which is adapted to carry passengers with a disability unless the driver has completed relevant disability awareness training, which must be periodically updated as may be required by the Council.

## **Section 9**

### **HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLE LICENCE CONDITIONS**

Note : The Council is empowered by virtue of the provisions of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to attach such conditions as may be considered reasonably necessary to the granting of Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licences.

If you are aggrieved by any of the following conditions you may appeal to the Magistrates Court within twenty-one days of receipt of the Licence.

The principal Offices of the Council for the purpose of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 is Gateshead Civic Centre Regent Street Gateshead NE8 1HH.

Please note that these Conditions are not exhaustive. The Town Police Clauses Act 1847, The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and the Hackney Carriage Byelaws also regulate the licensing and use of Hackney Carriage Vehicles.

In these conditions the term “you” means the proprietor(s) of a hackney carriage.

### **CONDITIONS**

#### **GENERAL**

1. This Licence is yours. You must notify the Council if you transfer your interest in the vehicle and licence. The renewal of the Licence will be at the Council's discretion.
2. You must maintain a continuous public hire Policy of Insurance for your licensed vehicle.
3. If an authorised officer of the Council or constable asks you, you must produce:
  - a. your current driving licence
  - b. the vehicle registration document
  - c. the vehicle insurance certificate within five days of the request.
4. If you move house, you must return your licence to the Council within seven days. An amended licence will be issued at a fee specified by the Council.
5. If you lose your licence, you may get a duplicate on payment of the current fee.

6. You must, within seven days disclose to the Council, in writing, details of any convictions or cautions imposed on you during the period of the Licence.
7. You must be sure that every person who drives your licensed vehicle for purpose of hire and reward holds a current Hackney Carriage Drivers Licence. You are required by law to hold the Licence of every driver who drives your vehicle.
8. You must keep a register of the names and addresses of all persons who drive the vehicle. This register must be available for inspection by Authorised Officers of the Council.

## **THE LICENCE PLATES**

9. You must secure and display the exterior licence plate on the rear of the vehicle, as near as is practicable to the vehicle registration plate, so that it can be clearly read by pedestrians and road users. It must not be displayed on or in the rear window.
10. You must affix the interior licence permit to the inside of the windscreen so that it is visible to passengers at all times.
11. If the vehicle fails a mechanical retest the licence will be suspended, and the exterior licence plate will be removed. The Plate will be returned when the vehicle passes a further test which you must pay for.
12. You must report the loss of any licence plate to the Council as soon as you become aware of the loss.
13. You may obtain a duplicate licence plate for a fee specified by the Council.
14. The licence remains the property of the Council at all times.

## **THE VEHICLE**

15. You must display the Motif issued by the Council centrally on the upper panel of the front offside and front nearside doors. The door motifs must be displayed upon the vehicle at all times whilst the vehicle is on the public highway unless parked up overnight. Duplicate Motifs may be purchased from the Council.
16. You must not allow the vehicle to be used unless:
  - a. the roof covering is watertight



- b. it is provided with any necessary windows and at least one window on each side is capable of being opened and closed
  - c. the seats are properly cushioned or covered
  - d. the fittings and furniture are kept clean, well maintained and in every way fit for public service
  - e. means are provided for securing any luggage carried in the vehicle
  - f. if your vehicle is furnished with a fire extinguisher it must be firmly secured in the boot
  - g. it is provided with at least two doors for the use of passengers (other than the driver's door) with effective means for passengers being conveyed in the vehicle to open each door
17. You must not allow the vehicle to be used unless a sign with the word "TAXI" is displayed on its roof. The sign must be capable of being illuminated.
  18. No change in the specification, design, condition or appearance of the vehicle may be made at any time without the approval of the Council.
  19. You must not allow any sign to be displayed on or from the vehicle unless it is required by law, is required or permitted by these conditions, or has been agreed by the Council in writing.
  20. Adverts may only be displayed on the rear doors and rear side panels of the licensed vehicle provided a copy has been submitted to and approved by the Council.
  21. You may display the name and telephone number of the Company operating your vehicle in its front and rear windows or on the rear doors or side panels. However, the display must not be illuminated and must not contravene any Road Traffic Act.
  22. If the vehicle is in an accident and its safety or appearance is affected, you must inform the Council immediately and then give details, in writing and within three days. If you are in doubt as to whether the vehicle is affected, you must advise the Council.
  23. The meter installed in the vehicle shall only be inspected, tested, calibrated and sealed by an authorised meter agent as approved by the Licensing Manager under the Council's 'Authorised Meter Agent Scheme'.

24. Only those tariffs approved by the Council, or lower, and displayed upon a scale of charges are permitted to be installed on the meter.

## **Section 10**

### **PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS LICENCE CONDITIONS**

Note : The Council is empowered by virtue of the provisions of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to attach such conditions as may be considered reasonably necessary to the granting of Private Hire Drivers Licence.

If you are aggrieved by any of the following conditions you may appeal to the Magistrates Court within twenty-one days of receipt of the Licence.

The principal Offices of the Council for the purpose of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 is Gateshead Civic Centre Regent Street Gateshead NE8 1HH.

Please note that these Conditions are not exhaustive. The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 also regulates the licensing of Private Hire Driver Licences.

In these conditions the term “you” means the Licensed Driver.

#### **CONDITIONS**

1. The Licence shall remain the property of the Council at all times.
2. You must return the licence to the Council for endorsement when you change your home address.
3. You must return the licence and badge to the Council on the expiry, revocation or suspension of the licence.
4. You must report the loss of the licence or badge to the Council as soon as such loss becomes known.
5. You may obtain a duplicate licence or badge which has been lost upon payment of the current fee.
6. You shall not use a private hire vehicle which is equipped with a taximeter for any journeys unless –
  - a. when the vehicle is hired by distance, before commencing the journey specified by the hirer you bring the machinery into action by moving the key or other device fitted for that purpose, so the word “Hired” is legible on the face of the taximeter and keep the machinery of the taximeter in motion until the termination of the hiring

- b. you cause the dial of the taximeter to be kept properly illuminated throughout any part of the hiring which takes place during the hours of darkness as defined for the purpose of the Road Traffic Act 1988 and also at any other time at the request of the hirer.
- 7. You must carry a guide or assistance dog belonging to a passenger free of charge. If you have a medical condition that precludes you from close contact with dogs, you must make application to the Licensing Service of the Council for an exemption certificate. You must display the exemption certificate in the vehicle. It is an offence to refuse to carry a guide or assistance dog accompanied by a passenger unless you can produce your exemption certificate and/or permit issued by the Council.
- 8. You shall not solicit any person to hire such vehicle and shall not make use of the services of any other person for the purpose. It is an offence to do so.
- 9. You must behave in a civil and orderly manner and shall take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of persons conveyed in or entering or alighting from the vehicle.
- 10. If you have agreed, undertaken or been hired to be in attendance with the vehicle at an appointed time and place you shall, unless delayed because of some unavoidable reason, directly attend with such vehicle at such appointed time and place.
- 11. You shall not convey or permit to be conveyed in the vehicle any greater number of persons than the number of persons which the vehicle is licensed to carry.
- 12. If the vehicle is so constructed as to carry luggage you shall, when requested by any person who has hired the vehicle –
  - a. convey a reasonable quantity of luggage
  - b. afford reasonable assistance in loading and unloading such luggage
  - c. afford reasonable assistance in removing from or depositing such luggage in the entrance of any building, station or other place at which you take up or set down such persons.
- 13. You shall immediately after the termination of any hiring, or as soon as is practicable thereafter, carefully search the vehicle for any property which may have been left therein. You shall, if any property is found by any person who may have been conveyed in the vehicle, be found by or be handed in to you,

convey it within twenty-four hours, if not previously claimed by or on behalf of its owner, to the Police Station and leave it in the custody of an Officer in Charge of the Station on his giving a receipt for it.

14. You shall –

- a. not without the express consent of the hirer play any radio or sound reproducing instrument or equipment in the vehicle other than for the purpose of sending or receiving messages in connection with the operation of the vehicle
- b. at no time cause or permit the noise emitted by any radio or other previously mentioned equipment in the vehicle which you are driving to be a source of nuisance or annoyance to any person, whether inside or outside the vehicle
- c. if requested by the hirer of the vehicle provide him with a written receipt of the fare paid
- d. not demand from any hirer a fare in excess of any previously agreed for that hiring between the hirer and the operator or, if the vehicle is fitted with a taximeter and there has been no previous agreement as to the fare, the fare shown on the face of the taximeter
- e. if the vehicle is fitted with a taximeter does not cause the fare recorded thereon to be cancelled or concealed until the hirer has had reasonable opportunity of examining it has paid the fare (unless credit is to be given)
- f. not convey in a Private Hire Vehicle any animal belonging to or in custody of yourself or the proprietor or operator of the vehicle.

15. You must notify the Council within 48 hours any arrest and release, charge or conviction.

16. All drivers must attend any relevant training or awareness raising events as deemed necessary by the Council. Drivers will be notified in writing at least 7 days in advance of such training and events. Failure to attend without reasonable cause may prevent renewal of your licence.

17. The licence does not permit the holder to drive any vehicle which is adapted to carry passengers with a disability unless the driver has completed relevant disability awareness training, which must be periodically updated as may be required by the Council.

## **Section 11**

### **PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE PROPRIETORS LICENCE CONDITIONS**

Note : The Council is empowered by virtue of the provisions of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to attach such conditions as may be considered reasonably necessary to the granting of Private Hire Vehicle Licence.

If you are aggrieved by any of the following conditions you may appeal to the Magistrates Court within twenty- one days of receipt of the Licence.

The principal Offices of the Council for the purpose of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 is Gateshead Civic Centre Regent Steet Gateshead NE8 1HH.

Please note that these Conditions are not exhaustive. The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 also regulates the licensing of Private Hire Vehicle Licences.

In these conditions the term “you” means the Proprietor(s) of a Private Hire vehicle.

#### **GENERAL**

1. The Licence is yours. You must inform the Authority if you transfer your interest in the licence. The renewal of the Licence will be at the Council's discretion.
2. You must produce the Licence for inspection at the request of any Police Officer.
3. If an Authorised Officer of the Council asks you, you must produce:
  - a. the vehicle registration document
  - b. the vehicle insurance certificate within five days of the request being made.
4. If you move house, you must return your Licence to the Council within seven days. An amended Licence will be issued.
5. If you lose your Licence, you may get a duplicate on payment of the current fee.
6. You must, within seven days disclose to the Council, in writing, details of any convictions or cautions imposed on you during the period of the Licence.

7. You must be sure that every person who drives your Licensed Vehicle for the purpose of hiring holds a current Private Hire Driver Licence.
8. You must keep a register of the names and addresses of all persons who drive the vehicle. This register must be available for inspection by any Authorised Officer of the Council.
9. You must maintain a continuous private hire Policy of Insurance for your Licensed Vehicle.

## **THE LICENCE PLATES**

10. The Licence Plate and Permit remain the property of the Council at all times.
11. You must secure and display the exterior Licence Plate on the rear of the vehicle, as near as is practicable to the vehicle registration plate, so that it can be easily read by pedestrians and road users. It must not be displayed on or in the rear window.
12. You must affix the interior Licence Permit to the inside of the windscreen so that it is visible to passengers at all times.
13. If the vehicle fails a mechanical retest, the exterior Licence Plate and Permit will be removed. The Plate will be returned when the vehicle passes a further test which you must pay for.
14. You must not conceal or deface the Licence Plate or permit.
15. You must report the loss of any Plates to the Council as soon as you become aware of the loss.
16. You may obtain a duplicate Licence Plate for which a charge will be made at the time of the order.

## **THE VEHICLE**

17. You must not allow any sign to be displayed on or from the vehicle unless it is required by law, is required or permitted by these Conditions, or has been agreed by the Council in writing.
18. No change in the specification, design, condition or appearance of the vehicle may be made at any time while the Licence is in force without the approval of the Council.
19. You must not allow the vehicle to be used unless:

- a. the roof covering is watertight
  - b. it is provided with any necessary windows and at least one window on each side is capable of being opened and closed
  - c. the seats are properly cushioned or covered
  - d. the fittings and furniture are kept clean, well maintained, securely fixed and in every way fit for public service
  - e. means are provided for securing any luggage carried in the vehicle
  - f. if your vehicle is furnished with a fire extinguisher it must be firmly secured in the boot
  - g. it is provided with at least two doors for use of passengers (other than the driver's door) with effective means for passengers in the vehicle to open each door
20. You must not carry any greater number of persons than the vehicle is licensed to carry.
21. Advertisements may only be displayed on the rear doors and rear side panels of the licensed vehicle if a copy has been submitted to and approved by the Council.
22. You may display the name and telephone number of the Company operating your vehicle in its front or rear windows or on the rear doors or side panels. However, the display must not be capable of being illuminated and the words ADVANCE BOOKINGS ONLY must be included. The display must not contravene any Road Traffic Act and must not include words such as TAXI, CAB or other similar words which might lead any person to believe that the vehicle is a Hackney Carriage.
23. If the vehicle is in an accident and its safety or appearance is affected, you must inform the Council immediately and then give details, in writing within three days. If you are in doubt as to whether the vehicle is affected you must advise the Council.

## **THE METER**

24. Any meter installed in the vehicle shall only be inspected, tested, calibrated and sealed by an authorised meter agent as approved by the Licensing Manager under the Council's 'Authorised Meter Agent Scheme'.



25. No person shall tamper with or permit a person to tamper with a meter installed in the vehicle.
26. You must not allow the vehicle to be used if a taximeter is installed unless:
  - a. the meter has been tested and found to be satisfactory by an Authorised Officer of the Council
  - b. a Table of Fares has been given to the Council (showing the fares for distance and any extra charges which you propose to charge when the vehicle is hired)
  - c. a statement of such fares and extra charges is exhibited inside the vehicle in such a position that it is always clearly visible to any passenger
  - d. the taximeter is fitted with a key or other device which, when turned, will make the taximeter operate and display the word 'HIRED'
  - e. such key or device can lock the taximeter, so it does not work and no fare is recorded on it
  - f. when the taximeter is working the fare is recorded on it in clearly legible figures. This fare must be unambiguous and must not exceed the rate of fare as given in the Table of Fares deposited with the Council
  - g. the word 'FARE' is printed on the face of the taximeter in plain letters to clearly apply to the fare recorded on the meter
  - h. you have placed the taximeter where all letters and figures on the face of the meter are always clearly visible to any passenger in the vehicle. The letters and figures must therefore be capable of being illuminated.

## **Section 12**

### **PRIVATE HIRE OPERATORS LICENCE CONDITIONS**

Note : The Council is empowered by virtue of the provisions of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to attach such conditions as may be considered reasonably necessary to the granting of Private Hire Vehicle Operators Licences.

If you are aggrieved by any of the following conditions you may appeal to the Magistrates Court within twenty-one days of receipt of the Licence.

The principal Offices of the Council for the purpose of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 is Gateshead Civic Centre Regent Street Gateshead NE8 1HH.

Please note that these Conditions are not exhaustive.

In these conditions the term “you” means the Licensed Operator(s).

### **CONDITIONS**

1. You must return the Licence to the Licensing Section of the Council for endorsement when you change your home address or business address.
2. You shall return the Licence to the Licensing Section of the Council on the expiry, revocation or suspension of such Licence or upon you ceasing to be an Operator.
3. The Licence shall remain the property of the Council at all times.
4. You may obtain a duplicate of a Licence that has been lost on payment of the current fee.
5. You shall report the loss of the Licence to the Licensing Section of the Council as soon as such loss becomes known.
6. You shall keep a record of all Private Hire bookings in the following form -

DATE / SHIFT/ TIME SHIFT COMMENCES/ NAME OF BOOKING CLERK

Followed by a list of all drivers on shift in the following form.

NAME/ BADGE NO./ VEHICLE LICENCE NO./ REGISTRATION NO./ CALL SIGN

Followed by the usual booking information.

TIME / NAME OF CLIENT/ PICKING UP POINT/ DESTINATION/ CALL  
SIGN/ NAME OF DRIVER/VEHICLE REGISTRATION/NAME OF  
DISPATCHER

- (a) Hackney Carriages undertaking pre-booked journeys are to have their journeys entered in the records.
  - (b) Drivers coming on shift are to have their details recorded as a single entry at the appropriate time.
  - (c) Drivers going off shift are to have their details recorded as a single entry at the appropriate time.
- 7. Such records shall be kept for a year after the booking has been made.
  - 8. You must maintain a register of all staff who take bookings and dispatch vehicles and make the register available upon request to authorised officers of the Council.
  - 9. You must ensure that all staff on that register have had a basic DBS check.
  - 10. You must inform the person making a booking if you dispatch a PCV instead of a licenced private hire vehicle. The driver of a PCV has not had the same enhanced DBS checks.
  - 11. You shall keep a record of the following particulars of all vehicles operated by you and their drivers:
    - a. Vehicle Registration Number
    - b. Vehicle Licence Number (as issued by the Council)
    - c. Make, type and colour of vehicle
    - d. Name and address of Vehicle Licence holder
    - e. Vehicle Insurance Cover
    - f. Driver's Name
    - g. Driver's Licence Number (as issued by the Council)
  - 12. You must ensure, to the best of your ability, that all vehicles used, and drivers employed under the scope of your operator's licence (whether directly owned or employed by you or not and whether or not licensed by this Licensing Authority) comply with all the conditions attached to vehicle and drivers licences as issued by that authority.

13. You shall advise the Council, in writing, of the rate of fares and other charges you operate.
14. You must ensure that no driver is dispatched to a hiring with a vehicle that is adapted to carry passengers with a disability unless the driver has completed relevant disability awareness training by Gateshead Council.
15. You shall ensure that any area to which the public have access, whether for the purpose of booking or waiting –
  - a. be kept clean, adequately heated, ventilated, and lit, and
  - b. ensure that any waiting area has adequate seating facilities.
16. You shall, within seven days, disclose to the Council in writing, details of any convictions or cautions imposed upon you during the period of the Licence.
17. All private hire operators, and their staff responsible for handling calls and directing bookings, must attend any relevant training or awareness raising events as deemed necessary by the Council. Operators will be notified in writing at least 7 days in advance of such training and events. Failure to attend without reasonable cause may prevent renewal of your licence.

## **Section 13**

### **GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1976**

#### **SECTION 75 (2)&(3) EXEMPTION CERTIFICATE**

#### **VEHICLES USED FOR HIRE AND REWARD**

#### **EXPLANATORY NOTES**

The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 provides that a Licensing Authority may grant to a licensed private hire proprietor an exemption from the requirement to display upon the licensed vehicle, the private hire vehicle license identification plate issued by the council.

When an exemption is given to a licensed private hire proprietor, the driver of the vehicle does not need to wear the private hire driver's identification badge issued by the council.

The Council have resolved that it is reasonable to grant the said exemptions to a licenced private hire proprietor engaged in the provision of an executive/chauffeur/limousine/private ambulance or other service, provided that the Licensing Manager is satisfied in each case that the specification of the vehicle and the overall level of service provision constitute such a service.

Upon written request by the licensed proprietor and operator, the Head of Environment will consider applications for the said exemptions and if satisfied that the application is valid, will then issue a formal notification of exemption, the 'Exemption Notice', to the proprietor.

The Exemption Notice shall not be granted for a period of more than one year and shall expire upon the expiry of the private hire vehicle licence or lesser period as specified on the Exemption Notice.

The private hire operator, proprietor and driver operating under the provisions of an executive/chauffeur/limousine/private ambulance 'Exemption Notice', remain subject to the requirements of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 with regard to the respective licences and the standard conditions attached in each case.

Should it be the case that the Council's standard private hire operator, proprietor or driver's conditions conflict with the Council's standard 'Exemption Notice' conditions, then for the period that the said notice remains in force, the standard 'Exemption Notice' conditions shall be deemed to take precedence.

The 'Exemption Notice' is granted subject to the licenced private hire vehicle being operated in accordance with standard conditions. Failure to comply with these conditions may result in the withdrawal of the exemption notice.

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT 1976**

### **SECTION 75 (2)&(3) EXEMPTION NOTICE**

#### **VEHICLES USED FOR HIRE AND REWARD**

#### **STANDARD 'EXEMPTION NOTICE' CONDITIONS**

An 'Exemption Notice', exempting a private hire vehicle proprietor from the requirement to display the exterior licence plate upon the vehicle, and the driver of that vehicle from the requirement to wear/display a private hire driver's identification badge, is granted subject to the licensed private hire vehicle being operated in accordance with the conditions set out below.

Failure to comply with these conditions may result in the withdrawal of the exemption notice at the discretion of the Licensing Manager.

Should it be the case that the councils standard private hire operator, proprietor or drivers' conditions conflict with the Council's standard 'Exemption Notice' conditions, then for the period that the said notice remains in force, the standard 'Exemption Notice' conditions shall be deemed take precedence.

1. The Proprietor shall notify the Council immediately in writing if there is any material change in the use of the vehicle.
2. The Proprietor shall ensure that the private hire vehicle licence identification disc issued by the council shall be displayed within the nearside of the front windscreen at all times.
3. The 'Exemption Notice' issued by the Licensing Manager in respect of the licensed private hire vehicle shall be carried within the vehicle at all times and

presented for inspection at the request of an Authorised Officer of the Council, a Police Constable or the hirer.

4. Other than the Council's Licence Identification Disc; the proprietor shall not display in, on or from the vehicle any advertisement, sign, logo or insignia advertising the operating company or promoting the vehicles' status as a licensed private hire vehicle, without the prior written approval of the Licensing Manager.
5. The Private Hire Vehicle proprietors licence identification plate issued by the council shall not be affixed to the vehicle, and shall not be displayed in, on or from the vehicle at any time.
6. The Private Hire Vehicle proprietors licence identification plate issued by the council shall be carried in the luggage compartment of the vehicle at all times and produced for inspection at the request of an Authorised Officer of the Council, a Police Constable or the hirer.
7. No taximeter shall be displayed within the vehicle at any time during vehicle's hirings.
8. No table of fares/tariff card shall be displayed in the vehicle at any time during the vehicle's hirings.
9. A tariff of charges shall be deposited with the Council and carried within the vehicle at all times.
10. The Proprietor shall not change the vehicle colour without the prior written consent of the Licensing Manager.
11. The Proprietor shall ensure that the driver of the vehicle does not wear the private hire driver's licence identification badge issued by the Council or display that badge in, on or from the vehicle at any time during the vehicle's hirings.
12. The Proprietor shall ensure that the private hire driver's identification badge issued by the Council shall be carried within the vehicle at all times and produced for inspection at the request of an Authorised Officer of the Council, a Police Constable or the hirer.
13. The Proprietor shall ensure that the driver of the vehicle shall be appropriately dressed in a chauffeur's uniform, business suit or dress shirt and trousers when carrying out executive/chauffeur limousine private ambulance hirings.
14. The Proprietor shall ensure that the hirer shall be afforded the facility to settle accounts and/or tender direct payment by credit card, debit card or cash (Sterling).

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