

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

Monday 17 October 2016 at 10.00 am in the Bridges Room - Civic Centre

From the Acting Chief Executive, Mike Barker

Item	Business
1	Apologies
2	Minutes (Pages 3 - 8) The Committee is asked to approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2016.
3	Case Study - Workforce Strategy (Pages 9 - 14) Report of the Acting Chief Executive.
4	Annual Health and Safety Performance Report (Pages 15 - 26) Report of the Acting Chief Executive, Mike Barker
5	Implementation of Gateshead Volunteers Plan - Annual Report (Pages 27 - 40) Report of the Strategic Director Communities and Environment

Contact: Neil Porteous

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Date: Friday 7 October 2016

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GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday 5 September 2016

PRESENT: Councillor John Eagle (Chair)
Councillor(s): L Caffrey, P Dillon, P Foy, T Graham, J Green, S Green, M Hall, B Oliphant and M Ord

APOLOGIES: Councillor(s): R Beadle, M Charlton, M Henry and N Weatherley

CR10 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Beadle, M Charlton, M Henry and N Weatherley.

CR11 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2016 be approved as a correct record, with the inclusion of Councillor S Green as present.

CR12 ROLE AND REMIT

The terms of reference for the Committee, as detailed in the Council's Constitution, were reported.

RESOLVED: That the Committee's remit and terms of reference be noted.

CR13 ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2016-17

The Committee received a report detailing revisions to the 2016/17 work programme for the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED - i) That the work programme be noted.
ii) That further reports on the work programme be submitted to the Committee to identify any additional policy issues, which the Committee may be asked to consider.

CR14 CORPORATE STRATEGIC TRACKER AND TARGET INDICATORS - 2020

The Committee received a report outlining the proposed service targets (Strategic Indicators – SIs) to be agreed for the period up to 2020.

The targets will be used a tool for driving continuous improvement and stretching

performance against a particular measure over a period of time and will enable the delivery of Vision 2030 and the Council Plan.

It was reported that Cabinet approved revisions to the corporate strategic indicator set, including the replacement of the rolling five-year performance targets with a single fixed 2020 target.

RESOLVED: i) The Committee endorsed the proposed approach.

CR15 THE COUNCIL PLAN - YEAR END ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE AND DELIVERY 2015/2016

The Committee received a report providing the year end assessment of performance for 2015/16, along with an update on the performance and delivery of the Council Plan 2015-2020.

The year end 2015/2016 assessment of performance report relates to the remit of this Committee and focuses on achievements, areas for improvement and future actions.

Where available, information was included in the report in respect of how well the Council is performing in relation to the 2015/16 targets.

The Council's performance in relation to the equalities objectives was also included in the report.

It was noted that 42% of respondents to the employee survey felt that generally communication wasn't good within the Council. The Committee agreed that this is an area requiring improvement and noted evidence that activity is underway to address this.

Concerns were raised that 47% of respondents to the employee survey felt they did not have opportunities to develop their careers at the Council.

The Committee welcomed a greater focus on digital inclusion, following the identification of Gateshead (by Doteveryone) as an area where digital exclusion is likely to occur. It was also suggested that more detailed information be presented to Councillors on the work being undertaken to improve digital inclusion, for consideration and discussion.

It was suggested that technology could be provided in public locations to increase the public's engagement with the Council's consultations and surveys.

It was queried whether Councillors are automatically signed up to receive the Gateshead Now emails. Information was also sought on how the email addresses (for the distribution of Gateshead Now) were obtained.

It was queried why the free Wi-Fi in the centre of Gateshead is not available.

RESOLVED: i) The Committee was satisfied with the activities

undertaken to achieve the desired outcomes in the Council Plan 2015-2020.

- ii) That the views of the Committee be used to inform the Council's approach.

CR16 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION - ANNUAL REPORT 2015

The Committee considered a report detailing the number of requests for information received by the Council, under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015.

The report provided the background to the Act, highlighted the number of requests received and provided information resulting from analysis.

Over the period 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015 the number of requests received was 1206, representing an 8.16% increase on requests received in the previous year and a 453.21% increase since the implementation of the Act in 2005.

Of the requests received 94.84% were dealt with within the 20 day timescale. This represents a decrease of 0.1% in performance on the 2014 figure.

Eight requests were subject to an internal review. The original decision maker's decision was upheld in all eight cases.

It was noted that one requester has exercised the right of appeal to the Information Commissioner. This has yet to be determined.

Comparative data was also included showing the number of requests received by Gateshead and its neighbouring authorities in 2015.

- RESOLVED:
- i) That the information be noted.
 - ii) That the Committee is satisfied with the operation of the Freedom of Information Act procedure.

CR17 THE IMPACT OF THE GATESHEAD FUND 2015-16: A CASE STUDY

The Committee received a case study report on the impact of The Gateshead Fund and in particular the allocation of the Gateshead Funding during 2015/16 to support, develop and build capacity in the voluntary and community sector.

It was noted that the interactive presentation will also be made available to Councillors outside of the meeting and that more detailed financial data is available on request.

The Committee praised the reporting of the impact of the Gateshead Fund and were pleased to note a focus on support to grass roots and small organisations.

It was commented that it is often relatively small contributions that deliver a great

dividend.

The Committee agreed the importance of being able to provide smaller funds to support activities undertaken by volunteers such as litter picks and not just formal groups.

It was also commented that the activities operated by the Older Peoples Assembly have transformed Deckham Community Centre and the local community.

It was queried whether the local history projects that have been supported by the Council could be collated and details published online. It was also said that the professional input of the Library Service into many of these projects should be acknowledged.

It was commented that in previous funding years the Councillors in Wardley and Leam Lane have helped support over 450 cadets in the Durham Army Cadet Force using the Local Community Fund. This was cited as a good project that could be considered for funding in future years as children from various wards in Gateshead participate in the annual camp.

RESOLVED: i) That the Committee praised the overall impact of the Gateshead Fund.

CR18 RESILIENCE AND EMERGENCY PLANNING FRAMEWORK - PROGRESS UPDATE

An update report was provided on the progress made during the last six months in relation to the Strategic Resilience and Emergency Planning Framework.

The key focus over the last six months for Resilience and Emergency Planning has been to continue to work in collaboration with partners and communities; increasing capacity and capability to respond; strengthening community resilience; and ensuring lessons are learnt to respond to future incidents.

Updates were provided against the themed areas.

The vision for Resilience and Emergency Planning will be to maintain that 'Gateshead is a safe and resilient place to live, work and visit'.

It was queried whether the Sustainable Urban Drainage system at Shelly Drive, Gateshead has been successful to date. It was agreed that an update will be obtained from the engineers on the severity of the event that the system is expected to mitigate and whether such an event as occurred since its installation.

It was requested that future reports include details on the implementation of the Flood Risk Management Strategy.

It was reported that a Councillor's Seminar for Emergency Response will take place

on Wednesday 7 December 2016. The session will follow a different format to regular seminars and will present an exercise with a scenario for all Councillors to participate in a mock incident. More details will follow separately.

- RESOLVED:
- i) That the progress be noted.
 - ii) That the Committee is satisfied with the progress achieved within the last six months.
 - ii) That a further progress report be provided in April 2017.

Chair.....

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TITLE OF REPORT: Case Study – the Workforce Plan
REPORT OF: Mike Barker, Acting Chief Executive

Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek Committee's views on the progress being made on implementation of the Workforce Plan.

Background

1. The Council's Workforce Strategy was approved by Council on 16 July 2015. The Workforce Plan that sits behind the Strategy was approved by Cabinet on 6 October 2015 and was refreshed over the summer to reflect the work that had already been undertaken and to ensure it continued to be relevant and appropriate.
2. The Workforce Strategy is based on a number of themes – skills and behaviours, recruitment and retention, pay, reward and recognition, wellbeing and engagement and performance and change. There is a detailed delivery plan for each of the themes within the Workforce Plan. This is to ensure that the right things are put in place, in the right order and that effort is prioritised into activities that will make the most difference.
3. To develop the plan, work was carried out to identify the Council's existing skill base and to assess need going forward. This involved all services completing a questionnaire to provide a council-wide picture of capability, gaps and an assessment of future need.
4. That assessment was critical in shaping the detail and timeframes for the plan as it helped to clarify what the priorities are across services as well as corporately. It also helped to ensure that Human Resources/ Workforce Development and other in-house resources could be focussed on activities where there is greatest need. The plan has also been informed by the results of the last two employee surveys.
5. The aim of the plan over the coming years is to ensure we have a workforce that can support delivery of the sustained transformation necessary to achieve the services our residents want and need – services that are cheaper, fit for purpose, flexible and customer focussed – ultimately a workforce that can deliver on the Council Plan and Vision 2030.
6. The plan, attached as Appendix 1, sets out the projected activity, when and how it will be delivered, who it is targeted at and the resources required to deliver it under each of the five themes. It will be continually developed in order to respond to the future direction and shape of Council groups and services as appropriate.

Activity to Date (by theme)

Skills and Behaviours

7. All members of the Leadership Team have completed a 360 degree appraisal to identify strengths and areas for development. They have all received their own

appraisal report and individual feedback sessions have taken place with an external consultant to discuss and interpret appraisal outcomes. Individual development plans will be produced by all members of the Leadership Team in discussion with their line managers and will be worked to over the next 12 months.

8. The external consultant led a workshop with the team on 8 September to collectively identify emerging themes across the groups which might usefully be addressed by the Council as a whole.
9. A Learning and Development framework has been developed on the Intranet as a one-stop shop for managers and employees to access information on courses and other resources to support their development. A range of refresher training sessions have been developed for managers as part of the Learning and Development Framework. These sessions will be mandatory for managers to attend and will equip them with skills to deal with HR issues such as recruitment and selection, dealing with capability and competency issues, undertaking an investigation and managing sickness absence. Inconsistent and unfair management has been a theme in the last two employee surveys.
10. We have developed a number of schemes, tools and guidance to support senior managers' ongoing development. These include coaching opportunities, a mentoring scheme and revised guidance on the use of action learning sets.
11. Opportunities have been created for employees at all levels to learn and develop through participation in projects in the four work streams of the change programme.
12. Media training workshops have been provided for senior offices who may be required, at times, to appear before the media on behalf of the Council.
13. Weekly Leadership Team meetings have been initiated enabling the timely sharing of information and learning.
14. A programme of in-house workshops has been delivered to develop the skills of managers. We have also provided opportunities for development through fully funded accredited distance learning programmes enabling first line and middle managers to achieve a recognised management qualification.
15. Over 100 of our managers have also acquired development opportunities through the Public Service Academy short courses and master classes programme.
16. We continue to provide a range of e-learning modules on Knowledge Net to support the development of management skills in areas such as project management, time management, coaching, mentoring, managing change, managing people and performance etc.
17. We continue to deliver a wide programme of training throughout the Council to address the learning and development needs of our employees. In the last year 12,500 learning and development opportunities were accessed by employees attending training courses.
18. In addition, over 3,500 learning opportunities were accessed via e-learning.
19. We continue to promote and enlist employees onto our courses through our learning and development directories (available on the Intranet), promotional flyers, Council Info, target e-mails and the Itrent online booking system.

Recruitment and Retention

20. A Talent Management and Succession Planning framework has been developed. This will be launched in October and will be linked to the current Appraisal and Development process.
21. The Council's approach to recruitment and retention allowances has been reviewed and reflected in the current corporate Pay Policy.

22. The Council's Recruitment Policy is being revised to ensure the appropriate and timely recruitment of staff.

Pay, Reward and Recognition

23. A revised grading structure was implemented from 1 April 2016 to address the implementation of the National Living Wage (NLW), and move further towards the UK Living Wage.
24. A review of terms and conditions is ongoing to ensure our approach is fair but also in keeping with what is happening elsewhere in the public sector and ensuring we are competitive in the market.
25. Cabinet approval will be sought in October in relation to:
- Removal of essential car user status from all employees from February 2017 with the exception of children's social workers and domiciliary care evening workers.
 - Removing the protected working week of 35 hours 50 minutes and moving all employees onto a 37 hour or pro rata working week from February 2017.
 - Reducing the current pay protection period of 4 years to 2 years from 1 January 2017 and to 1 year from 1 January 2018
26. Further consideration will be given to the removal of essential car user status for children's social workers and domiciliary care evening workers with a view to giving notice to remove this allowance in its entirety by April 2017.
27. Negotiations with the trade unions in relation to the removal or reduction of premium rates of pay are ongoing. The trade unions are resistant to a blanket approach but do support operational changes that will remove or reduce the reliance on premium rates of pay. They may also be open to reviewing terms and conditions where this would secure or retain business or would make a service more competitive. They will, however, only commence negotiations if the Council guarantees that the affected services will remain in-house and that there will be no compulsory redundancies.
28. Service directors have been asked to provide detailed business cases outlining the terms and conditions which would support them in becoming more sustainable and competitive within their proposed future delivery models. Once developed legal advice will be sought relating to these changes to identify potential equal pay risks and whether these can be mitigated.
29. Work is ongoing to broaden the range of employee benefits available including implementation of further salary sacrifice schemes for GO leisure membership and a car leasing scheme; Club Nissan giving employees up to 24% discount off new Nissan cars and the introduction of the Civic Service Sports College (GSSC) Staff Offers Scheme where employees can access a range of discount offers for leisure and sport activities, shopping and tourist attractions.
30. An employee benefits market place event took place in September 2016 which promoted the full range of employee benefits available.
31. An Employee Recognition Framework to recognise and celebrate the often outstanding work of our employees is under development.

Wellbeing and Engagement

32. The 2016 employee survey has taken place. The turnout was slightly increased from last year with 41% of the workforce completing the survey. An initial analysis has highlighted some positive trends and some areas that require further

improvement. Service directors have received the results relevant to their service areas and they and their managers are now working on action plans to positively engage employees and address areas of concern.

33. A Council-wide employee forum will be launched in the autumn of 2016 to further improve employee communication and engagement.
34. The summer conference was held on 29 June 2016 with a focus on the change programme in order to increase senior managers' buy-in to change and facilitate a greater knowledge of and contribution to the change programme.
35. A range of courses have been delivered across the Council to ensure that the prioritised health and safety training needs of employees are met.
36. We have delivered a series of stress management courses for managers and stress buster sessions for employees to promote awareness of stress and how to deal with it.
37. We published a Stress Toolkit on the Intranet as a valuable information resource to provide managers and employees with guidance on how to deal with stress and promote wellbeing.
38. Courses were also provided for managers on managing and supporting employees with mental health issues and on managing employees' health and wellbeing.
39. We have developed a network of health advocates to promote health and wellbeing initiatives across the Council and delivered a range of information and briefing sessions to address issues around healthy eating, stress, smoking, drug and alcohol; misuse and physical activity.
40. We have developed a pool of Workplace Contacts to act as a point of contact for any employees suffering from a mental health problem affecting their work or anyone who feels that they are a victim of bullying and harassment in the workplace.
41. We will shortly reintroduce, on a trial basis, the provision of holistic therapies including Swedish massage, sports massage, reflexology and Indian head massage as part of the wellbeing at work agenda.
42. The Council's lead counsellor, Danny Halpin provided four sessions of mindfulness training to reinforce support that had been received by employees through the counselling service.

Performance and Change

43. Work has been undertaken to review the Appraisal and Development process to include a performance management element. The recent employee survey reinforced the need for stronger performance management across the Council. The revised scheme has been presented to Leadership Team and will now be discussed with trade unions with a view to implementation as soon as possible. I-trent has been developed with the functionality to record and report on the completion rates of Appraisal and Development sessions.
44. The Change Team continues to promote and support change initiatives across the Council.

Key Challenges to Delivery of Outcomes

45. The most significant challenge is progressing negotiations in relation to changes to terms and conditions. In some services sustainability of new delivery models without a change to terms and conditions may not be viable. It is difficult however, to make progress with proposals that will inevitably see the earnings of lower paid

workers reduced. An addition challenge is developing options for changing terms and conditions that limit any potential for equal pay claims.

46. The process of embedding an effective performance management culture Council-wide in order to deliver on objectives provides a range of challenges around ensuring consistency alongside flexibility to empower managers to manage.
47. How we capture the workforce requirements across other groups, services and work streams as a result of change needs to be clearly identified and those requirements effectively reflected in the plan.

Next Steps/Benefits

Skills and Behaviours

48. Having developed and worked upon their personal development plans, the Leadership Team will complete a follow up 360 degree appraisal in the autumn of 2017. The results should demonstrate an improvement in leadership skills and identify areas of focus for the following year to ensure the team continues to develop to meet the Council's diverse and changing needs.
49. The Learning and Development Framework ensures that all development opportunities and resources are available in one place and are easy to access. We will monitor the number of employees attending courses as one means of determining the effectiveness of the framework.
50. We will utilise course feedback to continually develop our courses to ensure they are of maximum benefit.
51. The effectiveness of our learning and development resources will also be monitored through the employee survey question 'I am able to access the right learning and development opportunities when I need them' ~ (57% agreed in the 2016 survey).
52. Specific areas of learning and development will be monitored to continually assess effectiveness including:
 - Health and safety training – accidents/incidents statistics should reflect a reduction.
 - ICT training – numbers of security breaches should fall.
 - Training of managers in relation to HR processes – sickness absence should fall, investigations should be progressed more rapidly and there should be fewer grievances etc.
53. We will monitor the use of coaching and mentoring schemes alongside the employee survey question 'There are opportunities to develop my career at the Council' (37% agreed in the 2016 survey).

Recruitment and Retention

54. Employee turnover rates and information received from exit interviews will be continually analysed and themes will be addressed as they emerge.
55. We will monitor the effectiveness of the new talent management and succession planning framework to ensure that employees are being supported to develop into higher level roles.

Pay, Reward and Recognition

56. The use of the employee benefits scheme (including salary sacrifice schemes) will be reviewed and feedback from employees sought in order to continually improve the benefits available.

Wellbeing and Engagement

57. Action plans developed to address issues from the 2016 employee survey will be analysed to identify and address recurring themes.
58. We will monitor sickness absence levels due to stress alongside the employee survey question “Stress at work is affecting my home life” (24% agreed in the 2016 survey) with a view to seeing a reduction due to the improved stress toolkit and accessibility of materials.

Performance and Change

59. We expect to see an increase in the number of people who have received an Employee Performance and Development Review through monitoring completion rates through iTrent and next year’s employee survey question, “have you had an A&D in the last 6 months” (53% said they had in the 2016 survey).
60. Following the introduction of the revised learning and development framework and the new Employee Performance and Development Review we expect to see poor performance being effectively managed and an increase in employees receiving constructive feedback from their manager. We will monitor the employee survey questions: “Poor performance is effectively addressed in my team” (45% agreed in the 2016 survey) and “I receive useful and constructive feedback from my manager” (69% agreed in the 2016 survey).
61. The workforce plan will be reviewed annually in order to respond to the changing landscape of the Council and meet the goals and objectives as set out in the Workforce Strategy.

Recommendations

The OSC is asked to

- (a) Give its views on the initial progress made in implementing actions from the Workforce Plan and its effectiveness in delivering the aims of the Workforce Strategy.
- (b) Consider further updates on progress on an annual basis.

Contact: Deborah Hill	Ext 2210
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TITLE OF REPORT: Annual Health and Safety Performance Report

REPORT OF: Mike Barker, Acting Chief Executive

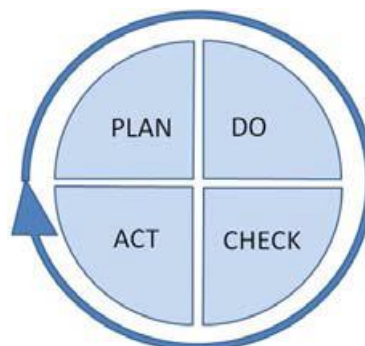
SUMMARY

This report provides the year end assessment of performance on occupational health and safety matters for 2015/16 within Gateshead Council.

Introduction

1. This annual report sets out the Council’s occupational health and safety performance during the year 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016. It is structured in such a way as to reflect Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance and is split into a number of sections highlighting the key issues that councillors need to be aware of.
2. The update provides an indication of the effectiveness and success of the health and safety control measures the Council has in place with evidence showing training delivered, progress towards meeting health and safety aims and objectives and the number of accidents recorded.
3. As noted in the body of this report, considerable work was also undertaken in areas such as Asbestos Management, Contractor Management, Educational Visits, Fire Safety and Legionella Management.
4. The ongoing emphasis is on a sensible, risk-based approach. Building health & safety into the normal way of working, rather than regarding it as an ‘add on’ will help to ensure that we get it right and keep it that way.

Gateshead Council’s Approach to Managing Health & Safety Risks



5. The Council’s Health & Safety management System includes key elements of the Health & Safety Executives document HSG65 – ‘Managing for Health and Safety’. The HSE has moved away from using the POPMAR (Policy, Organising, Planning, Measuring Performance, Auditing and Review) model of managing health and safety to a ‘Plan, Do Check, Act’ approach.

6. It describes the principles and management practices which provide the basis of effective health and safety management. The HSE follows a model of managing health and safety, using the Plan; Do; Check and Act approach set out in Table 1.

Table 1

Plan	Do	Check	Act
Determine the policy	Profile the health and safety risks	Measure Performance	Review performance
Plan for implementation	Organise for health and safety	Investigate accidents and incidents	Learn lessons
	Implement the plan		

7. To manage the health and safety risks it faces and to follow the Plan, Do, Check, Act model, the Council takes the following approach:

Plan

8. **Policy** – The Council has documented health and safety (H & S) management arrangements including a Corporate Health Policy (approved by Council 21 April 2016), as well as a range of corporate procedures and guidance.
9. **Plan for Implementation** - Each group / service has developed health and safety action plans. These are reviewed regularly.

Do

10. **Group / Service and Team Meetings** - Health & Safety is included as a standard agenda item for discussion at regular meetings. A H & S Adviser also attends group management team meetings quarterly to discuss corporate issues and share relevant information.
11. **General Health & Safety Advice** – The H & S Advisers acting through the Occupational H & S Manager provide independent technical advice on all aspects of health and safety at work to managers and employees. They also advise managers via various reporting mechanisms on how to control risks identified and how to comply with legislation. From 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 the H & S Advisers carried out 142 advisory visits, 18 incident investigations and 220 inspections and audits.
12. **Fire Safety Advice** – The H & S Advisers now also play an important part in fire safety. All of the advisers undertook training in November 2015 to enable them to carry out suitable and sufficient fire risk assessments. Following the training a new fire risk assessment template was developed; the assessment programme was reviewed and updated to determine what needed to be carried out in order of priority, residential care properties being top of the list. The advisers also provide advice and deliver fire warden training. During the reporting period 31 fire risk assessments and reviews were carried out. All of the fire risk assessments for the high risk properties identified in the new programme (18) have been completed. Fire risk assessments will continue to be carried out over a five year period based on the level of risk and resources available to the team. The team are also working with the Asset Management Team to ensure up to date information relating to each council property is updated on the GP2 system.

13. **Occupational Health** - In the last year the Council has appointed a new Senior Occupational Health Adviser. Work has commenced on developing a strategy to assist the Council reduce sickness absence which remains a priority. Occupational Health will work closely with HR managers to take a fresh approach to sickness absence management. Ill health due to stress, depression and anxiety (including work-related stress continue to emerge as a clear priority for us. A summary of the work carried out is set out in the tables 2 and 3 below.

Table 2 - Occupational Health Appointments

Type	Year			Comments
	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016	
Health Surveillance	389	362	351	
Driver Medical	113	95	48	
Vision Screening	107	84	66	
Medical Referral – OHA	488	508	280	
Medical Referral – OHP	367	376	433	
Pre-employment questionnaires	1149*	1165*	1105*	Employees – desk top exercise
Pre-employment questionnaires	397*	218*	156*	Volunteers – desk top exercise
Physiotherapy	1017	789	618	
Counselling Sessions	804	897	851	
Total	4831 (3285*)	4494 (3111*)	3908 (2647*)	Figures down on previous years due to five month period with no Senior OH Adviser in post.

Table 3 - Occupational Non-attendance

Type	Year			Comments
	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016	
Health Surveillance	58	44	17	
Driver Medical	5	3	1	
Vision Screening	11	14	9	
Medical Referral – OHA	54	53	41	
Medical Referral – OHP	33	22	23	
Physiotherapy	78	64	46	
Counselling	22	23	24	
Total	261 (7.9% excl *)	223 (7.2% excl*)	161 (6.0% excl*)	

Further information on the role of Occupational Health is given in the 6 monthly OSC 'Sickness Absence / Health of the Workforce' report.



14. **Health & Safety Training** – This is delivered by internal and external trainers. Individual Service areas are responsible for specialised safety training and will hold records of training that they have arranged. Figures below show the number of employees that have received H&S training in 15/16.

Competence – Training

- 131 employees attended 10 corporate H & S training courses (see Table 8).
- Care Wellbeing & Learning provided a range of training for 995 employees delivered by Workforce Development.
- Communities & Environment
 - Construction Services provided over 1800 training opportunities to staff and operatives in over 95 specific areas. These included but were not limited to Plant Operation, Manual Handling, First Aid and Specialist Technical areas. Staff and operatives transferring from Mears to Construction Services attended a 4 day intensive induction covering areas such as Site Safety, Manual Handling, Asbestos Awareness, Working at Height as well as corporate elements including Corporate Induction and Customer Care.
 - Facilities Management provided training for 270 employees in 11 specific areas including Food Safety, Allergen Awareness, Risk Assessment, Dynamic Risk Assessment, Manual Handling, COSHH, Asbestos Awareness and Working at Height.
 - Fleet Management provided training for 43 employees in 6 specific areas including Driver Certificate of Professional Competence, Safe Towing, Abrasive Wheels and Training for Advanced Motorists.
 - Waste Services & Grounds Maintenance continually assessed frontline staff and provided training for 488 employees which included: Reversing Assistant; Load Safety and Lashing Down; Roadside Verge; Driver CPC; C & G Signing/Lighting/Guarding; Safe Use of Pesticides; Automatic Bin Lift Operation and Induction Training.

412 Health and Safety e-learning modules were accessed. This was a significant decrease from 3202 units in the previous year. However, most H & S training courses do not require annual refresher which may account for this.

15. **Risk Assessment** – Risk assessment procedure, guidance, generic assessments and training was provided to appropriate managers to enable them to carry out suitable and sufficient assessments within their service areas.
16. **Health & Safety Information** – An intranet H & S section is freely accessible for all employees to view policies, procedures and guidance together with examples of generic risk assessments. The intranet page is also used to communicate minutes of the Corporate H & S Committee.

17. **Corporate Procedures and Codes of Practice** – Form part of the overall health and safety policy, providing safe systems of work for employees to follow and to adapt them to their service areas as appropriate. New documents were produced for Response to Verbal / Threatening Incidents in Civic Centre and other Public Areas. Documents were also revised for COSHH, Driver Medicals, Fire Safety, H & S Induction, H & S Performance and Stress.

Check

18. **Reporting to the Corporate H & S Committee** - Quarterly reporting by the OH & S Manager and H & S Advisers to the committee consisting of senior management and union representatives. Updates are given on H & S Audits, New Legislation and Guidance, Incident Statistics, Occupational Health, Fire Safety, Work Related Stress and HSE Investigations, with the opportunity also being available for those attending to discuss other health and safety issues that may be relevant.
19. **SMG H&S Update Reports** - Quarterly reporting by the OH & S Manager to the Senior Management Group, advising on the status at the time of the H&S management system and of hazards that have been identified, recommending to SMG any reasonable actions to be taken.
20. **Monitoring of Hazards** – The H & S Team utilises a system for the recording of hazards identified by employees. Checks are carried out to ensure appropriate action has been taken by the relevant manager to address concerns.
21. **Incident Investigations** – Where appropriate, incidents are investigated with findings and recommendations communicated to responsible managers for them to take action to prevent reoccurrence. Summaries of lost working time accidents are reported to the Corporate H & S Committee and group committees for their consideration.
22. **Annual Reporting on Corporate Health & Safety** – Annual reports are produced for SMG and OSC to inform senior managers and councillors of the work undertaken in the last 12 month period and including details on H & S performance and incident statistics.

Internal Assurance

23. The Corporate H & S Team was audited during the year by internal audit. The objectives of the audit were to ensure:
- There is an adequate H & S policy in place.
 - That H & S audits are planned and carried out in a consistent manner to assess compliance with legal requirements and best practice standards.
 - Recommendations made during a H & S audit are implemented.
 - There is adequate performance monitoring arrangements in place.

The auditor's conclusions were that the control systems and procedures in place were satisfactory.

24. The following section reviews the action taken in the higher risk areas during the reporting period to demonstrate what has been done to identify, eliminate and

control the hazards and risks effectively to prevent injuries, ill health, incidents or losses.

Asbestos Management

The Asbestos Management Team (AMT) who sit within Council Housing, Design & Technical Services, Communities & Environment working closely with the H & S Team have achieved the following in the reporting period:

- Arranged the annual inspections of all schools who have bought in to the gateway scheme and all the operational / non-operational buildings.
- Updated Asbestos Management Registers as the re-inspection reports are received.
- Continued to offer a Site Specific Asbestos Management Plan writing service to aid those who do not feel confident / competent enough to write their own.
- Provide technical advice to schools which have bought in to the gateway scheme.
- Reviewed and updated the corporate asbestos management plan.
- Provided most of our registers to the end users electronically in PDF format eliminating the need to print hard copies off.
- Checked all asbestos registers for accuracy before going to print.
- Surveyors reported any Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs) requiring immediate remediation or removal to the AMT during inspections.
- Ensured that any Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs) that cannot be managed are removed by a licensed contractor as soon as possible. This urgent work is arranged by the AMT and then recharged to the client ensuring work is carried out quickly and by competent contractors.
- Arranged refurbishment / demolition surveys for design as and when required.
- Provided information we hold on file to design thus occasionally eliminating the cost for refurbishment / demolition survey for new projects.
- Assisted with the input of all asbestos data in to the GP2 system.

Contractor Management

During the 6 week and half term holidays (2015), the H & S Advisers visited all schools and other sites where they were notified that contractors would be working. This enabled activities to be monitored and risk assessments, method statements and training records to be checked. When the necessary standards were not being achieved the work was stopped until corrective action was taken.

Educational Visits

The H & S Advisers provide advice and support to teachers, youth workers and other Council employees who take young people out on educational and out-of-centre visits. Under the banner of the Educational Visits Advisory Team, they are also responsible for the implementation of, and monitoring compliance with, the policy and procedures which ensure the Council meets its statutory responsibilities for the safety of such activities. The Team maintains the EVOLVE on-line visit planning, recording and approval system for Gateshead.

EVOLVE has been adopted by the majority of Local Authorities throughout the country and is endorsed by Ofsted as a good practice system for managing safety with the minimum of bureaucracy. EVOLVE, together with the resources of the

Council's Care Call service, provide a robust Critical Incident response in the event of an emergency on an Educational Visit, by making detailed information almost instantly available to emergency services and others managing the incident.

EVOLVE also provides the Council with a clear picture of the great range of learning outside the classroom opportunities being provided for Gateshead children. In the academic year 2015/16 we recorded 7194 visits (an increase from 5365). Of these, 768 involved residential stays, adventurous activities or travel overseas to countries including Beijing, Borneo, Ethiopia, Russia, New York, Shanghai, Tanzania as well as our closer European neighbours.

Legionella Management

The Water Hygiene Team who sit within Council Housing, Design & Technical Services Communities & Environment working closely with the H & S Team have achieved the following in the reporting period:

- In all buildings visited or audited no significant issues were found. Ensured that all Council buildings continue to have their risk assessment documentation updated if: there is a change to the water system or its use; a change to the use of the building where the system is installed; new information available about risks or control measures; the results of checks indicating that control measures are no longer effective; changes to key personnel or a case of legionnaires' disease / legionellosis associated with the system.
- 191 samples were taken in 2015 with no positive legionella results returned. At the same time samples were taken for pseudomonas with 4 positive samples returned. Remedial action was taken and the properties resampled. All 4 buildings came back with negative results demonstrating that our control methods are robust and where positive results have been identified they have been dealt with quickly.
- Retained Legionella Control Association Accreditation to prove good practice and to allow them to do work in the private sector.
- Have started to risk assess water systems on all domestic properties owned by Gateshead Council as part of a ten year scheme. 1500 properties have been assessed so far.

25. **Performance Indicators** - The tables set out below detail the performance indicator data for 2015 - 2016 and how this compares to previous years. These are common indicators for occupational health and safety, and help to track performance and compare against other organisations.

Table 4 - Incidents / Industrial Diseases (ID)

Type	Year			Comments
	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016	
RIDDOR	26	32	25	Injuries resulting in over 7 days absence reported to HSE
Specified Injuries	9	4	2	Significant injuries such as fractures, amputation, loss of sight, crush injury, significant burn injury and degree of scalping
ID	2	0	0	Industrial diseases reported to the HSE
> 3 day	13	2	3	Injuries > 3 days but < 7 days noted for information

Table 5 - Incidence Rates

Type	Year			Comments
	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016	
RIDDOR	3.8	5.8	4.88	Incidence Rate for over 7 day injuries (number of over 7 day injuries per 1000 employees).
Specified Injuries	1.2	0.72	0.39	Incidence Rate for specified injuries (number of injuries per 1000 employees).

The statistics (include LA schools) show improvements in some areas compared to the previous year:

- Total number of incidents down from 518 to 420
- Specified injuries down from 7 to 2
- Non employees sent direct to hospital down from 5 to 1
- Increase in near miss reporting from 136 to 151 which includes 48 reports of verbal threatening behaviour.

The main cause of over 7 day incidents is handling, lifting and carrying. The specified injuries were as a result of handling, lifting and carrying and slip, trip and fall. These occurred in various locations at different times of the year so could not be linked to any trends. Detailed quarterly reports are given to groups on the recorded incidents to enable them to take relevant action to help reverse any trends, identify training needs etc.

Table 6 – Health & Safety Executive (HSE) Enforcement Action

Type	Year			Comments
	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016	
Prosecution	0	1	0	Ryton Train Incident 2012
Prohibition Notice	0	1	0	Inadequate Working at Height arrangements
Improvement Notice	0	1	0	Fire Risk Assessment for Timber Frame Build inadequate
FFI	0	1*	0	*(£458.80) Related to improvement and prohibition notices

Table 7 - Sickness Absence (Stress / Work Incidents)

Type	Year			Comments
	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016	
Sickness Absence	53,466	54,818	60,166	Total sickness absence days
Stress	28.2%	21.7%	23.8%	Percentage of total days lost due to stress, depression and mental health including work related stress
Work incident	3.1%	3.4%	2.81%	Percentage of total days lost due to work related injury and ill health

Table 8 – Training

Type	Year			Comments
	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016	
Corporate	107 (9 courses 99% average attendance rate)	282 (19 courses 93% average attendance rate)	131 (10 courses 84% average attendance rate)	Number attending corporate health and safety training courses (Accident investigation, Asbestos Management, Accident Investigation, DSE, Fire Warden, H & S for Managers and Risk assessment).
e-learning	3238	3202	412	

Act

26. **Auditing and Performance Review** are the final steps in the health and safety management control cycle. They constitute the ‘feedback loop’ which enables the Council to reinforce, maintain and develop its ability to reduce risks to the fullest extent and to ensure the continued effectiveness of the health and safety management system.

The H & S audit team carried out the audits of Waste Services and Grounds Maintenance looking at Driving at Work and Hand Arm Vibration, Construction Services looking at Assessment, Engagement & Management of Contractors; Excavations; Fire Safety; Hand Arm Vibration; Work at Height and Workplace Health, Safety & Welfare. Audits were also carried out in all services looking at the risk assessments for the highest risks in the services identified as part of the annual health and safety performance review. A new self – audit template for schools was prepared and tested in several schools in preparation for it to be introduced fully in 2016 – 2017. There were no major issues identified. However, inconsistencies in management arrangements were identified which are being addressed locally.

Audits are carried out based on the level of risk. This is determined by reviewing accident statistics, previous audit findings, safety alerts issued, existing intelligence/knowledge from within the H & S Team and enforcement action including, prosecutions, prohibition/improvement notices and fee for interventions.

27. **Review of Policies and Procedures** – Considerable ongoing review of the H & S policy, corporate procedures and guidance takes place. New documents are developed or others amended. See number 16 for details.
28. **Lessons arising from the use of private sector contractors at 7 Queen Elizabeth Ave** – In June 2015 the Corporate H & S Team were alerted of plans to crane lift a modular unit extension to the rear of 7 QE Ave. As it appeared that

appropriate procedures had not been followed the work was stopped. A thorough review was carried out by the H & S Team and an investigation by the Service Director, Commissioning & Business Development. As a result of the review and investigation a number of issues were identified which need to be adopted when assessing, engaging and managing contractors. These include the following:

- Lessons learnt from previous incidents such as the Ryton train incident must be communicated effectively through all tiers of the workforce and embedded in management practices
- Procedures and protocols must be followed
- Procurement procedures must be followed
- Abilities of employees must be recognised and training given where necessary
- Risk assessments and method statements must be verified prior to work commencing
- Employees raising concerns must be supported fully
- The level and frequency of health and safety monitoring should be decided before the start of any project
- Advice and support should be sought from Health and Safety to minimise potential risk and exposure of the Council.
- The need for the improvements has been acknowledged by the Senior Management Team and there have been concerted efforts by key personnel in attempts to see these through to completion.

Health & Safety Executive

29. To the best knowledge of the H & S Team there were no prosecutions, enforcement notices or fee for intervention issued by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) in respect of any health and safety failures within the Council during 2015/16.

Tyne & Wear Fire & Rescue Service

30. To the best knowledge of the H & S Team, there were no prosecutions or enforcement notices issued by the Fire Service in respect of any fire management failures within the Council during 2015/16.

Summary

31. As mentioned at the start of this report, the Council's approach to health & safety management continues to follow the guidance document HSG65 – 'Managing for Health and Safety'. Commitment from senior management is strong and substantial progress has been made in delivering improvements.
32. Throughout the last year there has been increased focus on asbestos and fire safety management and contractor health and safety performance.
33. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in this reporting period have not visited any of the Council's sites.

What will we do next?

34. The corporate H & S team will work with the Group Management Teams to ensure that progress is made on a continual basis.
35. Group Management Teams and Head Teachers will be informed of any significant changes to the Council's corporate health and safety policies and procedures or when action is necessary as a result of any health and safety failing via a health and safety briefing note.
36. SMG will be advised on a quarterly basis on the progress being made and any issues to address.

Recommendation

37. The views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are sought as follows:
 - Is the Committee satisfied that the actions taken are appropriate and effective to maintain or improve the health and safety management system?

Contact: Susan Smith

Ext. 2272

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TITLE OF REPORT: Implementation of the Volunteer Plan – Annual Update

REPORT OF: Paul Dowling, Strategic Director, Communities and Environment

Summary

Corporate Vitality Overview and Scrutiny Committee previously agreed that that this Committee should receive an annual update of the implementation of the Councils Volunteers Plan 2013-17.

This report provides information about the number of volunteers, the types of volunteer roles, case studies (appendix 1) and the impact of volunteering in Gateshead's communities. The report also includes priority areas for future action.

Introduction

1. Vision 2030, the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy, sets out six big ideas to help achieve the vision for Gateshead. One of the big ideas is Gateshead Volunteers, enabling everyone to make a recognised contribution to their community. Gateshead volunteers has been a council priority since 2007 when Vision 2030 was agreed and is founded upon a strong history of volunteering in Gateshead, creating strong communities.
2. Vision 2030, Gateshead Volunteers, seeks to achieve the following outcomes:
 - a. The voluntary and community sector thrives within Gateshead
 - b. Vibrant, sustainable communities through a culture of supporting community and voluntary sector organisations in the delivery of local services
 - c. Volunteering recognised as important in career development
 - d. Volunteering frameworks that help volunteers develop their skills
 - e. Gateshead known as a national leader in promoting and supporting volunteering
 - f. Social responsibility is achieved through local businesses participating in supporting volunteers.
3. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016/2017-2020/2021 states that the Council will continue to seek to mitigate demand pressures within services by capacity building within communities, including, where appropriate, work with partners and volunteers.
4. The Council Plan 2015-2020 identifies "Gateshead Volunteers" as one of our six big ideas focused on people and places.

5. Gateshead Council Volunteers Plan 2013-17 provides a strategic and structured approach to volunteering in Gateshead. It identifies principles, priorities and the infrastructure through which the Council will significantly accelerate and develop volunteering across Gateshead in the Council Plan period. The plan ensures that volunteers are supported effectively in areas such as training, skills, expenses and health and safety so that the principles of volunteering are not undermined.
6. The targets in the plan were to increase formal volunteering from 18% to 25% and to increase informal volunteering from 34% to 40% by 2017, an additional 20,000 volunteers. To reach this target it required an increase the number of volunteers by 5,000 each year.

Progress to Date

7. The volunteer plan originally identified five objectives to be achieved, these included:
 - Enable everyone to make a recognised contribution to their community and become the volunteering capital of England
 - Deliver economic growth and wellbeing
 - Volunteering activity adds value to local service provision, enabling neighbourhoods to have services that would not otherwise be provided and enhancing core public services.
 - Increase formal volunteering from 18% to 25% by 2017
 - Increase informal volunteering from 34% to 40% by 2017
8. Volunteering continues to grow and as it becomes better understood, there is now an opportunity to update the original volunteer plan objectives and principles whilst recognising current and forthcoming council budgetary challenges.
9. Communities in Gateshead continue to develop and evolve and therefore the need to provide support and guidance increases. Officers continue to monitor activities within communities and volunteering, recording the number of volunteers now occurs regularly.

Volunteer Recruitment

10. Since 2013 there has been a single point of access to volunteering with Gateshead Council. All documentation and an outline of the process are available online:
<http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/People%20and%20Living/Volunteering/home.aspx>
11. The most popular requests relate to children & families, supporting vulnerable people and parks and open spaces. More volunteers are also becoming in supporting victims of the Anti-Social Behaviour, partly as a result of a project commissioned by the Police and Crime Commissioner.
12. The number of voluntary and community groups requesting support and accessing our service continues to increase. Currently there are over 100 volunteer roles available for individuals to choose from. All of these volunteer roles can be found on the Gateshead Council website. Support is tailored to the needs of each community organisation making a request.

13. The current estimate of the number of volunteers across council services and within the voluntary and community sector is as follows:

- Community Links – 60
- Countryside & Environment – 500
- School Governors – 1,200
- General School Volunteers - 900
- Community Centres – 800
- Youth Offending Team – 25
- Youth Council – 30
- Children Centres – 50
- VCS Organisations and others – 1,000
- Sports – 400
- Heritage, Events & general Culture - 500
- Libraries – 800
- Employee Volunteers – 50
- Private Sector Employee Volunteers – 250
- Jewish Community 1,500

Total – 8,065

14. The total of just over 8,000 represents a 77% increase (up from 6,230) from 2015, and means that approximately 24,200 additional residents are now participating in volunteering since the Plan was implemented in 2013, ahead of the 2017 target of 20,000 in the Plan.

15. There are now a total of 1,417 volunteers listed on Gateshead Council's Central Volunteer system. The Neighbourhood Management and Volunteering Team has developed strong links regarding volunteering opportunities with local education providers including Gateshead College, Newcastle College, Northumbria and Newcastle Universities.

16. As volunteering increases working in partnership is becoming increasingly important to ensure effective and efficient working. The Council is also careful to ensure there is clear delineation between volunteers and employees of the council. This ensures that volunteers and officers can work together.

17. The definitions are:

Employee – a paid role in which an individual undertakes specific duties within their job description which contributes to the statutory function of Gateshead Council.

Volunteer – an unpaid role which adds value to the Councils statutory function by undertaking non statutory tasks.

18. As services continue to develop and provide volunteer roles employees and volunteers continue to work alongside each other. The council coordinates much of this work through a steering group of officers where regular opportunities and information is disseminated and shared.

Gateshead Volunteers Month

19. Gateshead's fourth Volunteers' Month, took place in June. The aim of Volunteers Month was to:
 - Celebrate the positive contribution made by existing volunteers
 - Recruit more volunteers
 - Enable local people to contribute to their community
 - Confirm Gateshead's reputation as a national leader in volunteering
20. Throughout June, 101,170 hours were recorded on the volunteer totaliser which equates to £1.3m economic value. This is a 62% rise from last year.
21. £11,600 was allocated to 54 groups and organisations across Gateshead from the Volunteers' Month Grant Scheme. Various events were held during the month long activities. These ranged from community celebrations, Queens tea parties, training sessions and award ceremonies that gave recognition to the commitment made by Gateshead residents.
22. A celebratory event was held at the end of June in Trinity Square. Over 20 organisations took part in the event including, Citizens Advice Gateshead, Sight Service, Jazz NE and Age UK. Interactive volunteering opportunities were offered to local people on the date and the event was a great success. The Trinity Square management staff has informed the council that footfall for the day was 16,000, the highest footfall level of the month and for any event at Trinity Square.

Group volunteering and the Corporate Offer

23. To enable group volunteering to take place, a recruitment process was created. This enables volunteer activities to sit within the council's insurance policy for volunteering. This therefore avoids processing large numbers of individual requests. Work has begun on creating larger group activities with collective tasks and outcomes.
24. The most popular group volunteer opportunities at present are environmental projects or decoration tasks. These enable the volunteer teams to undertake a task where the end result creates a visible and tangible impact in a community or within a building.
25. The demand for group volunteer opportunities continues to grow.
26. Examples of organisations who have volunteered as volunteering teams include Virgin Media, the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), The AA, and also Gateshead Council services. Case studies are attached at Appendix 1.

Corporate Volunteering Offer

27. Officers are developing a corporate volunteer offer to organisations and businesses who want their employees to volunteer as an activity within Gateshead.
28. Volunteering enables team building amongst their employees and also allows their employees to work in a different environment.

29. Where opportunities arise businesses are matched with a community group or organisation that requires volunteering assistance. In some cases this requires the creation of a bespoke package in partnership between all parties so that all expectations and needs are met.
30. Opportunities available to organisations could range from a one day set of activities but has the potential to be longer term depending on the needs of the parties involved.
31. Discussions are taking place with Virgin Media for example regarding how volunteering opportunities can be embedded within their corporate employee volunteer commitment.

Gateshead Council Employer Volunteering Scheme

32. In May 2014 the Gateshead Council Employees Volunteering opportunity was refreshed enabling employees to request up to 15 hours paid time to volunteer in Gateshead over a 12 month period. This needs to be matched by at least 15 hours pro rata of employees own time.
33. There are currently 44 employees registered as volunteers through the scheme. This is a 48% increase from 2015.
34. Employees are involved in various volunteering projects, these range from one to one support projects through to employees participating in a wider group.
35. Further discussions will continue within Senior Management Teams across the council to enable the message and opportunity to be cascaded down to officers throughout the council.

DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) Checks

36. DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) Checks are required when a regulated activity is undertaken which will be unsupervised. The Officer who is delivering the volunteer role needs to initiate the DBS application with the volunteer.
37. All council registered volunteers do not necessarily have to have a DBS check. This depends upon the specific volunteer role.
38. Voluntary and Community Groups need to initiate their own DBS checks for their own individual volunteers. This can be completed through Gateshead Council as an Umbrella Organisation; however organisations need to sign up to the agreement first. Once the agreement is signed Groups will be provided with online access to the council's portal for DBS applications.
39. The Neighbourhood Management & Volunteering Team can provide information and clarity on the DBS process but cannot process checks for roles the team are not delivering.

Newcastle Council for Voluntary Service (NCVS)

40. Gateshead Voluntary Organisations Council dissolved in May 2016 due to financial difficulties. To ensure the voluntary and community sector in the Borough continued to have access to advice, guidance and an independent voice, the Council entered into an agreement with NCVS to provide some of the activities a Council for Voluntary Service typically provides. This was agreed as an interim arrangement whilst the Council consults with the sector and its partners on the approach to be implemented from April 2017.
41. The original targets set out within the Volunteers Plan (outlined in paragraph 6) included increasing informal and formal volunteering, and increasing volunteering overall by 20,000 volunteers by 2017. The Agreement with Newcastle CVS does not incorporate volunteering. In order to achieve the 2017 target, the Council took over the responsibility to aim towards an additional 5,000 volunteers in 2016. The support provided by the Council will include support to organisations regarding volunteer policies and management, individual support to volunteers, group volunteering opportunities and corporate volunteer experiences.

Future Actions

42. There are a number of priority areas for future action which have been identified in the delivery of the Volunteers Plan:
 - Refresh the Volunteers Plan principles and the objectives set.
 - Continue to develop and communicate the definition of an employee's role and a volunteers role throughout council services
 - Find ways to continue to support volunteers despite challenges which may arise from future budget proposals
 - Create a new management system to record volunteers, employee volunteers and volunteer hours contributed by voluntary groups are collated in one location.
 - Continue promotion of the Employee Volunteering Scheme.
 - Identify opportunities for group volunteering projects for teams
 - Ensure continued support and development for Friends of Groups throughout Gateshead.
 - Explore arrangements for joint working with other agencies and external organisations.
 - Consider how volunteers can add further value to current services provided by Gateshead Council.
 - Continue to develop and promote the corporate volunteer opportunities.
 - Continue to create a more diverse range of roles across Gateshead, working with Newcastle Council for Voluntary Service, communities and community groups to offer more choice to potential volunteers.
 - Consider volunteering roles in the development of new policies and strategies
 - Develop closer working relationships with Trade Unions regarding the creation of further volunteering opportunities.

Recommendations

43. Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to:
- i. Note and comment on the progress of implementation of the Volunteers Plan
 - ii. To comment on whether sufficient progress has been made on implementing the Volunteers Plan
 - iii. Consider the future actions as set out in paragraph 42

Lindsay Murray, extension 2794

Case Studies

All individuals discussed within these case studies have given permission for their information to be presented.

Case study 1 – Community Links, supporting vulnerable people – Individual Volunteering

Alan Ayre

Alan is the current Gateshead Volunteer of the Year and has offered regular, valuable, volunteer support since 2005 in a wide range of groups and on a 1:1 basis.

Alan has undertaken extensive volunteer training, including relevant Distance Learning subjects, in order to carry out his role efficiently, effectively and safely.

Alan trained as a Health Walk Leader and developed interesting, informative local history information which he uses, during the walk, to illustrate the changing face of Gateshead.

Alan invites participation from all group member and volunteers by asking them to share their own local knowledge.

Alan has enhanced the lives of many adults with learning disabilities by offering friendship, respect, the opportunity to share fun and rewarding activities and acknowledging their many skills and talents.

Alan has supported service users to be active members of their local community, show and develop their skills and extend their knowledge of the wider world.

Alan has volunteered alongside employees within Community Links throughout his period of volunteering.

Mary Ambury

Mary began her Community Links volunteer role in 2015 at Little Bites, a weekly enterprise café, run by people with learning disabilities, in Kibblesworth Millennium Centre.

The café provides opportunities for service users to develop employment related skills in the community.

Mary has developed excellent relationships with the service users and in August 2016 the Enterprise Lead Worker said

“Mary is an asset to our team, she is hard working, enthusiastic and always willing to go that extra mile. She is an excellent communicator and her positive approach to supporting people has enabled us, as a team, to develop strategies that have empowered people to obtain new skills”

Group Volunteering – Community Links

A group of NHS volunteers enjoyed a day volunteering at the Harvest and Help allotment in August. The event was organized by Community Links in partnership with the Durham University Community Engagement Team.

The NHS team enjoyed a day in the sun painting sheds, fences and preparing flower pots for planting. This practical support was of great benefit to the Enterprise members who provided a warm, friendly welcome to the team and shared their own gardening knowledge and skills.

Foodbank Collection – Community Links

7 Community Links service users and 2 volunteers supported a very successful Foodbank Collection in the Civic Centre in June where 159 kgs of food and £21.00 in donations was donated from Council employees and visitors to the Civic Centre. This activity provided the opportunity for service users to support their local community and the collection is much appreciated by Gateshead Foodbank.

Case Study 2 – The Cecily Douglas Memory Garden at Springwell Estate – Group Volunteering

Silverline Memories is a registered charity that focuses on improving the quality of life for people living with dementia and those that care for them by providing places to go and activities to participate in.

Silverline Memories expanded their services to Gateshead and began the project of transforming the abandoned Springwell Estate Community Garden into the newly named Cecily Douglas Memorial Garden. The site was then tidied and cleared with volunteers from AA insurance services in December 2015. The project was made possible by a team of volunteers who attended the garden on Wednesday 20th July 2016 to help paint fences and plant flowers and tidy unused spaces.

The project was associated with Marks and Spencer's and was named as an M&S #SparkSomethingGood Event. M&S donated flowers to support the garden.

"It was great to see volunteers of all ages and walks of life show up to help out at the garden and dedicate so much time and effort to improving the look of the site. They helped plant various different flowers, fruits and vegetables and some even got handy with a paintbrush and paint pot to make over the flowerbed fences. They have helped to create a drastic change to the once ran down and over grown garden by showing dedication and commitment. As a result of their efforts the garden is now a beautiful place for the friends, family and carers of those living with dementia and the general public to enjoy and look after. It has inspired younger generations to help out when it comes to bringing Gateshead's community together and helped dementia sufferers to find a new lease of life"

Case study 3 – Pelaw Youth Centre – Corporate Offer Volunteering

A team of 8 employees from Virgin Media attended Pelaw Youth Centre in June to complete some redecoration work within the building.

Risk assessments were completed and the required health and safety issues identified and considered. The main task for the day included painting the large community hall within Pelaw Youth Centre.

The Virgin Media employees stayed at the centre for the full day and interacted with the members of the youth centre who were also present.

The Youth Centre committee and users were extremely grateful for the work completed and now have a freshly painted large community hall that they can now continue to use for community based project work with groups and activities.

The volunteers explained that they appreciated the chance to work in a different environment on new tasks with colleagues whilst benefitting a project within Gateshead.

Virgin Media were so pleased with the project that they are currently in discussions with officers regarding a number of other staff teams within their organisation.

Case Study 4 - ASB (Anti-Social Behaviour) Volunteer support – Individual volunteer role.

There are a number of individual residents within Gateshead who are subject to ASB (Anti-Social Behaviour) which affects them in their own home. These cases are classified by officers as non-criminal.

The Gateshead Housing Company do not have the resource to support these residents. It is recognised that these residents need support and guidance in order to resolve problems.

The Community Safety Board (through the Police Crime Commissioner) awarded funding direct to the council to create an ASB volunteer led project to ensure that residents can be supported.

Working with Gateshead Housing Company, the Development Officer for volunteering developed the project where individual tenants could access support. Initially this project will only involve Gateshead Housing Company Tenants.

A tailored 10 week (20 hours) training programme was developed specifically for this project. The training includes counselling skills, listening skills, safety information and potential support services and stakeholders.

12 volunteers were initially assessed as suitable for the programme. Once fully registered they commenced the training in May 2016. Following the completion of the training, 5 volunteers were fully trained, DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) check cleared and were ready for placement.

Neighbourhood Management working alongside Gateshead Housing Company Estate Officers, matched the 5 active volunteers to cases that were referred to the project. Working alongside the identified Estate Officer, the volunteer then supported the individual by using the information they had been given and the training that they had received.

The volunteer support to the individual enables the Estate Officer to concentrate their time and effort on core service delivery. The volunteer then concentrates on the added value to the core service. This can demonstrate the cooperation between volunteers and employees and also ensures that the tenant is receiving support.

The volunteers involved in the initial stage of this project are also going to be part of the training for the 2nd stage of the project which is due to start in November 2016. The volunteers will be able to share their experiences with the new volunteers that will soon embark on the training.

Case study 5 – Individual Employee Volunteer

Employee volunteering take up has gradually increased over the year. More employees are becoming aware of the fact that they can claim up to 15 paid hours to use towards their own volunteer activity.

Employees who have registered through the scheme are involved in a variety of groups and activities. These range from youth football teams, school governors, to officers volunteering at homeless shelters.

An example of one of these volunteers is Helen Gaffney. Helen is a Community Engagement Officer within Neighbourhood Management and Volunteering. Helen is an active member of the 'Wrekenton Methodist Community Church organisation.

Over the years Helen has been involved at the church she has contributed countless hours. Helen completed the required documentation within the policy and provided the required 15 hours match. Once authorised to volunteer Helen was then able to take another 15 hours to continue her volunteer activity at the church.

Without the hours through the Employee Volunteering Policy Helen wouldn't have been able to complete some essential monitoring information and funding applications in the time required. This benefitted the group greatly.

Helen explains

“As an employee of Gateshead Council I think it is wonderful to have an employer who recognises the importance of volunteering and the benefits it has for the community and the individual”.

Case study 6 – Cedars Academy – Volunteer project

Within Gateshead central Library there is an Autism Hub. The Hub itself provides a drop in point to share information and receive help and advice.

The Hub is very successful and relies upon employees of the library and volunteers. Discussions have recently taken place between the Central Library and Cedars

Academy. After discussing the Hub with some of the 6th year pupils in the school, two of the students declared an interest in becoming involved in the project.

The students have autism and feel that they can support people who visit the Hub. The school also feel that in turn this will develop their own personal skills and be beneficial to them.

Support has been provided from the school and the Central Library to enable the two students to become volunteers. Using the central volunteer recruitment process the students will be registered as volunteers and will be supported by the Volunteer Coordinator for the Library service.

The Volunteer Coordinator working with the school teachers, volunteers and the manager of the project will develop a specific list of tasks. These will be tasks that the volunteers will deliver and will add value to those delivered by employees.

“This is an excellent opportunity for the pupils to get involved and will allow them to develop in confidence, while supporting the project”.

Case study 7 – Gateshead Older People’s Assembly (GOPA)

Gateshead Older People’s Assembly are hosting their AGM (Annual General Meeting) on Friday 7th October.

The group required volunteers for the following tasks:

- Assisting some of the members into the venue
- Showing members to their seats
- Pointing out where the facilities are
- Helping and supporting any queries from members

This is a “one–off” opportunity and would enable a volunteer to gain valuable experience in a short period of time.

Using connections already established with Gateshead College, the Development Officer for Volunteering approached Gateshead College. It was proposed that a small group of college students (within the area of care giving) becoming involved at the event as volunteers.

The students would be able to volunteer together to help with confidence. They would also be able to be involved in an event that is local to the college, meaning they do not have to travel far.

The relevant Gateshead College tutor identified an estimated 10 students that would fit the role. As a DBS (Disclosure & Barring Service) Check isn’t required, and to prevent all the individual students having to go through the central process, a group Expression of Interest was processed instead.

This meant that the college tutor gave confirmation that all the students were suitable and would be supervising them on the day itself.

The college tutor explained:

“This is a fantastic opportunity for students to get involved within their local community. These students will be learning important life skills by talking to vulnerable people while also learning academically”.

The group are also benefiting by having a group of volunteers willing to support their AGM meeting which they wouldn't have had without the support from the Neighbourhood Management Team.

Case Study 8 Charden Pouo – Gateshead Older People's Assembly

Charden Pouo was referred to the Assembly by a member of the Culture, Communities & Volunteering team earlier this year. Charden is an asylum seeker from the Republic of the Congo and has been in the UK since January 2016.

Charden volunteers with us three days per week. On Wednesdays and Thursdays, he helps in our community café, the Cosy Crow. Charden's customer service skills are excellent and he makes everyone feel welcome. He is usually found in our dining area, taking orders, tidying tables, and making conversation with our customers. He's recently started cooking and his specialty is a pea and ham frittata. On Fridays, Charden helps at our tea dances, preparing afternoon teas and setting up the café.

Charden has quickly made himself an invaluable asset to the Assembly and the community. He is self-motivated, has a positive attitude, and is incredibly keen to learn. His English was already excellent when he came to us, but his skill in speaking Geordie has improved considerably over the past few months!

In July, Charden was recognised as the Assembly's Non-Member Volunteer of the Year.

The Cosy Crow community café operates on a pay what you can basis and is located in Deckham Village Hall. The café is open Wednesdays and Thursdays from 12:30 until 3 and all are welcome.

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