

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

Monday, 28 November 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 Monday 17 October 2016.
3	Review of Absence in the Council - Monitoring Report (Pages 9 - 20) Report of the Acting Chief Executive and Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance
4	The Council Plan - Six month assessment of performance and delivery 2016/17 (Pages 21 - 34) Report of the Acting Chief Executive, Strategic Director Corporate Services & Governance and Strategic Director Corporate Resources.
5	Case Study - Equality Impact Assessments and the Council Plan - Progress Report (Pages 35 - 42) Report of the Acting Chief Executive and Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance
6	Corporate Asset Management - Delivery and Performance Report (Pages 43 - 76) Report of the Acting Chief Executive and Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance

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Tel: (0191) 433 2149, Date: Friday, 18 November 2016

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GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday, 17 October 2016

PRESENT: Councillor John Eagle (Chair)

Councillor(s): J Wallace, R Beadle, M Charlton, S Green,
B Oliphant, M Ord, Bradford and M Henry

APOLOGIES: Councillor(s): P Foy, L Caffrey, T Graham, J Green and
M Hall

CR19 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 September 2016 be approved as a correct record.

CR20 MATTERS ARISING

It was confirmed that Councillors are now automatically signed up to receive the 'Gateshead Now' emails.

It was confirmed that the free Wi-Fi in the centre of Gateshead has been tested and is now working.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

CR21 CASE STUDY - WORKFORCE STRATEGY

The Committee received a report outlining the progress being made on the implementation of the Council's Workforce Plan.

The Workforce Plan supports the delivery of the Workforce Strategy which was approved by Council on 16 July 2015.

To develop the plan, work was carried out to identify the Council's existing skill base and to assess future need. This involved all services completing a questionnaire to provide a council-wide picture of capability and skills. The assessment has shaped the detail and timeframes included in the plan and has helped to clarify both corporate and service priorities.

The aim of the plan is to ensure that the Council possesses a workforce that can deliver on the Council Plan and Vision 2030.

The plan 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.

The report detailed the activity to date and next steps against the themes of: Skills and Behaviours; Recruitment and Retention; Pay, Reward and Recognition; Wellbeing and Engagement; and Performance and Change.

The report also highlighted the challenges associated with delivering the outcomes.

The Committee participated in a demonstration of the newly created Learning and Development section of the Council's Intranet. These new Intranet pages bring together all of the resources available to employees to help them access Learning and Development opportunities. Also provided are tools to support the induction; and appraisal and development processes.

Some members of the Committee expressed disappointment with the 41% turnout in the 2016 employee survey and queried whether there are any patterns or variances by Directorship or Service area.

It was noted that the employee survey turnout was slightly increased from last year and that the Chief Executive has requested Service Directors to look at ways of increasing turnout. Within Communities and Environment, the provision of hard copy surveys resulted in an increase in responses being received.

It was clarified that employees who receive financial support to undertake certain accredited courses are expected to repay the costs, if they leave the employment of the Council within an agreed timeframe. It was commented by one Councillor that some Local Authorities seek to recover costs if employees leave within a four year period and therefore this Council could look to increase its recovery period.

It was clarified that Councillors can access the employee discounts.

Concerns were raised about the identification of aspiring future leaders solely by line managers. It was commented that the employee/line-manager relationship is vulnerable and therefore employees may feel their opportunities are being limited.

The proportion of staff identified as aspiring future leaders was queried. It was commented that service directors should have this information.

It was clarified that if employees were to feel that they were not being considered for opportunities by their line manager, they could raise their concerns with their Service Director. However, it was noted that employees would not know whether they had been identified as a future aspiring leader and that Service Directors may not hold this information.

Concerns were raised that employees may be demotivated by the restrictions on development opportunities as shown in the Workforce Plan Development Matrix. This point was noted and it was agreed that the matrix be reviewed for accuracy.

The Committee was pleased to note that the iTrent system will enable the accurate

monitoring of completion rates in respect of Employee Performance and Development Reviews, therefore addressing the issues identified by the employee survey.

The Committee was pleased to note that the employee surveys also capture qualitative feedback, which is then examined.

The age profile of the workforce was reported and concerns were raised about the issues associated with an aging workforce.

The range of courses available was praised and it was suggested that they be more widely advertised and sold to the public and partners. It was queried whether some of the learning and development opportunities are available to Councillors, such as dealing with difficult situations.

It was requested that future updates identify the proportion of employees identified as aspiring future leaders and of those the numbers who have undertaken learning and development opportunities. Future updates should also provide the raw data in respect of the employee survey so that the Committee, as part of its monitoring role, can collectively scrutinise the information.

It was previously queried in 2014 whether general improvements could be made to the Health Room. Linking to the theme of wellbeing it was queried whether this can be explored again.

- RESOLVED:
- i. That the Committee was satisfied with the progress made in implementing actions from the Workforce Plan.
 - ii. That the Committee was satisfied with the effectiveness of the Workforce Plan in delivering the aims of the Workforce Strategy.
 - iii. That the Committee agreed to consider annual updates on progress.
 - iv. That future updates should detail the proportion of aspiring future leaders and of those, the numbers who have undertaken training opportunities. The raw data from the employee surveys should also be provided for scrutiny.

CR22 ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Annual Health & Safety Performance Report was presented to the Committee, setting out performance during the year 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016. The report is structured to reflect Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance and is split into a number of sections highlighting key issues for Councillors to be aware of.

The update provided: an indication of the effectiveness of the health and safety control measures the Council has in place, with evidence showing training delivered; details of progress towards meeting health and safety aims and objectives and; the number of accidents recorded.

It was highlighted in the report, that work has been undertaken in areas such as Asbestos Management, Contractor Management, Educational Visits, Fire Safety and Legionella Management.

It was commented that the financial environment within which the Council is operating will contribute further to work-related stress. It was queried whether general briefings on stress had been circulated to the entire workforce.

It was confirmed that leaflets have been made available for managers and employees but an entire workforce notice has not been circulated. The Committee noted that hundreds of employees have attended 'stress buster' sessions.

It was queried whether occupational health assessments could be triggered on notice of employees being absent due to stress, so that support is available early.

- RESOLVED: i. That the Committee was satisfied with the actions taken to maintain and improve the health and safety management system.

CR23 IMPLEMENTATION OF GATESHEAD VOLUNTEERS PLAN - ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee received the annual update on the implementation of the Council's Volunteer Plan 2013-17. The update was delivered by way of report and PowerPoint presentation.

The report provided information about: the number of volunteers; the types of volunteer roles; and the impact of volunteering in Gateshead's communities. The report also included case studies and priority areas for future action.

It was commented that the reported volunteering within the Jewish Community is well established and has been in existence for a long time but has only just been recorded by the management information system. It was suggested that students at Northumbria University's Business Clinics be invited to develop a new and improved management information system to assist with this work.

One Councillor highlighted that businesses are increasingly more likely to support community projects being headed by VCS groups. The opportunities presented by this should be recognised.

It was suggested employee volunteering could be increased by creating a link to the workforce plan, whereby aspiring future leaders and senior management are encouraged to undertake volunteering activity.

The Committee also proposed that a Councillor volunteering session or day be organised.

It was commented that volunteering opportunities should be linked to accreditation or qualifications.

The training directories developed as part of the workforce plan could be shared with VCS groups, to support capacity building within communities. It was also commented that volunteering opportunities could be included in the training directories as they provide learning and development opportunities to employees.

It was requested that the amount of funding secured by Gateshead VCS groups be calculated and reported to the Committee. This money is often spent within Gateshead and it was said that more funding could possibly be secured by groups in the borough providing support and advice is available.

There was a view that VCS groups' access to funding is becoming increasingly complicated and that grants are often secured by communities with greater capacity and existing resource.

- RESOLVED:
- i. That the Committee was satisfied with the progress being made to implement the Volunteers Plan.
 - ii. That the future actions identified in the report be endorsed, with the inclusion of the actions identified by the Committee.

Chair.....

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**CORPORATE RESOURCES
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
November 2016**

TITLE OF REPORT: **Review of Absence in the Council – Monitoring Report**

REPORT OF: **Mike Barker, Acting Chief Executive**

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to update the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on actions taken since the last monitoring report which was considered on 29 February 2016.

Background

1. Cabinet asked the former Corporate Vitality Overview and Scrutiny Committee to carry out a review of absence in the Council, and between February and July 2005, the Committee undertook a review of the strategies, systems and procedures the Council is employing to reduce sickness absence levels within its workforce.
2. A number of recommendations were identified to be included in an Attendance Management Action Plan for the Council to inform its ongoing efforts to reduce sickness absence. Councillors agreed at the meeting on 29 February to keep the matter under scrutiny and this is the nineteenth update on progress since the Committee considered the final report arising from the review.

Statistical Information

3. At a previous meeting, councillors requested that future reports include annual graphs to illustrate any monthly and seasonal trends in sickness absence. The attached appendices contain information relating to:
 - The causes of sickness absence
 - Sickness absence total days lost
 - Percentage of sickness absence due to stress

The statistics quoted in this report relate to the period 1 November 2015 to 31 October 2016.

The previous figure reported to OSC for average sickness days per FTE was 10.25 days' absence for the period 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015. This figure is calculated based on the former BVPI formula, which the Council has retained as a key performance indicator, and only takes into account permanent employees including those in schools. The same calculation for the period 1 November 2015 to

31 October 2016 was 8.83 days' absence including schools, and 9.81 days' absence excluding schools.

Sickness Absence Causes – Appendix 1

5. This appendix shows the causes of sickness absence in percentage terms for the Council. Across the Council as a whole, stress/depression and mental ill health now accounts for 25.5% which is a slight increase since the last report (24%) and it remains the largest cause of sickness absence. Post-op recovery/hospital treatment makes up 16% which is a slight reduction from the last report (19%), and other musculo-skeletal conditions now account for 12% which again is a reduction (16%). These three categories remain the largest causes of sickness absence.

Sickness Absence Days Lost – Appendices 2, 3 & 4

6. Appendix 2 shows the total number of sick days lost per group/service. Appendix 3 shows the average sick days lost per FTE per group. Appendix 4 shows the overall trend in sickness absence.

Sickness Absence Days Lost Due to Stress – Appendix 5 & 6

7. Stress, depression and mental ill health issues remain the largest cause of absence. The average for the whole Council is now 2.58 days' per FTE excluding schools for the 12 month period 1 November 2015 to 31 October 2016. This was previously reported as 2.73 days' per FTE excluding schools for the 12 month period 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015.
8. The Council's year end sickness absence figures for the last 5 years based on the former BVPI formula (including schools) were:

	Actual days per employee per year	Target days per employee per year
November 2010 to October 2011	10.32	10.55
November 2011 to October 2012	8.55	10.15
November 2012 to October 2013	9.03	10.00
November 2013 to October 2014	9.30	8.25
July 2014 to June 2015	10.16	8.1
January 2015 to December 2015	10.25	9.3

9. The actual figure at the end of October 2016 was 8.83 days' lost per FTE including schools which indicates that absence levels are falling.

What has happened since the last report?

10. Since the last report we have:

- Continued to support employees suffering from work related and other stressors through sickness absence and counselling referrals.
- Delivered a pilot course (4 x 1 hour sessions) on 'Mindfulness'. This was offered to employees at work suffering from stress; employees absent from work suffering from stress; employees returning to work following absence and employees who know they are prone to suffer from stress, anxiety and depression. The course, which was delivered by Danny Halpin our lead counsellor, was fully attended and feedback was positive. The course gave employees practical tools to help them manage their symptoms more effectively in the workplace.
- Continued to support employees suffering from musculo-skeletal problems through the physiotherapy service. Early intervention ensures employees remain at work or return to work sooner when absent.
- Developed a Workplace Contact scheme aimed at providing initial support and guidance to employees experiencing issues with mental health.
- Continued to train employees in mental health first aid. This will ensure additional workplace contacts are available to signpost employees to enable them to get the right level of support.
- Commissioned and organised a number of courses relating to mental health and the management of stress:
 - 3 x Stressbusters courses delivered by the TUC
 - 2 x Mental Health First Aid delivered by the TUC
 - 4 x Mental Health in the Workplace for Managers courses delivered by Tyneside MIND
 - 2 x A Life worth Living courses delivered by Washington MIND
 - 2 x Understanding Self Harm courses delivered by Washington MIND
 - 3 x Managers role in Managing Stress briefings delivered by the Corporate health and Safety team, Occupational health Manager and Workforce Development
 - 1 x Emotional health and Well-Being Intervention session delivered by the Live Well Gateshead Hub.
- Continued to commission and monitor a Health and Safety E-Learning portal which has allowed 122 Council employees to complete modules on Stress Management (Employees) or Stress Management (Employers).
- Recently submitted our application for retention of the Better Health at Work award. Campaigns this year have included:
 - Alcohol Awareness
 - British Heart Foundation National Red Wear Day
 - No Smoking Day
 - Nutrition and Hydration
 - Stress and Mental Health

- Physical Activity
- Oral Health
- Cancer
- Sexual Health
- Stay Well this Winter
- Weight Management

What will we do next?

- As part of a new strategy to tackle sickness absence, led by the new Senior Occupational Health Adviser we will:
 - Increase Occupational Health time by maximising the appointments and employee through-put with effective case management led by the Senior Occupational Health Adviser. All sickness absence management referrals will be directed to the Senior Occupational Health Adviser. She will arrange appointments with the relevant managers, HR Advisers, and Occupational Health Physicians and ensure that an agreed plan is put in place with the aim of reducing sickness absence.
 - Offer proactive care by increasing the NHS health check clinics to tackle middle-aged health issues such as Type II diabetes.
 - Assist managers to help employees to return to work after planned surgery by introducing pre-surgery referrals to establish a return to work plan.
- We will roll out Sickness Absence Management training for all managers to ensure they understand their responsibilities under the Council's Sickness Absence Policy and are applying the policy to best effect in relation to managing absence from day one. Training will cover all aspects of managing absence including offering adaptive duties where appropriate, staying in regular contact with absent employees, and ensuring early referral to Occupational Health; in particular, for stress and musculoskeletal issues.
- Workforce Development will continue to work in partnership with the Corporate Health and Safety team, Occupational Health and Public Health to commission and promote a workforce development programme that gives employees and managers the skills and knowledge to recognise and manage stress and related mental health conditions.

Recommendation

The views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are sought on:

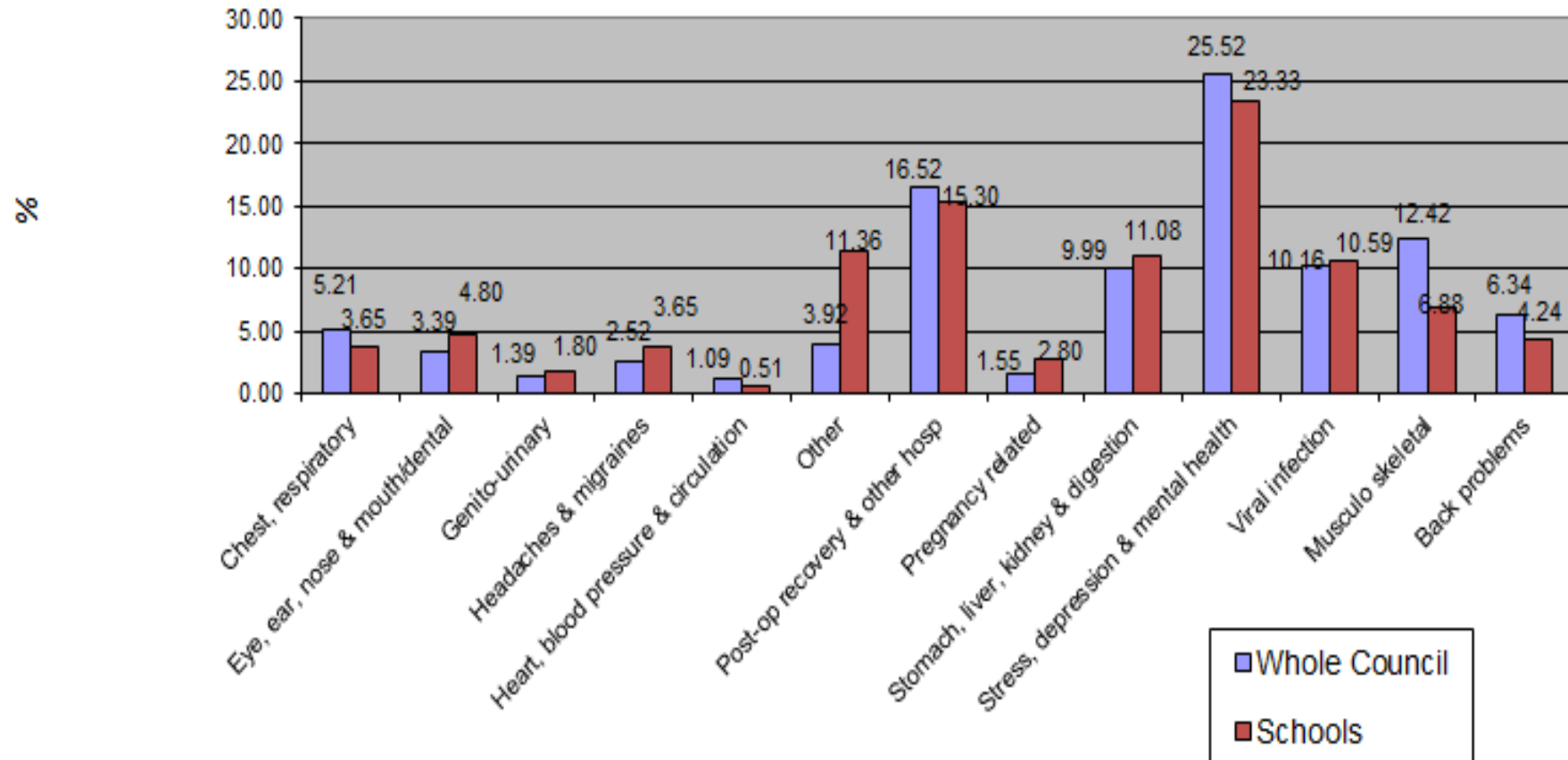
- Whether the Committee is satisfied that the actions necessary to reduce the sickness absence levels of employees are in place.
- Whether the Committee is satisfied with the scope of the data that is included in the reporting of sickness absence management.

- Whether sickness absence continues to be reported separately or as part of the regular assessment of performance and delivery report.

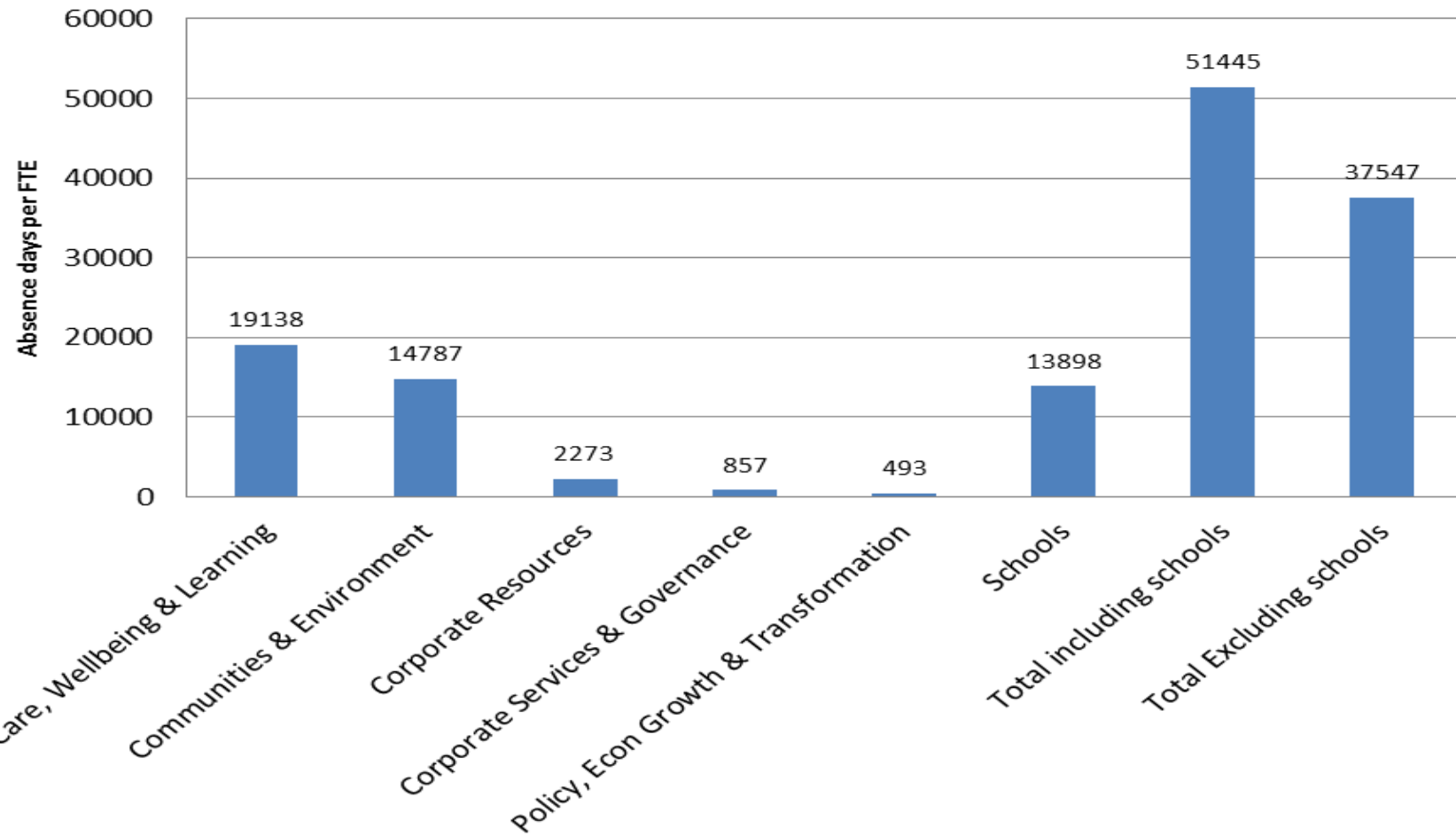
Contact: Deborah Hill

Ext. 2110

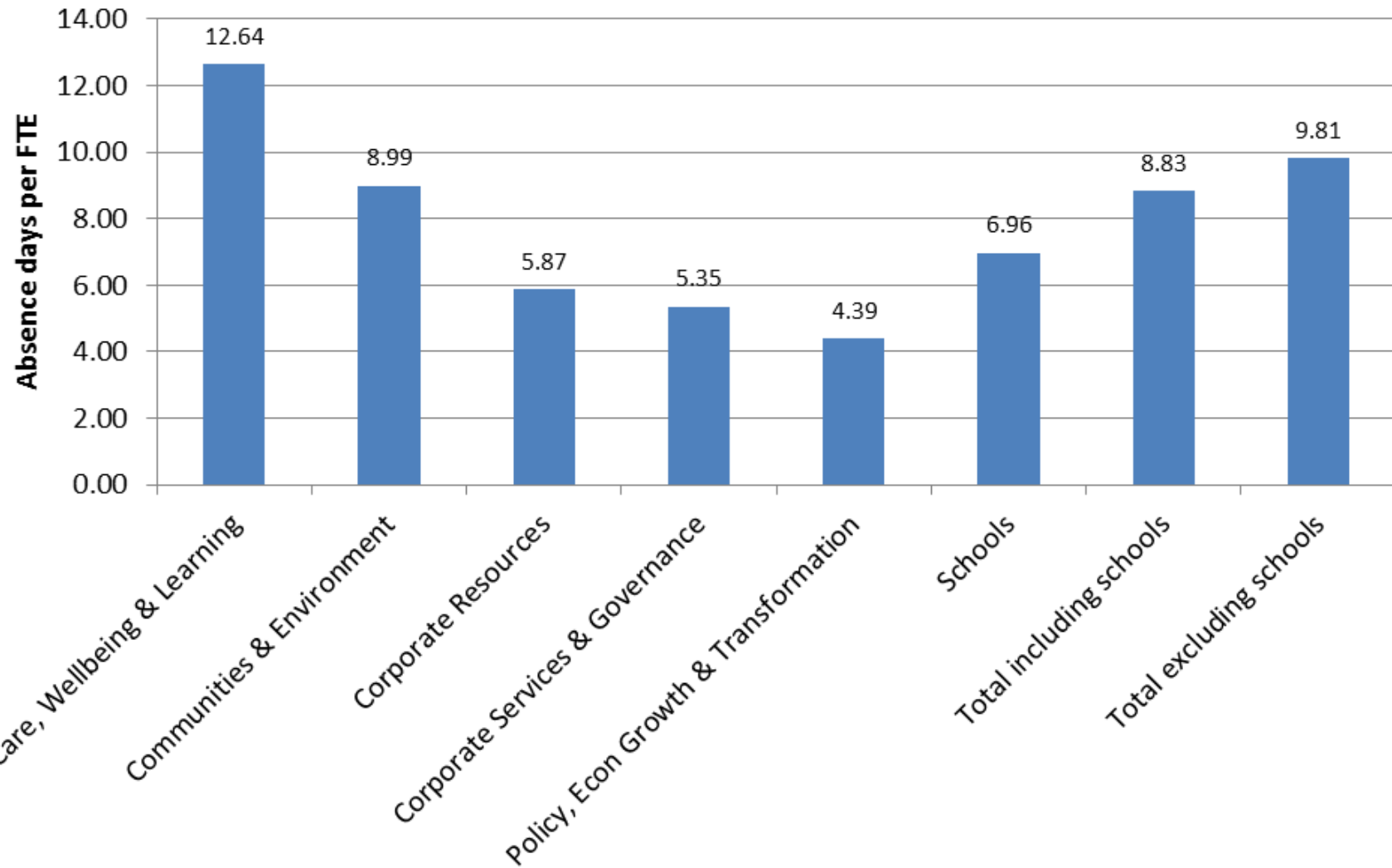
Causes of Sickness Absence
1 November 2015 to 31 October 2016



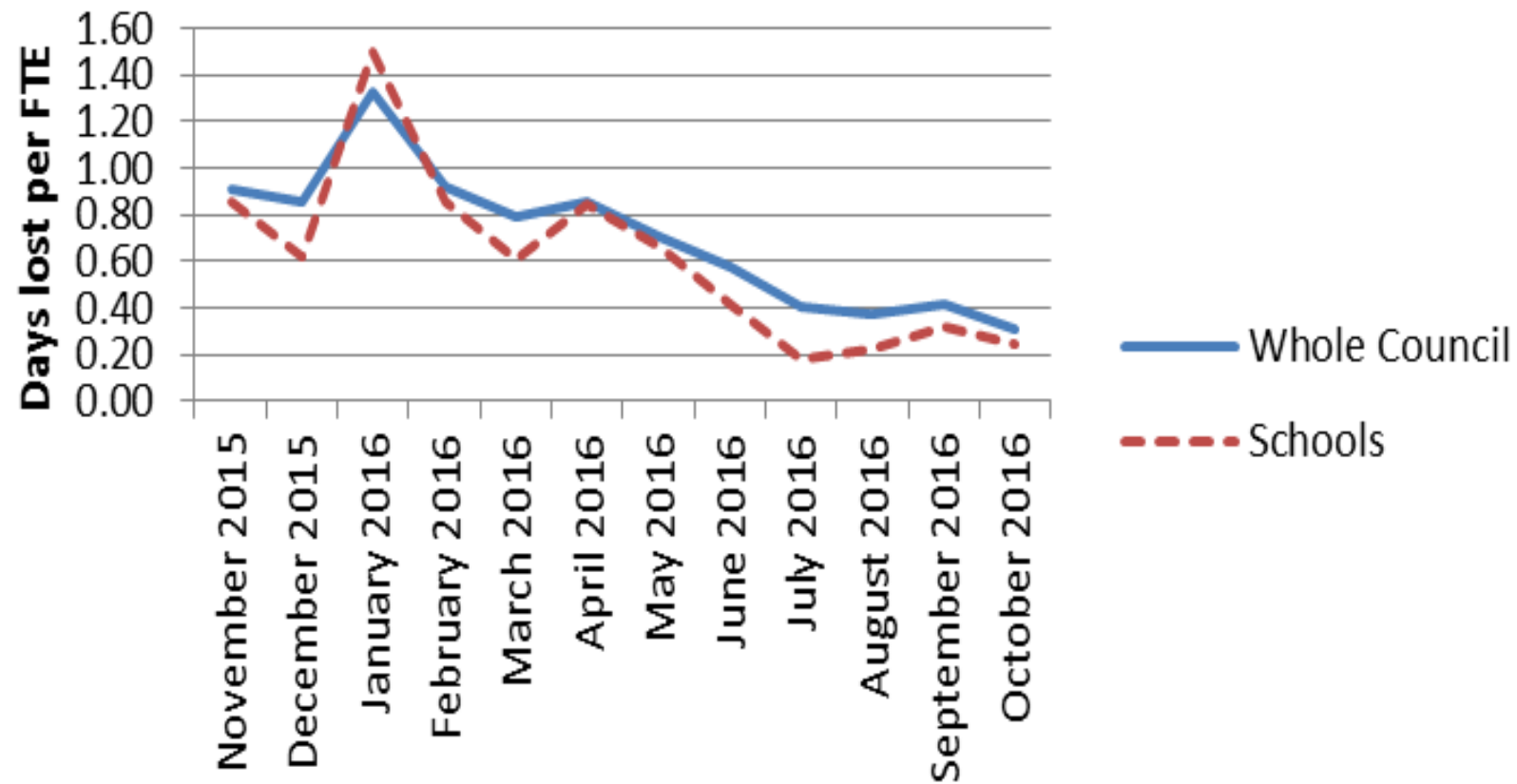
**Total Sickness Days
1 November 2015 to 31 October 2016**



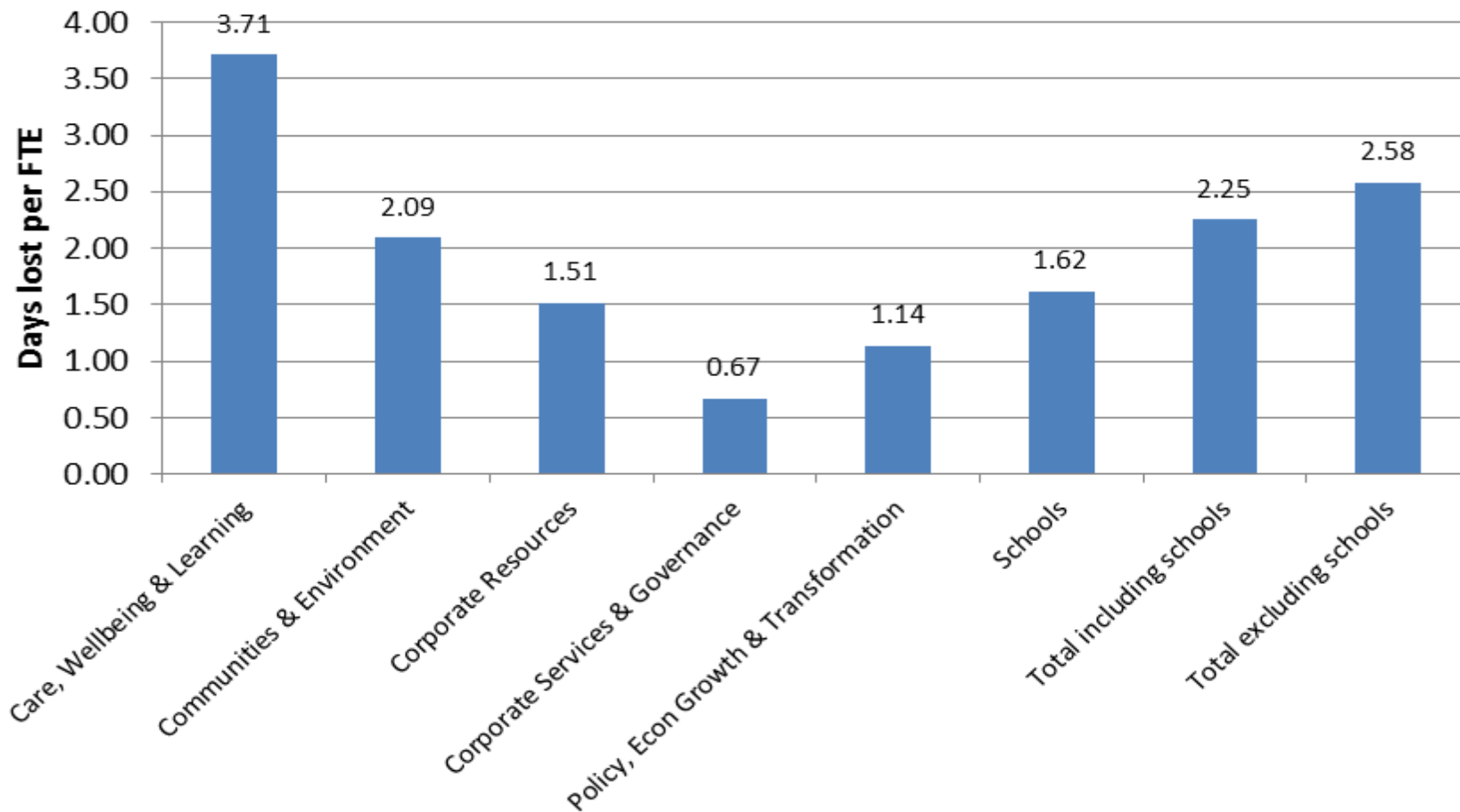
Sickness Absence
1 November 2015 to 31 October 2016



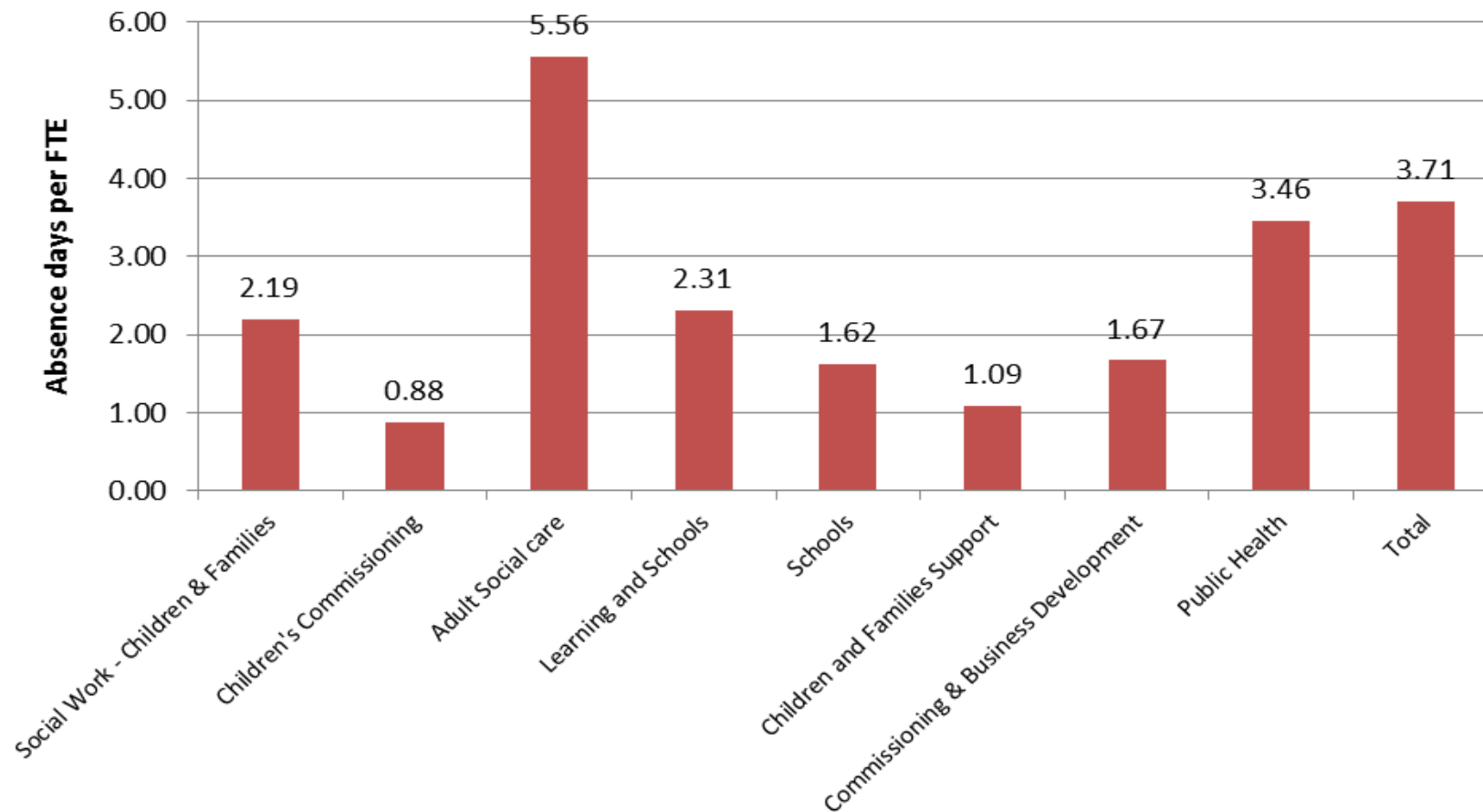
Sickness Absence 1 November 2015 to 31 October 2016



**Sickness Absence Days per FTE
Stress, Depression & Mental Ill Health
1 November 2015 to 31 October 2016**



**Sickness absence days per FTE
Stress, Depression & Mental Ill Health
Care, Wellbeing & Learning
1 November 2015 to 31 October 2016**



TITLE OF REPORT: The Council Plan – Six month assessment of performance and delivery 2016/2017

REPORT OF: Mike Barker, Acting Chief Executive
Darren Collins, Strategic Director, Corporate Resources
Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Services & Governance

SUMMARY

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

Background

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

2020 Target Setting

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

Delivery and Performance

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

Recommendation

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

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Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Six Monthly Performance Update

TITLE OF REPORT: Council Plan Delivery and Performance – Six Month update

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

Date: 28 November 2016

SUMMARY

This report is an assessment of the performance and delivery of the Council Plan 2015-2020 for the first six month period of 2016/2017.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:

Corporate Resources

CHAIR:

Councillor John Eagle

VICE CHAIRS:

Councillor Paul Foy

Councillor Jonathan Wallace

ROLE AND REMIT OF THE COMMITTEE:

- The management of the Council's financial, human and physical resources
- Support for the democratic process;
- The involvement of local people and communities of Gateshead in the work of the Council
- Capacity building in communities, volunteering and resilience
- Matters relating to the Council's relationship with Gateshead Voluntary Organisations Council including the Gateshead Offer
- Social inclusion, equalities and diversity; and
- The Council's arrangements for securing efficiency and money; and the development and operation of the Council's procurement strategy

Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Six Monthly Performance Update

PERFORMANCE AT A GLANCE

Table 1 Corporate Performance				
Ref	Description	Year end performance 2015/16	6 month or latest performance	2020 Target
CP1	% Council Tax collected	95.4%	53.8%	96.5%
CP2	% of Business Rates collected	97.6%	55%	97%
CP3	% of undisputed invoices paid on time	87.16%	73.5%	95%
CP4	Speed of benefit claims (processing) – average time to process new claims & changes in circumstances (days)	7.95 days	10.2 days <i>(management target for 16/17 11 days)</i>	7.5 days
CP5	Staff sickness (days) (excluding schools)	9.19 days	9.81 days	8 days
CP6	% increase in transactions moved to digital (channel shift)	Baseline Year	Baseline Year	Baseline Year
CP7	% increase in online transactions	Baseline Year	Baseline Year	Baseline Year
CP8	Employee Engagement	68%	64%	TBC
CP9	Superfast Broadband Coverage	91.89%	93.02%	98.9%
Equality Objective: To increase levels of ambition and aspiration of vulnerable groups				
CP10	Ensure young people leaving care are supported to have an opportunity in the Council for an apprenticeship	New	Not yet available	<i>Dependent on detail of Government legislation</i>
Prosperous Gateshead				
PG16	Apprenticeships within the workforce	New	95 Apprenticeships	<i>Dependent on detail of Government legislation</i>
Live Love Gateshead				
LL1	Satisfaction – Gateshead as a place to live	64.5%	75.5%	80%

CONTEXT

Social inclusion, equalities and diversity

Equality and Diversity

The Council continues to identify and monitor potential equalities impacts of budget proposals, and the mitigating actions taken to reduce or remove any adverse impact of budget decisions.

Equality impact assessments are being prepared in line with the budget proposals for 2017/18 to identify potential impact against protected characteristics.

This committee will be receiving a separate progress report on Equality Impact Assessments and the Council Plan on this agenda.

Support for the democratic process

Elections

Local elections took place across Gateshead in May 2016. The total turnout was 35.2% of the electorate. Of all the postal votes that were issued 67% were returned.

May 2016 also saw the Police and Crime Commissioner Election for the Northumbria Police Area. 32.1% of the electorate voted across the Northumbria Police area.

The EU referendum took place in June 2016. In Gateshead the turnout was 70.7% of the electorate, over 103,000 votes were cast.

Involvement of local people and communities of Gateshead in the work of the Council

Digital Consultation / Resident Involvement

36,000 residents now receive Gateshead Now. This is the Council's free regular email which enables residents to stay up to date with latest news, our services, important issues and what's on in the local area. It is a proactive and cost-effective way of keeping in touch with residents.

In addition to the readership of Gateshead now the Council has 14,000 followers on twitter and almost 10,000 likes on the Facebook page.

The Council currently has around 1400 members on the online resident panel ViewPoint. This allows residents to take part in online surveys about our services.

Residents Survey

The 2016 Residents Survey was developed using the council's online consultation system and distributed via email to our ViewPoint panel members. The panel has wide representation across all wards and across different age and ethnic groups.

The survey explored satisfaction with the local area, volunteering, satisfaction and trust in the council, and views, attitudes and behaviours relating to waste and recycling.

Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Six Monthly Performance Update

A total of 928 online responses were received. The responses were weighted based on age, gender and ethnic group. Headline results are shown below;

Table 2: Key measures	2016 (%)	2015 (%)	2012 (%)
% Satisfied with their local area as a place to live	75.5	64.5	72.7
% Satisfied with the way that the council runs things	51.3	52.1	51.0
% Satisfied with value for money provided by the council	39.7	N/A	41.0
% Say council keeps residents well informed	67.3	N/A	67.0
% Agree they can influence decisions affecting their local area	33.2	N/A	31.0
% Who volunteer formally at least once a month	26.8	N/A	18.0
% Who volunteer informally at least once a month	32.4	N/A	34.0

Satisfaction in the local area

There has been a significant increase in the percentage of residents who are satisfied with their local area as a place to live from 64.5% in 2015 to 75.5% in 2016. Satisfaction is now also higher than it was in 2012 (72.7%).

Residents were asked what they feel is most important in making somewhere a good place to live, and what most needs improving in their local area. 'Good schools' and 'clean streets' area considered to be most important, followed by crime and anti-social behaviour.

Table 3: What is most important in making somewhere a good place to live, and what most needs improving in your local area?	2016		2012	
	Most important %	Needs improving %	Most important %	Needs improving %
Good schools	43.7	6.5	37	8
Clean streets	42.3	44.4	51	41
Level of crime	39.2	19.2	38	18
Level of anti-social behaviour	38.5	32.6	41	33
Parks and green spaces	36.7	20.4	25	25
Health services	34.7	9.4	41	11

Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Six Monthly Performance Update

Affordable decent housing	34.3	16.8	35	20
Public transport	32.6	16.1	24	16
Good community spirit	29.2	14.9	12	14
Community facilities	28.3	18.1	21	8
Local shops	23.6	20.6	17	22
Access to good local jobs	22.2	17.3	21	33
Road and pavement repairs	18.4	50.7	20	45
Facilities and activities for young children	13.5	20.2	17	23
Level of traffic congestion	12.3	32.0	7	20
Facilities and activities for teenagers	11.6	32.1	13	27
None of these	0.3	1.5	-	1

Residents were asked if they think that **people in their local area usually get on well together**, and 91% said yes (always or most of the time). The wording of this question is different to that included in previous surveys. In 2012, 55% of residents agreed that their local area was a place where people from different backgrounds got on well together. It is interesting to note the difference in response based on this change in wording.

Table 4: Do you think that people in your local area usually get on well together? 2016 (%)

Yes, always	7.1
Yes, most of the time	83.8
No, not often	7.4
No, never	1.6

Yes	91.0
No	9.0

Satisfaction with the council

Satisfaction with the way the council runs things has decreased very slightly from 52.1% in 2015 to 51.3% in 2016. However it is worth noting that dissatisfaction with the council has decreased slightly over this period from 28% to 27.3%.

Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Six Monthly Performance Update

Table 5: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way the council runs things?	2016 (%)	2015 (%)	2012 (%)
Very satisfied	6.1	8.5	8
Fairly satisfied	45.3	43.6	43
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	21.4	19.9	20
Fairly dissatisfied	20.4	17.3	19
Very dissatisfied	7.0	10.7	10
Satisfied	51.3	52.1	51
Dissatisfied	27.3	28.0	29.0

There has been a slight decrease in the percentage of residents who agree that the council provides good value for money from 41% in 2012 to 39.7% in 2016.

Around two thirds of residents (67.3%) feel well informed about what the council does and the services it provides. This is largely unchanged from the 2012 figure of 67%.

Around a third of residents (33.2%) agree that they can influence decisions affecting their local area, a slight increase on the 2012 figure of 31%.

Six in ten residents are confident that the council will provide the best possible services it can within its available budget, and the best possible advice and information, dropping to five in ten for services that local people need and value.

Table 6: Confidence in the council	2016 (%)
% Who are confident that the council will provide.....	
..... the best possible services it can within its available budget	60.1
..... services that local people need and value	49.2
..... the best possible advice and information	60.1

Budget Consultation

The Council is required to agree a lawful budget each year and is now consulting with draft proposals, on the basis that the budget for 2017/18 needs to be decreased by approximately £22m. The public consultation runs from 8 November 2016 to 6 January 2017. The main method for people to give their views will be via the consultation portal accessed via the

Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Six Monthly Performance Update

Council's website. In addition, engagement with key stakeholder groups will also be undertaken.

In order to communicate the Council's budget challenge as clearly and effectively as possible the communications team produced an [animation](#) which is now available on the Council's website.

Capacity building communities, volunteering and resilience

Population

Gateshead's population is projected to increase by 4,700 (+2.4%) over the 10 year period between 2014 and 2024. The overall rate of growth is similar to the previous 2012-based projection (+2.7%).

The main reason for the projected increase continues to be an ageing population. It is projected that by 2024 there will be an additional 5,100 people aged 65 or over (+13%). The 85+ age group is projected to increase at a faster rate (+35% by 2024) and is projected to more than double (+114%) to 9,700 by 2039.

Resilience

As reported to the committee in April, the focus of the Resilience and Emergency Planning Framework has been to continue to work in collaboration with partners and communities, increasing the capacity and capability to respond to future incidents.

GSP Review

A fundamental review of the Gateshead Strategic Partnership is taking place to ensure all activity is as joined up and as co-ordinated as possible to maximise our joint effort. Given the importance of partnership working, it is felt that it may be timely to review the effectiveness of the GSP to reinvigorate and improve effectiveness to help deliver the Council Plan and ultimately, Vision 2030.

Volunteering

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

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.

£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.

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These ranged from community celebrations, Queens tea parties, training sessions and award ceremonies that gave recognition to the commitment made by Gateshead residents.

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.

The Residents Survey highlighted a significant increase in the percentage of residents who volunteer at least once a month in a formal way as part of a group, club or organisation from 18% in 2015 to 26.8% in 2016. Conversely there has been a slight reduction in informal volunteering (helping out someone who is not a relative) from 34% in 2012 to 32.6% in 2016.

The 2016 survey also asked if residents voluntarily help to improve their local area by litter picking, removing weeds etc. but not as part of a formal group. Around a fifth (19.6%) do so monthly, increasing to just under half (47.3%) who have done something to improve their local area less often.

The management of the Council's financial, human and physical resources

Customer Service Performance

Telephony performance in 2015/16 within the customer contact centre was as follows;

- Average wait to answer was 140 seconds
- Average abandonment rate was 40%

The customer contact centre receives around 250,00 calls per year and a significant number of calls to the civic centre (around 2 million per year) are not dealt with by the contact centre as these calls go direct to other extensions within the building.

Following a number of actions taken to improve performance, which included an increase and redeployment of Customer services Adviser resources together with a move to more automated channels and enhancements to the website to allow customer self service, performance for the first 6 months of 2016/17 resulted in by September 2016, average wait to answer of 28 seconds and average abandonment rate of 11.4%.

Council Tax Collection

At the end of the 2015/16 financial year 95.4% of all Council Tax had been successfully collected which equated to a £3m increase in cash terms from the previous year. The target for 2020 has been set at 96.5%.

The current rate of collection at **six month stage is 53.8%**. This is a slight improvement from the six month performance in 2015/16 which was 53.7%.

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Business Rates

The performance of business rate collection at the end of the 2015/16 financial year was 97.6% against the 2020 target of 97%.

At six month stage, 55% of business rates have been collected for the 2016/17 financial year.

Peer Challenge

The Council invited the Local Government Association (LGA) to undertake a Corporate Peer Challenge on the authority. Peer Challenges are designed to support councils to take responsibility for their own improvement. The Corporate Peer Challenge looks at core parts of councils and provides a constructive, yet robust, challenge to the organisation that will help us identify areas for improvement. The Peer Challenge in Gateshead focussed on leadership, governance, corporate capacity and financial resilience. It was also requested that the 'Peer Reviewer' look at our approach to economic growth and prosperity, the work we are doing around how we work with the community (Achieving More Together), our use of digital solutions and how we look to generate income from trading and commercialisation.

A self-assessment was been produced and submitted to the Peer Challenge Team along with a number of supporting documents. Whilst on-site, the Peer Challenge Team met with Councillors and a variety of Officers to explore these themes further.

We are currently awaiting the outcome of the Peer Challenge.

Speed of processing benefit claims

Six month performance is 10.2 days, which is within the 2016/17 management target of **11 days**. Performance to date is an improvement on this stage last year. The introduction of national fraud and error initiatives are impacting on processing times through increased workload, but also more efficient ways of dealing with customers are being developed.

The ongoing uncertainty around the future rollout of Universal Credit in Gateshead and possible impact on performance has also made the 2020 target setting problematic, but it is anticipated that performance will improve year on year to bring levels within the 2020 target of 7.5 days.

Employee Engagement

Through the 2016 employee survey **64%** of employees said that the Council is a good place to work. This is down 4% on the baseline result from 2015.

However there were some positive trends that were highlighted in the survey as well. Some of the results are highlighted below

Question	2015	2016	Difference
Communication is good at the Council	33% agreed	37% agreed	+4%
I am able to access the right learning and development opportunities when I need to	54% agreed	57% agreed	+3%
There are opportunities for me to develop my	30% agreed	33% agreed	+3%

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career at the Council

I receive useful and constructive feedback from my manager	63% agreed	69% agreed	+6%
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The people in my team cooperate to get the work done	82% agreed	87% agreed	+5%
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There were challenges highlighted within the survey as well, including;

Question	2015	2016	Difference
I am confident with the way the Council is run	51% agreed	43% agreed	-8%
The Council is a good place to work	68% agreed	64% agreed	-4%
I feel proud to work for Gateshead Council	61% agreed	57% agreed	-4%
Customers are always a priority where I work	84% agreed	80% agreed	-4%

The full results and detail around what is happening to address some of the issues raised were included in an infographic document which can be accessed [here](#).

Workforce Plan

The Council's Workforce Plan sets out how some of the issues raised through the employee survey are being tackled. The plan 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.

As set out in the recent case study that was considered by this committee in October, there has been a lot of progress against the delivery of the plan including;

- A new learning and development tool that gives managers and employees access to information on courses and other resources to support continued learning and development
- Development of a talent management and succession planning framework
- A revised grading structure to address the implementation of the National Living Wage
- Developing employee engagement plan to improve communication with employees and create new opportunities for employees to influence the work of the Council (further details below)
- Reviewing the Appraisal and Development process to include a performance management element
- Employee benefit scheme (including salary sacrifice schemes) to continually improve the benefits available to employees

Employee Forum

A new Council wide employee forum has been established as an opportunity for employees to come together from different services to influence and improve the way we work as an organisation. One of the objectives of the forum is to perform a 'deep dive' and get

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underneath the survey results to make improvements around issues raised such as communication, learning and development, managing change and flexible/agile working.

Summer Conference

The summer conference was held on 29 June 2016. The opportunity was taken to raise awareness of the change programme and the 4 workstreams to engage senior managers, increase buy in to change and facilitate a greater knowledge of and contribution to the change programme.

Over 95% of attendees rated the conference as either very good or good and 54% said that they now had a clearer understanding of how they / their teams could contribute to the change programme.

Digital Gateshead

Digital Gateshead is centred round “making it easy to access, benefit from and deliver good services”. Implementation began with Building Capacity (phase 1) in May 2016. This focused on solving problems that more obviously lent themselves to digital solutions, whilst further developing the technology we need. Phase 2 – Increasing Corporate Capability began in September 2016. This phase seeks to use digital means to solve more complex problems that require judgement rather than being solely transactional (such as getting a planning or benefits decision or engaging with social care).

Progress includes:

- Agreement of a new Digital Platform which will lead to improvements in our customer interface,
- The new and improved Councillor and Committees system went live on-line in August
- All existing online payments and balances moved to the council's new payment facility in August 2016. Work is now taking place to investigate the potential for delivering more payments electronically and increase the online sign up for direct debits
- A pilot trialling improved online forms, text reminders and Public-use PCs within Benefits reception went live in September 2016
- Free outdoor WiFi has been launched in the town centre and at the Quayside as part of GoDigital_WiFi, a partnership between Gateshead and Newcastle Councils with BT.

Sickness Absence

The average number of days of staff sickness at the end of the 2015/16 financial year was 9.19 days per employee / per year. The six month performance shows that this has increased slightly to 9.81 days per employee / per year. The target for 2020 is 8 days.

Sickness absence is being considered by this committee as a separate report on this agenda.

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Summary

Achievements	Areas for focus over the next 6 months
Satisfaction as a place to live	Continued focus on council tax and business rate collection to achieve 2020 targets
Delivery of the Workforce Plan including employee engagement activity and new learning and development framework	Successful LGA Peer Challenge to support continued improvement in Gateshead
Digital Gateshead new digital platform and improvements to online systems including improved online payment facility, free WIFI launched in Gateshead Town Centre and Quays	Continued roll out of the Digital Gateshead programme
1400 residents signed up to the Council's ViewPoint online system Annual Gateshead Volunteers Month hit 101,170 hours of volunteering - which equates to £1.3m economic value	Ongoing efforts to deliver the Workforce Plan , supporting learning and development, employee engagement and wellbeing including continuing to improve levels of Sickness Absence

TITLE OF REPORT: Case Study - Equality Impact Assessments and the Council Plan – Progress Report

REPORT OF: Mike Barker, Acting Chief Executive & Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance

Summary

This report summaries the work undertaken to monitor the impact of spending proposals over the period of the 2011/12 to 2016/17 budgets, that were identified as potentially having a significant impact in terms of protected characteristics as determined by the Equality Act 2010. The report outlines an assessment of the impact that occurred following implementation, along with any activity taken to mitigate this.

1. Background

- 1.1 As part of the 2011/12 Budget process, the Council assessed the potential impact of spending decisions in terms of equalities. Since then the process has been developed further to consider the potential impact of decisions on the achievement of the new Council Plan 2015-20, in addition to the Council's responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010, by means of an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) tool. This has continued annually through each of the subsequent budget processes, with a number service proposals identified for monitoring by Corporate Resources OSC where mitigation is considered not to have been fully identified.

2. Council Responsibilities under the Equality Act

- 2.1 The Council must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) - introduced by the Equality Act 2010. In summary, this means in the exercise of its functions, the Council must have **due regard** to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 2.2 Section Four of the Equality Act lists nine protected characteristics in terms of prohibited conduct. These characteristics are:
- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| • Age | • Race |
| • Disability | • Religion or Belief |
| • Gender Reassignment | • Gender |
| • Marriage & Civil Partnership | • Sexual Orientation |
| • Pregnancy and Maternity | |

3. Approach and Methodology

- 3.1 When taking budget decisions, the Council must consider that these decisions are taken following an assessment of the impact on diverse groups, to aid understanding of potentially adverse issues arising for particular groups such as faith; disability or age, and

to identify ways in which any adverse impacts could be reduced or removed. The EIA is a tool used in the budget setting process to avoid disproportionate impact on vulnerable individuals and communities.

- 3.2 The ongoing review of monitoring the impact on equalities from budget proposals has seen the development of a revised approach, which seeks to focus more on equalities and whether we are having an appropriate due regard to equalities impact. Therefore an *Equality Impact Assessments* (EIAs) approach for 2016/17 budget proposals was adopted, to ensure the core focus of the PSED is considered and given the appropriate regard.

4. Analysis of impact

- 4.1 This section outlines the impact of the budget decisions as assessed by each service director and how identified adverse impact has been mitigated. In addition, it also includes a recommendation of whether the proposal requires further monitoring by the Committee, or whether it is considered to have been mitigated.
- 4.2 A summary of the 27 budget decisions is provided below:

2014/15 agreed proposals

- 4.3 *Community Centre Review Phase 3* - The proposal was to continue to implement the Community Centre Review and continue to hand responsibility for operating and manage community centres to community organisations. Phase 3 is now complete with Phase 4 due to be completed in March 2017. The Neighbourhood Management and Volunteering Team continue to provide advice and support to management committees as required and the Gateshead Fund is available to groups who wish to supply for support and development costs. The recommendation is for continued monitoring due to potential impact in the future.
- 4.4 *Sport and Physical Activity* - During 2016/17, the Get Active project (funded by Sport England) has been taking place to encourage residents to lead an active and healthy lifestyle. It targets those currently less likely to take part in sport and physical activity such as, women and girls, people living in disadvantaged communities, those with a disability and BME groups. This ends in March 2017 although efforts will be made to consider alternative funding to continue delivery. The service also remains a key deliverer of the Live Well Gateshead service, with resources committed until March 2017, with further resource confirmed for 2017/18, subject to the Council's annual budget setting process. It is proposed the sport and physical activity will be reported together with the Leisure proposal around reduction in overall provision. The recommendation is for continued monitoring due to potential impact in the future.
- 4.5 *Library Network* - In February 2016, Cabinet agreed the removal of the remaining 50% mainline buildings budgets for the volunteer operated libraries. The operating volunteer libraries now either pay operating costs directly or are recharged these by the Council. Volunteer libraries have been supported through payments from the Capacity Building Fund and it has been assessed that all volunteer operated libraries have finances to operate until approximately March 2018. All volunteer libraries continue to develop and embed a range of activities for local communities. Lobley Hill Volunteer Library Association took the decision to cease operation from April 2016, due to the low level of business. Library provision has been sustained through the creation of a community book collection that can be used by customers on a self-serve basis. In November 2015 Dunston Library, part of Dunston Activity Centre, transferred to volunteer operation as part of the asset transfer of these premises. The sustainability of this volunteer library benefits from the

income generated by the larger building. The recommendation is for continued monitoring due to potential impact in the future.

- 4.6 *Gateshead Fund* - The Gateshead Fund in 2016/17 received 92 applications requesting funding totalling £212,777. A total of 84 applications have been supported with funding totalling £159,702. Over fifty organisations received grants used to promote and increase volunteer opportunities. Although GVOC experienced difficulties in 2015, advice and support through *The Gateshead Offer* continued to be made available to organisations as well as voluntary and community groups by Council Officers. Additionally, an online resource of ready-made products was made available including model constitutions, business plan template, cash flow spreadsheets and access to support through the *Our Gateshead* website. Gateshead Council has maintained its commitment to providing advice, guidance and representation to Gateshead groups and organisations for 2016/17 with the commissioning of Newcastle CVS. This is an interim arrangement whilst the Council considers options for providing these services from 1st April 2017 onwards. It is suggested that, as the Gateshead Fund is subject to a separate annual report to Corporate Resources OSC, and to avoid duplication, that equalities impact is ceased to be monitored via this report, but is instead included in the Gateshead Fund annual report.
- 4.7 *Highways R&M* - The recommended reduction in highways repairs activity and methodology has been reviewed since the publication of the Highways Maintenance and Efficiency Programme report in April 2012. Areas are prioritised in terms of high footfall or high traffic such as classified roads, school routes, shopping areas and bus routes. Whilst it has proved difficult to monitor equalities impact as no meaningful data has been collected regarding the protected characteristics, the Council's Insurance and Risk section are hopeful a new claims handling system will be able to provide better data as claims move to being handled internally. Recommendation is for continued monitoring.
- 4.8 *Post-16 Home to School Transport* - Following a consultation exercise between October and December 2013, the Council agreed at its budget meeting on 27 February 2014, to introduce a charge for post-16 home to college transport for learners with SEN from September 2016. However, the decision has since been reviewed and a financial contribution to Post-16 transport in the academic year 2016-17 was not introduced. The Council will review this decision again during 2017. It is proposed that this proposal should cease to be monitored, until a new policy is fully agreed and implemented.
- 4.9 *Older Peoples Assembly* - The Council awarded the Older People's Assembly (OPA) a grant from the Capacity Building Fund of £9,925 to support the Assembly during transition. The Assembly now operate from Deckham Community Centre, an arrangement the Council brokered with the existing management committee, which helped to substantially reduce their operating costs. Partly as a result of the Capacity Building Fund grant, the OPA has now been able to appoint a community development worker, who has successfully implemented a number of projects and initiatives that are responding to the needs of older people across the Borough and generating income for the organisation. The budget proposal to withdraw funding for the OPA has been mitigated and it is proposed that it should cease to be monitored.
- 4.10 *Leisure Service* - The reduction in the overall provision of leisure services has assessed that the impact on employees of reduced opening hours has been mitigated by the utilisation of previously vacant posts and a reduction in the dependence on casual employment contracts. The impact on the public of reduced pool opening times has been mitigated by moving swimming club use of pools to outside of public swimming times. As the swimming clubs are now charged more for pool use we have been able to

accommodate the costs of opening the pools outside of core hours for their use. This also simplifies the timetables for the public use of swimming pools across the borough. Council officers continue to work with the swimming clubs to support them and assist in ensuring their continued financial viability. Reduced catering provision at Gateshead International Stadium has not required mitigation as it now more accurately reflects patterns in usage of the facility. Recommendation is for continued monitoring due to potential future impact.

- 4.11 *Older People's Support Service* - The proposal to withdraw funding from the Older People Support Service (OPSS) was assessed as potentially having a negative impact on some individuals due to their age and/or disability. Transitional funding was provided for the financial year 2015/16, to assist in the development of an alternative, sustainable service. The OPSS was amalgamated with the Home Support Service to create the Supporting Independence Service (SIS), which provides support to over 400 residents with housework, shopping, the accompaniment of older people to appointments and assistance with household management issues. The new service is VAT exempt, thereby keeping costs down for the clients. Of the existing OPSS customers 49 did not sign up to SIS. The price of the service will in future be closely monitored to ensure that the SIS continues to be financially sustainable. It is recommended this proposal should cease to be monitored.

2016/17 agreed proposals

- 4.12 *Recommission Looked After Children Residential Placements* - The proposal to recommission residential placements for looked after children and the subsequent closure of Crawcrook in-house provision has been achieved. Five children and young people were satisfactorily relocated and it is therefore recommended that this proposal should cease to be monitored.
- 4.13 *Re-provide Respite Care for Disabled Children* - The aim of re-providing respite care for children with a disability is progressing. The service is currently exploring options and ways of making the necessary savings, while at the same time supporting the provision to continue through a different model of delivery. The service will be further developing this proposal through discussions with elected members as part of a future options paper. As this proposal received mitigation from the Council's reserves, there has been no disproportionate impact. It is therefore recommended that this should cease to be monitored until future service delivery is clear.
- 4.14 *Early Help Service* - The proposal to reconfigure the Early Help Services is not due to be implemented until 1 April 2017. It is therefore recommended that this continue to be monitored.
- 4.15 *Remodel 0-5 (Early Years/5-19 Children's Public Health* - The savings proposal for 2016/17 was removal of the CQUIN (quality improvement incentive) part of the current contract in 16/17 (£94,636) for health visiting and family nurse partnership programmes. This was part of the former contract with the NHS which local authorities are no longer obliged to include. As this was a quality improvement incentive, and not directly linked to service provision, there has been no mitigation required in this instance. It is therefore recommended that this should cease to be monitored.
- 4.16 *Reduction in funding for NHS Checks (40-75 year olds)* - The NHS Health Checks Programme is a mandatory Public Health function and Local Authorities have a duty to ensure an NHS Health Check is offered to all of their eligible residents aged between 40 and 75 years old. NHS Health Checks are currently delivered by all 31 GP practices in Gateshead, three pharmacies and Gateshead Council Occupational Health Department. The data for quarter 1 of 2016/17 was received in August 2016 and showed that 4,627

people were offered a NHS Health Check (7.8% of eligible population), and 2,067 people received a check (44.7% of the 4,627 invited). This indicates minimal impact to date in terms of the Age protected characteristic. However, as there will be a requirement for 2017/18 NHS Health Check service specifications to give specific consideration for those who share a protected characteristic, it is recommended that this proposal continues to be monitored so that the Council can be confident there will be no disproportionate impact across any of the 9 protected characteristics.

- 4.17 *MESMAC* – This organisation is a specialist sexual health service based in Newcastle, targeting HIV prevention and testing services toward men who have sex with men (MSM). MSM are categorised as a high risk group for the transmission and burden of STIs and HIV. Gateshead Council had a rolling 12 month contract with MESMAC, an organisation under the auspices of Newcastle City Council. This was in place prior to transfer of Public Health to local authority control. The MESMAC contract has now ended and the organisation has been instructed to refer Gateshead residents to the new Gateshead Integrated Sexual Health Service (GISHS), which is a new service model procured in April 2015. People are still able to access the specialist online service content and will receive a similar service from the GISHS, which includes assessment, advice, screening, psycho-social counselling, and onward referral to other HIV specific groups and organisations that offer broadly similar provision to that provided by MESMAC. It is recommended that this proposal has been mitigated and should cease to be monitored.
- 4.18 *Labriut Centre* - The funding for Labriut ends in March 2017. The Centre is currently making bids to other funding sources to enable it to continue to deliver services. NHS England will monitor immunisation programmes, although data is not collected by ethnic origin, to ensure relationships between the NHS and this community are maintained. Most of the Jewish population in Gateshead are registered with two GP practices and comparatively easy to monitor. NHS England are aware of the potential closure of the Labriut Centre and have communication links with GP practices and commented formally to the consultation to maintain relationships with this community. Continued monitoring for 2017/18 is recommended by the Director of Public Health, as the funding withdrawal does not commence until 2017/18.
- 4.19 *Public Health Funded Posts* - The proposals that removed funding for a full time midwife post at the Queen Elizabeth (QE) Hospital and a part-time breastfeeding nurse, also based at the QE, will not provide validated data to allow the impact of the proposal and the success of the suggested mitigation to be measured until November 2017. It is proposed by the Director of Public Health that these two proposals cease to be monitored, however, should the validated data provide any areas of concern a report will be brought back to Corporate Resources OSC for their consideration.
- 4.20 *Drug and Alcohol Treatment* - A number of budget proposals were agreed in the 2016/17 Budget relating to drug and alcohol treatment services. Public Health has been working in partnership with the QE Gastroenterology Department and the Hepatology Nurse to support them in the development of an exit strategy. There is a continued commitment from Public Health to the Alcohol Brief Intervention & Screening work. The QE is also involved in Hepatitis C pilot (led by the Freeman Hospital), and the development of a local Liver Strategy. All of this should help mitigate the impact of this reduced funding, however until such time as it is demonstrable that there has been no disproportionate impact, it is recommended that monitoring of this proposal should continue.
- 4.21 *Review of support for people to live independently* - The Council currently operates four Promoting Independence Centres (PICs); Eastwood at Felling, Southernwood at

Allerdene, Tynedale at Ryton and Shadon House, a specialist dementia facility at Birtley. These PICs provide short stay interventions of up to 6 weeks within a residential environment to optimise the functional ability of a service user, maximising the prospect that they can then be safely discharged to continue living independently within their own homes. The proposal is to close Tynedale PIC at Ryton and externalise respite provision at Southernwood in Allerdene to independent sector residential care homes, which are in close proximity to those two centres. Southernwood will remain open as a centre which solely provides assessment provision to service users. As this proposal has not been fully implemented, it is recommended that continued monitoring is required.

- 4.22 *Independent Supported Living Schemes* - This proposal is due to commence from 1 April 2017 with the introduction of a framework for the provision of support at home and in the community for adults with a learning disability. The service is suggesting a positive impact for all the protected characteristics, however as this proposal is yet to be implemented, it is recommended that monitoring should continue.
- 4.23 *Recommissioning Day Services* - The proposal for Recommissioning Day Services has been put on hold, pending a full market review with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). It is recommended that this proposal should cease to be monitored – pending potential alternative proposals being brought forward.
- 4.24 *Adult Social Care Demand Management model* - One of the pivotal Council proposals is the move to a demand management model for Adult Social Care (ASC). There is a phased implementation of the demand management model and the service. This model is interdependent on the implementation of all other ASC spending decisions. It is, therefore, proposed that monitoring of this model should continue while the model is implemented fully. For example, the review into reducing residential care admissions is ongoing and is reliant on the need to develop the market for overnight care at home and the necessary extra care housing provision. It is extrinsically linked to the revised demand management model for ASC, as it requires a change in social care assessment practice, which is also subject to an ongoing review. Additionally, the proposal for domiciliary care packages by enhanced early intervention is also linked to the revised demand management model for ASC. The aim is that enhanced enablement will be introduced and will maximise independence and result in a reduced number of packages of long-term domiciliary care being required. As these proposals are not yet implemented, it is recommended they continue to be monitored
- 4.25 *Recommissioning Learning Disability Care Packages* - when undertaking assessments on individuals, the protected characteristics are taken into account and reflected in their Care and Support Plans. The service is yet to complete re-assessments of all current service users, therefore it is recommended that continued monitoring is required.

Crosscutting Proposal

Community and Voluntary Sector

- 4.26 *Voluntary and Community Sector* - The monitoring of impact on the community and voluntary sector in relation to equalities has continued throughout 2016/17. As part of a review of funding to the VCS sector, in January 2016, Cabinet agreed to review its approach to supporting the provision of a CVS in Gateshead (a function previously delivered by GVOC). To ensure continuity of support for community organisations during 2016/2017, the Council invited Newcastle CVS to come in to stabilise the sector's support for 2016/17, while the Council took views and considered the options for support for future years. With a reduced annual budget of £160,000 in 2016/17, Newcastle CVS commenced the Agreement in April 2016 to provide "Support, Development, Networking

and Representation to the Voluntary and Community Sector in Gateshead". The commitment to an active, diverse voluntary and community sector is viewed as integral to the future of the Borough and it is recommended that the importance of this impact should continue to be monitored.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 The views of the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee are sought on:
- i. the continuation of the approach adopted to identifying and monitoring potential equalities impact of budget proposals, and the mitigating actions taken to reduce or remove any adverse impact of budget decisions;
 - ii. the recommendations of the Service Directors that:
 - 14 proposals still require monitoring, including the cross cutting impact assessment on voluntary and community sector;
 - future monitoring of equalities impact relating to Sport & Physical Activity and Leisure Service are combined
 - the Equality Impact Monitoring of the Gateshead Fund will in future be incorporated into the Gateshead Fund annual report.
 - 3 proposals relating to Post 16 Home to School/College transport, provision of respite care for disabled children and the recommissioning of day services, should cease to be monitored pending revised policy implementation.
 - 2 proposals relating to midwifery and breastfeeding posts at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital should cease to be monitored due to a lack of available data until 2017, and should be brought back to this Committee if this data raises concern.
 - 5 proposals should cease to be monitored following mitigation.
 - iii receiving a further report in autumn 2017, on proposals where the impact is considered not to have yet been fully mitigated.

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TITLE OF REPORT: **Corporate Asset Management – Annual
Delivery and Performance Report**

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

SUMMARY

This report provides an update on the progress made against the Council's Corporate Asset Strategy and Management Plan and the year on year performance of the property portfolio.

The Committee is requested to consider whether sufficient progress has been made in relation to property performance.

Background

1. In June 2009, as part of the review of how the Council manages its property portfolio, it was recognised that councillor engagement was essential in both the monitoring and scrutiny of the way in which the Council uses its property portfolio to deliver its services and priorities.
2. It was agreed this would be in respect of two specific elements:
 - approval of a Corporate Asset Strategy and Management Plan (CASMP); and
 - monitoring the performance of the property portfolio.

The CASMP sets the strategic direction for the use of the Council's land and buildings in support of its policy priorities. It provides the focus for the efficient use of property assets to support service delivery and the strategic management of, and investment in, the Council's property portfolio.

The Council's vision therefore is for an effective and appropriate land and property asset portfolio supporting Vision 2030 and the Council Plan. At a time of continuing budgetary constraint, and increasing pressures on resources due to rising demand, it is essential that the Council can demonstrate that it has a property portfolio that is: fit for purpose; appropriate for service delivery; sustainable and performing well; and supports the overall aims and ambitions of the Council.

3. The performance of the assets is assessed against the provisions of the Council Plan, the CASMP and the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

4. The CASMP, together with the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Workforce Strategy, is one of the three main corporate strategies that support the Council Plan.
5. The establishment of the role of Corporate Property Officer (a role held by the Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance since 2010), along with the subsequent creation of the Corporate Asset Strategy Team, continues to work well; and the ability to take a more strategic approach to the way the portfolio is managed overall has enabled the Council to deliver budgetary savings through the reduction of its operational portfolio by way of rationalisation and consolidation.

Performance Update

6. Appendix 1 of this report sets out an update of asset management performance and property performance. The Annex 1 to Appendix 1 details the definition for the accessibility indicators. The report includes trends in how the Council property is performing over the periods:
 - 2012/2013
 - 2013/2014
 - 2014/2015
 - 2015/2016
7. As advised in last year's report, the National Property Performance Indicators (NaPPMI) are no longer collated by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) and as such the Council has, as in previous years, had to rely on its own data and consider its own year on year performance in areas such as energy consumption, water use and CO₂ emissions.
8. Instead of collating the NaPPMI data, CIPFA now relies on the information garnered from the value for money reviews it undertakes with a number of local authorities to produce a benchmarking framework. The Council has taken part in the reviews and summary of the findings are set out in the Property Performance report.

Recommendations

9. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to:
 - (i) Note the progress achieved over the period
 - (ii) Comment on the level of progress to date.



**Property Performance Report
2015 -2016**

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Property Performance

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Introduction

Gateshead's sustainable community strategy, Vision 2030, aims to improve the wellbeing and equality of opportunity for the people of Gateshead, enabling them to realise their full potential and enjoy the best quality of life.

In July 2015, the Council adopted a new Council Plan. The Council Plan 2015 -2020 is effectively the Council's delivery plan for the Community Strategy, Vision 2030 and sets out the direction of the Council for the period to 2020 in order to achieve the longer term goals (the "Big Ideas") described in Vision 2030.

The Council Plan is supported by a number of corporate and service strategies developed to ensure resources are aligned to meet the Council's priorities. These include:

- The Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017/18 – 2021/22
- Gateshead Economic Growth Acceleration Plan 2014 – 2018
- Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan for Gateshead and Newcastle upon Tyne 2010 - 2030
- Housing Strategy 2013 – 2018
- Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2013 - 2043
- Culture Strategy 2014 – 2017
- Workforce Strategy 2015 – 2020
- Corporate Asset Strategy and Management Plan 2015 - 2020

It is imperative that, with the current budgetary constraints on local government, the Council is confident all the resources at its disposal are deployed as efficiently and effectively as possible.

The Corporate Asset Strategy and Management Plan provides the framework within which the Council can ensure that its property assets are fully utilised in terms of:

- Operating as efficiently as possible in terms of outgoings
- Generation of sustainable income
- Support of service delivery

This report provides an overview of how the Council's portfolio is performing against these three criteria.

Property Performance

Benchmarking is a way of demonstrating how the portfolio is performing in relation to other, preferably similarly constituted, authorities; it provides a snapshot of performance and compares information in order to identify areas of improvement and best practice.

Benchmarking has in the past been undertaken on a national basis using key, nationally recognised indicators. However, over the last few years, due to budgetary pressures, the opportunities to benchmark with other directly comparable authorities has ceased.

The NaPPMI indicators are no longer collected and collated by CIPFA with the organisation relying on information obtained through the work CIPFA Property undertakes for local authorities in connection with the Value for Money Exercise.

As a result of the lack of national data the Council will continue to rely on its own data and consider its year-on-year performance in areas such as energy consumption, water use and CO₂ emissions.

The Council was part of the North East Property Group which comprised all local authorities within the Combine Authority Region together with other key public sector organisations, including the NHS Foundation Trust, the Police and Fire and Rescue Services. It had been hoped that, in due course, it would be possible to progress to a position where data could be made available to make benchmarking an option.

However, since the last report was submitted to the Committee, officers from Gateshead have been working with officers from neighbouring authorities within the region on a more co-ordinated approach to shared services and use of assets. The outcome of these discussions has been the creation of the North of Tyne One Public Estate initiative. The partnership comprises Newcastle Council, Gateshead Council, North Tyneside Council and Northumberland Council together with other public sector organisations. It has been established to determine if there are opportunities for shared services and/or shared use of properties. The implementation of such opportunities could enable a reduction in the number of operational buildings, which will in turn reduce running costs and release sites/buildings for economic and housing development.

Since the North of Tyne One Public Estate was established discussions have subsequently taken place with Sunderland, South Tyneside and Durham local authorities to see if there was the potential for these local authorities to be part of the partnership. All three local authorities have now confirmed that they want to be members of the partnership and arrangements are in hand to formalise this. The inclusion of these three local authorities enables the North of Tyne One Public Estate to be expanded and become the North East One Public Estate and sit within the same boundary as that of the Combined Authority

As a result of this work the North East Property Group has been superseded by the North of Tyne OPE and with the expansion of this partnership to include all local

authorities and public sector organisations within the North East Combine Authority area there can be further development of benchmarking between the organisations

In 2015/16 the Council has again taken part in the Value for Money Exercise promoted by CIPFA. In this exercise the Council considered the current cost of managing its property portfolio and benchmarking it against other local authorities to determine whether or not the current arrangements represent value for money and are the most beneficial for the Council. The outcome of the exercise which covered the period 2014/2015 is set out in the report at paragraph 3.1.11

Although there was some improvement nationally during 2015 -2016 in the overall economic position, local government, particularly in the North East, has not benefited from this and has therefore been particularly badly affected by funding from central government continuing to reduce year on year. As such, councils continue to function in an environment of decreasing budgets and increasing pressure on resources, particularly in the areas of children and adult services. Local authorities therefore have to deliver more with less.

In this context it is important that asset management makes a significant contribution to future strategies. Along with all of the other corporate resources, good management of property assets is even more important in this critical period for public services.

Executive Summary

The Council continues to take a proactive approach to the management of its property portfolio:

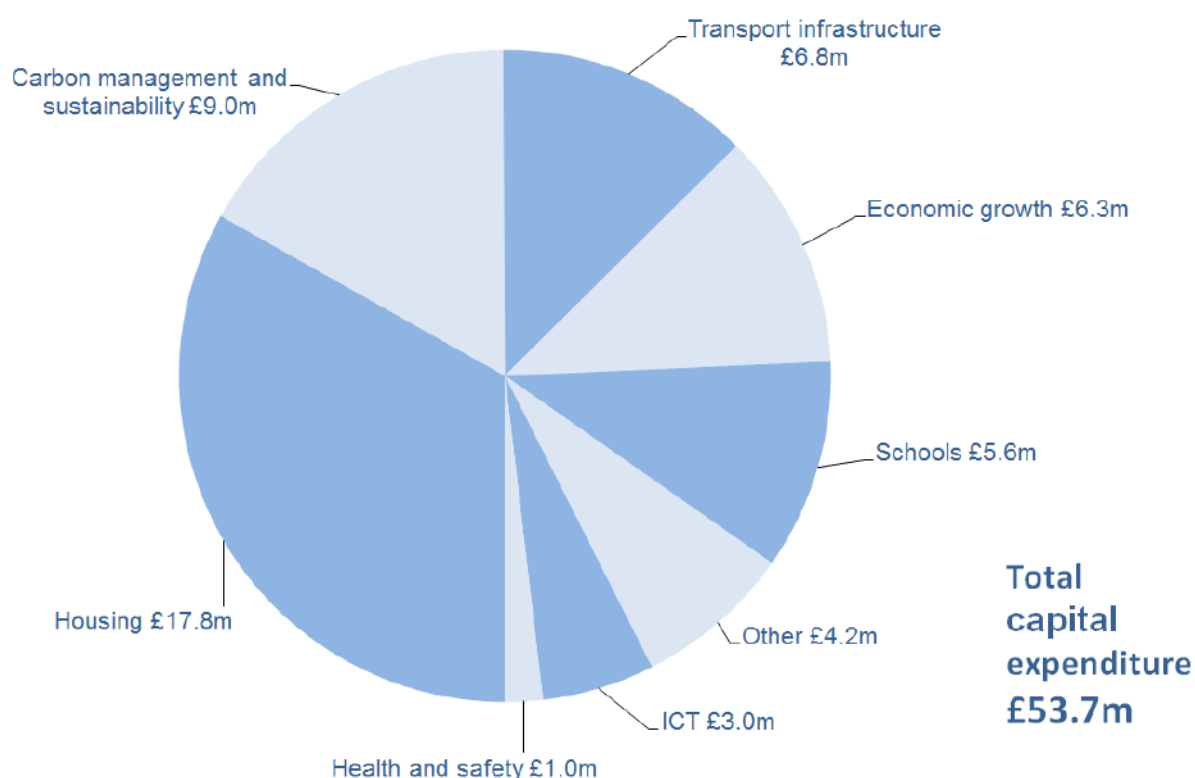
- investing in its fabric to ensure its properties are fit for purpose;
- identifying and implementing energy efficiency initiatives;
- ensuring that it is used efficiently and effectively; and
- driving value out of its tenanted non-residential portfolio.

The benefits of which can be seen as follows:

- investing in its fabric to ensure its properties are fit for purpose:
 - the majority of its operational portfolio falling within condition category A and B (definitions in paragraph 2.2.1); and
 - high degree of satisfaction in the suitability of property for service delivery.
- identifying and implementing energy efficiency initiatives:
 - year on year improvement in terms of electricity usage;
 - in 2015/16 gas usage reduced as compared to the previous year; and
 - a further reduction in carbon emissions.
- ensuring that it is used efficiently and effectively:
 - co-location of services within buildings;
 - reduction in the overall portfolio and therefore building related costs; and
 - 76% of council buildings now meet the Disability Equality strand of the Equality Act standards (local Indicator 7a) up from 70% in 2014/2015.
- driving value out of the tenanted non-residential portfolio:
 - reduction in the number of void properties;
 - sustained rental income; and
 - reduction in the number of properties on the surplus property register, thus reducing holding costs

Context

1. Gateshead Council takes a strategic approach to investment in its land, buildings and infrastructure to ensure that it secures the best value from the resources available. The total value of its property assets at March 2016 was approximately £473m (excluding housing stock). The 2015/16 Capital Programme invested a total of £54m in capital schemes, £51m of which was invested directly in the Council's assets of which £18m related to property assets, primarily funded by prudential borrowing.
2. The chart below illustrates how the total Capital Programme was spent across the Council's Services:



The Council's vision is for an effective, appropriate land and property asset portfolio supporting Vision 2030 and the Council Plan. It is for property that is appropriate for service delivery, fit for purpose, sustainable, provided through a regular systematic challenge of the assets, and delivered through high-quality, flexible asset management.

3. Our Six Key Property Objectives that support this were reconfirmed in the 2014 Update of the CASMP 2012 – 2015 and have been agreed as still relevant in the CASMP 2015 - 2020. They are:
 - **A strategic approach to management of our assets and involving our partners;**
 - **Justification of holding assets based on business need;**
 - **Continuous improvement of the sustainability of our assets;**

- **Using our property assets to encourage community development;**
 - **Using our property assets for economic development and regeneration purposes; and**
 - **To provide properties that are fit for purpose.**
4. Whilst this provides the framework for assessing our assets, it is also important to understand property performance and develop improvement strategies. The efficiency of the property portfolio is reported in Part 2 of this report. Unfortunately, as previously indicated, this year's report does not include returns against national performance indicators and comparison with other local authorities. As such the focus of the report is on the Council's own year on year performance.

Gp2

5. The Council has continued to make progress in developing the corporate property data base: Gp2. The data base, which holds information on the Council's property portfolios, is bringing together the existing, disparate asset management data sources into a single co-ordinated system, which is also capable of synchronising with other corporate data systems.
6. Gp2 now supports Property Services in its management function with all but the low value asset data having been entered onto the system. A rolling programme has been established to add the outstanding information relating to low value assets, such as allotments.
7. To accord with the government's transparency agenda, the Council's operational buildings, surplus properties and development sites were aligned with the compulsory 'key attributes specified within the regulations. In addition, 8 of the 10 recommended key attributes identified by the government were also aligned and the data released. A rolling programme of further property types has been established for alignment and release.
8. The Help Desk module on Gp2 which became live in 14/15 is used by Facilities Management to monitor service delivery of reactive maintenance. In addition a link to Gp2 has been provided on the schools portal which enables individual schools to use the Helpdesk module for reporting repairs and monitoring progress. This link also enables the schools to have direct access to the reports relating to net capacity, condition survey data and statutory compliance reports relating to their schools.
9. Further development work has been undertaken in connection with the Planned Programme Module and as a result Facilities Management (FM), together with Service managers who are responsible for buildings, can now run inspection programmes for such items as Display Energy Certificates (DEC), Asbestos Risk Assessments and Water Hygiene Risk assessments. It is also used by FM for statutory compliance checks.
10. Work has also progressed on the corporate use of the system to programme insurance valuations, condition surveys and asbestos risk assessments.

11. Work continues on aligning the finance asset register and records on Gp2 this will address the issue of multiple names/entries for the same property.
12. The upload of the schools' asbestos data is now 65% complete.
13. The List facility on Gp2 has been developed for Economic and Housing Growth to assist in the monitoring of performance in relation to housing growth and co-ordination of the release programme for Council owned sites.
14. Gp2 has also been used to prepare the property data for inclusion on ePims - the government's property data base. The use of the ePims database enables all the local authorities involved in the North of Tyne One Public Estate to have sight of property information across the various estates, which is useful when trying to identify potential opportunities for shared services/shared use of buildings.

PART 1: Key Achievements.

1.1 Property Projects Completed between April 2015 and March 2016

- 1.1.1. The investment in the Civic Centre as part of the Workspace Strategy was completed during the year. Proposals as to how the public spaces and reception areas might be improved to provide enhanced facilities for both visitors and staff in terms of reception and meeting facilities are currently being considered.
- 1.1.2. As a result of changes in service delivery, improved communications technology, and reduction in the workforce, the utilisation of desk space is continually under review. This ongoing review will enable the Council to consider the further consolidation of staff within the building or consider options for offering surplus accommodation to other public sector and/or partner organisations.
- 1.1.3. During 2015/2016 the school estate across Gateshead saw further capital investment with a range of works implemented across a number of school sites.
- 1.1.4. The new protocols which were initially introduced during 2013/2014 for the commissioning and delivery of schemes across the borough have now been fully integrated across the Council to ensure both the corporate procurement and health and safety issues are fully considered, thus offering compliance with legislative requirements and Council policies.
- 1.1.5. The Council continued its commitment to upgrading its public buildings and external environment to comply with the Equality Act 2010 (formerly the Disability Discrimination Act 1995) spending over £250,000 on its operational property portfolio to improve access. A strict priority scoring exercise is used to ensure targeted spending is established. This will enable the agreed budget reductions to be implemented, but still enable high priority works to be undertaken across the borough.
- 1.1.6. The Council continues to promote energy saving measures across its portfolio both through its own resources and SALIX and SEELS finance, including major LED lighting upgrades at leisure facilities during 2015/16.
- 1.1.7. From June 2015, construction of a district heat and power network across Gateshead Town Centre commenced, to provide low carbon heat and power to homes, public buildings as well as commercial customers, including hotels and offices. The scheme should be operational by winter 2016.
- 1.1.8. The Council also completed £2.8m installation of solar PV panels across 34 Council buildings, schools and third party buildings, to reduce both carbon emissions and energy costs.

- 1.1.9. All of the above mentioned schemes contribute towards improving the opportunity to access good quality and efficient service provision, a key element of Vision 2030 and the Council Plan.

1.2 Assets of Community Value

- 1.2.1 The Localism Act 2011 provides that the community have the opportunity to have listed and to bid for properties of 'community value'. A report was approved by Cabinet on the 18th December 2012 which set out a protocol for dealing with applications received from groups and associations arising from the legislation.
- 1.2.2 In 2015 -2016 two further applications were received, both of which were in relation to public houses in private ownership. The applications were submitted by community interest groups: one related to the Sun Inn at Swalwell and the other the Black Bull at Blaydon. Both applications were successful and the properties have been added to the Council's list of Assets of Community. This brings the total of listed Assets of Community Value to 5.

1.3 Community Asset Transfer

- 1.3.1 The Council has adopted a very pro-active approach to working with local communities and associations supporting the idea of community asset transfer. In September 2012 Cabinet approved a revised Community Asset Transfer Policy which addressed a number of issues that had been highlighted through the implementation of the earlier policy which had been agreed in 2009.
- 1.3.2 To date, 19 former community centres have been transferred to Charitable Incorporated Organisations or Sports Clubs of which a further one (Swalwell Community Centre) was completed in 2015/16. There are a number of others in the process of transfer and these will be reported in a future report.

PART 2: An Efficient Property Portfolio

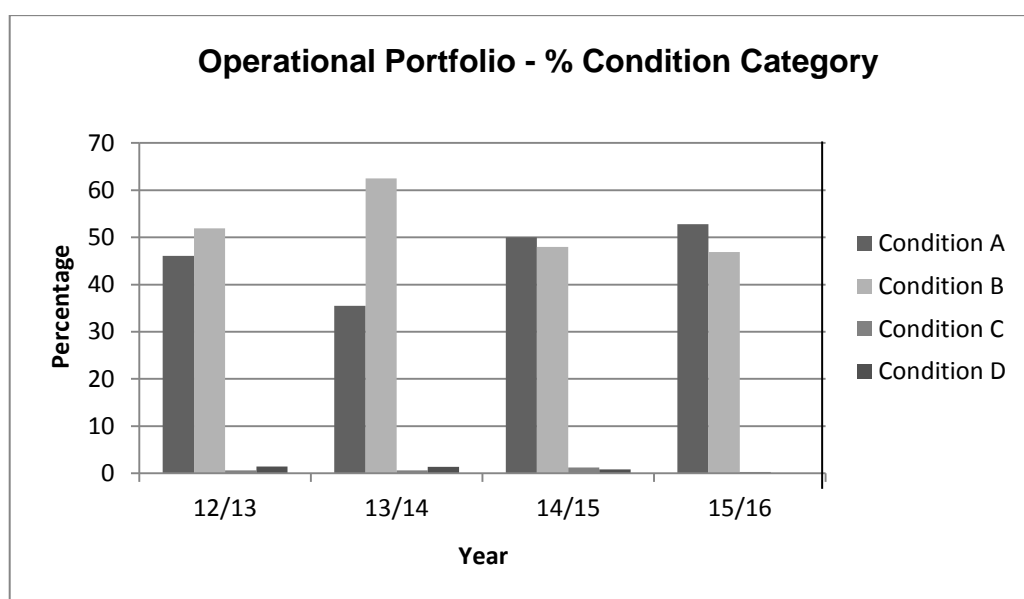
2.1 Objectives

2.1.1 The Council is committed to developing a more effective and efficient property portfolio that is 'fit for purpose'. This will not only reduce the cost of running the property portfolio, but will help to contribute to the delivery of Vision 2030. In particular it is:

- Creating and sustaining quality places to work, by addressing issues around condition and maintenance of buildings, by disposing of buildings that are no longer suitable for use and investing in sustainable, well designed, multi-use buildings.
- Promoting wellbeing, health and independence, by making physical improvements to buildings, providing facilities that are easier to access and offering alternative ways of accessing services.
- Managing the environment by implementing measures to improve the energy efficiency of our existing property and, where possible ensuring new buildings use technologies that reduce environmental impact.

2.2. Condition and Required Maintenance

2.2.1 Percentage of Gross Internal Floor-Space in Condition Categories A – D (excluding housing):



Definition of condition categories:

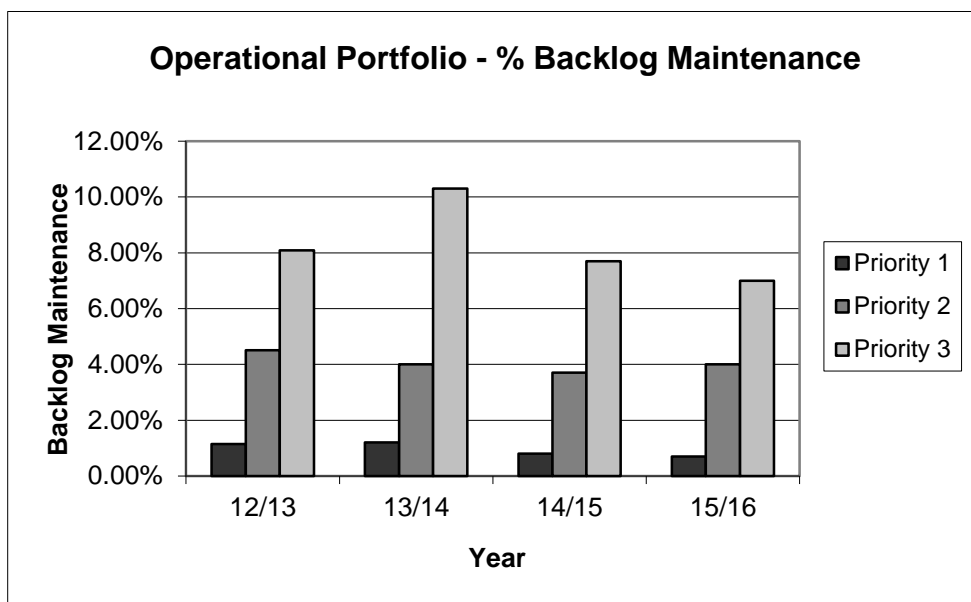
- A: Good – Performing as intended and operating efficiently.
B: Satisfactory – Performing as intended but showing minor deterioration.
C: Poor – Showing major defects and/or not operating as intended.
D: Bad – Life expired and/or serious risk of imminent failure.

Performance

Despite the pressure on budgets, the Council has continued to allocate funds, albeit on a reduced basis, to maintain its operational portfolio to ensure it continues to be fit for purpose. This is reflected in the above figures. There are no longer any buildings in category D the last building to sit within this category being the old Campground Depot which was demolished in 2014/15 it being replaced by a state of the art waste facility.

There will continue to be fluctuations in the percentage of buildings in categories A and B with the ongoing updating of the building condition surveys, and whilst the Council continues to move from a number of disparate property information systems across the Council into the corporate data base system Gp2.

2.2.2. Percentage of Backlog- Maintenance in Priority Levels 1 – 3 (excluding housing)



Definition of priority levels:

- 1. Urgent -** works that will prevent immediate closure of premises and/or address an immediate high risk to the health and safety of the occupants and/or remedy a serious breach of legislation.
- 2. Essential -** work required within two years that will prevent serious deterioration of the fabric or services and/or address a medium risk to the health and safety of the occupants and/or remedy a minor breach of legislation.
- 3. Desirable -** work required within 3 to 5 years that will prevent deterioration of the fabric or services and /or address a low risk to the health and safety of the occupants and/or a minor breach of legislation.

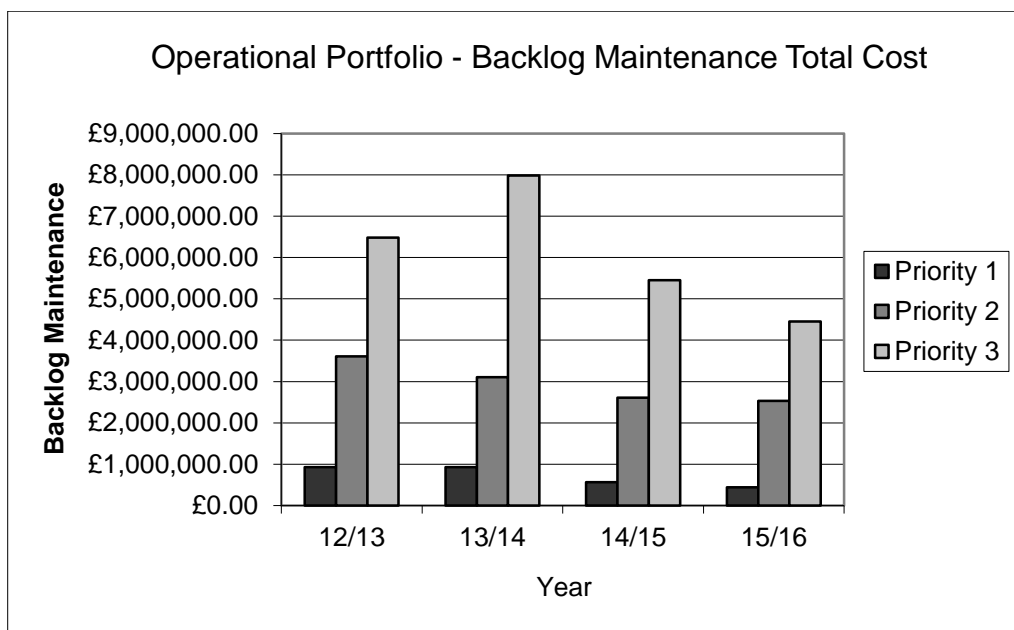
Performance

During 2015/16 the Council continued to target Priority 1 work as a result there are now fewer buildings requiring urgent works. The Council will continue to target such works in the coming year.

The percentage reduction for Priority 1 work is also assisted by the disposal of poorer quality buildings.

The back log maintenance required to the remainder of the operational portfolio does not need to be undertaken within the periods specified in the Priorities 1 – 3.

2.2.3 Total Cost of Required Maintenance



Performance

There has been a further reduction in the cost of works in priorities 1-3; with costs falling from £8,600,00 in 2014/15 to £7,425,103 although less than in the previous years it still continues the downward trend.

This is as a result of targeted spend and a reduction in the number of properties in the portfolio, through disposal by way of sale or lease, including Community Asset Transfer. The Council will continue the process of targeting spend and rationalising the operational portfolio.

Overall performance

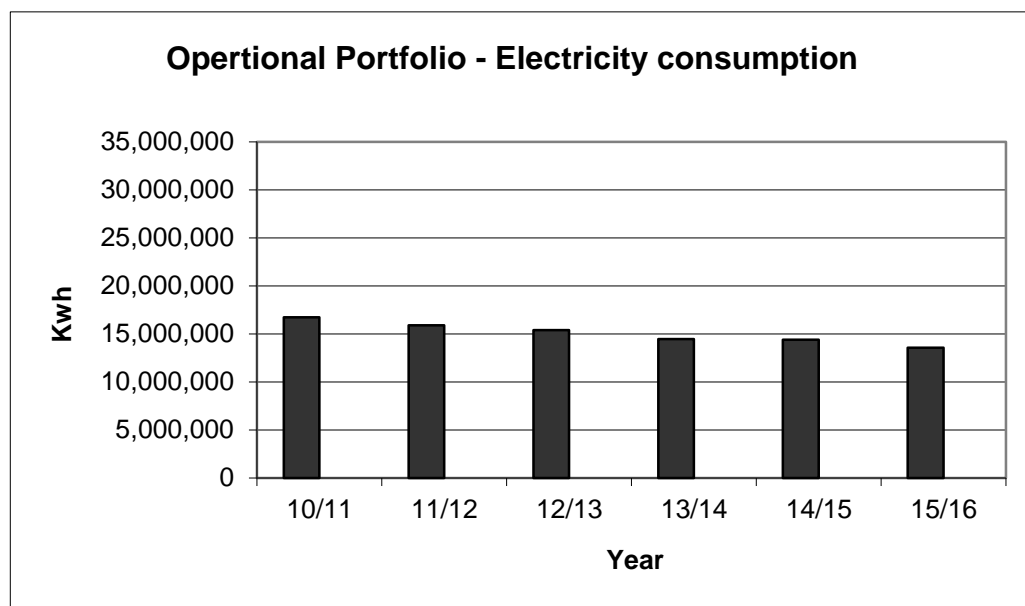
Gateshead Council continues to allocate funding for strategic maintenance which differs from many other local authorities who, because of budgetary pressures, are now only undertaking statutory repairs.

Gateshead is, therefore, performing well having regard to the circumstances when compared to other local authorities. In adopting such an approach the Council is ensuring that its properties continue to be fit for purpose. In addition, by undertaking repairs and maintenance works in a timely manner costs can be minimised.

2.3. Environmental Property Issues

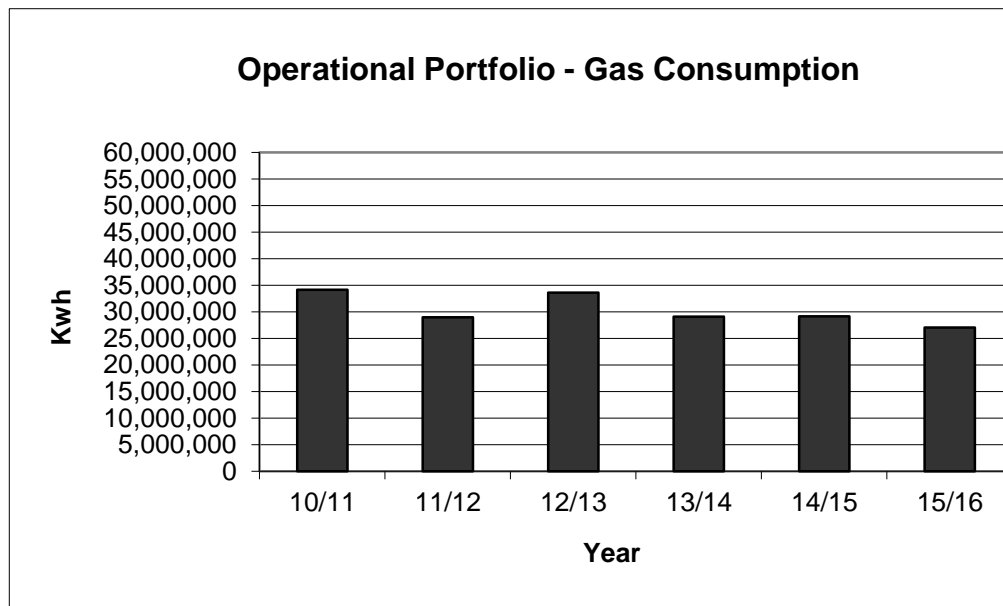
- 2.3.1 The figures used to produce the annual comparison are taken straight from the councils' Energy Management data base. They are imported into the data base straight from supplier EDI (electronic billing) files. The bills are almost completely supported by smart meter readings to ensure accuracy, with only a handful of hard to reach or out of signal supplies supported by manual readings.

Electricity Consumption



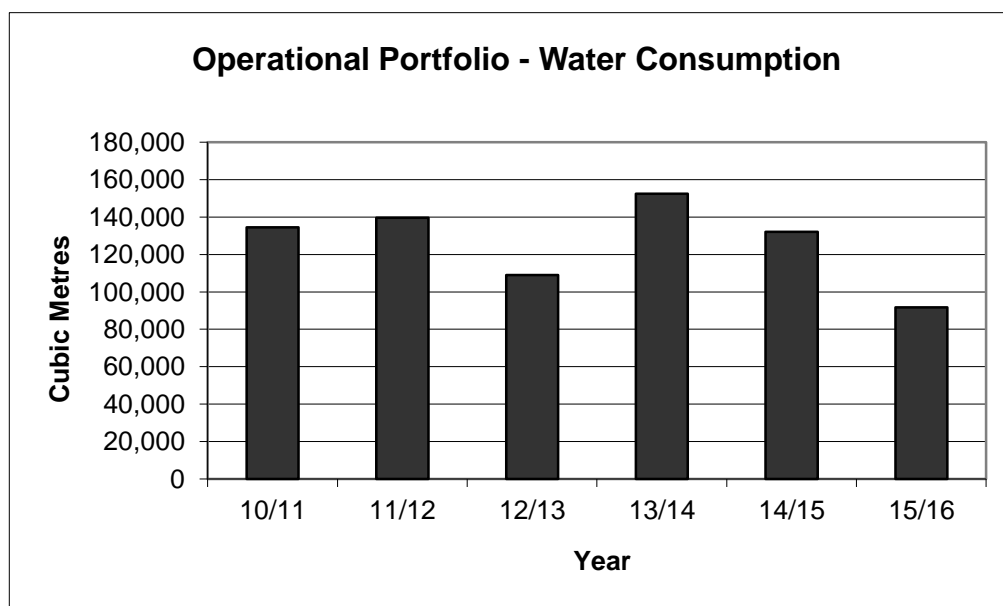
- 2.3.2 Electricity consumption continues to fall and is down another 5.7% on 2014/15 figures and by almost 19% since 2010/11. Consumption reductions in 2015/16 are due in the main to the highly successful Solar Panel installation programme across the borough. This programme has helped in achieving a reduction of almost 800,000 kWh of electricity. The ongoing investment in other energy saving measures to lighting, pumps and motors, is also reflected in this figure.

Gas Consumption



2.3.3 2015/16 saw gas consumption drop noticeably to 21% below the 2010/11 level. Another mild winter aided this drop in consumption but colder spring slightly suppressed the reduction which was still 7%. This was helped by correct billing throughout the year and no repeat of the errors that distorted last years figures. The recent improvements are due to new boiler and pump installations. The district energy scheme is due to start providing heat and electricity towards the end of the calendar year 2016, so a noticeable reduction should be further achieved.

Water Consumption



2.3.4 Water consumption in 2015/16 appears to have reduced by around 30%. A number of billing errors having been corrected and resulting in large

credits is largely responsible for this. Water accounts are increasingly difficult to monitor accurately due to the large amount of estimated bills. It is however anticipated that water deregulation due 1st April 2017 should see water automatic meter readings introduced across the board.

Carbon Emissions

2.3.5 In 2009 the Council committed to reducing its carbon emissions by 35%, with a revised deadline of 2016.

2.3.6 As at March 2016 the total actual and weather corrected, carbon emissions for property and street lighting have decreased by 30% since 2007. This represents a reduction of 12% on the previous year and is largely attributable to the completion of 3 phases of the Solar PV programme, fitting solar panels to 34 of the councils buildings, schools and academies and the near completion of the 5 year programme to retrofit all street lighting with efficient lanterns (either LED, or high efficiency dimmable lanterns). Street light energy consumption alone has reduced by 40% since 2010/11 and further savings are still expected.

Tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions per year, from Council buildings and streetlights.

Carbon emissions Tonnes/yr.	2007/8	2014/15	2015/16	%change since 07/08 the baseline date
Actual	21,692	17,838	15,226	-29.9%
Weather corrected	22,184	18,723	15,302	-31%

2.3.7 The Energy Service Team provides a full utilities management service, which includes carbon management and reporting and energy conservation work.

2.3.8 Using SALIX funding the Council has during 2015/16 commissioned an additional £258,000 of energy efficiency projects both in relation to the Council's property portfolio and street lighting.

2.3.9 Key projects delivered in 2015/16 include:

- Replacement LED lighting throughout at Gateshead Leisure Centre commenced (completion due December 2016)
- Replacement LED lighting installed in Blaydon and Heworth Leisure Centre gyms, coordinated with the lease renewal for gym equipment

2.3.10 In addition, the Council continued to access SEELS funding, to offer projects to schools and academies.

- Schemes at Windy Nook Primary School and Brandling Primary School to install LED light, and improve heating controls were completed
- The Council secured and delivered £450k energy efficiency scheme for Joseph Swan Academy. Furthermore, the Council made a successful bid to the Condition Improvement Fund for a further £490k to fund asbestos cleaning, which will allow the final LED Lighting works to be installed during summer 2016/17

2.3.11 The Council also completed the installation of its Solar Panel Programme and now boasts over 2MW of solar PV systems on 34 Council buildings, schools and academies. The installation of the panels is anticipated to save 650 tonnes of carbon emissions and cut electricity use of operational buildings by a further 4% (not including savings to schools and academies). Early indications show that these savings are achievable and a full year's data will support this further.

2.3.12 A full report on carbon reduction targets will be provided to the Communities and Place OSC as part of its 2017/18 programme.

2.4. Suitability

2.4.1 Suitability surveys are undertaken on a three yearly cycle. The last suitability survey was undertaken during the latter part of 2013.

2.4.2 An assessment of suitability of a property for service delivery is undertaken by way of a survey completed by the users of the buildings. In 2013 a 71% response was received and it identified that:

- 83.08% of the council's operational buildings fell into category A*
- 13.24% of the council's operational buildings fell in to category B*
- 3.68% of the council's operational buildings fell in to category C*
- No buildings were identified in category D*

2.4.3 The 5 buildings falling in category C which were considered to be showing major problems and/or not operating optimally included: Blaydon's Children's Home and The Sound Room. Since the survey was undertaken refurbishment works have been undertaken at the Children's Home and as such when the next survey is undertaken in 2016 the improvements should be reflected in the score. The Sound Room is no longer being used for service delivery, having been the subject of a community asset transfer.

A: Good – performing well and operating efficiently. The building supports the delivery of the service and is considered suitable for use now and in the future.

B: Satisfactory - performing well but with minor issues. The building generally supports the delivery of the service and would be considered suitable. There is room for improvement in certain areas but the property is fundamentally suitable.

C: Poor – showing major problems and/ or not operating optimally. The building impedes the delivery of services and would not be considered suitable.

D: Bad – does not support the delivery of services at all. The building seriously impedes the delivery of services and would definitely not be considered suitable.

- 2.4.4 Suitability surveys are usually undertaken on a three yearly basis a new survey is currently underway and the results will be reported in the 2017 report.

2.5. Accessibility

- 2.5.1 The Council is committed to making its services accessible for all residents and visitors. As such it is taking the necessary steps to identify and remove barriers that may prevent people from using our services. It will ensure that where practicable and reasonable its operational buildings are accessible and compliant with equality legislation. Access has traditionally been associated with removing physical barriers to buildings and premises. This was reflected in the BVPI 156 requirement to report on the accessibility of areas open to the public that meet Part M of the Building Regulation standards. BVPI 156 is no longer collated as a national performance indicator but the Council has retained it as a local indicator (Local Indicator 7) which continues to improve year on year.
- 2.5.2 The Council's programme of works to meet its duties under the Equality Act 2010 continued during 2015/16. Schemes have been completed at: Civic Centre Quiet Room (contribution), Civic Centre meeting rooms (induction loops phase3), Credit Union move to West Street (contribution), Stadium external works, Easy Access Routes at Lowery's Lane Car Park, installation of dropped kerbs at Low Fell and Upgrade of Stitling Lane Car Park at Rowlands Gill South.
- 2.5.3 As a result of this work 76% of the Council's buildings now meet the Disability Equality strand of the Equality Act standards (Local Indicator 7a) which compared with 70% being compliant as at 2014/2015.

Challenge and Future Focus

- 2.5.4 As a result of budgetary pressures the capital funding to progress the Equality Act Upgrade programme was reduced in 2015/16 from £500,000 to £250,000. The budget will reduce further in 2016/17 to £200,000. The proposed reduction will impact on the provision of a dedicated Equalities Act fund to implement physical changes. As a result those involved in future major schemes will need to ensure that implications of the Equality Act are considered and provision made within the scheme cost as it will no longer be possible for the Equality Act fund to cover such items. Although the budget is reducing the Council is still in a much better position than many other local authorities who have cut their budgets for such works completely.
- 2.5.5 The Council successfully completed its programme of priority schemes during 2015/2016. In light of the continuing reduction in funding, the focus for 2016/2017 will be to build on existing facilities to provide best practice inclusive facilities. A scheme is being developed to improve changing and

swimming pool access at Heworth Pool in a warm water environment. A scheme to provide automated doors at Gateshead Central Library is also being programmed.

2.5.6 Throughout 2015/2016 Council Housing, Design and Technical Services continued to use a robust scoring matrix which has been used to identify priority schemes for the 2016/2017 programme. The scoring matrix records the results of consultations with Corporate Asset Strategy Team, Disability Service User Involvement Forum (DESUIF), Development Management, Learning and Children Accessibility Strategy Group and individual client groups.

2.5.7 As in previous years the Council has continued to work with Gateshead Access Panel, which provides service user involvement advice and consultancy regarding inclusive design issues on most Council led projects and policies.

2.5.8 The Gateshead Access Panel is also responsible for facilitating attendance at the Disability Equality Service User Involvement Forum. This enables the Council to consult with as wide a range of disabled people and people with impairments as possible about inclusive design issues on its projects and policies.

PART 3: Generation of Income and Capital

3.1. Non-operational Property Portfolio

3.1.1 The Non-operational Property Portfolio includes 198 industrial units and 148 shops supplemented with allotments, grazing sites, garages and ground leases. The rent roll over the last 3 years was as follows:

- £3,298,279 in 2013/14
- £3,574,034 in 2014/15
- £3,174,408 in 2015/16

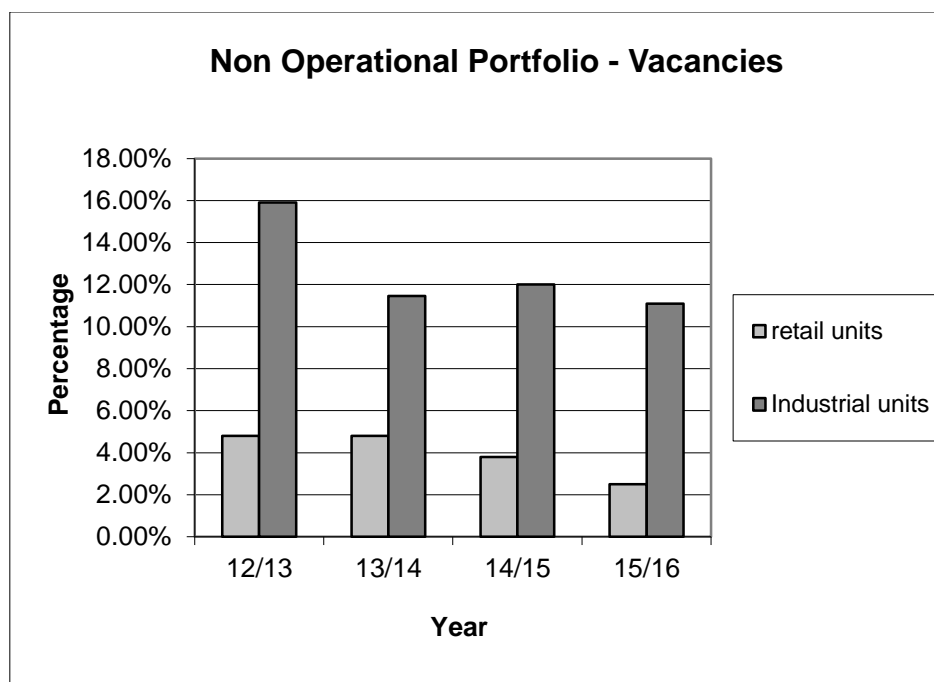
3.1.2 The reduction in the rental income in 2015/16 as against 2014/15 is as a result of a windfall payment received in 2014/15. However the cost of managing the portfolio at £1,138,295 (which covered maintenance and void costs such as rates and service charges) decreased in 2015/2016 and as such the net income from the non-operational portfolio of £2,036,111 was higher than in 2015/205 (£1,916,701). This revenue income contributed to the Council's General Fund. A further sum of £506,602 was spent on the maintenance and security of the surplus properties.

3.1.3 Between 2014/15 and 2015/16 the level of voids for industrial units has fallen from 19 to 17 whilst the level of retail units standing empty has fallen from 6 to 2 These indicate an ongoing improvement in relation to the level of voids in both the industrial retail portfolio.

3.1.4 This reflects a reduction in the vacancy rate across the industrial portfolio from 12% in 2014/15 to 11.1% in 2015/16 and from 3.8% to 2.5% across the retail portfolio in the same period.

3.1.5 The above figures include the properties which were transferred to the Council in 2013/2014 from Tyne and Wear Economic Development Company.

3.1.6 The trend over the four year period is shown on the table below:



3.1.7 There are no national indicators to benchmark across as this information does not necessarily demonstrate performance. It is more an indication of the market conditions and what action the Council is taking to try and mitigate the situation.

3.1.8 Following a strategic review of the Council's non-operational portfolio, a suite of local property performance indicators were agreed. The full report was provided to the Corporate Property Officer in July 2016, the highlights of the report being:

- The deficit between the budget target and net income of £102,369 (this being a further improvement on the previous year when the deficit was £127,162)
- Income was boosted by £248,520 as a result of 23 new lettings, 10 lease renewals and 8 rent reviews
- As at 31st March 2016 there were 6 property assets on the surplus register which is the lowest figure for over 5 years

3.1.9 To maintain and improve the income stream from the non-operational portfolio the Council agreed in 2014, on the basis of a Strategic Investment Plan prepared by Property Services, to invest in the portfolio through the Capital Programme. A sum of £1,000,000 was identified which was to be used to support a three year rolling programme of investment, with each application for funding from the allocation supported by a business case. During 2015/16 money from this fund was allocated to undertake structural repairs at Cowen Road Industrial Estate and the installation of new access doors at the Interchange Centre.

3.1.10 The Council completed the CIPFA value for money benchmarking exercise in 2015 which covered the period 2014/15. This exercise was in relation to both the management of its tenanted non-operational portfolio and operational property. Twenty two local authorities took part in the exercise.

3.1.11 The outcome of this exercise highlighted that in 2014/15 Gateshead Council:

- had one of the lowest number recorded training days
- had the second highest average sickness days per FTE
- had the highest average cost of management per asset
- had one of the lowest average cost of a works order
- had the second lowest external spend

3.1.12 The results from the benchmarking exercise are being reviewed but information gleaned to date indicates that:

- not all training is recorded on the Council's system as officers are recording the details of their training on their own professional web sites as they are required to do;
- there are variances across Services with regard to sickness days with some Services recording lower than average sickness days per FTE. Further enquires are to be made to try and determine the reason for the variances
- The Council has a greater number of assets than the other local authorities who took part in the exercise but the size of the portfolio was smaller (350,000 sq. m. as compared to 427,000 sq. m.). The cost of managing low value small sized assets is greater than managing fewer large sized assets as managing the smaller sized assets is overall more intensive.

3.1.13 During the course of 2015/16 officers entered into preliminary discussions with Public Sector Plc (PSP). The Company had approached the Council as it was interested in working with the Council because of Gateshead's pro-active and innovative approach, and profile in the North East.

3.1.14 PSP was developed in 1997, encouraged by the then Government, to develop relationships between the public and private sector founded on cultural exchange, trust and equality of relationship, rather than the

traditional (sometimes adversarial) relationships based strictly on contract. In its 2013 publication “Relational Partnering”, PSP say that “it delivers funding to enhance the value of public services and its property portfolios and can and does reduce the costs of maintenance of council land and buildings. PSP also affords the additional opportunity for public sector staff from council workforces to supply resources to unlock this value”.

3.1.15 PSP is a funding joint venture underwritten and supported by William Pears and Winston investment groups. However, it is not a Local Asset Backed Vehicle and therefore not an outsourcing model where services are simply bought from and provided by the private sector. PSP prefer to label the approach as “insourcing” in that it works with a local authority, bringing finance, skills and resources, but also utilising, and enhancing if necessary, in-house resources in order to facilitate a project.

3.1.16 The initial discussion identified potential opportunities for the Council, working with PSP, to drive additional value from its Tenanted Non-Residential Portfolio.

3.1.17 Discussions have continued throughout 2016/17 with PSP also making a presentation to Cabinet Members and a report submitted to Cabinet. An update on progress will be provided in the 2017 Property Performance Report.

3.2. Surplus Land & Property Assets

3.2.1 The Council continues to strive to secure the disposal of surplus assets as quickly and efficiently as possible, as this helps to avoid vandalism or antisocial behaviour associated with vacant property, both of which can pose a risk and cause problems for local residents. It also reduces the holding costs and the amount of maintenance required to the property portfolio. Often early demolition is the most appropriate course of action.

3.2.2 As at March 2016 there were 6 properties, valued at £154,877 on the Council’s surplus property register. Although the economic outlook over the year, and subsequently property values, continued to improve, the ability for the Council to take advantage of this improvement was limited as there were fewer opportunities to identify properties which were surplus to the Council’s requirements as a result of the rationalisation programme undertaken in previous years. The outcome of this can be seen in the capital receipts achieved during 2015/16 as compared to 2014/15. Details of the capital receipts received over the last three years are as follows:

- 2013/14 - £3,534,290
- 2014/15 - £3,108,131
- 2015/16 - £1,363,436

The capital receipts are used to support the Council’s Capital Programme.

- 3.2.3 However, off-setting this reduced opportunity to generate capital receipts from surplus buildings, there have been opportunities in relation to the Council's land holdings.
- 3.2.4 The Council sells land through a variety of channel e.g. open market, through the Council's Joint Venture Vehicle. The options are considered at the Land Development Group which is a cross service, with membership comprising officers from, amongst others, Housing and Economic Growth, Property Services and Development, Transport and Public Protection.
- 3.2.5 A number of development sites have been included in the Council's Joint Venture Vehicle (JVV), whilst the other sites will be brought to market as part of a planned approach to maximise receipts and generate economic and housing growth.
- 3.2.6 The Council's partner in the JV is Evolution Gateshead (a consortium of Galliford Try and Home Group) who was selected after a full OJEU Procurement process with financial close in April 2012. The JV is now known as The Gateshead Regeneration Partnership.
- 3.2.7 The Partnership is looking to regenerate 19 sites across the Borough, totalling 70 hectares. Redevelopment began with a bundle of three sites at Saltwell, Deckham and Birtley Northside.
- 3.2.8 The first three sites were transferred in January 2014 and this first bundle currently has planning approval for 315 homes (including 55 affordable homes). Progress is as follows:
- 16 affordable homes have been built and occupied in Deckham
 - Birtley Phase 1 comprising 47 units is nearing completion with all units having been sold
 - The planning application for Birtley Phase 2 which comprises 147 units has been approved and preliminary works are now progressing
 - The first phase in Saltwell comprises 99 new homes which will all be built out by summer 2017. Of those that have already been completed the 23 affordable homes are all occupied and 32 homes available by way of open market sale are either purchased or reserved.
 - The second phase in Saltwell will begin with the submission of a planning application for 50 units at the end of this year.
- 3.2.9 The Partnership is currently considering which of the remaining 16 sites will make up the second bundle and once finalised planning applications will be submitted with the first coming forward by the end of 2016.
- 3.2.10 The Council has retained the option to sell additional surplus sites into the partnership and a protocol for identifying sites for consideration was established in April 2010.

Significant Land Disposals in 2015/16

- Felling Town Centre (£664,300)
- Blaydon Housing Office (£381,500)
- Former Alexander Road Infant School (£210,00)
- Garden House Cemetery Lodge (£170,000)

Surplus Asset Declarations

The following are a few of the properties declared surplus to the Council's needs during 2015/16:

- Whickham Thorns Outdoor Activity Centre
- 11/12 Gladstone Terrace
- Former Chopwell Library

Surplus Asset Demolitions

The following are a few of the properties demolished during 2015/16:

- Corbitt Street, Demolition and site clearance
- Brandling phase 2
- The Shipcote Centre

Estate Regeneration Demolitions

- Clasper Village Phases 1, 2 and 4
- Bensham Saltwell
- Bleach Green Phases 1 and 2
-

PART 4: Supporting Service Delivery

4.1. Office Accommodation

- 4.1.1 The Civic Centre is now the main office location for Council employees. There are still, however, a small number of out based offices, primarily the Dryden Centre and the offices associated with the main depots at Park Road and Shearlegs Road.
- 4.1.2 The Corporate Asset Strategy Team will continue to review the use of the Council's office accommodation as it is recognised that as a result of changes in service delivery, improved communications technology, and reduction in the workforce, office requirements will change. This ongoing review will enable the Council to consider the further consolidation of staff within the building or consider options for offering surplus accommodation to other public sector and/or partner organisations

- 4.1.3 As the size of the operational portfolio has been reduced over the last few years the opportunities to secure further rationalisation will reduce. However, officers in the Corporate Asset Strategy Team will continue to work with Services during the year to identify service specific buildings that are no longer needed as a result of consolidation and changes in working practices and service delivery.

4.2 Service Strategies

- 4.2.1 Service Directors have produced a business plan for the delivery of their Service which should include a section on accommodation need both now and anticipated as budget proposals are implemented and alternative delivery models progressed. By working with Service Directors in connection with their accommodation needs the Corporate Asset Strategy Team can ensure that best use is made of assets to enable running costs to be mitigated whilst ensuring that services are delivered effectively for clients and residents. During 2015/16 the following outcomes were achieved:
- One further community asset transfer has been completed to a community association with a number of others being processed and will be included in the report covering the period 2016/2017;
 - Use of the Council's land to secure additional private and social housing, either through the JV or open market sale;
 - Working with Keelman Homes and registered social providers to secure further social housing across the borough;
 - Chopwell Library was co-located with the Chopwell Children's Centre at Chopwell Primary School.
- 4.2.2 With regard to the school estate, local authorities continue to have ownership and asset management of school buildings. Local authorities will also continue to manage capital allocations for maintained schools. As schools convert to academies, responsibility for managing their individual condition budgets move from local authorities to academy trusts.
- 4.2.3 For 2015/16, Gateshead received £1.5m of School Condition Allocation. This amount is indicative of the next two years allocations which will be updated annually to reflect schools converting to academy status. The School Condition Allocations take into account the information collected by the Government through the Property Data Survey programme about the condition of schools and includes a core condition funding component based on pupil numbers.
- 4.2.4 The funding was allocated to improve and maintain the condition of the school estate maintained by Gateshead, including rewires, boiler replacements, window replacements, roofing schemes etc.
- 4.2.5 Local authorities have responsibility for ensuring that every child has a school place including the duty to ensure that there are sufficient school,

special school and alternative provision places to meet demand. The government will continue to provide substantial funding to deliver sufficient places.

- 4.2.6 Under the first phase of the Government's Priority Schools Building Programme, Gateshead Council was successful in bidding for five schools to be included in the programme. Works at Hill Top School were completed October 2014 and works at Thorp Academy are on-going, with an anticipated completion date of December 2016
- 4.2.7 In addition, Roman Road Primary, Lingey House Primary School and Front Street Primary School have been rebuilt using private finance via the Priority Schools Building Programme. As part of the project, Lingey House Primary School has been increased from 1.5 FE (form of entry) into 2 FE which has created 105 additional pupil places.
- 4.2.8 In May 2014, the Department for Education (DfE) announced a further phase of the Priority School Building Programme to undertake major rebuilding and refurbishment projects to address the needs of those schools in the very worst condition. Gateshead has been successful in a bid to replace three demountable classrooms at Winlaton West Lane Primary with a new build extension. The Education Funding Agency has made contact with the school as part of an initial scoping study. The scoping study will assess the detailed work required together with any specific site issues, and will review the best method and timescale for delivery.
- 4.2.9 The Council has also been successful in its bid for Targeted Basic Need Funding from the Government. This has enabled two schools to be extended to meet increased demand for pupil places. The two successful schools are: Gibside School (25 additional places) and Riverside Academy (210 additional places). These works were completed in the summer 2015.
- 4.2.10 In addition, Ravensworth Terrace Primary School is being re-provided as a 2FE (227 additional places) new build school on a Council owned site in Birtley. These works are expected to be complete and available for use in May 2017. Options for the future of the existing school are currently being considered.
- 4.2.11 Across the borough, the Council has considered the potential pupil impact associated with planned housing growth and proposed site allocation in the Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan for Newcastle and Gateshead. The Local Plan provides a strategy for delivering 11,000 new homes in Gateshead. Financial contributions from developers will cover the cost of additional school places where proposed development is likely to result in the generation of additional pupil numbers in excess of that which local schools can accommodate.

4.2.12 During 2015/16, Gateshead was also successful in bidding for further kitchen capital funding at for improvements at Oakfield Infant School (£144,000), Parkhead Primary School (£45,000) and St. Joseph's Infant School (£98,700). These works were completed in August 2015.

4.3 Area Reviews

4.3.1 Work on the area reviews has continued throughout 2015/16 which has identified opportunities to work with other public sector organisations such as the Northumbria Police, NHS Property Services and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) for more efficient use of the estate. The CCG has taken office accommodation within the Civic Centre, health services are being provided at the Birtley Children Centre (Chirpody) and drop in desks have been provided at Wrekenton hub and Gateshead@ Blaydon for Northumbria Police. It is anticipated that further opportunities will be identified through the OPE Partnership

4.3.2 The use of buildings and the range of services offered within Chopwell have been reviewed. The proposal coming out of this review led to the co-location of the library and children's services within the existing Children Centre which occupies space within Chopwell School.

PART 5: Future Actions

To ensure that the assets are used to support the Council Plan, officers will, throughout the coming year:

- Play an active role within the OPE Partnership to bring forward opportunities for shared services and property utilisation which supports the Council in rationalisation of its portfolio to support service delivery, generate revenue savings and potential capital receipts.
- Continue to engage with other north east authorities to try to find a set of indicators which can be used for benchmarking purposes;
- Progress the development of the corporate web-based asset management database (Gp2) which will ensure delivery of accurate up to date benchmarking data;
- Monitor the new suite of indicators for the performance of the non-operational portfolio;
- The Corporate Asset Strategy Team will continue to co-ordinate the Strategic Maintenance budget to ensure that spend is focussed on properties to be retained by the Council as set out in the Corporate Asset Strategy and Management Plan 2015-2020;
- Work with Services to enable the continued delivery of services within the areas and neighbourhoods within a reduced level of funding and a

smaller portfolio through alternative models of service delivery and the more efficient use of the retained property;

- Identify future funding and implement schemes in relation to the energy saving measures and opportunities for income generation from PV;
- In relation to the Equality Act 2010, the Council will continue, albeit with reduced funding, to roll out the upgrade works during the forthcoming year; and
- Identify development opportunities for both housing and commercial schemes to assist in driving forward the Council's housing and economic growth agenda.
- Progress discussions with PSP.

Annex 1

Accessibility Indicators definitions:

National & Local Indicators

Local Indicator 007 has been reported since June 2009; soon after its introduction to replace National Indicator BV156 (Many Councils consider that the latter is not a robust indicator of performance)

Gateshead Council has developed a suite of Indicators around LI 007 which will enable performance monitoring across a number of asset types. This data has been passed to the Octopus Group and CIPFA for their consideration as a Benchmarking standard

The suite is as follows

Local Indicator 7 - Accessibility to Buildings and Open Spaces:

7a - The percentage of the authority's buildings open to the public in which all areas (open to the public) are suitable for and accessible for disabled people.

For this indicator the standard for accessible and suitable will be as defined in Approved Document M of the Building Regulations 2004.

7b - The percentage of the authority's schools which are suitable for and accessible for disabled people.

For this indicator the standard for accessible and suitable will be the "one star" standard as defined in the Accessibility Strategy (Education and Schools) 2006 - 2010

7c - The percentage of the authority's residential buildings with communal areas in which all public access areas are suitable for and accessible for disabled people

For this indicator the standard for accessible and suitable will be as defined in Approved Document M of the Building Regulations 2004.

7d - The percentage of the authority's open spaces that have had a disability access audit carried out.

For this indicator the standard for accessible and suitable will be as defined in British Telecom (BT) Countryside for All Standards and Guidelines (1997)

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