



COUNCIL MEETING

21 November 2019

GATESHEAD COUNCIL

REPORT FROM THE CABINET

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This is the report from the Cabinet. Its purpose is to report on issues for the period September to November 2019.

PROGRESS ON KEY ISSUES

2. PEOPLE

Adult Social Care

Confirm & Challenge Event

An event took place on 27 September 2019 to plan the further development of the Transforming Care Community Model for people with a learning disability and/or autism. The day was organised through a joint effort between Gateshead Council, Newcastle-Gateshead CCG and Northumberland Tyne & Wear NHS Trust, with the help of partners from the Gateshead Confirm and Challenge Group and Inclusion North.

The event was well attended with over 100 delegates made up of people with a learning disability and/or autism, families and carers, health and social care professionals and providers, and the voluntary sector.

The day was well received by attendees who had the opportunity to hear peoples' stories about how their life has been transformed by moving from hospital to the community, feed into the vision for Gateshead, and start designing the future. Feedback echoed this, one attendee being appreciative of the opportunity 'to spend time listening to parents and carers and for them to help shape services going forward.' Another leaving with the hope that 'the day goes on to produce the changes that are much needed.'

All the feedback from the day has been collated and plans are afoot to bring together leaders from across the system, to agree next steps and start putting plans into action to improve the care and support for people with a learning disability and/or autism and their families.

A further event will be organised in the Spring to report back and continue this transformational journey.

3. PLACE AND ECONOMY

Environment and Transport

Air Quality Update

The consultation on new proposals to tackle air quality problems in Central Tyneside will end on 25 November.

The proposals include charging for more polluting lorries, vans, buses and taxis to enter Newcastle City Centre but not cars. It also includes restrictions on traffic on the Tyne Bridge, which will be reduced to one lane in each direction.

These restrictions will pose major challenges in managing traffic on the approaches through Gateshead, and changes to the local road network are being developed to try and cater for this. A major bid to Government for funding will be submitted with any proposals to implement these and provide support to those most affected.

PSPO Update – Littering and Dog Fouling

The Environmental Enforcement team aim to be in a position to enforce the PSPOs relating to dog fouling and the means to control/pick up after littering by the end of November. Work has been ongoing to implement changes to the programming of the back office systems and hand held devices.

Further work is continuing with input from Legal Services, regarding elements relating to anti-social use of motor vehicles and parking around schools. Enforcement in these areas is anticipated to start in the New Year.

Electric Vehicle Charging Points

The Government has recently published national figures on the availability of electric vehicle charging points in each local authority. The average for the United Kingdom is 23 charging devices per 100,000 population, while the figure for Gateshead is 30.

This reflects the work carried out by the Council and the North East Joint Transport Committee in obtaining funding and installing charge points at various locations across the borough.

Opportunities to provide additional facilities continue to be exploited where they arise, and work is also underway through the Joint Transport Committee on providing a more sustainable basis for the continued maintenance of the existing stock of electric vehicle chargers

4. COMMUNITIES

Communities and Volunteering

Dept of Education Holiday Activity and Food Programme

Gateshead Central Library, in partnership with The Friends of Gateshead Central Library volunteers, delivered a four week holiday activity programme. 'Golden tickets' were gifted to priority families in the Bensham area via local schools. Families were invited to a fantastic programme of fun, educational and creative activities. Over 4

weeks the library served 880 free lunches to school-children, siblings and parents. The programme brought families into the library who had not previously visited.

Elmer Day

Over 400 visitors came along to the Central Library for a family activity day in June to celebrate 30 years since the publication of the much-loved children's books about Elmer the Elephant. There was a huge selection of free, fun, creative activities for children of all ages as well as storytimes and rhymetimes throughout the day. The library is now host to a herd of little Elmers as part of the St Oswalds hospice Great North Parade. The herd is attracting many new visitors to the library.

Summer Reading Challenge 2019 – Space Chase

Over 700 children across Gateshead took part in the annual Summer Reading Challenge. Children read 6 books over 6 weeks and got stickers and small gifts along the way. The space theme this year proved very popular and encouraged children to keep reading during the summer break. Most of the supporting events and activities were fully booked, with the Central Library receiving 893 visits to children's library events. The events programme included a popular selection of digital activities for families to enjoy including coding and animation.

Culture, Sport and Leisure

Blaydon Leisure Centre Outdoor Sports Facilities Update

A key recommendation from the Gateshead Sport Strategy documents, approved by Cabinet in December 2016, was to increase the use of 3G artificial turf pitches to support and improve the quality of playing pitch provision.

The plan indicated that investment should be prioritised at Blaydon Leisure Centre and Gateshead International Stadium (GIS) initially, with the GIS refurbishment project being completed earlier in the year.

The service was successful in gaining £1.1 million investment including funding from the Football Foundation and Sport England to significantly enhance the outdoor sports provision at Blaydon Leisure Centre.

The project included the conversion of the sand based artificial turf pitch to a state of the art full size 3G artificial playing pitch, and the development of a new 6-lane athletics track, new long and triple jump pit and shot putt circle. The site now benefits from improved floodlighting, drainage and perimeter fencing to help protect the investment. The facility was handed back to the Council from the developers and became operational on Thursday 24 October 2019.

The site will continue to be the home of Blaydon Harriers and Athletics Club and Ryton Triathlon club but will now also provide training provision for a number of local football clubs as well as a competition venue for the Gateshead Youth Football League.

The development is a major boost to the site which will help to improve access to physical activity for residents across Gateshead.

5. CONCLUSION

The Council is asked to note this report.