



COUNCIL MEETING

23 January 2020

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 November 2019 – January 2020.

PROGRESS ON KEY ISSUES

2. PEOPLE

Gateshead Holiday Activities and Food Programme 2019

In 2019 the Council secured £204,403 from the Department for Education (DfE) and subsequently delivered a programme of free summer holiday activities and healthy food.

The programme aimed to help children and families benefit through:

- To eat more healthily over the summer holidays;
- To be more active over the summer holidays;
- To take part in engaging and enriching activities;
- To be safe and not socially isolated;
- To have a greater knowledge of health and nutrition;
- To be more engaged with school and other local services.

The key outputs were as follows:

- Delivery across 39 venues borough-wide including schools, community centres and sports facilities;
- 2,020 individual children attending on least one occasion;
- 10,802 attendances in total at an average of 5.4 attendances per child;
- Over 8,000 packed lunches prepared and delivered by Catering Services.

A further application has been made to DfE for a 2020 programme and a decision on the request for funding will be known in mid-February. If successful, the 2020 programme will aim to:

- Work with up to 42 partners and 643 sessions across urban and rural Gateshead;
- 11,429 places available for children with disadvantaged areas again targeted;
- A mix of activities from stage schools, football coaching, trips to the countryside and skateboarding;
- Provision of 1,714 places for parents including a meal and guidance on issues such as mitigating fuel poverty.

3. PLACE AND ECONOMY

Environment and Transport

Balloon Release

The Council has recently agreed to sign up to the Marine Conservation Society's Don't Let Go! Campaign. <https://www.mcsuk.org/campaigns/dont-let-go>

In 2009 Gateshead signed a declaration, as part of the Durham Biodiversity Partnership's 10th Anniversary, not to undertake balloon releases or to permit them on Council land. The problem with balloon releases is that balloons are often carried out to sea as well as causing problems in the countryside. They drop into the sea and countryside to become pollution, being a problem for sea birds and mammals which may then eat them and subsequently die. Although they may ultimately biodegrade, they don't do so quickly enough to prevent this from happening. Balloon releases are environmentally bad practice for this reason. Following concerns raised by plastics in the marine environment by Blue Planet II the public are increasingly concerned about this issue.

The Council encourages individuals and groups to carry out activities to mark events and there are alternatives such as lighting candles, blowing bubbles, a minute's applause, plant a tree or trees to remember a loved one. Signing up to the Don't Let Go! reasserts the Council commitment to highlight and address the environmental dangers of balloon releases.

Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Funding

The South Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership Team submitted a successful funding application to the DTS Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Fund for £119,460 to deliver a repair and reuse project to promote the reduction, repair and reuse of small WEEE and batteries within our three partner local authority areas.

The project will be delivered over a period of 12-months by a full time Project Officer and part-time Electrician who will work with the following organisations to forge links with local communities, the third sector and voluntary organisations:

- Groundwork NE & Cumbria and Groundwork South Tyneside & North Tyneside (STANT), local environmental regeneration charity
- Valpak the current Producer Compliance Scheme for WEEE
- SUEZ, the current residual waste treatment and HWRC contractor

The project's scope is multi-faceted and concentrates on the promotion and delivery of reduction and reuse activities to include the provision of repair, reuse and repurposing workshops, amnesty events and swap shops through our Visitor and Education Centre and within community facilities and schools. It will also continue to provide essential educational messages across our three Council areas and use varied communications mechanisms to help inform residents how they can push their WEEE further up the waste hierarchy.

Update on Climate Change Emergency

Capability North East have been appointed using the Investors in the Environment system to guide work. Investors in the Environment is a nationally recognised and will allow others to understand more about what the Council is doing. Capability North East have begun work to undertake an independent audit of the Council's carbon emissions as part of this work. They will produce an action plan and strategy. A launch of the Council's campaign to be carbon neutral by 2030 will take place later this month followed by a workshop with communities and key partners in February.

This is the start of a comprehensive two-pronged approach to Carbon Zero Gateshead building on the excellent projects we have been working on and ensuring everyone in Gateshead plays their part in our efforts. Citizens panels on key topics will follow over coming months with Councillor workshops to ensure we work well with the community over coming years.

4. COMMUNITIES

Communities and Volunteering

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Update

The CIL neighbourhood portion allows 15% of CIL receipts to be spent on local infrastructure in the area where CIL chargeable development is located. Priority is given to the ward in which the development takes place, then the nearest neighbouring ward. After this, it can be spent anywhere in the Borough.

A legal agreement has recently been signed with the Community Foundation to manage the process and issue a call out for bids. Members for the relevant ward(s) will be involved in assessing bids alongside the Cabinet Member for Communities and Volunteering.

There are currently CIL receipts of £37,584.64 available to be spent in the Whickham South and Sunniside Ward and a call for bids will be issued in early 2020. It is expected that a further £44,922.30 will come forward for the same ward in 2021 and it is expected that £10,647 will come forward for the Saltwell Ward in 2021.

Christmas Shoe Box Appeal 2019

The Council and a group of volunteers, including the Church of Latter-day Saints in Low Fell have collected items to distribute as Christmas presents for the last 5 years. This year the number of items donated was overwhelming, the quality of the gifts (especially children's toys) donated was outstanding. The call for donations story reached 29,000 people through the Council's Facebook page.

A range of organisations participated in collecting items for the appeal, including Intu Metro Centre, Tarmac, Shipley Art Gallery, De La Rue, St Chad's, DWF Newcastle, Natwest, Skills 4 Work, Rowlands Gill Primary School, QE Hospital, NCG Newcastle, Newcastle Gateshead CCG, Labour4 UK, Oakfield Primary School, Older Peoples Sheltered Accommodation and The Gateshead Housing Company.

The appeal asked for donations including:

- Christmas wrapping paper materials and empty shoe boxes
- Children's toys
- Hats, scarves and gloves

- Hair bobbles and hair brushes
- Baby wipes, toiletries and hygiene products
- Chocolates, sweets and other goodies

On evening of Wednesday 4 December around 100 volunteers met at the Church of Latter-day Saints to help wrap over 820 individual items received. Volunteers attended from:

- Church of latter-Day Saints Low Fell members
- Gateshead Council employees
- NHS employees
- GoodGym volunteers
- Newcastle CCG
- De La Rue employees
- Labour 4 UK
- Members of the public.

In addition, Guidepost, Helping Hands (Adults with learning disabilities) volunteers also helped out by promoting members of the public about how they could get involved and donate.

Tyneside Radio also attended on the evening and recorded interviews throughout the night with both volunteers and groups who attended.

Culture, Sport and Leisure

Opening of the Archives at Gateshead Central Library

The Council has opened a new service, Gateshead Archive at Gateshead Central Library. The service provides access to our unique collections about the history of Gateshead. The Library Service has been collecting local history material for over a century and provides a local history enquiry service, research support for individuals and community groups and a school visit programme.

Our collections hold more than 50,000 items including:

- Books & pamphlets
- Maps
- Newspapers
- Photographs
- Special collections such as posters, manuscripts and sound recordings

The collection dates back to the 1600s but mostly are from 19th and 20th centuries. Collections include material of national importance relating to the First World War, labour history and Thomas Bewick.

The new service has been made possible due to £499,200 funding from National Lottery Health Fund to improve access to the collection which was previously housed in restricted areas. A bigger public access area has been created with public PCs and study desks as well as shelving for around 8,000 books. In addition, a group study desk has been created to assist community groups with their research and interactive units will provide digital access to historic maps from the 1850s onwards, information about the history of Gateshead plus some of the digitised items in the collection.

Lottery funding will also support an events programme to help promote awareness of Gateshead's history. As part of this, the first Gateshead History Festival will be held from 30 April - 2 May and is being delivered in partnership with the University of Northumbria. It will offer a range of talks, interactive Q&As and workshops from leading historians. Finally, our NLHF grant is also allowing investment in digitisation equipment so we can begin an ongoing programme to digitally capture and preserve the more unique and fragile items in the collection, such as electors lists and newspapers such as the Gateshead Post.

The service will be officially opened in February 2020.

5. CONCLUSION

The Council is asked to note this report.