

TITLE OF REPORT: **Changing Futures Northumbria**

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

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek Cabinet endorsement of the governance arrangements for the Changing Futures Northumbria programme to ensure that the delivery plan can be implemented.
2. To advise Cabinet on the progress of the successful regional bid, 'Changing Futures Northumbria' (for which Gateshead Council is the lead authority) to the Changing Futures fund.

Background

3. Changing Futures Fund is a three-year (to 31 March 2024), £64 million programme funded by Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and The National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF) to improve the life situation of adults who face multiple disadvantage, to transform local services and partnerships, and to change the wider system of services and support. This is consistent with much of the reform work that has been happening across many areas of the Council in recent years.
4. The successful £5m bid by Changing Futures Northumbria (CFN) is based on caseworker teams in four 'touchpoint' locations which ensure a presence in all six local authority areas:
 - Homelessness services (Gateshead)
 - Commissioned substance misuse services (Northumberland)
 - Alcohol in-reach in hospitals (Sunderland/South Tyneside)
 - Domestic abuse support (Northumbria, North Tyneside, Newcastle)
5. Gateshead Council is the lead authority and the Director of Public Service Reform is the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for the bid and partnership.

Progress to date

6. Since September 2021, the core project team from Gateshead Council, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Fulfilling Lives and the Collective Impact Agency have been building partnerships and liaising with government (DLUHC) to 'mobilise' (set up) the touchpoint sites:

Focus	LA's involved	Status/Progress
Homelessness services	Gateshead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live from January 2022 • Some recruitment to be completed • 4 cases currently being supported
Alcohol in-reach in hospitals	Sunderland/South Tyneside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not yet Live • Recruitment recently completed
Commissioned substance misuse services	Northumberland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalising proposal details to enable recruitment to start
Domestic abuse support	Northumbria, North Tyneside, Newcastle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalising proposal details to enable recruitment to start

7. Essentially, the four sites will look like larger Public Service Reform (PSR) prototypes, but with more partners, dedicated analysts and a firm link into government. They will all work to the rules and principles developed through Gateshead's PSR work which have been adopted and used to create the 'Theory of Change'.
8. An Evidence Lead and three embedded learning leads (a more advanced role than a traditional analyst) have been recruited to capture what is happening, the learning and the measures/evidence for change. They are already synthesising the learning from setting the programme up as a whole and the mobilisation of the Gateshead Touchpoint. Bi-weekly debriefs are taking place with the Caseworkers in the Gateshead Touchpoint to extract the learning in relation to the cases to date and the wellbeing of the caseworkers themselves.
9. Some of the challenges we have already faced are:
 - Mobilising touchpoint teams - despite there being existing partner relationships in place, the fact that CFN involves trying new things has led to a large amount of time managing uncertainty and surfacing assumptions. Essentially, trying to do a radical programme within a rigid system leads to partners being uncomfortable with the absence of conventional features like Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and pre-defined outcomes.
 - Recruitment - the current national recruitment situation is a significant barrier and only being able to offer a two-year contract may make the positions less desirable.
 - Managing the lead project teams responsibilities and capacity. The day job still needs to be done so we have built relationships within the project lead team to enable collective support and leadership
10. A [microsite](#) is being developed to communicate key information of the programme in a dynamic way. This will be launched in the coming weeks.

Governance

11. Meetings are held with DLUHC following the submission of the quarterly returns detailing the progress against the regional delivery plan (Appendix 2) and current budget spend. These are an open and ongoing dialogue which are positive and useful.
12. A written partnership agreement will ensure that the governance arrangements described in this report and in particular the proposals that form the touchpoints are ratified correctly by their authority and enable the money to be passported through appropriately.
13. CFN is also 'experimenting' with Governance and have created a Regional Enablers Network (REN) to work with senior leaders and stakeholders in a more dynamic way with the purpose of helping them to learn and solve problems with the teams and partners. The intention is for them to then take the learning and issues emerging from the CFN projects into already existing boards and forums that they attend. The first meeting of the Regional Enablers Network took place on 4 March 2022 (postponed from December due to Covid) to outline the programme and their role. Currently there are nearly 50 members of this forum including the following from Gateshead Council:
 - Sheen Ramsey, Chief Executive
 - Alice Wiseman, Director of Public Health
 - Steph Downey, Service Director, Adult Social Care
 - Neil Bouch, Service Director, Neighbourhoods and Localities
 - Anna Tankerville, Assistant Manager, Housing & Community Safety.
14. The Lived Experience network have been engaged with ensuring equity in recruitment and the development of Peer Support Roles. They will also look to co-produce how they will connect with the REN.

Wider research in partnership with DLUHC and Social Finance

15. The evidence provided in the initial bid regarding the existing system's difficulty in supporting people with multiple and complex needs not only made the bid attractive, but it piqued DLUHC's interest in making a complete case for system change at a national level.
16. Our findings from the PSR work and those from Fulfilling Lives Newcastle Gateshead show that we both need to create something that works well but we also need to show that the status quo is not an option. For example, our work in showing that the system increases demand through screening and delaying support lends weight to the case for change.
17. Whilst CFN endeavours to show a more holistic alternative, DLUHC are working in partnership with CFN to conduct some parallel research into the current system and its propensity to unintentionally inflate demand. It will use researchers from the think tank Social Finance to cost historical pathways through the system. This work is still being scoped but analytical resources from both DLUHC and Social Finance has been allocated to this work.

Recommendations

18. It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (i) Approves the partnership agreement and governance arrangements detailed within the report to administer the fund in line with government guidance; and
- (ii) Approves the Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance being given delegated authority to agree a partnership agreement with participating local authorities.

For the following reason:

To administer the funds in compliance with government guidance.

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APPENDIX 1

Policy Context

1. Gateshead's strategic approach is set out in 'Making Gateshead a place where everyone thrives'. Within this strategy, the Council has pledged to put people and families at the heart of everything we do and to tackle inequality, so people have a fair chance.
2. Our Health and Wellbeing Strategy 'Good jobs, homes, health and friends' also aims to reduce inequalities and improve health and wellbeing, for people living in our communities. A key aim of the strategy is to strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention.
3. The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy sets out a clear vision to prevent and end homelessness in all forms in Gateshead over the next five years. A key action in the strategy is 'implementing the changing futures programme for those with multiple and complex needs, to inform learning and system change in Gateshead as well as regionally and nationally'.

Background

4. Changing Futures Fund is a three-year (to 31 March 2024), £64 million programme that seeks to test new ways of bringing together the public sector and community sector to address cross-cutting issues and to drive the modernisation of public services for people experiencing multiple disadvantage. This is funded by Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and The National Lottery Community Fund (TNLCF).
5. Changing Futures Northumbria (CFN) submitted a bid with a regional footprint aligned to that of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) and is a collaboration across the six local authority areas of Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside and Sunderland. It also includes probation and police/OPCC as regional partners and many sub-regional partners including CCGs/Foundation trusts and voluntary and community sector partners.
6. In recent years, organisations across Northumbria have been developing radical methods of understanding the causes and the consequences of inequality, including:
 - **Fulfilling Lives Newcastle Gateshead (FLNG)** – building the role of lived experience into understanding people's context and helping them to navigate a confusing and punitive system whilst vulnerable. Includes developing trauma-informed practice and creating psychologically-informed environments to build better relationships.
 - **Public Service Reform prototypes** – applied across multiple contexts including council tax debt, homelessness and community development, these prototypes empowered self-managed teams from councils, DWP and Citizens' Advice to work outside the system to help break cycles of repeated crisis and intervention.
 - **Human Learning Systems** – Northumbria University and partners are creating a [unifying understanding](#) of a better way of designing services and relationships

with the public. Many partners in this bid are centrally involved with this work (case studies [here](#) and [here](#)).

- **‘People @ the heart’: MCN Transformation Initiative** – Commissioned by Gateshead Health and Care Board, and funded by FLNG, this work identified current dysfunctions of support systems for people experiencing multiple disadvantage. It was co-designed by networks of people with lived experience, and is a direct forerunner to this bid.
- **Experts by Experience network (EbE)** - a team with lived experience working to bring about change across the systems they have been through. The network links into the National Experts Citizens Group (NECG) to bring research and policy together with the perspective and insights of those who have experienced the failure of the system.

7. Gateshead Council is the lead authority and the Service Director - Public Service Reform is the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for the bid and partnership.

Consultation

8. Consultation events were held at the ‘Expression of Interest’ stage in late 2020 and early 2021 with partners across Gateshead to ascertain levels of likely engagement in writing the bid and taking part in any ensuing projects. These directly led to the formation of the multi-agency and multi-sector project teams that are now operating.
9. The Leader and Deputy Leader have been consulted.

Alternative Options

10. The alternative option would be to not have governance arrangements in place for the Changing Futures Northumbria programme which would mean that it would not be able to operate efficiently. Valuable learning would be lost and the opportunity to affect real system change would be reduced.

Implications of Recommended Option

11. Resources:

- a) **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital confirms that the Changing Futures programme is externally funded as outlined in the report. Any additional costs associated with the delivery of the programme will be met from the Changing Futures funding. The council is providing in kind resources through officer time, particularly in the leadership of this work.
- b) **Human Resources Implications** – There are no human resources implications for the Council from the proposals.
- c) **Property Implications** - There are no property implications for the Council from the proposals.

12. **Risk Management Implication** - the risk management implications of the programme will be assessed and monitored by the Changing Futures Northumbria Board as part of the governance arrangements.

13. **Equality and Diversity Implications** - CFN aims to improve the life situation of adults who face multiple disadvantage and the Gateshead Touchpoint will address the main challenges facing some of the most vulnerable people in Gateshead through new ways of working which are person-centred.
14. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – CFN aims to contribute to the achievement of reducing crime and disorder in Gateshead.
15. **Health Implications** - Working in a person-centred way will improve the health of the individual and address the wider determinants of health and wellbeing.
16. **Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications** - there are no climate emergency and sustainability implications from the proposals.
17. **Human Rights Implications** - There are no Human Rights implications for the Council from the proposals.
18. **Ward Implications** - all wards within the borough are covered by the Gateshead Touchpoint's homelessness project.

Background Information

19. More information can be found:
 - [Changing Futures](#)
 - [Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy](#) (Cabinet Report 25 January 2022)