

TITLE OF REPORT: **Local Boundary Commission for England - Electoral Review of Gateshead Council, Part One (Council Size)**

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

Purpose of the Report

1. Following the report presented to Cabinet in December 2022 setting out the timetable for the statutory Electoral Review of the Council being carried out by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (the Commission), this report is to update Cabinet on the Council's draft submission to the Commission on Part One of its review of Gateshead Council (Council Size) and to seek agreement for the Chief Executive to make such amendments as required to the draft following the Cabinet and full Council meetings.

Background

2. The Council is required to file its submission on Council Size by 17 February 2023. This date has been extended by the Commission of its own volition. In addition to the Council's submission, the Commission also welcomes comments from individual councillors or groups.
3. The Council's submission follows the Commission's three broad areas of consideration:
 - The **governance arrangements** of the council and how it takes decisions across the broad range of its responsibilities
 - The **scrutiny functions** relating to its own decision making and the council's responsibilities to outside bodies
 - The **representational role of councillors in the local community** and how they engage with people, conduct casework and represent the council on local partner organisations
4. All Elected Members were invited to an engagement event on Tuesday 17 January 2023 to provide direct feedback on the following options:
 - a. Fewer Councillors
 - b. More Councillors
 - c. Retain the same number of Councillors
5. The consensus of the Elected Members was to support the Council remaining at 66 Councillors, across 22 wards.

Proposal

6. Cabinet is requested to consider the content of the attached submission and appendices.
7. Cabinet is requested to endorse the proposed recommendation to the Commission that the Council's size remains unchanged at 66 Councillors, across 22 wards, and recommends the same to Council for approval.
8. Cabinet may wish to express a view on the content and provide amendments to the proposed submission.

Recommendations

9. Cabinet is requested to recommend that Council:
 - (i) agrees the recommendation of the draft Submission in terms of Council size remaining the same at 66 Councillors, across 22 wards;
 - (ii) notes the content of the Submission and the accompanying appendices and
 - (iii) agrees that the Chief Executive, following consultation with the Leader of the Council, may make any amendments to the draft Submission she deems appropriate prior to it being filed with the Commission on 17 February 2023;

For the following reason:

This is a periodic review undertaken by the Commission that the Council must partake in with a requirement for the Submission to be filed on 17 February 2023.

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APPENDIX 1

Policy Context

1. The Review is a statutory process undertaken by the Commission, and the Council is obliged to participate and provide certain information, such as property forecasts and population data. However, the Council Size stage of the review process should also ensure that this aspect of the Council's governance arrangements reflect the needs of the community it serves and its long-term ambitions, thereby enabling the Council to fulfil its policy objectives and particularly its pledges to '*Support our communities to support themselves and each other*' and to '*Work together and fight for a better future for Gateshead*'.

Background

2. This is a review of the Council's structure and electoral arrangements. The revised arrangements will take effect from the local elections in May 2026.

Consultation

3. Initial consultation has taken place between the Commission, officers, political group leaders and Council members in September 2022.
4. All Elected Members were given the opportunity to contribute to the Submission in an engagement event which took place on 17 January 2023.

Alternative Options

5. There are no alternatives. This is a statutory review being undertaken by the Commission which the Council must take part in.

Implications of Recommended Option

6. **Resources:**
 - a) **Financial Implications** – There are no financial implications arising directly from this report
 - b) **Human Resources Implications** – There are no human resource implications arising directly from this report
 - c) **Property Implications** - The outcome of the review process will result in properties being moved from one ward to another, but there are no other implications for the Council property.
7. **Risk Management Implications** – there are no risk management implications arising from this report.
8. **Equality and Diversity Implications** – The outcome of the review will result in a more balanced level of representation across the whole Borough

9. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report
10. **Health Implications** – There are no health implications arising from this report.
11. **Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications** - There are no climate emergency and sustainability implications arising from this report.
12. **Human Rights Implications** - There are no human rights implications arising from this report
13. **Ward Implications** - The review process is applicable to all wards

Background Information

14. Local Government Boundary Commission for England Guide for Councillors

Introduction

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) has informed Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council of its decision to carry out an Electoral Review of the Council's size (number of elected Councillors) and the number of wards and ward boundaries for the Council. The last electoral review in Gateshead was undertaken in 2002.

This review began in 2022; any changes that are made regarding council size and ward boundaries will come into effect for the local government elections in May 2026.

This document is Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council's council size submission, which provides the LGBCE with the Council's view on the appropriate council size and supporting evidence across the following three broad areas (as stated in the LGBCE guidance on council size for local authority elected members and staff):

- **Governance and decision making** – determining the role of councillors in decision making, and how the Council takes decisions across a broad range of its responsibilities.
- **Scrutiny functions** – the role of councillors in holding decision makers to account and to ensure that the Council can discharge its responsibilities to outside bodies.
- **Representational role of councillors in the local community** – assessing how councillors engage with people, conduct casework, and represent the council on local partner organisations.

The document concludes that the size of the Council should remain at 66 councillors across 22 wards (3 members per ward). No change to the current council size is proposed.

Local Authority Profile

Gateshead is located in the North East of England, on the southern bank of the river Tyne, opposite Newcastle upon Tyne to the north, and bordering County Durham to the south, Northumberland to the west and South Tyneside/Sunderland to the east. Gateshead is a constantly changing borough combining modern facilities with a fascinating heritage. The Borough stretches almost 13 miles along the south bank of the river Tyne and covers 55 square miles, making it the largest of the five Tyne and Wear authorities.

Gateshead is a borough of contrasts. It has a large urban hub centred around the main town centre area in Bridges ward and has a number of smaller urban centres and busy employment areas. However, around two thirds of the borough is rural, consisting of green-belt or countryside land, with numerous small settlements.

Gateshead has a population of 196,144 (Census 2021). This is an increase of 4993 (2.6%) since the last electoral review took place in 2002 (Census 2001 / Census 2021). It is ranked 95th for total population out of all local authorities in England. It has a population density of approximately 1,400/km sq. Gateshead is the 6th most densely populated area out of the North East's 12 local authorities, with around 10 people living on each football pitch area of land (Census 2021).

The age demographic of the Borough reflects the national picture of an ageing population. Over the last 10 years there has been an increase of 12.9% in people aged 65 years and over, a decrease of 6.1% in people aged 15 to 64 years. The number of retired residents

has increased from 15.9% to 24.2% over that same period (Census 2021). The mean average age per household in Gateshead is 42, an increase from the last census.

Gateshead has increased its ethnic diversity from 3.7% to 6.5% of the population within the Borough, with an increase in groups where English is not their first language, from 2.9% to 4.2% (Census 2021).

The electorate is forecast to grow by 9,127 from 2023 to 2029.

Built on traditional industries of mining and heavy engineering, the 1930s saw diversification through the development of the Team Valley Trading Estate (TVTE), the first trading estate of its type in the UK. Centrally located for the region, the TVTE has become prominent for transport and distribution activities and is the Borough's most prestigious employment centre; attracting the highest number of inward commuters on a daily basis.

The 1970s saw the decline of many of the region's traditional industries. A high proportion of those who lived in Gateshead worked in these industries, resulting in unemployment and high levels of deprivation and financial and social exclusion, the impact of which is still being felt today.

Within Gateshead, socio-economic inequalities exist as illustrated by the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). Gateshead is ranked as the 47th most deprived local authority in England according to the IMD 2019. Overall, 16.2% of households in Gateshead are within the 10% most deprived Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA), this is a 4% rise on the IMD 2015 figures and is expected to rise further when the next IMD figures are published.

In the Felling ward, 82% of its residents are living in the 10% most deprived areas in England.

IMD 2019 figures confirm 31% of residents within Gateshead are living within 20% of the most deprived areas in England.

One measure of deprivation, calculated in the IMD figures, is the crime domain, which measures the risk of personal and material victimisation at local level. The IMD 2019 demonstrate that the crime domain has seen the most significant change in rank for Gateshead Council, relative to other authorities, from 196th in 2015 to 62nd in 2019.

Health inequalities in Gateshead pose a challenge for the Council. There are substantial variations in life expectancy between different wards within Gateshead. Male life expectancy in the Whickham South & Sunnyside ward is 82.4 years compared to 73.1 in the Dunston and Teams ward, a variation of 8.1 years. The female life expectancy in the Whickham South & Sunnyside ward is 87.9 years compared to 79 in the Felling ward, a variation of 8.9 years. The national average is 79.6 for males and 83.4 for females.

At the time of the last review in 2002, as of 31 March 2002, there were 255 children and young people in the care of the Council, known as "looked after children". As of 31 December 2022, there were 519 looked after children in the care of Gateshead Council. This is an increase of 104%. Research has found that there is a strong association between deprivation in an area and the number of children who are looked after by the local authority ([16469-17-CWIP-BRIEFING-2-FINAL.pdf \(nuffieldfoundation.org\)](#)).

The Council's data relating to the percentage of school aged children entitled to free school meals in the borough shows a large increase since these figures were first collected. In

January 2007 there were 18.08% of children eligible for free school meals (5,300 out of 27,917), this has grown to 26.95% in January 2022 (7,405 out of 27,476).

The average household income in Gateshead is just over £34,200 per year, compared with a national figure of just under £41,100 (CACI Paycheck, 2021). Over the last 10 years, the number of residents in Gateshead in full or part time employment (including self-employed) has reduced by 3,300, a 3.7% decrease (Census 2011/21). Since the previous review, the number of those who have never worked or are long term unemployed has risen sharply from 6,556 in 2001 to 18,451 in 2021, a 181% increase (Census 2001/21).

Around 91,000 or 71.6% of working age (16-64) Gateshead residents are in employment which compares with an average of 74.9% for England as a whole (ONS Annual Population Survey Y/E Sep 2021), and around 6,545 or 5.1% are unemployed, claiming jobseekers allowance or universal credit which compares with an average of 4.5% for England as a whole (DWP Dec 2021).

The urban core, which extends across the River Tyne to Newcastle, is the focus of regeneration, promoting growth through the digital economy, knowledge-based businesses and cultural-led regeneration. Major initiatives in Gateshead, such as the Sage Gateshead, BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead College and the Gateshead Millennium Bridge have all been developed over recent years. An ambitious project is planned for the Baltic Quay area which is the subject of a bid to the Levelling Up Fund.

To address the challenges the Borough has, the Council has developed a strategic approach to tackle poverty and health inequalities. The Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy is based on the strategic approach "*Making Gateshead a place where everyone thrives*". There are 5 pledges which guide the Council's decision making:

- Put people and families at the heart of everything we do
- Tackle inequality so people have a fair chance
- Support our communities to support themselves and others
- Invest in our economy to provide opportunities for employment, innovation and growth
- Work together to fight for a better future for Gateshead

To deliver against this core strategy requires partnership working between councillors, stakeholders in the private, public and voluntary sectors and the residents of Gateshead.

With the announcement of a devolution deal for the North East, with an elected Mayor of the North East in 2024, and powers transferred to the region from central government, councillors are operating in a complex environment. This will require planning for the long term, with certainty, and unlock the benefits of devolution for 2 million people living in the area, whilst still representing the communities within the Borough. The historic deal will also devolve control over the multi-million pound Adult Education Budget to shape provision in a way that best suits the needs of local people; give control to the region of over half a billion pounds to upgrade public transport through a new City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement; and provide immediate support to build new affordable homes on brownfield sites. There will also be a funding pot available to help place based regeneration across the region. This creates wider responsibilities for all councillors in addition to their existing responsibilities as devolution does not remove any of the existing powers and functions of the Council.

Population

The population of Gateshead has grown since the last electoral review in 2002. There are currently 196,144 people living in Gateshead. This is an increase of 4993 (2.6%) since the last electoral review took place.

Future Housing developments

There continues to be an ambitious housing strategy to increase the number of homes within the borough.

New house building over the next 5 years can be estimated by:

- Development sites where construction has already started
- Sites with existing planning permission
- Where an application for planning permission has been submitted

The following table sets out sites of new development on larger sites and can give an accurate figure for future housing numbers within the Borough:

Site name	Ward	Yield
BAE Systems	Birtley/ Lamesley	300
Bleach Green	Blaydon	115
Pipewellgate	Bridges	270
Freight Depot Site	Bridges	300
Ochre Yards	Bridges	62
South Chopwell	Chopwell and Rowlands Gill	147
Chopwell Heartlands	Chopwell and Rowlands Gill	220
Play area, Wolseley Close	Dunston and Teams	41
Dunston Hill Persimmon (part of Dunston Hill Neighbourhood Growth Area)	Dunston Hill and Whickham East	352
Part of Dunston Hill Hosp	Dunston Hill and Whickham East	35
Brandling Village	Felling	146
Rear of Pensher St East	Felling	36
Whitley Court	High Fell	44
Northside - Cell C	Lamesley	132

Askew Road (West)	Lobley Hill and Bensham	190
Ravensdene Lodge	Lobley Hill and Bensham	82
Ryton Village Growth Area site	Ryton Crookhill and Stella	550
Hyde Park	Saltwell	62
Wardley Colliery	Wardley and Leam Lane	144
High Spen East	Winlaton and High Spen	163
Total		3,391

So as to not account twice for new properties which have already been added to the electoral role, the applicable number of additional dwellings is **2,996**. Of the 3,391 properties identified in the table above, **395** have already been added to electoral role as at 1st December 2022.

Demolitions

The following are high-rise buildings which are currently in the process of being vacated. Whilst it has not yet been determined when these demolitions will take place, the table below demonstrates that by the end of 2024/25 the following sites will be empty and may be either demolished or awaiting demolition.

Site	Ward	Empty now (Nov 22)	2022-23 (remaining part of year)	Total for 2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	Total flats in each block
Crowhall Towers	Felling	87	1	12			88
Sir Godfrey Thomson Court	Felling	53	4	10			57
Warwick Court	Bridges	55	16	20	39		110
Redheugh Court	Dunston and Teams	77	16	21	38	37	168
Eslington Court	Dunston and Teams	89	14	30	33	32	168
Total				93	110	69	591

Across the borough there will be an overall reduction of **591** units between 2020 - 2029. It is notable that the majority of these units have been single occupancy.

So as to not account twice for empty properties which have already been removed from the electoral role. The applicable figure to be subtracted from new property figures is **153**. Of the 591 units identified in the table above, **438** had been removed from electoral role or marked up for removal as at 1st December 2022.

The net increase in properties in the borough of Gateshead over the next 6 years is **2,843**.

Electoral Forecasts

As part of the electoral review of Gateshead, there is a requirement to determine how the electorate of the borough is forecast to change over the next six years (2023-2029).

Gateshead Council has used the forecasting tool provided by the LGBCE. Gateshead Council does not have software that tracks population change between census years.

In determining these figures, the Council has considered the ONS mid-year population estimates. The ONS figures were published on 21 December 2022 and were predominantly based on the Census 2021 population data. It should be noted that there was only a 10-person difference between the Census 2021 population (196,144) and the ONS mid-year (2021) population estimate for Gateshead (196,154). In the circumstances, the Census 2021 figure has been used as the more accurate measure of population.

Based on electoral role data, the number of electors registered to vote has reduced in the 20-year period since the last review – from 151,535 on 1st December 2001, to 141,945 as of 1st December 2022.

There are currently 161,746 residents potentially eligible to vote in the borough. Based on a current electoral role of 141,945, 87.8% those who are eligible to vote are registered. It is anticipated that the rate of electoral registrations over the next six years will remain consistent.

Using the LGBCE tool, the following is predicted:

Current No. of electors as at 1.12.22	LGBCE forecast for electorate in 2029	Gateshead Council forecast based on population increase above	Estimated No. of additional electors	Percentage difference
141, 945	145,454	151,072	9,127	+6.42%

Forecasts suggest a further growth of **9,127** electors from now to 2029.

Councillor/elector ratio:

Year	No. of Councillor	Number of Electors	Councillor/Elector ratio
2023	66	141,945	2,150
2029	66 (if numbers remain the same)	151,072	2,289

Electorate forecast by ward

Ward	2023 Electorate	Gateshead Forecast	Difference	% change
Crawcrook and Greenside	7148	7257	109	1.52
Ryton Crookhill and Stella	6857	7832	975	14.22
Chopwell and Rowlands Gill	6681	7404	723	10.82
Winlaton and High Spen	6808	7265	457	6.71
Blaydon	7092	7418	326	4.60
Whickham North	6130	6307	177	2.89
Whickham South and Sunnyside	6527	6666	139	2.13
Dunston Hill and Whickham East	6553	7423	870	13.28
Dunston and Teams	5984	6207	223	3.73
Lobley Hill and Bensham	6870	7461	591	8.60
Saltwell	6008	6264	256	4.26
Low Fell	6825	7037	212	3.11
Chowdene	6570	6771	201	3.06
Bridges	5544	6907	1363	24.59
Deckham	6256	6429	173	2.77
High Fell	5956	6112	156	2.62
Felling	5540	5983	443	8.00
Windy Nook and Whitehills	6889	7083	194	2.82
Pelaw and Heworth	6404	6534	130	2.03
Wardley and Leam Lane	5916	6337	421	7.12
Lamesley	7209	7583	374	5.19
Birtley	6178	6792	614	9.94
Total	141945	151072	9127	6.43

Governance and decision-making structures

In 1974 the County Borough of Gateshead was merged with the urban districts of Felling, Whickham, Blaydon and Ryton and part of the rural district of Chester-le-Street to create the Metropolitan Borough of Gateshead. Since that time the Council has had a Labour party majority.

The Council consists of 66 Members across 22 wards. Each ward has 3 elected members. Elections take place by thirds, based on a four-year cycle. This means each councillor serves a four-year term, with elections for one third of council seats taking place in three years out of four.

As a result of the local election on 5 May 2022, the political make up on the Council is as follows:

Political Party	No. of Councillors
Labour	51
Liberal Democrats	15
Total	66

Appendix 1 sets out the current elected councillors within each ward and includes their political party.

Councillors are democratically accountable to the residents of their wards. The overriding duty of councillors is to the whole community, but they have a special duty to their constituents, including those who did not vote for them.

Since 1999 the Council has operated a Leader and Cabinet arrangement as defined in Part 1A of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended) (see below). Following the appointment of a Leader, they determine all delegations of executive functions, appoint a cabinet and determine portfolio holder arrangements and responsibilities. The Council's Executive carries out a wide range of decision-making functions, whether by law or under the Council's constitution ('local choice' functions).

The Council will be one of seven local authorities to make up the North East Combined Authority, alongside Newcastle, Northumberland, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, Sunderland and Durham.

The current leader of the Council is Councillor Martin Gannon. He was elected to this position in May 2016, having served as a Labour Councillor since 1984. As Leader of the Council, he is involved in several national and regional bodies. Councillor Gannon is Chair of the North East Joint Transport Committee and a board member of North East Combined Authority, North East LEP, LGA Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board and Gateshead College. He is also a Non-Executive Director of Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust and Chair of the Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust. The Leader is recognised as the person who speaks for the Council on policy issues.

Governance Model

The Constitution

As indicated above, Gateshead Council implemented a new constitution in May 2002 based on a Leader and Cabinet form of Executive. The constitution is divided into 17 articles which set out the basic rules governing the Council's business, how the Council operates, how decisions are made, the procedures that are followed to ensure that these decisions are efficient and transparent, and sets out the terms of reference for the Committee structure.

Article 1 of the constitution commits the Council to:

- Local democratic self-government
- Improvement, quality and equality in the delivery of services
- Working in partnership with its residents
- Taking a lead in working with other agencies – public, private and voluntary.

The constitution provides the framework and democratic processes needed to realise the Council's vision and deliver the strategic approach of *Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives*. The vision for Gateshead is a place where all local people can realise their full potential, enjoying the best quality of life in a healthy, equal, safe, prosperous and sustainable Gateshead.

The constitution supports the realisation of this vision through:

- enabling the Council to provide clear leadership to the community in partnership with citizens, businesses and other organisations
- supporting the active involvement of citizens in the process of local authority decision-making
- helping councillors to represent their constituents more effectively
- creating powerful, effective and impartial means of holding decision-makers to public account
- ensuring that those responsible for decision-making are clearly identifiable to local people and that they explain the reasons for decisions
- providing a means of improving the delivery of services to the community

Full Council

The full Council, consisting of 66 elected members, meets every six weeks, plus an annual meeting and a budget meeting.

Its role is to:

- Agree the policy framework, strategies and plans
- Agree the budget
- Decide on the political management framework
- Appoint the Leader for a term of four years

The Council also receives reports from the Cabinet portfolio holders and from Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Councillors can put forward notices of motion, which initiate debates on topics of major significance to the Borough. Councillors may also question the Leader and Cabinet Members, and present petitions on behalf of local residents. Members of the public can also ask questions or present petitions, provided they give notice.

The Council meeting is above all the 'public face' of decision-making – the forum at which all councillors gather to determine, in the public spotlight, the most significant policy issues facing the Borough.

These decisions are closely monitored by Overview and Scrutiny Committees which are made up of other local councillors who are not on the Cabinet.

Functions of the full Council

Only full Council will exercise the following functions:

- adopting and changing the constitution
- approving, adopting or amending the Policy Framework, the budget and any application to the Secretary of State in respect of any Housing Land Transfer
- Framework Rules in part 4 of this constitution, making decisions about any matter in the discharge of an executive function where the decision would be contrary to the policy framework or contrary to/or not wholly in accordance with the budget
- appointing the Leader
- agreeing and/or amending the terms of reference for committees of the Council, deciding on their composition and making appointments to them
- appointing representatives to outside bodies unless the appointment is in respect of an executive function or has been delegated by the Council
- adopting an allowances scheme under Article 2.04 or amending, revoking or replacing such a scheme
- changing the name of the area, conferring the title of honorary alderman or freedom of the borough
- appointing the head of paid service on the recommendation of the Special Appointments Committee
- making, amending, revoking, re-enacting or adopting bylaws and promoting or opposing the making of local legislation or personal Bills
- determining, or delegating to a committee or an officer, all local choice functions set out in part 3 of this constitution which the Council decides should be undertaken by itself rather than the Cabinet
- all other matters which by law, must be reserved to the Council

Policy Framework

The current Policy Framework consists of the following plans and strategies (together with such other plans, strategies and policies that the Council determines should be adopted or approved by them):

- Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives
- Early Help Strategy
- Youth Justice Plan
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy (Gateshead Community Safety Board Partnership Plan)
- Local Transport Plan
- Local Development Plan and associated documents
- Housing Strategy and associated plans
- Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and associated documents
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Joint Municipal Waste Strategy
- Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Budget Plan and Capital Programme
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Environmental Policy
- Supporting policies including
- Policy Statement of Principles on Gambling
- Statement of Licensing Policy

It is notable that under the current governance arrangements all councillors have collective responsibility and are the ultimate policy-makers and determine, as a council, the budget and Policy Framework.

It should also be noted that within the forthcoming Mayoral North East Combined Authority participating members from this council will have additional roles on a variety of committees, yet to be determined. The implications for members, with regards to the devolution of power and functions from central government, coupled with an increase in the scrutiny role, will, without doubt, add to the current caseload of councillors required to sit on the various committees, boards and bodies which will be created following the formation of the Combined Authority.

Cabinet

The Cabinet is headed by the Leader of the Council, which is considered a full-time role. It consists of nine additional councillors who are appointed by the Leader. The Cabinet meets formerly on a monthly basis and provides political leadership and direction across the whole range of council services and considers all policy issues. These meetings are open to the public and press to attend.

The Cabinet collectively makes decisions on most council services within the budget and Policy Framework on behalf of the Council and can make recommendations for change to

full Council. Its meetings (like those of other council bodies) are held in public, except where confidential information is to be discussed.

If the Cabinet wishes to make a decision which is outside of the budget and Policy Framework, this must be referred to the whole Council to decide upon.

The Cabinet also has an important role in seeing that the Council's existing policies are delivered and in developing proposals for changes to policy or new policies.

All Cabinet members work collectively with other councillors to carry out their role and seek advice from the Council's Advisory Groups on policy development. They also receive reports from Overview and Scrutiny Committees on policy reviews and performance management. Cabinet members meet on a weekly basis to discuss issues.

Each Cabinet Member has an area of special responsibility – known as portfolios – which are allocated to them by the Leader of the Council.

Cabinet Members hold positions on regional committees and partnership meetings, specific to their portfolio. In addition, each member will fulfil a range of commitments with officers, community organisations, businesses and partners. Role expectations and obligations for Cabinet Members is high, with a significant amount of time allocated for the preparation and attendance of meetings, requiring their knowledge and active contribution.

Members of the Cabinet report undertaking activities related to their elected role amounting to between 20 – 55 hours per week, depending upon the requirements of their portfolio at any given time. It is notable that some Cabinet Members also have outside employment and undertake their portfolio responsibilities on top of that work (eg Teacher, Secretary).

Given the significant strain on the Council's budget, the Leader has created a small group of Cabinet members to consider a Finance Portfolio. The Deputy Leader and members for Children & Young People and Housing meet every 3-4 weeks and considers an agenda dealing with reports relevant to the Council and Housing Revenue Accounts (HRA) and considering budget setting, both in year and future years.

There are a number of strategy days held each year bringing together Cabinet members and Senior Officers from the Corporate Management team.

Portfolios

Portfolio Holders are grouped with other members of the Cabinet with similar portfolios, for example, the Children & Young People portfolio holder is supported by the Adult Social Care and the Health and Wellbeing portfolio holders, whilst the member for Housing is supported by the Economy and the Environment and Transport portfolio holders.

The portfolio teams meet on a weekly basis to discuss portfolio related matters.

Current portfolios:

- Adult Social Care
- Children & Young People
- Communities & Volunteering
- Culture, Sport & Leisure
- Economy
- Environment & Transport
- Health & Wellbeing
- Housing

Portfolio	Responsibilities
<p style="text-align: center;">Leader</p>	<p>Overall strategy and policy (including direction and transformation) programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications • Finance • Governance • HR (including health and safety) • Inclusion and equalities • Local democracy • Relationships (partnerships, international, national, sub-national and regional) • Resilience • Strategic economic growth (including major regeneration projects) • Transformation through technology
<p style="text-align: center;">Deputy Leader (Cabinet Member)</p>	<p>Deputising for the Leader of the Council at appropriate meetings (eg regional, sub-regional etc). Specific responsibility for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset Management • Business continuity and risk • Customer Services • Performance • Traded services • Transformation Programme. • Poverty
<p style="text-align: center;">Adult Social Care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment, commissioning & provision of adult social care • Independent living • Older people; people with learning/physical disabilities (including domiciliary care and day care meals and shopping services) • Re-enablement • Residential/nursing care • Safeguarding adults & protecting/supporting vulnerable adults • Supporting carers.
<p style="text-align: center;">Children & Young People</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment, commissioning and provision of children's services • Child poverty • Inclusion (children with SEND) • Health and Well-being Board • Early Help • Early years, children's centres and corporate parenting (LAC, CP, CIN) • Safeguarding and family support (FamiliesGateshead) • Health services for children in our care • Schools and education • Fostering • Youth services and raising aspiration.

Communities & Volunteering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cemeteries and Crematoria • Capacity building • Community and resident engagement • Community Centres • Community safety (crime reduction; fear of crime; victim support; domestic violence; anti-social behaviour, hate crime) • Co-ordination of neighbourhood issues (including pest control and dog wardens; allotments; street lighting; highway maintenance) • Licensing • Neighbourhood management • Volunteering • Waste disposal/management.
Culture, Sport & Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts • Cultural opportunities • Events • Heritage • Leisure • Libraries • Museums • Physical activity • Sport
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital inclusion/broadband (external) • Employment support • Financial inclusion • Graduate retention • Indigenous business growth and diversification • Inward investment • Rural economy • Skills (including apprenticeships) • Tourism and profile promotion.
Environment & Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality and noise • Climate change • Countryside parks and open spaces • Energy management and carbon reduction • Highway asset management • Natural environment • Parking policy • Planning and building control • Road safety promotion • Spatial planning • Sustainable transport • Transport network • Transport strategy.
Health & Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental health (food safety) • Health checks • Health and Wellbeing Board • Health inequalities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JSNA • Mental health issues • Health trainers • Preventative health services • Promoting healthy lifestyles (activity and eating) • Public health • Tobacco, drugs and alcohol.
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptations • Homelessness • Housing growth • Housing management • Housing needs, policy and strategy • Private sector housing (including affordable housing and landlord licensing) • Supported housing.

Delegation of Functions

Part 3 of the constitution explains who is responsible for the various functions of the Council and sets out the delegation scheme that applies with regards to those functions:

- Non-executive functions
 - These are functions which, under law, may not be the responsibility of the executive. In some cases, such as adopting the Council's budget or the policy framework, only the full Council meeting may take the decision. In other cases, the Council may delegate the responsibility for taking the decision to a committee or a manager.
- 'Local Choice' functions
 - There are some functions which the Council may treat as being the responsibility of the executive (in part or whole) or as being non-executive, at its discretion.
- Executive functions
 - All other functions are executive functions. Decisions on these functions will be taken by the Cabinet unless they are dealt with under joint arrangements or delegated, under this constitution, to a manager. Details of such delegations are set out in.

The Rules apply in relations to delegation:

- (i) Where a function (whether executive or non-executive) is delegated to a committee or any other body, or to a manager, the body or person that delegated the function may direct in any particular case that the delegation is not to apply, and may determine the matter himself/herself/itself.
- (ii) A committee or other body, or a manager, to whom any function (whether executive or non-executive) is delegated, is not obliged to exercise that delegation and may report to the Council or the Cabinet (as the case may be) or any other appropriate body on any delegated matter.

Appendix 2, contains Schedule 1 of the schedule of delegations within the constitution. This sets out the non-executive delegated functions to Council Bodies. Appendix 3 contains Schedule 3 of the schedule of delegations within the constitution. This sets out the delegated Local Choice functions to Council Bodies.

Also within the constitution, but not appended to this document are the following schedule of delegations:

- Schedule 2 Non-Executive Functions – Delegations to Managers
- Schedule 4 Executive Functions dealt with under Joint Arrangements (contained in body of relevant section below)
- Schedule 5 Executive Functions delegated to Managers

Regulatory and other Committees

The Council appoints Committees to undertake a variety of regulatory and other functions that are the responsibility of the Council. These Committees are set out below:-

Name of Committee	Audit & Standards
Composition	<p>Consists of 10 members as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 councillors, of whom no more than 2 may be members of the Cabinet (and may not be the Leader) • 3 persons who are not councillors or officers of the Council (independent members) • 1 member of Lamesley Parish Council nominated by that Council (parish member) who will be invited to attend for standards issues only <p>The Council will appoint members of the Audit and Standards Committee at its annual meeting and will appoint one of the councillors to be chair of the committee.</p> <p>There are currently 5 Labour members and 2 Liberal Democrat members.</p>
Function	<p>Promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct by councillors, co-opted members and church and parent governor representatives;</p> <p>Assisting the councillors, co-opted members and church and parent governor representatives to observe the Council's adopted Code of Conduct;</p> <p>Advising the Council on the adoption or revision of the Code of Conduct;</p> <p>Monitoring the Code of Conduct;</p> <p>Advising, training or arranging to train councillors, co-opted members and church and parent governor representatives on matters relating to the Code of Conduct;</p> <p>Granting dispensations to councillors, co-opted members and church and parent governor representatives from requirements relating to interests set out in the Code of Conduct;</p> <p>Dealing with any reports including investigations from the Monitoring Officer;</p>

	<p>And the exercise of the above in relation to Lamesley Parish Council and its members.</p> <p>The specific delegations to the Audit and Standards Committee have been set out in Part 3, Schedule 1 of the Constitution.</p>
Name of Committee	Accounts
Composition	<p>Consists of 3 Councillors which includes the Leader.</p> <p>There are currently 2 Labour members and 1 Liberal Democrat member.</p>
Function	The committee approves the Council's annual statement of accounts and statement on internal control.

Name of Committee	<p>Appeals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Education grants; ○ Housing, including exclusion from the housing register, introductory tenancies, deferred applications for rehousing and homeless appeals; ○ Adaptations for disabled people ○ Charges ○ Access to personal files ○ Marriage premises
Composition	<p>Consists of Chair and Vice Chair plus 19 Councillors. No Cabinet members sit on this Committee.</p> <p>There are currently 16 Labour members and 5 Liberal Democrats members.</p> <p>Depending on the type of appeal, either 3 or 5 councillors sit on each hearing, drawn from a committee of 22 councillors.</p>
Function	<p>The Appeals Committee has delegated power:</p> <p>To determine appeals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • against decisions on the award of discretionary financial assistance to students • from introductory tenants against decisions to end their tenancies • from persons who have been excluded from the housing register or whose application for re-housing has been deferred; • against decisions relating to homelessness • against decisions regarding adaptations to dwellings occupied by disabled persons

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • against refusal by the Director of Adult Services or Director of Children’s Services to waive or amend discretionary charges • against the decisions to remove a medical priority for housing • against decisions of the Council to use mandatory grounds of possession in anti-social behaviour cases • against Council decisions relating to charging and financial assessment for adult care and support services • against decisions relating to home to school and college travel. <p>To determine any other appeal where the Council’s policies provide a right of appeal against a decision made by or on behalf of the authority, except where the matter is the responsibility of the Personnel Appeals Committee.</p>
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Name of Committee	Gateshead Health & Wellbeing Board
Composition	<p>Consists of 10 Members including the Chair and Vice-Chair.</p> <p>There currently are 9 Labour members and 1 Liberal Democrat member.</p> <p>There are also an additional 14 non-Council members.</p>
Function	<p>Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs) are responsible for overseeing and coordinating local NHS, social care and public health services</p> <p>Please see further details below</p>

Name of Committee	Licensing
Composition	<p>Consists of 15 Members including the Chair and Vice-Chair.</p> <p>There currently are 12 Labour members and 3 Liberal Democrat members.</p> <p>The Licensing and Regulatory Committees will have the same membership.</p>
Function	<p>The Licensing Committee will exercise all the powers and duties of the Council under the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005, except for those functions which are reserved to the Council.</p> <p>The Licensing Committee may arrange for any functions that it exercises to be discharged by:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(a) a sub-committee established by it;</p>

	<p>(b) an officer of the Council as Licensing authority in accordance with the Statement of Licensing Policy approved by the Council from time to time</p> <p>The Committee will submit a report to the Council on any such arrangements that it may make</p> <p>Where the Licensing Committee exercises the function of determining any application or similar matter, it will do so through a Sub-Committee.</p>
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Name of Committee	Regulatory
Composition	<p>Consists of 15 Members including the Chair and Vice-Chair.</p> <p>There currently are 12 Labour members and 3 Liberal Democrat members.</p> <p>The Licensing and Regulatory Committees will have the same membership.</p>
Function	<p>To determine licensing applications in the following areas, where there has been a refusal to grant, renew, vary or transfer a licence to where there are relevant objections to such applications; and to consider the revocation of existing licences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • animal boarding establishments • dangerous wild animals • dog breeding establishments • hypnotism • motor salvage operators • pet shops • pleasure boats and navigators • sex establishments • street collections • street trading • scrap metal dealers <p>To grant and renew licences for Hackney Carriages, Hackney Carriage Drivers, Private Hire Vehicles and Private Hire Operators (including Dual Driver licences) where the application does not meet the Council's standard conditions, but having regard to all relevant information, it is determined that the individual circumstances justify deviation from policy;</p> <p>To vary, suspend and revoke such licences where, having regard all relevant information, it is determined that in individual circumstances it is appropriate to do so;</p> <p>To deal with all applications for approved marriage premises status;</p> <p>To deal with control and enforcement of the law relating to safety at sports grounds;</p>

	To deal with any licence and registration which is not delegated to any other body.
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Name of Committee	Rights of way
Composition	<p>Consists of 7 Members including the Chair and vice chair.</p> <p>There currently are 5 Labour members and 2 Liberal Democrat members.</p>
Function	<p>To create, stop up and divert footpaths and bridleways;</p> <p>To assert and protect the rights of the public to use and enjoyment of highways;</p> <p>To remove things so deposited on highways as to be a nuisance;</p> <p>To keep the Council's definite map and statement under review;</p> <p>To Reclassify roads used as public paths; and</p> <p>To discharge any other function which is classed as a function relating to public rights of way in Part I Schedule 1 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended).</p>

Name of Committee	Planning and Development
Composition	<p>Consists of 23 Members including the Chair and vice chair.</p> <p>There currently are 18 Labour members and 5 Liberal Democrat members.</p> <p>The Planning and Development and Appeals Committees will as far as possible consist of one member per ward.</p>
Function	<p>The Planning and Development Committee meets to consider major planning applications and decisions.</p> <p>To exercise the powers and duties of the Council as local planning authority under the following legislation (or any statutory modification or re-enactment) and any statutory instruments made under the legislation: a. Part III and Part XV Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – control over development; b. Part VII Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – enforcement; c. Part VIII Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – trees, land adversity affecting amenity and the control of advertisements; d. Part XIII Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – Crown Land; e. Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990; f. The Town</p>

	<p>and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1998.</p> <p>To exercise the powers and duties of the Council under the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990</p> <p>To exercise the powers and duties of the Council as Local Planning Authority under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997;</p> <p>To respond to waste management licence consultations from the Environment Agency</p> <p>To respond to consultations from other local planning authorities and from Government departments and agencies relating to development management matters</p> <p>To determine the conditions to which old mining permissions, relevant planning permissions relating to dormant sites or active Phase I or II sites, or mineral permissions relating to mining sites are to be subject;</p> <p>To exercise the powers of the Council to make limestone pavement orders under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981;</p> <p>To exercise the powers of the Council: 58 a. to register common land or town or village greens, except where the power is exercisable solely for the purpose of giving effect to an exchange of lands under the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 or an order under the Inclosure Act 1845; and b. to register variation of rights of common land.</p> <p>To exercise the powers of the Council under the Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations 2017 to prepare and maintain a register of previously developed land.</p> <p>To exercise the powers of the Council under the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and The Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) Order 2017 to allocate land to Part 2 of the Council's register of previously adopted land.</p> <p>To exercise the powers of the Council under the Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) (Amendment) Order 2017 to determine applications for permission in principle and technical details consent.</p>
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Name of Committee	Personnel appeals
Composition	7 Members plus Chair and vice chair
Function	To determine any appeal from an employee of the Council relating to conditions of service, promotion, demotion or

	dismissal, or disciplinary action including dismissal, or arising from the Council's grievance procedure.
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Name of Committee	Contracts
Composition	Consists of 5 members, including the Chair. There currently are 4 Labour members and 1 Liberal Democrat member.
Function	To negotiate and agree individual contracts of service with the Chief Executive, Strategic Directors and Service Directors; To agree the remuneration of the Chief Executive, Strategic Directors and Service Directors; To appraise the performance of the Chief Executive and arrange for the appraisal of Strategic Directors and Service Directors.

Name of Committee	Special Appointments
Composition	Consists of 15 Members including the Chair and Vice Chair, with 6 Cabinet and 9 non-Cabinet members. There currently are 12 Labour members and 3 Liberal Democrat members.
Function	In accordance with the Employee Recruitment Rules, the Committee has delegated power: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) in relation to the appointment of the Head of Paid Service, to select a short list of candidates, to interview candidates and make a recommendation to the Council (ii) in relation to appointments to Chief Officer posts (as defined in the Employee Recruitment Rules) to select a short list of candidates, interview candidates and make the appointment; or, if considered appropriate, to fill the post by appointing an existing employee in circumstances where no reorganisation of a service is involved. The Special Appointments Committee may appoint one or two additional non-voting Cabinet members to the Committee in relation to any particular appointment.

Name of Committee	Pensions and Pay Discretions Sub-Committee
Composition	Consists of 4 Members including the Chair (the Leader).

	There currently are 3 Labour members and 1 Liberal Democrat member.
Function	<p>To determine:</p> <p>requests from former employees or their spouses to access their deferred pensions on an unreduced or partially reduced basis</p> <p>cases relating to employer discretions where added years have been awarded under Regulations 21, 22 and 25 of the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2000 or preceding regulations</p> <p>discretionary pension issues which are not subject to other delegations set out in Part 3 of the Council's constitution</p> <p>requests from employees to extend periods of half and full sick pay.</p>

The Health and Wellbeing Board

Pursuant to the Health and Social Care Act 2012, the Council has a role in local health services, which includes appointing a Director of Public Health and establishing a Health and Wellbeing Board with a duty to encourage integrated working.

Article 11 of the constitution requires the Council to establish and maintain a Health and Wellbeing Board. The Board meets, as a minimum, on a 6 weekly basis and is made up of 10 members, including the chair and Vice Chair, as well as relevant internal and external stakeholders.

Role and Functions:

- to lead on the production of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment;
- to lead on the production of a Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy;
- for the purpose of advancing the health and wellbeing of children and adults in Gateshead, encourage integration in the provision of health, education and social care in its area;
- provide such advice, assistance or other support as the Health and Wellbeing Board considers appropriate for the purpose of encouraging the making of arrangements under Section 75 of the National Health Service Act 2006 and the Children and Social Work Act 2017 in the provision of health and social care services;
- to encourage persons who arrange for the provision of any health-related services in its area to work closely with the Health and Wellbeing Board;
- to encourage persons who arrange for the provision of health, education and social care services in its area and persons who arrange for the provision of any health-related services in its area to work closely together;
- provide an opinion to the Council on whether the Council is complying with its duty to have regard to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy;
- to exercise any other function that the Council requires the Health and Wellbeing Board to undertake on behalf of the Council;

- to ensure the delivery of better health and wellbeing outcomes for children and adults, and improve the quality of education and care as well as to ensure value for money
- to provide strategic direction on the wider determinants of health in order to create the conditions where people's health and wellbeing is able to thrive;
- to provide strategic direction on addressing inequalities across our local population through targeted support for our most disadvantaged citizens;
- to promote equity of health and wellbeing, working with local communities and local partners; and
- m) to promote the primacy of place in health and care decision making so that it is as close to communities as possible, liaising with broader health and care geographies towards this end

The Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board has monthly meetings with the Chief Executive, the Leader of the Council, three strategic directors, the Director of Public Health and four service directors across a range of services, as well as involvement in taking forward projects and joint pieces of work. The Chair also meets regularly with Chief Executives from across a range of other organisations (VCSE, FT Hospital etc).

Joint Arrangements

Non-executive functions – The Council may establish joint arrangements with one or more local authorities and/or their executives to exercise functions which are not executive functions in any of the participating authorities, or to advise the Council.

Executive Functions – The Cabinet may establish joint arrangements with one or more local authorities to exercise functions which are executive functions.

Details of joint arrangements including delegations to joint committees are found in the Council's scheme of delegations in part 3 of the constitution (Schedule 4 – see tables below).

Delegation to and from other local authorities:

- The Council may delegate non-executive functions to another local authority or, in certain circumstances, the executive of another local authority
- The Cabinet may delegate executive functions to another local authority or the executive of another local authority in certain circumstances
- The decision whether or not to accept such a delegation from another local authority is reserved to the Council meeting.

Appointments to joint committees will be made by

- The Council, where all the functions of the joint committee are the responsibility of the Council
- The Council with the agreement of the Cabinet, where some of the functions of the joint committee are the responsibility of the council and some are the responsibility of the Cabinet
- The Cabinet, where all of the functions of the joint committee are the responsibility of the Cabinet

Where the Council makes the appointment, then:

- If the authority has only one seat on the joint committee, the person appointed need not be a Cabinet member
- If the authority has more than one seat on the joint committee, at least one Cabinet member must be appointed

Where the Cabinet makes the appointment, then:

- If the joint committee is discharging a function in relation to one or more local authority or which is required by statute to be discharged by a joint committee, non-Cabinet members as well as Cabinet members may be appointed
- In other circumstances, Cabinet members may be appointed
- The political balance restrictions do not apply

The list below briefly describes those executive functions that are delegated to a joint committee, with details of any advisory joint committee set to advise the authorities concerned (and/or their executives) on the discharge of such functions.

Function	Body
Archives	Management of the Authority's archives functions; Tyne and Wear Archives and Museum Joint Strategic Board
Trading Standards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordination of enforcement functions • Management of the Tyne and Wear Metrology Laboratory 	Tyne and Wear Trading Standards Joint Committee. This Chaired by Gateshead Councillor.
Management of the Shipley Art Gallery	Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums Board
Purchasing through a consortium of local authorities	Association of North East Councils Ltd (Collaborative Procurement Subcommittee)
Management of the Mountsett Crematorium	Mountsett Crematorium Joint Committee
Shared Waste Management Arrangements	South of Tyne and Wear Waste Management Partnership
Policy and service delivery of fire and rescue services.	Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue Authority
Control of the Pension Fund.	Tyne & Wear Pension Fund Committee
Negotiation and liaison between local government employers and employees.	The North East Regional Employers Organisation (NEREO)

In terms of the commitment required of the appointed councillors on these external bodies, for example:

Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue Authority

Three councillors represent Gateshead Council on the Fire Authority. It meets 9 times per year with a further three sub-committees, one of which is chaired by a Gateshead Cabinet member. There is an ongoing member training programme which aims to keep members informed about changing legislation, community safety and service response across Tyne and Wear. Each member is also linked to at least one fire station in Gateshead.

Tyne and Wear Pension Fund Committee

Two councillors are members of the Committee (one as a substitute). They both read the papers for the quarterly meetings and often both attend. Pensions is a complex subject and both the full member and substitute undertake the full range of member training (around 60 hours per year) provided by the Fund.

The North East Regional Employers Organisation (NEREO)

This is a body funded and operated jointly by the 12 local authorities in the region. It acts as a Regional Employers' Organisation to support negotiation and liaison between local government employers and employees through the North East Provincial Council.

The Governance of NEREO is carried out by an Executive Committee made up of Elected Member representatives from each of the 12 regional local authorities. Three councillors are members of this body as Gateshead representatives, with one acting in the role of Vice Chair. This requires a significant time commitment from members both in terms of reading in preparation for meetings and in attending quarterly meetings. Meetings of the North East Provincial Council are twice a year.

Advisory Joint Committees

Function	Body
To advise Gateshead and Newcastle Councils on management and maintenance on cross-Tyne bridges	Joint Bridges Committee

The North East Combined Authority

Currently, the North East Combined Authority is the legal body that brings together the four councils which serve County Durham, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland. The decision making and scrutiny functions are undertaken by the Leadership Board, the Audit & Standards Committee, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Economic, Development and Digital Advisory Board.

- Leadership Board
 - The NECA Leadership Board is the strategic decision-making body of the North East Combined Authority, responsible for a number of transport functions and economic development and growth. It is comprised of the four Leaders of the four constituent local authorities, plus the Chair of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership. The Leadership Board exercises statutory functions and general powers relating to economic development and growth, economic conditions and transport. It aims to achieve a number of key improvements across the area.
- Audit & Standards Committee (and Sub-Committee)
 - The Audit and Standards Committee is a key component of the North East Combined Authority's corporate governance arrangements and is an important source of assurance about the organisation's arrangements for managing risk, maintaining an effective control environment and reporting on financial and other performance, and for the promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct by its elected and co-opted members.
 - The Audit and Standards Sub-Committee
 - The Sub-Committee that deals with applications from members and co-opted members for dispensation from requirements relating to interests as set out in the Members' Code of Conduct

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee (and Call-In Sub-Committee)
 - Effective scrutiny arrangements are an essential part of local democracy, enhancing accountability and transparency of decision-making and enabling local councillors to represent the views of their constituents. These arrangements have been established to enable local councillors, on behalf of their communities, to scrutinise and challenge all matters within the remit of the Combined Authority. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee also investigates matters of significant importance to residents within the areas covered by the four councils with a view to influencing decisions made in respect of all matters within the remit of the Combined Authority.
 - The Overview and Scrutiny Call-In Sub-Committee
The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Call-In Sub-Committee is to exercise the power to call-in decisions of the NECA that have been made but not yet implemented. The purpose of call-in is to consider whether to recommend that a decision be reviewed by the decision taker and is used only where members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee have evidence which suggests that the decision was not taken in accordance with the principles of decision making.

- Economic, Development and Digital Advisory Board
 - The Economic Development and Digital Advisory Board (previously Economic Development and Regeneration Advisory Board) is a committee which advises the NECA Leadership Board on economic strategy, project pipelines, funding and future priorities and monitors and oversees collaborative initiatives to promote inward investment. Councillors from the four constituent councils and representatives of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership, North East Chamber of Commerce, Confederation of British Industry, Federation of Small Businesses and Trade Union Congress form the membership of the Advisory Board.

Once devolution takes place, NECA will merge with the North of Tyne Combined Authority.

The North East Joint Transport Committee

The North East Joint Transport Committee brings together a total of seven members from each of the Constituent Authorities of the region. Transport is of strategic importance to the North East, and the collaborative working allows effective decision making across the region, which ensures that the local needs and priorities are delivered.

The Leader and Deputy Leader are members of the Committee with four additional Gateshead Councillors sitting on the sub-committees:

- Joint Transport Committee Audit Committee
 - A key component of the corporate governance arrangements and is an important source of assurance about the organisation's arrangements for managing risk, maintaining an effective control environment; and reporting on financial and other performance.

- Joint Transport Committee Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 - Scrutiny arrangements are an essential component of local democracy, enhancing accountability and transparency of decision making and enabling local councillors to represent the views of their constituents

- These arrangements have been established to enable local councillors, on behalf of their communities, to scrutinise and challenge the Joint Transport Committee, its committees and Nexus, and to investigate matters of strategic importance to residents within the LA7 Area with a view to influencing and adding value to the decisions.
- Joint Transport Committee Tyne and Wear Sub Committee
 - On behalf of the Joint Transport Committee, the Tyne and Wear Sub Committee focuses on the Tyne and Wear area and in particular on the issues that would have formerly been decided by the Tyne and Wear Integrated Transport Authority.

Parish Council

There is only one Parish Council within the borough, namely Lamesley Parish Council. This consists of 15 elected members, based on 4 year terms. There are all out elections every 4 years which are mainly uncontested. The Parish Council only covers 43.4% of the residents within the Lamesley Ward, amounting to 2.2% of residents within the borough.

Scrutiny Functions

The Council's scrutiny function forms an integral part of the Council's decision-making process. Scrutiny acts as a critical friend to the Executive by reviewing policy development and performance, with the aim to improve outcomes for residents of Gateshead. Scrutiny plays an important role in reviewing Council policies, matters of general concern, and seeks to make recommendations to the Executive. The creation of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees is set out in Article 6 of the constitution.

Overview and Scrutiny Committees

There are four Overview and Scrutiny committees which support the work of the Cabinet and the Council as a whole. They make recommendations and reports to the Cabinet and the Council on its policies, budget and service delivery. They may comment on forthcoming decisions on policies and budgets which are in the course of development.

Overview and Scrutiny committees also monitor the decisions of the Cabinet. They can 'call in' a decision which has been made by the Cabinet but not yet implemented and, if they think it appropriate, may ask the Cabinet to think again. They can also hold reviews and inquiries into matters of local concern, involving other agencies in Gateshead as well as the Council.

The following principles govern the Overview and Scrutiny function in the Council:

- It will be an integral part of the Council's framework, working within it not outside or against it
- It will be a constructive process which is open and accountable
- It will work alongside the other parts of the Council's structure in making a contribution to policy
- It will enhance rather than duplicate activity
- It will look outwards to broader issues affecting local people rather than just internal Council issues

Within these principles, the Overview and Scrutiny committees will:

- Review decisions, holding decision makers to account
- Call in executive decisions in accordance with the procedure set out in the Overview and Scrutiny Rules
- Contribute to the policy-making process through:
 - Policy reviews agreed as part of the service planning cycle
 - Advice given to the Cabinet as part of the Council's performance management framework
 - Examining issues in the Council's schedule of decisions
 - Ensure other agencies, public and private, play their part in accordance with the Council's protocol

The allocation of seats on Overview and Scrutiny Committees is in accordance with political balance Rules, the appointment of councillors on Overview and Scrutiny Committees and appointment of the Chairs and Vice-Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committees takes place in the annual meeting of the Full Council.

Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee will draw up a work programme based on the Cabinet's Policy Framework. The work programme will be agreed annually by the Council as part of the policy planning process. In drawing up work programmes, Committees will take account of the aims and objectives of the Scrutiny function as set out in Article 6.02 of the constitution.

The work programme should have regard to:

- The Council's Policy Framework
- The resources available
- Time constraints
- The need for flexibility
- The interests of the local community
- The concerns of all members of the committee.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committees will also respond, as soon as their work programme permits, to requests from the Council or Cabinet to review particular areas of Council activity.

Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee will meet 7 times per year and are listed for approximately 3 hours to ensure Members can effectively scrutinise the reports presented by Officers.

In the lead up to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting, the Chair and Vice Chair will hold a briefing meeting with presenting Officers to discuss the proposed agenda / reports. This is to ensure any outstanding issues are addressed prior to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee taking place.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committees

Name of Committee	Care, Health and Wellbeing
Composition	Consists of 18 Members including Chair & Vice Chair.
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health services for adults and Overview of health services for children and young people • Social services (except those for children and young people) • Overview of functions discharged under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 or any other enactment in relation to the planning provision and operation of the health service in the area.
Function	<p>To perform the Overview and Scrutiny role in relation to:</p> <p>all the functions of the Council as a social services authority except those services provided to children and young people</p> <p>the provision of health services in the Borough, including the function of reviewing and scrutinising matters relating to the health service to adults as set out in the Health and Social Care Act 2001 and associated regulations</p> <p>the provision of health services to children and young people in the borough</p> <p>the health functions discharged by the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Director of Public Health under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and the National Health Service Act 2006 (as amended) and any related enactment</p>

Name of Committee	Families
Composition	Consists of 18 Members, including the Chair and Vice Chair (plus 6 independents – 1 Church of England diocesan representative, 1 Roman Catholic diocesan representative and 4 parent governor representatives)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Social services for children and young people • Health services for children and young people • Children in the Council's care
Function	<p>To perform the Overview and Scrutiny role in relation to the Council's functions:</p> <p>as an education authority;</p> <p>in respect of the provision of social services, and other services to children and young people, including specific health services for children and young people (including the function of reviewing and scrutinising matters relating to the health service as set out on the Health and Social Care Act 2001 and associated regulations).</p> <p>to receive and consider monitoring reports on children in the Council's care.</p> <p>to keep under review the Council's arrangements for ensuring that the Council fulfils its role as corporate parent.</p>

Name of Committee	Housing, Environment, Healthier Communities
Composition	Consists of 18 Members including Chair & Vice Chair (4 Housing Scrutiny Panel representatives and 2 Housing Assurance Board representatives – non-voting)
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic development • Lifelong learning • Culture, including leisure • Community safety • Housing including buildings and service compliance and performance monitoring • Homelessness, locality management and housing development • Physical development and regeneration • Transport planning and public transport • Local environment • Protection of the environment
Function	<p>To perform the Overview and Scrutiny role in relation to:</p> <p>economic development and vitality</p>

	<p>lifelong learning including education, training and learning outside the school environment; people into work</p> <p>culture, leisure, the arts, sports and recreation</p> <p>the safety of communities and people in the Borough</p> <p>matters relating to housing, including management and maintenance of the Council's housing stock and private housing stock</p> <p>the physical development and regeneration of the area</p> <p>transport planning and the promotion of public transport</p> <p>the quality of the local environment, including refuse collection, street cleaning, ground maintenance, highway maintenance and the cleaning of Council buildings</p> <p>the protection of the environment, including Climate Change</p> <p>Homelessness, rough sleeping and asylum matters</p>
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Name of Committee	Corporate Resources
Composition	Consists of 18 Members including Chair & 2 x Vice Chair.
Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of resources • Supporting democracy and involving local people • Social inclusion • Equalities and diversity Efficiency, VFM and procurement • Community capacity building • Volunteering and resilience
Function	<p>To perform the Overview and Scrutiny role in relation to:</p> <p>the management of the Council's financial, human and physical resources</p> <p>support for the democratic process</p> <p>the involvement of the people and communities of Gateshead in the work of the Council</p> <p>capacity building in communities, volunteering and resilience</p> <p>social inclusion, equalities and diversity</p> <p>the Council's arrangements for securing efficiency and value for money; and the development and operation of the Council's procurement strategy.</p>

Advisory Groups

The Cabinet will draw on the advice and experience of non-Cabinet members of the Council and will involve them constructively in the process of policy formulation. To this end, the Cabinet will establish a series of Advisory Groups consisting of non-Cabinet (including opposition) members.

The Cabinet will, initially establish the advisory groups and appoint their members at the Cabinet's first meeting following the Annual Council meeting, taking into account the wishes of the political groups.

The Cabinet may vary the number of councillors to be appointed to an advisory group and may also establish time-limited advisory groups.

In general terms, the purpose of advisory groups is to enable the Cabinet to seek advice, in an informal setting, from a broad group of Council members before a firm line is fixed. Meetings of advisory groups will be held in response to a request from the Cabinet for advice on a specific issue or issues; meetings should focus on discussing the issue and giving advice rather than arriving at a formal resolution.

All members of the Council are invited to attend meetings of the Corporate Resources and Policy Advisory Groups.

The advisory group system is the primary means by which the Cabinet carries out consultation within the Council.

In addition, the Cabinet may:

- request advice from all councillors on issues where there are ward implications
- refer any matter to the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny committee for it to consider and report on
- consult with any councillor or members of the Council on any matter

There are two advisory groups based on corporate resources and policy areas, as follows:

Advisory Group	Membership
Corporate Resources	All members of the Council to be invited to attend meetings.
Policy	All members of the Council to be invited to attend meetings

The Corporate Resources Advisory Group will be chaired by the Leader of the Council.

The Policy Advisory Group will be chaired by a councillor nominated by the Leader of the Council from the development pool.

Other advisory groups will be established as follows:

Advisory Group	Membership
The Thrive Fund (previously known as the Capacity Building Fund)	7 (2 Cabinet, 5 non-Cabinet)

Honours Advisory Group	12 (4 Cabinet, 8 non-Cabinet)
Ward Liaison Groups (1 per ward)	3 (ward councillors)

Strategic Housing Board

The Council has established the Strategic Housing Board which is a formal advisory committee.

It will consider a range of proposals relating to housing strategy, tackling homelessness, enabling independent living, promoting residential growth, policies relating to all housing sectors, and the contribution housing needs to make towards the Council's Thrive ambition and delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

The Strategic Housing Board consists of 21 members as follows:

- Fifteen councillors (including the Chair and Vice Chair) appointed by the Council
- Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board
- Chair of the Community Safety Partnership
- Three tenant representatives
- Three partner representatives.

The Council may appoint such other persons or representatives as it thinks appropriate having consulted the Strategic Housing Board. The Strategic Housing Board may itself appoint such additional persons to be members of the Strategic Housing Board as it thinks appropriate.

Each member of the Strategic Housing Board is entitled to vote at meetings.

The political balance rules apply to the Strategic Housing Board.

The Board meets on a bi-monthly basis or at such other times as the Strategic Housing Board may determine.

The Strategic Housing Board may appoint one or more sub-committees to advise the Strategic Housing Board with regard to any matter relating to the discharge of its functions.

As a formal advisory Committee of the Council, the Strategic Housing Board will consider and make recommendations on a range of proposals relating to:

- Housing Strategy
- Residential and affordable housing development
- Area based and housing led regeneration proposals and plans
- Tackling homelessness, rough sleeping and specialist housing provision
- Independent living
- Ensuring regulatory and statutory compliance for the Council's homes
- The management and maintenance of the Council's homes
- Private sector housing
- Locality planning, sustainability and management
- Waste, environmental and community safety management
- Social inclusion and community development
- The tenant and wider community voice
- Housing related planning policies and guidance
- Partnership working with key stakeholders

- Bids, relevant funding and investment plans
- Housing's contribution to the delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Thrive ambition

External Scrutiny roles

Police and Crime Panel

The five Tyne and Wear Councils and Northumberland County Council have established the Northumbria Police and Crime Panel as required by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. The Panel scrutinises the performance of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and also promotes openness in the delivery of police services throughout Northumbria.

The Panel is currently Chaired by Gateshead Councillor, Angela Douglas, Cabinet Member for Culture, Sport & Leisure. A second Gateshead Councillor also sits on the Panel which meets on a monthly basis.

The Panel's powers and responsibilities include:

- Reviewing the draft Police and Crime Plan
- Publicly scrutinising the PCC's annual report
- Reviewing and scrutinising decisions and actions of the PCC
- Reviewing and vetoing the PCC's proposed precept levels
- Reviewing and confirming the PCC's proposed appointments of Chief Constable, Chief Executive, Chief Finance Officer, and Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner.

The Integrated Care Partnership

The Integrated Care Board (ICB) has been established to run the Integrated Care System (ICS), covering North Yorkshire to North Cumbria, replacing the previous system of Clinical Commissioning Groups. The strategy for the new ICS is formulated by the Integrated Care Partnership (ICP). The ICP will meet twice per year and there will be one Gateshead Council representative to meet with the representatives from each local authority, the ICB, Healthwatch and VCSE representatives. The elected member for Gateshead will be the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

There will be 4 regional sub-groups of the ICP. The North ICP will include representative from Newcastle, Gateshead,, North Tyneside and Northumberland. The Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board will be the Gateshead representative, further increasing the remit of that role.

To coordinate local delivery, there will be joint working between the Council, Health and the VCSE as well as other strategic stakeholders. Currently a sub-group of the Health and Wellbeing Board, Gateshead Cares, undertakes this function. It meets every two weeks and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board attends the meetings.

Currently Gateshead Council provides the secretariat for the regional Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the ICP and the North and Central sub ICPs. There are 3 Councillors on this Overview and Scrutiny Committee, of which one is Chair.

Overall

Under the current structure, there is a total of 197 seats on Committees (excluding Cabinet which does not have to be politically proportionate). This equates to 2.99 committee seats per councillor.

To realise the Council's vision and deliver the strategic approach of *Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives* there is a comprehensive Policy Framework, which encompasses 17 plans and strategies. The Committees undertake a robust scrutiny and decision-making process to ensure the Council achieves these aims. The workload for these Committees is consequently high, requiring Members to undertake extensive reading and preparation ahead of meetings, especially in Planning Committee, which may also require travel to site visits and engagement with Officers.

Full year data for overall Member attendance at Council, Cabinet and Committees, for municipal year 2021/22, is available at Appendix 4. Individual attendance data for Councillors during the same period is available at Appendix 5. It is recognised that the figures for attendance, whilst high for some meetings and a number of Councillors, were impacted by the continued prevalence of Covid-19 during that period.

There is a total of 66 outside bodies upon which Councillors have been nominated to represent the Council. These include, but are not limited to:

- Baltic Flour Mills Visual Arts Trust
- Northumbria Regional Flood Defence Committee
- Tyne and Wear Pension Fund
- East Gateshead Bus Alliance
- CNTW Mental Health NHS Foundation
- Tyne and Wear Trading Standards Joint Committee
- North East Procurement Organisation
- North East Combined Authority

A number of these outside bodies require the attendance of more than one Councillor, including, but not limited to:

- Port of Tyne Health Authority
- Newcastle Airport Local Authority Holding Company
- North East Joint Transport Committee
- Northumbria Police & Crime Panel
- Tyne and Wear Fire Authority

There are 37 Councillors nominated as Governors at 40 schools across the borough, with a further 11 Councillors co-opted as a Governor. 2 Councillors sit as Observers on schools within their wards.

Formal Partnerships, also require the appointment of a Councillor include:

- Community Safety Board – 1 Cabinet Member
- Gateshead Fairtrade partnership – 1 Cabinet Member
- Gateshead Schools forum – 1 Member
- Gateshead Strategic partnership – 2 Members (Leader and Deputy Leader)
- Lamesley ward – 2 Members plus Chair
- South Tyne and Wear waste management partnership – 2 Cabinet Members

There is a high number of internal and external seats which need to be filled from the pool of 66 Councillors to ensure powers, functions and scrutiny responsibilities can be administered effectively.

Representational role of councillors in the local community

Duties of Councillors

Councillors Role and Functions

The constitution sets out the key roles and the rights and duties of elected members in Article 2, paragraph 2.02:

(a) Key Roles:

All councillors will:

- (i) uphold and promote the purposes of the constitution
- (ii) collectively be the ultimate policy-makers and carry out a number of strategic and corporate management functions
- (iii) represent their communities and bring their views into the Council's decision-making processes, ie become the advocate of and for their communities
- (iv) deal with individual casework and act as an advocate for constituents in resolving particular concerns or grievances fairly and impartially
- (v) effectively represent the interests of their ward as a whole and of individual constituents
- (vi) respond to constituents' enquiries and representations
- (vii) participate in the governance and management of the Council and be involved in decision-making
- (viii) ensure that the Council meeting is a forum for the debate of matters of concern to the local community
- (ix) promote public involvement in the Council's activities 11
- (x) be available to represent the Council on other bodies
- (xi) maintain the highest standard of conduct and ethics and observe the authority's code of conduct

(b) Rights and Duties:

- (i) Councillors will have such rights of access to such documents, information, land and buildings of the Council as are necessary for the proper discharge of their functions and in accordance with the law
- (iii) Councillors will not make public information which is confidential or exempt without the consent of the Council or divulge information given in confidence to anyone other than a councillor or employee entitled to know it
- (iv) For these purposes, 'confidential' and 'exempt' information are defined in the Access to Information Rules in Part 4 of this constitution

Role and Function of the Mayor

The election of the Mayor is set out in Article 5 of the constitution. Part 4 of the constitution sets out the role and duties of the Mayor as Chair of the Council.

At its Annual Meeting the Council will appoint a Mayor and a Deputy Mayor. The Mayor will also act as the Chair of Council and the Deputy Mayor will act as the Vice Chair of Council. The role of the Mayor is not merely a traditional one, but is an onerous position requiring support.

The current Mayor is Councillor Dorothy Burnett. Councillor Burnett is currently serving a second term. She is the elected member for the Dunston & Teams Ward.

The Mayor, and in his/her absence, the Deputy Mayor, will have the following roles, functions and responsibilities;

- i) Be first citizen of the Borough of Gateshead
- ii) He/she will attend appropriate civic and ceremonial functions.
- iii) In his/her capacity as chair of the Council, the mayor will preside over meetings of the Council and interpret the Council Procedure Rules, so that its business can be carried out efficiently and with regard to the rights of councillors and the interests of the community.

Role and Function of the Leader of the Council

The responsibilities of the Leader of the Council extend to responsibility for the vision, policies, strategies and consequent decisions of the whole council.

- The Leader is the political Leader of the Council and acts as the Council's principal public spokesperson to promote the Council's vision for Gateshead and the policies and programmes adopted by the council.
- The Leader ensures the council develops and maintains a vision for the whole of Gateshead and exercises leadership in all decision-making processes to support that vision.
- The Leader ensures the effectiveness of the council.
- The Leader ensures that the exercise of all of the powers of the council and delivery of all of the services for which the council is responsible best contributes to the corporate strategies of the council.
- The Leader provides policy direction and progress the Council's corporate objectives with Committee Chairs, the Chief Executive and Chief Officers, the Leaders of other political groups on the Council, partners and other stakeholders
- The Leader has particular responsibility for council's role of community leadership and oversees effective relationships with partner organisations.
- The Leader of the Council has a particular role in the promotion of an inclusive working environment involving all members of the council and in developing and encouraging effective working relationships among councillors and officers and maintaining and promoting high standards of conduct.
- The Leader attends and participates in such civic and ceremonial functions and duties as determined by Council.

As set out above, the current Leader Councillor Gannon also leads on several national and regional bodies as well as internal committees:

External:

- Chair of the North East Joint Transport Committee
- Board member of North East Combined Authority, North East LEP, LGA Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board and Gateshead College.
- Non-Executive Director of Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust
- Chair of the Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust.
- Gateshead Strategic Partnership Steering Group (Chair)
- Northumbria Police and Crime Panel (Reserve)

Internal:

- Accounts Committee (Chair)
- Cabinet (Chair)
- Contracts Committee (Chair)

- Council
- Gateshead Health and Wellbeing Board
- Pensions and Pay Discretions Sub Committee (Chair)
- Special Appointments Committee (Chair)

The Council also appoints Member Champions to support the work of the Leader.

Current Champions:

- Armed Forces
- Cycling
- Historic Environment
- Looked After Children
- Procurement

Elected Members

Councillors have a multifaceted role, including (but not limited to):

- Communicating with constituents and undertaking case work on their behalf
- Attending internal governance and or scrutiny meetings
- Working with Officers in areas of specialism eg as a Chair of a Committee or on behalf of residents to further casework.
- Attending external meetings as the representative of Gateshead Council
- Engaging in community activities
- Undertaking roles within schools / community organisations / charities

From the Councillor engagement which has taken place for the preparation of this submission, Members report an average of between 15 – 55 hours per week on activities related to their elected role, encompassing all of the above. The time commitment required of Councillors can vary week to week depending upon the nature of the activity and their role. Members report working daily on activities connected to their elected role.

The amount of time spent on these activities is not necessarily dependent upon having a position on a Committee. Councillors in full time employment who are unable to put themselves forward for positions in Committees or as Chairs/Vice Chairs, still report spending on average over 20 hours per week on work connected to their role as a Councillor.

Of the current 66 Councillors, 34 currently declare external employment. The time spent by councillors each week on activities connected to their elected duties are on top of their employment commitments as well as caring and child-care responsibilities. Appendix 6 details a case study of the work undertaken by a Portfolio holder.

The list of activities referred to by Members included (but not limited to):

- Active case work
- Preparation and reading of reports
- Attendance at meetings – this can include:
 - Committees including OSC, joint-committees, partnerships
 - Full Council
 - Cabinet
 - Panels
 - Group
- Travel
- Site visits
- Ward related events – this can include:

- Community action meetings
- Tenant / Resident Association meetings
- Engaging with Faith Groups
- Litter picking drives
- Maintenance of public spaces
- Engaging directly with constituents
 - Surgeries (returning after the pandemic)
 - Telephone calls
 - Social media
 - Email correspondence
- School Governor activities

Within their communities, the following are examples of the type, range and scope of groups councillors are involved in:

- Community Projects (eg St Chads' Community Project)
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Friends of (eg Shipley Art Gallery, the Staithes)
- Community Associations (eg Rowland Gill, Chopwell, Greenside)
- Community initiatives (eg Bensham & Saltwell Alive, Love Dunston, Love Your Avenues)
- Community Centres (eg Ryton, Dunston, Kibblesworth Village Hall, Millennium Centre)
- Mutual Aid Group (eg Rowland Gill and Highfield)
- Cultural heritage (eg Banner Tales (heritage in villages of West Gateshead), Coatsworth Road Townscape Heritage Initiative)
- Foodbanks (eg Founder and Chair of The Felling Food Network, Bensham Court)
- Friends of parks (eg Fernedene, Chase, Saltwell)
- Trustee (eg Blaydon Youth and Community Centre, Felling Magpies Youth Football Club, Pathways 4 All, Gateshead Citizens Advice, Happy to Help – home help project, Teams and Bensham community care - lunch club for older residents, Ryton Scout Hut, North East Culture Partnership, Age UK)
- Volunteer (eg Gateshead Community Kitchens at Callendar Court, Larkspur Hub, Bensham Court Woman's Group, Barmoor Hub lunch club)
- President of Gateshead Sea Cadets
- Environmental Groups (eg Brighten Ryton, Durham Wildlife)
- Charities (eg Our Villages Crawcrook & Greenside, Aid Electrics, Foundations Furniture Project, Ryton Parochial Charity Trust)

The Member's registers of interest and their responses to a request for information show they are involved in approximately 90 outside bodies, including charities and other groups in the community. This is a mixture of Council appointments as well as volunteer, trustee and organisational roles.

Councillors also sit on the board of governors in 40 schools across the borough (39 maintained schools and 1 academy), this is a mixture of Council nominated appointments as well as co-opted members. Councillors hold 3 positions as Chair and 5 Vice-Chair roles.

The way in which councillors engage with their constituents has changed since the last review was undertaken. Previously, in 2002, whilst surgeries, telephone and, to a more limited extent, email communication was used to contact a Councillor, members of the public are making increasing use of social media to seek direct access to their Councillor.

In addition to that, councillors are making use of "pages" on social media to raise the profile of their community. In two examples, pages hosted on Facebook by councillors have

several thousand followers – the Ryton Councillor page has 1,916 followers whilst the Crawcrook residents page, hosted by the elected member, has 5,849 followers. One Councillor reports spending 30 minutes each day reviewing 4 Facebook pages connected to her ward, allowing her to identify and respond to any concerns or issues raised by residents.

One Councillor commented:

“[Facebook] attracts casework through messenger, [and] requires me to post things regularly and occasionally when something controversial crops up it can feel like I spend all day replying to people. I am also active on two significant residents’ pages and a few other pages that are less active. In the past I have counted over 250 individual residents have directly messaged me as a result of posts on these pages over the last 4 years. Some of the casework this has generated has been easily resolved some of it is very long standing. I couldn’t begin to put a value in hours on this, other than to say it is a significant workload.”

The Council has faced £179 million cuts since 2010 and this has resulted in a number of non-statutory services being cut, this is at a time when the levels of deprivation in the borough are going up. With the reduction in Officers within the Council and the removal of many services within the community, members report that constituents seek their help as they don’t have anyone else to help them. These difficult decisions must be taken by councillors and in making these decisions, they have to undertake work to understand what the proposals will mean for the residents of their ward. Consequently, Members spend a significant amount of time engaging with officers and preparing for difficult decision-making meetings.

During the period since the last review, the number of properties within the Council’s housing stock has reduced, leading to an increase in the number of privately rented properties within the borough. In 2010, the number of private rents amounted to 6% of the total housing stock, by 2021, this had risen to 24.6%. In that period (up to 30.11.22) there has been an increase in Anti-Social Behaviour complaints associated with private housing (18.7%). In just a 3 year period, 19/20 – 21/22, the number of requests for support with private-rental housing conditions has risen by 25.7%. Many of these tenants are involving their Councillor to support them during these difficult periods.

As a consequence of the cuts to services and the current cost of living crisis, councillors have seen an increase in the following types of enquiries from their constituents:

- Adult Social Care assessments
 - With the reduction in adult social care provision, Members report the diversity and complexity of queries has increased.
- Request for adaptations
- Anti-social behaviour complaints
- Housing repairs
- Environmental services – grass cutting, road repairs
- Energy and food bills

Looked after children – Corporate Parents

s.1 Children and Social Care Act 2017 sets out the “corporate parenting principles” which apply to all councils in respect of the children and young people in their care. Gateshead Council ensures these principles are at the forefront of services provided to looked after children. There is an increasing focus on members as corporate parents, with all looked after children being told of the identity their ward Councillor (age appropriate), should they wish to approach their Councillor for support. The Cabinet Member for Children & Families is forging regional links to promote the corporate parenting principles.

The Armed Forces

In 2011 the Gateshead Armed Forces Network (GAFN) was set up. The Leader has appointed an Armed Forces Champion to reinforce the commitment of the Council to the Gateshead Armed Forces Network. The Armed Forces Champion chairs the Network.

The Network was established to promote joint working to prevent disadvantage to individuals and their families as a result of their military service and their transition to civilian life.

The Network involves representatives of the armed forces and organisations supporting ex-service personnel as well as the Council's Armed Forces Champion and other partner organisations.

The Network also acts as the mechanism to annually review the actions taken by the Council and partners to implement the Gateshead Armed Forces Community Covenant.

In 2012 Gateshead Council was the first Council to sign up to the Armed Forces Covenant and in 2020 the Council affirmed its commitment to ensuring that serving and former members of the armed forces and their families are treated fairly and are not disadvantaged as a result of their service, by signing a new Armed Forces Covenant.

In addition, in 2020 Gateshead Council was the first organisation in the North East to have its Ministry of Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award revalidated. The award recognises employers who demonstrate positive attitudes and policies towards serving and ex-members of the armed forces.

In 2014 the Armed Forces Outreach Service (AFOS) was established to provide help and support, for all Forces personnel, reservists, veterans and their families. Staffed mainly by ex-service leavers, the service provides direct assistance and support on issues such as:

- housing and financial management / debt advice
- benefits
- employment / training
- health and wellbeing
- care and support

AFOS works particularly closely with Walking With the Wounded, a leading national veterans charity, to offer opportunities for employment, training and volunteering. In Gateshead, Walking With the Wounded also deliver family welfare support and support for veterans who come into contact with the Police through their Project Nova Team.

Council size – Options considered

All councillors were invited to an engagement event via Team on Tuesday 17 January 2023. The purpose of the event was to allow members to provide direct feedback on the council size options.

Fewer Councillors

The option of reducing the number of councillors was considered but has been disregarded.

As can be demonstrated from the information contained in this document, Gateshead Councillors are currently undertaking a tremendous amount of work connected with their elected role. The majority of the responses received from Members referred to an average of 15-25 hours per week on activities undertaken in the capacity as a Councillor.

Members would suggest that because of the unprecedented cuts over the last 12 years, their role within the Council has grown as difficult decisions have to be taken within an extensive Policy Framework, which is in place to ensure the residents of Gateshead have the opportunity to thrive, the overall strategic approach of the Council.

This additional workload and responsibility have put an extra burden on councillors as they pick up more queries, issues and concerns of their constituents who require support connected to the devastating impact of the increasing cost of living crisis. Reducing the number of councillors would further increase this level of demand and would limit the ability of councillors to provide effective representation to their constituents.

Fewer councillors would mean that the workload for the remaining councillors would increase. The ability to attract councillors who represent the community, ie in employment, those with caring responsibilities, would be diminished as they could not balance the work required of a Councillor and their private life. Those in that position can already struggle to achieve that balance. The current members are concerned that if there were fewer councillors, the age demographic of councillors would increase, as many of the positions to be filled, would be taken by retired councillors as they would have the required time available.

The proposed devolution will also bring additional powers and greater levels of accountability which will require significant involvement of the cabinet and the wider members to support scrutiny requirements at this regional level. This will be in addition to the responsibility of councillors to pursue opportunities for their residents that will come from the new funding streams available through the Combined Authority. It is notable that with devolution comes additional powers and functions devolved from central government and does not reduce the existing governance/scrutiny functions of members within the Council itself. Whilst the exact nature of the roles expected of Gateshead Councillors within the new Combined Authority are uncertain, what is undoubted is that there will be an increasing demand on the representational role of the councillors in Gateshead.

It is anticipated that there will be greater integration between the Council and Health, evidenced by the increasing work between health and adult social care services (see the Government's white paper, issued February 2022, "Health and social care integration: joining up care for people, places and population"). As with the Health & Wellbeing Board, it is anticipated that with the focus on integration between Health and Social Care, this will lead to a statutory requirement to formalise these arrangements.

More Councillors

The option of increasing the number of councillors was considered but has been disregarded.

The Council is conscious that at the decision on Council size at the last review resulted in an objectively generous Councillor / Elector ratio. It is recognised that despite the workload pressures upon the current councillors due to the high levels of deprivation in the borough and the significant number of internal and external decision-making and scrutiny positions which need to be undertaken, it would be unrealistic to seek an increase in the number of Councillors to help reduce this workload.

It is also noted that there are severe financial pressures on the Council's budget, with a further £55 million in savings to be made over the next 5 years. With the difficult budget decisions that Councillors are repeatedly required to make, the Council felt that instead of seeking an increase in Councillor numbers, resources should be prioritised for the provision of front-line services.

Same Number of Councillors

The majority of Members support the position that the number of Councillors should remain the same in Gateshead. This position is not supported by the opposition party. The Liberal Democrats will submit a proposal to reduce the number of Councillors.

The Council has operated with 66 Councillors in 22 wards since 1982 and in that time the role of the councillor has been changed in many ways – the complexity of the work, the increasing needs of their constituents and through the developments in technology and social media the way in which the public to interact with Councillors has made them more accessible than ever.

Whilst workloads are high, they are currently manageable with the number of Councillors in place.

The Council's governance arrangements have been largely unchanged since the previous review in 2002. The Council will continue to operate a Leader and Cabinet executive model, and it is anticipated that the committees and advisory groups in place to assist in this decision-making role, as well as the committees carrying out the scrutiny functions, will remain unchanged moving through the next few years.

There will be a change in role for Councillors, especially Cabinet members and Portfolio holders, connected to the devolution agreement, but as yet the impact of this is unknown.

The somewhat smaller councillor / elector ratio allows Members to effectively represent their constituents whose needs are significantly increased due to the prevalence of deprivation in the borough.

Conclusion and recommendation

This submission has highlighted a number of challenges currently facing Gateshead Council in seeking to address and reduce deprivation levels, health inequalities and socio-economic inequalities within the borough.

The role of the Councillor has never been so important in ensuring the Council achieves its strategic objective in "*Making Gateshead a place where everyone thrives*". This is against a background in which many residents are struggling more than ever. Councillors are ensuring effective governance and scrutiny of the Policy Framework which consists of 17 crucial plans and strategies to help the Council address the identified challenges within the borough.

The Council has an ambitious plan to increase the economic prosperity of the borough through the significant development of the Baltic Quay area. The Local Plan, containing the overall vision and spatial strategy to deliver economic prosperity, create lifetime neighbourhoods, and protect and enhance the natural and built environment, demonstrates this commitment. Councillors play a critical role in ensuring these ambitions are achieved for the benefit of their constituents.

The Council recognises the advantages of collaborative working with other organisations to achieve the best outcomes for the people of the borough. With that commitment comes the need to ensure sufficient Councillor representation on external decision-making and scrutiny bodies to allow the Council to discharge its responsibilities within the joint partnerships.

This submission has also highlighted the personal commitment of Councillors to groups within their communities. This demonstrates our Councillors' public service and dedication to the needs of their local communities. Many Councillors are involved across a range of neighbourhood activities for the benefit of both the old and young residents within their wards.

The changes in the social norms mean that Councillors are more directly accessible than ever before. The forms of communication which allow constituents to make contact with their Councillor is wider than ever and with the use of social media, this communication is now public facing with a broader audience.

Recommendation

To ensure that the Council can administer convenient and effective local government activities – decision-making, scrutiny and community participation – it is the opinion of the majority of Gateshead Council that the optimum Council size should remain at 66 Members.

Appendix 1**Current list of elected members, comprising ward and political party**

Ward	Councillor	Party
Birtley	Catherine Davison	Labour
	Daniel Weatherley	Labour
	Hazel Weatherley	Labour
Blaydon	Lee-Ann Moir	Labour
	Malcolm Brain	Labour
	Steve Ronchetti	Labour
Bridges	Angela Douglas	Labour
	Bob Goldsworthy	Labour
	John Eagle	Labour
Chopwell and Rowlands Gill	Dave Bradford	Labour
	Lynne Caffrey	Labour
	Michael Mcnestry	Labour
Chowdene	John McElroy	Labour
	Keith Wood	Labour
	Maureen Goldsworthy	Labour
Crawcrook and Greenside	Helen Haran	Labour
	Hugh Peter Kelly	Labour
	Kathleen McCartney	Labour
Deckham	Bernadette Oliphant	Labour
	Leigh Kirton	Labour
	Martin Gannon	Labour
Dunston and Teams	Brenda Clelland	Labour
	Dot Burnett	Labour
	Gary Haley	Labour
Dunston Hill and Whickham East	Amelia Louise Ord	Liberal Democrat
	Peter Maughan	Liberal Democrat
	Victoria Anderson	Liberal Democrat
Felling	Bill Dick	Labour
	Paul McNally	Labour
	Sonya Dickie	Labour
High Fell	Jennifer Reay	Labour
	Jill Green	Labour
	Judith Gibson	Labour
Lamesley	Jane McCoid	Labour
	Judith Turner	Labour
	Sheila Gallagher	Labour
Lobley Hill and Bensham	Catherine Donovan	Labour
	Eileen McMaster	Labour
	Kevin Dodds	Labour

Low Fell	Daniel Duggan	Liberal Democrat
	Dawn Elizabeth Welsh	Liberal Democrat
	Ron Beadle	Liberal Democrat
Pelaw and Heworth	Amanda Renee Wintcher	Liberal Democrat
	Ian Patterson	Liberal Democrat
	Paul Diston	Liberal Democrat
Ryton Crookhill and Stella	Alex Geddes	Labour
	Christopher Buckley	Labour
	Freda Geddes	Labour
Saltwell	Denise Robson	Labour
	John Adams	Labour
	Robert Lee Waugh	Labour
Wardley and Leam Lane	Linda Green MBE	Labour
	Sharon Louise Potts	Labour
	Stuart Green	Labour
Whickham North	Cristopher Ord	Liberal Democrat
	Peter Craig	Liberal Democrat
	Sonya Hawkins	Liberal Democrat
Whickham South and Sunnyside	Johnathon Wallace	Liberal Democrat
	Jonathan Mohammed	Liberal Democrat
	Marilynn Ord	Liberal Democrat
Windy Nook and Whitehills	Jim Turnbull	Labour
	Rachel Mullen	Labour
	Thomas Graham	Labour
Winlaton and High Spen	Julie Simpson	Labour
	Maria Hall	Labour
	Pamela Marie Burns	Labour

Appendix 2

NON-EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

The Council will establish the following bodies to deal with non-executive functions as shown in this Annex.

The Council will appoint the stated number of councillors to each body at the Annual Meeting. The Council may vary the number of councillors appointed to each body at its discretion.

Name of Body	Number of Cabinet Members	Number of Non-Cabinet Members	Total
Accounts	2	1	3
Appeals	-	22	22
Audit and Standards	2	5	11*
Contracts	3	2	5
Health and Wellbeing Board	4	4	24**
Licensing	-	15	15
Regulatory	-	15	15
Personnel Appeals	3	7	10***
Planning and Development	-	23	23
Rights of Way	-	7	7
Special Appointments	6	9	15

* Includes three independent members and one Lamesley Parish Councillor.

** The membership also includes 14 non councillor members.

*** Redundancy appeals will be considered by a politically balanced Sub Committee consisting of 3 members of the Personnel Sub Committee.

The Planning and Development and Appeals Committees will as far as possible consist of one member per ward.

The Licensing and Regulatory Committees will have the same membership.

Matters to be dealt with by the full Council

The Council meeting will exercise the following functions, duties and powers (in addition to those listed in Article 4.02):

- (i) determining the amount of any allowance payable under sections 3 and 5 of the Local Government Act 1972 (chair's/vice-chair's expenses);
- (ii) determining a scheme for basic, attendance and special responsibility allowances in accordance with section 18 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and any Regulations made thereunder;
- (iii) determining whether a charge should be made for any approval, consent, licence, permit or registration the issue of which is not the responsibility of the executive, and the amount of any such charge; 55
- (iv) the powers and duties of the Council in relation to elections and electoral registration, including:
 - a. the appointment of an electoral registration officer and a returning officer for local government elections;
 - b. the division of the authority's area into polling districts
 - c. the submission to the Secretary of State of proposals for pilot schemes for local elections;

- (v) functions and powers of the Council in relation to parish councils (except for matters which are the responsibility of the Audit and Standards Committee);
- (vi) the functions of the Council in relation to local government pensions;
- (vii) the duty to approve the authority's statement of accounts, income and expenditure and balance sheet or record of receipts and payments (as the case may be);
- (viii) the power to make payments or provide other benefits in cases of maladministration in accordance with section 92 of the Local Government Act 2000;
- (ix) the functions of the Council relating to sea fisheries;
- (x) the duty under section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 to make arrangements for the proper administration of the authority's financial affairs;
- (xi) the duty to designate an officer as head of the paid service and to designate an officer as the monitoring officer, and to provide them with such officers, accommodation and other resources as are in their opinion sufficient to allow their duties to be performed;
- (xii) the power to appoint proper officers under section 270(3) of the Local Government Act 1972;
- (xiii) the duty to approve proposals in connection with the preparation of an altered or replacement development plan, prior to public consultation, under regulations 10 and 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Plans) (England) Regulations 1999;
- (xiv) on the recommendation of the Cabinet and the receipt of a report from the Chief Executive, to appoint an existing employee to a chief officer post as part of a reorganisation of the service or services concerned;
- (xv) the power under section 166 of the Gambling Act 2005 to resolve not to issue casino premises licences;
- (xvi) the power under section 212 of the Gambling Act 2005 to determine any fees payable to the Council under that Act; 56
- (xvii) the duty to determine, publish and review the Council's Statements of Principle under the Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005;
- (xviii) the power to appoint Public Analysts pursuant to section 27 of the Food Safety Act 1990;
- (xix) the power to appoint Agricultural Analysts pursuant to section 67 of the Agriculture Act 1970;
- (xx) the power to appoint, jointly with the Secretary of State, a Director of Public Health under the Health and Social Care Act 2012;
- (xxi) the duty to publish the annual report on the health of the local population as produced by the Director of Public Health;
- (xxii) dismissal of Statutory Officers in accordance with the procedure set out in the Employee Recruitment Rules and the requirements of The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015.

Delegations to Council bodies

Council bodies will exercise non-executive functions as set out in the following below subject to any conditions or restrictions imposed by the Council.

NON-EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS – DELEGATION TO COUNCIL BODIES

1. Planning and Development Committee

Except when a matter is delegated to the Service Director, Climate Change, Compliance, Planning and Transport, the Planning and Development Committee has delegated power:

- (i) to exercise the powers and duties of the Council as local planning authority under the following legislation (or any statutory modification or re-enactment) and any statutory instruments made under the legislation:
 - a. Part III and Part XV Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – control over development;
 - b. Part VII Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – enforcement;
 - c. Part VIII Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – trees, land adversity affecting amenity and the control of advertisements;
 - d. Part XIII Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – Crown Land;
 - e. Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990;
 - f. The Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1998
- (ii) to exercise the powers and duties of the Council under the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990
- (iii) to exercise the powers and duties of the Council as Local Planning Authority under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997;
- (iv) to respond to waste management licence consultations from the Environment Agency
- (v) to respond to consultations from other local planning authorities and from Government departments and agencies relating to development management matters
- (vi) to determine the conditions to which old mining permissions, relevant planning permissions relating to dormant sites or active Phase I or II sites, or mineral permissions relating to mining sites are to be subject;
- (vii) to exercise the powers of the Council to make limestone pavement orders under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981;
- (viii) to exercise the powers of the Council:
 - a. to register common land or town or village greens, except where the power is exercisable solely for the purpose of giving effect to an exchange of lands under the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 or an order under the Inclosure Act 1845; and
 - b. to register variation of rights of common land.
- (ix) To exercise the powers of the Council under the Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations 2017 to prepare and maintain a register of previously developed land.
- (x) To exercise the powers of the Council under the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and The Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) Order 2017 to allocate land to Part 2 of the Council's register of previously adopted land.
- (xi) To exercise the powers of the Council under the Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) (Amendment) Order 2017 to determine applications for permission in principle and technical details consent.

2. Licensing Committee

The Licensing Committee will:

- (i) Exercise all the powers and duties of the Council under the Licensing Act 2003 and the Gambling Act 2005, except for those functions which are reserved to the Council.
- (ii) May arrange for any functions that it exercises to be discharged by:
 - a. a sub-committee established by it (this should consist of three councillors);
 - b. an officer of the Council as Licensing Authority in accordance with the Statement of Licensing Policy approved by the Council from time to time.

The Committee will submit a report to the Council on any such arrangements that it may make.

3. Regulatory Committee

The Regulatory Committee, except where the matter is delegated to the Service Director, Climate Change, Compliance, Planning and Transport, has delegated powers:

- (a) to determine licensing applications in the following areas, where there has been a refusal to grant, renew, vary or transfer a license to where there are relevant objections to such applications; and to consider the 59 revocation of existing licences:
 - animal boarding establishments
 - dangerous wild animals
 - dog breeding establishments
 - hypnotism • motor salvage operators
 - pet shops
 - pleasure boats and navigators
 - sex establishments
 - street collections
 - street trading
 - scrap metal dealers
- (b) to grant and renew licences for Hackney Carriages, Hackney Carriage Drivers, Private Hire Vehicles, Private Hire Drivers and Private Hire Operators (including Dual Driver licences) where the application does not meet the Council's standard conditions, but having regard to all relevant information, it is determined that the individual circumstances justify deviation from policy;
- (c) to vary, suspend and revoke such licences where, having regard to all relevant information, it is determined that in individual circumstances it is appropriate to do so;
- (d) to deal with all applications for approved venue status under the Marriage Act 1949 and Civil Partnerships Act 2004 where there has been a request to review the decision of the Proper Officer to refuse approval or to grant approval subject to the imposition of condition(s);
- (e) to deal with control and enforcement of the law relating to safety at sports grounds; and
- (f) to deal with any licence and registration which is not delegated to any other body.

4. Rights of Way Committee

The Committee has delegated power to exercise the powers and duties of the Council to:

- (i) create, stop up and divert footpaths and bridleways;
- (ii) assert and protect the rights of the public to use and enjoyment of highways;
- (iii) remove things so deposited on highways as to be a nuisance;
- (iv) keep the Council's definitive map and statement under review;
- (v) reclassify roads used as public paths; and
- (vi) discharge any other function which is classed as a function relating to public rights of way in Part I Schedule 1 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended).

5. Appeals Committee

The Appeals Committee has delegated power:

- (i) to determine appeals
 - a. against decisions on the award of discretionary financial assistance to students;
 - b. from introductory tenants against decisions to end their tenancies;
 - c. from persons who have been excluded from the housing register or whose application for re-housing has been deferred;
 - d. against decisions relating to homelessness;
 - e. against decisions regarding adaptations to dwellings occupied by disabled persons;
 - f. against refusal by the Director of Adult Services or Director of Children's Services to waive or amend discretionary charges;
 - g. against the decisions to remove a medical priority for housing;
 - h. against decisions of the Council to use mandatory grounds of possession in anti-social behaviour cases;
 - i. against Council decisions relating to charging and financial assessment for adult care and support services;
 - j. against decisions relating to home to school and college travel.
- (ii) to review, at the request of aggrieved persons, any decision concerning access to, or rectification or erasure of, any information (Access to Personal Files Act 1987 and associated Regulations);
- (iii) to determine any other appeal where the Council's policies provide a right of appeal against a decision made by or on behalf of the authority, except where the matter is the responsibility of the Personnel Appeals Committee.

6. Personnel Appeals Committee

The Personnel Appeals Committee has delegated power to determine any appeal from an employee of the Council relating to conditions of service, promotion, demotion or dismissal, or disciplinary action including dismissal, or arising from the Council's grievance procedure.

7. Contracts Committee

The Contracts Committee has delegated power:

- (i) to negotiate and agree individual contracts of service with the Chief Executive, Strategic Directors and Service Directors;
- (ii) to agree the remuneration of the Chief Executive, Strategic Directors and Service Directors;
- (iii) to appraise the performance of the Chief Executive and arrange for the appraisal of Strategic Directors and Service Directors.

8. Special Appointments Committee

In accordance with the Employee Recruitment Rules, the Committee has delegated power:

- (i) in relation to the appointment of the Head of Paid Service, to select a short list of candidates, to interview candidates and make a recommendation to the Council;
- (ii) in relation to appointments to Chief Officer posts (as defined in the Employee Recruitment Rules) to select a short list of candidates, interview candidates and make the appointment; or, if considered appropriate, to fill the post by appointing an existing employee in circumstances where no reorganisation of a service is involved.

The Special Appointments Committee may appoint one or two additional non-voting Cabinet members to the Committee in relation to any particular appointment.

9. Audit and Standards Committee

The Audit and Standards Committee has delegated power to:

- (i) consider the effectiveness of the Council's risk management arrangements, the internal control environment and associated anti-fraud and anti-corruption arrangements;
- (ii) seek assurances, and satisfy itself, that action is being taken on risk-related issues identified by auditors and inspectors;
- (iii) satisfy itself that the Council's assurance statements, including the Statement on Internal Control, properly reflect the risk environment and any actions required to improve it;
- (iv) approve the Council's Statement on Internal Control and Annual Governance Statement;
- (v) approve, but not direct, the Council's internal audit strategy and audit plan, and monitor its performance;
- (vi) review reports on internal audit activity and the main issues arising, and seek assurances that action has been taken where necessary;
- (vii) consider the annual audit report on internal audit activity;
- (viii) consider the reports of external audit and inspection agencies;
- (ix) review the scope and depth of external audit work, inspection agencies and other relevant bodies, and ensure that they provide value for money;
- (x) raise the profile of audit, risk management and the internal control environment;
- (xi) review the financial statements, external auditor's opinion and reports to members, and monitor management action in response to the issues raised by external audit;
- (xii) consider the Council's arrangements for Corporate Governance and agreeing necessary actions to ensure compliance with best practice;
- (xiii) consider treasury management performance reports;
- (xiv) promote and maintain high standards of conduct by councillors and co-opted members;
- (xv) assist the councillors and co-opted members to observe the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (xvi) advise the Council on the adoption or revision of the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (xvii) monitor the operation of the Members' Code of Conduct
- (xviii) advise, train or arrange to train councillors and co-opted members on matters relating to the Members' Code of Conduct;
- (xix) grant dispensations to councillors and co-opted members from requirements relating to interests set out in the Members' Code of Conduct so far as not delegated to the Monitoring Officer including holding hearings as appropriate undertaken by a standards sub-committee set up for the purpose;
- (xx) assist and advise parish councils in the Borough, if requested and as appropriate, in relation to their discharge of functions (xiv)-(xix) above on request of their parish councillors;
- (xxi) in accordance with the approved delegations, deal with written allegations that a councillor or co-opted member (or former councillor or co-opted member) of the Council or a parish councillor or former parish councillor in

the Borough has failed, or may have failed, to comply with the Members' Code of Conduct

- (xxii) set from time to time appropriate allowances and expenses payable to the statutory Independent Persons;
- (xxiii) amend from time to time as it considers appropriate the arrangements to be followed in the initial consideration, investigation or hearing of any complaint of a breach of the Code of Conduct
- (xxiv) take any of the actions in respect of any member who after investigation the Committee decides, following a recommendation from a standards subcommittee, has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct;
- (xxv) promote and maintain high standards of conduct by officers;
- (xxvi) assist officers to observe the Code of Conduct for Employees;
- (xxvii) monitor the operation of the Code of Conduct for Employees.

Standards Sanctions

Actions delegated to the Committee on a finding that a member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct:

- Issue a formal censure.
- Recommend to full Council (or to the Parish Council) the issue of a formal censure by the Council (or by the Parish Council).
- Refer its findings to full Council (or the Parish Council) for information;
- Publish its findings by such means as the Committee thinks fit.
- Recommend to the Council (or the Parish Council) that the member be removed from any or all Committees or Sub-Committees (subject to the approval of the member's Group if applicable).
- Recommend to the Council (or the Parish Council) that the member be removed from being the chair or vice –chair of any Committees or SubCommittee.
- Recommend to the Leader of the Council that the member be removed from the Cabinet, or from particular portfolio responsibilities.
- Recommend to the Council (or the Parish Council) that the member be removed from one or more outside appointments to which s/he has been appointed or nominated by the Council (or the Parish Council).
- Instruct the Monitoring Officer to offer training to the member or recommend that the Parish Council should do so.

10. Accounts Committee

The Accounts Committee has delegated power to approve the Council's statement of accounts.

11. Health and Wellbeing Board

The Health and Wellbeing Board shall have such powers as are set out in Article 11 of the Constitution

12. Pensions and Pay Discretions Sub-Committee

The Pensions and Pay Discretions Sub-Committee has delegated powers to determine:

- (i) requests from former employees or their spouses to access their deferred pensions on an unreduced or partially reduced basis;
- (ii) cases relating to employer discretions where added years have been awarded under Regulations 21, 22 and 25 of the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2000 or preceding regulations;

- (iii) discretionary pension issues which are not subject to other delegations set out in Part 3 of the Council's constitution; and
- (iv) requests from employees to extend periods of half and full sick pay

Appendix 3

RESPONSIBILITY FOR LOCAL CHOICE FUNCTIONS

	FUNCTION	DECISION-MAKING BODY	DELEGATED TO
1.	The discharge of any function under a local Act	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Planning and Development Committee, Licensing and Regulatory Committees, as appropriate in respect of any matter involving the determination of an application for a licence, approval or registration, or the direct regulation of a person together with any related enforcement action.2. The Cabinet, in respect of any other function	The Service Director, Climate Change, Compliance, Planning and Transport to the extent set out in Annex 1A
2.	The determination of an appeal against any decision made by or on behalf of the authority	The Appeals Committee, except where the matter is delegated to the Personnel Appeals Committee (see Annex 1A)	
3.	The appointment of reviews boards under the Social Security Act 1988	The Council	
4.	The making of arrangements for reviews in respect of the exclusion of pupils.	The Cabinet	
5.	The making of arrangements for school admission appeals	The Cabinet	
6.	The making of arrangements for appeals by Governors against the Authority's decision to admit a child who had previously been excluded	The Cabinet	

	FUNCTION	DECISION-MAKING BODY	DELEGATED TO
7.	The discharge of any function relating to contaminated land	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Planning and Development Committee, insofar as it relates to serving and enforcing notices 2. The Cabinet, insofar as it relates to any other function (such as preparing a strategy or specific proposals) 	Employees to the extent set out in Annex 1A
8.	The discharge of any function relating to the control of pollution or the management of air quality	The Licensing and Regulatory Committees	The Service Director, Climate Change, Compliance, Planning and Transport to the extent set out in Annex 1A
9.	The service of an abatement notice in respect of a statutory nuisance	The Licensing and Regulatory Committees	The Service Director, Climate Change, Compliance, Planning and Transport to the extent set out in Annex 1A
10.	The passing of a resolution that Schedule 2 to the Statutory Nuisance Act 1993 should apply in the Authority's area	The Licensing and Regulatory Committees	The Service Director, Climate Change, Compliance, Planning and Transport to the extent set out in Annex 1A
11.	The inspection of the Authority's area to detect any statutory nuisance	The Licensing and Regulatory Committees	The Service Director, Climate Change, Compliance, Planning and Transport to the extent set out in Annex 1A
12.	The investigation of any complaint as to the existence of a statutory nuisance	The Licensing and Regulatory Committees	The Service Director, Climate Change, Compliance,

			Planning and Transport to the extent set out in Annex 1A
13.	The obtaining of information under section 330 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as to interests in land	The Planning and Development Committee	The Service Director, Climate Change, Compliance, Planning and Transport to the extent set out in Annex 1A
	FUNCTION	DECISION-MAKING BODY	DELEGATED TO
14.	The obtaining of particulars of persons interested in land under section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976	The Planning and Development Committee	The Service Director, Climate Change, Compliance, Planning and Transport to the extent set out in Annex 1A
15.	The appointment of any individual to an outside body (other than a joint committee) or a committee or sub-committee of an outside body	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Cabinet, in relation to functions which are the responsibility of the executive 2. The Council, in relation to all other appointments 	
16.	The making of agreements with other local authorities for the placing of staff at the disposal of those other authorities	The Cabinet	
17.	Any function of the local authority in its capacity as a harbour authority	Not applicable	

Appendix 4

Attendance Information for Gateshead Council Bodies – 2021/22

Body	No of Councillors	Number of Meetings	Total for 100% Attendance	Actual Attendance	% Attendance
Council	66	8	528	442	83.7%
Cabinet	10	11	110	94	85.5%
Care, Health and Wellbeing OSC	18	7	124	76	61.3%
Corporate Resources OSC	18	5	90	62	68.9%
Families OSC	18	6	108	74	68.5%
Housing, Communities and Healthy Communities OSC	18	7	124	73	58.9%
Accounts Committee	3	1	3	3	100%
Appeals Committee	3	10	30	30	100%
Audit and Standards Committee	7	7	49	38	77.6%
Gateshead Health and Wellbeing Board	8*	7	56	43	76.8%
Licensing Committee	14	1	14	12	85.7%
Licensing Sub Committee	3	8	24	24	100%
Planning and Development Committee	23	13	299	221	73.9%
Regulatory Committee	14	8	112	62	55.4%
Rights of Way Committee	7	3	21	16	76.2%

*The councillor membership on the Health and Wellbeing Board was increased from 8 to 10 in May 2022.

Appendix 5

Gateshead Council – Councillor Attendance Figures 2021/22

Councillor	Expected	Present	Percentage
Councillor Angela Douglas	40	35	87.50%
Councillor Alex Geddes	32	29	90.63%
<u>Councillor Anne Wheeler</u>	35	14	40.00%
Councillor Bernadette Oliphant	29	16	55.17%
Councillor Bill Dick	23	18	78.26%
Councillor Bob Goldsworthy	36	29	80.56%
<u>Councillor Brenda Clelland</u>	32	27	84.38%
Councillor Catherine Davison	16	10	62.50%
Councillor Catherine Donovan	25	23	92.00%
Councillor Chris Buckley	23	11	47.83%
<u>Councillor Christopher Ord</u>	29	21	72.41%
Councillor Daniel Duggan	21	9	42.86%
Councillor Dave Bradford	31	26	83.87%
Councillor Denise Robson	28	19	67.86%
<u>Councillor Dot Burnett</u>	47	43	91.49%
Councillor Eileen McMaster	32	25	78.13%
Councillor Freda Geddes	19	16	84.21%
Councillor Gary Haley	30	25	83.33%
Councillor Hazel Weatherley	38	28	73.68%
Councillor Helen Haran	16	10	62.50%
Councillor Hugh Kelly	35	33	94.23%
Councillor Ian Patterson	51	41	80.39%

Councillor	Expected	Present	Percentage
Councillor Jane McCoid	16	16	100%
Councillor Jennifer Reay	25	20	80.00%
Councillor Jill Green	29	20	68.97%
Councillor Jim Turnbull	35	19	54.29%
Councillor John Adams	27	24	88.89%
Councillor John Eagle	15	12	80.00%
Councillor John McElroy	28	27	96.43%
Councillor Jonathan Mohammed	29	25	86.21%
Councillor Jonathan Wallace	29	24	82.76%
Councillor Judith Gibson	23	18	78.26%
Councillor Judith Turner	28	28	100%
Councillor Julie Simpson	22	18	81.82%
Councillor Kathleen McCartney	32	30	93.75%
Councillor Kathryn Ferdinand	26	11	42.31%
Councillor Keith Wood	32	16	50.00%
Councillor Kevin Dodds	27	19	70.37%
Councillor Kevin McClurey	20	12	60.00%
Councillor Leigh Kirton	43	40	93.02%
Councillor Linda Green	33	20	60.61%
Councillor Lynne Caffrey	51	37	72.55%
Councillor Malcolm Brain	23	22	95.65%
Councillor Maria Hall	46	36	78.26%
Councillor Marilyn Charlton	30	24	80.00%
Councillor Marilynn Ord	36	32	88.89%
Councillor Martin Gannon	31	26	83.87%

Councillor	Expected	Present	Percentage
Councillor Maureen Goldsworthy	21	15	71.43%
Councillor Michael McNestry	30	27	90.00%
<u>Councillor Paul Diston</u>	15	15	100%
Councillor Paul Foy	25	9	36.00%
Councillor Paul McNally	16	7	43.75%
Councillor Peter Craig	17	13	76.47%
<u>Councillor Peter Maughan</u>	19	7	36.84%
Councillor Rachel Mullen	27	20	74.07%
Councillor Robert Waugh	32	26	81.25%
Councillor Ron Beadle	39	27	69.23%
<u>Councillor Rosy Oxberry</u>	27	15	55.56%
Councillor Sheila Gallagher	26	24	92.31%
Councillor Sonya Dickie	34	23	67.65%
Councillor Sonya Hawkins	21	8	38.10%
<u>Councillor Steve Ronchetti</u>	17	14	82.35%
Councillor Stuart Green	30	23	76.67%
Councillor Susan Craig	19	10	52.63%
Councillor Tom Graham	29	28	96.55%
<u>Councillor Vicky Anderson</u>	27	23	85.19%
TOTAL	1,875	1,418	75.63%

Please note:

- The above attendance figures relate to formal council meetings only and do not include the numerous other meetings Councillors attend locally and regionally.
- These figures relate to the period during which there was a notional pandemic and Members' ability to carry out their elected role was impacted upon as a result of Covid-19.
- Where the name appears in green, that person is no longer an Elected Member on the Council and was replaced at the local election in May 2022.

Appendix 6

Experience of Portfolio Holder and Cabinet Member – Councillor John Adams

Councillor Adams was elected on the Council in 2014 and is the current Cabinet Member for Housing. He also works as a special needs teacher in North Tyneside where he teaches children on the autistic spectrum who also have learning difficulties.

Councillor Adams was asked to give an account of his workload, the time spent on his activities connected to his elected role and his other commitments.

As well as my role as a cabinet member on Gateshead Council, I also work as a teacher in a Special Needs school in North Tyneside. I work there on a Monday and a Friday. The rest of the week I devote to my duties at Gateshead Council. I do occasionally have time off from work for council duties, but since I have reduced my contract to two days a week, this is now quite rare.

I would estimate that I spend about 30 hours a week on council duties, this is very much an estimate. But it is my best estimate. I often start work in school at 7am, and do not finish at the Council until 8 or 9pm at night, and additionally I have events and meetings at the weekend.

I am a Cabinet Member, with responsibility for Housing. I would say that this is one of the areas where there is a higher than average number of reports which come forward to Cabinet and Council meetings. For each report that comes forward I am briefed on its contents by the relevant officer, and we discuss the issues and the political implications. This can be time consuming. Furthermore, I am aware that as the responsible member I can be called upon to answer for any issue which is contained in these reports, and I try to 'brush up' my knowledge before every meeting and try to anticipate what questions may be asked.

As a Cabinet Member I also feel I need to 'be across' all policy areas across the council. I am briefed on major issues in a weekly private meeting between senior officers and all cabinet members, and I do carefully read all council and cabinet documents as part of my role on the Cabinet. I also have various meetings with officers to discuss housing-related matters. I have a regular 'catch-up' with the Service Director of Construction Services to discuss housing repairs (every two weeks I think). I also have a similar catch-up with the Housing Strategy Service Director and the Housing and Neighbourhood Management Service Director, but these are slightly less frequent. I discuss and plan with the senior officers how we can achieve the objectives of our Housing Strategy document, and I see my role as being an instigator and an initiator to prompt action. I therefore need to be across national policy and local feeling. I am also called on to be interviewed by media outlets and take part in photo opportunities and so forth.

Gateshead Council work on a 'portfolio' system, whereby cabinet members in similar portfolio areas are grouped together to provide support for one another. This means that I have weekly meetings with the Cabinet members for Transport and Economy. These meetings often have to consider a great deal of information, and for example in today's portfolio meeting the agenda pack ran to 177 pages. That isn't unusual.

I am also involved with other committees on the council. I chair the strategic housing board, which also has to consider very important issues and various policy documents (which again can be hundreds of pages long). This has become the main driver of policy in housing in the council, and so is a responsibility I take very seriously. The Board also have a number of task and finish groups in addition to formal committee meetings – for example we have

recently rewritten our lettings and tenancy policies, and these were discussed and important issues teased out in a number of these extra meetings.

I am also on what is called the 'Ukrainian Taskforce' which was set up to supervise the council's response to the Homes for Ukraine scheme but now has developed and discusses all issues connected to what we do on refugees and asylum seekers.

I am the chair of LearningSkills, which meets every two months (although we have extra monitoring visits) and is the quasi-governing body for the council's adult and community learning work. This includes pottery and language classes in local community centres, apprenticeships for people who did not achieve academically at school, provision for post-18 students with profound learning difficulties, and much else. It is one of the largest in the country, success rates are well above the national average, and has a budget of over £4 million.

There are many other council committees I am on – I chair the Chopwell Plan, I am Secretary of the Labour Group, I represent the Council on a local housing association board (Keelman Homes), I am on the finance portfolio, I am on a committee that oversees the Gateshead Energy Company, I am on a committee that oversees the Gateshead Regeneration Partnership, I attend partnership meetings between our trade unions and the cabinet, etc.

In my ward, I am on the board of the St Chad's Community Project, I attend partnership meetings concerning my local ward and I am on the governing bodies of two local schools, I am also involved in a local environment group (Love Your Avenues) and organise local litter-picks. For each of these I might attend committee meetings, which can have substantial papers to read in advance, but I also go on monitoring meetings, site visits, open days and so forth. I also have to meet up with other organisations and voluntary sector organisations that are active in my ward.

I receive a reasonable amount of casework from residents in my wards, normally on issues in private rented housing or waste fly-tipping and street litter. For each enquiry I need to draft a response, and often need to liaise with officers to take things further.

I am Treasurer of the local Labour Party, and often run door-knocking sessions and leafletting sessions in my ward, and I support colleagues in other wards. This happens every other weekend and a couple of times during the week. I am also involved in the national network of Labour Councillors and am on the Exec for the regional Labour Party Housing Group. While these are not council activities per se, I would not be involved in some of them, and certainly not as much, if I was not a councillor. I have not included these activities within the 30 hours a week envelope I have estimated.