

# The strength of Gateshead is the people of Gateshead

Corporate Plan 2023 - 2028



# Foreword by the Leader of the Council

Welcome to our Corporate Plan for 2023-28. This plan sets out the priorities the Council will focus on over the next five years. The identified priority areas will guide the work of the council and sets out our response to what we believe will deliver good outcomes for the people of Gateshead.

At this stage the plan sets out the council's view of the world and we anticipate that the plan will evolve and be shaped through consultation and engagement with a range of stakeholders.

We believe *'The strength of Gateshead is the people of Gateshead'* because, when faced with adversity - we come together and deliver for one another, working tirelessly for the benefit of the communities of Gateshead, just as we saw throughout the pandemic. We are stronger together and will continue to place people at the heart of everything we do.

Gateshead is unique and different to many other places in the United Kingdom. We are a borough of contrasts, we're two thirds rural and have large expanses of green space. We then have densely populated urban areas and towns. Home to globally recognised icons, such as the Angel of the North, and proud birthplace to the first domestic property in the world to be illuminated by electric light bulb.

We also have different levels of health inequality with life expectancy varying depending upon where you live in the borough. Lives in Gateshead are being cut short. In our poorest areas people's lives are up to 10 years shorter than in our better-off areas. This can be as much as 15 years shorter than the wealthiest parts of England. People in poorer areas also live more of their lives in bad health. This is not right nor should it be acceptable.

Wherever you live or chose to be in Gateshead, we want you to know that the council is relevant to you, it has a role in the life you lead, and that it delivers a good level of service for you.

We provide hundreds of services each day, some of which you'll see and have a direct impact on your life such as bins and local roads, some of

which you'll only need when you request it, such as social care. Some people need the council more, others less so. Whenever you do interact with us though, we want it to be a positive interaction or experience. This isn't saying we'll always say yes or respond in the way you want each time. However, when we do reply, there'll be a clear rationale or reason sat behind the decision.

We're a big, complex organisation and recognise that won't always get things right first time. What we can promise to do though, as a learning organisation, is to listen and take on board your feedback and apply improvements along the way.

As a council we continue to work towards a sustainable budget position. In working towards this, it does mean we have a reduced level of budget available to spend on the services deliver, which means that we cannot deliver everything that we used to, or that you might want us to. We are having to make extremely challenging decisions, but ones that are necessary to ensure we can continue to deliver statutory and essential services for residents.

We launched Thrive in 2018. This was our approach to ensuring we put people at the heart of everything that we do. Thrive is as relevant today as it was then, whilst recognising that the world in which we operate has changed significantly. Our Corporate Plan is the immediate response to prioritising our offer, and ultimately our available budget, to local people. This plan will evolve, and we will look to engage residents and our partners further in the refinement of this. In doing so, reaffirming our commitment to Gateshead and you.



**The Strength  
of Gateshead  
is the people of  
Gateshead**

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Martin Gannon'.

**Councillor Martin Gannon, Leader of Gateshead Council**

# Purpose of this plan

This plan sets Gateshead Council's strategic approach and priorities for 2023-2028 so that employees, councillors, delivery partners and other stakeholders understand:

- The strategic priorities of the council - so that resources, delivery plans, strategies and operational activity can be aligned to them; and
- How the council will continue to transform and drive improvement in services to deliver our priorities and operate as an organisation and partner in the most effective, productive, and impactful way.

## Supporting Strategies and Plans

This plan and the priorities in it are supported by a range of strategies and policies (both current and new) which set out how and what the Council will deliver, including:

- **Delivery strategies and policies** – strategies (some of which are statutory plans) that set out detailed actions and outputs which will help deliver priorities e.g. Health and Wellbeing Strategy and many more.
- **Place-based strategies** – for priority areas such as the Local Plan and River Tyne Renaissance

There are also plans and programmes which support and enable the council to deliver priorities in an effective, efficient, and productive way - including:

- The **Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy** sets out how the council's financial resources will be deployed. The Budget outlines the council's financial income and expenditure, and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy sets out how the council intends to deploy its financial resources
- Plans to improve the council's effectiveness and modernise its ways of working, for example through its **Workforce Development Strategy**

We will be developing a **Delivery and Performance Plan** which will outline the key actions, activity and metrics that support the delivery of the Corporate Plan priorities.



# Gateshead in numbers

## Gateshead

has a population of **196,200**



It is projected to increase to around **204,200** in **2043**

## Life expectancy

**81.5**  
women



**77.4**  
men



## POPULATION



## Residents over the age of 65

is projected to grow in future, which means we have an ageing population (**48,733 by 2040**)



## Gateshead is ranked 47th most deprived

out of 317 local authorities in England.



## Number of jobs

**89,000** in jobs



## 5,610

**businesses**

trading in Gateshead



## 55% of residents

are qualified to at least NVQ Level 3 equivalent



## ECONOMY

The **Sage** is anticipated to support more than **1,140 jobs** and attract an extra **296,000 visitors** to the region.



Estimated to boost the regional economy by over **£29.5 million annually**.

Average household income is just over

**£37,600 per year**



**Around 95,500 or 71.7% of working age (16-64)**

Gateshead residents are in employment



## HOUSEHOLDS



**58% of housing is owner occupied**, and **19%** is managed by Gateshead Council.



**16% of housing is rented**

from a private landlord or letting agency and **6%** from a registered social landlord



**68 new**

affordable homes built in 2021/22



Average house prices in Gateshead approx.

**£154,000** (Feb 2023)

**61% of people** are active per week



**1501**

average weekday cycle trips made



## HEALTH



**25% of adults obese**

**22% of people** are

limited in day-to-day activities by health



**27% of year 6 children**

classified as obese



**8% are in bad health**



Gateshead is approx. **two thirds rural**



**Around 15%**

of Gateshead is woodland



**23%**

of household waste is recycled



**Carbon emissions**

from the council have **reduced by 55%** since 2010



**Around 17%**

of Gateshead is protected for wildlife



**Gateshead Energy centre**

**2.5%** of employers' energy is provided by our energy centre



Approx

**152 Million**

journeys are made using public transport in Tyne & Wear



# Making Gateshead a place where everyone thrives

Our strategic approach, Making Gateshead a place where everyone thrives, aims to redress the imbalance of inequality, whilst championing fairness and social justice in Gateshead.

As a council we are working with partners and others, to achieve the right outcomes for those people and families who require support. Many of our services are either universal e.g. bins, roads or targeted like social care. People and families need different degrees of support at different times in their lives.

We need our residents, community organisations, partners and stakeholders to join us in our bid to make Gateshead a place where everyone thrives.

The Corporate Plan is our guide and sets our priorities and direction of travel. Each year we will refresh a delivery plan which will set out how we will take our strategy forward in that year and what we expect the impact to be.

We want the Corporate Plan to remain current and relevant and ensure that it is a living document, which everyone plays their part in delivering.



# Our Organisational Vision

A great borough, with vibrant communities, where businesses can grow, residents feel supported and live fulfilled lives, and our environmental impact is minimised

We are committed to running an organisation that puts our residents first, delivers value for money, and works with our communities to ensure we focus on what is important.

## Our pledges

Putting people and families at the heart of everything we do

Tackling inequalities so people have a fair chance

Supporting our communities go support themselves and each other

Investing in our economy to provide sustainable opportunities for employment, innovation and growth

Working together and fighting for a better future for Gateshead

## All underpinned by

Good customer  
service

Sound financial  
planning

Inclusivity

Good  
governance

Continuous  
improvement

Culture

# Putting people and families at the heart of everything we do

Gateshead is a place that offers opportunities for all residents to live healthy and fulfilled lives and achieve their ambitions. This starts by giving all **children the best start in life**.



In doing so improve outcomes and opportunities for all. **We will think long-term and adopt a preventative approach** in determining our response to local need. The aim being to have access to services for those who need them, social care where required, alongside **population health improvements for all**.

This will require the wider Gateshead health system and partners to empower **good health outcomes across the life cycle**.

We will provide **integrated and targeted family support** where it is needed and reduce risks of harm to young people.

With an increasing older population, it is essential we ensure people **start life well, live fulfilling lives and enjoy later life in good health**. We will work with health partners and agencies to develop strong delivery plans tailored to local need.

We want residents to be able to make informed decisions over their life and will ensure information and advice if available and accessible. This will **promote independence through enablement; promote independence through technology; be based on strength base practice; all with a home first prioritisation**.





# Tackling inequalities, so people have a fair chance



Poverty and deprivation still have too big an impact upon too many of our residents. We want to **tackle those inequalities**, so people have a **fair chance** to achieve their personal goals and ambitions. Our aim is to be a borough with reduced inequalities where residents having improved access to social and economic opportunities, enabling them to live fulfilling lives.

To truly enable our residents to Thrive we must create the conditions for fairness and equality – maximising the wellbeing of our communities.

Over the next two years we aim to further the **actions** set out within our **Health and Wellbeing Strategy**. In doing so strengthening the role of ill health prevention and **ensuring a healthy standard of living for all**.

We all want children to have the best start in life and will champion and support the delivery of **high quality, inclusive education for Gateshead's children**.

Through an integrated, intensive and effective offer, we aim to **reduce the need for children and young people to come into our care**.

Ensure all children and young people in our care have the **best care and stable homes**.

We will also **improve outcomes for children with SEND** through the delivery of strengthened and inclusive services alongside our local partners.



# Supporting our communities to support themselves and each other



Ensuring that people are **safe and feel safe** is a wellbeing requirement. The strength and ability for communities to adapt to change and deal with shocks and emergencies is essential. Through being more resilient we can reduce the negative impact on individuals. Reducing the direct intervention needed by the Council to provide a fix.

We cannot achieve the ambitions of Thrive alone and in recognition of the contribution they make, we will **strengthen the support provided by the voluntary, community and social enterprises sector** within Gateshead.

We also recognise the support of Gateshead's **Caregivers** and want to continue to support those who choose to care as both a profession and those who look after relatives, friends or loved ones.

We also want to work with our communities to ensure we have the **range and choice of high-quality homes for children who need care**.

We will support and invest in the development of stronger and more resilient communities, enabling residents and partners to tailor service delivery to the local need – in Gateshead this is **locality working**. Delivering a local range of services in response to the direct needs of our communities. Evidence led and informed by feedback on the ground, we will deliver a range of tailored service in collaboration with our partners.



# Investing in our economy to provide sustainable opportunities for employment, innovation and growth

We want Gateshead to have strong local economic outlook, with **more businesses, good jobs, and inward investment**.

With this strong economic outlook, we want to tackle unemployment and ensure residents have **skills and qualifications** to enable them to **access opportunities**.

We will **support regeneration and development opportunities** that come forward and will support investors to do so. Creating a **fairer, green and more resilient economy** at the heart of this work.

It is important to **maximise the visitor and rural offer** that exists within the borough and embrace the wider regional cultural offer.

The council will work with neighbouring councils to support the formation of a North East Mayoral Combined Authority and seek to maximise the opportunities that **Devolution for the North East** provides residents, business and partners.

All of which provides a strong platform for our ambitions to **tackle health inequalities** within Fair Gateshead.



# Working together and fighting for a better future for Gateshead

We want Gateshead to have **an aspirational outlook and visionary future**, whilst reflecting the needs of local people and building for our future generations.

We want to ensure that there is a **broad range of homes** available for our residents. We will work with partners to meet housing needs now and for the future. We will **invest £168m to build new council homes and improve our current offer**.

It is important that residents have access to **improved connectivity** within Gateshead and the region, allowing them to travel for both work and pleasure purposes.

We will also look to **protect the environment** as we move towards a low-carbon future, helping the community minimise its carbon footprint and encourage the reduction of borough wide carbon emissions.

We want Gateshead to be a place where people have **pride in their local area** and will work to introduce minimum environmental standards within the borough.

We also want everyone to be an ambassador for the Gateshead – having **civic pride**, where **diversity is embraced**, and people are **proud of their community and home**. Creating a positive outlook for all.

We will **champion the work of the council**, together with encouraging our communities to play their part in **local democracy**. Understanding how they can **influence local decision making** and having a say in local improvements.



# Interconnected Priorities

The priorities in this plan are interconnected. Many of the priorities and the outcomes from the pledges are dependent on one another. For example, we know well-paid employment, affordable homes and transport, clean air and access to green spaces can all contribute to good physical and mental health.

## **Prioritising: Inclusivity**

We will:

- embed our organisational values and behaviours.
- promote, champion and advocate diversity.
- demonstrate inclusive leadership, partnership, and a clear organisational commitment to be a leader in equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- involve and enable our diverse communities in our decision-making processes.
- encourage and build a skilled and diverse workforce to build a culture of equity and inclusion in everything we do.

## **Prioritising: Customer experience**

We will:

- put our customers at the heart of everything do.
- provide a consistent quality of service to our customers.
- reflect customer feedback in the design and delivery of services.
- continue to adopt a digital by default approach, enabling self-service where achievable.
- co-design and collaborate with partners where possible, to deliver for local communities.
- effectively communicate and engage residents and partners in the work of the council.

## **Prioritising: Financial sustainability**

We will:

- ensure effective and prudent use of the council's resources.
- provide value for money through efficient and effective service delivery.
- provide services without the use of reserves.
- continue to identify and develop new and appropriate income generating opportunities that are in keeping with our Vision.
- maintain an investment strategy that preserves and improves the financial resources available to the council.
- rigorously manage the council's risks.
- have sound governance arrangements in place.

## **Prioritising: Culture**

We will:

- develop refreshed core values for the council to be incorporated into how we work and everything we do.
- develop a new Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy to be rolled-out across the council.
- promote communication and transparency.
- welcome challenge and learn from our mistakes.

## **Prioritising: Continuous improvement**

We will:

- review and strengthen our performance management framework, including regular reporting and clear accountability.
- develop a clear programme of transformation and improvement activity.
- arrange for a peer challenge in 2024 and act promptly on key recommendations.
- recognise and celebrate good performance and address poor performance through a strengthened Appraisal & Development framework for employees.
- develop a council-wide awareness and culture of continuous improvement in every aspect of council activity.

## **Prioritising: Good governance**

We will:

- review the council's constitution to ensure it is accessible, comprehensive, and meets the needs of the council in the delivery of this Corporate Plan.
- promote awareness of the seven principles of public life ('the Nolan principles') and effective application of the respective codes of conduct for councillors and employees.
- review the council's overview and scrutiny function to ensure it is robust, challenges constructively, and contributes continually to the delivery of this Corporate Plan.
- ensure the revenue budget and capital programme remain balanced and sustainable over a rolling 5 year period.
- maintain a programme of reviews for our services to ensure they are delivered efficiently and effectively.

# Engagement with communities

- Focussing on our residents' needs
- Engaging with all our residents, and partners, to understand what matters to them
- Working in partnership to benefit Gateshead
- Providing quality public services that are accessible to all
- Making best use of our resources and look to invest in the future of the borough
- Adopting modern and efficient working practices
- Promoting a culture of fairness, openness and transparency
- Providing equality of opportunity in all our activities and ensure that discrimination does not occur
- Lobbying for Gateshead's interests both regionally and nationally



