
CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, 02.10.12

Present: Councillor Simon Glyn (Chairman);
Councillor Brian Jones (Vice-chairman).

Councillors:- Lesley Day, Elwyn Edwards, Trevor Edwards, Aled Evans, Gweno Glyn, Charles Wyn Jones, Eryl Jones-Williams, June Marshall, Dafydd Meurig, Michael Sol Owen, Mair Rowlands, Gareth Thomas and Eirwyn Williams.

Also present: Vera Jones (Democratic Services Manager), Hawis Jones (Performance and Efficiency Improvement Manager), Gareth James (Members Support and Scrutiny Manager) and Eirian Roberts (Members Support and Scrutiny Officer).

In attendance for the scrutiny item:-

Cabinet Member - Councillor Dyfed Edwards (Council Leader)

Apology: Councillor Selwyn Griffiths.

At the beginning of the meeting, concern was expressed regarding the fact that the external door of the Chamber was locked during the open meetings and the Democratic Service was asked to secure appropriate arrangements to allow easy access for the public to the Council meetings.

1. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received from any member present.

2. MINUTES

The Chairman signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 19 July, 2012, as a true record.

3. IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Cabinet Member: Councillor Dyfed Edwards

The report of the Council Leader – Councillor Dyfed Edwards was considered which asked the committee to scrutinise the quality of the Gwynedd Council Performance Report 2011/12 by assessing whether or not it provided a balanced, fair and accurate picture of the Council's performance.

The following main observations were noted:-

- (1) Concern was expressed regarding the fact that there was no follow-up to the Improvement Plan (The Council's Performance Report 2011/12) at present and the need to establish a mechanism for tracking any failures over the coming year was emphasised. In response, the Democratic Services Manager explained that the chairs and vice-chairs of the scrutiny committees would receive copies of the

quarterly reports to the Cabinet in order to identify any slippages or successes so that they could be discussed in the preparatory meetings.

- (2) Referring to the Community Transport project under the Gwynedd Council Performance Overview, concern was expressed that the decision of this Council not to publish paper versions of bus timetables prevented people from using buses. It was noted that this created particular problems for some older people, who did not have access to the Internet, and that it was also difficult for visitors to know where to go to find the information. It was suggested that giving more publicity to the Traveline telephone number would help.

Reference was also made to the lack of profitability of a number of the travel routes, the area reviews and the reduction in grant from the Welsh Government, and the importance of ensuring that the county's rural communities continued to be serviced in full in the future was emphasised.

It was noted that there were examples of community transport working well in the county, including door to door transport in Pen Llŷn and it was suggested that there were lessons to be learnt from that.

It was suggested to send a message to the Welsh Government expressing concern that the method of awarding contracts gave the large companies an unfair advantage.

- (3) Referring to the Story behind the Performance in the Care field, it was noted, although the Council's aim was to support people to remain in their communities, that it was obvious that they did not receive the appropriate support to enable them to do so as 76% of the people who were questioned recently had stated that they did not receive a satisfactory response to their enquiries over the phone.
- (4) It was noted that it was very difficult for the committee to scrutinise this report so late in the day and without the background information to be able to satisfy themselves that the colours that had been assigned to the different plans were a fair reflection of the situation. It was suggested, in the future, that the committee received a draft of the report around two months in advance so that it would be possible to include the responses to the members' questions in the final draft of the document that would be submitted to the full Council. It was agreed that the Chair and the Members Support and Scrutiny Manager, in consultation with the Performance and Efficiency Improvement Manager, should discuss the appropriate mechanism to implement such a procedure.
- (5) Referring to the indicator 'Rate of Children in Workless Households in Gwynedd (Reduction)' it was suggested that there was also a need to address the income of families, whether those families were in work or out of work, rather than addressing the unemployed alone. The Leader agreed to address this for the future.
- (6) Referring to scheme Add.05 – Primary and Secondary Education Organisation Project, it was noted that the fact that the situation was red in Dwyfor and Arfon was not reflected here as those parts of the county had been excluded from the reporting process. In response, the Leader noted that there should be an indicator for the things that were not achieved as it was important to monitor the progress across county rather than only addressing the area in the county where progress had been identified. It was too late to add an indicator to this report, but this could be done for the 2012/13 Performance Report.

RESOLVED

(a) To recommend amending the performance report as follows, with the approval of the Council Leader in consultation with the Chairman of this committee:-

- (i) Plan Ref. CGOE01 – Enablement Plan
As it is evident that the third output was not successful, ask the Cabinet Member to note the extent of the increase that was seen in the number of home care hours and determine a colour to reflect that.
- (ii) Plan (no reference) – Tomorrow’s Service
Seek more information on the size of the bid and as a percentage of the budget required and also ask whether the additional resources are sufficient to meet the 5% increase in the number of looked after children.
- (iii) Plan Ref. PG.02 - Keeping The Benefit Local - Respond to the needs of local sectors to get more benefits from major capital plans
Although the improvement sought is robust, the output, namely ‘We will have identified...’ should have been more specific.
- (iv) Plan Ref. SM.G07 - Overcoming barriers to work – those with mental health problems
Delete the word ‘advocaciaeth’ as the word ‘eiriolaeth’ is there anyway in the Welsh version - both meaning ‘advocacy’.
- (v) Children and Young People Key Indicators
Correct the reference to ‘Number’ at the side of the table indicating the ‘Percentage of referrals to the Children and Families Service re-referred within 12 months’ to ‘Percentage’.
- (vi) Plan Ref. Add.03 - Transforming Services for Children and Young People with Behavioural Problems – Strengthen the provision for vulnerable children and young people and those with behavioural problems within mainstream schools.
Need to draw specific attention to the secondary sector in the improvement and outcome.
- (vii) Performance in the Language field – the Story behind the Performance
The column ‘2014 Achievement’ should note a specific figure rather than referring to ‘more’ families using the Welsh language in the home.
- (viii) Plan Ref. Add.11 - Design, develop and implement a comprehensive and appropriate training programme for the entire workforce in Gwynedd primary schools in order to increase children’s social use of the Welsh language.
Recommend changing this to amber as the Council Board’s decision to transfer this improvement to 2012/13 means deferring achievement.
- (ix) Plan Ref. PS.105 - The Schools’ Language Charter Scheme based on the Healthy Schools Scheme, the Green Schools Scheme and the Eco Schools, operational in Gwynedd’s primary schools.
Recommend changing this to amber as it has not been fully achieved.
- (x) Plan Ref. PS.106 - Hold a high profile event to raise awareness of the workforce’s role to have a positive influence on children’s social use of the Welsh language
Recommend changing this to amber because, although it was successful in bringing some publicity to the plan, the Council has not reinforced the primary schools’ workforce on the importance of promoting the Welsh language in every aspect of school life.

- (xi) **Plan Ref. PS.109 - Investing in a Community Translation Scheme to promote and facilitate the use made of the Welsh language**
Recommend changing this to amber as the plan has not been realised.
- (xii) **Plan Ref. PS.110 - Implement the Thriving Welsh-speaking Neighbourhoods Characteristics Framework.**
Recommend changing this to amber as the Board has permitted slippage on this.
- (xiii) **Local Development Plan Key Indicators – Number of residential units and land area for employment within the pre deposit draft of the Plan addressing local requirements**
The 'Performance 2011/12' column should note how many housing units have been approved and what is meant by 'needs to be monitored'.
- (b) To look to add the following indicators to the Performance Report 2012/13:-
 - (i) An indicator that looks at family income, rather than looking at unemployed families alone.
 - (ii) An indicator for things that are not achieved within the Primary and Secondary Education Organisation Project.
- (c) To refer the following matters to the relevant scrutiny committees:-
 - (i) Community Transport;
 - (ii) Supporting people to remain in their communities.
- (ch) To convey the committee's messages on Community Transport to the Cabinet Member and request that consideration is given to publishing paper versions of the bus timetables once the area reviews have been completed.
- (d) That the Chairman and the Members Support and Scrutiny Manager should discuss the appropriate mechanism for considering the performance report in the future.

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at midday.