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Adran y Prif Weithredwr
Chief Executive's Department
Swyddfa'r Cyngor
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

Cyfarfod / Meeting

Y CYNGOR
THE COUNCIL

Dyddiad ac Amser / Date and Time

1.00pm, DYDD IAU, 5 RHAGFYR, 2013

1.00pm, THURSDAY, 5 DECEMBER, 2013

Lleoliad / Location

Siambwr Dafydd Orwig
Swyddfa'r Cyngor, Caernarfon

Pwynt Cyswllt / Contact Point

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(DOSBARTHWDYD/DISTRIBUTED 29/11/13)

Harry Thomas
Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive

www.gwynedd.gov.uk

29 Tachwedd / November 2013

Annwyl Gyngorydd,

CYFARFOD O GYNGOR GWYNEDD – 5 RHAGFYR 2013

FE'CH GWYSIR TRWY HYN i gyfarfod o **GYNGOR GWYNEDD** a gynhelir am **1.00PM, DYDD IAU** nesaf, **5 RHAGFYR 2013 YN SIAMBR DAFYDD ORWIG, SWYDDFA'R CYNGOR, CAERNARFON**, i ystyried y materion a grybwyllir yn y rhaglen a ganlyn.

Dear Councillor,

MEETING OF GWYNEDD COUNCIL – 5 DECEMBER 2013

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to attend a meeting of **GWYNEDD COUNCIL** which will be held at **1.00PM on THURSDAY** next, **5 DECEMBER 2013 in SIAMBR DAFYDD ORWIG, COUNCIL OFFICES, CAERNARFON** to consider the matters mentioned in the following agenda.

Yr eiddoch yn gywir/Yours faithfully,



Prif Weithredwr/Chief Executive

Bydd yr ystafelloedd a ganlyn ar gael i'r grwpiau gwleidyddol yn ystod y bore:-

The following rooms will be available for the political groups during the morning:-

Plaid Cymru - Siambr Dafydd Orwig

Annibynnol/Independent – Siambr Hywel Dda

Llais Gwynedd – Ystafell Gwyrfai

Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol/Liberal Democrats - Ystafell Llyfni

Llafur/Labour – Cefn Siambr Dafydd Orwig/Rear of Siambr Dafydd Orwig

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. MINUTES

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the last meeting of the Council held on 19 September, 2013 be signed as true record (copy attached).

3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

4. THE CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive any Chairman's announcements.

5. CORRESPONDENCE, COMMUNICATIONS OR OTHER BUSINESS

To receive any correspondence, communications or other business brought forward at the request of the Chairman.

6. URGENT BUSINESS

To note any items which are urgent business in the opinion of the Chairman so they may be considered.

7. QUESTIONS

To consider any questions the appropriate notice for which have been given under Procedural Rule 15.

8. PRESENTATION BY THE CABINET MEMBER ENVIRONMENT

To receive a verbal presentation by the Cabinet Member Environment.

9. FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2014/15 – 2017/18

To consider the report of the Cabinet Member Resources (copy attached).

10. REVISED STRATEGIC PLAN

To consider the report of the Council Leader (copy attached).

11. COUNCIL TAX: DISCRETIONARY POWERS TO ALLOW DISCOUNTS

To consider the report of the Cabinet Member Resources (copy attached).

12. COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2014/15

To consider the report of the Head of Finance (copy attached).

13. JOINT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN – REVISED TIMETABLE

To consider the report of the Head of Regulatory Department (copy attached).

14. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

To consider the report of the Deputy Leader of the Council (copy attached).

15. THE COUNCIL'S POLITICAL BALANCE

To consider the report of the Council Leader (copy attached).

16. NOTICES OF MOTION

- (A) To submit a response by the Government's Business Team in response to Councillor Eryl Jones-Williams' notice of motion to the last meeting calling for a Medical University in North Wales (copy attached).
- (B) In accordance with the notice of motion received under Procedural Rule 17, Councillor Dilwyn Morgan will propose as follows:

“Gwynedd Council objects to the bedroom tax implemented by the Westminster Government. We note the impact that this harmful policy has on many residents of Gwynedd, hitting the most needy in our communities. We note the good work that is ongoing within the county to assist tenants who are faced with difficulties as a result of the bedroom tax. We ask the Council to encourage our partners, the social landlords, to make every attempt to assist and support tenants to ensure that nobody will lose their home as a result of the implications of the bedroom tax. We press for the devolution of the welfare field to Wales in order to ensure that policies are implemented in accordance with the aspirations and requirements of the people of Wales.”

The procedural motion was received from the member in accordance with Procedural Rule 17(12) requesting that the matter be discussed on the day instead of being referred to the relevant committee.

THE COUNCIL 19.09.13

Present: Councillor Huw Edwards (Chairman);
Councillor Dewi Owen (Vice-chairman).

Councillors: Craig ab Iago, Stephen Churchman, Endaf Cooke, Anwen Davies, Lesley Day, Eddie Dogan, Gwynfor Edwards, Dyfed Edwards, Elwyn Edwards, Thomas Ellis, Alan Jones Evans, Aled Evans, Jean Forsyth, Gweno Glyn, Simon Glyn, Gwen Griffith, Selwyn Griffiths, Alwyn Gruffydd, Sian Gwenllian, Annwen Hughes, Louise Hughes, Jason Humphreys, Peredur Jenkins, Anne Lloyd Jones, Brian Jones, Charles W.Jones, Dyfrig Jones, Elin Walker Jones, Eric Merfyn Jones, John Wynn Jones, Linda Wyn Jones, Sion Wyn Jones, Eryl Jones-Williams, Beth Lawton, Dilwyn Lloyd, June Marshall, Dafydd Meurig, Dilwyn Morgan, Linda Morgan, Michael Sol Owen, W.Roy Owen, William Tudor Owen, Peter Read, Caerwyn Roberts, John Pugh Roberts, Liz Saville Roberts, W.Gareth Roberts, Mair Rowlands, Angela Russell, Dyfrig Siencyn, Gareth Thomas, Ioan Thomas, Paul Thomas, Ann Williams, Eirwyn Williams, Elfed Williams, Gethin Glyn Williams, Hefin Williams, John Wyn Williams, Owain Williams, R.H.Wyn Williams and Mandy Williams-Davies.

Also present: Harry Thomas (Chief Executive), Iwan Trefor Jones and Dilwyn Williams (Corporate Directors), Morwena Edwards (Corporate Director / Statutory Director / Head of Social Services, Housing and Leisure Department), Dilys Phillips (Monitoring Officer / Head of Democracy and Legal Department), Dafydd Edwards (Head of Finance Department), Geraint George (Head of Strategic and Improvement Department), Aled Davies (Head of Regulatory Department), Arwel Ellis Jones (Senior Manager – Corporate Commissioning Service), Iwan Evans (Legal Services Manager), Nia Elis-Williams (Senior Business Manager / Executive Support), Hawis Jones (Performance and Efficiency Improvement Manager) and Eirian Roberts (Member Support and Scrutiny Officer).

Apologies: Councillors Trefor Edwards, John Brynmor Hughes, Llywarch Bowen Jones, Mike Stevens, Gruffydd Williams and Robert J. Wright.

The meeting was opened with a prayer from Councillor Selwyn Griffiths.

1. MINUTES

The Chairman signed the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 2 May 2013 as a true record, subject to the inclusion of the following additions under item 9 – Member Support:-

- To note that a member had asked for assurance that those members who did not use a Council e-mail address would not be deprived of information.
- To note that a member had stated, although acknowledging that a member could only speak once on a proposal, that he/she should be entitled to ask a question in addition to that.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

- i) Councillor Dyfrig Jones declared a personal interest in item 14 on the agenda – a Notice of Motion calling for a Medical University in North Wales – as he was employed by Bangor University.

The member was of the opinion that it was a prejudicial interest and he withdrew from the meeting during the discussion on the item.

- ii) Councillor Mair Rowlands declared a personal interest in item 14 on the agenda – a Notice of Motion calling for a Medical University in North Wales – as she worked for Bangor University.

The member was of the opinion that it was not a prejudicial interest and she participated fully in the discussion on the item.

- ii) Councillor Elin Walker Jones declared a personal interest in item 14 on the agenda – a Notice of Motion calling for a Medical University in North Wales – as she was employed by Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and by Bangor University.

The member was of the opinion that it was a prejudicial interest and she withdrew from the meeting during the discussion on the item.

3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- i) Condolences were expressed to the following:-

Councillor Gwen Griffith on the death of her mother, who was also the mother-in-law of Councillor Brian Jones.

Councillor Anne Lloyd Jones on the death of her mother-in-law.

Councillor Trefor Edwards on the death of his mother-in-law.

It was also noted that the Council wished to remember others within the county's communities who had lost loved ones recently.

The Council members stood as a mark of respect.

- ii) Welcome back

Councillor Alwyn Gruffydd was welcomed back following his recent ill-health.

- iii) Congratulations

To everyone from Gwynedd who had been successful in the Urdd Eisteddfod and National Eisteddfod recently, in particular Ifor ap Glyn, the winner of the Crown, and Bet Jones, the winner of the Prose Medal at the Denbigh Eisteddfod.

- iv) General

Gratitude was expressed to those people who undertook voluntary work and raised money for various charities in the county.

It was noted that the arrival of the famous 'Tour of Britain' cycle race to Llanberis the previous day had been the pinnacle of the activities in Gwynedd and that the return of the race to Gwynedd in the future was greatly anticipated.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Paul Thomas, Cabinet Member for Healthy Gwynedd noted that every member had received a small pin badge with the '*Healthy Living*' logo on it. He explained that this logo had been designed to promote the Council's vision to encourage people to make healthy lifestyle choices and that it would be offered to organisations or businesses in the county that contributed to that vision in some way or another.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Sian Gwenllian, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education, submitted a brief report on the results of Estyn's recent inspection of the Council's education services. She noted:-

- Following the Survey on the Quality of Education Services of the Gwynedd Local Authority for children and young people undertaken in March 2013, it had been ruled that the Authority's current performance and projected improvements were '*adequate*'.
- That the Cabinet had accepted and confirmed the Post-inspection Action Plan which responded to six recommendations relating to safeguarding, quality, performance management and reorganisation.
- That the plan was part of the Council's broader work to raise standards and was a priority that had been included in the Strategic Plan.
- That the hard work was starting to come into fruition. The initial analysis of this year's GCSE results showed a 3% increase across Gwynedd in the key indicator used by Estyn, namely TL2+. Also, a secondary school in the county had now stopped being party to special measures and absence levels had reduced by 1.3%, thus placing Gwynedd in the second best position in Wales in terms of the percentage of children attending school.
- Nevertheless, much work remained and the role of the Cabinet and the Services Scrutiny Committee was to continue demanding that the Council progressed and accelerated the pace of this change and raised its ambitions for the benefit of all children and young people in the county. Members had a key role in this as school governors also, and she aimed to strengthen the support provided to members, as governors, to improve their skills in the field.
- Although much of the content of the Hill Report on Ensuring Improved Education Services in Wales was to be welcomed greatly, it included an element of risk of becoming embroiled in the discussion regarding structural change once more, which was very disappointing.

To close, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Education noted that she would welcome the members' observations over the coming weeks.

Some members expressed discontent that they had to respond privately to a public announcement.

The Chairman explained that this was a presentation for information purposes only under the Chairman's Announcements and that members were welcome to speak with the Cabinet Member after the Council meeting.

4. QUESTIONS

Question by Councillor Louise Hughes

"The wonderful weather this summer has meant that tens of thousands of people visited during the holidays (an increase of 20% on last year's figures), which gave a much needed boost to our economy. However, after receiving an e-mail from a member of the

public complaining about over zealous traffic wardens, can I have an explanation as to why in excess of 50 parking tickets were issued near Snowdon over the Bank Holiday weekend? If we want people to visit us again is this really the right way to go about it?"

Response from Councillor W. Gareth Roberts, Cabinet Member for the Environment:

"The arterial roads (A498 and A4086) are important transport links through this northern part of Snowdonia National Park.

Historically, during the summer months and in particular Bank Holiday weekends, the roads in question become heavily congested. A significant contributory factor is parked vehicles which results in various traffic and road safety related problems affecting vulnerable road users, through traffic and the emergency services. As a result of the significant problems caused and as part of the partnership work between Gwynedd and Conwy Councils and the Snowdonia National Park Authority, a Clearway and Traffic Order was adopted in an attempt to overcome the said safety and traffic flow concerns. Whilst not popular with all people, the Order has been successful in achieving the desired objectives.

Primarily, the problems outlined are a direct result of vehicles parking on the carriageway and on verges in contravention of the Clearway Order and/or parking restrictions, both of which are clearly signed in accordance with the relevant Orders.

I can confirm that on each of the three days of the Bank Holiday weekend a single Civil Parking Enforcement Officer periodically patrolled the site. This frequency is the norm in relation to the parking and traffic problems faced at this location during the holiday season.

Having regard to the issues raised by the complainant and their views regarding enforcement of the area concerned, I would suggest that the Council's enforcement operations under Parking Enforcement Guidelines are fair and proportionate given the risks caused by indiscriminate parking.

The Bank Holiday is a very busy time, but consider seriously this site and many other sites. 50 cars parked there. A narrow road, with stone walls on either side. Buses from Beddgelert and Betws y Coed travelling back and forth to Llanberis. Cars parked on one side, no room for two cars to pass each other. Two coming face to face. Congestion. An accident on Snowdon. An ambulance attempting to reach the site. The Mountain Rescue Team attempting to reach there, whilst these people are unhappy that they've been issued a parking ticket. There are clear signs here. They are there for a reason and when it is busy like this on Bank Holidays, there is even more reason for them. I support what happens here. This is something that has been agreed upon between this Council, Conwy Council and the National Park in terms of the needs of this site because of the problems caused in the years gone by. If these 50 are unhappy, consider what would happen if there was a mile-long queue each way unable to travel through because it is gridlocked. Consider how unhappy they would be in turn. I believe that this is a no-win situation. I believe that it is obvious from seeing the place that it is unreasonable for you to park along the roadside."

Supplementary question by Councillor Louise Hughes

"Considering that our economy depends extensively on visitors, and as the current parking arrangements cannot cope with the high number of visitors in vehicles to our main

visitor destinations, will the Highways Department consider ways of improving road safety without disrupting the visitor experience?"

Response from Councillor W. Gareth Roberts, Cabinet Member for the Environment:

"By all means, this is something I can take to the group that deals with this area for consideration."

5(a) PRESENTATION BY THE CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES

An oral presentation was received from Councillor Peredur Jenkins, Cabinet Member for Resources, on the specific functions in his remit. He noted that there were four elements to the work, namely strategic, financial, Council transformation and human resources, and he expanded upon each element in turn.

The members were then given an opportunity to ask questions and make observations. The Cabinet Member for Resources responded appropriately to the majority of the questions; however, he agreed to get back to members in relation to the questions below, as he did not have the particular information to hand:-

- Will the health and safety training courses be mandatory for teachers, and in particular for those staff who supervise children during lunchtime and break time?
- How many health and safety officers are employed by the Council?

It was also asked who was the head of the Penarlâg Offices in Dolgellau and why had the security locks on the doors not been changed for some months. It was noted that this was a question for the Cabinet Member for Customer Care.

The Cabinet Member for Resources was thanked for his presentation.

5(b) ENSURING SUSTAINABLE SERVICES IN DIFFICULT TIMES

Councillor Peredur Jenkins, Cabinet Member for Resources had submitted his report to the Cabinet on 16 July 2013, recommending, in light of the substantial change in the financial climate, that the Asset Plan should be revisited to see whether there were opportunities there to reduce financial demands on the Council and also revisit the Strategic Plan to identify which plans were absolutely necessary to achieve and which ones could be reconsidered. He explained that the Cabinet had recommended submitting the matter before the full Council as the Council owned these plans. He then thanked the departments' committed staff for their support and emphasised that they undertook commendable work on behalf of the residents of Gwynedd.

The members were then given an opportunity to ask questions and make observations. During the discussion the following main matters were highlighted:-

- It was hoped that all members would meet often enough to work through these plans in detail and a request was made to receive information on paper noting how many people worked in the various departments and what were their functions and salary scales. In response, the Cabinet Member for Resources confirmed that there would be extensive consultation with all members and he urged each and every one of them to attend the seminars which would be arranged as their contribution was essential and important. In terms of salaries, he noted that the totals were being published in the Annual Financial Handbook and that he did not

wish to recommence the procedure of publishing the salary of each of the Council's 7,000 staff members.

- It was suggested, although it was not wished to see any cuts in services, that there was scope to give protection to social services and education. It should also be ensured that any cuts did not affect people and that the most vulnerable people in society were protected. It was also important that any cuts were made in a balanced way that protected the service as much as possible. It had to be considered whether the service added value to the residents, whether this was the service that residents wished to have and whether the Council provided that service for historical reasons only?
- In response to an enquiry regarding the use of the Council's reserves to reduce pressure on Council Tax next year, the Cabinet Member for Resources replied that the Council's reserves had been earmarked for specific purposes and that the situation was being reviewed regularly. He also emphasised that the balances could only be used once and that such a strategy did not address the problem in forthcoming years. With that in mind, careful planning was required over a period of time which was this Council's financial strategy.
- Concern was expressed regarding the implications of a poor settlement for the Gwynedd countryside and a call was made for more pressure to be placed on the Welsh Government and to explain to the politicians in Cardiff what such a huge cut in the grant meant to a rural and dispersed county like Gwynedd. In response, the Cabinet Member for Resources noted that the Leader, the Cabinet, the Chief Executive and Corporate Directors lobbied the Government ministers regularly on this subject as well as the rural issue where delivering services was much more expensive in each field. He noted further that he was arranging a meeting with Gwynedd AMs to educate them about the financial problems of this Council and it was hoped to be able to influence the Government's Minister for Local Government and Business.
- A request was made for assurance that plans were in place to address the worst possible financial scenario in 2013/14. In response, Dilwyn Williams, Corporate Director, reminded members of the Council's original plan and explained how that would be thrown as a result of the Government's actions. He noted that officers were looking at a way for the Council to adhere to its plans in 2014/15, which would possibly include an element of using balances to bridge the period until 2015/16 and using the period running up to that to identify logical plans that sought more efficiency, and sought to gain more from controlling demand and minimising service cuts for the residents of Gwynedd. He emphasised that no promises could be made at present; but that would be the plan submitted before the Council in December.
- It was suggested that it was important to protect frontline staff as they provided the services on a day to day basis.
- It was suggested that the Cabinet pushed difficult and unpleasant decisions to the full Council, without it having received full information to enable the Council to undertake that work. In response, the Cabinet Member for Resources noted that he did not accept that there was a lack of information and he encouraged the member who had raised the issue to attend the seminars.
- It was emphasised that Council Tax should not be increased above the level of inflation at any cost and concern was expressed regarding the situation of those people on low salaries but who were ineligible for discounts.
- A member suggested that, although she did not attend the seminars, she worked hard out in the field, but although she had phoned officers they often did not listen to her. It was suggested that the member should raise the point with the relevant Cabinet Member.

RESOLVED to note the latest financial position and in light of the fundamental changes outlined, that the Asset Management Plan should be revisited to see whether there are opportunities to reduce the financial demands on the Council, and that we also revisit the Strategic Plan in order to identify which schemes are absolutely necessary to achieve and which ones could be reconsidered.

6. GWYNEDD COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE COMMISSION'S CONSULTATION ON GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC SERVICES PROVISION

The Council Leader submitted his report enclosing the response he had sent to the above-mentioned consultation, along with a progress report released by the Commission at the end of August providing an explanation of the main points that had been submitted to it as evidence thus far. Because organisations had been requested to respond to the call for evidence by 31 August, and in order to ensure that the Council had the greatest impact on the Commission's work, he explained that he had concluded that the best thing to do was to draw up a concise response based on the principles that the Commission should consider when forming a decision and publish this response in the form of a Decision Notice and circulate it to all Council members. However, as he was of the view that this was a matter that should be addressed by all members at a meeting of the full Council, and that the Commission had stated that it was willing to receive evidence up until the end of September, he was submitting the response to the attention of the Council in order to have a broader discussion on its content and to allow him to conclude whether any additional evidence needed to be sent to the Commission on behalf of the Council.

Members' observations on the response were requested. The following points were noted by individual members:-

- The constant conflict between this Council's opinion which benefits the county and the guidance and centralisation which come from Cardiff.
- Opposition to the Leader's individual opinion in favour of merging councils as it would not benefit the county with services becoming more distant from the residents.
- That paragraph 3.3 of the response should be strengthened to make specific reference to the fact that any changes should not affect the Welsh language.
- Concern that it was the Government's plan to dispose of town and community councils and create district councils in their place and dispose of the existing county councils and have larger councils in their place. This was a matter which showed the Government's lack of understanding of what communities were and a lack of appreciation of what local government was.
- That the greatest disappointment was that none of the members of the Commission lived and worked above the M4 corridor.
- That the governance model that already existed in Wales worked well on the whole, despite some flaws that needed to be addressed in order to provide services that were suitable and appropriate, at the right cost without being a world away from electors.
- That a clear message should be sent to the Commission, and copy the Government into the message, expressing disappointment that the timetable for responding to such a critically important consultation had been so tight and to note that more time should have been allowed to give everyone an opportunity to respond.
- That a more challenging culture was required in Welsh politics. In response, the Council Leader noted that his method of working involved establishing a good relationship with ministers, the First Ministers, government officers and everyone,

when attempting to present Gwynedd's case and that he pleaded guilty should that mean that he was too friendly.

It was proposed and seconded that additional evidence should be sent to the Commission on Governance and Public Services Provision based on the members' observations in relation to:-

- the importance of having local democracy and accountability and keeping that accountability close to the people locally;
- not centralising matters in Cardiff;
- the importance of the work of town and community councils;
- if change was inevitable, to merge three councils rather than six across the north;
- the Commission's membership and the fact that nobody on this side of the M4 corridor served on it;
- placing more emphasis on the Welsh language;
- sending a clear message to the Commission regarding the timing of the consultation.

An amendment was proposed and seconded to remove the reference to merging councils because that could be considered as silent support to the notion of merging with others.

A vote was taken on the amendment and it was carried.

A further amendment was proposed and seconded to write to the Commission to express that the Leader's response did not reflect the Council's opinion.

A vote was taken on the further amendment and it fell.

A vote was taken on the original proposal and it was carried.

RESOLVED to send additional evidence to the Commission on Governance and Public Services Provision based on the members' observations in relation to:-

- **the importance of having local democracy and accountability and keeping that accountability close to the people locally;**
- **not centralising matters in Cardiff;**
- **the importance of the work of town and community councils;**
- **the Commission's membership and the fact that nobody on this side of the M4 corridor serves on it;**
- **placing more emphasis on the Welsh language;**
- **sending a clear message to the Commission regarding the timing of the consultation.**

7. GWYNEDD COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2012/13

The Council Leader submitted his report appending the Gwynedd Council Performance Report 2012/13, requesting the Council to approve the document as a balanced, fair and accurate reflection of the Council's performance in 2012/13, and adopt it. He noted that Gwynedd performed best in Wales and he asked the Chief Executive to express his gratitude to all staff for their commendable work over the year. He added that he was keen to include the citizen's experience in the 2013/14 report, along with the performance against the best, whichever country that happened to be.

The Chief Executive explained that the Council's role was to assess whether or not the report was a balanced, fair and accurate reflection of the performance, and not scrutinise the performance. In relation to comparative information, the Chief Executive noted that Gwynedd had performed best throughout Wales in respect of a quarter of the national indicators (11 out of 44) and that half the indicators were in the highest quartile (22 in the highest 6-7).

The members were then given an opportunity to ask questions and make observations. During the discussion the following main matters were highlighted:-

- It was noted that there were many weaknesses which needed to be improved in the report, such as:-

Social Services – Ref. SCA/002a The rate of older people (aged 65 or over): a) who receive assistance to live at home per 1,000 of the population aged 65 or over (page 90 in the English version)

It was misleading to note that the performance against Wales was red because the fact that the percentage had fallen from 60.47% in 2010/11 to 46.53% in 2012/13, compared to a Wales average of 77.53% in 2012/13, showed that the Council was doing its work.

Economy – Ref. Twr4 Benefits to the local economy from supporting high-profile and strategic events (page 92 in the English version)

It was not obvious to the public how the figure of £4,994,155.40 had been achieved.

The Council – Ref. Eff5 – % of savings plans with a positive equality impact assessment

Evidence is needed to substantiate the 100% performance.

The Council – Ref. Eff6 – Number of proposed new efficiency savings plans that have been equality impact assessed

The 104% performance needs to be explained.

The Chief Executive noted that some minor editorial changes needed to be made to the report and he asked members to direct any such observations to the attention of the Performance and Efficiency Improvement Manager.

The Leader noted that he took personal responsibility for any weaknesses in the report and that he would ensure that they were corrected.

RESOLVED to approve the report as a balanced, fair and accurate reflection of the Council's performance in 2012/13, and to adopt the report.

8. THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Submitted – the Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services.

The Cabinet Member for Care set out the context and congratulated the Director on her recent appointment as Corporate Director. He thanked all of the department's staff for their work and noted that their commitment and enthusiasm had been very prominent, along with the collaboration with other providers and partners to ensure that children and young people, vulnerable adults and families received the best possible service.

He then invited the Director to provide a taster of the priorities and vision for the future of the department.

The Director gave thanks to the Cabinet Member for his support and to the department's staff and partners who had been totally committed to the work throughout the year.

In submitting her report, the Director gave details of the need for a substantial change in direction within the care service in Gwynedd. She emphasised that there was a responsibility on the Council as a body, and as individuals within the communities, to safeguard and protect the most vulnerable people in society and she also emphasised the importance of ensuring that the Council collaborated very closely with its key partners. In looking to the future, there was a need to consider the context of very challenging financial pressures, demographic changes and increasing expectations. The services of the future needed to be sustainable and this was addressed in the Welsh Government's Social Services and Well-being Bill. It was seen in the Bill that there was a need to ensure that people's well-being was placed centrally, by giving a voice and control to people who needed services, as well as safeguarding and protecting vulnerable children, young people and adults. To ensure a sustainable future, there was a need to think differently and Gwynedd had an excellent foundation of viable communities and committed individuals. This was the key foundation for planning and providing in the future. Change would not be easy, but by joint-creating and joint-producing services and building on the strengths of individuals and communities, she was confident that there was true potential to create a positive and sustainable future for the people of Gwynedd.

The members were then given an opportunity to ask questions and make observations. During the discussion the following main matters were highlighted:-

- It was noted that the observations of the Director in relation to listening to the communities were welcomed. This was where the service had failed in the past. People knew what their needs were and how to meet those needs; however, procedures and processes within the Council had prevented those needs from being met.
- The good communication between the department and the older people in Gwynedd was praised and it was also noted that the collaboration between the third sector and the department had developed well and had led to better opportunities for older people.

The Director was thanked for her presentation and she was wished well in her new post. Gratitude was also expressed to the department's staff who achieved excellent work for small salaries.

9. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT CHARTER

The Chair of the Democratic Services Committee submitted her report, recommending that the Council should express an interest in applying for the Wales Charter for Member Support and Development, referred to verbally as the 'Members' Charter', in 2013/14.

RESOLVED that the Council agrees to express its corporate commitment to applying for the Members' Charter in 2013/14.

10. THE COUNCIL'S POLITICAL BALANCE

As the Leader had left the meeting early due to other commitments, the Deputy Leader submitted his report, recommending allocating seats on the Council's committees and external bodies as a result of a member's decision to leave the Llais Gwynedd Group and be treated as an individual member, and another member's decision to move from the Independent Group to the Llais Gwynedd Group.

RESOLVED

- (a) To adopt seat allocation on the Council's committees in accordance with the table below –

SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

	Plaid Cymru	Independent	Llais Gwynedd	Labour	Liberal Democrats	Individual Member
Corporate	9	4	3	1	1	
Communities	9	4	3	1	1	
Services	9	4	4	1		
Audit	9	4	3	1		1

OTHER COMMITTEES

	Plaid Cymru	Independent	Llais Gwynedd	Labour	Liberal Democrats	Individual Member
Democratic Services	7	4	3	1		
Planning	7	3	3	1	1	
Central Licensing	7	4	4	0		
Language	8	4	3			
Appointment of Principal Officers	7	4	2	1	1	
Employment Appeals	4	1	1	1		

Number of seats	76	37	28	8	4	1	154
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	Plaid Cymru	Independent	Llais Gwynedd	Labour	Liberal Democrats	Individual Member
Pensions	3	2	1		1	
SACRE	3	2	2			
Local Consultative Joint Committee	6	2	2	1		

Special Educational Needs Joint Committee	4	2	1			
Joint Planning Policy Committee	4 (3 seats and one deputy)	1	1	1		1
Total seats	96	47	36	10	5	194

- (b) That the representation on the Snowdonia National Park Authority and the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority should continue based on political balance in accordance with the table below and that the Independent Group should be invited to nominate a member to replace the member who has left the group on the Snowdonia National Park Authority and that the Llais Gwynedd Group should be invited to nominate a member to replace the member who has left the group on the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority.

	Plaid Cymru	Independent	Llais Gwynedd	Labour	Liberal Democrats	Individual Member
Snowdonia National Park Authority	4	2	2	1	0	0
North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority	3	1	1	0	0	0

11. NOTICE OF MOTION

In accordance with Procedural Rule 17, it was reported that a notice of motion had been submitted, along with a procedural motion, in accordance with Procedural Rule 17 (12), by Councillor Eryl Jones-Williams, requesting that the matter be discussed at the full Council without being referred to committee:-

RESOLVED to discuss the motion at this meeting.

The following proposal was proposed and seconded:-

“Will Gwynedd Council please support the need for a Doctors and Medical University for North Wales in order to combat the shortage of Doctors in Gwynedd and other areas of North Wales?”

I ask Gwynedd Council to press on the Welsh Government, the Health Minister and the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board to support the Medical University as there would be additional benefits in keeping our young professional people in the area and it would help create jobs and also help to provide Welsh speaking doctors in areas such as Gwynedd.”

Many members expressed their enthusiastic support to the motion.

RESOLVED to accept the motion.

The meeting commenced at 1.00pm and concluded at 4.50pm.

REPORT TO COUNCIL

5 December 2013

Cabinet Member: Cllr Peredur Jenkins

Subject: Financial Strategy 2014/15 – 2017/18

Contact Officer: Dilwyn Williams, Corporate Director

The decision sought/purpose of the report

To note the position in relation to the substantial grant reduction that will affect the Council in 2014/15 and to approve the high level strategy to deal with the new financial scenario we are facing.

Opinion of local member

Not a local matter

Introduction

1. I reported to the Cabinet in July that Ministers within Welsh Government had suggested that they intended to change direction when considering expenditure priorities within Welsh Government and stating that local authorities should plan ahead on the basis of “English style” financial reductions.
2. The draft settlement for local authorities has now been published and it is possible for us to plan on the basis of more solid information.
3. Back in February, the Council formulated a four year financial strategy based on the information given to us at that time regarding the likely settlement from Welsh Government as follows:-

£m	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total
Anticipated deficit	1.9	4.7	9.8	8.4	24.8
Savings already found	3.6	4.6	0.5	-	8.7
Further savings required	(1.7)	0.1	9.3	8.4	16.1

4. It can be seen from the above that we forecast that the planned savings we had found for 2013/14 and 2014/15 were going to be more than sufficient to meet the deficit for those years but that further savings would need to be found for 2015/16 and 2016/17.

5. This was based on the Welsh Government statement in February this year that the local government grant would increase 0.8% in 2014/15. On this basis assumptions were made that this would mean an increase of about £500,000 in grant for Gwynedd Council.
6. Now, the draft settlement suggests that local government grant will reduce 3.5% on average across Wales in 2014/15. However, the actual reduction is higher due to the way the Government has dealt with the Council Tax Reduction Scheme grant and the new money given to fund the borrowing regime for road improvement. Taking these two issues into account the true reduction across Wales is nearer to 4% and the reduction for Gwynedd is nearer - 4.7%. This equates to a grant reduction of £8.3m for Gwynedd Council.
7. This is very disheartening for a council like us who have created a prudent and responsible plan based on the information that it was given, and it completely destroys any attempt at having responsible medium term financial planning that is being urged by the District Auditor.
8. Having said that, we must now try and deal with the situation, and due to the financial planning already undertaken by the Council, we will probably be in a better position to deal with these substantial changes compared with some other councils.
9. It appears that we have two main options in order to deal with this situation, namely -
 - Take emergency action to find more savings quickly (which will probably mean service cuts : as cuts are the quickest way to achieve savings); or
 - Consider whether there is a way to take advantage of the planning already undertaken by the Council to establish a balanced budget in 2014/15 without any substantial changes, so as to buy time to be prudent in establishing a new savings programme.
10. As I stated in my presentation to the Council in September, I have been consulting officers in order to see if the second option is practically possible.
11. By looking at the figures, it now appears that this could be done, and on this basis I therefore suggest the following strategy.

The Long term Strategy

12. The work of establishing the probable gap for the next four years is ongoing, and by December we will have a planning which we can use to underpin our preparations for the next four years.
13. Work is also ongoing to establish the opportunities available to the various services to find savings by keeping the effect on the outcomes for the people of Gwynedd to the minimum possible (through efficiency savings; demand management measures and low impact cuts).
14. Based on these opportunities it will then be possible to establish differential savings targets for each service to be presented to a series of seminars for all members in January/February and then to the Cabinet and the Council in March.
15. Services would then produce their own plans to deliver the targets set by the Council and present those plans to a series of seminars and the scrutiny process in the same way that was successfully done with the last Council in order to establish the present savings programme.
16. These savings would then start to be implemented around the end of 2014/15 onwards.
17. Such a system would allow us to be considered in our approach and to give adequate time to assess and scrutinise the proposals in order to ensure that we make the correct decisions in relation to the effect which they will have on the people of Gwynedd. It would also allow us to be much more inclusive by engaging all the members in the process.

2014/15 Budget

18. Of course, in order to buy time to do this, a way must be found to deal with the substantial reduction in grant in 2014/15.
19. The following high level strategy is therefore recommended.
20. Our initial analysis shows that there will be pressure on the Council's expenditure in 2014/15 due to inflation, an increase in the number of elderly, pressures on budgets etc around £5.0m.
21. By deleting the provision we have for salary inflation over 1% together with the permanent budget we have set aside for the Council's Strategic Plan, and by taking some other tactical actions, we anticipate that this figure can be reduced to around £2.0m.

22. It can be seen that if the Government for Wales had kept to its original spending plans, we would have been able to cope easily with the situation since this would be the size of the funding gap for us in 2014/15 and the plan we had established would be more than sufficient to cope with the situation.
23. However, since our loss of grant equates to £8.3m this increases the gap to £10.3m.
24. Work is ongoing on establishing the detailed budget which will be reported in January but we currently anticipate that savings of £5.9m can be delivered in 2014/15.
25. By increasing the Council Tax collection rate back to 99% and by using an element of balances (say about £1.5m), I am quite confident that we can create a balanced budget in 2014/15.
26. Whilst there is considerable discussion across Wales at the moment about how to calculate the schools education funding commitment of 0.9% made by the Welsh Government, this strategy conforms with our understanding of the funding commitment's requirements.
27. The whole issue was considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 26 November, and they commend this high level strategy to the Council in order to deal with the situation with which we are faced, namely -
 - that we establish a new savings programme for the 4 year period to come which is based on trying to have the least possible effect on the outcomes for the people of Gwynedd and to be implemented from around the end of 2014/15; and
 - that in order to buy the necessary time to enable us to plan a new considered and sensible programme of savings, that we use the remainder of our present savings programme along with several other steps including using an element of balances (say around £1.5m) to formulate a balanced budget in 2014/15.

Next steps

28. In undertaking this strategy we will have bought ourselves a little time but we are fortunate that we are in a position to do that. We must use that time wisely and be careful not to think that this strategy means we can sit back and take things easy. The process of creating a new programme in a considered and inclusive way will be challenging and trying to limit the effect on the people of Gwynedd to the least possible extent will be challenging to say the least.

29. If the Council agrees to the strategy, the financial details will be presented to the Cabinet at the end of January in order that they may publish their draft proposals for the Audit Committee to scrutinise before presenting their final suggestions to the Council in March.
30. As I noted above, I will also be arranging a series of seminars for members across the county in January/February to explain and discuss the details of the financial strategy before the Cabinet considers the final suggestions around the end of February.

Views of the Statutory Officers

Chief Executive:

The task of ensuring a balanced budget for next year and the following years (whilst maintaining quality services) is one of the most difficult tasks that the Council has ever faced. As a result, today's decisions must be made with a view to their longer term implications. To some extent, it is the Council's success in doing so in the past that has led to us being in a comparatively favourable position since we have savings plans already in place; this does enable us to meet the challenge to some extent. However, the challenge ahead is enormous and there will be very difficult decisions to be made over the coming years.

Monitoring Officer:

Nothing to add regarding propriety

Head of Finance:

When the Statutory Financial Officer prepares an opinion, and as members reach a decision on the use of balances in the next budget setting round, it is essential to consider and assess the risks facing the Council. I am preparing this opinion after considering the financial position, commitments and fundamental assumptions in the budget (the basis of the figures in paragraphs 18 – 25 of the report, such as inflation rates and interest, the change in the demand for services, estimates on the savings plans etc.)

As a result of an unprecedented challenging grant settlement from the Welsh Government in October and in the difficult current financial climate, there is no doubt that the Council will need to be prudent with its balances by 2015/16 and beyond (in order that it can meet unavoidable redundancy costs and any further bridging costs in the years ahead before its larger savings plans can be realised).

However, as our current level of balances (about £8m) are at a prudent level, and as Gwynedd has a solid financial strategy for the years ahead, with the promise from Cabinet members that they will keep to plans to ensure new savings are found in 2014, I support the steps recommended, including using a reasonable portion of balances (around £1.5m) in order to bridge the gap in 2014/15 and to allow the Council time to prepare a new appropriate savings programme.

Meeting	THE COUNCIL
Date	5 December 2013
Subject	Revised Strategic Plan
Purpose of the Report	To present specific suggestions for revising the Strategic Plan for 2013 - 14 in light of new challenges facing the Council.
Author	Councillor Dyfed Edwards, Council Leader

1. Introduction

- 1.1 On 19 September 2013, the Full Council received a report from Councillor Peredur Jenkins on the new financial challenge facing the Council. Obviously, the details of the Council's exact settlement are becoming clearer and there will be some more concrete information available at the Full Council meeting on 5 December 2013. Among other things, the Council agreed to re-visit the Strategic Plan to identify which projects are absolutely necessary to achieve and which ones can be reconsidered.
- 1.2 This is important for several reasons. Firstly, with the enormous challenges that face us in finding savings in the coming years, a large proportion of the time of Council Members and Officers must be dedicated to identifying those savings. Therefore, it is necessary to weigh up the time required to do so against the time to work on more developmental matters. Also, all this is happening at a time of uncertainty following from the expected Sir Paul Williams Commission report on the future of public services in Wales. Obviously, if a clear message about reorganisation emerges from the report, then that brings another element to the picture, and one that will take considerable time and attention over the next few years. Therefore, it was necessary to take a fresh look at the Council's capacity to address some of the commitments in the Plan.

- 1.3 Secondly, financial resources are associated with some projects. Obviously, there will be huge pressure on resources in the coming years and there will be a need to weigh the Council's ability to invest in certain areas while seeking to find savings. It is important to remember that there will be a need to invest in some cases to find the savings necessary and it will be necessary to ensure that the Council has sufficient resources to be able to invest in order to save.
- 1.4 The Cabinet has been discussing these two elements and the discussions have considered the projects that should continue, come what may, and projects that can not be given any additional resources (in terms of capacity or money) at the moment. The Scrutiny Forum has also discussed the matter and expressed concern that this could lead to a failure to tackle key issues, such as responding to Climate Change, Fuel Poverty and Engagement. The comments of the Forum have been reported to the Cabinet.
- 1.5 In addition to the fact that the Council is reviewing its Strategic Plan, as has been reported previously, the Council will need to look, with its partners, at different ways of supporting and providing services and new preventive approaches to minimise or manage the demand for services. In this context, there needs to be a 'discussion' with the citizens of Gwynedd citizens about the future direction of public services.
- 1.6 This report sets out specific suggestions for revising the Plan's commitments for what remains of 2013 - 14. Having undertaken further assessment and analysis, it is important to note that the vast majority of the proposals of the original plan remains in place. In addition, the Cabinet has been able to free up financial resources in order to realise some of those proposals, even at a time when the Council is facing a financial crisis. For example, a sum of £1.983m of one-off resources has been released to support work in the field of Economy and £400,000 for work on the Welfare Reform agenda. The work of preparing proposals for 2014 - 15 onwards is in progress. One focus of the review is further prioritisation and also being far more disciplined and focused in terms of achieving clear outcomes for residents out of our work.

2. Revising the Strategic Plan - Specific Suggestions:

- 2.1 Presented below are specific suggestions for revising the Strategic Plan for 2013 - 14 in response to the challenges noted above. These suggestions are focused on making significant changes to the content of the Strategic Plan for 2013 - 14 in terms of deleting or substantially modifying some of the priorities, outcomes and proposals.

Priority	GOF3 - PROTECTING CHILDREN AND ADULTS
Change	Delete the delivery proposal: <i>We will also develop proposals in order to establish the nature of Adult Protection in Gwynedd through a review.</i>
Reason For The Change	Because of the challenging financial situation this project did not reach the high category in the Cabinet's re-prioritisation list. Overview of adult protection work is greeted in the Safeguarding Children and Adults Strategic Panel.

Priority	ECON1 - STRENGTHENING BUSINESS RESILIENCE AND RETAINING THE ECONOMIC BENEFIT LOCALLY
Change	Delete the 'Growing Indigenous Businesses Project' and its associated Measures.
Reason For The Change	Because of the challenging financial situation this project did not reach the high category in the Cabinet's re-prioritisation list. Work for 2013/14 is close to being completed and to achieving the proposals noted in the Strategic Plan for the year, but the funds and capacity are not sufficient for the project to continue in 2014-17.

Priority	ECON1 - STRENGTHENING BUSINESS RESILIENCE AND RETAINING THE ECONOMIC BENEFIT LOCALLY
Change	Delete the work of developing proposals for town centres and in the field of business succession.
Reason For The Change	The financial situation did not allow for extending resources to develop these activities. The work of developing proposals for supporting traditional businesses through difficult times will continue through the attention to e.business and e.commerce, the Gwynedd Buy Local Card and the This is Where Things Happen project.

Priority	AMG1 - PROMOTING AN APPROPRIATE SUPPLY OF HOUSING FOR LOCAL PEOPLE
Change	Change the ambition of the 'Vacant Properties Back Into Use Project' in relation to the number of empty properties bought back into use during 2013-14 from 95 to 54. An additional phrase has been included stating that money will be allocated to bring 10 additional vacant housing units back into use in the first quarter of 2014-15.

Reason For The Change	The ambition has been modified to reflect the level of resources allocated to the project. The additional clause has been included as the preparatory work will happen during the next few months but the units can not be brought back into use during 2013-14 due to the conditions of the grant that allow owners up to 6 months to make improvements and the grant is paid on completion of the work.
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Priority	AMG3 - RESPONDING TO THE THREAT OF CLIMATE CHANGE
Change	Delete the priority and 3 associated projects.
Reason For The Change	<p>The Delivery Panel has determined that it is not a priority following the process of re- prioritizing the Strategic Plan.</p> <p><i>Responding to Threats of Climate Change in the Long Term Project:</i> Elements of the work will be addressed as part of the development of the LDP but for a shorter term. Longer term elements can be picked up in future Strategic Plans.</p> <p><i>Responding to Threats of Climate Change Project (Increase in the number of residents living in areas with a high risk of flooding with a 'plan' to respond to instances of flooding):</i> Project to take place outside of the Strategic Plan and Service to do what it can within available resources. Project Leader to highlight any risks that arise or if we are likely to be operating outside of the law to the Delivery Panel for attention if necessary.</p> <p><i>Responding to Threats of Climate Change Project (Improving the Council's ability to respond to assist residents to deal with the side effects of flooding events):</i> Omit project from Strategic Plan and let the service do what it can as part of the Council's emergency planning work.</p>

Priority	CC2 - Reducing The Effects Of Poverty And Deprivation
Change	Delete the result: <i>More vulnerable individuals and communities receiving appropriate support to move forward.</i> Delete the delivery proposal: <i>Set the foundations for establishing a coordinated system to provide support for vulnerable individuals and communities, along with appropriate social plans to help people make ends meet.</i>
Reason For The Change	Reducing the effects of poverty and deprivation remains a priority. However, there is a need to place more emphasis this year on responding to the welfare reform agenda due to the immediate impact of these changes on some of the county's residents.

Priority	CC4 - PROMOTING COMMUNITY PRIDE AND RESPONSIBILITY
Change	Delete the following delivery proposal: <i>Pilot community pride in areas in order to learn what works.</i>
Reason For The Change	The Delivery Panel decided that the delivery proposal should be deleted from the Strategic Plan. As the emphasis of the project now is to identify methods to reduce demand and public dependency on the Council's services by promoting social activities rather than the environmental component within the community pride pilot.

- 2.2 A copy of the revised Strategic Plan is presented as an appendix to this report, for information only. Members will see that the Strategic Plan includes other minor changes and amendments. However, they are not listed above because they do not have a substantial or significant impact on the content and commitments for 2013 - 14.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 The Council is asked to agree to the suggestions presented above with regards to revising the Strategic Plan for 2013 - 14 and adopt the revised Strategic Plan.
-

GWYNEDD COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN 2013 - 2017

Supporting the people of Gwynedd to thrive in difficult times



www.gwynedd.gov.uk

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1. INTRODUCTION BY THE COUNCIL LEADER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The purpose of this plan is to set out the Council's priorities for the period 2013 - 17 and to describe what the Council will do to achieve them.

The Council's aim is to ensure the ***Best for the People of Gwynedd Today and Tomorrow***. This is the continuous aim that informs the work of the Council at all levels and we will continue to measure the extent to which we achieve this on a daily basis. This plan seeks to do this, but also recognises the special circumstances of the period in question.

For the period 2013 to 2017, the biggest threat to the sustainability and improvement of services is the combination of ever increasing demand for services and a substantial reduction in Council resources. This plan seeks to address this challenge by fundamentally changing the business model of the Council. A key feature, throughout the plan, is to work more effectively with partners, individuals and communities to prevent and reduce demand for services by helping earlier, as problem arise, and helping more people to help themselves. We also recognize that as a Council we need to change the way we engage with service users and communities and become more citizen centric. In addition, we will need to become more innovative in the way we provide services in order to contribute to more substantial efficiency savings and minimise service cuts. We are confident that, in Gwynedd, we can build on the virtues of our citizens, communities and workforce in order to overcome these challenges and exploit the right opportunities. Hence, the overall vision for the period is:

Supporting the people of Gwynedd to thrive in difficult times

This plan also identifies a series of visions that contribute to the main vision. The visions describe the Council's ambition for all thematic areas over the next four years, as follows:

Thematic Area	Vision
Children and Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting all children and young people to live fulfilled lives
Care, Health and Well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspiring the people of Gwynedd to live healthy lives • Supporting vulnerable children and people to live fulfilled lives
The Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving opportunities for the people of Gwynedd to live, work and succeed locally
The Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting a suitable supply of homes for people in Gwynedd • Promoting a safe and sustainable environment, with convenient connections
Strong Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working together to create a confident and Welsh future • Reducing the impact of deprivation on the people of Gwynedd
Culture and Business Arrangements of the Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The people of Gwynedd central to everything we do

In order to fulfil these visions, the Council has adopted 24 priorities that summarise the Council's views on the issues that should be addressed over the next four years. These priorities will be Council's improvement objectives. The plan also reports on the results the Council seeks to achieve under each priority over the life of the plan, and offers more specific details on what we aim to achieve during 2013 / 14.

The thematic areas of this plan are based on the Gwynedd Community Strategy. The Community Strategy sets the important multi-agency direction which determines the high level results for Gwynedd, as follows:

- An area where the economy is thriving
- An area with a sustainable environment
- An area where children and young people succeed
- An exciting area to live in with vibrant communities
- An area with good health and the best care in the community

The Council's Strategic Plan, therefore, describes our contribution to achieving these high level results, as well as describing what the Council will do in addition to achieve its vision for the period.

Although the Strategic Plan sets the strategic direction for the Council for four years, we are well aware that the world around us is constantly changing. As a result, this plan will be a 'living' document and we will manage the work very carefully in order to respond to any further changes we encounter, and also to try to adapt, improve and be more definite on the results we want to achieve for the residents of Gwynedd.



Dyfed Edwards

**Dyfed Edwards
Council Leader**



Harry Thomas

**Harry Thomas
Chief Executive**

2. PROFILE OF GWYNEDD AND THE COUNCIL



Presented below are some facts about the County of Gwynedd and the Council:

- 75 Elected Member sit on Gwynedd Council. The Council is responsible for providing a wide range of public services for 121,900 residents, including: education and schools, social services, leisure centres, libraries, planning services, highways, waste management, public protection, youth services and economic development.
- Since 2001, Gwynedd's population has increased from 4.3% (5,031 people). This compares with an increase of 5.5% in Wales.
- Gwynedd is a large rural area that is 2,535 square kilometres in size in geographical terms. Gwynedd is the second largest County in Wales and represents 12% of the total area of the country.
- 65% of Gwynedd's residents speak Welsh and it is also the Council's internal administrative language.
- In 2012 / 13, the Gross Revenue Expenditure of the Council was £361.5 million. Among a wide range of other services, this money was used to educate nearly 16,000 residents, maintain 2,882 kilometres of highways and 301 kilometres of coastline.
- There are 102 Primary Schools, 14 Secondary Schools and 3 Special Schools in Gwynedd.

- The Council is responsible for running 14 Leisure Centres and 17 Libraries within the County.
- Gwynedd's natural environment is a valuable attraction to tourists. In 2011, approximately 7.2 million visitors came to Gwynedd, creating £916 million in revenue.
- 67.5% of the land within Gwynedd is located in the Snowdonia National Park, the largest national park in Wales.
- A large part of the Llŷn Peninsula was designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 1956, one of five in Wales.
- In 2012, the average household income in Gwynedd (£22,369) was 10% below the figure for Wales (£24,848) and 21% lower than the figure for Britain (£28,413).
- In 2011, the median price for a house sold in Gwynedd was £132,000 which is a decrease of 2.9% compared with 2010.
- It is estimated that the number of households in Gwynedd will increase by 16.2% by 2033. This is less than the estimated increase for all of Wales, which is 25.0%.
- According Gwynedd Residents Panel Survey (2012):
 - 92.7% of people were satisfied or very satisfied with Gwynedd as a place to live.
 - 56.7% were satisfied or very satisfied with the way the Council runs things.
 - 48.9% agreed or strongly agreed that Gwynedd Council provides value for money. 21.4% disagreed or strongly disagreed that Gwynedd Council provides value for money.
 - 39.0% disagreed that they can influence decisions in their local area, but 31.1% agreed that they could influence the services they use.

More information about the Council and its services can be found on the website - www.gwynedd.gov.uk

3. PREPARING THE PLAN

The plan was prepared in several stages, as follows:

- Stage One - Needs Assessment and Horizon Scanning:

The process of preparing the plan began with the identification of the main social, economic, environmental and policy drivers that currently influence the Council and the County, and which are likely to do so in the coming years. This involved collecting and analysing data and key information in order to build up a statistical picture of the opportunities and challenges facing the Council and the County.

In addition, surveys were conducted with residents of the County as well as staff and Elected Members of the Council in November 2012 to gather information about their experiences of living and working in Gwynedd, and to give them an opportunity to voice their opinions on the issues that should be prioritised in the Strategic Plan. There was a very good response to the survey - with 692 members of the Gwynedd Residents Panel, 495 staff and 44 Elected Members taking part.

This led to a collection of data and key information that provided a sound evidence base for the plan.

- Stage Two - Identifying the Draft Priorities:

The second stage in the process was to use the data and key information as a basis for identifying priorities for the draft plan. As part of this, consideration was given to the key opportunities and challenges facing the County across several areas, their potential impact on the residents of Gwynedd, and the Council's ability to make a significant difference in those areas.

The draft priorities were published in March 2013. Subsequently, the Council consulted with the public and with its partners on the draft priorities. A series of events were held across the County and use was made of social media, such as Twitter and Facebook, to give people an opportunity to voice their opinions. Unfortunately, the Council's efforts were not successful this time and the number of responses to this element of the consultation was disappointing. Nevertheless, the comments received were appreciated and important lessons were learnt with regards to improving future engagement arrangements.

- Stage Three - Confirming the Priorities and Developing Delivery Proposals:

The next stage was to confirm the priorities for the plan and to develop a series of proposals to achieve them. As part of this work, evidence was gathered about what works in order to ensure that the Council's proposals would lead to significant changes. Proposals for specific areas were developed and the need to complete further work during 2013 / 14 in order to develop concrete proposals for other areas was identified. It is clearly stated in the plan which proposals will be implemented during 2013 / 14 and which will be developed during the year. This is further indication that this plan is a 'living' document.

Careful consideration was given to equality, language and sustainability issues throughout the preparation of the Strategic Plan in order to ensure that this plan will have a positive impact on specific groups within the population, the environment, and the Welsh language.

4. NATURE OF THE PLAN

The aim of the Council is to ensure *Best for the People of Gwynedd Today and Tomorrow* and it does this primarily through its normal business, that is, the services that are provided on a daily basis, and the Council has key measures to monitor the quality of these services (see Appendix 1). This plan, however, pays particular attention to the Council's priorities and the major changes it is committing itself to over the next four years.

This document is structured around the following thematic areas:

- Children and Young People
- Care, Health and Well-being
- The Economy
- The Environment
- Strong Communities
- Culture and Business Arrangements of the Council

The following is presented for each thematic area:

- **Thematic Vision** - The thematic vision contributes to the main vision of the plan and describes the Council's ambition for the thematic area over the next four years.
- **Priorities** - The priorities focus on the issues the Council will give full attention to over the next four years in order to address the main social, economic, environmental and financial opportunities and threats facing the Council and the County. The priorities are the Council's improvement objectives for the period in question.
- **Evidence** - The evidence summarises the data and key information underlying the priorities.
- **Results** - The results describe the main difference the Council wants to make by 2017.

- ***Delivery Proposals*** - The proposals describe what the Council will do to achieve its priorities. In particular, attention is given to what the Council aims to achieve during 2013 / 14. There is also a reference to the developmental work the Council will undertake during 2013 / 14 to draw up proposals in certain areas.
- ***Measures*** - These are the main measures the Council will use to measure its progress in terms of achieving the results and priorities it is aiming for.

Finally, there are three appendices:

- Appendix 1: Key Council Measures - These measures represent the key outcomes for individuals and the quality of service for the Council's normal business.
- Appendix 2: The Financial Strategy of the Council - The Council has prepared a financial strategy that corresponds to the period of the Strategic Plan, ensuring that the appropriate resources are in place to deliver on what is included in the plan.
- Appendix 3: National Performance Indicators - All of these indicators are set nationally and they are presented here in order to provide a comprehensive list of everything the Council is expected to report on an annual basis.

5. DELIVERING THE PLAN

Delivering this plan is an important priority in itself. The Council will put appropriate arrangements in place at all levels to deliver the plan and everyone will have an important role to play in achieving the vision of supporting the people of Gwynedd to thrive in difficult times.

The Full Council is responsible for adopting the Strategic Plan and setting the direction for the work of the Council over the next four years.

The Council's Cabinet Members, through the Delivery Panels, are responsible for implementing the Strategic Plan within their areas and for ensuring that project management and performance management arrangements are in place to deliver the priorities and results.

The Scrutiny Committees will hold Cabinet Members to account for their performance in terms of achieving the priorities and will scrutinise the impact of the Strategic Plan on the people of Gwynedd.

The Council will continue to work effectively with its partners across all sectors to realise the priorities that need input from more than one partner to ensure their delivery.

As part of its commitment to put Gwynedd people at the centre of everything it does, the Council will put arrangements in place to continuously engage with the people and communities of the County in order to give them opportunities to influence the work of the Council and to empower them to take ownership and responsibility for the future.

THEME - CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Thematic Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting all children and young people to live fulfilled lives
Priority	P1 - RAISING THE EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Education and Skills Minister’s Education Improvement plan has set the ambition for national attainment to achieve 60% at L2+ standard (5 GCSE grades (A*- C) including Maths and Welsh or English) by 2015 - Gwynedd is 55% at present (6th position throughout Wales). Key Stage 4 results are decreasing compared to the other key stages (Foundation Stage = 83%, Key Stage 2 = 86%, Key Stage 3 = 83%, Key Stage 4 Level 2+ = 55%). Results for Maths are lower in Gwynedd compared to results in the other core subjects – Maths = 58.3%, Welsh = 76.8%, English = 64.1%, Science = 71.7%. There is no common system for “tracking” pupil achievement in our schools. The recent Estyn Inspection highlighted a variation of the performance standards and improvement prospects in our secondary schools.
What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i>	<p>Children and young people’s education standards will be improved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 65% or more of pupils will achieve Level 2+ standard (5 GCSE grades (A*- C) including Maths and Welsh or English) in Key Stage 4. 65% or more of pupils achieving Level 2 standard (A*- C grade) in Maths. Fewer Secondary Schools in Estyn’s “follow up” category.
What will we achieve in 2013 / 14? <i>(Delivery Proposals)</i>	We will develop proposals in order to ensure that children and young people’s education standards will improve. By doing this consideration will be given to the recommendations of the Estyn Report and of the Services Scrutiny Committee on completion of their Review on the Quality of Education.
How will we measure this? <i>(Measures)</i>	GY02 % of 15 year old pupils who attain Level 2+ threshold (5 GCSE grades (A*- C) including Maths and Welsh or English) in Key Stage 4.
	GY26 % of pupils who attain Level 2 + threshold (5 GCSE Grade(A*- C) in key stage 4 in Maths
	In addition, we will consider developing further measures whilst developing proposals in 2013 / 14.

Priority	P2 - EQUALISE OPPORTUNITIES FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS OF CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES
Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Breaking the Cycle Project highlights the lack of focus on providing preventative work and lack of support for families who do not meet the statutory threshold for assistance, but need help nonetheless. • The Additional Learning Needs Strategic Review highlights that it is difficult to prove that the annual investment of £ 14.5m offers the best value for money at the moment.. • Not being able to track children's attainment means that it is difficult to prove progress and attainment of children and young people with additional learning needs / vulnerable groups. • The gap between pupils receiving Free School Meals and the remainder of the pupils in Gwynedd who reach level 2+ (5 GCSE grades (A*-C) including Maths and Welsh or English) is: 36.04% while in Wales it is slightly lower at: 33.22%. • Children from low income households are more likely to start school with deficits in their ability to learn and social behaviour which leads to poor outcomes for children, indeed there is evidence that children from households in the poorest 20% are an average of 19 months behind children from the top 20% by the age of 4/5. • The level of absences will have an impact on children's attainment (achieving level indicator Core Subject at Key Stage 4 ranged from 65.7% to 2.2% dependent on the level of attendance) – from the Welsh data it is suggested that schools with the highest children with the right to free school meals have more cases of absences. • Exclusions continue as an issue especially within Secondary Schools.
What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i>	<p>The attainment of vulnerable pupils has improved.</p> <p>More families are confident, nurturing and resilient.</p> <p>Permanent exclusions have been eradicated and an increase in pupil attendance.</p> <p>Improved experiences for children and young people which additional educational needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the number of school places for children with additional educational needs in Meirion/Dwyfor. • Increase in the number of children with additional educational needs who attend the new school. • Increase in the residential beds/respice available in Gwynedd for the use of the County's children and possibly other counties. • Decrease in the need to send children with additional educational needs to other counties and therefore a reduction in costs.

What will we achieve in 2013 / 14?
(Delivery Proposals)

We will undertake the following projects:

Gyda'n Gilydd Project – Gwynedd Team Around the Family:

- Support 120 families during 2013 / 14.
- Establish preventative services for the following areas – parenting support, financial literacy, play and energetic leisure opportunities and early years learning.
- Establish a system for measuring and assessing the impact of the team and investigate the possibility of extending the provision to deal with more cases.
- Ensure a link between the Gyda'n Gilydd Project and the Communities First Programme.
- Establish preventative services for families who receive a service from the Children and Families Service for the following areas – parenting support, financial literacy, play and energetic leisure opportunities and early years learning.
- Extend the Flying Start provision to two new areas.

Inclusion and Behaviour Project:

- Continue to improve and provide support to vulnerable pupils in all secondary schools through the inclusion strategy.
- Prepare a Business Plan for the Llwybrau Ni centre for pupils with severe and complex behavioural problems in the centre of the County which will be more accessible to everyone.
- Ensure a specific work programme will be implemented at Friars school that will deal with rates of exclusions.

Additional Learning Needs Project:

- Agree on a new model of providing educational experiences and opportunities for children with Special Educational Needs.
- Decide on possible locations for establishing a new Centre of Excellence for Special Education in the Dwyfor-Meirionnydd area.

We will also develop proposals in order to:

- Improve the attainment of vulnerable pupils.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a stronger voice for children and young people who use the service by developing an engagement strategy, strengthen the advocacy process and reviewing and revising the role and structure of the Children's Service. 	
How will we measure this? <i>(Measures)</i>	DCh26	Number of families who have been given support through the Gyda'n Gilydd Project.
	EDU/016b	% of pupil attendance in secondary schools.
	EDU/010aN	The number of school days lost due to fixed term exclusions during the academic year, in primary schools.
	EDU/010bN	The number of school days lost due to fixed term exclusions during the academic year, in secondary schools.
	EDU/008bN	Number of permanent exclusion in secondary schools.
For the developmental work, we will be measuring this after we have developed the proposals during 2013 / 14.		

Priority	P3 - IMPROVING THE SUITABILITY OF THE SCHOOLS SYSTEM	
Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council has already expressed concern about the sustainability of secondary schools in Meirionnydd. Range of class sizes vary significantly throughout the County. Condition of some of our school buildings have raised concerns - not sustainable. Gwynedd has the highest % of empty places in schools throughout Wales = 28%. Difficulties in appointing new Headmasters - impact on school leadership. Pupil per school ratio (all schools) are lower in the Dwyfor Meirionnydd constituency than that of Arfon (DM = 101 pupils, Arfon = 195 pupils, Wales = 261 pupils). Requirement for Local Authorities and learning providers, whether they are schools or colleges, to collaborate on the basis of Learning Areas to establish and jointly introduce a Local Curriculum. 	
What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i>	Suitability of the school system has improved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in the number of empty places below 20%. Reduction in the range of cost per head - greater consistency in the spending per pupil across all schools. Resources to improve the quality of education being re-allocated following reorganisation plans. More resources spent on children's education rather than on buildings. Improvement in the condition of school buildings, which allows positive impact on children's learning conditions. Gwynedd and Anglesey established as an area of excellence for post-16 education. 	

<p>What will we achieve in 2013 / 14? <i>(Delivery Proposals)</i></p>	<p>We will undertake the following projects:</p> <p>School Reorganisation Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open and establish Ysgol Craig y Deryn in the Dysynni area to replace four smaller schools. • Close Aberdyfi school and make improvements to Penybryn School, Tywyn. • Close Ysgol Y Parc and make improvements to Ysgol O M Edwards, Llanuwchllyn. • Consult on proposals to close Ysgol Groeslon, Carmel and Bronyfoel and establish a new area school in Groeslon and get a final decision on the proposal. • Consult on proposals to close Ysgol Llidiardau and stabilise the provision in Ysgol Crud y Werin and get a final decision on the proposal. • Review the provision in Meirionnydd by assessing whether there is a case for change in the area, paying particular attention to the secondary sector. • Move forward and further the debate on the review of the provision in the Gader catchment area. • Move forward with discussions and background work to establish the Lifelong Learning Campus in Bala. • Develop a new Special Education Centre of Excellence in the Dwyfor-Meirionnydd area (more details on this given under priority P2). <p>Post-16 Education Provision Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all post-16 organisations support in Gwynedd and Anglesey. • Establish and implement an effective management system. • Establish systems to gather data and information including the voice of employers and learners. • Identify a suitable area curriculum for September 2014. • Identify and address barriers to change. • Develop partnership working with the Berwyn / Llandrillo Group. 	
<p>How will we measure this? <i>(Measures)</i></p>	DA04	% empty places in Gwynedd schools.
	Adn23	Range in the cost per head per pupil across the schools.
	Adn24	% of the savings resulting from reorganisation that is being redirected back to schools.
<p>For the Post-16 Education Provision Project, the Post-16 Learning Partnership has identified a set of measures for further discussion and agreement, as well as targets, for the Consortium when it will be operational.</p>		

Priority	P4 - BETTER PREPARING YOUNG PEOPLE FOR WORK AND LIFE
Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gwynedd Business Survey - 87.9% of businesses who highlight difficulty in recruiting state that it's due to applicant's lack of skills and qualifications (communication, customer care, numeracy and literacy). • Emigration from the County in the age range 20-34 has increased to 14.7% in 2010/11, skills and qualifications leave as a result of the emigration. • Young people in Gwynedd report that they have difficulty getting jobs locally, including young graduates. • Lack of emphasis in schools on learning life skills such as managing money, cooking, child care skills, job interview skills, etc. • Wylfa B is likely to bring job opportunities across numerous fields; Eryri Enterprise Zone creating further employment opportunities, such as in the digital sector, Pontio Centre, new opportunities within the creative industries through Pontio, and possibly the relocation of one of S4C centres – need to ensure that local people are provided to take advantage of the employment opportunities. • The Llwyddo'n Lleol Project, which started in 2011, has provided assistance to 1,979 young people between the ages of 11 and 19 to develop an idea and prepare a simple business plan, and then to use the business plan to apply for a Llwyddo'n Lleol bursary. 143 bursaries of £1,000 have been awarded to help individuals or groups start their own enterprise. • 620 Job Seekers Allowance claimants are under 25 years old (July 2012).
What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i>	<p>Young people have appropriate job and life skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people state that they have a better understanding of career opportunities and are more willing to move into the world of employment. • Businesses report fewer difficulties recruiting and are more willing to recruit young people. • Fewer young people not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). • Fewer Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimants.
What will we achieve in 2013 / 14? <i>(Delivery Proposals)</i>	<p>We will develop proposals in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that appropriate courses, academic or vocational, are provided for the employment opportunities available in the area. • Satisfy the lack of skills that are apparent among young people according to employers. • Ensure that young people are prepared for life.

How will we measure this? <i>(Measures)</i>	DGD17	% of young people 16-18 years old who are not in education, work or training
	P4a	% Job Seekers Allowance Claimants under 25 years old.
	In addition, we will consider developing further measures whilst developing proposals in 2013 / 14.	

THEME - CARE, HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Thematic Visions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspiring the people of Gwynedd to live healthy lives • Supporting vulnerable children and people to live fulfilled lives
Priority	GOF1 - RESPONDING BETTER TO THE NEEDS OF VULNERABLE PEOPLE TO ENSURE SUSTAINABLE CARE SERVICES
Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in the older population with a significant increase of 87% in the numbers of people aged 85 + over the next twenty years - affecting health and social care. • Migration of Gwynedd's young people to other parts of the UK between 2002 and 2009 with an in-migration of the population of older people (50-64) to Gwynedd from other parts of the UK. Anticipating the problem of ensuring suitable social care workforce, to meet the needs for the next twenty years. Evidence of this already in South Meirionnydd. • Increased demand for services for children, with an increase in children in care and children in need. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Numbers of Children in Care: Numbers of Children in Need: ○ 2009-10 = 175 2009-10 = 605 ○ 2010-11 = 175 2010-11 = 650 ○ 2011-12 = 195 2011-12 = 663 • The rate of older people (aged 65 or over) whom the authority supports in care homes per 1,000 population aged 65 or over at 31 March 2011/12 - Gwynedd 24.9, Family 20.75, Wales 21.35. Gwynedd up to Q3 2012/13- 24.0. • The Social Services, Health and Well-being (Wales) Bill provides a statutory framework that will transform the way social services are provided. This will be done mainly through promoting independence in order to give people more of a voice and control.
What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i>	<p>Gwynedd children receiving an effective service which offers value for money.</p> <p>A stronger voice for Gwynedd Social Services users.</p> <p>The appropriate provision of care in the right place.</p> <p>Gwynedd adults and children receiving services by a confident and competent workforce that can react to needs.</p> <p>Gwynedd adults and children living in strong communities which are supportive and that build on people's strengths.</p>

What will we achieve in 2013 / 14?
(Delivery Proposals)

We will undertake the following projects:

Engagement Project: THIS HAS MOVED TO GOF2

- Develop an engagement strategy that will ensure the inclusion of users / prospective users / carers when planning, developing and evaluating interventions.
- Establish and strengthen user forums.
- Strengthen the advocacy process by providing clear and fair guidelines.

Transforming Services for Older People Project:

(Aiming to ensure better collaboration with the Health Service)

Residential

- Consider the recommendations of the Porthmadog accommodation and care assessment.
- Identify the way forward for the provision in the Porthmadog catchment.
- Implement an engagement programme regarding the way forward.
- Agree the way forward for the Council's residential homes.
- Open a specific pilot Respite Unit.

Day Care

- Agree a plan to meet the care needs of older people that includes work opportunities / volunteering / socialising / personal care and intensive care.
- Identify Maesinla Caernarfon day care options.
- Jointly develop a work programme with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board in relation to specialist dementia day care provision.

Telecare

- Complete a review of the telecare business case.
- Agree the way forward.

	<p>Transforming the Learning Disabilities Service Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the engagement programme with Fron Deg Caernarfon stakeholders. • Identify accommodation and day care models for people with learning disabilities. • Consider engagement information, decide on the options and create a business case for the Fron Deg home. • Cabinet to consider the Fron Deg business case. THIS IS LIKELY TO HAPPEN IN 2014 - 15 <p>Leadership Structure Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and revise the leadership structure in conjunction with the statutory role and departmental structure to ensure it is fit for purpose. • Determine the structure following the review. <p>We will also develop proposals in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify a way of offering better value for money through offering an effective service by implementing an ‘End to End’ review of the Children’s Service. • Identify the best way of providing a range of beds that meet demands by implementing an ‘End to End’ review of the Adult Service. • Identify the strengths of individual communities and identify gaps through a Review of Community Support. THIS HAS MOVED TO GOF2 	
How will we measure this? <i>(Measures)</i>	SCA/002b	The rate of older people (aged 65 or over) whom the authority supports in care homes per 1,000 population aged 65 or over at 31 March
	OED09	% of users reporting that Telecare has enabled them to live independently at home.
	SCA/007	% of clients with a care plan on 31 March who should have had their care plans reviewed who were reviewed during the year.

Priority	GOF2 - INCREASING PREVENTIVE WORK IN FIELD OF ADULT AND OLDER PEOPLE SOCIAL CARE	
Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The preventative agenda increases the focus on early preventive interventions to improve quality of life and reduce the pressure on services. Research shows that informal early intervention (e.g. by the voluntary sector/ 3rd sector) promotes independence but formal early intervention exacerbates the problem and creates an increased dependency. • Anticipated 12% increase in the number of unpaid carers aged 65 + during the next 5 years. 	

What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i>	A network of proactive support available to support adults and older people live independently without Social Services formal intervention.
What will we achieve in 2013 / 14? <i>(Delivery Proposals)</i>	<p>We will implement the following project:</p> <p>Co-production and Participation Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make preparations to develop an engagement strategy that will ensure the inclusion of users / prospective users / carers when planning, developing and evaluating interventions. AMENDMENT • Establish and strengthen user forums. TO BE INCLUDED IN THE 2014 - 15 PLAN • Strengthen the advocacy process by providing clear and fair guidelines. TO BE INCLUDED IN THE 2014 - 15 PLAN • Identify the strengths of individual communities and identify gaps through a Review of Community Support • Establish a single point of access pilot in Meirionydd AMENDMENT <p>We will also develop proposals in order to identify the preventative opportunities in the field of Adult and Older People Care through a review ensuring linkages with the implementation of the Older People Strategy.</p>
How will we measure this? <i>(Measures)</i>	We will measure this once the proposals have been developed during 2013 / 14.

Priority	GOF3 - PROTECTING CHILDREN AND ADULTS
Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting vulnerable people is a fundamental issue for statutory agencies and partners in care. • Protecting children is a key priority for the Council. Need to maximize outcomes for children as regards their protection and protecting their welfare.
What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i>	<p>Gwynedd Children, Young People and Adults Safer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children attending school where the people who need a Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS, formerly CRB) have received it. • An increase in the percentage of risk assessments that were introduced to Case Conference that were considered as ones that showed quality when making a decision. • Every new member of staff receiving safeguarding training through their induction. • Maintaining performance in the number of adult protection referrals completed where the risk has been managed.

What will we achieve in 2013 / 14? <i>(Delivery Proposals)</i>	<p>We will undertake the following project:</p> <p>Protecting Children and Adults Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt and implement the Gwynedd Council Child and Adult Protection Policy and Guidelines. • Appoint Designated Managers for each Service. • Ensure every service has a Safeguarding Plan in place in accordance with corporate guidelines. • Introduce Child and Adult Protection training / programme. • Develop a corporate e-learning module. • Introduce Safeguarding Training for Elected Members. <p>We will also develop proposals in order to establish the nature of Adult Protection in Gwynedd through a review.</p> <p>DELETE</p>	
How will we measure this? <i>(Measures)</i>	Adn25	% of people Governors in Gwynedd Schools who need a Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS, formerly CRB) who have received it. AMENDMENT
	Adn09	% of school staff that have received a Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS, formerly CRB) in Gwynedd Schools. ADDITION
	Diogelu2	% of risk assessments that were introduced to Case Conference that were considered as ones that showed quality when making a decision.
	SCA/019	Of the adult protection referrals completed during the year, the % where the risk is managed.
	AdranDiogelu2	% of new members of staff who have receiving safeguarding training through their induction. DELETE. BEING REPLACED BY THE FOLLOWING:
	AdranDiogelu2a	Number of staff that received child safeguarding training through Gwynedd's Workforce Development Unit.
	AdranDiogelu2b	Number of staff that received adult safeguarding training through Gwynedd's Workforce Development Unit.
Priority	GOF4 - INCREASING PREVENTATIVE WORK AND TARGETING INEQUALITIES IN THE HEALTH FIELD	
Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The preventative agenda increases the focus on early preventive interventions to improve quality of life and reduce the pressure on services. Research shows that informal early intervention (e.g. by the voluntary sector/ 3rd sector) promotes independence but formal early intervention exacerbates the problem and creates an increased dependency. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipated 12% increase in the number of unpaid carers aged 65 + during the next 5 years. • Brief interventions in primary care provide the best value for money - between £20 and £440 QALY. • Life expectancy is increasing in Gwynedd, but the improvement is not uniform across all areas. There are significant inequality gaps nationally and locally between the least and most deprived areas in life expectancy and deaths from various causes. • Inequalities in quality of life in terms of healthy life expectancy and life expectancy without disability.
What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i>	A range of integrated services with partners to improve healthy living opportunities and experiences for individuals. Health inequalities reducing in Gwynedd. Improving Health mainstreamed throughout the Council.
What will we achieve in 2013 / 14? <i>(Delivery Proposals)</i>	<p>We will develop proposals in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a suitable provision for families from the start by considering the ways in which the health service can work together with the Council during the Early Years of children and their parents. • Offer a better service to individuals by considering the opportunities of collaboration, co-locating and joint provision for treatments, services and recovery programmes. • Create an up-to-date picture of health inequalities in the County by holding a Health Needs Assessment of Gwynedd. • Agree on specific and intense types of intervention that can be targeted in areas or on specific groups of people identified by developing a long term strategy. • Increase the awareness and contribution of the Council's services to Improving Health. • Establish how the Council's departments currently implement Health Needs Assessments on their policies and service procedures. • Ensure corporate ownership of the healthy living brand by establishing a system, standards and guidelines to reach.
How will we measure this? <i>(Measures)</i>	<p>We will measure this once the proposals have been developed during 2013 / 14.</p>

THEME - THE ECONOMY

Thematic Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving opportunities for the people of Gwynedd to live, work and succeed locally
Priority	ECON1 - STRENGTHENING BUSINESS RESILIENCE AND RETAINING THE ECONOMIC BENEFIT LOCALLY
Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peripheral position of the County in relation to the main markets. Just over a quarter of North Wales businesses are in Gwynedd (25.6%) - 12,840 businesses, employing 43,000 (WG figures). About half (6,305) are registered for VAT and/or PAYE – a need to support indigenous businesses to grow. A 37% reduction in business survival in the County between 2008 and 2010, now back to levels similar to 2008 but the businesses and job opportunities lost then have gone. Businesses note that work and opportunities go to businesses outside the County, including small contracts as well as large ones. Huge opportunities from investment in Wylfa B, and capital schemes to the value of £75m within Gwynedd in the coming period. Procurement is an area where the Council has influence - currently around 38.55% of the Council's procurement is within the County. Procurement processes identify <i>VOIDS</i>, which are services not offered by businesses within the County and, consequently, important opportunities for local businesses to win public sector investment leave the County. Gwynedd in the first phase to receive the super powerful next generation broadband infrastructure across the County - the indicated speed (up to 80Mbps) brings the County within the same category as some of the major world economies. Only 46.7% of Gwynedd residents currently take advantage of broadband (65.5% in Wales and 71.4% in UK).
What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i>	<p>More benefits to the people of the County from the Council's procurement.</p> <p>More of the County's businesses growing and with the potential to employ.</p> <p>Maintain survival level of the County's businesses.</p>
What will we achieve in 2013 / 14? <i>(Delivery Proposals)</i>	<p>We will implement the following projects:</p> <p>Retaining Economic Benefits Locally Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an annual Procurement Programme. Conduct a review of the Council's procurement arrangements and decide on the direction.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish social clauses within construction contracts over £500k, and identify other sectors. • Target the County’s businesses and raise their awareness of the Council's procurement contracts, ensuring appropriate support to enable them to submit tender bids. • Identify the supply <i>Voids</i> that exist within the County. <p>Gwynedd Suppliers Programme Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission Meet the Buyer sessions around specific contracts across several sectors. • Secure specialised accreditations sessions for local companies. • Raise awareness of the County’s businesses of the opportunities of Energy Island and regional contracts. <p>Growing Indigenous Businesses Project: DELETE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with 43 businesses that have already expressed a desire to grow and support them to pursue their individual growth programme. • Celebrate the success of 10 companies that will have realized their ambition to grow. <p>We will also develop proposals in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the County's traditional businesses through difficult times, creating a range of opportunities for them to increase their markets and survive - including attention to e.commerce, Gwynedd Buy Local Card, town centres, DELETE and supporting strategic events. and to business succession. DELETE • Develop more self-sufficient local economies that will take advantage of the opportunities of the green and environmental sector, and add value to local produce in order to contribute to strengthening business resilience and survival. 	
<p>How do we measure this? (Measures)</p>	Econ1.3a	Relative figures of annual Gwynedd business survivals.
	Econ1.2a	Relative figure businesses registered for VAT/PAYE.
	Econ1.1a	% Council contracts going to local businesses.
	Econ1.1b	Number of County businesses that win contracts from the Council.
	Econ1.1c	% of targeted businesses who go on to tender for Council work.
	Econ1.1d	% of the Council's procurement contracts over £500k in the construction field that include and have implemented relevant social clauses e.g. to establish apprenticeships etc.
	Econ1.2b	Number of businesses advised via the Suppliers Programme who win contracts.

	Econ1.2/3a	Number of jobs created as a result of implementing the Retaining Economic Benefits Locally Project and the Gwynedd Suppliers Programme Project. AMENDMENT
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Priority	ECON2 - IMPROVING QUALITY OF JOBS AND WAGE LEVELS
Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The County’s economy continues to be characterized by dependence on a limited number of sectors, with those sectors considered as high wage being relatively rare in the County - only 3.1% of workers in Gwynedd are in the Professional, Scientific and Technological sectors. • High dependence on sectors which generally have a high number of part-time jobs and low wages. • The Council currently works proactively with partners to establish and embed high value sectors within and across the County e.g. data and digital, medical, and creative industries – sectors which offer higher pay levels. • Marginal position of the County, and a danger of regionalisation trends shifting the economic focus to the east, and good job opportunities out of the County - so without intervention the variety of sectors and those of high value will shrink. • Seasonal economy with polarization intensifying between the seasonal jobs available in January 2011/12 (down 47%) and July 2011/12 (up 30.8%). • Between January 2011 and January 2012 live vacancies fell by 47% in the Job Centres in the County, and the situation is consistently worse in Meirionnydd. • In 2012 full-time wage levels in Gwynedd were lower than for Wales or the UK, with an increase seen in the gap. • Wages in Dwyfor-Meirionnydd are consistently among the worst across all UK constituencies (the worst of all in 2010). • Delays with Wylfa B will soon impact over 500 employees at the Trawsfynydd Power Station site, with the danger of an increase in unemployment and out-migration, and the loss of £80m annually from the local economy. • Out-migration of those aged 20-34 from the County increased to 14.7% in 2010/11, and skills/ qualifications also leaving in the wake of the out-migration.
What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i>	More high value jobs created. More variety of work, and jobs across the County.

<p>What will we achieve in 2013 / 14? (Delivery Proposals)</p>	<p>We will implement the following projects:</p> <p>High Value Jobs Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree with the University on an innovation transfer programme from specific research areas in order to maximise the potential for the County's businesses. • Identify the opportunities for businesses from innovation in areas of high value and target them. • Establish a programme for linking the people of Gwynedd with regional job opportunities arising from inward investment. • Continue to support the establishment of companies e.g. in the Data, Digital, and Advanced Technology sectors on the Snowdonia Enterprise Zone sites. <p>Employment Plans Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further implement the Meirionnydd Employment Plan projects. • Draw up the Llŷn and Eifionydd Employment Plan document. <p>We will also develop proposals in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on Gwynedd's strengths and USP, with attention given to a range of sectors in order to create jobs and establish a variety of work opportunities across the County: in 2013/14 the Alternative Energy, Creative Industries, and the Heritage sectors. • Prepare the foundations for gaining World Heritage Site status for the slate areas, together with proposals for a Welsh Government bid for improving the environment of the existing world heritage site (Menai Shore). <p>We will also lobby and exert influence to ensure sufficient funding resources to establish the appropriate conditions for growth in view of <i>City Regions</i> development.</p>	
<p>How do we measure this? (Measures)</p>	Econ2.1a	Median County wage levels.
	Econ2.1b	Number and % of those employed in the Professional, Scientific, Technological sectors, which are under-represented sectors in the County. AMENDMENT
	Econ2.1bb	% of those employed in the Professional, Scientific, Technological sectors, which are under-represented sectors in the County. ADDITION
	Econ2.2a	Number of new jobs created within the Areas of Gwynedd.

Priority	ECON3 - IMPROVING ACCESS TO WORK AND ADDRESSING BARRIERS
Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gwynedd Business Survey - 87.9% of businesses who stated that they were facing difficulties in recruiting noted that this was due to lack of skills. • County Business Surveys over the past 2 years indicate that an average of 19.6% have skills gaps within their workforces, including proficiency in Welsh. • Gwynedd's young people report that they are finding it difficult to get jobs locally, including graduates who would wish to work in their home County. • Wylfa B is likely to come, with job opportunities across many fields; the Snowdonia Enterprise Zone will create further employment opportunities e.g. in the digital and data sector; new opportunities will be created in the creative industries through the Pontio Centre and possibly the relocation of an S4C centre - need to ensure that local people are being prepared to take advantage of the job opportunities. • In June 2012, 20,500 people of working age were economically inactive, a rate of 28% of the working age population, which is higher than Wales (26.8%) and the UK (23.4%) - but the actual pool is approximately 2000 people, having taken out those who would not be available for work. • Although the Gwynedd unemployment rate is consistently lower than Wales or the UK, in April 2012 the real unemployment figure was 4,700. • Estimated that Benefits cash circulates approximately 5 times in the local economy, and the restricted increase of 1% is equivalent to a loss to the Gwynedd economy of £5m - £6m annually. • In July 2011 there were 523 live jobs in the Job Centres, compared to 2,174 jobseekers claiming JSA - the highest figure for any July since 2002. • With the lack of jobs within the County's Job Centres, and the new emphasis on moving those on benefits into work, there will be an increase in the number seeking the available jobs, and a risk that this will lead to an increase in out-migration (especially those with skills), and a risk also for those who are inactive within the most vulnerable groups being unable to compete for jobs and suffering cuts to their benefits.
What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i>	More of the County's employers able to recruit local people with the right skills. More people moving from benefits to work.

What will we achieve in 2013 / 14? <i>(Delivery Proposals)</i>	<p>We will develop proposals in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and implement a range of interventions that will develop the right skills and support the County's employers to appoint local workers, giving attention to areas of apprenticeships and trainees, jobs and career brokerage, and also employment gaps within the Council. • Come to an agreement on a system for the commissioning and provision of plans for getting people from welfare into work within the County and the region.
How do we measure this? <i>(Measures)</i>	<p>We will measure this after developing proposals during 2013 / 14.</p>

THEME - THE ENVIRONMENT

Thematic Visions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting a suitable supply of homes for people in Gwynedd • Promoting a safe and sustainable environment, with convenient connections
Priority	AMG1 - PROMOTING AN APPROPRIATE SUPPLY OF HOUSING FOR LOCAL PEOPLE
Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Census suggests that 1396 (2.7%) of the households in Gwynedd have an insufficient number of bedrooms for the kinds of families that live in them. • 43% of the candidates who are registered on the Common Housing Register are looking for a 1 bedroom home compared with 20% families who are looking for a 3 bedroom house or single people with children (20%) who are looking for a two or three bedroom home. (Based on information September 2012). • 14.1% of the County's households are without residents; this includes holiday homes and empty homes. Between 2001 and 2011 there was an increase of 1,035 or 13.9% in these figures. • Nearly 65.4% own their own homes, while 29.7% rent privately or socially. • There are 1,190 units with planning permission but where construction has not yet started in 2011/12. This may indicate a lack of confidence in the economy. • Median price for a house in 2011 was £132,000 while the median household income was £23,278. • The average deposit placed by first time buyers has increased significantly in the period between 2000 and 2010 from approximately £6,000 in 2000 to about £29,000 in 2010. • Assessment of housing market information shows that in 2011 there was an annual net gap of 664 houses.
What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i>	<p>More provision of smaller units in areas of need.</p> <p>Increasing the provision of affordable housing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 200 empty housing units back into use. • An increase in the provision of smaller units in areas of need. • An increase in the provision of affordable housing units (53 during 2013 / 14). • An increase in the number of affordable housing units established through the planning process. • An increase in the provision of housing for people with specific needs.
What will we achieve in 2013 / 14? <i>(Delivery Proposals)</i>	We will implement the following projects:

How will we measure this? <i>(Measures)</i>	Vacant Properties Back Into Use Project:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring 95 DELETE 54 AMENDMENT vacant units back into use with the emphasis on smaller units. In addition grant funding will be earmarked to bring an additional 10 empty housing units back into use during Quarter 1 2014/15. ADDITION 	
	Affordable Units Project:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish 53 affordable housing units in the County. Establish whether there are any other models that could be implemented to provide affordable housing in the County in the future (including overcoming Section 106 obstacles, the Council's Funding Models, Community Land Bank an Social Lettings Agency). 	
	Unitary Development Plan / Local Development Plan Project:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number of affordable housing units established through the planning process as a result of policies within the Unitary Development Plan Undertake preparatory work to ensure that the Local Development Plan, that will come into force in 2016, sets the policy framework to realise this priority. 	
Housing for Specific Needs Project:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify alternative models for the use of sheltered housing in the Meirionnydd area. Identify options to reduce the time taken to complete disabled modifications. Increase the construction and care planning for Extra Care Housing Bangor. Put the Older People's Housing Strategy in place. 		
	AMG1a	The number of 1/2 bedroom units created for rent.
	DAT01	The number of long term vacant units (6 months or more) in the County coming back into use.
	CTC01	% of applicants registered on the Common Housing Register looking for smaller units to rent.
	Strat6	The number of affordable housing units achieved in Gwynedd.
	PLA/006	The number of affordable housing units provided as a percentage of all the additional housing units provided during the year.
	PSR/002	Average number of calendar days taken to award Disabled Facilities Grants.

Priority	AMG2 - REDUCING CARBON EMISSIONS	
Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carbon dioxide emissions have increased by 9.2% since 2006 and Gwynedd is the County with the 9th lowest figure of all Welsh authorities. Commitment to a reduction of 3% per year in emissions of greenhouse gases within the Climate Change Strategy for Wales as well as a target to achieve a reduction of at least 40% of all greenhouse gas emissions in Wales by 2020 against a 1990 baseline. Gwynedd Council is responsible for 38.5% of CO₂ emissions resulting from energy use in buildings of LSB organisations in the County. There was a decrease of 17.23% between 2005/06 and 2011/12. 	
What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i>	<p>A reduction in the carbon emissions of Gwynedd Council and the public sector in the County:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A reduction in the carbon emissions of the bodies on the Local Service Boards in the workstreams of energy in non-domestic buildings and transport. A reduction of 30% in the Council's carbon emissions by the end of 2014/15. Financial savings arising from the reduction in the use of fuel An improvement in the support available for carbon emission reduction work in the community and private sector in the County. 	
What will we achieve in 2013 / 14? <i>(Delivery Proposals)</i>	<p>We will implement the following project:</p> <p>The Council's Carbon Management Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a further 10 schemes to reduce carbon emissions by a further 5% to meet the target of a 20% reduction in the Council's carbon emissions by the end of 2013/14. 	
How will we measure this? <i>(Measures)</i>	EEF/002	% change in carbon emissions in the non-domestic building stock.
	CYNCA07	% change in carbon emissions arising from business travel.

Priority	AMG3 – RESPONDING TO THE THREAT OF CLIMATE CHANGE DELETE THE ENTIRE PRIORITY	
Why is this a priority? <i>(main elements of the evidence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gwynedd has been identified as an area where about 12,000 of its inhabitants (together with critical infrastructure) live at risk of flooding. At the Wales level, it is the 3rd highest in terms of number of residents who are at risk of flooding and the 2nd highest in terms of property. 17 power stations or substations, 9 emergency response centres, 23 sewage / water works, 1 telephone exchange building and 66 kilometres of highways in North West Wales are at risk of flooding (1% chance per year). 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the Flood Risk Management Project within the current Strategic Plan (and the previous 3 Year Plan) 8 communities were identified within the County as those with a high risk of flooding. The initial work has been done within those communities to raise residents' awareness of flooding and the steps they can take to reduce the risk. Flooding incidents have occurred in recent months in areas not identified as being at a high risk of flooding, such as Llanberis. As a lead flood authority the Council needs to prepare a report to identify the reason in each case arising where a home has been flooded. Currently no system exists for recording these events but following the floods in November over 200 reports have been produced and shared with relevant partners so that they can consider steps for responding.
<p>What difference do we want to make by 2017? (Result)</p>	<p>Responses to the challenges of climate change in the longer term identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents and all relevant agencies clearer about the future in those areas under real threat in the longer term with that informing relevant policies. <p>An increase in the number of residents who live in areas of high flooding risk with a “plan” to respond to incidences of flooding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An increase in the number of people we will have engaged with to raise their awareness of flooding risk and who have received advice on identifying practical steps to reduce flooding risk. An increase in flooding awareness levels amongst residents. An increase in the number of individuals with “plans” in place to respond to incidences of flooding following engagement. <p>An improvement in the Council’s ability to respond in order to help residents to deal with the side effects of flooding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An improvement in the Council’s readiness to respond to a flooding emergency.
<p>What will we achieve in 2013 / 14? (Delivery Proposals)</p>	<p>We will implement the following project:</p> <p>Responding to the Threat of Climate Change Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify responses to flooding risks in the longer term by developing future development options and infrastructure needs in the Pwllheli area, using the work that has already taken place to look at the likely consequences of climate change as a basis for that work.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve awareness amongst residents living in high flooding risk areas by holding awareness campaigns and engagement activities. • Improve the ability of residents to respond to incidences of flooding by assisting them to identify practical steps and plans they can take in order to avoid or reduce the likely effects on property. • Improve the Council's internal arrangements to deal with the effects of flooding incidences by identifying gaps currently in place, review internal arrangements to respond to those gaps and ensure better arrangements for recording flooding incidences • Consider the opportunities the Council has to be more pro active to reduce the likelihood that flooding incidences will affect residents.
How will we measure this? <i>(Measures)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of individuals with "plans" in place to respond to incidences of flooding following engagement work. • % of key individuals within the Councils reporting an improvement in the Council's readiness to respond to the threat of flooding.

Priority	AMG3 - REDUCING THE AMOUNT OF WASTE SENT TO LANDFILL AMENDMENT
Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 48.1% of the County's municipal waste was recycled or composted during 2011/12, which is the 14th highest in Wales. This figure compares to 50.0% for Wales. The 51.9% of municipal waste remaining in Gwynedd goes to landfill, which is the 20th highest in Wales. • Target to re-use and recycle / compost 58% of all municipal waste by March 2016 and 64% by March 2020. • The total amount of waste that can be landfilled has decreased significantly in recent years and will decline further by 2020 when the total level of waste that can be landfilled will be set at 10%. • Need to increase levels of food waste collected in order to provide 7,500 tonnes of food waste which the Council has agreed to provide to the company that runs the GwyrAD facility. • Need to increase participation levels among residents of the County in terms of recycling and composting food waste - current food waste composting participation levels between 35 and 38%.
What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i>	<p>Increasing levels of re-use / recycling / composting.</p> <p>Reducing the dependence on landfill:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase in the % of municipal waste that is re-used / recycled / composted to the level of 58% by the end of 2015/16. • An increase in the % of commercial waste that is re-used / recycled / composted to the level of 50% by the end of 2016/17.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduction in the % of waste sent to landfill to conform with the annual landfill allowance set for the County. • An increase in the % of domestic properties using the weekly food collection service • An increase in the level of food waste composted annually to at least 7,500 tonnes by 2014/15. 	
What will we achieve in 2013 / 14? <i>(Delivery Proposals)</i>	<p>We will implement the following project:</p> <p>Waste Reduction Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the levels of re-using / recycling / composting in line with the targets set for municipal and commercial waste and reduced the level of waste sent to landfill. • Decide on the arrangements for disposing of residual waste in Gwynedd in the short term. • Decide on an alternative way of dealing with residual waste, other than landfill in the medium and longer term by working in partnership with other authorities in North Wales. 	
How will we measure this? <i>(Measures)</i>	WMT/009	% of municipal waste that is re-used / recycled / composted.
	PB51	% of commercial waste that is re-used / recycled / composted.
	WMT/004	Waste sent to landfill.
	PB60	Landfill Allowance. ADDITION
	PB53	% of domestic properties using the weekly food collection service.
	PB55	Total food waste composted.

THEME - STRONGER COMMUNITIES

Thematic Visions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working together to create a confident and Welsh future • Reducing the impact of deprivation on the people of Gwynedd
Priority	CC1 - PROMOTING THE WELSH LANGUAGE
Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A decrease 846 or 3.6% in the number of Welsh speakers between 2001 and 2011. In 2001, 69% (77,846) of people aged 3 and over in Gwynedd could speak Welsh, compared with 65.4% (77,000) in 2011. • There was a more obvious pattern of reduction in the number of Welsh speakers in urban areas between 2001 and 2011. • 70% or more of the population could speak Welsh in 40 of the 71 electoral wards in Gwynedd. This compares with 42 out of 71 in 2001, and 61 out of 77 electoral wards in 1991. • Fewer children and young people are using Welsh in informal/ social situations, with sample data in 15 primary schools in 2009 showing that only 38% of children say that they use the language in the playground compared with 70% in the class. • Variation in the language policies of public bodies and agencies within the County.
What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i>	<p>To halt the decline in the number of Welsh speakers in Gwynedd:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintained the number of communities where 70% of the population speak Welsh. • Increased the social use of the Welsh Language by children and young people outside school. • Increased the opportunities to use Welsh in the workplace. • Further strengthened the Welsh medium provision in our schools. • Ensured as standard attention to the Welsh language in partnership / collaboration discussions.
What will we achieve in 2013 / 14? <i>(Delivery Proposals)</i>	<p>We will implement the following project:</p> <p>Promoting the Welsh Language Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a research understanding of the factors affecting the Welsh language in specific communities in the 2011 census. • Support 3 communities to use the Local Implementation Framework to undertake an assessment of the situation of the Welsh language with action plans in place arising from that. • Give greater attention to the after-care provided to Welsh learners upon their return to their Primary Schools from the language centres.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support 102 primary schools to gain the Language Charter Bronze Award to increase the social use of the Welsh language by children • Collaborate with the 14 secondary schools in Gwynedd to establish a baseline on the social use of the Welsh language by children and young people. • Implement the Strategic Plan for the Welsh Language in Education in terms of the medium of teaching at 7 years old, language skills in the move from primary to secondary and the choice of medium at age 14-16, targeting attention as required • Seek the agreement of the Local Services Board to establish a baseline and develop more bilingual workplaces within Units and Departments of public bodies operating in Gwynedd • Appraise the Development Academy on Welsh Language Skills for Managers. • Lobby the Welsh Government to complete the work of revising the TAN20 Planning Guidelines, to put the Welsh language on a firmer footing as a planning consideration. • Implement the Year 1 requirements of “More than Words” to improve the experiences and results for users by improving the provision of health and care services through the medium of Welsh. • Ensure that the new Local Development Plan gives full consideration to the Welsh Language in the policies and in the spatial proposals related to spreading growth and housing developments . 	
How will we measure this? <i>(Measures)</i>	CC1a	The number of communities acting in favour of the Welsh Language by using the Local Implementation Framework.
	CC1b	The number of Gwynedd primary schools that have received Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards under the language Charter.
	CC1c	The social use of the Welsh Language by Primary School Children. DELETE
	GY06	% of pupils who gained level 3 good or above [level 3 written Welsh] at Key Stage 2 (age 7-11) and teacher assessment in first language Welsh at the end of Key Stage 3 (age 11-14).

Priority	CC2 - REDUCING THE EFFECTS OF POVERTY AND DEPRIVATION
Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low Income Levels within the County with 2 of every 5 households in Gwynedd living in relative poverty; full-time wages were 20.9% below the UK and 13.6% lower than Wales, with Meirion & Dwyfor lower still. Household income fell by 10.1% between 2009 and 2012 (6.1% in Wales). • Evidence of unsuitable homes and fuel poverty with (38.6%) of Gwynedd households at risk of fuel poverty. • Legislation to reform the Welfare System means losses in income of those receiving different benefits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * 10 - start of change to the Personal Independence Payments * 40 - change the "Cap" on weekly benefits * 1,350 – introducing under occupation rules * 4,800 - further changes to the Personal Independence Payments * 11,500 - transfer to Universal Credit (Digital Assumption) * 11,500 - possible change to the Council Tax Rules <p>(NB There are actual dates for each of these changes, although uncertainty about the last of them)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although the trend is generally down across Wales, the rate of homeless households in Gwynedd above the Welsh average in 5 of the last 11 years - even before the advent of the bedrooms tax under the new benefits regime
What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i>	<p>More people able to cope with the financial challenge independently.</p> <p>Fewer people are accepted as homeless.</p> <p>Fewer households experiencing fuel poverty.</p> <p>More vulnerable individuals and communities receiving appropriate support to move forward. DELETE</p>
What will we achieve in 2013 / 14? <i>(Delivery Proposals)</i>	<p>We will implement the following projects</p> <p>Welfare Reform Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake awareness-raising campaigns, and assist claimants of the <i>Universal Credit</i> and the new disability payment to deal independently with the change in Welfare Benefits. • Train staff from the Council's One Stop Shops on how to deal with claimants' questions and to refer them on effectively. • Establish a programme for increasing digital inclusion to enable residents to access online services. • Give Universal Credit claimants across the County access to an adequate provision of computers and skills support for using the Department of Work and Pensions systems.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide financial support to around 240 households to bridge the shortfall in Housing Benefit Tax as a result of the Bedroom Tax. <p>Leasing Private Housing Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target, lease, administer and manage 70 private sector units in order to reduce the number that would otherwise be homeless. <p>Homelessness Prevention Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Save and sustain 40 vulnerable tenancies. • Provide assistance to approximately 50 families to prevent homelessness. • Provide 7 new units for those who would otherwise be placed in bed and breakfast, and better prepare residents of the units for more permanent accommodation. • Complete an options study so the Council will be clear on its options with regard to investment in increasing the supply of suitably sized properties. <p>We will also develop proposals to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop appropriate measures to help people in need by reducing the number of fuel poor households, and for contributing to reducing the impact of poverty and deprivation in locations across the County. • Set the foundations for establishing a coordinated system to provide support for vulnerable individuals and communities, along with appropriate social plans to help people make ends meet. DELETE 	
<p>How do we measure this? <i>(Measures)</i></p>	CC2.1a	Number and % of those receiving advice going into debt. AMENDMENT
	CC2.1aa	% of those receiving advice going into debt. ADDITION
	CD12.05	The number of families that have received aid from the Discretionary Housing Payments Fund.
	HHA/013	% Possible homeless households where homelessness prevented for at least 6 months.
	HHA/016	Average number of days all homeless families with children will have spent in bed and breakfast accommodation.
	GTLLEOL6	Number of people who will have received assistance through the Homeless Prevention Fund via rent deposit and / or advance rent payment.
For the developmental work, we will measure this after developing proposals during 2013 / 14.		

Priority	CC3 - PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE RURAL COMMUNITIES
Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural authorities' vicious circle of comparative economic decline, depopulation, less public resources and access to services worsening. • 18 of the County's communities (LSOAs) are within the lowest 10% in Wales in terms of access to services, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivations (42 communities in the bottom 30%). • Centralizing the pattern of regional and County public services. • Pattern of historical public service that is not fit for the present period. • Whilst the general population in the County has risen between 2001 a 2011, there was a pattern of decline in the 0-15 population (particularly in maritime areas of -14.6%) and 25-44 (particularly in the maritime of -13.4% and rural areas o -10.2%). There was a general growth across the County (except Bangor in the 65+ population), with a County figure of +13.2%
What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i>	Reduce the comparative decline in public resources to the Council due to the rural nature of the County. Improve sustainability of Councils services in rural areas.
What will we achieve in 2013 / 14? <i>(Delivery Proposals)</i>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobby Ministers to raise awareness of the vicious circle. • Undertake a pilot to assess the opportunities to ensure the sustainability of rural services CHANGE TO: Supporting the investigation of the Scrutiny Committee into the sustainability of rural services. • Highlight rural deprivation better by means of lobbying. • Take full advantage of the 'Superfast Wales' (digital connection) opportunities.
How will we measure this? <i>(Measures)</i>	We will develop measures as we develop proposals during 2013 / 14.

Priority	CC4 - PROMOTING COMMUNITY PRIDE AND RESPONSIBILITY
<p>Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With increasing demand on services and resources declining, the Council needs to address this and use individual and community capacity to ensure the sustainability of services. Research shows that this can be achieved through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Supporting more individuals to move from being a passive recipient of service to be an active participant who does more for themselves. * Supporting more people to be a part of shaping their communities. * Enabling more people to volunteer their time to help others and by doing so they strengthen the social capital within their communities as well as the social network for individuals. * Making better use of community assets. * Changing the mindset of the Council from a service model that is based on a deficit to a model based on assets which means more work in the community.
<p>What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i></p>	<p>Releasing capacity and encouraging local pride:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More volunteers. • Less dependency the Council's services. • More community activities. • Improved attainment and participation in preventative services. • Less loneliness and more social networking for vulnerable people. • Improved use of community assets. <p>In addition to the above, a general result emerges of reduced demand on the Councils services and improving the resilience of individuals and communities.</p>
<p>What will we achieve in 2013 / 14? <i>(Delivery Proposals)</i></p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map voluntary and community activities across Gwynedd. • Research into areas that will benefit from the demand management approach. • Assess opportunities to prepare resources, in collaboration with partners to ensure we target the scheme where it's needed. • Pilot community pride in areas in order to learn what works. DELETE • Develop and implement a programme to change managers' mindset to adopt this method of service outputs where appropriate.

How will we measure this?
(Measures)

- ~~Number of community activities held in the community pride areas.~~ **DELETE**
- ~~Number of volunteers registered in the community pride areas.~~ **DELETE**

THEME - CULTURE AND BUSINESS ARRANGEMENTS OF THE COUNCIL

Thematic Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The people of Gwynedd central to everything we do
Priority	<p>DT1 - PROMOTING A CULTURE ACROSS THE WHOLE COUNCIL OF PUTTING THE PEOPLE OF GWYNEDD AT THE HEART OF ALL OUR WORK AND OUR DECISIONS</p>
<p>Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only 43% of residents stated that they were satisfied with the way the council runs things (Mori survey, 2009). Only 44% of the members of resident’s panels were satisfied with the way the council runs things (opinion survey, 2012). 42% of Gwynedd residents gave a score of 7 or less to the Customer Care received (field survey with 590 residents, 2012). Evidence from the systems interventions that have been conducted show we have dedicated staff who wish to do their best for the citizens but numerous activities infringe this desire. Perception among members and staff that we do not spend enough time thinking about what is important to the citizen (focus groups with staff, managers and elected members, 2012). Lack of use of customer data in determining the prioritization and design of services. During the focus groups that were held with staff, managers and elected members, a number of issues were identified that needed to be addressed if the Council is going to put the people of Gwynedd central to everything we do.
<p>What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i></p>	<p>A clear and common vision for everyone in the Council (known as “Ffordd Gwynedd / The Gwynedd Way”) regarding the corporate culture that’s needed, if we are to ensure that the people of Gwynedd are central to everything we do. And ensure that the vision is rooted throughout the Council. As a part of this, the following needs to be in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership that highlights the importance of “Ffordd Gwynedd” and supports the vision. Managers in the workplace that empower staff to meet customer’s needs and identify procedures that deviate demand for our services: and who also understand customer needs and dispose of obstacles. Staff empowered to work in an adaptable environment to fulfil customer needs and to identify opportunities to reduce demand for services. Robust governance arrangements that ensure decisions are based on robust evidence on its effect on the people of Gwynedd. Performance framework that measures how we effect the lives of the people of Gwynedd.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service provision arrangements that create value to the customer ac the people of Gwynedd. • Employment procedures that empower staff and reinforce the behaviour of putting the people of Gwynedd at the centre. • Policies that promote and support achieving the needs of our people, rather than create obstacles.
<p>What will we achieve in 2013 / 14? <i>(Delivery Proposals)</i></p>	<p>We will implement the following project:</p> <p>Ffordd Gwynedd Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt the Ffordd Gwynedd Strategy as well as the Ffordd Gwynedd Development Programme, to ensure the long term objectives noted above are realised, and starting their implementation by undertaking the following during the first year: <p><u>Leadership that highlights the importance of “Ffordd Gwynedd”</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all Council senior leaders understand the principles of ‘Ffordd Gwynedd’. • Establish a Leaders development programme and ready to be implemented. <p><u>Managers in the workplace that empower staff and staff feeling empowered</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a Ffordd Gwynedd Development Programme as well as the accreditation that will be awarded to business units that fully implement “Ffordd Gwynedd”. • Ensure a practical pilot is underway in 3 business units to test the Development Programme. • Provide training to 30 managers on the coaching method of management. • Ensure all Council managers understand the principles of “Ffordd Gwynedd” and the role of managers within the new framework. <p><u>Robust governance arrangements</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce the role of scrutiny in order to focus on the effect of services on our citizens. <p><u>Appropriate performance framework</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the performance measurement framework in order to ensure it measures our effect on the people of Gwynedd. • Provide training to the Senior Managers College on the revised framework. • Create a procedure that uses complaints to improve services and start to implement the new procedure.

	<p><u>Appropriate Services Provision</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a revised Business Case for Siop Gwynedd and the Call Centre in order to maximise their benefits in particular regarding their ability to resolve issues at the first point of contact. • Review our establishment opening hours over the Christmas period, and test the new procedure. • Review the Information Technology Strategy in order to identify those plans that may help services to achieve for the people of Gwynedd. • Extend the number of services where self service can be used. • Ensure that the key change projects have the appropriate support in order to ensure their achievement. <p><u>Appropriate Employment Framework</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the employment framework and in particular the appointment and evaluation process, in order to ensure it reinforces the principles of “Ffordd Gwynedd”. <p><u>Appropriate Policies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the councils training programme and agreeing any necessary changes. 	
<p>How will we measure this? <i>(Measures)</i></p>	CYSCW12	Number of business units within the Council that received the “Ffordd Gwynedd” accreditation.
	CYSCW13	Number of continuous reviews conducted in order to provide improved services to the people of Gwynedd.
	CYF09	% of Gwynedd residents that are satisfied with the way Gwynedd Council runs things.
	CYSCW15	% of Gwynedd residents that give a score of 7 or less to the Customer Care received.
	D6.22	% of staff and members that believe that the leader of Gwynedd Council profess the principles of “Ffordd Gwynedd”.
	D6.23	% of staff that state they feel empowered to work in an adaptable environment in order to achieve customer needs.
	CYF11	% of Gwynedd residents that believe the Council offers value for money.
	DT1.2	% value for money measures within business units that improve. DELETE
	CYSCW11	Number of services that are available through self service.
	CYSCW05	% of applications for services that are being addressed at first contact by Siop Gwynedd / Galw Gwynedd. AMENDMENT
	CYSCW06	% of applications for services that are being addressed at first contact by Siop Gwynedd ADDITION

	<p>* N.B. It's possible that these measures may change, especially if a more appropriate measure is available from the staff opinion survey. It's intended to conduct a survey during the summer in order to obtain the opinion of staff and members, and set a baseline in order to measure the success of the intervention by the end of the period.</p>
Priority	DT2 - ENGAGING EFFECTIVELY WITH THE PEOPLE OF GWYNEDD AND ENSURING THEIR PARTICIPATION AND OWNERSHIP OF THE FUTURE
Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only 37% of residents feel they can influence decisions that affect their area (Mori survey, 2009). • 43% of Gwynedd residents stated that they were satisfied with the way the council runs things – in comparison to 45% within our statistical neighbour (Mori survey, 2009). • 63% of residents feel they are unable to influence decisions in their area – compared to 73% within our statistical neighbour (Mori survey, 2009) • 29% of residents stated they would like more of a voice in decision that affect their area – with a further 59% dependent on the issues in question (Mori survey, 2009).
What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i>	<p>Appropriate engagement arrangements to ensure we accomplish the important issues to the people of Gwynedd in order to prioritize our resources accordingly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More Gwynedd residents feel they are able to influence decisions in their local area. • More Gwynedd residents taken part in order to influence what happens in their area. • More engaging exercises that influence the final plan. • Elected members satisfied with the Council's engagements arrangements.
What will we achieve in 2013 / 14? <i>(Delivery Proposals)</i>	<p>We will implement the following project:</p> <p>Engagement Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the Engagement Strategy for 2013-16 in order to improve the engagement process across the Council. • Establish an Engagement Management Board to oversee engagement arrangements across the Council and ensure that any lessons be it good or bad are disseminated across the Council. • Create an Engagement Handbook and undertake a campaign to raise awareness of the handbook. • Identify the individuals that are responsible for engagement and collaborate to improve their skills. • Seek to secure a resource to provide support and assistance to managers regarding engagement, as well as ensuring quality on key projects. AMENDMENT • Establish arrangements to assess the effectiveness of the engagement activities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an Engagement Forum. 	
How will we measure this? <i>(Measures)</i>	CYF10	% of Gwynedd residents that feel they are able to influence decisions in their local area.
	DT2.2	Number of Gwynedd residents that have taken part in order to influence what happens in their area.
	DT2.3	Number of the engaging exercises that has influenced the final plan.
	DT2.4	What are the elected members feeling regarding the engagements arrangements at the end of the period?

Priority	DT3 - MAKING MORE EFFICIENT USE OF RESOURCES, SEEKING TO MINIMISE THE IMPACT OF CUTS ON THE PEOPLE OF GWYNEDD	
Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council has approved a Financial Strategy covering the period of this Strategic Plan. The Strategy foresees that there will be a gap of over £32m between the Council's spending needs and the income from Government grant by the end of this period. Even assuming a relatively high increase in Council Tax (3.5% a year) the gap is still almost £25m. Projections of this kind are inevitably 'best estimates' rather than definite figures, especially over longer time horizons, and the true situation could turn out to be somewhat worse or somewhat better than the above. What is certain, however, is that the Council will need to implement substantial savings in order to close this financial gap. Because we foresaw difficult times ahead the Council has already approved schemes to save around £9m, which should be sufficient to close the financial gap in 2013/14 and 2014/15. This means that another £16m or so (planning assumption) will need to be found for the following two years. The aim of the Strategy is to find as much as possible of the £16m through a combination of further efficiencies and managing the demand for services, before falling back on cuts as a last resort should they be needed. We have some time before 2015/16 to develop comprehensive, inclusive arrangements to achieve this. 	
What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i>	<p>Make more efficient use of resources, and seek to minimise the impact of cuts on the people of Gwynedd, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Realising permanent financial savings of £24.8m over the 4 years. Realising at least £20.0m of this sum whilst continuing to achieve the same outcomes for Gwynedd residents (i.e. through efficiency savings or by reducing the demand for Council services). <p>The exact sums will be reviewed annually as part of the Council's Financial Strategy.</p>	

What will we achieve in 2013 / 14?
(Delivery Proposals)

We will implement the following projects:

Council Strategic Efficiency Project:

- Develop savings schemes equivalent to £1.5m, without impacting on results for residents, ready to be implemented during this financial year. Prepare to develop schemes worth £2m for 2014/15.

Outcomes Agreement Project:

- Ensure that the proposals which are agreed under the new Outcome Agreement framework will allow the Council to claim the full sum of £1.3m annually, and ensure achievement of the commitments made for 2013 / 14.

Realising Savings Project:

- Ensure that the savings approved for 2013/14 (total £3.6m) are achieved, and ensure preparations are made for the savings to be achieved in the following years.

Specific savings projects of a particularly complex / transformational nature:

- According to the timetable of the individual projects, which is assessed and reported as the projects are approved.

We will also develop proposals in order to:

- Achieve and quantify savings from the Reducing Demand for Services initiative - establish arrangements to ensure that future savings will be derived from the project and that they are appropriately measured and reported (the Reducing Demand project itself is included within Priority DT5).
- Identify further efficiency savings - develop proposals to ensure that as much as possible of the residual financial gap is met through efficiency savings.
- Prepare for the possibility of future service cuts - develop arrangements for identifying any service cuts which may be required in future, consulting widely with the public on the possibilities.

How will we measure this? <i>(Measures)</i>	DT3.1	Total savings achieved.
	DT3.2	Proportion of savings achieved which are efficiency savings.
	DT3.3	Proportion of savings achieved which are service cuts.
	DT3.4	Proportion of key service performance measures in the areas where efficiency savings were made, where performance did not deteriorate.

Priority	DT4 - CAPITALISING ON THE 'SIZE' OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PEOPLE OF GWYNEDD
Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has not established plans that take advantage of its size in the interests of the people of Gwynedd. • There are increasing examples of councils developing and implementing plans that will benefit the citizen. Examples of plans offered by many councils are; an opportunity to buy house insurance, offering "energy switching" opportunities, and using the pension fund for the benefit of the area - such as building new houses.
What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i>	More people of Gwynedd benefiting from schemes that capitalise on the size of the Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 schemes implemented during the first year.
What will we achieve in 2013 / 14? <i>(Delivery Proposals)</i>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct further research into what schemes can be implemented, identify their cost as well as gather evidence regarding what effect the schemes will have. • Submit a long list of possible schemes to the Cabinet by the end of the second quarter 2013/14. So the Cabinet can decide and prioritize which schemes should be implemented and when. • Implement at least 2 schemes by the end of 2013/14.
How will we measure this? <i>(Measures)</i>	We will develop measures as we develop proposals during 2013/14.

Priority	DT5 - REDUCE THE DEMAND FOR SERVICES BY PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION
Why is this a priority? <i>(The Evidence)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council cannot cope with the increasing demand on services without service cuts. • Preventive services generally undeveloped in the Council. • Other councils have developed and implemented interventions to manage the demand for services, with evidence of such work having an impact. • Lack of skills and procedures within some areas that are critical to reducing demand for services.
What difference do we want to make by 2017? <i>(Result)</i>	Effective preventative services in place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate enablers in place • Avoid increase in budgets
What will we achieve in 2013 / 14? <i>(Delivery Proposals)</i>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission effective preventative services. • Ensure the appropriate enablers are in place e.g. resources, capacity, analytics and research practice. • Undertake an assessment of the services where responsibilities could be transferred to individuals / communities.
How will we measure this? <i>(Measures)</i>	We will develop measures as we develop proposals during 2013/14.

APPENDIX 1 - KEY MEASURES

Field	Reference	Council's key measures - Tier 1	Performance 2012/13	Welsh Average 2012/13	Ambition 2013/14
Children and Young People	EDU/002i	The percentage of all pupils who leave full-time education without without an approved external qualification	0.00%	0.40%	0% - 0.21%
Children and Young People	EDU/002ii	The percentage of pupils in local authority care who leave full-time education without without an approved external qualification	0.00%	5.70%	0% - 6.5%
Children and Young People	GY25	Percentage difference between the performance of pupils who have the right to free school meals and pupils that are not eligible for free school meals in KS4 (14-16 years old) in the Level 2 + threshold indicator	36.04%	33.22%	32% - 34%
Children and Young People	DANS11	Number of primary schools in one of ESTYN's official categories (substantial and improvement and special measures)	1	Data published October 2013	1
Children and Young People	DANS12	Number of secondary schools in one of ESTYN's official categories (substantial and improvement and special measures)	2	Data published October 2013	1

Field	Reference	Council's key measures - Tier 1	Performance 2012/13	Welsh Average 2012/13	Ambition 2013/14
Children and Young People	GY01	Points Score Average capped on the basis of 8 GCSEs in KS4 (14-16 year old)	323.53	Data published October 2013	343
Care, Health and Well-being	Diogelu4a	Number of strategy meetings held under child protection procedures	-	-	Under Development. Establishing baseline 2013-14
Care, Health and Well-being	Diogelu4b	Percentage of strategy meetings (part 3) resulted in a Section 47 inquiry	-	-	Under Development. Establishing baseline 2013-14
Care, Health and Well-being	Diogelu3	The percentage of referrals that are re-referrals within 12 months (exclude GAP)	30.6% (SCC/010 29.95%)	(SCC/010 27%)	25% - 29%
Care, Health and Well-being	LlesPMG1	Agreed transition plan for disabled children at 16 years	Not reported in 2012/13	-	Under Development. Establishing baseline 2013-14
Care, Health and Well-being	LlesPMG2 / SCC/041a	Pathway plan agreed for children in care	100%	89.5%	95% - 100%

Field	Reference	Council's key measures - Tier 1	Performance 2012/13	Welsh Average 2012/13	Ambition 2013/14
Care, Health and Well-being	SCC/024	The percentage of children looked after during the year with a personal education plan within 20 school days of entering care or joining a school during the year	50.90%	65.00%	65% - 73%
Care, Health and Well-being	OED04	Enablement - Percentage of Enablement service recipients who returned within 2 years	11.70%	-	10% - 20%
Care, Health and Well-being	OED08 (SCA/002b Lleol)	Percentage of elderly people (65 years of age or over) receiving authority assistance in care homes in care homes per 1,000 of the population over 65 years of age on 31 March - apart from self-financiers	22.71 (SCA/002b 24.69)	(SCA/002b 20.63)	22.5 - 23
Care, Health and Well-being	OED12	Number of Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) referrals completed in the period	167	-	Establishing Baseline
Care, Health and Well-being	SCA/018c	Percentage of carers of adult service users who had an assessment during the year who were provided with services	82.27%	62.80%	65.13% - 82.27%
Care, Health and Well-being	LCS/002 (DADH.34)	Number of visits to leisure centres during the year per 1,000 of the population	12,408	8,864	12644
Care, Health and Well-being	DATBL01	Percentage of Gwynedd population that are members of the Council's leisure centres	-	-	15.27%

Field	Reference	Council's key measures - Tier 1	Performance 2012/13	Welsh Average 2012/13	Ambition 2013/14
Care, Health and Well-being	Ge02	Percentage of children attending 1 or more 5x60 sessions	70.31%	-	72.50%
Care, Health and Well-being	DADH.42	Percentage of children who have attained the national curriculum swimming standard by 11 years old	80%	-	82.50%
Economy	H6	Number of businesses developing with the support of the Economy Department	92	-	65
Economy	H7	Number of new businesses established with the support of the Economy Department	18	-	8 – 12
Economy	H8	Number of new posts established with the support of the Economy Department	90	-	34
Economy	H9 (CB9)	Number of new posts safeguarded with the support of the Economy Department	108	-	100
Economy	Ieu3	Percentage of young people supported by school youth workers who engage	100%	-	85%
Economy	SaC01	Percentage of working age individuals who move on to work (Taith i Waith)	7%	-	10% - 15%
Economy	SaC04	Number of apprentices employed	18	-	10
Economy	Twr4	Benefit to the local economy of high profile strategic events	£4,994,155	-	£3.15m - £3.5m

Field	Reference	Council's key measures - Tier 1	Performance 2012/13	Welsh Average 2012/13	Ambition 2013/14
Economy	Caff06c	Percentage spend with businesses in Wales	-	-	For information
Economy	Caff06ch	Percentage spend with businesses in North Wales	-	-	For information
Economy	Caff06d	Percentage spend with businesses in Gwynedd	-	-	For information
Environment	GyC10 PPN/008ii	Percentage of new businesses found who have received a risk assessment visit or who have returned a self-assessment questionnaire during the year for food hygiene	90.00%	90.27%	90.00%
Environment	PPN/009	Percentage of food establishments who are "broadly compliant" with food hygiene standards	95.44%	86.03%	90%
Environment	CT29	Percentage of all relevant planning applications decided within 8 weeks	73.13%	72.79%	75%
Environment	THS/011(a)	Condition of principal roads (A)	5.2	5.3	4.10%

Field	Reference	Council's key measures - Tier 1	Performance 2012/13	Welsh Average 2012/13	Ambition 2013/14
Environment	THS/011(b)	Condition of roads other than principal roads (B)	5.3	7.5	4.20%
Environment	THS/011(c)	Condition of class C roads	10.3	18.8	7%
Environment	THS/009	Number of calendar days taken to repair defective street lighting lamps by percentage during the year .	3.7	4.3	3.2
Environment	Y2	Performance of the Consultancy Department against their financial target	£571,414	-	£1,074,250
Strong Communities	CD12.03	The time taken to process new Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit claims	21.03	21	21 days
Strong Communities	CD12.04	The time taken to process changing events in Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit	5.68	7	7 days
Strong Communities	DAT02	Number of homeless people in Bed and Breakfast accommodation	13	-	12 - 15 cases
Strong Communities	HHA/008	Percentage of homeless referrals decided within 33 working days	77.40%	88.70%	77.4% - 88.7%
Culture and Business Arrangements of the Council	PEN12	Staff engagement reported as a score in the "Best Companies" staff survey	565	-	Increase of 5% (593)

Field	Reference	Council's key measures - Tier 1	Performance 2012/13	Welsh Average 2012/13	Ambition 2013/14
Culture and Business Arrangements of the Council	PEN13	Percentage of relevant staff who have received a Disclosure and Barring check within 2 months of the date of appointment	Not reported	-	95% - 100%
Culture and Business Arrangements of the Council	PEN01	Number of serious accidents as defined by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)	4	-	Less than 6
Culture and Business Arrangements of the Council	D2.1	Number of days lost due to sickness absence by member of staff (the Council's attendance level)	8.52	10.6	Reduction in last years figure
Culture and Business Arrangements of the Council	PEN06	Percentage of relevant staff who have been appraised between March and June	Not reported	-	90% - 100%
Culture and Business Arrangements of the Council	CD5.01	Council's actual expenditure in comparison with the budget	0.4%	-	+ / - 0.4%
Culture and Business Arrangements of the Council	CD6.01	Percentage of invoices paid within 30 days (across the Council)	94%	Information not available until November 2014	92%+
Culture and Business Arrangements of the Council	CD11.01	Current Year Council Tax Collection Rate	97.15%	96.70%	96.80%

Field	Reference	Council's key measures - Tier 1	Performance 2012/13	Welsh Average 2012/13	Ambition 2013/14
Culture and Business Arrangements of the Council	CR2	Percentage scrutiny recommendations accepted by the Cabinet Members	100%	-	70%
Culture and Business Arrangements of the Council	RhPe1	Percentage departments with measurements for 2013/14 with a focus on results	91%	-	91% - 100%
Culture and Business Arrangements of the Council	RhPe9	WAO's assesment of improvement arrangements, and the Council's true performance	Good	-	Good
Culture and Business Arrangements of the Council	Rhag8	Percentage of strategic plan results achieved	Not reported	-	66%

APPENDIX 2 - FINANCIAL CONTEXT FOR THE STRATEGIC PLAN 2013/14 – 2016/17

1. In accordance with its normal procedures, the Council has drawn up a financial strategy that corresponds to the period of the Strategic Plan, ensuring that we have the appropriate resources in order to realise what is included in the Strategic Plan.
2. There is no doubt that we are facing an extremely difficult situation for an extended period, but the Council is determined not to let that act as an excuse not to try to improve things for the people of Gwynedd during this period.
3. Over the four years in question, projections indicate that the grant we receive from the Welsh Government will increase 1.1% in 2013/14 and that it could rise by about 0.25% in 2014/15 followed by a significant decrease in 2015/16 and 2016/17.
4. Since about 80% of the Council's expenditure comes from this source, and since the Council must continue to face inflationary impacts and meet the increasing pressure that falls on our services, it is anticipated that we will therefore face a significant budget deficit over the next four years.
5. We have tried to predict what we might have to face as regards a potential deficit, and to consider how we will cope with such a situation.
6. The table below shows the size of the deficit planned for, and how we plan to achieve that :

Projection for budgetary planning- 2013/14 – 2016/17

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total
Budget deficit forecast	3.6	6.5	12.1	10.4	32.6
Council Tax	(1.7)	(1.8)	(2.3)	(2.0)	(7.8)
Savings already being realized	(3.6)	(4.6)	(0.5)	-	(8.7)
Further efficiencies	-	-		(6.4)	(6.4)
Demand Management	-	-		(5.0)	(5.0)
Balance	(1.7)	0.1		6.3	4.7

7. The figure for the projected budget deficit of £32.6m comes from the projections made of possible scenarios for the grant that we are likely to receive from the Welsh Government and the inflation that is forecast as well as the pressures that are likely to fall on services. Naturally, this calculation is for planning purposes, and the actual situation is bound to change as time goes on.
8. It can be seen that we consider we can raise about £7.8m by increasing Council Tax, and we already have £8.7m we can use from the savings that the Council has been planning for some time now.
9. It can be seen that the rest of the strategy is focused on discovering more efficiencies and to try to reduce our spending by managing the demands made upon us. Even then there is a possibility that we will be faced with having to implement cuts, but hopefully we can avoid that as much as possible.
10. To date the Council has been quite successful in avoiding having to cut services.
11. That does not mean of course that our residents will not see differences to services. Even trying to be more efficient sometimes means changing the way services are delivered, and we will have to face that if we hope to avoid cutting services altogether.
12. Clearly, the work of finding savings is going to be a huge task and this is recognised in the Strategic Plan, but the plan also defines our ambition for the residents of Gwynedd, and to achieve this we will need to invest in order to achieve that ambition.
13. The Council has already set aside a fund in its specific reserves to finance the Plan and the revenue budget also includes some elements that are there to implement the Plan. Moreover, the expenditure projections made for the future include an assumption that a permanent budget needs to be provided to fund some of the plans, but until they are more mature we do not know yet what will be the extent of that need.
14. Together therefore the financial strategy designed for the coming period does two things - namely to ensure that we have a balanced budget while at the same time ensuring that we have the resources necessary to fulfil the ambitions of the Council for its residents through this Strategic Plan.

APPENDIX 3 - NATIONAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Service	Reference	Indicator
Social Services	SCA/001	The rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons per 1,000 population aged 75 or over.
Social Services	SCA/002a	The rate of older people (aged 65 or over) supported in the community per 1,000 population aged 65 or over at 31 March
Social Services	SCA/002b	The rate of older people (aged 65 or over) whom the authority supports in care homes per 1,000 population aged 65 or over at 31 March
Social Services	SCA/019	The percentage of adult protection referrals completed where the risk has been managed
Social Services	SCC/002	The percentage of children looked after at 31 March who have experienced one or more changes of school, during a period or periods of being looked after, which were not due to transitional arrangements, in the 12 months to 31 March.
Social Services	SCC/004	The percentage of children looked after on 31 March who have had three or more placements during the year
Social Services	SCC/011b	The percentage of initial assessments that were completed during the year where there is evidence that the child has been seen alone by the Social Worker
Social Services	SCC/033a	The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact at the age of 19.
Social Services	SCC/033b	The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact, who are known to be in suitable, non-emergency accommodation at the age of 19.
Social Services	SCC/033c	The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact, who are known to be in engaged in education, training or employment at the age of 19.
Social Services	SCC/037	The average external qualifications point score for 16 year old looked after children in any local authority maintained learning setting.
Social Services	SCC/041a	The percentage of eligible, relevant and former relevant children that have pathway plans as required
Housing	HHA/013	The percentage of all potentially homeless households for whom homelessness was prevented for at least 6 months.
Housing	PSR/002	The average number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant.
Housing	PSR/004	The percentage of private sector dwellings that had been vacant for more than 6 months at 1 April that were returned to occupation during the year through direct action by the local authority.

Service	Reference	Indicator
Housing	PLA/006(b)	The number of additional affordable housing units provided during the year as a percentage of all additional housing units provided during the year.
Education	EDU/002i	The total number of pupils aged 15 on 31 August and on roll in any local authority maintained school at the time of the annual school census in January.
Education	EDU/002ii	The total number of pupils in local authority care aged 15 on 31 August and on roll in any local authority maintained school at the time of the annual school census in January.
Education	EDU/003	The percentage of pupils assessed at the end of Key Stage 2, in schools maintained by the local authority, achieving the Core Subject Indicator, as determined by Teacher Assessment
	EDU/006ii	The percentage of pupils assessed, in schools maintained by the local authority, receiving a Teacher Assessment in Welsh (first language) at the end of Key Stage 3
Education	EDU/011	The average point score for pupils aged 15 at the preceding 31 August in schools maintained by the local authority.
Education	EDU/015a	The total number of pupils for whom statements of special educational needs were issued for the first time during the year, including exceptions.
Education	EDU/015b	The total number of pupils for whom statements of special educational needs were issued for the first time during the year, excluding exceptions.
Education	EDU/017	The percentage of pupils aged 15 at the preceding 31 August, in schools maintained by the local authority who achieved the Level 2 threshold including a GCSE grade A*-C in English or Welsh first language and mathematics
Waste Management	WMT/004(b)	The percentage of municipal waste collected by local authorities sent to landfill.
Waste Management	WMT/009(b)	The percentage of municipal waste collected by local authorities and prepared for reuse and/or recycled, including source segregated biowastes that are composted or treated biologically in another way.
Waste Management	STS/006	The percentage of reported fly tipping incidents cleared within 5 working days.
Highways and Transport	THS/007	The percentage of adults aged 60 or over who hold a concessionary bus pass.
Culture and Sports	LCS/002(b)	The number of visits to local authority sport and leisure centres during the year per 1,000 population, where the visitor will be participating in physical activity.
Culture and Sports	LCL/001(b)	The number of visits to public libraries during the year per 1,000 population.

MEETING: **THE FULL COUNCIL**

DATE: **5 DECEMBER 2013**

TITLE: **COUNCIL TAX: DISCRETIONARY POWERS TO ALLOW DISCOUNTS**

PURPOSE: **Formal ratification for 2014/15 and thereafter of previous decisions not to allow any discounts for second homes and to disallow discount on empty properties.**

CABINET MEMBER: **Councillor Peredur Jenkins**

CONTACT OFFICER: **Dafydd L Edwards, Head of Finance**

1. LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Section 12 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended by Section 75 of The Local Government Act 2003 and The Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2004) provides Councils with the discretionary powers to grant discount or not to two classes of second homes (classes A and B, below) and to long term empty dwellings (class C). The discount can be 50%, a reduced percentage or no discount.
- 1.2 Whilst regulations now provide the Cabinet with powers to decide on the council tax base, **a decision by the full Council is still required in relation to discounts.** For technical reasons, annual confirmation has been sought again regarding the decision to disallow council tax discounts.

2. CURRENT POLICY AND INTENTION

- 2.1 The Council has resolved to allow NO discounts to second homes (classes A and B) every year since receiving discretionary powers for these classes in 1998, and it is recommended below that this should continue for 2014/15.
- 2.2 The Council has also resolved NOT to allow a 50% discount for class C (in respect of empty/unoccupied properties) since 2009/10, and it is recommended below that this should continue for 2014/15.
- 2.3 In order to avoid the need for an annual decision on the above, the full Council resolved on 21 January 2010 to confirm that this policy would continue beyond 2010/11, and thereafter until a relevant item is tabled on the full Council's agenda. However, consideration by a valuation tribunal of a case involving a property in another county raised doubt regarding the validity of a permanent resolution and policy on this matter, and the legal opinion is that it would avoid an element of risk to the Council if we secure an annual decision for this matter.
- 2.4 The financial strategy for 2014/15, and the Council's grant settlement from the Welsh Government, is based on continuation of the policy to allow NO discounts, and any change to that policy would need to be funded by the Council in 2014/15.

3. **“THE REGULATIONS” – COUNCIL TAX (PRESCRIBED CLASS OF DWELLINGS (WALES) REGULATIONS 1998 / THE COUNCIL TAX (PRESCRIBED CLASSES OF DWELLINGS) (WALES) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2004**

- 3.1 In the above Regulations, 'second homes' have been categorised into two classes, A and B, while class C refers to empty properties:
- ❑ **Class A** - Second homes which are unoccupied and furnished, with a restriction on occupancy for a period of at least 28 consecutive days in any 12 month period.
 - ❑ **Class B** - Second homes which are unoccupied and furnished.
 - ❑ **Class C** – empty and unfurnished properties, and have been such for a period of over 6 months.
- 3.2 The Regulations provide the Council with the discretion to charge full Council Tax or to allow a 25% or 50% discount to classes A and B.
- 3.3 Similarly, the Regulations provide the Council with discretion to continue to allow a 50% discount, to allow a lower percentage of discount, or no discount at all to class C.

4. **SECOND HOMES**

- 4.1 A number of elected members have suggested that we should charge more than 100% of the usual Council Tax payable on second homes, by means of a 'premium' rather than a discount.
- 4.2 In order to operate a 'premium', there would need to be a change in the national Regulations, and also a change in the primary legislation underpinning those Regulations (by the Westminster and Welsh Governments).
- 4.3 Acting jointly with other local authorities, the Council Leader, Cabinet Members and many officers continue to campaign to prompt such a development, with local authorities retaining the additional council tax income generated.
- 4.4 The Westminster Government has devolved powers allowing the Welsh Government to legislate on charging a Council Tax 'premium' on second homes, and the Welsh Government recently consulted on this matter.
- 4.5 A positive response was submitted on behalf of Gwynedd Council, supporting the introduction of a premium, whilst also stressing the need for measures to control / prevent the transfer of second homes to commercial holiday lets and the business rates regime.
- 4.6 The Council's response supporting the introduction of a Council Tax 'premium' on second homes can be seen in the November issue of 'Rhaeadr' on the following website, and preceding correspondence regarding transfer of second homes to business rates is in the July issue of 'Rhaeadr' on the same website –

25 Nov Article:

<http://gwyneddmembers.wordpress.com/2013/11/25/second-home-tax-the-latest/>

31 July Article:

<http://gwyneddmembers.wordpress.com/2013/07/31/tax-loopholes-councillors-concerns/>

- 4.7 We remain hopeful that discretionary powers to raise more than 100% will be allowed to local authorities in the future, but such powers will not be in place for 2014/15.

5. EMPTY PROPERTY

- 5.1 Gwynedd Council's Empty Property Strategy was adopted in February 2009. The Council has also recognised the importance of dealing with empty properties within its Strategic Plan (bringing empty properties back into use). The Empty Property Strategy's mission statement is that: *"Gwynedd Council will endeavour to bring empty properties back into use. Our aims are to contribute to the well-being of the neighbourhood, increase the supply of housing, reduce homelessness or the potential for homelessness, and at the same time, reduce the pressure on the Housing Waiting List"*.
- 5.2 Since April 2009, long term empty dwellings have been charged 100% council tax, following either an exempt period of 6 months, or an extended 12 month period of exemption if undergoing major renovation. Any discount would provide an unfortunate incentive for owners to keep dwellings empty. The Empty Property Strategy includes the Council exercising its discretion to charge 100% council tax on long term empty dwellings, as an incentive for these dwellings to be reoccupied. It is recommended that the full Council continues with the resolution not to allow a discount on empty property in 2014/15.
- 5.3 In October 2012, there was a Welsh Government consultation regarding empty property taxation and powers to raise more than 100% of Council Tax on long-term empty properties. On the 18 November 2013 the Housing (Wales) Bill 2013 was issued.
- 5.4 The Housing (Wales) Bill 2013 includes the discretionary provision for local authorities to charge a standard 150% tax on properties which have been empty for 12 months or more. The Bill will now continue its legislative passage through the Assembly, but it is not envisaged that it will be effective for 2014/15.

6. RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 It is prudent to seek an annual decision by the full Council on these matters.
- 6.2 Therefore, **the Council is asked to formally resolve** again for 2014/15 **that Gwynedd Council allows NO discount** under Section 12 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 **to the two classes of second homes** (classes A and B) defined in the Council Tax (Prescribed Class of Dwellings) (Wales) Regulations 1998.
- 6.3 Further, **the Council is asked to formally decide** again for 2014/15 **to allow NO discount in respect of empty properties** (class C).

MEETING:	Full Council
DATE:	5 December 2013
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Brian Jones
TITLE:	COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2014/15
OBJECTIVE:	Adopting a Local Scheme for providing assistance towards paying Council Tax from April 2014 onwards.
AUTHOR:	Dafydd L Edwards, Head of Finance

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present arrangements for the implementation of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and to approve it for 2014/15.
- 1.2 On 24 January 2013, the full Council adopted the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2013/14 in accordance with the Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2012. The Welsh Government put a sunset clause in those Regulations which means that they become invalid after 31/03/2014.
- 1.3 A Plenary meeting of the National Assembly for Wales on 26 November 2013 approved the 'Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013' and the 'Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme) (Wales) Regulations 2013', as submitted by Lesley Griffiths (the Minister for Local Government) on behalf of the Welsh Government. I am advised that the regulations are substantially the same as the previous year's, with some minor administrative improvements. Here is a link to a copy of the Regulation as approved by the National Assembly for Wales:

Prescribed Requirements Regulations: <http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-business-fourth-assembly-laid-docs.htm?act=dis&id=251458&ds=11/2013>

Default Scheme Regulations: <http://www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-business-fourth-assembly-laid-docs.htm?act=dis&id=251460&ds=11/2013>

- 1.4 Failure to adopt a 'local' scheme by 31 January 2014 will result in the Default Scheme being imposed on the Council.
- 1.5 The Welsh Government's regulations for 2014/15 do not contain any significant changes from the claimants' perspective. Qualifying taxpayers may continue to receive a reduction up to 100% of their Council Tax bill (where in receipt of certain benefits). Hence, the recommendations below are in accordance with Gwynedd Council's relevant resolution in January 2013, with detailed explanations and reasons behind the recommendations following in the body of this report.

2. Recommendations

The full Council is asked –

- 2.1 To note the 'Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013' for 2014/15.**
- 2.2 Subject to the result of the current consultation, to adopt the provisions within the Regulations above in respect of its Scheme for the financial year 2014/15 as the Council's local scheme from 01/04/2014, with the following conditions regarding the discretionary elements being consistent with arrangements in 2013/14.**
- 2.3 To apply a 100% disregard for war disablement pensions, war widows' pensions and war widowers' pensions, for both pensioners and working age claimants.**
- 2.4 Not to increase the extended reduction periods for pensioners and working age claimants from the standard 4 weeks in the Prescribed Scheme.**
- 2.5 Not to increase the backdate period for pensioners and working age claimants from the standard 3 months contained within the Prescribed Scheme.**
- 2.6 Where appropriate, that the Council delegates powers for the Head of Finance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Poverty Prevention, to make minor amendments to the scheme following the consultation, on condition that it will not change the substance of the scheme.**

3. Background Information

- 3.1 It was reported to the full Council on 24 January 2013 that the Welfare Reform Act 2013 included provisions to abolish Council Tax Benefit on 31 March 2013. From 1 April 2013, the responsibility for arranging support towards paying Council Tax and the associated funding transferred from the DWP to local authorities in England, and to the Scottish Government and the Welsh Government.**
- 3.2 The original regulations for the 2013/14 scheme limited support to 90% of the tax, but in January 2013, the Welsh Government issued regulations amending the scheme allowing support up to 100% for claimants and financing the majority of the relevant cost.**
- 3.3 A report to the full Council on 24 January 2013 referred to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme Regulations 2012 and the amending regulations 2013. Those regulations were for implementation during the 2013/14 financial year only and the full Council must resolve to adopt a new scheme for 2014/15 in accordance with new regulations approved by the Welsh Government on 26 November 2013.**

- 3.4 The regulations for 2014/15 again include provision for support up to 100% of council tax. As noted when presenting this issue in January, the regulations control the implementation of reduction schemes across the whole of Wales and are designed to ensure that each local authority consistently provides support for Welsh taxpayers.
- 3.5 Work is ongoing to draw up a different scheme and regulations for 2015/16 and beyond. From April 2015, it may not be possible to provide 100% support towards the tax, as it is now. More information will be provided as discussions develop.

4. 2014/15 Reduction Scheme

- 4.1 I gather that a Plenary meeting of the National Assembly for Wales on 26 November 2013 approved the 'Council Tax Reduction Schemes and Prescribed Requirements (Wales) Regulations 2013' and the 'Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Default Scheme) (Wales) Regulations 2013', as submitted by Lesley Griffiths (the Minister for Local Government) on behalf of the Welsh Government. I gather that these are largely the same as last year's regulations and that they denote the main aspects of the scheme to be adopted by all Welsh councils.
- 4.2 There is limited discretion under the Prescribed Scheme for councils to consider the following 3 specific discretionary elements. These discretionary elements are more generous than the national scheme.
- 4.3 To increase the disregard for war disablement pensions, war widows' pensions and war widowers' pensions, for both pensioners and working age.

Presently, regulations provide that the first £10 of a weekly war disablement pension, war widows' pension and war widowers' pension are disregarded. However, local authorities have discretion to disregard up to 100% of the actual amount above the first £10. Since 1 April 1996 Gwynedd Council, as have the majority of other Welsh Authorities, resolved to disregard 100% of the war pensions above the £10. It is estimated in 2013/14 that this disregard of war pensions will cost the Authority £30,000 in Council Tax reductions. As this is the position in 2013/14, this sum has already been included within the base budget and in the 2014/15 Financial Strategy.

Recommendation 2.3 in this report recommends continuing to allow this local discretion in Gwynedd.

- 4.4 To increase the standard extended payment period of 4 weeks given to people after they return to work, when they have been in receipt of a relevant qualifying benefit for at least 26 weeks.

There is no limit on the maximum period they may be extended to, but to extend this period would have financial implications. The estimated expenditure in respect of the standard 4 week extended payments is £20,000.

Recommendation 2.4 in this report recommends that the standard four week extended payment period contained within the Prescribed Scheme remains unaltered.

- 4.5 To increase backdates for late applications beyond the standard three months. There is no limit on the maximum period they may be extended to. The current cost of granting backdated claims is estimated at £28,000.

The current Council Tax Reduction Scheme only allows backdating for a maximum period of 3 months. Extending this period would increase the cost of the Scheme.

Recommendation 2.5 in this report recommends that there should be no increase in the backdate period from the standard 3 months contained within the Prescribed Scheme.

- 4.6 The recommendations above for 2014/15 are in line with current arrangements in 2013/14. Should the Council decide to allow more generous elements in the local scheme (in 4.4 and 4.5 above) then that would increase the cost of the scheme.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 I am advised, as per last year, that the Council should consult with interested parties, including the public and precepting authorities regarding the new regulations and scheme for 2014/15. This consultation is already live on the Council's website at: www.gwynedd.gov.uk/counciltaxreduction
- 5.2 Although the scheme is largely the same as last year's and consequently a flood of responses is not anticipated, adoption of the scheme will of course be subject to the results of the current consultation, which is open from 29/11/2013 until 10/01/2014.
- 5.3 There was a particularly thorough and inclusive consultation exercise in December 2012 / January 2013 for the 2013/14 scheme.
- 5.4 Unlike the situation a year ago, there is no reason or intention now to write consultation letters to all claimants. The current exercise is limited to provision of information and a questionnaire on the Council's website.
- 5.5 As there is no change in entitlement from the planned scheme for 2014/15 from claimants' perspective, there is no reason to think that there will be a different response to the lighter consultation which is ongoing this year.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 Other than funding at Council level, the scheme proposed for 2014/15 does not contain any significant changes from the scheme which is currently operational, hence Gwynedd Council did not conduct a local Equalities Impact Assessment Study this year (we did last year when changes were planned).
- 6.2 The Welsh Government has undertaken a detailed 'regulatory' impact assessment, which includes equality impact assessment, but I understand that the findings reported were in line with their expectations.

7. Resources

- 7.1 The local government 2014/15 grant 'settlement' from the Welsh Government states that the sum provided therein for Council Tax Reductions is at the same level as last year.
- 7.2 The Welsh Government's estimate of the whole cost of the scheme (at this time last year) was £244m. The Welsh Government's original intention was to finance 90% of the scheme, hence £222m was put into local government's 2013/14 grant 'settlement'. Later, a further £22m was paid via a specific grant, after the late change of mind to finance 100% in 2013/14.
- 7.3 For 2014/15 the Government say that the full £244m is "in the settlement", but this appears to be unclear. The £222m is still there, of course, but there is no trail to evidence the addition of the other £22m (which was paid via specific grant this year).
- 7.4 As the 2013/14 'settlement' didn't include all of the £244m (only £222m), and as the 2014/15 'settlement' included the commitment for local government to meet the full cost of the Council Tax Reduction scheme (which exceeds £244m), the true reduction in Welsh revenue support grant between the two years (nationally) is closer to 4% than the figure of 3.5% which the Government publicly acknowledge.
- 7.5 The notional cost of Council Tax Reductions in Gwynedd in 2014/15 (according to notional allocation of the total SSA between Services in the conditional settlement's tables) is £8.961m (a sum which corresponds with the national £244m). As well as Gwynedd's share of the £22m (£896k), the Council must meet the cost of growth in caseload, and due to the state of the economy this is estimated to be an additional £350k which is not financed by the Welsh Government in 2013/14 and in 2014/15. Further, the Welsh Government will not finance inflation (the cost of the support will increase in proportion with the increase in Council Tax).
- 7.6 However, as all available funding is now in the 'settlement', the Council must finance the whole cost of Council Tax Reductions in 2014/15, including the 10%, the caseload growth and inflation. That has already been considered appropriately and factored into the Financial Strategy which identifies the budgetary gap for 2014/15 (see the related item on the Council's agenda).

8. Conclusion

Although a consultation exercise is being undertaken and this adoption report is submitted for approval, the Council must follow the regulations, with very limited options for change being restricted to the discretionary elements detailed above.

MEETING	Full Council
DATE	3 December 2013
TOPIC	Joint Local Development Plan – Revised timetable
PURPOSE	To inform the County Council about the Delivery Agreement for preparing the Joint Local Development Plan for Anglesey and Gwynedd, and to ask it to adopt it so that it can be presented to the Welsh Government for its approval.
RECOMMENDATION	That the Council approves the revised timetable to be included in the Delivery Agreement. That the revised Delivery Agreement is presented to the Welsh Government for its support.
AUTHOR	Aled Davies, Head of Regulatory Department
CABINET MEMBER	Cllr. John Wyn Williams

1 Background

- 1.1 The Council, working with the Isle of Anglesey County Council, is preparing the Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan (Joint LDP) (excluding the Snowdonia National Park).
 - 1.2 A Delivery Agreement (DA) sets out the preparation process for the Joint LDP including a delivery timetable and proposals for community involvement in the plan making process. On the 13 September and 20 October 2011, the Isle of Anglesey County Council and Gwynedd Council, respectively, approved the DA which was subsequently submitted to and supported by the Welsh Government. The approved DA was published in November 2011 and can be viewed on:
- <http://www.gwynedd.gov.uk/upload/public/attachments/1178/DeliveryAgreementApproved.pdf>
- 1.3 The current DA Agreement foresaw that the two Councils would be in a position to approve the Deposit Plan for statutory public consultation between September and October 2013. The Councils must monitor the way they adhere to the DA, and make changes if necessary.
 - 1.4 A great deal of work has been done since we started on the journey but earlier on this year it was clear that a little more time is needed to prepare a full version of the Joint LDP, i.e. the Deposit Plan, that is 'sound'.
 - 1.5 There are many reasons why more time is needed to prepare the Deposit Plan. The Joint Planning Policy Committee when it met in June 2013 agreed that there is an unquestionable need to formally revise the DA in order to ensure that the Plan preparation process conforms to all the tests of soundness. The report presented to the Joint Planning Policy Committee on the 21 June 2013 discusses those risks. A copy of the report can be viewed at:

http://www.gwynedd.gov.uk/gwy_pwyllgorau.asp?cat=8038&doc=29824&Language=1

2 Public consultation

- 2.1 A public notice about the revised timetable was published in the local newspapers and emails and letters were sent to everyone of the Joint LDP database to inform them of the proposed revised timetable. The database includes all specific and general consultation bodies as well as individuals, businesses and organizations that have shown an interest in the Plan. The public consultation provided an opportunity to comment on the proposed revised timetable.

- 2.2 Only six representations were received during the six weeks public consultation period. Five of them either didn't have any specific comment to make or supported the Councils' decision to ensure that sufficient time is allowed to prepare the Deposit Plan.
- 2.3 The sixth thought that the original timetable was far too long and was very disappointed that the programme has slipped. It was suggested that more resources should be allocated and that every effort should be made to 'catch up'.

3 Revised timetable

- 3.1 Table 1 below, which has been taken from section 3.3.1 of the 2011 DA, shows the original timetable and the revised timetable, which was subject to public consultation until 9th September 2013. The timetable changes are highlighted in bold in the last column of the table.

Table 1 Original and revised timetable for preparing the Joint LDP

Stage in the preparation process		Timetable	Revised timetable
1.	Preparation and publication of the final Delivery Agreement (<i>Regulation 5 - 10</i>)	January to November 2011	January to November 2011
2.	Review and develop the evidence base	July 2010 - July 2012	July 2010 - October 2012
3.	Participation Pre-deposit – prepare the pre-deposit documents that will outline the key objectives and preferred strategy (<i>Regulation 14</i>). This will not be a full draft of the Joint LDP	January 2011- July 2012	January 2011 - October 2012
4.	Pre-Deposit Consultation - 6 week period (<i>Regulation 15</i>). Formal consultation on the pre-deposit documents and the sustainability appraisal report	September 2012 - October 2012	May - June 2013

5.	Participation - further develop the evidence base and prepare the Deposit Joint LDP (full draft plan) which is based on the evidence base, including the response to the pre-deposit documents	November 2012 - September 2013	July 2013 - March 2014
6.	Placing the Joint LDP and associated documents on deposit - 6 week consultation period (<i>Regulation 17</i>)	October 2013 - November 2013	May - June 2014
Indicative timetable			
7.	Consideration of comments about the Deposit Joint LDP (<i>Regulations 18 & 19</i>)	December 2013 - June 2014	July 2014 - January 2015
8.	Publish comments on alternative sites, consulting upon them - a period of 6 weeks (<i>Regulations 20 & 21</i>)	January 2014 - February 2014	September - October 2014
9.	Submitting the Joint LDP to the Welsh Government for Examination (<i>Regulation 22</i>)	November 2014	February 2015
10.	Independent Public Examination (<i>Regulation 23</i>)	April 2015	June 2015
11.	Publication of the Inspector's Report (<i>Regulation 24</i>)	January 2016	March 2016
12.	Adoption of the Joint LDP (<i>Regulation 25</i>)	April 2016	May 2016
13.	Monitoring and Reviewing	Annual report	Annual report

3.2 Although the production of the Deposit Plan will take about 6 months more than initially anticipated, it is considered that the overall timetable to reach adoption may only slip by a month (see row 12 of Table 1 above).

4 Isle of Anglesey County Council's decision

- 4.1 A report about the revised timetable was presented to the Isle of Anglesey County Council on the 10th October 2013. It decided to approve the revised timetable.

5 Recommendation

- 5.1 That the Council approves the revised timetable to be included in the Delivery Agreement.

That the revised Delivery Agreement is presented to the Welsh Government for its support.

Background papers:
Town and Country Planning Regulations (Local Development Plan) (Wales) 2005; Local Development Plan Handbook (2006)

Meeting	THE COUNCIL
Date	5/12/13
Subject	Annual Report of the Gwynedd Corporate Parenting Panel
Purpose of the Report	To present the report to the Council for discussion
Author	Siân Gwenllian, Deputy Leader of the Council.

Introduction

The Council has a clear statutory responsibility as a “corporate parent” for children in care and there is a clear expectation on the Council to fulfil that role “as if they were my child”.

It is important to remember that the parenting responsibility rests on the whole Council but the Corporate Parenting Panel does have a specific role to take an overview of the welfare and interests of these children.

It is good practice to produce an annual report describing the support given in terms of the voice of children and young people, the service provision, placements and a number of other matters that can be seen in the attached report. In addition to the report on what has been achieved, a key element in the papers is the work programme noting the issues that are to be addressed over the coming months.

The report and the appendix were approved by the Cabinet on the 8th of October, 2013.

I should also note that I shall be appearing before the Services Scrutiny Committee on 28th November, 2013 where I will be scrutinised on the work in this area. If the Council wishes, I can report verbally on the result of that scrutiny.

Reasons for the Recommendation

The corporate support of the Cabinet is an important part of the Council’s commitment to the statutory responsibility that it shoulders. This responsibility is not a matter for a single department and the Cabinet is keen to support that.

Relevant Considerations

In considering what is in the work programme, it is proper to consider the capacity implications arising. The work programme has been discussed and agreed internally prior to its submission to the Cabinet and the necessary resources to action the work programme are in place.

Recommendation

I recommend that the Council approves the annual report and the attached work programme.

**REPORT TO CABINET
8 OCTOBER, 2013**

Cabinet Member: Deputy Leader of the Council, Sian Gwenllian

Subject: Annual Report of the Corporate Parenting Panel

Contact Officer: Rhoslyn Prys

The decision sought

To approve the content of the Annual Report and the Work Programme.

Views of the local member

Not a local issue

Introduction

The Council has a clear statutory responsibility as a “corporate parent” for children in care and there is a clear expectation on the Council to fulfil that role “as if they were my child”.

It is important to remember that the parenting responsibility rests on the whole Council but the Corporate Parenting Panel does have a specific role to take an overview of the welfare and interests of these children.

It is necessary to produce an annual report describing the support given in terms of the voice of children and young people, the service provision, placements and a number of other matters that can be seen in the attached report.

In addition to the report on what has been achieved, a key element in the papers is the work programme noting the issues that are to be addressed over the coming months.

Reasons for the Recommendation

The corporate support of the Cabinet is an important part of the Council's commitment to the statutory responsibility that it shoulders. This responsibility is not a matter for a single department and the Cabinet is invited to show that support.

Relevant Considerations

In considering what is in the work programme, it is proper to consider the capacity implications arising. The work programme has been discussed and agreed internally prior to its submission to the Cabinet and the necessary resources to action the work programme are in place.

Recommendation

I recommend that the Cabinet approves the annual report and the attached work programme.

Statutory Officers' Observations

The Chief Executive

"It is vital that the Council shoulders its corporate parenting responsibility. Cabinet approval of the report is an important element in that but it is not the whole picture. There is now a clear responsibility to move ahead to action the Work Programme."

The Monitoring Officer

"The Corporate Parenting Panel is a panel that supports the Cabinet in undertaking the Council's functions as a parent to children in care and it is quite appropriate therefore that the Cabinet considers and receives a report annually. The Cabinet will wish to satisfy itself that the Panel has addressed the right issues in the report and the work programme."

The Head of Finance

As the "*considerations*" paragraph before the recommendation in this report notes that the "*necessary resources to action the work programme are in place*", I have nothing to add in relation to financial propriety.

Annual Report of the Gwynedd Corporate Parenting Panel

2012-13

Introduction

This report is in four sections, appertaining to the role and responsibilities of the Council, contributions from Council departments, contributions from partners and then a discussion of what has been achieved and steps needing to be taken for the future.

1.0 The Council's Role and Responsibilities

The Corporate Parenting Panel was established in Gwynedd, as in every other county in Wales, as a body to maintain an overview of the wellbeing and interests of children in care. There is an expectation from the Welsh Government that staff members in every county should have a positive attitude towards the role of corporate parent. In 2009, the Welsh Government, jointly with the Local Government Association, released a document entitled 'If this were my child...' which highlights the role and responsibilities of members as corporate parents.

The role of corporate parent has the expectation the parent will strive to ensure that children in care receive appropriate care, that the accommodation they live in is of a good standard and that they receive good health care and progress successfully in education. This it to happen without the parent ever meeting the child in care. For the children themselves, it's important they feel they are supported by the Council and the Council's partners during a very challenging period of their lives.

In order to support this role, the Council has established a Corporate Parenting Panel that includes relevant members of the Cabinet, Young People's Champion and a member selected by the Scrutiny Committees. The Panel also includes the relevant chief officers in the field (see below). Through this Panel the Council, namely all the elected members, delegate their responsibility in the field to the Lead Member for Children and Young People. This Panel has the right to ask for matters causing concern to them to be scrutinized on their behalf.

1.2 Letter from the Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services, Gwenda Thomas, A.M.

The Panel received a letter from the Minister, setting out the challenging expectations on local authorities and members to ensure that children in public care achieve the same results as every good parent would wish for their own children. It notes clearly that one of the main responsibilities of Elected Members is to ensure that children in their care are able to thrive, and notes a wide range of information points that members need to be satisfied on. This gives the Panel clear messages as it develops a new strategy for the future.

1.3 Members' Training

The training for Council members was held on 28 November 2012. It was an opportunity for members to learn about their role and consider different scenarios regarding the needs of children in care within the county. There were 24 members present. It is intended to hold another session in the new year.

1.4 Establishing the Cabinet

Following changes to the council's management arrangements and the adoption of a Cabinet model, the Panel's arrangements were adapted so that it reported to the Cabinet and was chaired by the Lead Member for Children and Young People.

A fixed membership was set for the Panel, with the following Cabinet Members as Panel members:

- Council Leader
- Lead Member for Children and Young People and Education Portfolio Leader
- Cabinet Member – Deprivation
- Cabinet Member – Care
- Member nominated by the Scrutiny Committee
- Champion for Children and Young People's Voice

and the following officers:

- Chief Executive
- Lead Director Children and Young People/Corporate Director
- Statutory Director/Head of Social Services, Housing and Leisure
- Head of Education
- Senior Manager Children's Services
- Service Manager – Care Resources

- Representative from the Health Board

1.5 The Panel's Strategy for 2013-17

The Panel has identified the need to act more strategically in future. Because of this, a developmental programme has been drawn up to assist the Panel in ensuring its future direction, ensuring that it hears the voice of children in care and responds to the challenge of safeguarding standards for services provided by Council departments and external partners. The programme will include a clear input from children and young people who are and were able to offer feedback and other suggestions based on their experiences. It is intended to have a strategy in place by the end of April 2014.

2.0 The Voice of Children in Care

2.1 'Have your say' sessions

The Children and Families Service holds regular 'Have your say' meetings with a group of children in care. The chair of the Panel and the Children's Champion are invited to join the meeting. Recently, the group has been working on producing information documents for children in care, on matters that have come up through that work, including discussion about:

My family and friends – very important people, maintaining contact is important but it can be difficult for some.

People in my life – a substantial number of people are involved in the life of the young person in care - the social worker, foster carer or residential unit staff, teachers, nurses and advocates. These are all important and offer support of different kinds.

Placements – it would be good to have more information about their placement locations and carers before commencing on a placement, where it is, what kind of house and so on.

Education – education can be a challenge because some have to change schools and have lost out on their education.

Social Worker – ideally one who listens and is able to answer complex questions about relationships with family, care needs within the accommodation and education, and ensure that things happen.

The group is now working diligently on the information pack and hopes to be able to release it in the new year.

2.2 Personal Experiences

At one meeting, the group received an honest and challenging presentation from a young person who was a service user, on her experiences in care, and feedback from the Customer Care Officer of Social Services on the work of gleaning the views of young people in care. The main matters were involved with the nature of the support that young people in care felt they were receiving from Council departments and the partners. Young people in care were generally appreciative of the support from their personal social worker, but felt there was less support for them from individuals in other departments. It was also felt that having more information about their current situation would be very useful to them in understanding what was happening to them.

2.3 Young people who have left care

Two young people who had used this Service in the past gave a presentation. Their comments were as follows:

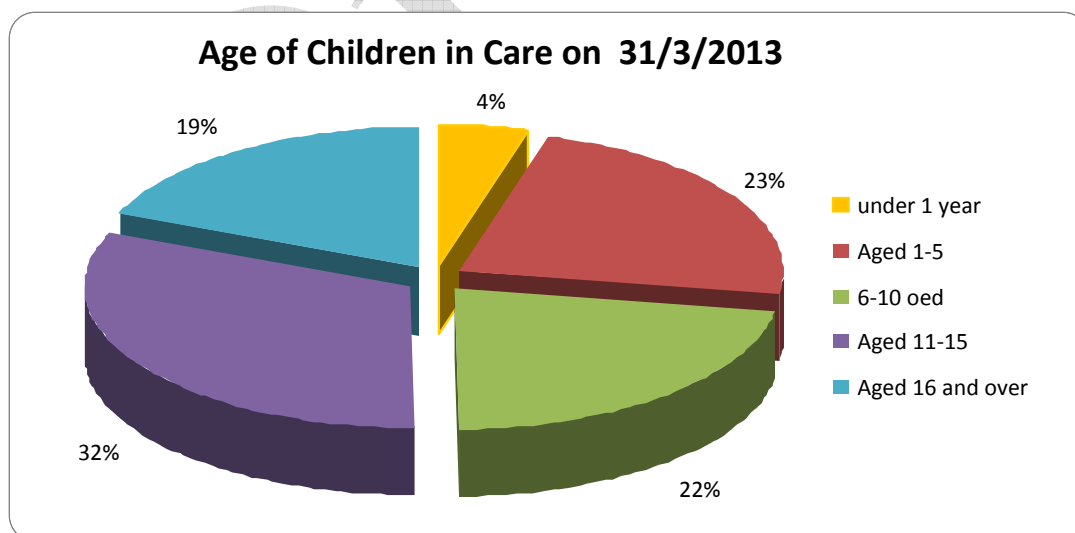
- The quality of foster placements was all-important and it was necessary to ensure the best care, particularly during the period between 14 and 16 years old.
- It was difficult to contact the service out of office hours.
- Their educational experiences had been difficult because they did not feel they had received enough support at school, as children in care, to reach their potential.
- They had received very good support from the Aftercare Team of the Children and Families Service.

2.0 Support from the Council

2.1 Children and Families Service, Social Services Department

Recent data is shown below on the number of children in care in Gwynedd

Children in care	2012/13	2011/12
Number of children in care at the end of the year	203	195
Number of children coming into care during the year	56 (B.33/ M.23)	54
Number of children leaving care during the year	49	36
Number of children adopted during the year	9	3



At the end of March 2013 there were 203 children in the Council's care. This is an increase of 4% from the number in care at the end of March 2012 (195). Nine children were adopted during the year, taking on average 24 months between the placement order and the adoption date, and therefore going out of the Council's care.

Reasons for receiving a service

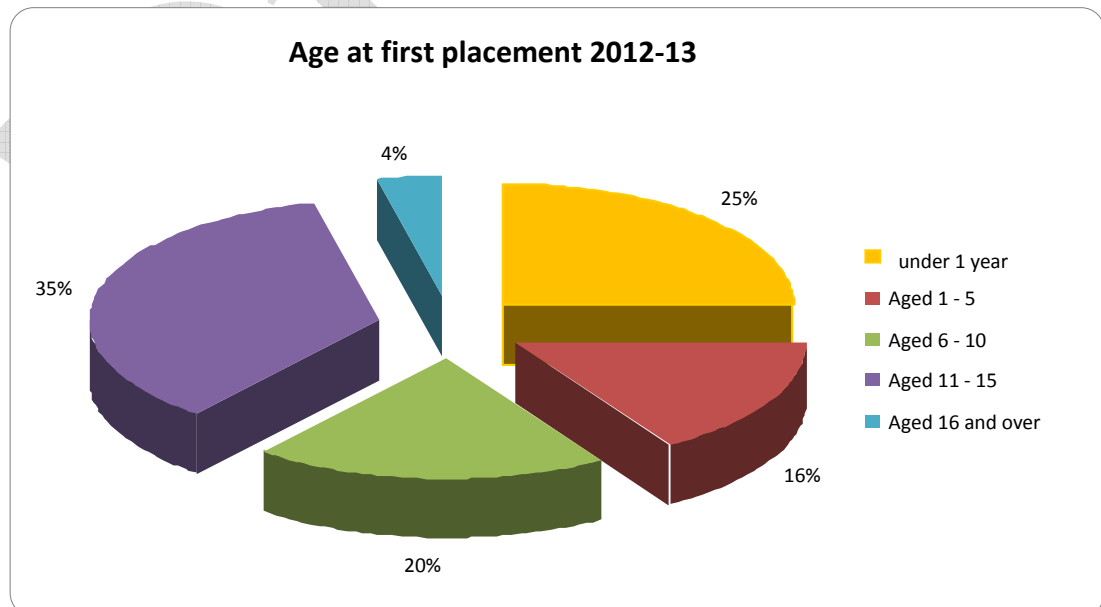
There was a turnover of 249 children in the Council's care between April 2012 and March 2013. The 'Category of Need Codes' used by the Welsh Government, shown below, refer to the reason the child is in need and receiving a service.

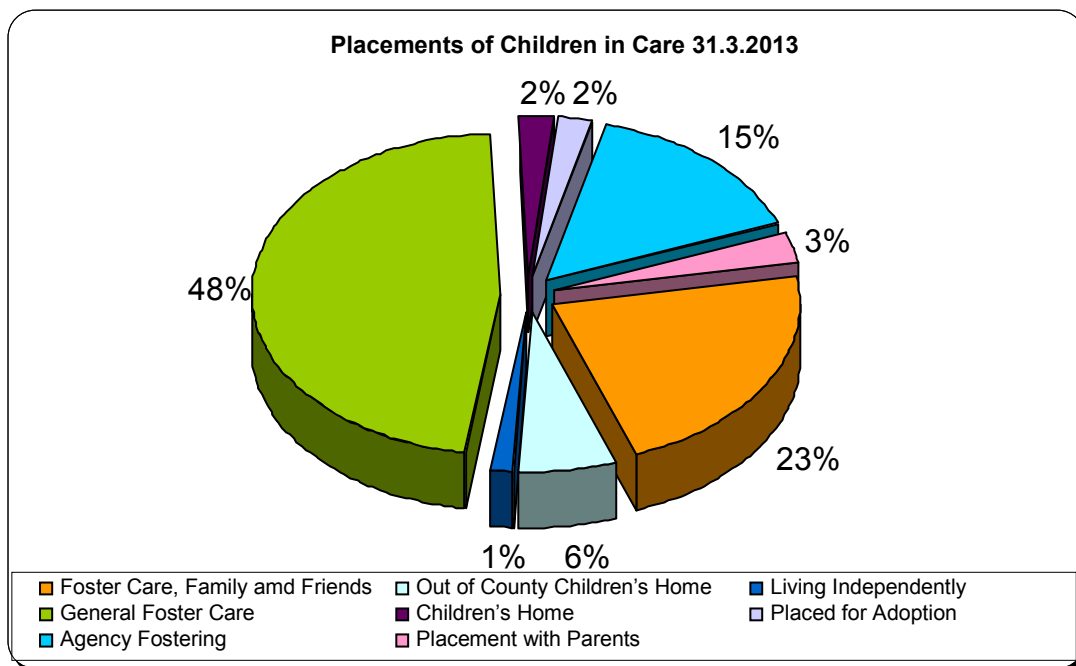
<u>Category of Need</u>	<u>Number of children</u>
N1 Abuse or neglect	150
N2 Child's illness or disability	5
N3 Parental illness or disability	15
N4 Family in acute stress	13
N5 Family dysfunction	49
N6 Socially unacceptable behaviour	10
N8 Absent parenting	6
N9 Disruption of adoption	1

It will be seen that abuse or neglect are by far the main reasons for receiving children and young people into care.

Placements for Children in care

At the end of 2012/13, 85% of the children in care were in foster placements. There were 172 children placed with foster carers, with 26% of the carers being family or friends. At the end of the year, there were 5 children in adoption placements.





Stability of Placements

Of the 203 children in care on 31 March 2013, 9 had three or more placements during the year. This reflects the efforts of the Service to ensure stable placements for children in care, accepting that at times children have to be moved to placements e.g. for them to be adopted, which brings better results for them. Gwynedd is amongst the counties with the best results in this field.

Geographical Locations

At the end of the year, 72% of children in care were located in Gwynedd, and the rest out of county. Of the 28% there were 8% of children out of county placed in Anglesey.

Response to the increase in number of children coming into care

The Service has taken steps to respond to the recent increase in numbers of children coming into care. In December 2012, there were 211 children in care but by the time of the Panel in April 2013 the number had fallen to 202. There were 57 new placements received during the year, with 13 received into care in November. This activity has brought about considerable pressure on the Service, particularly the Fostering Service, which organizes placements within the Service.

The Service is part of a partnership with the Health Board and other counties in North Wales trying to develop solutions to the demand for placements for children with inappropriate sexual behaviour. This kind of case is increasing,

and it is difficult to find suitable placements for them. The work is due to end at the end of March 2013.

The Children's Service has been collaborating with a 'Start to Finish' review led by the Head of Economy and Community to assess the best methods of reducing expenditure within the service, particularly on out of county placements. The current plans look at ways of strengthening the preventative provision that would lead to a reduction in demand for expensive placements.

The Service has also worked in partnership with North Wales Housing Association with the intention of opening accommodation for two post-16 young people in Bangor. The provision offers support for those living there, and has been open since September 2013.

Work and Training Scheme for Young People

The scheme has been established between Coleg Menai, Gwynedd Council and Careers Wales, to help young people in care or about to leave care. There are 11 young people in the initial group, and an officer from Careers Wales is supporting them in the enterprise.

The Service has arranged work placements for 4 individuals in departments across the Council, including one within Children's Services itself. The hope is to expand the experience within the council of providing placements for children in care, and as a result get more offers of placements.

2.2 The Education Department

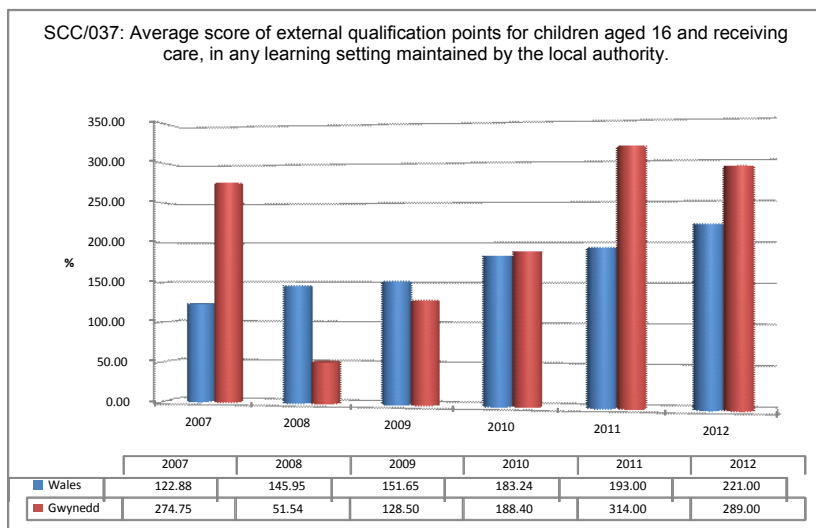
The 17 children (76% of the total) who were sitting for qualifications were attending schools in the County, and the remainder attended schools in Denbighshire, Anglesey, Conwy and Ceredigion.

Results - educational points score

The qualifications gained by these children include GCSE, BTEC, ESKW, ONAT, NVQ and others. Every qualification has an equivalent score calculated by Cynnal. There were 17 children in care who qualified for this indicator in 2012/13 (having been in care for over 12 months on 31/8/2012 and sitting GCSE exams in Summer 2012).

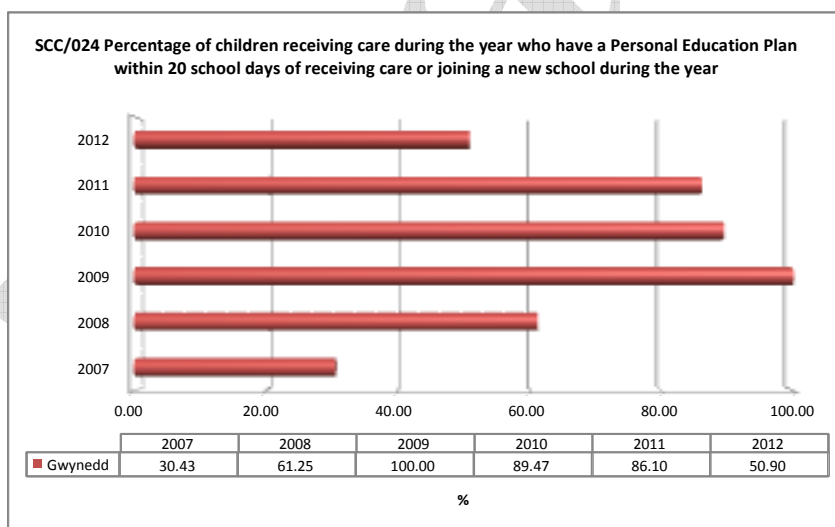
The results reflect the wide range of abilities and varied qualifications of a limited number of children in care in this age range – 17 between the ages of 15 and 16 at the time.

The average point score of children in care is 289. This compares with the average general point score for all children in Gwynedd of 525. Gwynedd had the highest general point score (EDU/011) of all the Welsh counties in 2013. The point score for children in care (SCC/0) is fifth amongst Welsh counties. This is a substantial gap, even though comparison is difficult because the numbers in care are small. The panel will be looking at this field in the future.



Additional children in care grant money will be targeted towards individuals this year (£450 per head) to improve outcomes for children in care. This is in addition to the bursary of £400 offered by the department for children in care during key stage 4. The money has been used to provide laptops and iPads to promote attainment by children in care.

Performance Report for Personal Education Plans



Although the reports on school performance have been very encouraging during the first part of the year, a substantial reduction was seen by the third quarter (from 100% to 62%). Schools are required to prepare a Personal Education Plan for each child in care when the child enters the school, and to do so within 20 days (4 weeks) of the child arriving. The Education Department has been working with the Authority's schools to ensure conformity, and this will continue into the future.

The system will highlight schools that have not conformed to this requirement within the first 15 days of the 20 day period. The Children in Care Officer will intervene directly following this.

Special Education Centre of Excellence

The panel welcomed the plans to establish the centre of excellence. The Head of Education gave an outline of the steps taken to achieve the objective of establishing a centre of excellence for the county. The Education Department and Children's Services are collaborating on this initiative. The new centre will offer respite care for between 5 and 10 children with disabilities and long term care for them, as needed. This will be a way of supporting families who have children with disabilities, in order to reduce the pressure on them and reduce the demand to bring children with disabilities into care. At present (September 2013) the Service has only one placement for children with disabilities.

A site has been identified and a comprehensive business plan for the provision presented to the Welsh Government. It is hoped the Centre will open in April 2016.

3.0 Healthcare for Children in Care

The panel is still concerned about the deficiencies in healthcare provision for children in care. The Senior Manager Children's Services gave a comprehensive presentation on the steps taken to try to persuade officers in the health service the service was insufficient. According to the Service, the Health Board was providing one third of the service to Gwynedd that it was to other counties, meaning there was a substantial reduction in healthcare for children in care compared to what was provided before. This has also meant a reduction in the health performance indicators for the Service at the end of the year. The matter was raised in different forums by members and officers, but the deficit continued for a substantial part of the year.

Following input by the Service, officers of the Health Board reviewed their plans, with the intention of maintaining a more comprehensive service from the beginning of July 2013. This field will need to be reviewed regularly in the future.

Summing up

As noted earlier, the Corporate Parenting Panel has identified the need to be more strategic in future. The appended document gives an outline of the process and the essential points. In order to move closer to the best practice, the Panel, departments of the Council and partners will need to ensure that children in care get appropriate healthcare that compares well with their peers across Wales. It will also be necessary to see how support can be increased for children in care, so that the educational point score moves closer to the average general point score for the county. It will be necessary to increase work experience opportunities within departments of the Council and partners, and maybe temporary jobs that are available over the summer.

English Counties have adopted a public declaration promising support to their children in care, and are working with representatives of children in care who are on their 'council' of children in care. They also have a training programme for all their staff, to inform them of their responsibilities towards children in care.

By developing a comprehensive strategy, the Panel will be in a situation to have an effectively influence for the benefit of children in care.

Draft

WORK PROGRAMME OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL 2013-2014

Field	Matter	Action	Lead Responsibilities	When	Result
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1.0 Corporate and Departmental Policies and Procedures

1.1	Corporate Parenting Policies and Guidelines – Gwynedd Council	Approve, distribute and ensure awareness of and conformity with Gwynedd Council 'Corporate Parenting Policies and Guidelines'	ITJ/AME. Heads of Service		<p>Clear understanding amongst staff, councillors and those working on behalf of the Council of corporate parenting policies and guidelines.</p> <p>Evidence that the effect is being monitored by every service, with regular reporting to the Corporate Parenting Panel [quarterly].</p> <p>Corporate Parenting Panel approves the Policies and Guidelines of every Service within the Council.</p> <p>Performance Indicators of the Corporate Parenting Panel's Annual Report to the Cabinet and Full Council. Standing Item - Corporate Management Team.</p>
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WORK PROGRAMME OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL 2013-2014

Field	Matter	Action	Lead Responsibilities	When	Result
1.2	Satisfy relevant Lead Members [Lead Member for Children and Young People and Cabinet Member for Social Services, Health] that the Council's procedures are sound.	Lead Members receive evidence of the Council's corporate / trans-departmental performance on matters regarding safeguarding children and adults. Ensure effective corporate communication. Ensure effective communication with Gwynedd and Anglesey Local Safeguarding Children Board. ITJ/AME/SG/RHWW	ITJ/AME/SG/RHWW		<p>Clear and convenient communication arrangements in place across the establishment / Council and with Gwynedd and Anglesey LSCB.</p> <p>Reports to Cabinet, Full Council, Corporate Management Team, Strategic Panel and Gwynedd and Anglesey LSCB. Performance Indicators.</p>
1.3	Role of the Strategic Director – Social Services.	Supporting the functions and duties of the Strategic Director within the Council.	Panel Members, Heads of Service.		The Strategic Director fulfils the responsibility on matters of corporate parenting. Ensures that the Council has appropriate safeguarding measures to protect children and adults and report at corporate level to councillors on their effectiveness.

WORK PROGRAMME OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL 2013-2014

Field	Matter	Action	Lead Responsibilities	When	Result
1.4	Strategic Plan – Gwynedd Council	Proposals for Safeguarding Children and Adults are reflected in the Strategic Plan.	SG/RHWW/ITJ/AME/DPh		Strategic Plan highlights the way Gwynedd Council will meet its corporate and legal commitments in the field of corporate parenting.

2.0 Corporate Training

2.1	Corporate Parenting Training for elected members.	Training Programme has been established.	SG/RHWW/AS/ITJ/AME /DPh		Members are familiar with the Council's corporate parenting policies and guidelines.
2.2	Corporate Training for Council staff.	Corporate parenting Training Programme agreed, established and funded within the Council's corporate training matrix.	ITJ/AME/AS		All the Council's workforce has received corporate parenting training to the appropriate level.

3. Specific Work Streams

3.1					
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MEETING OF	THE COUNCIL
DATE	5 December 2013
TITLE OF THE REPORT	THE COUNCIL'S POLITICAL BALANCE
PURPOSE	To review the Council's Political Balance
RECOMMENDATION	Allocation of seats on the Council's Committees
AUTHOR	Councillor Dyfed Edwards
RELEVANT OFFICER	Head of Democracy and Legal Department

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Notice has been received that
- 1.1.1 Councillor John Brynmor Hughes is no longer an individual member and wishes to move to the Independent Group.
- 1.2 Consequently, the political constitution of the Council is as follows:-

Plaid Cymru	37
Independent	18
Llais Gwynedd	14
Labour	4
Liberal Democrats	2
Individual Member	0
Total	75

2. ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON COMMITTEES

- 2.1 To remind members, the four main rules included in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 in relation to the allocation of seats are noted here:-
- 2.2 (a) Every seat on a committee cannot be allocated to the same political group;
- (b) The majority of seats on a committee must be allocated to a political group if the number of persons who are members of that group constitute a majority of the Council's members;
- (c) Subject to paragraphs (a) and (b) above, the number of seats on ordinary committees allocated to each political group will be the same as the number of all seats that members of that group has on the Council;
- (ch) Subject to paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) above, the number of seats on a committee allocated to each political group will be the same proportion of seats on the committee as the number of seats that members of that group has on the Council.
- 2.3 In order to ensure that these rules are adhered to, the Council has been dealing with committees in different blocks in the past. Also, this makes it

easier to ensure that rule (c) in paragraph 2.2 above is adhered to.

3. CHANGES TO THE ALLOCATION OF SEATS ON COMMITTEES

- 3.1 The change to the political balance means that the Independent Group gains a seat on the Audit Committee, and that the individual member loses a seat on the Audit Committee.
- 3.2 It also means that the Independent Group gains a seat on the Joint Planning Policy Committee, and that the individual member loses a seat on the Joint Planning Policy Committee.

(See **Appendix A**)

4. RECOMMENDATION

The Business Group is asked to:

- discuss and agree to the change in the allocation of seats on the committees as noted in 3.1 – 3.2 above according to the agreement of the Business Group.

APPENDIX A

SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

	Plaid Cymru	Independent	Llais Gwynedd	Labour	Liberal Democrats	Individual Member
Corporate	9	4	3	1	1	
Communities	9	4	3	1	1	
Services	9	4	4	1		
Audit	9	5	3	1		0

OTHER COMMITTEES

	Plaid Cymru	Independent	Llais Gwynedd	Labour	Liberal Democrats	Individual Member
Democratic Services	7	4	3	1		
Planning	7	3	3	1	1	
Central Licensing	7	4	4	0		
Language	8	4	3			
Appointment of Principal Officers	7	4	2	1	1	
Employment Appeals	4	1	1	1		

Number of seats	76	37	28	8	4	1	154
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	Plaid Cymru	Independent	Llais Gwynedd	Labour	Liberal Democrats	Individual Member
Pensions	3	2	1		1	
SACRE	3	2	2			
Local Consultative Joint Committee	6	2	2	1		
Special Educational Needs Joint Committee	4	2	1			
Joint Planning Policy Committee	4 (3 seats and one substitute)	2	1	1		0

Total seats	96	47	36	10	5	194
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Yr Adran Iechyd a Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
Department for Health and Social Services

Eich cyf/Your ref ER
Ein cyf/Our ref TO/MD/02614/13

Eirian Roberts
Council Offices
Caernarfon
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH
maireirianroberts@gwynedd.gov.uk

22 October 2013

Dear Eirian Roberts

Thank you for your letter dated 2 October to Mark Drakeford AM, the Minister for Health and Social Services, noting Gwynedd Council's support to the idea of having a Medical University in North Wales. I have been asked to respond.

There are already close links between the Universities and the Health Board in North Wales.

The North Wales Clinical School has academic staff from Bangor and Glyndŵr Universities. Establishing the school has increased the number of clinical places for students in North Wales and it is hoped that this will improve the ability to recruit younger physicians throughout the region.

We know that many medical students continue with their careers in the areas in which they were trained. Through the Working for Wales campaign, we will continue to promote the advantages of living and working in Wales. It is clear that radical and urgent changes need to be made to the health service in Wales. One of the many advantages of the reorganisation is that specialists in specific fields will come together in centres of excellence. This will offer the opportunity to provide better training as well as having a better quality of care.

We have established the Welsh Medical and Dental Academic Board, which is chaired by Baroness Ilora Finlay of Llandaff. The aim of the Board is to look at the future of medical and dental education in Wales in order to ensure that providers work together to provide education and training of a high standard, including a sustainable workforce for the NHS in Wales. The Board has recently been considering the matter of providing medical

education in North Wales. The outcome of those discussions will be presented to the Minister for Health and Social Services in the next few weeks.

Yours truly,

Clive Nurton

Government's Business Team