

THE CABINET 4/10/16

Present-

Councillors: Dyfrig L. Siencyn (Chair), Peredur Jenkins, John Wynn Jones, Dafydd Meurig, W. Gareth Roberts, Mair Rowlands, Gareth Thomas, Ioan Thomas and Mandy Williams-Davies.

Also present-

Dilwyn Williams (Chief Executive), Iwan Evans (Monitoring Officer), Dafydd L. Edwards (Head of Finance Department), Morwena Edwards (Corporate Director), Iwan Trefor Jones (Corporate Director), Sioned E. Williams (Head of Economy and Community Department – for items 6 and 7 on the agenda), Catrin Thomas (Community Learning Senior Manager – for items 6 and 7 on the agenda), Dylan Griffiths (Strategy and Development Manager – for items 6 and 7 on the agenda), Aled Davies (Head of Adults, Health and Well-being Department – for items 8 and 9 on the agenda), Rhion Glyn (Senior Operational Officer – for item 9 on the agenda), Sian Lloyd Roberts (Senior Operational Officer – for items 10 and 11 on the agenda) a Dewi W Jones (Senior Operational Officer – for item 12 on the agenda).

1. APOLOGIES

Cabinet Members and Officers were welcomed to the meeting.

An apology was received from Councillor Dyfed Wyn Edwards.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interest.

3. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

There were no matters arising from overview and scrutiny.

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13 SEPTEMBER 2016

The Chairman signed the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 13 September 2016, as a true record.

6. IMPLICATIONS OF THE EUROPE REFERENDUM RESULT

The item was submitted by Cllr Mandy Williams-Davies.

RESOLVED

To accept the report and consider at the earliest opportunity the internal

procedures that should be put in place so that the effects of the United Kingdom's decision to leave the European Union on the county can be monitored continually during the coming period and convey messages to the Westminster Government and Welsh Government.

DISCUSSION

Councillor Mandy Williams-Davies noted that the United Kingdom's decision to leave the European Union had a profound impact on Gwynedd, including on the economy, pensions and the environment. Attention was drawn to the list of valuable projects that had been partially funded by funding from Europe since 2007. It was emphasised that there was a need to voice opinions and portray the county's uniqueness.

The Members noted the following main points:-

- The list of projects was confirmation of the substantial investment realised in Gwynedd as a result of funding from Europe
- Concern in terms of uncertainty for the future
- The need to campaign for Gwynedd's best interests, ensuring a voice for Gwynedd in Cardiff and Westminster
- The need to be clear and coherent to safeguard Gwynedd's interests
- Concern in terms of the effect on higher education in the county, considering that around half of Bangor University's research income comes from Europe
- There would also be opportunities in times of change that we should make the most of
- Gwynedd would be much poorer without the funding that was received from Europe
- There is a role for the North Wales Ambition Board
- Concern that the focus would be on economic projects rather than on supporting people through schemes such as OPUS and TRAC 11-24*
- The need to ensure that funding set aside for funding under the European Union programmes until 2020 would come to Gwynedd
- There was considerable concern in the agricultural sector and this sector should be included when lobbying

Iwan Trefor Jones (Corporate Director) noted that it was essential that the United Kingdom have access to the single market in order to take advantage of funding from the European Investment Bank to carry out infrastructure plans. He added that Gwynedd needed to be part of the discussions when negotiating commercial contracts with other countries and regions. It was emphasised that the North Wales Ambition Board had a role to play in identifying opportunities and threats.

It was noted that, due to the situation being unclear at the moment, the Leadership Team should consider having a mechanism in place to respond to the situation as it develops, in order to ensure lobbying in the right place at the right time.

7. HARLECH AND ARDUDWY LEISURE

The item was submitted by Councillors Mandy Williams-Davies and Mair

Rowlands.

RESOLVED

Subject to the six Community Councils contributing in accordance with the funding model outlined in section 4.3 of the report, to commit making financial contributions to "Harlech & Ardudwy Leisure" towards the swimming pool by –

- prejudicing the success of the application for additional permanent funding of £6,000 from 2017/18 onwards as part of the joint financial package with the local community councils.
- asking the Head of Finance Department to assign £20,000 in the second quarter review of the 2016/17 budget, so as to release a one-off bridging payment in 2016/17 for the period up to 31 March 2017.

DISCUSSION

Cllr Mandy Williams-Davies noted that community councils should be praised for taking responsibility to ensure the resource. This was an example of the Council collaborating with the local community to ensure that an important resource for the community is saved whilst sending a message that the Council is ready to collaborate with partners when looking at the way it provides services in the future.

Members noted their appreciation of the community councils' willingness to take some of the financial burden to protect the resource.

8. COMPLAINTS AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT ANNUAL REPORTS

The report was submitted by Cllr Ioan Thomas.

RESOLVED

To accept the reports.

DISCUSSION

Cllr Ioan Thomas noted that one objective of the new procedure in terms of corporate complaints, that became operative on 1 April 2015, was to bring a specific benefit to the citizen by focussing on the solution instead of the process. It was emphasised that listening to the citizen's voice and learning from the experiences and disseminating good practice was at the core of the new procedure. It was noted that it was not possible to compare with previous years due to it being a new procedure.

Cllr. W. Gareth Roberts referred to the report in relation to the social services' complaints procedure, drawing attention to the fall in formal investigations reducing as a result of the effort made to try to have a local/informal solution. It was noted that lessons would be learnt from the tendencies to prevent the same thing from happening again.

It was explained that an individual had the right to appeal to the Ombudsman if they were dissatisfied with the Council's formal response. Attention was drawn to an amended letter that was accepted by the Ombudsman, which showed that the Council compared favourably on a national level with local authorities, National Parks and the Health Services in terms of the time it took to resolve complaints. It was noted that a 44% decrease was seen in the number of complaints that were referred to the Ombudsman.

The Chief Executive referred to the statistics in the amended letter received from the Ombudsman, which showed that the Council had not responded within three weeks to the Ombudsman's request for information. He explained that, whilst needing to ensure information so that the Ombudsman was able to appropriately consider a complaint, giving priority to it every time could not be justified because it would mean removing officers from their day to day work to produce information to respond to one application, and this would have an effect on the services provided for residents. Considering the lack of resources, a slippage in the time it took to respond was to be expected.

The above observation was corroborated by members, noting that a balance was needed in terms of a timely response and providing services.

The Service Improvement Officer was thanked for her enthusiasm in dealing with complaints in order to improve.

9. PERFORMANCE REPORT: CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

The report was submitted by Cllr W. Gareth Roberts.

RESOLVED

To accept and note the information in the report.

DISCUSSION

Cllr W. Gareth Roberts drew specific attention to Project **G7 'Capacity and Sustainability of the Care and Health System'**, noting that the project was added to the Strategic Plan this year due to great concern with regard to the current problems in terms of care and health provisions, within the older people field specifically. It was noted that there was a lack of staff in the field to provide the service, including nurses and home carers. It was noted that problems were highlighted by the performance under the measure **SCA/001 - The rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons per 1,000 population aged 75 or over**. It was noted that there was a high percentage of cases of delay in the South Meirionnydd area where there was a lack of provision and that the Council would be addressing this issue.

He noted that collaborating with the Health Service was vital to providing a service in a different way and that there was a need to look at the recruitment problem, and identify the obstacles nationally.

Cllr Dyfrig Siencyn referred to the proposal to develop Llys Cadfan Residential Home in order to be able to offer additional nursing support that would allow individuals to stay in the residential home longer and avoid being admitted into a nursing home. He welcomed the proposal, noting that the new care model attempted to address the gap in the provision.

10. PERFORMANCE REPORT: CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEISURE

The report was submitted by Cllr Mair Rowlands.

RESOLVED

- To accept and note the information in the report.
- Send a letter to Carl Sargeant AM, Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children and Mark Drakeford AM, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government, drawing attention to the practical impact of receiving information regarding grants for preventative work belatedly, and asking for more assurances in terms of funding preventative services for groups of vulnerable children and young people in the County.

DISCUSSION

Cllr Mair Rowlands drew specific attention to Project **P8, 'Early Intervention for groups of vulnerable children and young people in Gwynedd'**, noting that the grant funding for Families First would be coming to an end in March 2017 and that there was uncertainty in terms of financing the project in future. This created instability for staff, creating a risk of losing staff that had developed expertise, and this then hindering the preventative service provided. It was reported that bridging arrangements were in place to be able to give some assurance for staff. It was noted that the Leadership Team would receive an update in during November.

Iwan Trefor Jones (Corporate Director) added that Welsh Government were currently reviewing grants, and combining grants for supporting people and together was being considered. It was noted that the council was keen to ensure that this preventative agenda would continue in order to try to prevent children and young people from becoming dependent on statutory services.

The Chief Executive suggested that sending a letter to Carl Sargeant AM, Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children and Mark Drakeford AM, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government should be considered to draw attention to the practical effect of receiving information regarding grants for preventative work belatedly, and asking for more assurances in terms of funding preventative services for groups of vulnerable children and young people in the County.

Reference was made to the **IEU05 'Number of accreditations that young people receive through the Youth Service'** performance measure. The work was praised and reference was made to the 27% increase in the number of accreditations received during 2015-16. Cllr Mair Rowlands noted that she would

convey the message to the officers.

11. PERFORMANCE REPORT: CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION

The item was submitted by Cllr Gareth Thomas.

RESOLVED

To accept and note the information in the report.

DISCUSSION

Cllr Gareth Thomas drew specific attention to the conditional results of Summer 2016 which showed that the performance in Gwynedd was generally good across all key stages. It was highlighted that there was room for improvement at the Foundation Phase because results had stayed static over the past few years and that 2016 A Level results showed that 96.2% had gained A*-E grades at A level. This figure is -1.1% lower than the national figure and is the lowest figure in North Wales.

Key Stage 4 was referred to, and it was noted that a substantial increase of +5.2% could be seen in the percentage of those crossing the Level 2+ threshold (the equivalent of five GCSEs grades A to C including Welsh or English and Mathematics). The performance suggested that Gwynedd could be placed second among all Welsh authorities. Attention was drawn to the 13.5% increase in the TL+2 performance measure since the beginning of the current council period in 2012, and that it was a substantial improvement in the performance of pupils taking GCSEs.

The opportunity was taken to thank the staff at all the schools and the Department of Education for their work in terms of addressing standards. The increase would not have been possible without their commitment.

It was noted that great progress was made in the attendance percentage of secondary schools. Gwynedd was the first authority to reach a greater than 95% attendance for secondary and special schools, with the secondary schools reporting an average of 95.16%, placing Gwynedd first in terms of authorities in Wales.

In response to a question from a member, as to why Ysgol Morfa Nefyn was under an authority monitoring category, even though the school had been judged outstanding in all criteria under the ESTYN inspection. Cllr Gareth Thomas explained that the attendance of pupils came under consideration from ESTYN and, if the attendance was lower, the school moved directly into monitoring authority category.

The work of the schools was praised, noting that the improvement was encouraged.

12. PERFORMANCE REPORT: CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES

The report was submitted by Cllr Peredur Jenkins.

RESOLVED

To accept and note the information in the report.

DISCUSSION

Cllr Peredur Jenkins notes that two things need to be corrected in this report, which are:

- change paragraph 1.1. to read "...in the fields that I am responsible for as *Cabinet Member for Resources.*"
- there was no representation from the Corporate Scrutiny Committee at the Management Team meeting, there will be representation at the next meeting

Project **C1 'Implementing Ffordd Gwynedd'** was referred to, and it was noted that the number of reviews held during 2016-17 had decreased from 12 to 7 to ensure that detailed work would be done. Attention was drawn to project **C2 'Development of Leaders Programme'**. It was explained that, even though the work at the senior officers level was ongoing, as expected, there was concern about its suitability for Cabinet Members. It was noted that it was decided that the project would concentrate on the senior officers over the next months, re-visiting the needs of Cabinet Members early in 2017.

It was confirmed that the efficiency savings that were planned by the end of March 2017 had been realised and further efficiency plans were discovered to be realised in accordance with the timetable.

In response to an observation from a member that the performance of the Department of Education in terms of paying invoices within 30 days impacted on the performance measure **Percentage of the invoices that were paid within 30 days (across the Council)**, it was noted that discussions had been held with the Cabinet Member for Education and that a work programme has been established to deal with the matter. Cllr Gareth Thomas added that establishing regional offices would reduce the burden on the Heads and he was confident that the performance would improve.

The meeting commenced at 1.00pm and concluded at 2.20pm

CHAIR