

THE CABINET 28/03/17

Present-

Councillors: Dyfed Wyn Edwards, Dyfrig L. Siencyn, Peredur Jenkins, John Wynn Jones, Dafydd Meurig, Mair Rowlands, Gareth Thomas, Ioan Thomas and Mandy Williams-Davies

Also present: Dilwyn Williams (Chief Executive), Morwena Edwards (Corporate Director), Iwan Trefor Jones (Corporate Director), Dewi Morgan (Senior Manager - Revenue and Risk), Iwan Evans (Head of Legal Services).

Items 6 - 8: Catrin Thomas (Senior Manager - Community Learning), Dylan Griffiths (Strategy and Development Manager), Garem Jackson (Bangor Area Education Officer).
Item 13: Cllr Charles W. Jones and Dafydd Williams (Head of the Regulatory Department).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor W. Gareth Roberts and Dafydd Edwards (Head of Finance Department).

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor Gareth Thomas declared an interest in item 6 as a relative of his worked for the Library Service. It was a prejudicial interest.

3. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

There were no matters arising from overview and scrutiny.

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 MARCH 2017

The Chair signed the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 7 March 2017, as a true record.

6. LIBRARY SELF-SERVICE MACHINES

The item was presented by Cllr Ioan Thomas

RESOLVED

To approve the application for £74,412 from the Transformation Fund for the purchase and installation of nine self-service machines in the nine main libraries.

DISCUSSION

It was noted that the Cabinet had adopted the “More than Books Strategy 2016-2020” for the Library Service, which would lead to change in the library provision by moving from maintaining 17 libraries to 9 main libraries.

There had been a discussion with Libraries' service users, and they had noted that they wished to make their visits easier. The machines would provide staff with more time to help service users. It was emphasised that the aim of the scheme was to raise the service's standards rather than to make savings. It was noted that there were currently two self-service machines in the county, and that they had proven their value to the service.

Matters arising from the discussion

- A question was asked about whether the use of the self-service machines would be mandatory, but it was noted that staff would also be available to undertake the work if the need arose.
- It was noted that this would modernise the services and facilitate access to services.
- It was noted that the old machines were nearing the end of their lifespans, and they could not be used in other locations, but that they would be recycled.

7. COUNCIL PLAN 2017/18 - APPLICATIONS FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING

The item was presented by Cllr Ioan Thomas and Cllr Mandy Williams-Davies

RESOLVED

- I. To commit £121,255 of additional funding from the Transformation Fund to extend the 'Working together against poverty' scheme for 2017-18 to realise commitments that are a part of the Council Plan for 2017-18.
- II. To commit £117,000 of additional funding from the Transformation Fund, in order to extend the 'High Value and Quality Jobs' scheme for 2017-18 to realise the commitments that are a part of the Council's Plan for 2017-18.
- III. To commit £23,000 of additional funding from the Transformation Fund in order to extend the 'Rural Gwynedd Development Project' for 2017-18 to realise the commitments that are a part of the Council's Plan for 2017-18.
- IV. To commit £42,000 of additional funding, and continue with the remainder of the allocated funding, in order to extend the 'High Profile and Strategic

Events' scheme for 2017-18 to realise the commitments that are a part of the Council Plan 2017-18.

DISCUSSION

The relevant Cabinet Member provided a verbal report on all the schemes, regarding how much resource had been provided for these schemes in the past, and how much remained to be spent.

- I. It was noted that the report emphasised the main outcomes and activities in the Working Together Against Poverty Scheme for the forthcoming year. Following discussions with partners, it was noted that the figures in the recommendation had changed to the figure that was noted in the report.

It was noted that the scheme included a programme of interventions that included the provision of skills to cope with income management, skills to access information and services online and to prevent economic inactivity.

Observations from the discussion

- A discussion was held on the reason for the slippage of nearly £74,000 which should have been spent during the financial year. It was noted that the reason for this was that the application for funding from the Lottery Fund had been sent by partners and that they were awaiting a response from the fund.

- II. The benefit of raising awareness about high-value jobs was emphasised, and the need to secure support within the county. It was noted that the figures in the recommendation had changed compared to the figures noted in the report.

Observations from the discussion

- It was noted that there had been an increase in the number of young people establishing businesses in the county, and the importance of supporting these businesses was emphasised.

- III. The Rural Development Scheme was mentioned as a scheme that provided exciting opportunities in the area and that was extremely important in this respect. It was noted that the funding was required to continue with the scheme for an additional year.

Observations from the discussion

- It was noted that this was European funding, and that it emphasised the main risks of leaving the European Union. The Council was facing a challenging period in relation to European funding, but there was an opportunity for this project to continue for a further year.

- IV. This project supported high-profile events, and was an opportunity to collaborate in partnership with other organisations. It was noted that

the new Council would need to discuss what was considered to be the core work of departments, and what were projects.

Observations from the discussion

- In looking at this project the most important element was not the funding, but the support and experience that the department could offer companies that arranged events.
- It was also noted that these events contributed to raising awareness of the county, and brought economic benefits.

8. COUNCIL PLAN 2017/18 P9 YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIAL USE OF WELSH

The report was presented by Cllr Gareth Thomas

RESOLVED

To commit £40,000 of additional funding from the Transformation Fund in order to implement the Secondary Language Strategy to lead to a further increase in pupils' social and curricular use of Welsh.

DISCUSSION

It was noted that the Primary Language Charter had been accepted nationally. It had been an innovative project in Gwynedd and had now been adopted nationally. The children in primary schools who had benefited from the Charter were moving to secondary schools. It was noted that the Trywydd company had prepared a report examining the use of the Welsh language in secondary schools. The recommendations from this report had been incorporated into the Secondary Language Strategy.

Observations from the discussion

- It was noted that a significant change occurred between the Primary and Secondary, with pressure to use English rather than Welsh. There would be a significant challenge to overturn this trend.
- It was emphasised that there was a need to ensure that there was progression from Primary to Secondary, and that this was an important step forward.
- A question was asked about whether consideration had been given to establishing a further step after the Secondary Language Charter to an Employers Language Charter, as this was where the Welsh language needed to be used (e.g. in local shops). The language charter should be placed in its context of influencing the overall use of the Welsh language, and not only amongst children.

9. THE COUNCIL'S ASSET PLAN 2009/10 TO 2018/19

The report was presented by Cllr Peredur Jenkins

RESOLVED

- i. To note the likely final position with the 10 year Asset Plan
- ii. To confirm that we no longer require the £15m provision for Social Care as part of the new Plan to be established by the new Council;
- iii. To allocate £200,000 of the resource that is not now required for unsupported borrowing to meet the deficit in our savings for 2016/17
- iv. To use £800,000 of this resource to supplement the repairs and maintenance programme from 1 April 2017, leaving the remainder for the new Council to decide upon when considering its savings and asset requirements for the future.

DISCUSSION

In 2009, following an assessment of the Council's capital spending requirements, and in recognising the fact that the Council's resources would not allow for all capital expenditure requirements to be met, a series of workshops were held with Council members to establish capital priorities for the coming 10 years. Consequently, the Council's Corporate Assets Strategy was established, and adopted by the Full Council.

It was noted that it was an essential plan, and that the new council would be expected to establish a new plan early in the next financial year for the 2018/19 - 2027/28 period. It was noted that the purpose of this report was to report back and to conclude some aspects of the original plan. Over the Plan's 10-year period it was anticipated that there would be capital expenditure of £143.8m.

Observations from the discussion:

- The plan had been effective, and had facilitated investments in schools. Important work had been completed, and important work was still being delivered.

10. PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION

The report was presented by Cllr Gareth Thomas.

RESOLVED

- I. To accept and note the information in the report.
- II. To approve the re-profiling in relation to the Free Breakfast Club for Primary Schools, as slippage had been seen in the realisation time. There would be a need to slip £41,700 to be realised in 2018/19.

DISCUSSION

Following scrutiny and performance analysis over the summer, raising the standards of the Foundation Phase had been identified as a priority. The County Quality Board was continuing and showing progress.

It was noted that only two schools were in any follow-up categories at present and only two schools were in the red category. It was noted that no school was in a statutory category and only two schools were in the Estyn Monitoring category. Both schools had made expected progress at an appropriate pace.

It was noted that the work on Ysgol Bro Idris and Ysgol Glancegin was ongoing. Discussions were ongoing with the Governors about the status of the Bala catchment school.

It was emphasised that two schools had been awarded by Estyn for their excellence, namely Ysgol Cae Top and Ysgol Morfa Nefyn, and Cllr Gareth Thomas congratulated both schools.

Observations from the discussion

- It was noted that considerable progress had been made in this area, and that there had been a shift in culture. There was improved transparency in relation to clarity and expectations.
- The Head of the Education Department was wished well as he was leaving his post to work as the Managing Director of GwE, and he was thanked for his work.

11. PERFORMANCE REPORT OF THE DEPUTY LEADER

The item was presented by Cllr Dyfrig Siencyn

RESOLVED

- i. To accept and note the information in the report
- ii. To approve the re-profiling of the Savings Scheme in the Coroner's budget (DaCh13) to 2018/19 rather than 2017/18 as originally intended as highlighted in point 6.2 of the report.

DISCUSSION

It was noted that the work of promoting the Welsh language in communities was in progress in Bangor, Dolgellau and Porthmadog. It was a work programme that had been jointly agreed by the Welsh Government which funded the work via Hunaniaith. A discussion had been held with the Minister to discuss the idea of being able to develop our own schemes, as the area was different to others as the majority of the population spoke Welsh.

It was noted that the savings of the Corporate Support Department had been realised, and that there was one slippage, which was Savings in the Coroner's

budget which equated to £13,795.

Observations from the discussion

- In relation to the performance measures, it was noted that the number of Gwynedd residents who were satisfied with the information available to them about what the Council was doing, and its future intentions, was 54%. A view was expressed that this was low when considering that the Gwynedd Challenge had been held during the past year. This work needed to continue, and consideration was needed on how to raise awareness among a range of people.

12. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

Resolved - to exclude the press and public from the meeting during the discussion on the following item due to the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 14, Section 4, Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972. A request was made for the item to be exempt under the following section:

14.10.2 Exempt information – Discretion to Exclude Public

The report includes information relating to contract details and sales procedures which are not evident at this time. The information is considered exempt in accordance with category 14 because it is information relating to an individual's personal business or financial matters. Consequently, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

13. LAND IN LLANRUG

The report was presented by Cllr Dafydd Meurig

RESOLVED

To delegate powers to the Head of Regulatory Department, in consultation with the Head of Education Department, to purchase a plot of land in Llanrug and following the purchase, to take appropriate control of the site, in accordance with the report.

DISCUSSION

An opportunity had arisen to purchase a site in Llanrug for educational purposes that could contribute towards extending options for future education planning.

Observations from the discussion

- The Local Member, Cllr Charles Wyn Jones stated that there was local support to purchase the land.
- It was emphasised that the Council was buying land for the future, and that there are no current plans.
- It was noted that the land should be managed properly following its purchase.

The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm and concluded at 2.45 pm

CHAIRMAN