



# Complete Agenda

Democratic Services  
Swyddfa'r Cyngor  
CAERNARFON  
Gwynedd  
LL55 1SH

Meeting

**CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Date and Time

**10.30 am, THURSDAY, 21ST SEPTEMBER, 2017**

Location

**Siambr Hywel Dda, Council Offices, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 1SH**

**\* NOTE**

**This meeting will be webcast**

<http://www.gwynedd.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

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(DISTRIBUTED 13/09/17)

# **CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

## **MEMBERSHIP (18)**

### **Plaid Cymru (10)**

Councillors

Alan Jones Evans  
Elin Walker Jones  
Olaf Cai Larsen  
Linda Ann Jones  
Peter Read

Sian Wyn Hughes  
Dafydd Owen  
Annwen Daniels  
Rheinallt Puw

### **Independent (6)**

Councillors

Eryl Jones-Williams  
Beth Lawton  
Elfed Powell Roberts

Richard Medwyn Hughes  
Dewi Wyn Roberts  
Angela Russell

### **Llais Gwynedd (1)**

Councillor  
Anwen J. Davies

### **Individual Member (1)**

Councillor

### **Ex-officio Members**

Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council

# **A G E N D A**

## **1. APOLOGIES**

To receive any apologies for absence.

## **2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

## **3. URGENT BUSINESS**

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chairman for consideration.

## **4. MINUTES**

4 - 5

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on the 13 June 2017, be signed as a true copy.

(Copy enclosed)

## **5. HOMELESSNESS**

6 - 10

To consider the Housing, Leisure and Culture Cabinet Member's report on the above.

(Copy enclosed)

## **6. EMPTY PROPERTIES**

11 - 16

To consider the Housing, Leisure and Culture Cabinet Member's report on the above.

(Copy enclosed)

## **7. PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICE IN BLAENAU FFESTINIOG**

17 - 18

To consider the final wording of the recommendations of the Extraordinary Care Scrutiny Committee held on the 4 September 2017.

(Copy enclosed)

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## CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### 13.06.17

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**Present:** Councillors: Anwen J. Davies, Simon Glyn, E. Selwyn Griffiths, R. Medwyn Hughes, Elin Walker Jones, Linda Ann Wyn Jones, Eryl Jones-Williams, Beth Lawton, Rheinallt Puw, Peter Read, Dewi Wyn Roberts and Angela Russell.

**Also in Attendance:** Vera Jones (Democratic Service Manager), Gareth James (Member and Scrutiny Support Manager), Debbie Anne Jones (Welsh Language Services Manager) and Glynda O'Brien (Member Support Officer).

**Apologies:** Councillors Annwen Daniels, Siân Wyn Hughes, Elfed Powell Roberts, Craig ab Iago (Cabinet Member for Housing, Leisure and Culture), Dilwyn Morgan (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People), W. Gareth Roberts (Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Well-being)

#### 1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

**RESOLVED** to elect Councillor Eryl Jones-Williams subject to the Council's resolution on scrutiny chairpersonships based on the Council's political balance at its meeting on 16 June 2017.

#### 2. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

**RESOLVED** to elect Councillor R. Medwyn Hughes as Vice-chair of this committee for 2017/18 subject to the Council's resolution at its meeting on 16 June 2017.

The Monitoring Officer gave an explanation regarding appointments that are to be made by the political groups and attention was drawn to Section 70 of the Local Government Measure (Wales) 2011 and specifically to sub-section 6 that sets out the arrangements. It was noted that it was a requirement to allocate the chairpersonships of scrutiny committees in order to ensure, as far as possible, that political balance is reflected in those chairpersonships and that the groups that are not represented on the Executive are given a fair proportion of the chairpersonships. In accordance with the relevant principles, the appointments provision had to be rounded down to the nearest whole unit, in this case 1.64 which means 1 chairpersonship to the executive group.

Therefore, the chairpersonships are allocated based on the three Scrutiny Committees:

Independent Group – 2 chairs  
Plaid Cymru Group - 1 chair

**Resolved:** To accept and note the above.

**3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

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

**4. PERFORMANCE MONITORING**

It was reported that the Senior Corporate Support Manager would send a request to Committee Members to express an interest in attending performance challenge meetings (13.7.17 - Children and Families Service; 19.7.17 Adults Services) and in the meantime the following declarations of interest were made by individual Members present:

Children and Families Service: Councillors Beth Lawton, Angela Russell

Adults Service: Councillors Linda Ann Wyn Jones, Angela Russell, Peter Read, Dewi Roberts, Elin Walker

It was noted that two Members would be nominated for a period of approximately two years, in order to ensure consistency.

**Resolved: To accept and note the above.**

The meeting commenced at 10.00am and concluded at 10.20am.

# Agenda Item 5

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Scrutiny Committee- Care</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>21st September 2017</b>
<b>CABINET MEMBER</b>	<b>Councillor Craig ab Iago</b>
<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Homelessness Report</b>

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Homelessness is one of the Council's statutory responsibilities and there are a number of legal duties that the Council must respond. The responsibilities are set out in the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and the Council is required to assess the needs of any person who presents as homeless or is threatened with homeless. In addition, there is a duty to provide accommodation for vulnerable individuals (in priority need).
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to outline some issues that influence the direction of services for homeless people in Gwynedd and highlight elements that create pressure.

## **2.0 Statutory Duties**

- 2.1 The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 came into force in April 2015. This new Act has placed a number of additional statutory responsibilities upon the Council, including:
- i) a duty to assess the accommodation and support needs of everyone who is homeless or threatened with homelessness
  - ii) a duty to assist anyone who is threatened with homelessness within 56 days to help prevent homelessness
  - iii) a duty to provide assistance to any homeless person to help them secure a home
- 2.2 In addition, the Council continues to have a duty to provide temporary accommodation for people in priority need if it is not possible to find them somewhere else to live.
- 2.3 There is no requirement to be in priority need to be eligible for a duty under 2.1 (i), (ii) and (iii), and as a result more single people receive help where they did not qualify under the old legislation.

### 3.0 The effect of the New Act on the service

3.1 Following the changes to the Homelessness Legislation there has been a significant increase in the number of people who require assistance

Number of referrals to the Service	
2014/15	560
2015/16	648
2016/17	722

The above statistics show an increase of **28.9%** between 2014/15 and 2016/17

3.2 Cases can be open for a much longer period because the duty to prevent homelessness starts within 56 days of becoming homeless, and after that, if we cannot prevent homelessness, the duty to find another property is open for a further 56 days. The burden of cases is heavier on officers because of this change.

3.3 In addition, the burden of paperwork has increased due to the statutory requirement to provide each applicant a written notification of what duty is relevant to their case and a notice when that duty ends and moves to a new duty.

3.4 Officers spend more time looking for affordable property in the private sector, which proves difficult due to a number of factors, such as changes in the welfare benefit regime, high rent rates, and a lack of one bedroom accommodation.

3.5 Although the numbers that have gone in to temporary accommodation have reduced, due to the successful homelessness prevention work, those who have received temporary accommodation have had to wait there for longer periods while waiting for suitable permanent properties.

### 4.0 Measures

4.1 The Homelessness Unit has to report on a number of measures to the Welsh Government and also measure the success of the service against two local measures. There is a decline in performance on both local measures that reflect the pressures facing the service.

i) The time it takes to achieve what is important to the client-  
**77.73** days in 2016/17 compared to 69.08 days in 2015/16

ii) Period spent in temporary accommodation-  
**104.44** days in 2016/17 compared to 70.52 in 2015/16

4.2 Despite this decline, the service is performing well compared to other authorities, who also report an increase in workload.

## **5.0 Transitional Grant Funding**

5.1 In order to assist Local Authorities in implementing the new Act and to fulfil the new duties, the Welsh Government has awarded transitional grant funding for a period of three years. The grant is specific for work that is targeted at preventing homelessness.

5.2 The additional funding has enabled the service to employ three temporary additional officers and set up a homelessness prevention fund. The main work has been involved in working with private landlords to encourage letting property to people on low incomes on affordable rent; pay deposits to secure private property; provide advice and support on welfare benefits; provide a dedicated service for prison leavers; and provide tenancy support for vulnerable people to ensure that they sustain their tenancies.

5.3 The transitional grant will expire on **31 March 2018** and the Welsh Government has not committed to any subsequent grants thereafter.

5.4 Without the transitional funding the service would not have been able to cope with the changes or have so many successful outcomes with homelessness prevention.

## **6.0 Context**

6.1 Gwynedd Council has for many years placed an emphasis on trying to prevent homelessness as we believe these efforts improve consumer experience and lead to greater stability for users and families as their networks can be maintained. This work also proves to be more cost effective. The new Housing Act reinforces the need to focus on preventing homelessness. However, a number of factors affect our ability to get positive results for the vulnerable client group.

### **6.2 Identifying suitable accommodation for homeless people**

There are significant challenges in identifying properties for certain groups, namely single people and people with complex needs, e.g. people with severe mental health problems, prison leavers, and people with alcohol and drug misuse problems. An increasing number of people with high needs are discharged from hospitals to the community where supported accommodation has now disappeared. In addition, there is a general lack of one bedroom properties and supported housing in the County.

Looking at people leaving prison as an example, in 2016/17 Gwynedd had the second highest referral of prison leavers in North Wales, whilst the number of supported accommodation units in the County is the second lowest



### 6.3 Changes in the Welfare Benefit System

There is a significant challenge resulting from the reform of the benefits system that has a significant impact on particular groups and imposes a burden on the service. A high number of people receive housing benefit that is less than private and social rent, resulting in the need to find extra money to cover accommodation costs which puts pressure on the sustainability of tenancies

6.3.1 The research report undertaken by 'Policy in Practice' was commissioned, with the help of a Welsh Government grant, to try to estimate how the people of Gwynedd will be affected by changes in the benefit system and to outline the challenges for the future. The survey predicts that some groups within the community will face a significant challenge to try to meet housing costs and will lead to additional pressure on homelessness services.

#### 6.3.2 Summary of the main research findings

i) **53.3%** of Gwynedd' s benefit applicants will lose out when they transfer from the current benefit arrangements to Universal Credit, which is a higher percentage than other authorities. It was noted that many seasonal workers would be worse off back on benefit at the end of their employment than before they received seasonal work.

ii) **3022** families in Gwynedd will be worse off by a total of £ 5,985,474 per annum when transferred to Universal Credit. (Gwynedd will transfer to Universal Credit in April 2018).

iii) The income of Gwynedd residents will be £11m per annum less as a result of introducing benefit changes, and the amount will increase year by year

iv) **94.5%** of the people of Gwynedd claiming benefit will be worse off. Only 5.45% will remain the same or better off as a result of the changes.

v) As there are fewer job opportunities in Gwynedd there will be restrictions on options to move away from benefit and to permanent work.

vi) **Bedroom Tax** - **1147** people in Gwynedd will be affected by bedroom tax and will lose an average of **£13.51** per week, with 33% of these being families with children. If individuals fail to make up the shortfall they will be putting their tenancies at risk and more likely to request homelessness services

vii) **Local Housing Allowance** - The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate (the maximum benefit allowed for rent payments) in some parts of Gwynedd is among the lowest in the UK. If the LHA is frozen at the current level until 2020, which is intended, then the allowance may be insufficient to meet social housing rents

viii) **Rent 'Top up'** - We find that people who rent privately and receive the LHA already have to find a sum of £24.34 above the Housing Allowance rate to meet rent commitments.

ix) **Benefit Cap** – A number of families in Gwynedd are affected by the benefit cap and those families are likely to see their housing Benefit reduced by around £60 per week. The numbers are likely to increase in future. The change affects families with more than 2 children and many families are single parents.

x) **Young People and People under 35 in Social Tenancies**

In future it will be very difficult to find affordable accommodation for individuals under the age of 35. Individuals receive a maximum of £58.11 per week in North Gwynedd and £56 in South Gwynedd which is lower than the average social rent for one bed properties at around £71. This means that housing associations will be reluctant to let a property knowing that the tenancy will not be sustainable. If individuals present as homeless, the burden of finding accommodation will be with the local authority.

6.3.3 The service has seen an increase in the number of people requesting help due to tenancy affordability issues following a change in benefit. The impact of Universal Credit has already been seen for single people who have transferred to this benefit following a new application. More presentations are anticipated next year when universal credit is extended to everyone.

6.3.4 The effect of the benefit cap is also apparent with families with several children. There is one example of a family with four children where the housing benefit element has dropped to £1.48 per week and the rent is £90.52 per week (for a two bedroom property). We have assisted with a claim for Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) to the Housing Benefit department and the family has been awarded a payment of £ 66.78 a week leaving them with £ 22.26 a week to find towards the rental cost. In October the DHP will reduce to £ 44.52 per week. The existing property is too small for the family and we are trying to search for a larger property but this will mean that the rent is sure to be higher. The family has significant arrears already and is likely to become homeless.

## 7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1 The report notes that the homelessness service faces many challenges through legislative and benefit changes as well as the increased pressure. Also, the potential impact on rent inflation in the Arfon Area as a result of the development of the New Wylfa must be considered. The service already recognizes that demand has increased and the forecast is that it will continue to grow. It is therefore crucial to consider how we will respond to ensure the sustainability of the service and how we manage expenditure in future.

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Scrutiny Committee - Care</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>21st of September 2017</b>
<b>CABINET MEMBER</b>	<b>Councillor Craig ab Iago</b>
<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Empty Homes Report 2008-2017</b>

## Introduction

In a society where thousands of homes are empty and thousands of prospective tenants are waiting for rented accommodation, empty houses are considered a wasteful resource. Gwynedd has been identified as a County with one of the highest rates of empty homes in Wales with **1164** estimated as being vacant. The Housing Department believes that one way to alleviate this growing problem is by using and adapting what is already available to us.

We believe that bringing empty homes back into use should be a high priority in order to respond to the high demand for housing and to increase the supply of affordable housing in the County. It can also be a boost to improve the appearance of communities and reduce problems for neighbours.

## Discussion

An empty homes scheme was established in Gwynedd in 2008 and since then the range of schemes and interventions has evolved. Gwynedd Council's arrangements are considered quite progressive and have been emulated by a number of other authorities.

## Definition

We define empty properties as properties that have been vacant for a period of 6 months or more. Properties are identified with the co-operation of the Council Tax Unit but also from individual inquiries / complaints from councillors and members of the public.

By focusing on properties that has been vacant for more than six months, the Empty Homes initiative aims to raise awareness of the various issues surrounding empty homes, the problems that they cause to our communities, and encourage the Owners to re-use their property to create quality accommodation and alleviate the housing crisis. Our aim is that houses do not remain empty for long periods.

Between 2008-2017 the Housing Service have succeeded in bringing **455** houses back to use and, as a result, managed to accommodate **915** people in Gwynedd. This has helped reduce pressure on social housing waiting lists and has also resulted in deteriorating and problematic properties being renovated and brought back into use.

Between 2008-2017 the Council has invested over £4 million in empty homes, which has attracted an additional private investment of £10.5 million. This gives a total of **£14.5 million** spent in Gwynedd on property, goods, labour, mortgages, etc.

Cost - The average cost of bringing a property back to use is around £46,000. This is much lower than the cost of building new social housing property and can be a quick way to get new supply. In recent years, the Empty Homes Unit has been successful in bringing almost **60** units annually. In the same period we see that around **30** additional social properties are being built.

The initiatives that we have available have a significant impact on reducing the number of empty homes in Gwynedd, and contributing significantly to the local economy. We know that a large proportion of money is spent with local companies.

Given that there is a specific resource for Empty Homes, the Housing Service has been in a position to take advantage of additional Government funds that would otherwise would have been difficult to attract and administer.

In order to implement the initiatives and minimise the number of empty homes in Gwynedd, resources are needed. Outputs are linked to the level of investment are linked, and the Council's investment has been crucial to the success of schemes.

There are a number of services within the Council, which have benefited from the Empty Housing Unit efforts to secure to provide affordable units in particular the homeless unit, vulnerable adult unit and people waiting on the Common Housing Register in Gwynedd.

### **Council Tax Premium on Second Homes and Vacant Homes**

At the end of November 2016 the Council approved a proposal to increase the level of Council tax due on second homes and long term vacancies of 50%, and in accordance with statutory requirements to give a 12 month notice of the proposal. We anticipate that the plan will be implemented from April 2018 onwards and offers are being developed so that the Council can consider using some of this premium towards bringing empty homes back into use.

### **Empty Homes Schemes**

We have developed a variety of flexible options that can help empty homeowners make the most of their properties. These options include:

#### **Information and Advice**

The Unit has developed expertise in the field and can provide impartial free guidance for empty homeowners and various options that are available whether they wish to sell, rent or renew empty houses.

#### **Empty Homes Grant**

A grant up to £20,000 or 75% of the total cost of work is available to assist with refurbishment costs and convert empty homes back into use. The refurbished house must be part of a lease plan for a period of five years, available to people off the Council waiting list or social services clients.

### **Houses into Homes**

Interest-free loans over three years to enable people to renew, improve and convert vacant buildings into homes. Properties must have been vacant for 6 months or more. Up to £ 25,000 can be obtained for an individual house; The maximum loan for each candidate is £ 150,000. Money is then rotated and available for reinvestment.

### **Welsh Government Home Improvement Loan Scheme**

Interest-free loans from £ 1,000 to £ 25,000 to assist owners of empty property requiring renovation. Available to Owner Occupiers, Landlords, Developers and Charities to help with make a home warm and safe. The loans incur an administrative fee of 15% that can be added to the loan. The term of a loan for residential owners is 7 years, 5 years for landlords / companies. Owner Occupier loans can be extended to 10 years, depending on affordability.

### **First Time Buyers Mortgage Deposit Loan Scheme**

This is a scheme to offer loans to meet deposit requirements from mortgage providers for first-time buyers. The emphasis is on helping first-time buyers to buy empty houses and get a foot on the housing market. Money within this scheme is recycled.

### **Project Management Grant**

Technical support of up to £ 5,000 (of value) in relation to repairs and renovations of relevant properties. It is available for property owners who receive either a grant or loan from the Council.

### **Value Added Tax Relief**

The Council can help reduce or dispose of VAT on all the materials used in the renovation of an empty house. If the property has been vacant between 2 and 10 years, VAT on the materials will come down to 5%. If a property has been vacant for over 10 years, the VAT can be reduced to 0%.

### **Investment so far**

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Council Investment</b>	<b>Private investment</b>	<b>Total</b>
Empty Homes Grants (2008 >)	£1,892,131	£4,537,804	<b>£6,429,935</b>

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Council Investment</b>	<b>Private investment</b>	<b>Total</b>
Renovation Loans (2012>)	£436,201	£831,375	<b>£1,267,576</b>

Scheme	Council Investment	Private investment	Total
Houses into Homes (2012>)	£882,300	£3,063,996	<b>£3,946,296</b>

Scheme	Council investment	Private investment	Value of homes bought in Gwynedd	Total
Deposit Loans (2012>)	£527,650	£120,250	£1,809,500	<b>£2,457,400</b>

Scheme	Council investment	Private investment	Total
Home Improvement Loan Scheme (2015>)	£171,000	£256,399	<b>£384,399</b>

Scheme Total	Empty Homes Scheme Investment	Private investment	Total spent in Gwynedd 2008-2017
Empty Homes Scheme (2008 > 2017)	£3,912,282	£10,506,824	<b>£14,419,106</b>

### Evaluation of Empty Homes Initiative Options - Strategic Plan - 4 Years

The table below outlines the outputs which would arise from the level of current level of investment based on the Council's Capital programme at the current level. This could be amended if other funding were identified.

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Option</b>	<b>Target Usage (over 4 years)</b>	<b>Market</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Income/ Outcome</b>
<b>1. Empty Homes Grant Scheme</b>	Maximum of £20,000 per unit	50 units (on the basis of receiving maximum grant)  As part of the grant conditions, the 50 units should be occupied by the homeless, those on the housing waiting list, social services clients or local residents.	Yes – many have shown an interest in receiving a grant  25 applicants on a waiting list	£200k per year million grant funding and officer time administrating the grant	Residents of Gwynedd are housed for a period of 5 years.  Grant repayment (on sliding scale) if the property is sold within 5 years of receipt.
<b>2. Interest Free Loan Scheme, based on the Welsh Government Loan Scheme</b>	Maximum of £25,000 per unit	40 (on the basis of receiving maximum loan, this figure could be higher if smaller loans were issued)	Scheme has not been advertised widely due to limited funding.	£250k per year grant funding and officer time administrating the loan process.	Investment on loan will be constantly being recycled and recovered over 7 years.  15% administrative fee.
<b>3. First Time Buyers Mortgage Deposit Scheme</b>	Maximum of £30,000 per unit	33 (on the basis of receiving maximum loan, this figure could be higher if smaller loans were issued)	Yes – many have shown an interest in receiving a deposit loan	£250 k per year grant funding and officer time administrating the loan process. £2.5k Street UK administration fee.	Loan money repaid to Council within 7 years.  If the lenders do not pay the loan back to the Council by the 7th year the debt will turn into an 'equity share loan' based on the value of the property.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

We believe that the report clearly demonstrates the increase in activity over recent years and the obvious contribution the Empty Homes scheme has made in many areas. We believe that the initiative provides good value as any investment from the council is being maximized by other funds.

There are opportunities to do more but the level of outputs is dependent on the initial commitment of the council. Looking at the future there are opportunities to consider reinvestment of any additional money from the Second Homes Council Tax and Empty Property Tax scheme to assist in that work and proposals will be submitted for the Cabinet to consider.

The Unit has developed expertise in the field and has strived to make the Council and the people of Gwynedd benefit in different ways.



Meeting	Care Scrutiny Committee
Date	21 September 2017
Subject	Health in Blaenau Ffestiniog
Chairman	Cllr Eryl Jones Williams, Chairman of the Care Scrutiny Committee
Author	Gareth James, Member Manager - Support and Scrutiny

## Background

1. An Extraordinary Meeting of the Care Scrutiny Committee was held on 4 September 2017 following on from the following notice of motion that was submitted by Councillor Glyn Daniels to a meeting of the full Council on 15 June, 2017:

**"I propose that Gwynedd Council supports the Hospital Defence Committee and the residents of Blaenau Ffestiniog to press on Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and relevant authorities to ensure that appropriate and necessary facilities are provided in the new hospital being built in the town.**

**With this I mean facilities that are usually found in local hospitals, such as an x-ray unit, minor injuries unit and a sufficient number of beds for inpatients. Given that Blaenau Ffestiniog is the third largest town in Gwynedd and also that the response of the vast majority of residents in a recent referendum insisted that the town deserved to be treated in a better way, I believe that there is no reason why the Council should not support this proposal."**

**RESOLVED to refer the matter immediately to the Care Scrutiny Committee and to discuss it as soon as possible."**

2. Representatives from Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and the Ffestiniog Memorial Hospital Defence Committee were invited to submit relevant information and evidence regarding the suitability of the proposed health provision for the residents of Blaenau Ffestiniog and surrounding area.
3. Following the discussion, six recommendations were agreed, but that the final wording of the recommendations to be presented to the next meeting of the committee for their agreement. These recommendations as follows:
  - (i) **That the Care Scrutiny Committee calls on the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board to share the full background information that was part of the original decision to change the provision of health facilities and services in the Blaenau Ffestiniog area.**

- (ii) That the Scrutiny Committee calls on the Health Board to regularly monitor information and data in relation to the effectiveness of the current health services in the Blaenau Ffestiniog area and the wellbeing of its inhabitants and to make a commitment to change the provision if there is evidence to do so. The Committee is of the opinion that it would be beneficial for this work to be done by an independent agency and that the information is presented to the attention of the Care Scrutiny Committee within a reasonable time scale.**
- (iii) Following the information submitted by the Blaenau Ffestiniog Defence Committee about the lack of response to petitions and correspondence in the past; that the Board gives detailed consideration to engagement and consultation deficiencies in the past in order to improve their arrangements for the future. The Health Board is encouraged to engage regularly and effectively with residents of the Blaenau Ffestiniog area in relation to the provision of health facilities and services locally.**
- (iv) To ask the Cabinet Member for the Environment and the Cabinet Member for Care to undertake an assessment of travel needs and obstacles of community and public services to health services in the catchment area of Ysbyty Alltwen. Whilst priority be given to this catchment area, that consideration be given to the value of holding a similar exercise in other areas.**
- (v) That the need for suitable housing for older people including the provision of extra care homes in the Blaenau Ffestiniog area be thoroughly researched jointly with the Care Cabinet Member, Housing, Leisure and Culture Cabinet Member and the Gwynedd Housing Partnership.**
- (vi) That the Scrutiny Committee calls on the Health Board and Gwynedd Council to co-operate closely and to take suitable practical steps to recruit care and health staff so that full teams are in place to maintain services in the Blaenau Ffestiniog area and across the County.**

4. Members of the Scrutiny Committee are asked to agree on the final wording.