

THE CABINET 16/01/18

Present-

Councillors: Dyfrig L. Siencyn, Mair Rowlands, Craig ab Iago, Gareth Wyn Griffith, Peredur Jenkins, Dafydd Meurig, Dilwyn Morgan, W. Gareth Roberts, Gareth Thomas and Ioan Thomas

Also present: Dilwyn Williams (Chief Executive), Morwena Edwards (Corporate Director), Iwan Trefor Jones (Corporate Director), Iwan Evans (Head of Legal Services), Dafydd Edwards (Head of Finance Department)

Item 7: Sioned Williams (Head of Economy and Community Department), Robin Evans (Project Pool Manager)

Item 8: Dewi Morgan (Revenue and Risk Senior Manager)

Item 9 and 10: Ffion Madog Evans (Senior Finance Manager)

1. APOLOGIES

Cabinet Members and Officers were welcomed to the meeting.
No apologies were received.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal 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 12 DECEMBER

The Chair signed the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 12 December 2017, as a true record.

6. INTEGRATION AGREEMENT WITHIN THE CARE AND HEALTH FIELD REGIONALLY

The item was submitted by Cllr W Gareth Roberts

RESOLVED

Resolved:

- It was resolved to agree to The Integration Agreement as set out in Appendix 1. This agreement provides the governance arrangements for Social Care Services to work in partnership across the region and to satisfy legislative requirements as noted in Part 9 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act.
- It was agreed that the Cabinet Member would approve individual agreements for specific projects unless specific implications arose which made it appropriate to seek the Cabinet's opinion on them.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted and it was noted that six Local Authorities in north Wales together with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (the Health Board) have worked together informally as a collaboration for a number of years, in order to ensure improvements for the social care field. They had collaborated since 2014 using the Collaboration Framework to agree strategically on service developments. It was expressed that the arrangements needed to be formalised in order to continue to govern correctly and in accordance with the duties set out in the Social Services and Well-being Act and the Code of Practice.

It was noted that by enabling this agreement, it would be possible to create regional combined funds, however, it was emphasised that this was not compulsory. It was reiterated that this agreement established a framework and formal guidelines for the region and did not transfer responsibilities

7. PROPOSED GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR GWYNEDD COUNCIL'S LEISURE COMPANY

The report was presented by Cllr Craig ab Iago

DECISION

Resolved:

- To delegate authority to the Head of Economy and Community Department, in consultation with the Head of Legal Services, to prepare company limited by guarantee constitutional documents incorporating the main issues and principles recommended in the report.
- To authorise the Head of Economy and Community Department, in consultation with the Head of Legal Services, to register the Company at Companies House in accordance with the Leisure Project requirements and timetable and take any necessary steps to achieve this.

- To confirm that the process of appointing a Board of Directors and Managing Director is to begin.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted noting that on 3 and 5 October, the Cabinet and the Full Council approved the establishment of a Company, limited by guarantee, managed by the Council, to provide leisure facilities in Gwynedd. It was explained that submitting the report to the Cabinet was a matter of procedure in order to begin the work of establishing the Company.

It was reiterated that the proposed terms had been submitted to the Economy and Community Scrutiny Committee on 13 December and their observations and recommendations were considered within the report.

8. DEVELOPING A NEW ASSET STRATEGY FOR THE PERIOD 2019/20 TO 2028/29

The report was presented by Cllr. Peredur Jenkins

DECISION

To approve the procedure for establishing a new asset strategy for the period 2019-20 until 2028/29 set out in clauses 18 to 21 of the report.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted and it was noted that in 2009 the Council had conducted a assessment of its likely capital needs for the next 10 years. During the same period an assessment of the capital resources available for the period was drawn up. Following the assessment, and in recognising the fact that the resources would not allow the Council to meet all capital requirements, a series of workshops were held with Council members to establish capital priorities for the coming 10 years.

As 2018/19 would be the final year of the current strategy, a new strategy would need to be established for the coming 10 years. It was noted that departments were considering their capital requirements for the coming 10 years. It was expressed that the demand was much higher than the available resources therefore there would be a need to prioritise. It was suggested to follow a similar procedure to the one that was followed last time, which was to hold a series of workshops to enable all members to express their opinion before the Cabinet would make formal recommendations to the full Council. The plan would follow the same timetable as had been noted in the report

9. REVENUE BUDGET 2017/18 - THIRD QUARTER REVIEW (DECEMBER 2017)

The report was presented by Cllr. Peredur Jenkins

DECISION

To accept the report on the third quarter review of the Revenue Budget (situation on 31 December 2017) and consider the latest situation of each department/service's budget, and ask the Cabinet Members and the relevant heads of department to take appropriate steps on matters under their leadership/management.

It was resolved that (£270k) from the underspend on Council Tax Reduction, (£12k) one-off underspend on bids and (£803k) from grants received and favourable conditions on other Council budgets, would be collected and transferred to the Financial Strategy Reserve to assist with unavoidable one-off pressures on the Council's budgets, with an element of it returned to compensate for the possible impact of school taxis overspend at year end.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted noting that this report was being submitted much earlier than usual and that this was part of a tighter procedure to close the Council's accounts at the end of the year. It was noted that the situation on the whole was similar to the situation at the end of the second quarter. It was expressed that this report reflected acceptable financial control by a number of the Council's departments, however, a combination of specific actions were recommended to the Education, Adults, Health and Well-being, Children and Supporting Families and Highways and Municipal Departments to ensure control of their budgets by 31 March 2018.

Details were provided about some Departments, specifically:

Children and Supporting Families Department:

It was expressed that the department was aware of an overspend in the department, specifically when locating placements for young people. It was noted that this was a challenging period and that the department was looking for a solution to the overspend. It was emphasised that the placements were specialist ones, therefore the numbers were low, and that it was a problem across the region's counties. It was noted that discussions were taking place regionally to discuss a way forward.

Adults, Health and Well-being Department

It was noted that the Department's problem was due to unfulfilled savings plans. It was emphasised that the Department was trying to work on a different way of working, and it was hoped that it would be possible to re-submit the savings plans packages to the Cabinet soon, and that these packages would provide better services for the residents of Gwynedd.

Education Department

It was noted that an increase in expenditure on school taxis was the main reason for the overspend. It was expressed that a consultation was being held with the Head of the Environment Department to explore different ways of providing

transport to reduce costs.

Highways and Municipal Department

It was noted, following a previous discussion at the Cabinet about overspend, the Department had successfully reduced the overspend from £600,000 to £400,000. It was emphasised that the Department was working to reduce the figure by the end of March

10. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2017/18 - THIRD QUARTER REVIEW (DECEMBER 2017)

The report was presented by Cllr Peredur Jenkins

DECISION

The report was accepted on the third quarter review (December 2017 position) of the capital programme, and the revised financing as shown in part 4 of the report was approved, that is:

- (£21,000) decrease in the use of the capital reserve
- £567,000 increase in the use of grants and contributions
- £27,000 increase in the use of capital receipts
- £71,000 increase in the use of revenue contributions
- £132,000 increase in the use of renewal funds and others

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted noting that the report was an analysis of the 2017/18 capital budgets. It was emphasised that the main conclusion was that there were firm plans in place to invest approximately £30.6m in 2017/18 with £5.8m of it funded through specific grants, which equates to 19%. The departments were thanked for ensuring that the capital plans were continuing.

Observations arising from the discussion

- Whilst looking at the revised proposed programme of the capital programme for 2017/18 to 2019/20, it was noted that capital funding reduced or there were no plans in place which would result in a reduction in capital funding. It was noted that funding levels for the future were slightly smaller, however, many reasons impacted capital funding.
- Future plans were discussed, and the importance of having mature plans in place was emphasised. It was expressed that it would be possible to receive European grants for the next two years, and the importance of having mature plans in place was noted in order to take full advantage of this funding. It was noted that the Council had a good history of successfully obtaining European funding

11. PERFORMANCE REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING, CULTURE AND LEISURE

The report was presented by Cllr. Craig ab Iago

DECISION

To accept and note the information in the report.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted, noting that he was satisfied with the performance on the whole. Attention was drawn to some specific projects. It was noted that the work of modifying and re-modelling the Youth service and the Leisure service was continuing. Development work which had been taking place at Neuadd Buddug, Y Bala, Neuadd Dwyfor, Pwllheli and Storiell in Bangor was mentioned.

It was emphasised that priority had been given to the Joint-effort Against Poverty project, and specifically the collaboration with external partners, to work together as the county progressed towards Universal Credit. It was emphasised that the Universal Credit scheme had slipped slightly, and the service would be rolled out to the Jobcentre Plus across Gwynedd (except Caernarfon) in July rather than March as was initially planned. It was reiterated that staff were being trained in order to deal with any problems that may arise as a result of Universal Credit.

It was emphasised that good work was being undertaken by the homelessness unit, in addition to this a Multi Agency Board had been specifically created to look at housing. It was noted that the first meeting had been held and that it had been positive and constructive.

Generally, the Members were happy with the performance. It was noted that work was being undertaken with the departments in order to consider meaningful measures. It was expressed that the measures needed to be clear that could be understood by Gwynedd residents, and that work was being undertaken to look at these measures.

Observations arising from the discussion

- The Homelessness Unit was discussed and it was noted that cases were increasing. It was expressed that there had been a decline in the meters, but that the Government's expectations were much higher although there had been a reduction in the level of funding. It was noted that the Unit was succeeding but that there was much work to be done. It was emphasised that it was a national problem, but that Gwynedd on the whole was performing well nationally

12. PERFORMANCE REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The item was submitted by Cllr. Ioan Thomas

DECISION

To accept and note the information in the report.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted and it was noted that the Member was happy on the whole with the performance of the majority of projects and that every one was on the right track. Attention was drawn to specific projects. It was expressed in regards to High Value and Quality Jobs that the work programme was continuing, and that since the previous report that 10 high value jobs had been created in the County and that 92 high value jobs had been safeguarded. It was noted that many of the jobs had been created/safeguarded in the Arfon area, and that the main reason for this was because the high value sectors were more developed in Arfon. However, foundations were being set to enable significant developments in the Meirionnydd and Dwyfor areas.

Digital Gwynedd was discussed, and it was noted that there were some delays in the new scheme which is under way by the Government, but a confirmation had been received recently confirming that Superfast Cymru 2 will begin in 2018. By now, 86% of homes and businesses received superfast broadband in the county.

In regards to the Work Heritage Site project, it was noted that work was continuing in Harlech and Caernarfon. It was noted that the work of supporting local partners in Harlech to respond to the needs had taken a step forward with a report on Prioritising Strategic Opportunities in the area now concluded. It was also noted that the County had successfully attracted investment for the Red Bull Hardline Mountain Biking Event in Dinas Mawddwy.

Observations arising from the discussion

- The Gwynedd Digital scheme was discussed. He noted that he was aware that at the end of this scheme, that individuals could get in touch to request broadband in an individual house. It was asked if there was a resource within the Council for groups to come together to submit an application for a specific area. It was emphasised that it was the intention of the second phase to secure faster internet to those areas which were yet to receive it. It was confirmed that data was available about those areas which still do not receive broadband - in order to target these areas during the next phase

13. PERFORMANCE REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

The report was presented by Cllr. W Gareth Roberts

DECISION

To accept and note the information in the report.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted and attention was drawn to the fact that the Cabinet Member was more than happy with the Department's performance. It was noted that firm arrangements were in place and the Head of Department and Staff were thanked for their hard work.

Some specific projects were highlighted. It was noted that the process of integrated working between Gwynedd Council staff and the Health Board was now transferring to the new structure. Much has been learnt by creating the integrated teams and implementing the principles of Ffordd Gwynedd and these were now showing results. It was expressed that there had been some slippage in the construction timetable of the Extra Care Housing in Porthmadog. Despite this, 58 applications had been accepted for the scheme which has 40 flats.

As noted in the previous report, staff recruitment continues to be an increasing problem. In terms of Phase 2 of the Llys Cadfan project, there was a risk that the Health Board would fail to recruit nurses in the area which would impact the scheme's full potential. The Department was continuing to endeavour to attract staff and keep staff, and it was added that this was a problem which could also be seen in the private sector. The importance of carers was acknowledged and it was noted that steps had been taken to incorporate carers' support work into the well-being / preventative agenda.

When looking at performance, attention was drawn to the rate of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons, which has seen an improvement in the performance. Only one case of delay had been recorded in October. It was noted that it was positive that there was an ongoing increase in the percentage of cases that had received a period of enablement, with an increase in the percentage who have completed an enablement package and can cope and live at home. It was noted that the department was busy trying to ensure that the needs of the residents were at the centre of everything they did.

Observations arising from the discussion

- The Extra Care Housing in Porthmadog was discussed. It was enquired as to why there was a need for marketing when 58 applications had been received for 40 flats. It was noted that there was a need to ensure that the needs of the individuals matched the flats, therefore, it was likely that not all applicants would qualify for one of these flats.
- It was noted whilst discussing integrated working that Ysbyty Alltwen had been successful, and it was asked where the next integrated work developments would be taking place. It was explained that the county had been divided into five areas and that every area was following a different path, it was noted that in south Meirionnydd that the principles had been strongly established within the team.
- The shortage of nurses and the recruitment problem in the area was discussed. It was expressed that perhaps this was a key matter and

that cross-service collaboration was needed to examine the situation. It was noted that Brexit would be a threat as the area was dependent on movement of nurses from abroad. It was emphasised that recruiting in rural areas was a worse problem and that the majority of nurses were more eager to work in hospitals rather than Residential Homes. It was noted that work needed to be done to improve the image of nurses in care homes. It was added that this was a national problem, and that the Care Council for Wales should assist with the matter

14. SAVINGS OVERVIEW: PROGRESS REPORT ON REALISING SAVING SCHEMES

The report was presented by Cllr. Peredur Jenkins

DECISION

To note the encouraging progress towards realising the 2015/16 - 2017/18 savings schemes.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted and it was noted that the Council's Financial Strategy for 2017/18 had planned £7,414,751 of savings for the year. It was noted that the current forecasts in terms of realising plans noted that from the 122 plans, 103 had been fully or partly realised, and seven were now on track to be realised in a timely manner. When looking at the 2016/17 departmental plans, it was noted that 99% of the savings had now been realised.

It was noted that the Adults Department would submit a report outlining their plans to combine a number of individual plans to be submitted in February 2018. As a result of this, it could be predicted that a significant amount of the savings within the 2017/18 plans would be realised in a timely manner. It was noted that one of the Highways and Municipal Department's plans was a cause for concern, however steps were being undertaken to submit a report to the Scrutiny Committee to consider the situation.

Generally, the Member was happy with the progress that had been done to realise what had slipped in the historic plans, and that the predictions in terms of the 2017/18 plans were promising on the whole.

The meeting commenced at 13:00 and concluded at 14:30

CHAIRMAN