

THE CABINET 13/03/18

Present-

Councillors: 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), Iwan Evans (Head of Legal Services), Dafydd Edwards (Head of Finance Department)

Item 6: Garem Jackson (Head of Education Department), Diane Jones (Gwynedd Area Education Officer), Hedd Morlais Tomos (Schools Organisation Programme Manager)

Item 7: Sioned Williams (Head of Economy and Community Department), Catrin Thomas (Senior Community Learning Manager), Nia Morris

Item 8: Aled Davies (Head of Adults, Health and Well-being Department)

Item 9: Aled Davies (Head of Adults, Health and Well-being Department), Rhion Glyn (Senior Business Manager), Erin Fôn Jones (Category Manager)

Item 10: Geraint Owen (Head of Corporate Support Department)

Item 11: Dewi Wyn Jones (The Council's Business Support Service Manager)

Item 12: Dewi Morgan (Senior Manager - Revenue and Risk)

Item 13: Gwenllïan Mair Williams (Welsh Language Services Manager)

Item 14: Aled Davies (Head of Adults, Health and Well-being Department)

1. APOLOGIES

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

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Item 6 - The Future of Primary Education Provision in the Bangor Catchment Area

A declaration of interest was received from Cllr Dafydd Meurig as his sister ran the nursery on the Ysgol y Faenol site. It was a prejudicial interest and he left the meeting for this item.

The Local Member for the above item - Cllr Richard Medwyn Hughes - declared an interest as he was a Governor of Ysgol Coedmawr and Ysgol Glanadda. It was not a prejudicial interest and therefore he was able to express his view.

Item 7 - Remodelling the Youth Service

A declaration of interest was received from Cllr W. Gareth Roberts, as his son-in-law was employed by the Service. It was a prejudicial interest and he left the meeting.

Item 12 - Discretionary Relief from Non Domestic Rates

A declaration of interest was received from Cllr Dyfrig Siencyn, Cllr Mair Rowlands, Cllr Peredur Jenkins and the Head of Finance, Dafydd Edwards, as they were trustees or directors of various clubs and enterprises which received rates relief. Iwan Evans, the Monitoring Officer provided advice on the personal interests and emphasised that they were not prejudicial interests, and therefore the members and officer had the right to take part in the discussion.

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 MEETINGS HELD ON 13 FEBRUARY 2018

The Chairman signed the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 13 February 2018, as a true record.

6. FUTURE OF PRIMARY EDUCATION PROVISION IN THE BANGOR CATCHMENT AREA

The item was submitted by Cllr. Gareth Thomas

RESOLVED

Resolved:

- i. To hold a statutory consultation, in accordance with Section 48 Schools Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013, in the Bangor catchment area on the proposal to close Ysgol Glanadda and Ysgol Coedmawr on 31 August 2020, and offer a place to the pupils at Ysgol y Garnedd (subject to parental choice); and increase the capacity of Ysgol y Garnedd to 420.
- ii. To hold a pre-consultation with the Church in Wales regarding increasing the capacity of Ysgol y Faenol to 315 in accordance with the School Organisation Code 2013 requirements and report on the results to the Cabinet.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted noting that the purpose of the report was to seek permission to proceed to hold a statutory consultation in relation to the process

of reorganising schools in the Bangor area. It was added that at the end of 2016, Welsh Government had announced that there was an opportunity for Local Authorities with the capacity, to apply for further funding to fulfil additional projects within Band A of the 21st Century Schools Programme. Following submitting a request, the Education Department had received confirmation that funding had been agreed in principle.

In addition to this, there was a new housing development in Bangor. One of the planning conditions when the application had been approved was that the company would commit to contributing funding towards primary-age education provision in Bangor. By combining funding from Welsh Government and the Housing Development Company, there was a budget of approximately £13.8m.

It was noted that work had been done to look at potential options, and it was noted that, of the nine Primary Schools in Bangor, two schools had high numbers over capacity and two were fairly empty. The Department's preferred option would need to be consulted upon. The preferred option was to increase the capacity of Ysgol y Faenol, build a new school for Ysgol y Garnedd and increase the capacity from 210 to 420 and close Ysgol Coedmawr and Ysgol Glanadda.

Observations arising from the discussion

- Observations were made by the Local Members who noted that they congratulated the Council on receiving this money. He suggested that the Department revised the options and that he favoured option 10, namely to increase the capacity at Ysgol y Faenol, provide a new school and increase the capacity of Ysgol y Garnedd and adapt the Ysgol Glanadda site to receive children from Ysgol Coedmawr. He noted that the level of education at Ysgol Glanadda and Ysgol Coedmawr had been in the red category, but since the arrival of the acting Headteacher, the school had been raised to the orange category.
- The Local Members added that it was a mistake to go for option 3 as Ysgol Cae Top and Ysgol Glancegin, which had been developed over the previous eight years, were already over capacity. With the wards growing and more demand for housing for families the numbers at the schools would continue to increase.
- There was a discussion around safety for children on the way to the school; it was noted that the road was a busy one but that children travelled along it every day. In addition, the traffic problem which already existed on the roads was discussed, as there were five schools and a Hospital in the same area.
- It was emphasised that it was important to listen to and discuss with local members and local people, and also to remember about the *Mudiad Meithrin*

7. RE-MODELLING THE YOUTH SERVICE

The report was submitted by Cllr Craig ab Iago

DECISION

Resolved:

- i. To approve the adoption of the County Youth Club model, Option 3 with the amendments outlined in paragraph 10.1 of the report for the re-modelling of the Youth Service
- ii. To approve the re-profiling of £24,800 of the savings from 2018/19 to 2019/20 to allow some funding for the voluntary organisations in 2018/19 as set out in part 10.4.3 of the report.
- iii. To commit the Cabinet Member for Housing, Leisure and Culture to report back to the Cabinet every four months on the progress of the service

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted and it was noted that there were many reasons for remodelling the Youth Service. It was noted that Welsh Government expected Gwynedd Council to remodel the service. In addition, following the Gwynedd Challenge consultation, the Full Council resolved to cut £200,000 from the Service's budget, together with achieving an efficiency target of £70,000. Consequently, it was noted that it was impossible for the service to continue with the current structure.

A consultation was undertaken with young people, who had noted that they wanted a different model. The new structure would be pioneering and exciting which would provide the same youth provision to every young person across the county.

It was added that there were negative elements to the restructuring, as some of the young people wanted to continue to attend their local youth club. It was also noted that grants to support voluntary organisations working in the field would end in nine months' time.

Observations arising from the discussion

- It was noted that engagement work had been carried out with the young people and that over 3,000 had taken part. The consultation emphasised that young people wanted a youth worker that was available regularly.
- Travelling was one of the main problems for young people, and how it would be possible to access the service. This model would ensure that the youth worker would go out to the young people rather than the young people going to the worker.
- Some areas wanted the clubs to continue in their communities; it was noted that local engagement work was needed to see whether the Community Councils were eager to take on the club or volunteers. It was added that staff would be available to provide assistance and support volunteers.
- The timeframe was discussed and it was noted that the provision ended annually in April and recommenced in September, and this cycle would be emulated. The clubs would close in April and the new provision would commence in September. This would give an opportunity for the department to dismantle the old structure and to identify local needs and to discuss with partners.
- The importance of youth to the county was stressed, and the importance

of keeping the young people here. It was believed that the new service would be able to collaborate closely with the Children and Supporting Families Department.

- It was noted that stopping the grants to support the voluntary organisations would be difficult, as the two principal organisations did a lot of good work. The members acknowledged the organisations' good work and asked officers to work closely with the organisations. It was noted that, once the youth service would be aware of the type of activity that young people would want in each area, the activities could then be commissioned.
- It was added that the Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture and Leisure would need to report on the progress of the service to the Cabinet every four months.

8. PARLIAMENTARY REVIEW OF HEALTH AND CARE IN WALES

The report was submitted by Cllr Dilwyn Morgan and Cllr W. Gareth Roberts

DECISION

Resolved:

- i. To accept the report and appendix and acknowledge the alignment of the plans which are already in the Council's Corporate Plan with the reference noted in the review.
- ii. To request that the Leader and Chief Executive contact Welsh Government directly, in addition to Assembly Members and the WLGA to highlight the question of how it will be possible to proceed following the review.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted, noting that the Parliamentary Review confirmed that the changes undertaken by the Children and Supporting Families Department and the Adults, Health and Well-being Department were going in the right direction. It was added that the Council was seen as a pioneering Authority.

It was noted that the integrated working in the departments had been included as good practices. It was expressed that the department showed the way forward clearly, emphasising that decisions needed to be kept local. Despite this, many discussions were national ones, but that the work needed to start locally. It was added that the timeframe to report back was tight, and that this was a cause of concern. It was noted that it was important not to rush and to ensure that we were clear on what needed to be changed regionally and that these were intertwined.

Observations arising from the discussion

- It was noted that this was only the start of the journey but that the report underlined that Gwynedd was ahead of the game. It was added that the Williams Report raised concerns and the timeframe was tight.
- There was a need for a discussion with the Assembly Members in order to build on the report and ensure that it was citizen-centric. There was a

need to emphasise that a measured response was needed and to pay attention to ensure a solution to the recommendations. It was added that the Chief Executive and Leader would send a message to the Government, Assembly Members and the WLGA to highlight the question of how it would be possible to proceed following the review

9. NORTH WALES POPULATION ASSESSMENT REGIONAL PLAN 2018 TO 2023

The report was submitted by Cllr W Gareth Roberts.

DECISION

To approve the North Wales Population Assessment Regional Plan 2018 to 2023

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted, noting that it was a requirement to approve the Regional Plan to ensure that the Council complied with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. It was emphasised that this was a regional plan and a live document which would evolve over time, but the question was asked in relation to how a Local Assessment would come in to this.

It was noted that the Plan had followed the order of the act of creating a joint regional plan and then creating a local one. In future, it may be an idea to undertake a Local Assessment to begin with and then combine them to create a regional one. There was certainty that a Local Assessment was available for the county, however, local aspects to Gwynedd were seen in the Regional Plan.

Observations arising from the discussion

- It was noted that the Plan was easy to read, but nonetheless it highlighted that the Regional Transformation Structure was unclear.
- It was added that the obvious differences between working regionally and locally in the Act and the Parliamentary Review caused tension.

10. AMENDMENTS TO THE COUNCIL'S LOCAL CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

The report was submitted by Cllr Mair Rowlands

DECISION

To approve the proposed amendments to the Council's Local Conditions of Service.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted and the proposed changes to the Local Conditions of

Service were noted. It was noted that discussions had been held with the recognised unions since October 2015; nevertheless, it was not possible to ensure a collective agreement in order to realise the saving because the Unison National Office would not allow any local branch to hold a ballot on a proposal relating to a deterioration in conditions of service.

It was added that consultation with staff had been carried out and 116 of the 6,000 had responded, and the main responses were noted. It was emphasised that Community Social Carers would not be included in the amendment to reimburse travelling expenses as their home was their place of work. In addition, gritting and highways workers would not be included in the condition to reduce the payment to be on duty outside normal working hours.

Despite this, many of the observations received reflected the general opinion, namely that the package in question, though not desirable, was a step that needed to be taken.

Observations arising from the discussion

- Appreciation was noted of the close collaboration between Council and Union staff.

11. GWYNEDD COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE STATUTORY CONSULTATION ON THE GWYNEDD AND ANGLESEY DRAFT WELL-BEING PLAN

The report was submitted by Cllr Dyfrig Siencyn

DECISION

To approve the draft response which has been prepared on behalf of the Council to the Statutory Consultation on the Gwynedd and Anglesey Draft Well-being Plan.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted and it was noted that the Gwynedd and Anglesey Draft Well-being Plan had been published. It was added that the Communities Scrutiny Committee had scrutinised the Plan and that its responses had been incorporated within the draft response submitted. It was outlined that the response noted that some elements within the well-being objectives and priorities needed to be strengthened and that there was insufficient information in the plan about the implementation methods.

It was noted that the response was fair and that the next step for the Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board would be to determine how the plan could be executed.

Observations arising from the discussion

- It was noted that the priorities were to have healthy communities and to

empower the communities. It was added that it was important to ensure that there was no duplication and that there would be collaboration on how the objectives would be delivered

12. DISCRETIONARY RELIEF FROM NON DOMESTIC RATES

The report was submitted by Cllr Peredur Jenkins

DECISION

To adopt the Framework for Awarding Discretionary Relief from Non Domestic Rates that appears in Appendix 1 to the report.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted, noting that it was timely for the Council to conduct a comprehensive review of its policy on Discretionary Relief, as the framework had been established for some years and there was a need to ensure it remained relevant in light of legislative changes. In September 2017, the Audit and Governance Committee agreed to establish a Working Group to review the existing Framework. The Group had met twice and the outcome was that the Group was satisfied with the framework in place on the whole, but some adaptations were highlighted.

All the adaptations were elaborated upon, which included abolishing the additional relief for Organisations of Special Interest for those that have registered as a charity but without a local connection. These adaptations were as a result of agreeing in principle that the Gwynedd taxpayers' money should not pay to meet the tax deficit when there was no local benefit. In addition, the recommendation of the Working Group was noted that the discretionary additional relief given by default to the properties of the National Trust, the RSPCA and the RSPB should cease. It was explained that the justification for this was that these national charities should not be dealt with differently from other charities, and, consequently, the properties of these charities, like everyone else, would have to be considered on merit.

13. GWYNEDD LANGUAGE STRATEGY 2018

The report was submitted by Cllr Mair Rowlands.

DECISION

To approve the consultation version of the Welsh Language Strategy 2018.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted, noting that agreement was needed on the content of

the strategy and the priorities, and that they were in keeping with the priorities identified in other plans such as the Council Plan. It was added that the strategy needed to note a target for increasing or maintaining the number of Welsh-speakers in the county.

It was emphasised that the Council was a pioneer in terms of the language strategy in Wales, and that the language policy showed the Council's commitment to the language. It was added that the strategy built on the work of promoting the use of the Welsh language. It was noted that the strategy needed to go to public consultation during March and April and that the outcome of the consultation would be discussed in April. The intention was for the strategy to return to the Cabinet in June, before going to the Full Council in July.

14. ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELLBEING DEPARTMENT'S PROGRAMME OF SAVINGS

The report was submitted by Cllr W. Gareth Roberts.

DECISION

Resolved:

- a) To combine some schemes (that have already been approved) to work streams that are achieving savings from the same budgets and re-profiling equivalent to £270,000 of the 2018/19 to 2019/20 savings as outlined in part 7 of the report.
- b) To increase the savings target in some areas that are achieving more than the original target, £195,000 in 2018/19 and £200,000 in 2019/20, as outlined in part 8 of the report.
- c) To increase the savings target from new schemes, £390,000 in 2018/19 and £570,000 in 2019/20, as outlined in part 9 of the report.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted noting the proposed programme of savings. It was noted that the previous programme of savings had slipped as a result of a change in the care field nationally. Following time to restructure and rationalise the programme, new schemes had been proposed. It was added that it was possible for the department to achieve more than the original target in some fields.

However, it was noted that the challenge continued, as some schemes would have to be slipped. It was emphasised that the department's intention was to commission differently and change the service rather than reducing the available service.

Observations arising from the discussion

- It was confirmed that these savings would address the historical targets, but that further savings for the Council would be seen in the future, and it was noted that the department anticipated that it would be possible to

build on the proposed programme

15. WELSH GOVERNMENT'S TAXATION POWERS

The report was submitted by Cllr Dyfrig Siencyn

DECISION

To respond favourably to Welsh Government's intention to introduce new taxes, whilst noting observations made in the discussion and specifically the desire for local features to be emphasised in the regime.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted and it was noted that Welsh Government had the right to legislate to obtain new taxes. It was added that the item was an opportunity to discuss the proposals and to decide on the next steps forward. Each of the taxes was considered individually.

Vacant Land Tax

In principle, the tax would be useful which would act as an end to large companies sitting on lands for long periods of time. It was added that more information was needed and that it was difficult to define it. It was noted that this was already happening in Ireland.

Social Care Levy

It was suggested that this may be valuable, as the population lived longer and needed support, so it would be possible to use it to address the demand on the service.

Disposable Plastic Tax

It was noted that a notice of motion had been made at the Full Council regarding Disposable Plastic. It was asked that as this would be a national tax how much could be claimed in Gwynedd. It was noted that a request would have to be made to devolve the money and distribute it on a local level.

Tourism Tax

Support was expressed to the tax, emphasising that it was seen as a local tax abroad at present. It was added that it was not a very high tax but businesses would need to see the local advantages of doing it.

In terms of the proposals, it was noted that there was support for all of them, but that more information was needed and the aspect of a local tax needed to be emphasised. A response would be drawn up based on the discussion.

To respond favourably to Welsh Government's intention to introduce new taxes, whilst noting observations made in the discussion and specifically the desire for local features to be emphasised in the regime.

The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm and concluded at 3.45 pm

CHAIRMAN