

THE CABINET 2/10/18

Present-

Councillors: Dyfrig L. Siencyn, Dafydd Meurig, Craig ab Iago, Gareth Wyn Griffith, Nia Wyn Jeffreys, Peredur Jenkins, Dilwyn Morgan, Gareth Thomas and Ioan Thomas

Also present:

Dilwyn Williams (Chief Executive), Iwan Evans (Monitoring Officer), Dewi Morgan (Senior Manager - Revenue and Risk) and Morwena Edwards (Corporate Director).

Item 5: Ceryl Davies (Senior Manager - Complex Needs)

Item 6: Marian Parry Hughes (Head of Children and Supporting Families Department)

1. APOLOGIES

Cabinet Members and Officers were welcomed to the meeting.

An apology was received from Cllr W Gareth Roberts and Aled Davies (Head of Adults, Health and Well-being Department)

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. PERFORMANCE REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The report was submitted by Morwena Edwards

RESOLVED

To accept and note the information in the report.

DISCUSSION

The report was presented and it was noted that the department's performance was positive on the whole. It was added that the department had an ambitious challenge and it was emphasised that it was not possible for the department to

fulfil its challenges without the support of its partners. It was emphasised that what mattered to the individual motivated the service and it was now the department's principal measure. It was stressed that this was a new measure but that it was not easy to compare performance against previous years.

Attention was drawn to Community Resilience noting that five teams worked on a cross-departmental and cross-organisational basis which made it easier for people to continue living independently in their communities.

It was noted that the main work was transferring people to the community following a period in hospital. It was added that the main problem for the field was obtaining care packages due to a lack of capacity in homes and staff recruitment issues.

It was noted that work was being done to examine the workforce and to recruit within the Care field. It was added that a piece of work was being commissioned in order to improve the department's understanding of recruitment problems. It was reiterated that a domiciliary care project had been operational in Bethesda which had been working in a different way.

Attention was drawn to the results of the National Questionnaire which showed that Gwynedd's performance compared well against the performance of Wales. It was emphasised that the questionnaire had drawn attention to the need to support carers, and it was added that a Regional Carers Strategy was currently being developed.

Observations arising from the discussion

- Recruitment was discussed noting that we had been discussing this field since January and that it seemed that we could not get to the bottom of the matter so we could put actions in place; we also needed to consider whether or not this matter was being given sufficient priority. It was noted that work was being done on the paper and it was hoped that a report would soon be submitted.
- It was noted that arrangements to measure whether or not savings schemes were successful depended on the budget review rather than an analysis of the financial value of the individual steps being taken and it was challenged whether there was a need for more refined arrangements. It was noted that this would be addressed.
- Attention was drawn to the tables noting that one emphasised 'targets'. It was noted that this did not correspond with Ffordd Gwynedd principles as we should not be aiming towards quantitative targets unless they had a real critical meaning.
- A discussion was held on the closure of the Penisarwaun Residential Home at short notice, it was enquired how much attention the department gave to Private Residential Homes. It was noted that Care Inspectorate Wales would monitor financial matters and that they were not obliged to share information with the Council. However, it was added that a visit had been held a week prior to the closure of the Home and that no problems had been highlighted.

6. PERFORMANCE REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND SUPPORTING FAMILIES

The item was submitted by Cllr Dilwyn Morgan

RESOLVED

To accept and note the information in the report.

DISCUSSION

The report was presented and it was noted that the general practice and performance in the Field of Children was robust on the whole. It was noted that a Full Inspection Report by the Care Inspectorate Wales confirmed the performance of the department. It was added that the report noted that the service had substantial strengths and a committed and robust workforce. It was added that the inspection had identified four fields for development but that these corresponded with priorities in the Council Plan.

Attention was drawn to the review of the 'End to End' scheme, noting that the number of residential placements had decreased. Although numbers were reducing, it was stressed that the inspection had not taken the increase in placement costs into consideration. It was reiterated that this was the main reason for the department's overspend and it was added that a specific report on this was being prepared by the department, on a joint basis with the Finance Department, to explain the matter in more detail.

The department's priorities were emphasised noting that they corresponded with the three improvement plans included in the Council Plan. It was added that the initial work of the Gwynedd Supporting Families Strategy had commenced and that the department had identified the demand for support for families and had also mapped what provision was available. It was expressed that an initial discussion with key partners would have taken place by the next reporting Cycle about the Strategy.

Attention was drawn to the fact that Tackling Poverty work had now been transferred to the Children and Supporting Families Department. As the timetable for introducing Universal Credit in the county had slipped, it was added that the project would live up to the end of March in order to support people to cope with the changes.

It was noted that it was encouraging to see the Care Inspectorate Wales describing the Corporate Parent Panel as ambitious for the Looked after Children. It was added that further work had taken place to attempt to identify where there was a need to improve and identify good practice through the established task groups. Concern was expressed that just over half of elected members had attended the 'Corporate Parenting' training, and it was noted that more sessions would be held in order for members to understand their responsibilities in the field.

Observations arising from the discussion

- It was noted that the department was now examining their measures and their purpose as some measures had now been abolished as you did not measure data that was important to Gwynedd residents.
- The cost of out-of-county placements was discussed and it was asked whether or not there was anything the department could do to avoid the costs. It was noted that numbers had reduced as more support was available at home. It was added that there was an increase in cost as problems that needed to be dealt with within placements were more complex which consequently led to providers charging a higher amount. It was added that this was a national problem and that a regional discussion to look into the matter was being held.
- Attention was drawn to the fact that overspend within the department was not a new problem and the question was raised whether or not the budgetary presumption at the beginning of the financial year was accurate. It was expressed that it was not possible to anticipate the number of young people who would require out-of-county placements, nor the increase in costs, and that setting a robust budget for the department was difficult as a result. It was added that the Head of Finance Department and the Research and Analytics Service were currently looking into inflation levels used in budgets and other comparative information.

The meeting commenced at 1:00pm and concluded at 1:50pm

CHAIRMAN