

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



Report to a meeting of Gwynedd Council Cabinet

Date:	5 September 2017
Title of Item:	Performance Report of the Deputy Leader
Purpose:	To accept and note the information in the report
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Mair Rowlands
Contact Officer:	Dilwyn Williams, Chief Executive

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update my fellow members on what has been achieved in the fields within my remit as Deputy Leader. This includes outlining the latest developments of promises within the Council's Plan; where we have reached with measuring performance; and the latest in terms of the savings and cuts schemes.
- 1.2 I will remind you that all matters have already been the subject of discussions and have been scrutinised at a meeting of the Corporate Support Department, which also included a representation from the Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.3 On the whole, I am happy with the progress of the Strategic Plan's projects and the performance measures for which I am responsible.

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THE DECISION SOUGHT

- 2.1 To accept and note the information in the report.
- 2.2 Ask the relevant Cabinet Members to challenge the work progress of the Language Audit within the Gwynedd Consultancy Department and the Economy and Community (Leisure) Department as outlined in 4.4.6.

THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

- 3.1 In order to ensure effective performance management.

STRATEGIC PLAN PROJECTS

Poverty, Economy, Housing

4.1 T2 Keeping the Benefit Local

- 4.1.1 The work of establishing the category teams has continued during recent months, and they are currently in the process of establishing a portrait of all the fields the Council scrutinise with the intention of submitting a savings plans soon. In addition, the work has continued to raise awareness amongst local companies of tendering opportunities, offers of support and reducing barriers.
- 4.1.2 This work is now part of the Scrutiny Unit's core work, therefore I will not be reporting upon it as a separate project in the future.

The Welsh Language

4.2 I1 Communities promoting the Welsh Language

- 4.2.1 This project is still ongoing in the communities of Bangor, Dolgellau and Porthmadog/Pwllheli; a summary of the main activities can be seen below. You are reminded that the work programme for this project has been agreed upon jointly with Welsh Government which funds the work via Hunaniaith.

4.2.2 Bangor

- There has only been a slight increase in this work during recent months due to the sickness absence of the Popdy Development Officer (Bangor's Language Initiative Centre).

4.2.3 Dolgellau

- 'Gig y Gwylia' was arranged by Dolgellau's Entertainment Initiative on 23 June and was attended by 92 young people under 18 years old. In addition, a questionnaire has been completed by Ysgol y Gader pupils in regards to their use of the Welsh language and social activities, with the intention of collaborating with groups that arrange activities to increase the use of the language amongst young people.
- Activities to assimilate Welsh speakers and learners were continued with, and a 'Cawl a Chân' evening was held at the end of April which was attended by 23 individuals, including nine learners.

4.2.4 Porthmadog/Pwllheli

- Hunaniaith has been collaborating on a project with 60 tourism sector businesses in the area in order to map their use of the Welsh language with the intention of increasing the use of the language.

4.3 **I2 - The Welsh language and public services**

- 4.3.1 A meeting between senior managers and public organisations' language officers was held during April, where an open and honest discussion was had in regards to the ambitions of this project. It became clear that there are some differing opinions within the culture of some of the organisations, and in terms of their interpretation of responsibilities in providing bilingual services.
- 4.3.2 As an initial step, it was agreed upon to work with Bangor University to produce a training and development pack to enable staff to do more to encourage the use of the language when interacting with customers.
- 4.3.3 As the officer who has been leading this project within the Council on behalf of the Public Services Board has retired, I have asked for a confirmation in regards to project's leadership for the future.

4.4 **I4 Audit of the Welsh Language's situation in Gwynedd Council**

- 4.4.1 During recent months, the project's work has focused on two Departments, namely Gwynedd Consultancy and Economy and Community.
- 4.4.2 By the end of June, language awareness sessions had been held with the majority of Gwynedd Consultancy's staff, with feedback already suggesting a change in attitude, more consideration in regards to using the language and clear leadership by managers in terms of the Welsh language. In addition, six Language Champions have been nominated to challenge negative attitudes and identify individuals who need support.
- 4.4.3 The progress has been somewhat slower in the Economy and Community (Leisure) Department. Whilst language awareness sessions have been held with staff from three Leisure Centres (from the four that had been prioritised) it was not possible to reach all targeted staff as a result of the Leisure Centres' staff rotas.
- 4.4.4 However, needs have already been identified in two Leisure Centres (Tywyn and Bangor) to develop verbal skills; training sessions will be held soon. In addition, it is also intended to hold a training session in order to support staff to be more confident in conducting bilingual activities.
- 4.4.5 In the future, we'll be looking to progress the work within the Adult, Health and Wellbeing and Environment Departments and I'll be reporting on this in my next performance report.
- 4.4.6 In order to ensure ownership within the Departments, I suggest that the relevant Cabinet Member should challenge the project's progress within the performance challenge meetings. Following this, an overview of the project's progress in its entirety will be presented to the performance challenge meeting in my field in order to enable me to ensure that the progress is in accordance with what is expected. I will continue to report on the project's progress as part of my performance reports.

Delivering the Plan

4.5 FfG1 Implementing the Ffordd Gwynedd Project

- 4.5.1 The review within the Highways and Municipal Department has now reached the experimental stage and is looking at new ways of working in the Meirionnydd area with the intention of adopting what work best across the county. Improvements have already been seen, such as changes to the arrangements of emptying gutters which has led to a reduction in the amount of time it takes to complete the work, as well as using cheaper fuel in the gritting machines.
- 4.5.2 In addition, two further reviews have just commenced in the Registration Section within the Environment Department and the Income and Welfare Section within the Adults, Health and Well-being Department. Further reviews will take place within the Maritime and Leisure Department over the coming months and within the Planning and Building Control Services before the end of 2017/18. I will update you on their developments in future reports.
- 4.5.3 We have now commenced training sessions for the the Council's Managers. These sessions will mean that all Council managers will have been immersed in the principles of Ffordd Gwynedd, ensuring that they all have an understanding of the relevant concepts and what they can do to disseminate the mindset within their units. The intention is that all Managers will have completed the course by the end of 2017/18.

4.6 FfG2 Leaders Development Programme

- 4.6.1 As you will be aware, an informal meeting was held with Cabinet Members during July in order to discuss their development needs. Many work streams have been identified as a result of this discussion which will form a revised development programme for Cabinet Members.
- 4.6.2 I am faithful that this programme will set a firm foundation, but, as a further step I have asked the Project Leader to consider how we could look at jointly developing leadership between the Cabinet and the Corporate Management Team.
- 4.6.3 Work to develop a definition of 'leadership' is continuing. I have suggested to expand the membership of the Project Group to include individuals who understand the principles of Ffordd Gwynedd in order to ensure that they intertwine before further consultation on the definition.

4.7 FfG3 Consultation

- 4.7.1 During recent months, work has continued to recruit young people to be on-line members of Gwynedd's Youth Panel; there are now 300 members. Work is also

ongoing to examine the most effective methods and techniques for engaging with children and young people.

4.7.2 There has also been a campaign to improve our engagement with the Citizen's Panel by recruiting new members who are willing to provide feedback through electronic methods rather than by telephone. By now, around 300 (approximately 25%) of the adults who are members of the Panel provide feedback via electronic methods.

4.8 **FfG4 Extending the use of self-service**

4.8.1 There has been an increase in the number of services available to the public through self-service. This includes ordering waste bins, blue boxes and bin bags along with submitting an enquiry or complaint about the waste and recycling service.

4.8.2 In addition, developments in the system used has enabled the customer and the Council to update the status of any application by using the self-service account. This should reduce the need to contact the Council again for an update on the status of an application.

4.8.3 Currently, an account must be created in order to use the service, but I have asked the Project Leader to consider how to meet the needs of people who wish to make a one-off application without having to create an account.

4.8.4 The business case will be submitted to the Cabinet for approval at the beginning of October.

Financial Planning

4.9 **CA4 Further efficiencies and service provision models**

4.9.1 The current Financial Strategy requests further efficiency savings of £1.082m for this year, and £1.084m has already been approved. In addition, further plans or plans in development worth £5.2m have been identified for the 2018/19 to 2020/21 period.

4.9.2 Even with the most optimistic projection, this is not likely to be sufficient from 2019/20 onwards, therefore a system to discover further savings has been drawn up and approved by the Cabinet in its meeting on 18 July.

4.9.3 The work of preparing a business case for an **Alternative Leisure Model** is drawing to a close, and a report on establishing a company controlled by the Council will be submitted to the Cabinet in October.

PERFORMANCE

- 6.1 A full report on the performance measures associated with the portfolio is provided in **Appendix 1**. I am responsible for remits within the **Corporate Support Department** along with the **Legal Service**.
- 6.2 The **Health, Safety and Well-being Service** is responsible for advising how to protect the health and safety and well-being of staff and the people of Gwynedd and monitoring quality. Although the measured performance appears comparative with previous periods, the fact that this could give a misleading impression of the situation was highlighted in the challenging performance meeting.
- 6.3 As a result, I am not completely confident that the business model we have chosen to follow is rooted within the Departments. I intend to hold further discussion about the situation with the Chief Executive and Head of the Corporate Support Department soon, and I will update you on any developments.
- 6.4 The **Galw Gwynedd and Siopau Gwynedd Units** provide prompt and accurate assistance for customers to access Council services by providing answers, guidance and service.
- 6.5 Following assigning an additional resource to Galw Gwynedd in order to answer phones in April, we have seen an improvement in the related measures. A reduction has been seen in the **Percentage of phone calls answered by Galw Gwynedd** from 0.58 minutes in 2016/17 to 0.42 minutes in the first period of 2017/18 with the **Percentage of calls not being answered by Galw Gwynedd** reducing from 11.30% in 2016/17 to 5.39%.
- 6.6 The measure of **Percentage and score of less than 10 noted with the service provided when contacting the Council by calling Galw Gwynedd** was discussed along with the fact that 28% had given a score of less than 10. Whilst I am satisfied that steps have been put in place by the Unit to respond to their relevant points, it is noted that a number of respondents had declared unhappiness in regards to services provided by other Departments.
- 6.7 I understand that all comments were passed on to the relevant services, but it is not clear to me how the information is held within their customer satisfaction performance measures. I will consider this whilst scrutinising the performance reports of my fellow Cabinet Members.
- 6.8 The **Procurement Unit** enables the Council to focus on value for money and keeping the benefit local within the procurement field. Some progress has been seen in the measures measuring local expenditure over the past two years with the **Percentage of the Council's procurement expenditure awarded to**

companies with its headquarters or a branch in Gwynedd and local expenditure through sub-contracts has increased to 47% in the first quarter of 2017/18 compared with 44% during the same quarter in 2016/17 and 40% in 2015/16.

- 6.9 Nonetheless, whilst discussing this measure it became apparent that the value of the expenditure is reducing as a result of a reduction in capital plans. In order to ensure that we report the true situation, I have suggested that we only report on capital and revenue expenditure individually in the future.
- 6.10 Following challenging the performance of the **Research and Analysis Unit** I am happy with the progress of the work. The Unit has recently completed detailed work examining population projections for different well-being areas in Gwynedd which could be an important resource when planning services for the future. I will report upon this work to the Cabinet Members during September.

FINANCIAL POSITION / SAVINGS

- 6.1 Every Department's savings plans for 2017/18 have been realised, and no problems are anticipated for realising the two plans identified for 2018/19.

NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE

- 7.1 None to note.

ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

- 8.1 **Views of the Statutory Officers:**

i. Monitoring Officer:

No observations in terms of propriety.

ii. Head of Finance Department:

I am satisfied that the contents of the report are a fair reflection of the financial situation. The contents of part 4.9 of the report reflect the previous report by the Cabinet Member for Finance on 18 July on the need to establish arrangements to find further savings. Part 6 of the report deals with the savings plans of the Corporate Support Department, and I can confirm that these comments are a fair reflection and are to be welcomed.

- 8.2 **Views of the Local Member:**

- 8.2.1 Not a local matter.

- 8.3 **Results of Any Consultation:**

- 8.3.1 None to note.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Performance Measures

