

THE CABINET 12/12/17

Present-

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

Also present:

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

Item 6: Geraint Owen (Head of Corporate Support Department).

Item 7: Sioned Williams (Head of Economy and Community Department) and Nia Bowden (High Value Jobs Programme and Snowdonia Enterprise Zone Manager).

1. APOLOGIES

Cabinet Members and officers were welcomed to the meeting.
Apologies were received from Cllr W. Gareth Roberts and Cllr Annwen Hughes, as the Local Member for item 7.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

There were no declarations of personal interest.

3. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items to discuss

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

There were no matters arising from overview and scrutiny.

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 OCTOBER

The Chair signed the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 21 November 2017, as a true record.

6. HUMAN RESOURCES ANNUAL REPORT

The item was submitted by Cllr Mair Rowlands

RESOLVED

The Annual Report was approved.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted noting that the latest report drew attention to the main challenges that were facing Human Resources. Attention was drawn to developing the Apprenticeship Scheme that the Council had identified as a priority over the last year and that the work programme within the People Plan needed to be updated to reflect this.

It was also noted that it was appropriate to note that since publishing the report, the Council had received a Gold Health assessment again this year. It was explained that the number of sickness days had increased during the year; nevertheless, the number of staff members who had not missed a day of work due to sickness had also increased.

It was outlined that the percentage of women who worked in the Council was currently much higher than men - the percentage was 75%. It was emphasised that the percentage was higher in departments with the largest budgets. Nevertheless, the Council's age profile was higher and there would be a need to keep an eye on this. It was emphasised that this was not a Human Resources annual report, but a report on the Council's employment.

Observations arising from the discussion

- It was asked whether it would be possible to have input from the field of Children, and specifically looked after children, when looking at Apprenticeships to see whether it would be possible for looked after children to gain access to the jobs. It was noted that there had been a discussion on this at the Departmental Management Team and they had agreed to do this.

7. APPLICATION FOR EUROPEAN FUNDS TO IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND ACCESS AT SNOWDONIA AREOSPACE CENTRE, LLANBEDR

The item was submitted by Cllr Ioan Thomas

RESOLVED

Resolved:

1. To support the principle that Gwynedd Council is taking on the role of Lead Body for the project
2. Subject to receiving a confirmation of the other contributions:

- i. That the Cabinet gives its approval to the Economy and Community Department's decision to commit £250,000,000 of its Joint Funding Fund towards a plan of approximately £25,000 to develop appropriate infrastructure to support the development of the Snowdonia Aerospace Centre in Llanbedr.
- ii. That Gwynedd Council commit another £250,000 to the plan in advance of the proposed Asset Management Plan.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted as there was a need for further investment on the location. It was estimated that developing the Snowdonia Aerospace Centre, Llanbedr to be a centre for excellence for developing and trialling remotely-piloted vehicles could lead to the creation of 100 jobs. It was noted that in order to enable the development of the site, further investment was needed, including improvements to the facilities on the airfield and a new access road which would by-pass Llanbedr village centre.

It was emphasised that the Airfield was a significant asset which could develop the economy of Meirionnydd by creating high value jobs. The site was also part of the Snowdonia Enterprise Zone, and the Council had been working closely with the company that operated the site and Welsh Government to develop it. It was emphasised that Welsh Government owned the site and they had leased the site to the Snowdonia Aerospace company on a long-term contract.

It was emphasised clearly that Gwynedd's contribution was going entirely towards improving access to the site, which would include improvements to local roads.

Observations arising from the discussion

- It was noted that many individuals and organisations had asked whether there would be an investment into the companies that were located on the site, as there were companies that developed weapons. It was emphasised again that the Council's funding would be used to develop the road and not the location itself.
- It was noted that Meirionnydd had seen a decrease in the number of high value jobs in recent years, and it was noted that there was a need to invest in infrastructure in order to attract high value jobs and enable local people to stay in the area. It was added that 10 local companies used the site and the existing road was poor; there was a need to invest in the road in order to enable a local company to expand.
- It was asked why it would be Gwynedd Council taking the Lead role - it was noted because Welsh Government received the funding from Europe, and therefore could not give them finance themselves, and the Company running the site had no experience and therefore the Council was the only option.
- It was asked what the company who owned the lease was doing - it was noted that the company was in the process of developing a business plan in order to be able to lease parts of the location to local companies, to upgrade places on the site and they were making an application to become an Aerospace Centre. It was noted that they were aiming to maintain the site and to increase the value of the site and acquire more tenants.

- A discussion was held for the management of the future and whether the developments would continue to have to follow the Council's planning rules - it was noted that they would and that the investment on the road would not impact the arrangement.
- It was noted that there was no mention of a Plan to develop weapons / drones in the report, asked whether anyone had any plans to do this. It was noted that the QinetiQ company, who carried out work in the field of drones, was a tenant on the site but that the site was not specifically for them.
- In terms of the Council, it was noted that making improvements to the road was a good deal as it contributed towards creating more jobs locally.
- It was asked about the opinion of the local people of Llanbedr to the application - it was noted that they had been asking for a bypass to the village since the 1950s, and that they encouraged the Council to move forward with the application.

8. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The report was submitted by Cllr Dyfrig Siencyn

RESOLVED

The Forward Work Programme included with the meeting papers was approved.

DISCUSSION

The forward work programme was submitted, noting that there would be some additions to the forward work programme nearer to the dates.

The meeting commenced at 1.00 pm and concluded at 1.50 pm

CHAIRMAN