

Meeting	Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee
Date	23rd of January 2018
Title	Re-modelling the Youth Service
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Member	Councillor Craig ab Iago
Purpose	Scrutinise the case and recommendation to re-model the Youth Service.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The report outlines the steps taken to identify a preferred option for Re-modelling the Youth Service.
- 1.2 The Scrutiny Committee's comments on the re-modelling option will be presented at the Cabinet's meeting on the 13th of March 2018.

2 Background

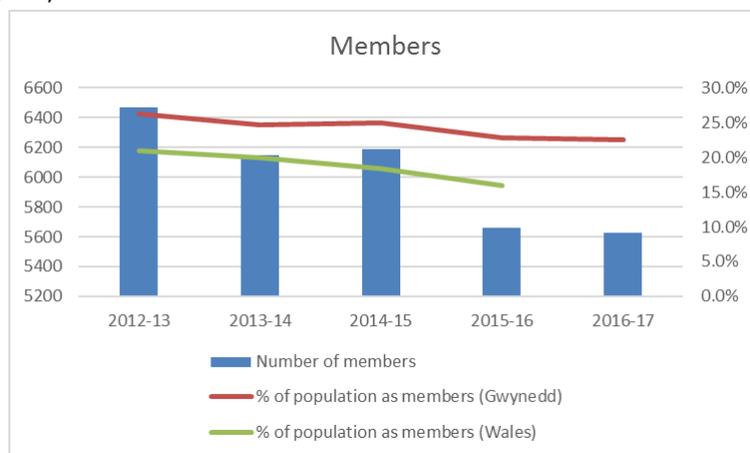
- 2.1 The provision of Youth Support Services is a statutory requirement under the Learning and Skills Act 2000. Welsh Government directs local authorities to provide, ensure provision or contribute to the provision of Youth Support Services. Welsh Government provides direction for Youth Work and Local Authority's Youth Services via the "Extending Entitlement Guidance (2002)", Wales Youth Work Strategy 2014-2018, The Youth Engagement and Framework 2015-2018, and the Youth Charter 2016.
- 2.2 Youth Support Services contribute towards supporting and sustaining young people through their adolescent years to adulthood (11-25 years old. Young People receive Youth Support Services in Gwynedd from a variety of organisations which includes the Information Service (Gwynedd-Ni), health services, youth service, education, training and careers services, housing services, and access to travel and transport services. For those young people who require more help there are specialist support services available which include children's social services, youth justice and police service, benefits services and advice services such as Barnados, Childline, NSPCC, Action for Children and others.
- 2.3 Further to these Youth Support Services, there are a number of activities, clubs, and societies for young people throughout the county that brings young people together based on their interests, to socialise with their peers independently from their parents / guardians and their families.

These include opportunities such as sports clubs, choirs, arts groups, Urdd, Chapel and Church Youth Groups, cadets, Young Farmers Clubs.

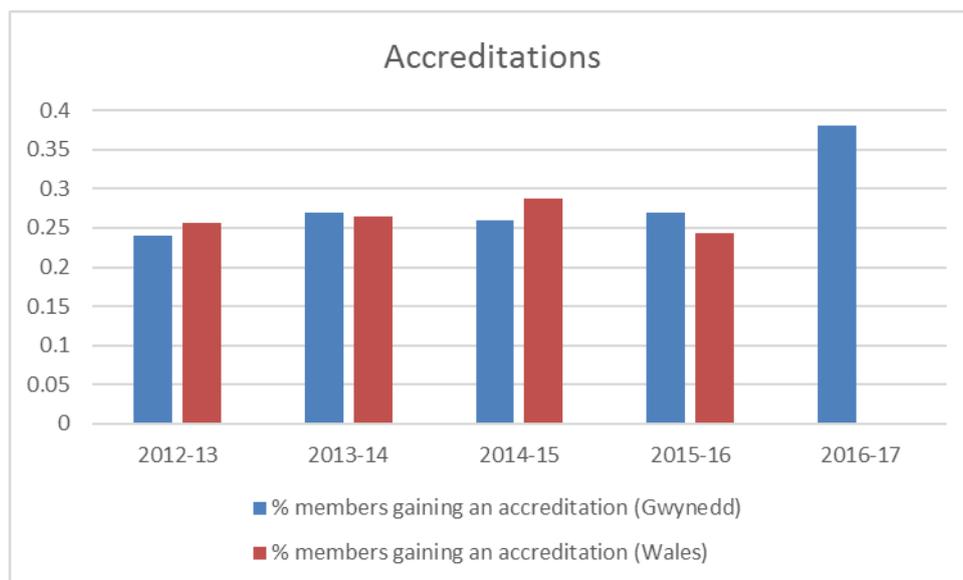
3 The current situation

3.1 Gwynedd Council's Youth Service currently (2016-17) provide:

- 39 school term youth clubs for 11-25 year olds,
- has 5625 members (via its own youth clubs and those ran by voluntary organisations through a grant)



- the youth clubs run informal learning projects and activities, with 1307 young people awarded a national accreditation, and 2740 awarded a local qualification



- a management team of 4 full times, administer, manage up to 100 youth club workers who work 3-9 hours per week,
- 5 full time youth workers (funded by grants) to provide support to small groups of young people within 9 secondary school,
- Give a grant to the Urdd (£35,600), Eryri and Meirionnydd Young Farmers (£36,590), Guides (£740) and Scouts (£740) towards their running costs.

3.2 When the Youth Service was reviewed in 2016-17 it had a (controlled) budget of £995,300.

3.3 In March 2016 the Council decided through 'Challenge Gwynedd' to cut £200,000 from the Youth Service budget in 2017-18, together with achieving an efficiency target of £70,000 by the end of March 2019.

3.4 The Youth Service, due to the financial pressures on the Council, has been operating efficiency savings / cuts equivalent to £ 476,545 between 2010/11 and 2017/18. The service has responded by trying to ensure as little impact as possible on Gwynedd's young people by introducing new efficiency measures to reduce costs. Finding efficiencies within the timetable and the current delivery model is proving difficult. If the proposed plan to re-model the Youth Service is approved, the service can achieve the efficiency savings and budget cuts.

3.5 A £ 270,000 reduction brings the Youth Service (controlled) budget to £725,300 from 2017-18 onwards.

4 Why Change?

4.1 A review of the Youth Service was completed during 2015-2017. See appendix 1 for a report on the review.

4.2 The review analysed and evaluated the current Youth Service Provision, and included an engagement process to identify needs, and gather opinions and ideas on a future direction for the Youth Service.

4.3 The Engagement Process included discussing with current service users, young people that do not use the service, internal and external partners, schools, and those voluntary organisations that currently receive a grant, to gather their input to the review and to identify options for the future.

4.4 The review demonstrated the need to change because of the challenges that the Youth Service face :

Ability to respond to what is important to young people.	During the engagement process with young people (via Youth Club Evaluations, focus groups, questionnaires etc.) they reported that the following matters were important to them – safety, self-image, sexuality and healthy relationships, health and emotional well-being, developing skills not gained at school or at home, developing communication skills
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	<p>and work readiness skills. Young people also reported than socialising and having fun with friends were important to them.</p> <p>Engagement with partners and other services that support young people have stated that the Youth Service has a role and a contribution towards the preventative agenda, because Youth Workers could be in a position to engage, support and work with young people in informal settings to tackle issues.</p>
The need to respond to changes in the strategic / policy context for Youth Work.	<p>There is no change to the statutory requirement as outlined under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, however, Welsh Government direction and guidance has seen a change of emphasis for local authority youth services to support young people with learning and education. There has also been an increase on the emphasis on supporting young people, 16 years and over, who are not in education, training or work.</p>
Meeting the changes in population trends.	<p>Data shows trends and behavioural patterns among the 11-25 year old group. The trends highlight young people's needs and behaviours in areas such as health, pregnancy, substance misuse, mental well-being. Young people who participated in the engagement process confirmed the trends identified by the data.</p>
Capacity to recruit and develop the workforce	<p>Engaging with staff, assessing business plans and risk registers has identified that recruiting, developing, training and administrating a large sessional workforce is challenging. Currently the Service employs 100 youth workers who work between 3.7, 7.4 or 11.1 hours per week, in youth clubs and it is increasingly difficult to recruit new people to these types of role. This sessional staffing structure means there is little flexibility for the youth workers to respond to the needs of young people outside of the hours / nights contracted to run a youth club. Young people's feedback stated that they wish to gain access to youth workers at school, in their community and at times convenient to them such as weekends, school holidays, after school and evenings.</p>
Deliver within Budget.	<p>This review, and in particular the engagement with our stakeholders on how to respond to the above challenges, has been conducted within a challenging financial context. The Council's 'Her Gwynedd' decision in March 2016 was to cut the Youth Service budget by £200,000, in addition to the efficiency savings target of £70,000. This decision means that the Service in its present form cannot be an option for the future.</p>

4.5 Therefore, the review and the feedback from the engagement process suggests that the Youth Service for the future should concentrate on helping young people

- to learn and develop their skills
- with their personal development
- to support their health and wellbeing.

This help should ensure that young people can fully engage with their education or training, they are prepared for the world of work, and they can contribute fully to their community

5 Identifying and Evaluating the Options

5.1. A long list of options was identified. Some of these have been disregarded because on their own they would not meet the reduction in the budget, for example:

- Reduce or Stop Grant funding to the third sector
- Cut the Youth Bus
- Stop the Duke of Edinburgh Award
- Change caretaking and property management
- Reduce or remove mini bus fleet.

Other options have been disregarded because of the risks, and due to the findings of national studies into alternative youth models.

5.2 Four Options were presented to the Cabinet on the 24th of October 2017. These options were formed based on the findings of the Youth Service Review and the challenges outlined in section 4 above.

5.3 The 4 Options were :

	What is it?	How would it look?
Option 1	<p>Continue to provide school term youth clubs for 11-25 year olds and give less grant to the same voluntary organisations as present.</p> <p>(close rural youth clubs and reduce the grant given to the Urdd, Young Farmers, Guides and Scouts)</p>	<p>Continue to run 10 Youth Clubs in</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maesgeirchen 2. Caernarfon 3. Bethesda 4. Dyffryn Nantlle 5. Pwllheli 6. Porthmadog 7. Blaenau Ffestiniog 8. Dolgellau 9. Tywyn 10. Bala <p>Youth Club provision will be available School Term only.</p> <p>The same will be offered to all 11-25 year olds.</p> <p>A reduction of 50% grant to the third sector.</p>

Option 2	<p>Continue to provide school term youth clubs for 11-25 year olds and no grant to voluntary organisations</p> <p>(close rural youth clubs and cut the grant to the Urdd, Young Farmers, Guides and Scouts)</p>	<p>Run 14 Youth Clubs in</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maesgeirchen 2. Bangor 3. Caernarfon 4. Bethesda 5. Llanrug 6. Dyffryn Nantlle 7. Botwnnog 8. Pwllheli 9. Porthmadog 10. Blaenau Ffestiniog 11. Harlech 12. Tywyn 13. Dolgellau 14. Bala <p>Youth Club provision will be available School Term only.</p> <p>The same will be offered to all 11-25 year olds.</p> <p>No grant to third sector.</p>
Option 3	<p>Provide in a different way, by a Programme of Activities and Projects that goes from location to location throughout the county. Commission additional activities from external partners.</p>	<p>A County Wide Club, which delivers a programme of activities and projects in school and in the community for 11-19 year olds throughout the year.</p> <p>Youth Worker attached to every high school.</p> <p>Personal Support provided to 16-25 year olds who are facing barriers to education, training or work.</p> <p>Commission the third sector to deliver activities and projects on behalf of the Youth Service to meet specific needs.</p>
Option 4	<p>Provide in a different way, by a Programme of Activities and Projects that goes from location to location throughout the county. Establish a community grant for third sector organisations to provide opportunities for young people.</p>	<p>A County Wide Club, which delivers a programme of activities and projects in school and in the community for 11-19 year olds throughout the year.</p> <p>Youth Worker attached to every high school, but contact would be less than option 3.</p> <p>Personal Support provided to 16-25 year olds who are facing barriers to education, training or work.</p> <p>A Community grant of (£40k) through Cist Gwynedd open to third sector organisations to fund activities for young people.</p>

5.4 An Initial Equalities Impact Assessment was presented to the Cabinet (see appendix 2) which identified the following possible impacts:

- Every option will have a negative impact on 11-16 year olds due to the reduction of provision available.

- Option 3 and 4 will have a positive impact upon the 16-25-year-old group because it will deliver a specific service to target needs.
- Option 1 and 2 will have an impact on specific communities (28 to 32 communities) but will have a positive impact in 10 to 14 communities where a Club will be located.
- Option 3 and 4 could have a negative impact in 42 communities by moving away from running clubs (seen as less provision), but could have a positive impact in communities where the service would deliver activities and projects as part of its annual programme.
- Every option could have an impact upon groups with equality characteristics.
- Every option could have a negative impact upon Welsh Speakers due to a reduction in the opportunities for them to use Welsh in social settings.
- Option 3 and 4 would have greater impact upon disadvantaged communities.

5.5 Every Option could be a means to promote the Futures Generations Act’s objectives amongst young people in Gwynedd. The Youth Service could support young people to develop activities and projects that contribute towards these objectives. However, Option 3 and 4 are the only options that embraces the Act’s new way of working. Under option 3 and 4, the Youth Service, would be expected to co-design, integrate and jointly deliver interventions with other organisations. Under Option 3 and 4, the Youth Service would also support young people to identify answers and solutions to those matters that affect them and their communities.

5.6 The Cabinet assessed the 4 Options (see appendix 3) against the following criteria:

- Ability to meet the need of young people, and the changes affecting this age group / demography.
- Ability to deliver the local direction required of the service to the future, including meeting the statutory requirement, and changes to policy and strategic direction.
- Meets current budget and best placed for future financial context.
- Can respond to the challenges of recruiting and developing a safe workforce.
- Has the least negative impacts and some positive impacts
(In addition to the equalities impact assessment, the review identified potential spatial impact and impact upon the voluntary sector, which should be addressed.)

5.7 The table below summarises the evaluation of the options:

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4
Meets young people’s needs (young peoples’ opinions, trends)				
Responds to the context (policy, strategic and statutory)				

Meets the budget (affordability and sustainability)				
Recruit Safe Workforce (recruit, training and staffing)				
Impact Assessment (equalities, social, third sector)				

5.8 Based on the assessment, the Cabinet concluded that Option 3 was the preferred option at this point because:

- It best meets the needs of young people, and brings results to individuals.
- Best meets the context, and best placed to respond to policy and strategic direction.
- Has some negative impacts that can be mitigated, and also has some positive impacts.
- This provides the best option to respond to recruiting, training and sustaining a workforce for the future.
- Meets the current budget cuts and best placed for future financial context

5.9 The Cabinet decided to conduct a consultation on the preferred option to gather public opinion on its suggested way forward.

6 Public Consultation on the Preferred Option.

6.1 A public consultation was held on the preferred option between 10 November - 22 December 2017. See the analysis of the responses in appendix 4.

6.2 There were 3,391 responses (online / paper) with most (3,349) individuals, and a high percentage of those in the 11-15 year old age group (69.4%).

6.3 There is generally support for the themes that the Youth Service should focus on in the future namely developing skills, personal development and health and wellbeing support; with 63.3% of respondents identifying a score of 1 or 2 (great) and 10.7% scoring a score of 4 or 5 (poor).

6.4 Similarly there is general support that young people need different things as they grow up, and therefore support the Service to provide an activity programme for 11-19 year olds and one to one support for 16- 25 years old; with 62.4% identifying a score of 1 or 2 (great) and 5.9% scoring a score of 4 or 5 (poor).

6.5 People were asked to comment on the preferred option and the Research Unit analysed those comments and grouped and quantified them into themes.

6.6 A number of themes have identified that highlight different strengths and opportunities that the option can offer to young people. The comments across a number of themes express support for the option because it offers good opportunities for young people, more activities, opportunity to socialise, get advice and support, an opportunity to learn skills, keep healthy, and raise confidence. However, the most obvious singular theme is the collection of comments that state that there is nothing good about this option (21%).

6.7 The main concern that has emerged is that 14% of respondents are worried that their youth club closes / they will have nowhere to go, and this is most prominent from Y Moelwyn, Syr Hugh Owen and Tywyn areas, which coincides with some of the most popular clubs in the current Youth Service. Travelling and how they would be accessing the Youth Service activities and projects in the future worried about 7.9% of respondents. Having said that it should be noted that 38% of respondents have indicated that nothing worries them about what is being offered.

6.8 36.8% of respondents indicated that they would not face any barriers if the Youth Service moved to a Programme of Activities and Projects, and to One-One Support. The main barrier (16.7%) is travelling and access to the Service.

7 Other Considerations

7.1 Workforce Implications

7.1.1 The Youth Service workforce have been included in the process of identifying the ideas from the outset. While Reviewing the Service, 2 Workshops for Part Time Workers (84 of 100 attended) and 2 workshops for Full-time Workers and Support Workers (11 of 12 attended) were held in October 2016. The staff have also been involved in shaping the ideas by participating in the survey (January-March 2017). Since then there have been presentations and discussions with the whole workforce in February 2017 and in October 2017, to updated and to gather opinions.

7.1.2 The Youth Service has met with representatives from the relevant Unions in order to raise awareness of the review, engagement program and the latest public consultation.

7.1.3. The Cabinet's decision to re-model the Youth Service could impact on up to 100 part-time staff and 12 full-time staff. This impact has also been considered in the Equalities Impact Assessment.

7.2 Financial Implications

7.2.1 The Council has decided to cut £200,000 together with a target of £70,000 of savings on the Youth Service budget. Due to the need to schedule the changes required to meet this reduction, the Youth Service intends to realise the cut / savings over a period of time, as follows:

2017.18	2018.19	2019.20
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116,000	89,000	65,000
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7.2.2 If the Cabinet was unable to make a decision in March on the direction for the re-modelling this will affect the timetable to deliver. The Service would overspend in 2018.19.

7.3 Property Implications

7.3.1 The Council has 5 youth / community centres managed by the Youth Service These buildings are currently used by several council services. The Council is currently marketing Harlech Youth Centre for disposal. The Youth Service is in discussions with other internal departments about Penygroes, Maesgeirchen and Caernarfon Youth Centres. The Service is in discussion with the community regarding the Cefnfaes building in Bethesda, and the community has presented an Expression of Interest for transferring the building into local control.

7.3.2 The Youth Service has a number of other community buildings that have been leased to local Committees. The decision on the future direction of the Service will not impact those leases.

7.3.3 The Youth Service currently hires 36 Village Halls and 3 school halls for hosting a youth club. The Youth Service pays £25 per night for the hiring. Some clubs are held more than one night a week. Around £34,000 of the Youth Service budget is currently going to hire halls. The Preferred Option suggests moving away from running youth clubs to providing a program of activities and projects. The Youth Service would need to hire space in village halls to provide a program of activities and projects. The hire would be for a lesser period, and it can be within the halls that we currently use, and in halls that we are not currently using. Hiring places to meet would depend on the activity / project, and the availability of a meeting place locally. A budget of around £40k per annum would be earmarked for the hiring of meeting places under the preferred option. The Cabinet's decision to re-model the Youth Service can have an impact on the sustainability of some Village Halls.

7.4 Implications on the Organisations currently receiving a grant from the Youth Service.

7.4.1 Cabinet noted that the preferred Option had specific implications for those organisations currently receiving a grant from the Youth Service i.e. the Urdd, Eryri Young Farmers, and Meirionnydd Young Farmers. The Cabinet acknowledged the contribution that the Urdd and Young Farmers make to culture and the Welsh language in Gwynedd, to communities and to the lives of those young people who are members of these organisations.

7.4.2 The Preferred Option suggests that the Council should focus its resources on the 'youth support' element for the future (as defined in 2.2 above). The Preferred Option suggests that the Council should not continue to give a grant to the Urdd or Young Farmers towards employing officers to organize activities. The Preferred Option suggests that the Youth Service should commission

youth work by voluntary sector organisations (such as the Urdd, Young Farmers and others) as necessary. The Cabinet asked the Youth Service to carry out specific work with the Urdd and Young Farmers to better understand these implications, and to understand the situation of the organisations in other counties.

7.4.3 A series of meetings were held with the organisations since the decision of Challenge Gwynedd, and specifically during the latest public consultation. The Council has also given support through the Rural Development Program to the Young Farmers' Organisations to support them to look at income streams, expenditure and costs, their financial position, and governance structures.

7.4.4 Generally, the organisations see challenges in what is being suggested in the Preferred Option, but are also supportive and have a willingness to continue to work together for the benefit of young people in Gwynedd. Feedback from the organisations found that they faced risks and challenges from commissioning such as: the need for expertise and resources to administer such agreements and tendering, lack of certainty of work or income, reduction in the budget for commissioning compared to the current level of grant, competition in commissioning and therefore no guarantee of work. The organisations saw opportunities for them with their expertise to provide some types of commissioned activities and projects, as identified during the review and consultation, but also saw that many of the proposed commissioned activities / projects were outside their interests, abilities or experience.

7.4.5 The total withdrawal of grant as suggested would have an impact on employment issues in all three organisations.

7.4.6 One organisation has indicated that it would favour a cut in their grant rather than move to a commissioning system, and that cut should reflect the % of cut facing the Youth Service.

7.4.7 The Youth Service, at the Cabinet's request, have mapped the contributions of other councils to these organisations towards youth work. Information has been received from 17 councils, and it varies from providing no financial support to any of these organisations, to supporting specific projects, or support for core costs.

Financial Support for Young Farmers	5 of 17 Councils supports	average of £ 6,000
Financial support for the Urdd	9 of 17 Council supports	average of £ 9,000

8 Review the Preferred Option.

8.1 The Consultation has confirmed the effects already identified in the equality impact assessment, and no new impact has been identified.

8.2 The consultation has shown that the service could continue with the Preferred Option but with the following changes to respond to the latest feedback from the consultation: -

Matter	Response / Amendment
Travel / Distance / Access to activities and projects	<p>Ensure that the Programme of Activities and Projects moves regularly enough; go to community venues in villages and towns throughout the county; continue offering transport for some projects / activities; discuss with the Education Department and individual schools the use of the travel pass to pupils to facilitate travel; Continue to expect young people to travel to access (as is the case at the moment – Walking, escorted by family, friends).</p> <p>There will be a need to ensure the frequency of activities and projects in some communities - as identified in the Equality Impact Assessment, due to deprivation.</p>
Information / Marketing / Promotion of activities	<p>Capacity has been identified in the Staffing Structure for the Preferred Option for digital engagement and marketing Duties to include maximise the use of Tender, Facebook, and digital media</p>
Clubs Closing	<p>The Preferred Option has identified staff resource to support voluntary effort to establish local voluntary youth clubs. This assistance would need to be promoted.</p> <p>In addition the Youth Service should contact all community councils to ask if they are interested in funding the continuation of their local Youth Club. Pay for a Youth Club once a week and the Youth Service to provide staff. Cost of around £ 3,000 per year.</p> <p>Make arrangements for current Youth Club equipment and accounts to be transfer to a Voluntary Club if it is established, or to a local organisation / group with similar values.</p>
Commissioning	<p>Continue with the ability to commission work as need arises.</p> <p>Rather than allocate a % of the budget for commissioning, focusing on the identifying commissioning needs during the</p>

	<p>next 12 months, and establishing the commissioning structure. Due to the scale of change to the Urdd, Young Farmers, and the need to give them a proportionate notice of the change, offer them 30% of the current grant for 2018 19 and 12 months notice that the grant comes to end by 1st April 2020.</p>
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9. Proposed Action Timetable

- 9.1 The Cabinet Member is eager to receive the comments of the Scrutiny Committee on the preferred option and the steps that have been followed to identify and shape the option.
- 9.2 A Group of four members of the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee has met with the Youth Service to discuss the re-modeling of the service. Initial comments from these members are included in Appendix 5.
- 9.3. This report will be presented to the Cabinet with the comments of the Scrutiny Committee on the 13th of March. The Cabinet will be asked to approve the case for change and approve the amended Preferred Option for the implementation of the remodelling.
- 9.4 If this recommendation is approved in March it is intended to use 2018.19 as a transitional year to end current and existing arrangements and to establish the newly formed Service. The remodelled Youth Service will be operational from 1st April 2019 onwards.

10 Conclusions

- 10.1 One of the main conclusions of this work is that the service cannot continue as it is due to the challenges it faces.
- 10.2 There is a general objection to any change to the Youth Service. This is expressed particularly by current users of some Youth Clubs and by those who benefit from the grant that goes to the Young Farmers.
- 10.3 Every option presented and discussed by the Cabinet has its own challenges and opportunities. From the options available, the option that is now recommended offers the best way forward for Gwynedd Council in responding to the challenges of the Youth Service and young people of Gwynedd, the findings of the Equality Impact Assessment, and the requirements of the Future Generation of Future Act.

12 Appendices –

- 12.1 Appendix 1 - Youth Service Survey Report

12.2 Appendix 2- Equality Impact Assessment

12.3 Appendix 3 - Options Assessment

12.4 Appendix 4 - Public Consultation Report

12.5 Appendix 5 – Scrutiny Working Group’s Initial Comments