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## EDUCATION AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### 13.12.17

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**Present:** Councillor Beth Lawton – Chair.  
Councillor Nia Jeffreys – Vice-chair.

**Councillors:** Menna Baines, Steve Collings, Aled Evans, Evan Selwyn Griffiths, Alwyn Gruffydd, Judith Humphreys, Elwyn Jones, Cai Larsen, Dewi Owen, Paul Rowlinson, Cemlyn Williams, and Gareth Williams.

**Cabinet Members:** Councillor Craig ab Iago – Cabinet Member for Housing, Leisure and Culture (Item 5), and Councillor Gareth Thomas – Cabinet Member for Education (Item 6 and 7).

**Also in attendance:** Vera Jones (Members' Manager), Sioned Williams (Members Support Officer), Dylan Davies (Parent Representative/Meirionydd Governor), David Healey (Teachers' Union), and Anest Gray Frazer (The Church in Wales).

**Item 4:** Sioned Williams (Head of Economy and Community Department), Robin Evans (Project Manager), and Iwan Evans (Monitoring Officer).

**Item 5:** Arwyn Thomas (Managing Director GwE), Alwyn Lloyd Jones (GwE Assistant Director), and Ellen Williams (Gwynedd Secondary Core Leader).

**Item 5 and 6:** Garem Jackson (Head of Education Department).

#### 1. APOLOGIES

Councillors Jason Parry, Huw Wyn Jones, and Keith Jones.

#### 2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor Menna Baines declared a personal interest in relation to item 7 on the agenda, due to her role on the Cynnal Advisory Board.

#### 3. URGENT MATTERS

None to note.

#### 4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chair signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee, held on 26 September 2017, as a true record.

#### 5. PROPOSED GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR GWYNEDD COUNCIL'S LEISURE COMPANY

A report was presented by the Cabinet Member for Housing, Leisure and Culture and the Head of the Economy and Communities Department, which set out the proposed governance arrangements for Gwynedd Council's Leisure Company. Members were invited to provide comments/observations on the arrangements before the item goes

before the Cabinet. The Cabinet Member for Housing, Leisure and Culture thanked the Scrutiny Committee for the opportunity to discuss the arrangements.

During the discussion on the item, further information was provided to members with regards to the following matters:

- The role and the purpose of the Advisory Board.
- Responsibility for appointing the Management Board.
- The Board Members' responsibility and accountability should the company fail, and the Council's plans to deal with such an event – in particular the effect on the company's staff.
- The Managing Directors' appointment procedure, role and responsibility.

The Committee noted the following comments/observations on the company's governing arrangements for the attention of the Cabinet Member and the Cabinet:

- The Shadow Board should to play a key role in appointing the Managing Director.
- Consideration if more than five members should sit on the Management Board, as the role may require a lot of commitment.
- The importance of ensuring a healthy and open relationship with the Advisory Board from the outset. The Scrutiny Committee would like further clarity on how this will develop over the next months.
- That the development includes new opportunities, for example;
  - The opportunity to market the Leisure Centre more creatively.
  - A recommendation to introduce a 'bonus scheme' for staff members who promote the company enthusiastically should be considered.
- To ensure that clubs such as 'Dementia Go' and other successful developments continues.

The Scrutiny Committee welcomes the opportunity to scrutinise the developments further as promised.

Resolved: Support the report to go before Cabinet.

## **6. THE EFFECT AND CONSEQUENCE OF THE GWE PROVISION ON BEHALF OF GWYNEDD EDUCATION AUTHORITY**

The Cabinet Member for Education congratulated GwE on their success in the recent Estyn report.

A report was presented by the Cabinet Member for Education and the Head of the Education department responding to a number of questions, raised by the Scrutiny Committee Members beforehand, regarding the impact and result of the service provided by GwE on behalf of the Gwynedd Education Department.

Members of the Scrutiny Committee expressed the opinion that the report was too general and set out GwE's entire work remit, rather than focusing specifically on the value for money for Gwynedd Council.

During the discussion on the item, further information was provided to the Scrutiny Committee regarding the following matters:

- An explanation on the nature of the service that is being commissioned by GwE, and it was emphasised that there are two different levels, which are;
  - a. The service that GwE provides to the six authorities
  - b. The business plan that has been tailored specifically to the needs of Gwynedd.

- Clarity on the process of designing the business plan for each county.
- Concerns that Foundation Stage result have been weak for two consecutive years.
- Concerns that a school was placed under special measured under the current arrangements between GwE and the authority.
- The role of the Improvement Support Officers in providing consistent support to ensure consistent improvements across the county.
- The relationship between GwE and the authority – is there enough challenging going on?
- Leadership in schools is a priority for the six authorities and GwE, and this was the focus of the Developing Leadership Conference which took place in the summer.
- Lack of teachers/heads of education.

In response to the observation about lack of teachers and heads of education in Gwynedd, the Head of the Education Department highlighted what is being done to resolve the issue:

- Local Area Officers – developed to encourage a joint working approach and to ensure that the administrative work is effective and efficient across schools.
- Training Consortium – regional work which is afoot to target strategic heads, area managers, future heads and deputy heads.

**Resolved:** to accept and thank the relevant officers for the report.

## **7. EDUCATION SUPPORT SERVICE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION REPORT**

A report was presented by the Councillor Alwyn Gruffydd, presenting the six recommendations from the Education Support Service Scrutiny Investigation.

**Resolved:** to accept and thank the relevant officers for the report.