


# **GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET**



<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>12 June 2018</b>
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	<b>Councillor Craig ab Iago</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Catrin Thomas</b>
<b>Contact Telephone Number:</b>	<b>01286 679 913</b>
<b>Title of Item:</b>	<b>Remodelling the Youth Service</b>

## **1. THE DECISION SOUGHT**

1.1 To accept the report on the remodelling of the Youth Service and the Council's decision on 3 May 2018, and agree the Cabinet's response to the request to reconsider specific elements of the model.

## **2. THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION**

2.1 To decide on the response to the considerations noted by the Full Council, 3 May, 2018

## **3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 In March 2016, the Council, through Gwynedd Challenge, resolved to cut £200,000 of the Youth Service budget in 2017-18, and achieve an efficiency target of £70,000 via “a plan which re-designs the Youth Service” and “accepting that the grants will have to form part of the review”. The reduction brings the Youth Service (controlled) budget to £ 725,300 from 2017-18 onwards.

3.2 A review of the service was completed, along with an engagement programme with young people and partners to create options for remodelling the Youth Service within the financial context of the Gwynedd Challenge decision.

3.3 The Options, an Options Assessment, and an Equality Impact Assessment of the options were presented to the Cabinet on 24 October 2017. The Cabinet resolved to hold a consultation on the structure of the Youth Service for the future, and identified Option 3 as the preferred option.

3.4 The results of the public consultation and the method for identifying the preferred option were presented to the Scrutiny Committee on 23 January 2018, in order to obtain its views.

3.5 The case for change, the options assessment, the results of the public consultation, the observations of the Scrutiny Committee, and the equality impact assessment were presented to Cabinet on 13 March 2018. Based on the consideration and the assessment of all these factors, continuing to run the Youth Service in its current form was not an option for the future.

3.6 The Cabinet resolved to remodel the Youth Service in accordance with the direction stated in Option 3 with amendments to mitigate the impacts identified.

3.7 Following the decision, the Youth Service has started implementing the remodelling to ensure a service for the county's young people in September 2018.

#### **4. NOTICE OF MOTION, FULL COUNCIL, 3 MAY, 2018.**

4.1 A notice of motion was presented to the Full Council on 3 May 2018 by Councillor Alwyn Gruffydd and, as a result, an amendment was proposed by Councillor Menna Baines.

4.2 The following decision was adopted as a result of the amendment:-

"That this Council also asks that the Council Cabinet reconsider specific elements of the new model for the Youth Service in the County because of our concerns on three counts:-

- 1) change of emphasis from the community to the welfare of individuals
- 2) the impact on the most deprived areas of the county
- 3) Impact on the Welsh language

We, therefore, ask that the Cabinet hold urgent discussions, by the end of this month if possible, with all the town, community, and city councils along with other relevant agencies. The purpose of this is to look at ways of cooperating in order to fund the continuation of as many youth clubs in the county as possible, where this is desired, over the transitional period and in order to offer appropriate support for the voluntary youth organisations that, until recently, received funding.

We also ask that the Cabinet conduct a language assessment of the impact of the restructure and an assessment of its community impact on the most deprived areas of the county."

4.3 Although the Council asked that the Cabinet reconsider specific elements of the new model, the Cabinet has a legal responsibility to reach a resolution on the subject. Consequently, how the Cabinet responds to the Council's request is for the Cabinet to decide, within the Authority's Budgetary and Policy Framework.

4.4 The steps taken by the Youth Service in the context of each of the matters raised at the Council are stated below:

#### **5. CHANGE OF EMPHASIS FROM THE COMMUNITY TO THE WELFARE OF INDIVIDUALS**

5.1 Young people, partners and other organisations expressed their opinion about the priorities for the future of the Youth Service. Three priorities for the Youth Service were identified:-

- Helping young people develop skills
- Helping young people with their personal development
- Helping young people with health and well-being matters

(Engagement Exercise, October 2016-March 2017)

5.2 Young people also told us that they wanted this support in a safe environment, which allows them to socialise with their friends and have fun.

5.3 The public consultation held in December 2017 confirmed that 63% of the respondents (3,391) supported the priorities.

5.4 In addition to what young people have told us, national policy and strategies also set the direction for the Youth Service.

5.5 Welsh Government, under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, sets the direction for Youth Services. This direction currently comes through the Direction and Guidance - Extending Entitlement 2002, the National Youth Work Strategy for Wales 2014-18, and the Engagement and Progression Framework 2015-18.

5.6 Over recent years, Welsh Government emphasis has been on directing Youth Services toward supporting young people with their learning and education, and in supporting young people who are not in education, training or work.

5.7 The Youth Service delivers in accordance with the "Youth Work Curriculum Statement". The Curriculum Statement notes that youth work is

- based on a voluntary relationship between young people and youth workers,
- provides informal educational programmes that respond to individual needs (such as help with skills, health and well-being, help with personal development and educational attainment),
- to be provided in a safe environment.

5.8 The remodelling will result in the Youth Service working within communities, across Gwynedd, to deliver its activities and projects. The Youth Service will not be working within communities via a network of youth clubs in designated buildings and communities.

5.9 The Youth Service Remodelling Plan responds to what young people have told us are priorities for them, it responds to the policy direction imposed on us, and is within the available budget.

## **6. THE IMPACT ON THE MOST DEPRIVED AREAS**

6.1 Youth Clubs have existed in the most deprived areas, namely Maesgeirchen and Caernarfon, in accordance with Welsh Government definition (communities in the highest 10% of the Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2014). The remodelling moves away from this, and the equality impact assessment considered states that there is, therefore, a negative impact on the deprived areas.

6.2 The Equality Impact Assessment has identified mitigating measures, which are incorporated into the remodelling, these are:

- ensuring the presence of the Service in both communities and to this end, Penrallt Youth Centre and Maesgeirchen Youth Centre are to be used as office locations for some of the Full Time Youth Workers, and for holding the Youth Service's activities and projects, and for other community activities.
- ensuring more frequent activities in both these communities.
- targeting grants (for example SPLASH) to expand the provision in these geographical areas.

6.3 The Index of Multiple Deprivation was used to identifying deprived areas because it is acknowledged to be a widely used tool for measuring deprivation / poverty / disadvantage.

However, it is only one tool that measures a specific definition of poverty; and there is concern that it is not adequate for identifying poverty in rural areas.

6.4 The feedback gathered during and following the consultation confirms that some communities / areas outside Maesgeirchen and Caernarfon consider themselves to be deprived despite not appearing high up on the Index. Planning a service on the grounds of spatial deprivation, therefore, has its challenges. However, the Cabinet did consider options to remodel the Youth Service on a spatial basis that would address deprived areas - i.e. the options to run clubs in 10 or 14 communities only. An impact assessment of those options showed that the impact would have been more negative had the Cabinet taken this route. There was a negative impact on young people's accessibility to the Youth Service by restricting the service to fewer number of youth clubs in a small number of communities.

6.5 The Cabinet has also considered deprivation beyond the geographical definition in the equality impact assessment. When the Cabinet considered the profile of young people who took part in the review and the feedback from the public consultation, it became clear that deprivation is a broader concept than something that only affects 'places'. The feedback showed that young people faced obstacles, lacked opportunities, are vulnerable to harm, face challenges when growing up, can disengagement from education, training or work, no matter where they live. Although a higher concentration of vulnerable young people with needs live in the more urban areas, such as Maesgeirchen and Caernarfon, those needs are not unique to those specific geographical areas.

6.6 The Remodelling Plan adopted includes measures to mitigate the impacts of the changes on the deprived areas. The Youth Service's activities and projects, in moving from place to place, will reach young people and communities throughout the county, including those that have had no prior access (no previous youth club in the community).

## **7. IMPACT ON THE WELSH LANGUAGE**

7.1 The impact on the language has been considered as part of the Equality Impact Assessment. The Youth Service, in accordance with the Council's Language Policy provides all its work in Welsh, and this will continue in the future.

7.2 0.2% of respondents to the public consultation (December 2017) noted that remodelling the Service would be detrimental to the Welsh language.

7.3 The Equality Impact Assessment states that remodelling would lead to fewer clubs in communities where young people could use their Welsh, and would, therefore, possibly, negatively impact the young Welsh-speakers who would have attended Youth Clubs but who did not wish to participate in the new activities and projects. The assessment also notes that remodelling would provide activities and projects for young people in Welsh, and this would, consequently, have a positive effect on young Welsh-speakers taking part, especially in those communities where a Youth Club did not exist.

7.4 The language requirements on the Youth Service continue, and remodelling will not change those expectations. The Youth Service will continue to

- provide a Welsh language service for the young people of the county,
- improve awareness of the value of the language by holding Language Awareness sessions for its workforce and young people,
- ensure better access to Welsh medium social activities throughout the communities of the County.

(strategic aims of the 2012-18 Welsh Language Strategy)

## **8. COOPERATING WITH TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS**

8.1 Following the observations by the Scrutiny Committee, January 2018, the Youth Service has opened discussions with some community and town councils on identifying ways of cooperating to fund the continuation of as many of the county's youth clubs as possible, where this is desired.

8.2 A letter was sent to 32 Community and Town Councils on 31 January 2018, namely those councils in which Youth Clubs had been held between September 2017 and March 2018. 16 responses were received; of those, 10 Community Councils were keen to discuss further.

8.3 Discussions have begun with the 10 communities, and they vary in the type of possible cooperation arrangements. Below is a snapshot of the ideas currently being discussed.

- Giving the Youth Service a contribution to continue to hold the Youth Club
- Giving the Youth Service a contribution to provide activities and projects in their communities (the remodelling)
- Giving a voluntary organisation a contribution to run a Social Club locally
- Giving a Leisure Centre a financial contribution to hold a regular evening youth session
- Running their own Youth Club (by employing their own workers).
- Support to set up a brand new Voluntary Club (with discussions about the resources, equipment and accounts of the recently closed Youth Club being transferred to the new entity, and the Youth Service providing training on youth work and safeguarding for volunteers).

## **9. APPROPRIATE HELP FOR THE YOUTH ORGANISATIONS THAT WERE RECEIVING FUNDING.**

9.1 Discussions have taken place throughout the past two years between the Youth Service and the Urdd, Eryri Young Farmers Organisation, and Meirionnydd Young Farmers Organisation.

9.2 The Cabinet has considered the impact on these youth organisations when it made its decision in March 2018. The Cabinet has asked that its services provide specific assistance to the organisations to respond to the impacts, namely

- providing the advice of a human resources consultant and pensions advice on employment / payroll matters;
- advice on business planning and governance
- the support of an area regeneration officer to identify opportunities to target grants and maximise income,
- continue to pay for hiring locations for holding aelwydydd, clubs at schools,
- continue to accept applications to the Tithe Fund toward Young Farmers' Eisteddfodau
- continue to provide youth work and safeguarding training for employed workers of the Young Farmers' Organisations,
- a grant offer, equivalent to nine months of the existing grant, for the organisations for 2018-19.

9.3 The Cabinet acknowledges the contribution made by the Urdd and Young Farmers to the language, communities, and the lives of young people who are members. Cabinet members have met with the organisations and have expressed their willingness and desire to ensure that the collaboration between the Youth Service, the Urdd and Young Farmers continue into the future for the benefit of the young people of the county.

9.4 The Remodelling Plan includes establishing arrangements for commissioning organisations to provide activities that respond to the needs of young people in the county. The Youth Service has already trialled a commissioning procedure with the Urdd in relation to holding excursions for young people. The success of this partnership has highlighted the opportunities that arise from collaborating and commissioning between the Youth Service and voluntary organisations, which could be built upon in future.

## **10. SUMMARY**

10.1 The Cabinet has already directed the Youth Service to report back on the progress of the remodelling to meetings of the Cabinet. The Cabinet Member's Performance Reports will report on progress and will be an opportunity for the Cabinet to challenge and monitor that progress.

10.2 The Equality Impact Assessment has acknowledged mitigation measures to be implemented in remodelling the service.

10.3 Discussions have begun with some community councils and they will continue in order to identify and establish alternative arrangements to holding social clubs for young people.

10.4 Support has already been offered specifically for the Young Farmers' Organisations. The organisations and the Community Regeneration Service and the Youth Service continue to collaborate in order to provide the required support.

10.5 The Youth Service will work on developing the Commissioning Arrangement as part of its work programme during the next 12 months, which will include identifying the needs and establishing the commissioning arrangements.

## **11. VIEWS OF THE STATUTORY OFFICERS:**

### **Chief Finance Officer:**

“It is a matter for the Cabinet members to agree a response to the considerations presented by the Full Council on the 3rd May. Of course, if there were a decision not to re-model the Youth Service, it would have to be funded permanently, and consequently would mean less resources to maintain other services.

However, the Council could continue to re-model the service, but use one-off resources from the Transformation Fund to fund temporary alternative arrangements. ”

### **Monitoring Officer:**

“The report correctly notes that the provision of youth services in Gwynedd is a Cabinet matter. Therefore, it is a matter of discretion for the Cabinet to come to a view on the appropriate response to the Council’s request and any further steps which might follow in the context of its decision making framework. The aim of the report, by summarising the

background to the original decision and reporting on the current position is to give the Cabinet an opportunity to come to a view on how it wishes to respond.”

## **12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

**Cabinet Report, 13 March 2018**

<https://democratiaeth.cyngor.gwynedd.gov.uk/ielistdocuments.aspx?cid=133&mid=2237&ver=4&>