

# CABINET CYNGOR GWYNEDD



**Date:** 11 September 2018

**Title of Item:** Performance Report of the Cabinet Member for Highways and Municipal and Gwynedd Consultancy

**Purpose:** To accept and note the information in the report.

**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Gareth Griffith

**Contact Officer:** Dilwyn Williams, Chief Executive

## Report for a meeting of Gwynedd Council Cabinet

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to update my fellow members on what has been taking place in the fields within my remit as Cabinet Member for Highways and Municipal and Gwynedd Consultancy. This includes outlining where we have reached with measuring performance; and the latest in terms of 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 meetings of the Management Teams, which also included representatives from the relevant Scrutiny Committees.
- 1.3. On the whole, I am satisfied with the performance of the measures for which I am responsible.

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## 2. THE DECISION SOUGHT

2.1 To accept and note the information in the report.

2.1.1 I recommend that the Cabinet authorise the deferral of the implementation of the **Recycling Centres (PB5)** savings scheme in the Highways and Municipal Department, and deal with the deficit created when considering 2019/20 savings onwards, and also approve the rest of the proposal noted in part 6.3 below, to meet the deficits in other savings schemes.

## 3. PERFORMANCE

### Highways and Municipal Department

3.1 Maintaining a high quality local environment as well as the appearance of streets and public places is important to the residents of Gwynedd. The work of the **Street Services Unit** is to keep our streets clean and tidy and there are several measures which look at how well they do this. The performance of the **Measure of the Cleanliness and Appearance of Streets (STS/005a Measure)** this year to date is 74.5% which shows an improvement on the performance at the end of 2017/18 (71.95%).

3.2 The **Waste and Recycling Service** is responsible for dealing with waste in a sustainable way. I am satisfied with the performance of most measures for this service but I will draw your attention to the following points.

3.3 It is noted that the **Percentage levels of urban waste collected by the Local Authority and prepared for reuse, recycling or composting (WMT/009 Measure)** has improved from 60.01% in 2017/18 to 64.33% in the period from April to June 2018. The current performance, however, signifies a substantial increase compared with 54.3% in 2013/14, 55.25% in 2014/15, 58.70% in 2015/16. and 62.34% in 2016/17.

3.4 The **Percentage of commercial recycling/composting levels (PB51 Measure)** in the rates of recycling/composting by businesses is stable at 44.1% for 2018/19 thus far, compared to 44.34% for 2017/18.

3.5 Of course, what is important to the people of Gwynedd is that their waste is collected. I can report that **1.21 million** waste collections have been made in the period from April to June 2018, with **3,067** complaints received about non-collection (or 0.34%). It should be acknowledged that this figure is very low in comparison to the number of collections during this period. I have asked the Department to present the information as a graph over time, in order to show trends and so that we may identify the reasons for any failures and address the aspects we are able to influence. It appears that the percentage is higher in Meirionnydd and Arfon than in Dwyfor.

3.6 The performance of the **Percentage of urban waste sent to landfill (WMT/004)** measure is lower this year for the period from April to June, at 17.3% compared to 24.33% for 2017/18. This improvement could be attributed to the fact that more municipal waste has been treated through the incineration process and, consequently, had not been sent to landfill.

3.7 Information about the road conditions will not be available to us until later on in the year, and I will report on this when we receive the results.

## 4. UPDATE ON PROJECTS

- 4.1 On 22 September 2016, the Scrutiny Committee received the recommendations of the **Street Enforcement Scrutiny Investigation Report**. One of these recommendations was that 'The Council should look towards externalising aspects of its enforcement work to support the internal team.' That work would focus on swift enforcement and penalties (FPNs). In accordance with the recommendation, an outside company was commissioned to hold a year-long street enforcement trial.
- 4.1.1 The trial commenced in February this year, however, after a few days the company ended the trial.
- 4.1.2 We are now seeking to begin another pilot, using available internal resources in order to target areas where there are ongoing problems. I will update you on this once this pilot scheme is in place.
- 4.2 In the previous report, it stated that a substantial programme was in the pipeline to **change our street lights and signs to LED technology**. In 2015/16, 1,709 street lighting units and signs were replaced with LED with 3,418 more replaced in 2016/17, and 3,472 in 2017/18. In 2018/19, 1,680 units will be replaced (738 replaced thus far) which will mean that a total of 10,279 units will have been replaced during this initial programme. As a result of these changes, it is anticipated that we will save £260,000 per annum and will reduce carbon emissions (414 CO<sup>2</sup>).

## 5. Gwynedd Consultancy Department

- 5.1 One main measure has been identified for this Department, namely **Profit against Target**. It is noted that the situation is fairly positive at present with projections for the latest NET situation for April to June 2018/19 showing a profit deficit of **£22,775**. This compares with a profit deficit of £85,107 at the end of Quarter 1 in 2017/18. Looking back at historical patterns, due to the nature of client work, this figure is often lower in the first Quarter; therefore, at present, I am not concerned about this.
- 5.2 The **Building Control Unit** is responsible for ensuring that building work meets building standards. The Unit has developed a series of performance measures and has reported on them at the latest performance challenge meeting. The information about customer satisfaction (Measure BC1) for the period between April and June 2018 shows a satisfaction score of 9.7 out of 10, which is consistent with the 2017/18 performance of 9.6 out of 10. Work is underway to establish the reason for any dissatisfaction.
- 5.3 It is noted that the percentage of **full planning applications approved** or conditionally approved stood at 92.5% for the period between April and June 2018. The performance of this measure has remained fairly stable over recent years, with the 2016/17 performance at 92.5%, and the 2017/18 performance at 95.7%. I have requested that the Manager further investigate the reasons why not everyone was entirely satisfied and why applications had not been approved, in order to get a better understanding of the situation.

## 6. FINANCIAL POSITION / SAVINGS

### 6.1 Highways and Municipal Department

#### 2013/14 – 2016/17 Schemes

- 6.2 One historical plan worth a total of £40,000 has not been completed (**PB19 Rationalisation of Recycling Banks**). A means of realising this has now been identified, and progress is anticipated over the coming months.

#### 2017/18 - 2018/19 Schemes

- 6.3 Although acceptable progress has been made towards completing the majority of the 2017/18 schemes, some concern remains with the implications of implementing four of these:

- 6.3.1 With the plan for **Recycling Centres (PB5)**, the Gwynedd Challenge exercise had concluded that we should close one centre to achieve a £96,000 saving. However, these resources are popular among the public and the Department considers that it has proposals that would be less contentious than realising this plan. The preparatory work for the 2019/20 savings and onward has also revealed that potential plans by other departments that would also have been less challenging if we could have included them in the Gwynedd Challenge review are now becoming apparent. **Therefore, I recommend that the Cabinet authorise the deferral of the implementation of this savings scheme and deal with the deficit created when considering 2019/20 savings and onward.**
- 6.3.2 With the plan to **Rationalise Street Cleaning Circuits (PB10)**, two thirds of this plan's saving has been realised but realising the rest as anticipated is a challenge. The Garden Waste Scheme costs less to implement and creates slightly more income than what was anticipated and; therefore, I suggest that we use £50,000 from these sources to avoid more cuts to street cleaning.
- 6.3.3 With the plan to **Reduce the Frequency of Urban Grass Cutting and Collection Procedure (PB28)** the residents of Gwynedd clearly see the impact of what has already been done, and there is concern that the implications of continuing to cut the budget to meet the full required sum will likely be greater than what was originally anticipated when the initial decision was taken to make the cuts. A report on the situation was submitted to the Communities Scrutiny Committee on 19 April 2018 to seek a resolution, and they suggested that the Department further research alternative ideas to realise the saving. Plans to reduce flower planting (£5,000), reduce overtime (£20,000), and dress streets with cheaper materials (£20,000) means that it is possible to meet the deficit and I suggest that we do so.
- 6.3.4 With the plan to **Close 50 out of 73 of the county's public toilets (Cuts 51)** the Partnerships' plan with Community and Town Councils has enabled the majority of the toilets that were under threat to remain open, fully or seasonally. Now, the plan has also nearly been fully realised but I suggest that we use £6,000 of re-structuring savings to close the gap.
- 6.3.5 In addition to the plans that the Department itself is responsible for carrying out, they are also responsible for leading a corporate plan to review fleet arrangements

following recommendations from experts who have identified where savings could be made in the Council's fleet system. The assumption within the Council's budget was that £85,000 of savings could be realized this year and a further £48,000 next year. Unfortunately, the preparation work is taking longer than anticipated because we have been investigating different ways of achieving the saving and the need to take into account taxation implications.

Whilst we are confident that the saving can be achieved in due course, it is unlikely that the £85,000 will be achieved this year and obviously there are implications for the Council's budget for this year which will be highlighted in the forthcoming Savings Overview and Budget Review reports at the Cabinet meeting on October 16th.

### **Schemes for 2018/19 and beyond**

- 6.4 It is not anticipated that there would be any problems in realising any plans that are ongoing or that have been partially realised in 2016/17 and 2017/18.

### **7. Gwynedd Consultancy Department**

- 7.1 The Gwynedd Consultancy Department has achieved all its efficiency schemes and cuts for 2016/17 and 2017/18.

### **8. NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE**

- 8.1 None to note.

### **9 ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO RECOMMENDING THE DECISION**

#### **9.1 Views of the Statutory Officers:**

##### **i. Monitoring Officer:**

No Comments in terms of propriety.

##### **ii. Head of Finance Department:**

I confirm that the comments in part 6 and 7 of the report are a fair reflection of an up-to-date position to realise the savings that are the responsibility of the Highways and Municipal Department and the Gwynedd Consultancy Department.

As the report in paragraph 6.3.5 said, the next budget review will deal with the implications of delays in delivering a corporate saving scheme led by the Highways Department.

I believe that the Highways and Municipal Department's budget will be able to cope in 2018/19 if the Cabinet decided to defer implementation of the Recycling Centers saving (PB5) scheme, as recommended in part 2 of the report.

## **9.2 Views of the Local Member:**

9.2.1 Not a local matter.

## **9.3 Results of Any Consultation:**

9.3.1 None to note.

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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1 - Performance Measures**