

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



Date of meeting: 16 October 2018
Cabinet Member: Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn, Leader
Contact Officer: Dilwyn Williams, Chief Executive
Contact Telephone Number: 01286 679002
Title of Item: North Wales Fire and Rescue Service Public Consultation

Report for a meeting of Gwynedd Council Cabinet

1. THE DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1. Cabinet Members are asked to identify the principles for responding to the public consultation by the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority together with asking the Leader and the Chief Executive to draw up a full response to the consultation within the timeframe.

2. THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

- 2.1 The North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority is holding a public consultation in order to seek opinion for financing the fire and rescue services in 2019/20. Representatives of the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service were given an opportunity to explain the Public Consultation at the Full Council meeting on 4 October. The focus was on the Financial challenge, and obviously any risk to the lives of Gwynedd people would be a priority.
- 2.2 As context, prior to the discussion to identify the principles for responding on behalf of the Council, I note that the Fire Authority is consulting on increasing the levy by 6% by 2019/20, while Welsh Government's grant settlement to Councils by 2019/20 is a severe cut, a cut of -0.8% for Gwynedd, not an increase.
- 2.3 Gwynedd Council will have high levels of inflation and demands for additional resources to ensure the obligate continuation of services and the Council will have to realise savings in order to afford this.
- 2.4 During this time local authorities in north Wales have had to cut budgets, reduce services and reduce staffing numbers to realise savings in every field while there is little evidence that the Fire Service will implement such plans to save costs.
- 2.5 It must be borne in mind that increasing the Fire levy by 2019/20 means that the Council itself will have to find more savings by 2019/20. Gwynedd's contribution to

increasing the Fire Authority's levy by 6% would be £335,147 (equivalent to 0.5% on Council Tax).

- 2.6 Consequently, Cabinet Members are asked to identify the principles for responding to the public consultation, and ask the Leader and the Chief Executive to draw up a full response to the consultation.

3. PRESENTATION AND RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

4. NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE

- 4.1. Respond to the full consultation using the principles which have been identified by the Cabinet by the closing date of 2 November 2018.

5. ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

5.1. Views of the Statutory Officers:

i. Monitoring Officer:

No comments in terms of propriety.

ii. Head of Finance Department:

I have worked with the Cabinet Member to prepare the report and confirm the contents

Appendices

North Wales Fire and Rescue Service Public Consultation document