

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



Report to the Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 10 March 2020

Cabinet Member: Councillor Dilwyn Morgan
Councillor Craig ab Iago

Contact Officer: Dafydd Gibbard, Head of Housing and Properties
Catrin Thomas, Assistant Head Supporting Families

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Subject: Maesgeirchen Integrated Centre, Bangor.

1. DECISION SOUGHT

- 1.1. Cabinet approval is sought to move to work with the community of Maesgeirchen, Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board, Adra to develop a potential plan for an Integrated Center on the estate for family support services and provisions and to report back with recommendations for the way forward.

2. REASON WHY DECISION IS NEEDED

2.1 The Council adopted its "Asset Plan 2019-2029" on March 7th, 2019. The plan includes the allocation of a contribution of £500,000 towards the development of an Integrated Family Support Center in Maesgeirchen. Expenditure is programmed for 2021/22 onwards.

2.2 It is anticipated that some of the Asset Plan monies will need to be used for preparatory work in 2020/21

2.3 The Head of Housing and Property will co-ordinate the project across Council Services, with the support of the Assistant Head Supporting Families and Assistant Head Economy and Community to ensure appropriate governance to the Supporting People's Wellbeing Board and the Regeneration Board.

3. INTRODUCTION AND JUSTIFICATION BEHIND THE DECISION

3.1 The national tackling poverty programme : **Communities First** ended in 2018. Maesgeirchen remains in the 10% most deprived communities in Wales.

3.2 £5m was invested in a new school building for Ysgol Glan Cegin in 2017. Due to site and budget constraints the school is unable to accommodate services beyond education.

3.3 The area remains one of 6 **Flying Start** areas in Gwynedd. The programme provides more support and opportunities for families with children under the age of 4, namely an increased Early Years health service; Childcare; Parenting Support; and Early Support with language development.

3.4 The area has also been designated as one of 13 communities throughout Wales that the Big Lottery has identified for the **Invest Local Programme**. The programme is managed by Building Community Trust and is a 10 year programme that uses the strengths, skills and talents of people, groups and societies of the communities to change things for the better. Each area has £1m to spend on local priorities. It is the people of the community themselves who decide how to develop the community, how to use the money, which organisations they work with, and how to make those decisions. Partneriaeth Maesgeirchen Partnership and the Maes-Ni Group have been engaging extensively with the community locally to develop this programme for almost 2 years.

3.5 This work has identified that the priorities for the community over the next period are to develop a community centre / hub, maintain community pride, and develop community activities.

3.6 In 2017, the **Targeted Regeneration Investment Programme (TRI)** was launched by the Welsh Government which promotes economic regeneration, with activities that focus on individuals and areas of greatest need. As part of the programme arrangements, a regional strategy has been prepared for North Wales, which identifies the city of Bangor as a priority area. The programme may be extended beyond the initial 3 year period (2018-21), and if so, a potential opportunity to target additional resources from this programme may arise.

3.7 The Council and its partners have been involved in the Welsh Government's **Children First Programme**. The Programme aimed to bring partners together to trial different ways of working, utilising current resources, to improve life outcomes for children and their families. The Children First Board has completed a needs assessment; engaged with children, young people and families on the estate; and produced an Action Plan that identifies what we want to change, and how. Several agencies are leading on different elements of the action plan and a number of local projects and solutions are now in place on the estate.

3.8 From this work the Council is leading on the **Transforming Early Years Services' Project** in conjunction with the Health Board, Childcare provision and education in the area. The project looks at the whole system for supporting children and their families. The workforce across the organisations has embarked on a Ffordd Gwynedd intervention.

3.9 Engagement with families and workers on the estate has shown that what is important is:

- "Getting help when I need it, from someone I trust". (with school, parenting, crime, getting work, being healthy, childcare),
- "Having plenty of things to do in our community outside of school and school time, for all ages, and in a comfortable place",
- "We want our community looking clean and beautiful",
- "To feel proud of our local community",
- "Being safe and our children safe in our community".

3.10 Families and residents have also said that they want support and resources in the community to allow them to do more for themselves and their community.

3.11 Although the Council currently has a presence on the estate, employees and service users have reported that the services available are not easily accessible, and there is no suitable, friendly, comfortable and less formal space on the estate where services and

the community can come together to work together. Despite the barriers, residents and workers report that there is a good relationship between workers and families on the estate, with evidence showing that families repeatedly turn to workers when needed.

3.12 The services based on the estate wish to work in a different way, more connected to each other and to the community itself.

4. NEXT STEPS AND TIMESCALES

- 4.1. An opportunity has arisen for the Council to plan and develop its estate provisions in conjunction with the Maes-Ni Group to establish an Integrated Center.
- 4.2. Over the next year we want to work with partners locally to scope and assess the feasibility of establishing a joint integrated center.
- 4.3. We want to scope out new models of management and governance with the community in line with the vision of the Regeneration Board.
- 4.4. The aim is to develop a viable plan for a multi-purpose Integrated Center on the estate that would meet the needs of the residents and provide the Council with the opportunity to overcome the current barriers in delivering support services.
- 4.5. When the Council's Asset Management Plan was drawn up we were aware that a new development on the estate was required in order to try to realise the above and seek to replace the existing unsuitable buildings. We did not know what the needs would be at the time and the first phase of this project will be to try and establish the true cost if we are to achieve the goal. It should therefore be borne in mind that at this point we do not know if the capital contribution from the Council will be sufficient to meet the demand.
- 4.6. Following completion of feasibility work on the needs, costs and models of service delivery and site management, a further report will be submitted before moving on to the next stage.

5. ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO MAKING THE DECISION

5.1. LOCAL MEMBERS' VIEWS:

Councillor Nigel Pickavance:

"As one of the local members for the Marchog ward I would like to provide you with my views regarding the proposed integrated Community centre. I can't express enough the need for such a Centre in Maesgeirchen.

At the moment we have some great services in Maesgeirchen and partners, however it is concerning that whilst work is often carried out in partnership, communication often breaks down with residents having to move from building to building, leaving the estate to travel for some of these services which often fails logistically.

We have also identified the need for community cohesion since the loss of the Maesgeirchen Social Club. The Community felt a great blow with this loss and this multi-function building could have this element included.

Given the population of Maesgeirchen and the Community first classed status, it goes without saying that there is a huge need for such a hub in our Community. I can only see this being of great benefit to our Community and I support the idea and hope it will develop into reality."

Councillor Dylan Fernley :

“As a local member within Marchog I would like to note my support for the proposed project. Our community has done much work on bringing people together to address the limited facilities we have within our community. Developing a community hub that could include space for agencies to work from, and a leisure and wellbeing aspect would greatly benefit our residents. We are a large community, with a variety of needs and aspirations, and this project is an opportunity for us to work together to improve our community”.

5.2. STATUTORY OFFICERS' VIEWS:

i. Monitoring Officer:

The report notes that the project has been identified in the Councils Asset Plan. The recommendation to jointly seek a solution with partners and the local community offers a way forward which also recognises the principles of the Well Being of Future Generations Act.

ii. Head of Finance:

I support the decision sought. Undertaking detailed research, including collaboration with others and community engagement, is essential if the development of the Integrated Family Support Centre in Maesgeirchen is to be a success. Such research will not only ensure that the proposed provision is suitable, but will also form part of the necessary work to establish detailed costs for the project. I can confirm that £500k has been allocated in the Asset Management Plan for the development of such a centre.