

THE CABINET, TUESDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2016

Present -

Councillors: Dyfed Wyn Edwards (Chairman), Dyfrig L. Siencyn (Vice-chairman), Peredur Jenkins, John Wynn Jones, Dafydd Meurig, W. Gareth Roberts, Mair Rowlands, Gareth Thomas, Ioan Thomas and Mandy Williams-Davies

Also present-

Morwena Edwards (Corporate Director), Iwan Trefor Jones (Corporate Director), Dafydd L. Edwards (Head of Finance Department), Sioned Eirian Williams (Head of Economy and Community Department), Thomas Hywel James (Principal Librarian), Hawis Jones (Strategic Planning and Performance Manager), Eleri Llewelyn Owen (Temporary Project Manager), Arwyn Thomas (Head of Education Department) and Catrin Thomas (Senior Community Learning Manager)

1. APOLOGIES

Cabinet Members and Officers were welcomed to the meeting.

Apologies were received from the Chief Executive, Dilwyn Williams and the Monitoring Officer, Iwan Evans.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor Gareth Thomas declared a personal interest in Item 7 "The Libraries Service's "More than Books" Strategy" as a relative of his was employed by the Libraries Service. He withdrew from the meeting during the discussion on this item.

3. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

There were no matters arising from overview and scrutiny.

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 JULY 2016

The Chairman signed the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 12 July 2016.

6. GROWTH VISION FOR THE ECONOMY OF NORTH WALES

The item was submitted by Cllr Mandy Williams-Davies.

The item was seconded by Cllr Gareth Thomas.

DECISION

To approve the "*Growth Vision for the Economy of North Wales*" as a basis for holding discussions with the UK and Welsh Governments about the "*Growth Deal*" application for the region.

DISCUSSION

The document "*Growth Vision for the Economy of North Wales*" was welcomed by a great number of the Cabinet Members with the aspiration to collaborate and build a relationship amongst several authorities strongly noted.

The need to ensure benefits for North-West Wales specifically was stressed, by making great efforts to attract investment to the area. The Cabinet Member responsible confirmed that Gwynedd was a priority and that it was hoped that the availability of expertise in the County would strengthen with time as we ensure better co-ordinated discussions and collaboration. Iwan Trefor Jones added that the aim was to ensure that growth was dispersed across North Wales in order to ensure that the benefits were spread out.

A concern was noted that there was not obvious reference to collaborating with Welsh Government and the need to strengthen the relationship between the Government and North Wales was stressed. Iwan Trefor Jones confirmed that continued discussions were being held with the Ministers, Mark Drakeford AM and Ken Skates AM, and that there was a desire to strengthen the relationships between the Westminster Government and the Wales Office in London.

It was explained that the next step would be to hold further discussions with the UK Government and Welsh Government in the hope that the Chancellor would give his support to the principle in his statement on 23 November 2016.

7. THE LIBRARIES SERVICE'S "MORE THAN BOOKS" STRATEGY

Cllr Gareth Thomas declared an interest and he withdrew from the meeting.

The item was submitted by Cllr Ioan Thomas.

The item was seconded by Cllr Dyfrig Siencyn.

DECISION

To adopt the "More than Books" Strategy for Gwynedd Council's Libraries Service.

DISCUSSION

It was noted that there was a duty on the Council following the UK Government's cuts and the Council's decision to cut 25% of the book buying budget to operate within the available budget.

It was emphasised, in particular considering the difficult financial situation, that the Strategy meant being able to provide a service for the residents of Gwynedd that will be sustainable in the future. It was acknowledged, however, that although the strategy was a County one which meant that the provision would change for everyone across the County, that the impact would be felt more in some communities.

It was acknowledged that a general reluctance towards the changes to the provision had been obvious; however, upon discussing the matter further, the majority of areas were willing to hold further discussions and negotiate the details. Specific support was expressed to the references to strengthening the Mobile Library service and its value was noted, in particular in the most rural areas of the County.

It was noted that Porthmadog Library, which was now located in Glaslyn Leisure Centre, was a positive example of how another Council-owned asset could be used to maintain the provision, and although this part of adaptation was not possible in each area, it was confirmed that the Cabinet Member and the Officers were looking into any opportunities arising.

The strategy was welcomed as a way forward and it was noted that discussions were yet to be held in some communities. Gwynedd's partners and residents were thanked for their willingness to collaborate, and to the Officers for their work.

8. MOVING TOWARDS EDUCATION AREA OFFICES

The report was submitted by Councillor Gareth Thomas.

The report was seconded by Cllr Dyfrig Siencyn.

DECISION

To approve implementing an Education Area Offices model.

To approve the request for costs of approximately £275,000 from the Authority for the Head of Finance in consultation with the Head of Corporate Support and the Cabinet Member for Resources, to confirm the total as a result of the outcomes of the appraisal of staff's posts.

To approve the creation of a Service Level Agreement by the Corporate Support Department and the Education Department in relation to Human Resources to define the nature of the service.

DISCUSSION

The Head of Education, Arwyn Thomas, explained that more support was required on a more local level in order to assist Head Teachers to lead their schools and release them to do so, and support teachers to focus on educating, which in turn would lead to improving the standard of education for the children of the County.

The proposal was welcomed and it was emphasised that there had been excessive pressure on the schools, Head Teachers and Governors for some years without sufficient central support and that there was a need to invest in order to strengthen the education of the pupils.

It was noted that schools could often be competitive and it was emphasised that there was a need to promote collaboration and sharing good practice.

The Chief Finance Officer, Dafydd Edwards, explained that should the Cabinet approve the request for costs, the budgets would need to be reviewed in order to obtain the one-off amount, and it would have to be reclaimed from the balances should departments overspend. However, it was hoped that the Education Department, in turn, would make savings in order to fund the costs in the future.

It was noted that the great successes of our schools in the Summer 2016 results set the context for strengthening our structures and encouraging further improvement. All pupils and staff in the County were congratulated on their hard work throughout the year.

9. NEW ARRANGEMENTS OF THE ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS AND INCLUSION SERVICE IN GWYNEDD AND ANGLESEY

The report was submitted by Councillor Gareth Thomas.

The report was seconded by Cllr Mair Rowlands.

DECISION

1. To adopt a single Common Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion Strategy for Gwynedd and Anglesey which will address the needs of pupils and young people in an effective and efficient manner to be implemented by September 2017.

2. To join in a formal partnership with the Isle of Anglesey County Council to implement the Strategy and adopt a new governance structure referred to in this report, which will replace the Gwynedd and Anglesey Special Educational Needs

Joint-Committee (SENJC).

3. To delegate permission to the Head of Education Department in consultation with the Head of Legal Department and Head of Finance Department to agree and complete a Formal Agreement with the Isle of Anglesey County Council for the partnership.

4. To delegate permission to the Head of Education Department in consultation with the Head of Legal Department and Head of Finance Department to complete an Agreement / memorandum of understanding for the interim period before signing the official Agreement, which will state the commitment of both authorities to implement the new procedure, and will allow the work that is needed in order to reach that point to be carried out.

DISCUSSION

It was explained that very positive discussions had been held with the Isle of Anglesey Council to adopt a joint strategy that would in turn allow the two authorities to reach the appropriate pupils much sooner. It was explained that a similar report would be submitted to the Anglesey Executive in the near future for its approval.

The collaboration highlighted between both authorities was welcomed, along with the opportunity available here to create expertise and career opportunities as well as share the challenges.

A question was asked about the scrutiny and performance measuring system as we collaborated with Anglesey and Arwyn Thomas confirmed that the Heads of Education Departments in Gwynedd and Anglesey, along with the appropriate Cabinet Member/Portfolio Holder would scrutinise daily; however, there would be an opportunity for Gwynedd scrutinisers to call the matter in should they see the need to do so. It was confirmed that this joint Service would be accountable to both authorities.

Cllr Gareth Thomas thanked the Officers from both authorities for their work and willingness to collaborate.

10. REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE STRATEGIC SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS PANEL

The report was submitted by Cllr Mair Rowlands.

The report was seconded by Councillor Gareth Thomas.

DECISION

To accept the report submitted on the work of the Strategic Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Panel.

DISCUSSION

The progress seen in awareness and referrals made by front-line staff under the **D1** project was highlighted and this suggested that efforts to raise awareness had proved successful.

It was emphasised that the field of safeguarding children was much more mature than the field of safeguarding adults as this work was newer. However, it was noted that work was under-way to build on our arrangements in the adults field and it was hoped that further information could be presented for the attention of Cabinet Members soon.

It was noted that Gwynedd was one of the first Counties to put internal safeguarding arrangements in practice and, whilst acknowledging that work was yet to be done to ensure that our arrangements were clear and robust, and more effective within the adults department, Morwena Edwards emphasised that the Council had done successful work to date.

Cllr John Wynn Jones emphasised how effective the safeguarding training he had received as a school Governor in his ward had been. Other Members agreed that safeguarding was much more at the forefront of their minds by now.

A question was asked on how the Council intended to deal with the use of technology and Morwena Edwards noted that efforts were being made to raise the awareness of users of technology and ensure that parents and teachers were aware of the risks and that they had the skills to manage the issue. It was noted that there was no obvious answer to the risks of using technology but that a lot of collaboration was taking place with the Police in order to share best practices.

A question was asked as to whether or not the Council satisfied the regional work taking place effectively and influencing local level action. It was acknowledged that it was more difficult to ensure the work on a regional level and that the arrangements reaching us under the direction of Welsh Government and the Home Office could overlap; however, it was noted that the Council was satisfied that the regional arrangements strengthened the agenda.

11. GWYNEDD COUNCIL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2015/16

The item was submitted by Cllr Dyfed Edwards.

The item was seconded by Cllr Gareth Thomas.

DECISION

To approve the Gwynedd Council Performance Report 2015/16 and to recommend its adoption by the Full Council.

DISCUSSION

Pride was taken in the fact that Gwynedd Council had appeared amongst the highest for effective performance in comparison with other Councils and the visual and comprehensible report created to underline that performance was welcomed. It was reiterated that Gwynedd Council was amongst the best in Wales in the field of education, and it would take great pride in that.

It was noted that the real proof would be the experience of the citizens and the feedback given about this when reporting to the Residents' Panel was welcomed.

It was acknowledged that there was room to improve in many fields but that Gwynedd Council's performance was good on the whole.

It was emphasised that it would be a very useful document for Members of the Council to use in their communities. It was asked whether or not it would be possible to receive some of the images used in the report for the purposes of using them to communicate key messages and ensure an understanding of the challenges facing the Council and its ability to deal with them. It was agreed that all possible methods of communicating the message needed to be considered, acknowledging that everyone did not use Information Technology.

It was confirmed that the Cabinet was satisfied that the report was a fair and balanced reflection of the Council's performance. All Council staff were thanked for their commitment to the work.

12. PERFORMANCE REPORT: CABINET MEMBER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

The report was submitted by Cllr John Wynn Jones.

The report was seconded by Cllr Dafydd Meurig.

DECISION

To accept and note the information in the report.

DISCUSSION

Reference was made to the performance measure **WMT/004 Percentage of urban waste sent to landfill** where it was noted that the Mechanical Biological Treatment facility had been broken since April and a question was asked about why it had not been repaired earlier. Cllr John Wynn Jones noted that he would ask for an explanation as appropriate.

Reference was made to the performance measure **PB59 Percentage of Customer Satisfaction Survey satisfied with Department's response** and a question was asked as to why no data had been recorded. It was suggested that it could be as a result of the high percentage noted for the measure **PB57 Percentage of Municipal calls addressed the first time**; however, Cllr John Wynn Jones confirmed that he would seek clarity on this.

Reference was made to the figures in the report noting the number of missed waste/recycling collections, and it was asked whether or not there was a pattern behind this. As the measure was new and under development, Cllr John Wynn Jones noted that it was early days but that the department was currently looking at this. It was added that GPS technology in lorries means that they could track that they have been on appropriate journeys, and this is a step forward.

Reference was made to measure **THS/011c Percentage of roads (class C) which are in a poor condition** and a question was asked, considering the cuts facing the department, whether or not it would be possible to maintain the figure noted for 2015-16 or whether or not the roads are very likely to deteriorate gradually. The risks were acknowledged and Cllr John Wynn Jones confirmed that the department would monitor this figure to ensure that they did not lose control of it.

Cllr John Wynn Jones was thanked for his work.

13. PERFORMANCE REPORT: CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND REGULATORY

The report was submitted by Cllr Dafydd Meurig.

The report was seconded by Cllr Mandy Williams-Davies.

DECISION

To accept and note the information in the report.

DISCUSSION

Cllr Dafydd Meurig drew attention to the substantial progress in the measure **PLA/004b - Percentage of all other planning applications determined within 56 days and how quickly they are determined on average**, noting that he was very pleased with the result.

Reference was made to measure **Cludiant02 – Percentage of customers stating that they are satisfied with the level of service** and it was noted that the figure of 43% was not satisfactory. Cllr Dafydd Meurig explained that the measure took into account the routes that the Council subsidised and commercially-run routes. The transportation unit did not have any control over the commercial routes and therefore this could skew the figures. He confirmed that he had requested for the department to consider these separately in the future.

Reference was made to the measure **Parcio4 - Percentage of appeals to the independent adjudicator which are approved** Concern was expressed that the figure of 100% suggested that the fee had been unreasonable from the start. It was confirmed that Cllr Dafydd Meurig had raised this matter and was currently awaiting a response.

Reference was made to measure **Eiddo2 - Percentage of maintenance help-desk customers satisfied with the service received over the past 6 months** and a question was asked as to whether the department made any subsequent use of the data. It was confirmed that the department regularly asked customers for the reasons why they were not satisfied with the service and attempted to learn lessons from that. It was added that the Cabinet Members held regular performance management meetings and that this was a way of ensuring that a discussion took place and that messages reached the Heads.

Reference was made to measure **Eiddo6 - Percentage of new buildings (or alterations) supplied within the timetable and the budget** The Department was congratulated on the substantial progress to 100% on this measure.

Cllr Dafydd Meurig was thanked for his work.

14. PERFORMANCE REPORT: CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING, CUSTOMER CARE AND LIBRARIES, DEPRIVATION AND EQUALITY

The report was submitted by Cllr Ioan Thomas.

DECISION

To accept and note the information in the report.

DISCUSSION

Cllr Ioan Thomas referred to the project **T7 Working together against poverty** He noted that poverty was a Welsh Government priority and that the Council needed to address the agenda. It was noted that he was not completely comfortable that the Cabinet would be able to ensure that it understood the implications for various departments/portfolio fields. Consequently, Cllr Thomas intended to discuss with the relevant Cabinet Member and Officer to consider what exactly the department did to address the agenda. This would allow for the Cabinet to ensure that plans are submitted and enable them to monitor their success.

When referring to the project **T9 - Housing Supply Strategy** and the provision for homeless individuals, Cllr Ioan Thomas noted that the relevant Scrutiny Committee had noted that further consideration was needed in the field and that further developments needed to be encouraged as there was a relatively high demand for the provision.

Concern was expressed regarding measure **Gofal Cwsmer CYSCW02 Percentage of phone calls that are answered within 15 seconds across the Council** as it was reducing. A question was asked whether or not the fact that outgoing calls from Council offices all displayed the Galw Gwynedd phone number rather than the phone number of the officer who had attempted to call caused problems. It was added that staff needed to be trained to transfer their

phone lines and ensure a response. It was noted that the work was in progress at present but that it was premature to report on it.

Cllr Ioan Thomas was thanked for his work.

15. PERFORMANCE REPORT: CABINET MEMBER FOR ECONOMY AND COMMUNITY

The report was submitted by Cllr Mandy Williams-Davies.

DECISION

To accept and note the information in the report.

DISCUSSION

The Cabinet Members welcomed the opportunity recently had to meet Prof. Dermot Cahill from Bangor University and noted the value of the presentation received.

Reference was made to the pilot scheme to provide public Wi-Fi in Aberdaron under the project **T3 Digital Gwynedd** and noted that data was being recorded there regarding the type of service users and that this allowed businesses to use it to target customers when needed.

When discussing Festival No.6, it was emphasised that there was a need to differentiate between the hugely successful festival and the difficulties encountered as a result of the parking arrangements. It was noted that such festivals were currently very popular, but that there was a need to borne in mind that the interest could deteriorate in future, and thus there was a need to focus on a broad range of events.

When discussing the measures, the number of jobs created with the department's support was welcomed and a question was asked regarding whether the department had information on the nature of the posts and the sectors they were in. Cllr Mandy Williams-Davies noted that some of them were in the technology field in Parc Menai. She added that a reduction had been seen in the figures as a result of a lack of resource within the department, but that it was important to focus on the potential to create jobs now and consider the best possible ways of doing so.

Cllr Mandy Williams-Davies added that she was eager to look at the day to day experience of customers and businesses that need advice from the department and she would discuss the possibilities further.

Cllr Mandy Williams-Davies was thanked for her work.

16. GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET'S FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The forward work programme was submitted by Councillor Dyfed Edwards.

DECISION

To approve the Forward Work Programme included with the meeting papers, subject to the following adaptations:-

- Cllr Dyfed Edwards would not be submitting the item 'Strategic Plan 2017/18' on 4 October 2016.
- Cllr Dafydd Meurig would not submit the item 'Implications of the Council's Decision to close Frondeg, Pwllheli & Felinheli Offices' on 4 October 2016, but it would be deferred until the Cabinet meeting on 1 November 2016.

It was noted that a request had been received to discuss Leisure issues in Harlech and Ardudwy but that discussions on the way forward were ongoing at present.

The meeting commenced at 1.00pm and concluded at 3.50pm.

CHAIR