



**Gwasanaeth Democraidd**  
**Democratic Service**  
Swyddfa'r Cyngor  
CAERNARFON  
Gwynedd  
LL55 1SH

Cyfarfod / Meeting

**PWYLLGOR CRAFFU CYMUNEDAU**  
**COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Dyddiad ac Amser / Date and Time

**10.00AM, DYDD MAWRTH, 14 MAI, 2013**

**10.00AM, TUESDAY, 14 MAY, 2013**

Lleoliad / Location

**SIAMBR DAFYDD ORWIG**  
**SWYDDFA'R CYNGOR, CAERNARFON**

Pwynt Cyswllt / Contact Point

**Ioan Hughes (01286 679780)**

[IoanHughes@gwynedd.gov.uk](mailto:IoanHughes@gwynedd.gov.uk)

Dosbarthwyd 07.05.2013

**Aelodaeth/Membership (18)**

**Plaid Cymru (9)**

Y Cynghorwyr/Councillors

Craig ap Iago	Annwen Hughes	Gethin Glyn Williams
Dilwyn Morgan	Linda Morgan	Tudor Owen
Caerwyn Roberts	Mandy Williams-Davies	Eurig Wyn

**Annibynnol/Independent (4)**

Y Cynghorwyr / Councillors

Eric M. Jones	Nigel Pickavance	Angela Russell	Mike Stevens
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**Llais Gwynedd (3)**

Y Cynghorwyr/Councillors

Louise Hughes	Gruffydd Williams	Robert J. Wright
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**Llafur/Labour (1)**

Y Cynghorydd/Councillor

Gwynfor Edwards

**Democratiaid Rhyddfrydol / Liberal Democrats (1)**

Y Cynghorydd/Councillor

Stephen Churchman

**Aelodau Ex-officio / Ex-officio Members**

Cadeirydd ac Is-Gadeirydd y Cyngor / Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council – Y Cynghorwyr / Councillors Huw Edwards a / and Dewi Owen.

## AGENDA

### 1. CHAIRMAN

To elect a Chairman for 2013/14

### 2. VICE-CHAIRMAN

To elect a Vice-chairman for 2013/14

### 3. APOLOGIES

To accept any apologies for absence.

### 4. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

### 5. URGENT ITEMS

To note any items that are a matter of urgency in the view of the Chairman for consideration

### 6. MINUTES

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the last meeting of this committee, held on 26 March, 2013, be signed as a true record, (copy herewith – **yellow** enclosure).

Please note that the times listed below are estimates only.

### 7. TOWN CENTRES

**Cabinet member – Councillor John Wynn Jones**

To consider the observations of the Cabinet Member in relation to rejuvenating and enhancing the image of town centres.

(copy herewith)

10.05am – 10.50am (45 minutes)

### 8. NODDFA HOSTEL, DEINIOLEN

**Cabinet Member – Councillor John Wyn Williams**

To consider the observations of the Cabinet Member in relation to the service provided at the Noddfa Hostel, Deiniolen, (copy herewith – **lilac** enclosure)

10.50am – 11.50am (hour)

### 9. TRANSPORT

**Cabinet Member – Councillor W. Gareth Roberts**

To consider the observations of the Cabinet Member on the Council supported post - 16 transport provision, (copy herewith – **grey** enclosure)

11.50am – 12.50pm (hour)

## 10. ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME

To submit the latest version of the Annual Work Programme, (copy herewith- **pink** enclosure.

12.50pm

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**COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 26-03-2013**

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**PRESENT (Committee members)** - Councillor Eric M. Jones, (Chairman)  
Councillor Angela Russell, (Vice-chair).

Councillors:- Stephen Churchman, Annwen Hughes, Louise Hughes, Dilwyn Morgan, Nigel Pickavance, Caerwyn Roberts, Mandy Williams-Davies, Gruffydd Williams, Gethin Glyn Williams and Eurig Wyn.

**OFFICERS:** Gareth James (Member Support and Scrutiny Manager) and Ioan Hughes (Member Support and Scrutiny Officer).

**OTHERS INVITED TO THE MEETING:** (*For item 5 on the agenda – The Development of Transport Services in Gwynedd*), Bethan Russell Williams, (Mantell Gwynedd - Chief Officer), Barbara Snowball (Mawddach Bus Users), Rona Lewis (Director of the Dolgellau Campus, Coleg Meirion Dwyfor) and Linda Wyn, (Executive Director Academic Services, Coleg Meirion Dwyfor).

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors David Gwynfor Edwards, Mike Stevens and Robert J. Wright.

**WELCOME:** Councillor Nigel Pickavance, who was attending his first meeting of the committee for some time, was welcomed. He had not been able to attend for some months due to his daughter's illness, and the Chairman wished the member and his family well.

**SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION:** A scrutiny investigation had been undertaken recently, which dealt with the 'Provision of Housing for Local People'. Councillor Stephen Churchman, the Chairman of the Scrutiny Investigation Group confirmed that all the recommendations made had been approved in a meeting of the Informal Cabinet.

He added that this was the first time for the Cabinet members to consider the scrutiny investigation and that their response was very positive. Councillor Churchman thanked everyone, members and officers, who had been part of the investigation, and explained that the Cabinet Member would now collaborate with the relevant officers to submit the report to the Formal Cabinet in the coming weeks or months.

**1. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

No declarations of personal interest were received from any members present.

**2. MINUTES**

The Chairman signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 5 February, 2013 as a true record.

**3. THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSPORT SERVICES IN GWYNEDD**

**3a) An interview with Bethan Russell Williams, Mantell Gwynedd – Chief Officer**

a) The Chairman welcomed Mantell Gwynedd's Chief Officer to the meeting and thanked her for attending the meeting.

b) Mantell Gwynedd Chief Officer referred to proposed changes in relation to reorganising Health Services across north Wales and noted that the third sector was concerned about

how the residents of areas such as Llŷn and areas of Meirionnydd would travel a great distance if specialist services would be centralised.

Consequently, some work was undertaken by Betsi Cadwaladr Heath Board and Mrs Williams submitted information that they had provided in light of the possible reorganisation.

c) She added that voluntary organisations were facing problems in terms of funding, maintaining the service and forward planning. She further explained that Mantell Gwynedd did not provide a service, but that they worked to support the voluntary organisations.

ch) In response to an enquiry, it was noted that increased pressure tended to be placed on the entire third sector services, although the financial support was not available. The speaker added that consideration could be given to ensuring support for the voluntary organisations that would offer better value for money. She added that this could be achieved in a pilot area where transport difficulties already existed.

She also noted that the third sector could gain access to funds, such as the Lottery, who did not support the public sector.

d) It was further reported that consideration could be given to the value of taking services to the public, rather than waiting for them to travel, especially bearing in mind that problems could arise as a result of changes to the benefits system. It was suggested that the Council should consider how to improve consultation methods and ways of reaching the public.

dd) Members agreed that work should be undertaken to draw the public into the discussions in order to gain an understanding of the weaknesses in the transport service and consider how to ensure improvement.

**3b) An interview with Barbara Snowball, a representative of Mawddach Bus Users**

a) The Chairman welcomed Barbara Snowball to the meeting and thanked her for attending the meeting.

b) The speaker referred to concerns that existed in relation to the impact of cuts to the local bus service on the residents of rural areas in Meirionnydd and specifically referred to the service in the area of Llangelynnin Ward.

c) The campaigners noted that later buses were needed to travel between Dolgellau and Tywyn. Specific reference was made to difficulties faced by those who travelled on the bus to and from the hospital and it was noted that the travelling timetable was restrictive and inconvenient.

ch) It was further emphasised by the campaigners that the bus service was crucial in order to promote the tourism industry and they noted that the entire local community would benefit if a later bus service would be restored.

They suggested that the timetable could be changed for a trial period of a year. They were of the opinion that this would enable them to draw attention to the options available and encourage more people to use the bus service.

d) Mrs Snowball provided examples of problems faced by individuals along with difficulties that arose due to the current bus timetables.

dd) In terms of costs, she noted that a convenient arrangement would attract more people to use the bus service. She added that this emphasised the value of trialling changes for a

period of a year. She was concerned that using a reduction in the number of users as a reason for the trial would deteriorate the service further.

3c) An interview with Rona Lewis, Director of the Dolgellau Campus – Coleg Meirion Dwyfor and Linda Wyn, Executive Director Academic Services, Llandrillo Menai Group.

- a) As Linda Wyn was one of the Executive Directors of the Llandrillo Menai Group, that included Coleg Meirion Dwyfor, Coleg Menai and Coleg Llandrillo, it was explained that the information submitted would involve matters across Gwynedd.
- b) It was noted that one of the main concerns was the fact that Gwynedd's post 16 students, in the schools and colleges had to pay £180 per year to use buses in Gwynedd. The Group now involved four counties and it was noted that Anglesey students paid £60 per year and that Conwy and Denbigh students did not pay anything for the service. It was added that the Council's senior officers had suggested that those who felt hardship due to this payment could use the Education Maintenance Allowance. However, it was emphasised that the purpose of this allowance was to help towards other costs such as paying for equipment associated with vocational courses.
- c) Furthermore, it was noted that there was a restriction on the use that could be made of the bus passes. Although the payments were being made, the bus passes were not accepted on some routes, therefore an additional payment had to be made. In addition, Gwynedd Council insisted that payments for the bus passes were made via credit card, and it was believed that this discriminated against some groups of students.
- ch) The speakers noted that Gwynedd Council had not been very flexible in relation to permitting the tickets on a temporary basis. The temporary tickets were refused after three weeks although the permanent tickets did not arrive for five weeks on some occasions.
- d) Consideration was given to the bus times, and it was explained that the service was insufficient with some failing to attend some essential parts of the courses along with extra-curricular activities. The fact that some dropped out of the studies underlined the difficulties. It was also explained that the timetables had been arranged to tie-in with school terms which were different to the terms in the colleges. Consequently, students faced an additional payment of £5 per day.
- dd) General concern was expressed regarding the decline in range and quality of the transport service.
- e) In response to an enquiry, it was noted that approximately 15 students dropped out of their courses at the beginning of a term on the Dolgellau site as a result of the difficulties and the hardship.
- f) Concern was expressed by the members and it was noted that students missed opportunities due to the lack of flexibility and the unacceptable and unfair system.
- ff) The Chairman thanked the speakers for the information and promised that further enquires would be made to ensure that the matters would be drawn to the attention of the Cabinet Member.

**RESOLVED to authorise the Members Support and Scrutiny Manager, in collaboration with the Chair, Vice-chair and Councillor Eurig Wyn, who is responsible for making the proposal, to provide a list of concerns expressed and**

**submit them to the Cabinet in order to receive a report in response to the observations.**

**4. BANGOR PRIDE**

- a) Submitted – the report of the Member Support and Scrutiny Manager.
- b) Members were reminded that they had considered undertaking a scrutiny investigation into Bangor Pride Bangor in September 2012. However, it had been resolved at the time to prioritise the ‘provision of housing for local people.’
- c) In light of this, the Bangor Pride Scheme was being resubmitted, and it was explained that the scrutiny investigation would run between April and December 2013.
- ch) The members’ briefing notes were listed by the Scrutiny Officers and members were given an opportunity to submit observations.
- d) A member noted that it would be beneficial to consider the times of timely refuse collections, especially in the vicinity of houses of multiple occupation. He believed that they could collaborate with the Students Union in dealing with this matter.
- dd) A local member agreed that changes were needed and to ensure that appropriate bins were available. She was very supportive of the suggestion to collaborate with the students.
- e) It was agreed that the ‘cleaning manager’ should be part of the scrutiny investigation programme.
- f) It was confirmed that the Leading Members of the Scrutiny Investigation Group would be Councillors:  
Eric M. Jones, Mandy Williams–Davies, Gwynfor Edwards, Nigel Pickavance, Dilwyn Morgan and Gruffydd Williams.
- ff) The Member Support and Scrutiny Manager emphasised that the Scrutiny Investigation involved a significant time commitment and he wanted the Group members to be aware of this.

**5. ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME**

- a) Submitted – a version of the Annual Work Programme.
- b) It was noted that the Noddfa Centre, Deiniolen and the Car Hire Scheme had been added to the programme at the members’ request.
- c) Members were given an opportunity to submit additional items to include on the work programme and concern was expressed with regard to ‘using empty properties’ and second homes.
- ch) Concern was expressed in relation to observations that had been made during the meeting about the Council’s failure to engage with the public. It was confirmed that the Corporate Scrutiny Committee was considering the matter and the information would be transferred to them.

**RESOLVED to add the following two matters to the annual work programme:**

- **Using Empty Properties;**



- **Second Homes.**

The meeting commenced at 10.15am and concluded at 12.40pm

<b>NAME OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Communities Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>14 May 2013</b>
<b>TITLE OF ITEM</b>	<b>Town Centres</b>
<b>CABINET MEMBER</b>	<b>Cllr John Wyn Jones</b>

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. The Revitalising and Improving the Image of Town Centres Scheme was included in the Gwynedd Council Three Year Plan for 2011-2014.
- 1.2. The main aim of the Scheme is to try to assist towns in different parts of the county to rediscover their purpose as the main employment and services centres, and their image as lively and attractive places for residents and tourists alike. The Scheme includes specific activities funded through 3YP budgets and also intertwines with some of the Department's other activities and projects during the same period.
- 1.3. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the current situation.

## **2. The Context of Regenerating Town Centres**

- 2.1. Regenerating town centres is an increasingly important theme with the threats of online shopping and out-of-town shopping becoming more and more apparent. It is a challenge to try to maintain the vitality in our town centres, particularly in a period of recession, and more recent national / regional strategies and studies have highlighted the significance of the challenges faced by town centre areas.
- 2.2. It is anticipated that increasing attention will be drawn to the vitality of our towns in the coming years with strategies and policies encouraging and setting foundations for the regeneration of our towns.

## **3. Revitalising and Improving the Image of Town Centres Scheme**

- 3.1. The Revitalising and Improving the Image of Town Centres Scheme has been divided into six main activities. A brief summary of the current activities is included in Appendix 1. It is also noted that the Scheme ties in with the Council's other strategic projects to regenerate town centres, also included in the Appendix.
- 3.2. In accordance with the request of the Scrutiny Committee, the next parts of the report present information about matters involving the work undertaken along with the associated challenges.

#### **4. Work undertaken to date**

##### Stage 1 – Preparatory Work

- 4.1. The scheme was started by scoping and researching the County's town centres and identifying which schemes, ideas and aspirations existed locally. The following summarises the type of research undertaken:
- Initial consultation with officers, Chambers of Trade and Business Groups
  - Holding information events with Chambers of Trade and Business Groups
  - Preparing a survey of empty buildings within the towns' trade boundaries
  - Identifying good practice within the town centre regeneration field

##### Stage 2 – Identifying Town Centre Areas in Gwynedd

- 4.2. It was decided to define Town Centre areas and to address 'Sub regional Centres', 'Towns' and 'Local Centres' as identified in the Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan and Eryri Local Development Plan.
- 4.3. Consequently, several town centres have been identified including Bangor, Caernarfon, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Pwllheli, Bethesda, Tywyn, Porthmadog, Barmouth, Dolgellau, Bala, Llanberis, Penygroes, Harlech, Nefyn, Abersoch, Cricieth, Penrhyndedraeth and Aberdyfi.
- 4.4. The town centres were defined in accordance with the boundaries of trading areas in the Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan Eryri Local Development Plan.

##### Stage 3 : Fostering links with Business Groups / Chambers of Trade

- 4.5. Following initial consultation with business groups, arrangements were put in place in order to ensure that a specific link had been identified for each individual business group. Consequently, considerable emphasis is placed on trying to collaborate with the activities of these groups, rather than develop entirely separate schemes.
- 4.6. Further information about aspects of the scheme was distributed, and advertisements were placed in the local press inviting expressions of interest from business groups to submit proposals or ideas for various measures within the Scheme.

##### Stage 4 – Implementing Activities

- 4.7. Preparatory work and initial implementation has been operational since 2011. 2013/14 will be a year of completing the action associated with the Scheme. Appendix 1 refers to the individual activities (along with associated

additional activities) outlining an update of the activities and the work which needs to be completed in 2013/14.

## 5. Challenges associated with the Scheme

- 5.1. The Revitalising and Improving the Image of Town Centres Scheme is operational with clear steps having been followed when developing and implementing the scheme. Challenges were faced in each stage of the scheme from the initial research to the implementation.
- 5.2. In general, the following were identified as challenges:

	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>1. Development Stage</b>		
1.1.	Tight timescale for implementation	Outputs were set for the early years of the programme without acknowledging the volume of the preparatory/research work required.
1.2.	Cross-section of small towns in Gwynedd	There is a great number of towns in Gwynedd which serve as main centres for the residents. These vary from the main towns, market towns, seaside towns to small towns. It was a challenge to define which towns to focus on in order to have the most positive impact throughout the County.
1.3.	Background work needed	There was a lack of research and baseline for the County's towns which would reflect the specific needs and the opportunities available in all towns.
1.4.	Link between town centre business establishments and the Council.	The need to strengthen the link between the business establishments in the towns and the Council was highlighted. This was strengthened by contacting every business establishment directly.
1.5.	Invite ideas and interest for the Improving the Image elements of the Scheme.	Mixed response to press campaigns to share ideas which could be realised through the scheme.
<b>2. Implementation Stage</b>		
2.1.	Budget limitations	It is only possible to implement a programme of small schemes due to the budget limitations, with £223k allocated to the project. Additional funds were targeted for some elements of the scheme.
2.2.	Wider issues and challenges facing town centres	A number of factors affect the image and vitality of town centres, which are beyond the control of the project. The condition of the economy, changes in shopping patterns are a few examples.
2.3.	The capacity within the Department to implement.	The Scheme has an extensive number of schemes with a lot of work involved in them. Consequently, resources within the Department had to be increased in order to proceed with the implementation arrangements.

2.4	A slippage in the timescale	Circumstances beyond control and the period of the preparatory/development stage meant that the majority of the implementation is in 2013/14.
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- 5.3. The Scheme has been a useful medium to trial measures to rejuvenate town centres – and seeking to build on good practices in other locations. However, due to the challenges above and specifically the comparatively limited budget, responding to the significant challenges facing the town centre areas and associated businesses was a challenge.

## 6. Future Opportunities

- 6.1 The Revitalising and Improving the Image of Town Centres Scheme was programmed as a three year project. During the first two years, considerable work has been undertaken, particularly in relation to developmental work and establishing communication and operational arrangements. It should also be noted that associated strategic schemes have also been implemented during the period, securing substantial external grants.
- 6.2 Since developmental work has now been completed, arrangements and commitments are already in place for implementing and completing the work streams during 2013/14.
- 6.3 Associated with the existing work, it is anticipated that there are opportunities to develop other aspects for improving and Revitalising town centres. Further developmental work would be needed, but the opportunities currently highlighted include:
- An opportunity for the Council to take a holistic overview of town centre areas, considering a broad range of services provided by the authority
  - The Gwynedd Promoting Local Shopping Card Scheme
  - Researching opportunities of establishing Business Improvement Areas
  - The Welsh Government's intention to launch a campaign with the aim of Supporting the High Street in Wales in June 2013 (as noted in its New Regeneration Framework)
  - The development of a Gwynedd Destination Management Scheme, including the possibility of developing it further to a local area
  - The development of detailed policies within the Local Development Plan in respect of the use of land and buildings within town centres.
  - Welsh Government Business Rates Review
- 6.4 It is anticipated that any development work would need to be considered in relation to the above in the context of the Council's new strategic plan. It is expected that proposals will be developed as part of the priority of 'Strengthening Business Resilience and Retaining the Economic Benefit Locally'.

**APPENDIX 1: SUMMARY OF EXISTING ACTIVITIES (2011-2013)**

	<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Other Financers</b>	<b>Work completed</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>1. 3YP : REVITALISING AND IMPROVING THE IMAGE OF TOWN CENTRES</b>						
1.1	Rationalising the High Street	Analysis of individual towns' retail capacity prepared (via Planning Department)	-	Planning Dept	Town Centres' Retail Capacity Study completed	Information prepared to be considered when drawing up Local Development Plan planning policies
1.2	Improving the Image of Town Centres	Small scale environmental improvements in order to improve the image and increase pride	£90k	3YP Môn Menai	Implementing improvements in Porthmadog and Llanberis. Innovative process trialed for drawing up a package in Bethesda – opportunity to adopt it in other areas.	Ideas for small landscaping schemes accepted in Bala, Barmouth, Pwllheli, Dolgellau and Harlech.
1.3	Improving the Image of Empty Shops	Improving the appearance of empty buildings by organising vinyl pictures in the windows.	£15k	3YP	Company appointed to design and install the vinyls. Target of 36 properties dependent on the size of the property. Two pilot schemes identified in Nefyn and Bethesda to be installed in May 2013.	Evaluate first phase; press campaign in order to attract more interest by properties. Implement Phase 2 in 2013.
1.4	Empty Shops Initiatives	Scheme to encourage use of empty shops by supporting and promoting entrepreneurship targeting the Communities First Cluster.	£15k	3YP Communities First Môn Menai	Financial package of £165k secured and operational during 2013/14.	Brief to manage the scheme drawn up and a procurement process in the pipeline with tenders to be returned mid May.

	<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Other Financers</b>	<b>Work completed</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1.5	Package to Develop the Retail Sector	Specialist and independent advice package for individual businesses. Grant aid to assist to implement the recommendations of the business survey.	£26k	3YP	17 business reviews completed. Seven businesses received a grant to implement recommendations.	Continue to promote and offer support for businesses in 2013.
1.6	Upgrading Town Centre Properties	Grant of up to £1k for owners to upgrade the appearance of properties in commercial areas.	£25k	3YP	19 properties upgraded. Scheme targets areas outside the Môn Menai area.	Continue to promote and offer support for businesses in 2013.
1.7	Free Parking Scheme	Scheme offering free parking in the Council's pay and display car parks over the Christmas period.	-	-	Survey organised over the Christmas 2013 period to consider opinion about the scheme.	Future arrangements to be considered as part of a wider parking review.
1.8	Promoting Local Shopping	Campaigns to promote local shopping implemented over the period leading up to Christmas in 2011 and 2012.	£13k	3YP	Campaign on Heart FM and local media. Competition on local shopping experiences for young people. Establish a social media site to promote bargains/ reductions in local shops.	Identify opportunities to promote local shopping over other periods of the year other than Christmas. Create a Local Shopping Promotion Programme for Christmas 2014.
		Support for town centre events over Christmas 2012.	As above	3YP	Events held in Barmouth, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Llanberis, Bethesda, Pwllheli, Bala, Dolgellau and Bangor.	As above

	<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Other Financers</b>	<b>Work completed</b>	<b>Comments</b>
		Branding and promoting local shopping in Gwynedd.	£9.5k	3YP	Project Board has identified the need to draw up Brand Guidelines for promoting shopping in Gwynedd and looking at options as to how to promote reductions for local residents.	Brief to manage the scheme drawn up and a procurement process in the pipeline with tenders to be returned end of May.
1.9	Marketing	Support for business groups to promote and market individual towns.	£30k	3YP	Originally programmed for Y3 of the scheme.	Drawing up an action plan for marketing.
<b>2. TOWN IMPROVEMENT SCHEME (PART OF THE MÔN MENAI PROGRAMME)</b>						
2.1	Town Improvement Grants	Grants for owners to upgrade the appearance of properties in commercial areas.	£1.1m	Môn Menai	22 commercial properties upgraded in 2011/12 and 27 properties during 2012/13.	A budget of £500k has been secured for 2013/14.
<b>3. STRATEGIC URBAN REGENERATION SCHEMES (PART OF CONVERGANCE PROGRAMME)</b>						
3.1		Urban Regeneration Schemes in Caernarfon and Bangor	£7.5m	ERDF, Welsh Government, GC	Schemes implemented in Caernarfon and Bangor town centres (Regulatory Department)	Capital investment completed.
3.2		Blaenau Ffestiniog Regeneration Project	£4.4m	ERDF, Welsh Government, GC	Town Centre Scheme implemented.	Final phase of scheme to be completed in 2013/4.



	Scheme	Description	Budget	Other Financers	Work completed	Comments
<b>4. PREVIOUS TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION SCHEMES</b>						
4.1		Responding to the Recession Plan – Pwllheli Pilot	£30k	Gwynedd Council	The scheme has contributed to and supported Pwllheli Partnership to implement a programme of visual improvements such as information panels, Pwllheli Art Scheme, banners and flower pots.	Scheme completed
4.2		Scheme to respond to the Porthmadog bypass See 1.2 above	£34k	Gwynedd Council Visit Wales	Establish a Group to Respond to the Bypass from communities/businesses of Penrhyndeudraeth, Minffordd, Porthmadog and Tremadog. Drawing up an Action Plan to respond to the challenge and take advantage of opportunities. Implement a package of improvements such as information panels, cycle racks, roundabout features.	Complete specific schemes in Tremadog in 2013.

<b>SCTUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Scrutiny Committee – Community</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>14 May, 2013 am</b>
<b>TITELE OF ITEM</b>	<b>Noddfa Hostel, Deiniolen</b>
<b>CABINET MEMBER</b>	<b>Y Cyngorydd John Wyn Williams</b>

## 1.0 Background and Context

An application for a report to the Scrutiny Committee emanated following a discussion at the Arfon Area Committee on the 13<sup>th</sup> of March 2013. This was in response to an incident outside a private property involving a person who was a resident at the Noddfa Hostel. This led to a discussion about the role and function of Hostels provision within Gwynedd Council's homeless service. The individual case has now been dealt with by the police and court system and it is not the role of the Scrutiny Committee to scrutinize individual cases. The purpose of this report is to examine the relevance of hostel provision as a means to provide services to homeless people and to consider the arrangements in place to assist the authority to meet its statutory responsibilities.

## 2.0 Gwynedd Council's Statutory Responsibilities

The provision of services to the homeless is one of Gwynedd Council's statutory responsibilities and those expectations are outlined in the ***Housing Act 1996 part vii section 188***. The Act sets out the Council's responsibility to provide emergency accommodation for people who find themselves homeless. The definition of homelessness includes people who are at threat of losing, or are unlikely to be able to remain in their current accommodation. The authority is expected to secure "appropriate accommodation" to the applicant and/or his family until it can identify permanent accommodation.

The Authority aims to meet its statutory duties in many ways including the provision of hostel. The advantage of hostel provision is that it allows the Council to provide emergency accommodation rapidly for vulnerable groups.

The *Homeless (Suitability of Accommodation) (Wales) Order 2006* stated that it does not consider it appropriate for local authorities to meet its

statutory responsibilities by providing B&B accommodation especially for vulnerable groups.

The Council's response and compliance in meeting its legal duty is regularly inspected by the Assembly and is challenged by outside organizations such as Shelter.

There is an expectation that elected members of the council are satisfied the Authority has the necessary services to meet its statutory duties.

## **2.1 Need and Demand for Services**

Noddfa Hostel has been in the ownership of Gwynedd Council since 1974, and is one of two homeless hostels managed by Gwynedd Council. The Hostel is considered important to the homelessness service for various reasons.

- It assists the council to meet its legal responsibilities.
- It allows a rapid response to emerging situations and a way to provide secure placement for people in vulnerable situations.
- It is a cost effective way of providing accommodation especially for families.
- It provides a safe and protective environment for families as there are staff on duty to supervise and respond to emerging situations.
- Individual cases can be supervised and there are security measures in place.
- It has helped many people regain their lives after the unfortunate experiences of losing their home.

Although it is possible use another type of accommodation to meet statutory responsibilities, including leased properties; such arrangements can take time to establish and are not always suitable for some groups. A period in a hostel can be useful to identify the most appropriate type of accommodation for individuals and to highlight any ongoing support needs.

## **2.2 Placements at the Hostel**

Before a person is accepted into the Hostel the homeless service completes a formal assessment to confirm the Council's statutory responsibilities. The service will also undertake a risk assessment to ensure that the placement is suitable for Hostel. Noddfa is used primarily as a hostel for families and low-risk cases, predominantly single parents, young families, women escaping violence, young people and others who are compatible with the above group. Due to the nature of the individuals accommodated, the service is careful about the type of people admitted to the hostel. The hostel is not used to accommodate people who are known to have a history of violence.

Analysis of placements since April 2012 demonstrates that :-

- 49% of placements were families with children.
- 77% of placements were women.
- Less than 10% were single men.

Applications are not accepted into the homeless services without a local connection, unless there is a statutory or legal responsibility to do so, e.g. case of domestic violence. Since April 2012 only 1 placement has been accepted without a local connection and that person had a close relative (parent) living locally. The remainder of the placements came from the Arfon area with one placement from Dwyfor. Therefore Noddfa is a resource that provides a service to people who are local to Gwynedd.

### **2.3 Other Provision for Homeless Within Gwynedd**

In recent years the Gwynedd Council (along with 7 other authorities in Wales) has been criticized by the National Assembly for having an over reliance on bed and breakfast accommodation. The provision of hostel accommodation is considered to be a more acceptable way of providing services especially to vulnerable groups, due to the availability of support and supervision. Without the Hostel, dependence on Bed and Breakfast in Gwynedd would be higher and alternative types of provision is likely to be more costly to the Council and mean that individuals would be placed at higher risk due to lack of support.

At a time of financial recession, and with welfare reforms on-going, many commentators are predicting that demand on homelessness services is likely to increase. In the current economic climate it is important that the Council has adequate and appropriate resources to meet the demand.

Since people staying at the hostel can qualify for housing benefit and that the service receives a Supporting People Grant the hostel provides cost effective service. The Council is able to recover the cost of providing service. In comparison the cost of providing service to a family in a bed and breakfast can be over **£400** a week with no recovery of the cost.

### **2.4 Management of the Hostel**

The hostel employs 9 staff member at the hostel (2 full time staff and seven part-time). This ensures staff supervision during the day, weekends and over night with sleep-in staff.

Before receiving a placement at the Hostel the service undertake background inquiries and each applicant is expected to sign a license agreement where they agree to behave in an appropriate and responsible manner towards staff, the local community and fellow residents (see copy attached appendix 1). During

their stay staff will review compliance with the standards of conduct. If individuals do not comply they can lose the right to receive service.

CCTV equipment and other safety measures have been installed at the premises, and staff have established a good working relationship with the police with regular visits to ensure they are able respond to incidents or inappropriate behavior and to monitor and share information.

## **2.5 Incidents**

Records show very few calls to the police relating to the conduct of residents at Noddfa over the last 5 years. Although cases have been recorded we are aware that some of those calls related to anti social behavior towards residents of the hostel and/or events related to the period prior to admission.

We are not aware of any evidence to suggest an increase in the number of incidents recently or a consistent pattern of events. Since the incident in January 2013 we are not aware that any further complaint has been received concerning the residents of Noddfa.

As a service we recognize that the incident was unacceptable but believe it has been dealt with in the appropriate manner by the police and the courts. We do not believe it could have been possible to predict what happened and we do not believe that antisocial behavior is common. Whilst appreciating community feelings and that people are unhappy about the incident, we do not believe that one exceptional event by one individual warrants a universal rethink of the way services are delivered.

We appreciate there is a belief in Deiniolen that the community have shouldered the responsibility of the hostel service and that the area has not benefited from the presence of Noddfa. There also seems to be a perception that Deiniolen has been disadvantaged. Although there may be sympathy with the argument that the community has made a valuable contribution by providing the hostel with a home, this is not a reason to undermine the use of homeless hostels as a suitable model to provide a statutory services to homeless people.

## **2.6 Regulatory Measures:**

A number of measures have been in existence for some year to try to minimize the impact of the hostel on the community. Following the incident we have reviewed these arrangements and introduced further modifications to try to reduce the possibility of further events. The measures include :-

1. Confirming arrangement to record and investigate allegations of inappropriate behavior by providing direct contact numbers to highlight any concerns.
2. Undertaking a review of Risk Assessment Procedures to identify whether existing arrangements could be enhanced.
3. Strengthening arrangements for completing background investigations especially relating to individuals associated with the principal applicant.
4. Bring forward the door looking time from 11 o'clock to 10 o'clock in the evening, unless valid reasons are provided e.g. that person works and/or consent has been agreed in advance.
5. Giving notice (3 months) on a private property used in the village to accommodate homeless people in Deiniolen. Although there was no direct connection with the Noddfa hostel this change was instigated to reduce the number of homeless people in the village.

We also proposed that representatives of the community be invited to visit the hostel to view the management arrangements and offered to have regular meetings with the community council. It was believed that these measures would enable us to investigate and if appropriate take action if individuals were behave inappropriately. The aim was to try to build relationships and to discuss and exchange information; this offer has not as yet been accepted.

## **2.7 Alternative Provision**

Due to the Council's statutory responsibilities it would be difficult to terminate existing service, without securing alternative provision. This would require capital resources and planning permission. Should that be an intention then sufficient time would need to be allowed and additional funds would need to be designated. The Homeless services believes that it is appropriate to continue to use hostels to meet statutory homeless responsibilities as it is considered an effective way of providing services especially for the most vulnerable in society.

The Council has invested in improving the quality and suitability of Noddfa Hostel over the past 6 years. A capital expenditure program in excess of £100,000 has been spent over the annual maintenance program.

## **Appendix 1 - Enclosure**

*(Terms and Conditions of Tenancy)*



**GWYNEDD COUNCIL**

**HOUSING SERVICE**

**SWYDDFA'R CYNGOR,  
CAERNARFON,  
GWYNEDD,  
LL55 1SH**

**HOSTEL**

**LICENCE AGREEMENT**

*This Agreement is a legal contract. It describes your and our rights and responsibilities. When you sign the Agreement you are bound by it. If you are not sure about this, you can get legal advice from a Solicitor or Citizens Advice Bureau.*

(Attached to this Agreement are:  
Licence Termination Conditions,  
Rules & Conditions of Occupation)



**THIS LICENCE AGREEMENT IS BETWEEN**

**Gwynedd Council**, of Council Offices, Shirehall Street, Caernarfon ,Gwynedd LL55 1SH

AND .....(now referred to as ‘The Licensee’)

FOR the occupation of .....  
(now referred to as ‘The Premises’)

The accommodation is of a temporary nature and will comprise a bedroom and shared use of kitchen, dining room, lounge, bathroom and toilet facilities. Staff support is provided to ensure that the running of the premises is in accordance with the attached conditions.

The daily rental charge for the use and occupation of the premises is £.....

You have been allocated Room .....

Occupation shall commence from.....

A licence is only permission to occupy and can legally be terminated by Gwynedd Council without reason. {Whilst Gwynedd Council will only terminate because of a breach of the attached conditions}. You should be aware that there is no security in Licensed occupation which is for a temporary period only.

**I confirm my Acceptance to this Licence and agree to abide by the Occupancy conditions as stated overleaf. I am aware that failure to adhere to these conditions will result in my permission to occupy the Hostel being withdrawn.**

**Signed** ..... **Date** ..... **Licensee**

**Signed** ..... **Date** ..... **for Gwynedd Council**



**NOTICE TO OCCUPIER OF GWYNEDD COUNCIL'S HOSTEL**

1. The Council do give their consent and authority for you to occupy its hostel
2. Such consent and authority to occupy does not give you any interest or estate in the hostel.
3. The Council's consent or authority can be rescinded by the Council, and this can be done by the Council, at any time, giving you a notice to cease to occupy. Such notice can be given orally and can take effect immediately.
4. The Council will not need a Court Order for the purposes of your eviction.
5. A notice to cease to occupy the premises can be given by the council for any reasonable reason.
6. You have been allocated a certain room, and the Council do have in its absolute discretion the right to require you to move to another room within the hostel.

Dated: .....

Signed:.....

For and on behalf of  
Gwynedd Council  
Caernarfon  
Gwynedd  
LL55 1SH

## **LICENCE TERMINATION (explanatory notes)**

### **1) YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **ENDING THE LICENCE AGREEMENT**

You may terminate this Agreement at any time by telling one of the Hostel staff when you are leaving. If possible, give as much notice as you can.

When you leave you must leave the property in good decorative order and in a clean and tidy condition. You must also leave the fixtures and fittings provided by the Hostel in good condition. Gwynedd Council will not accept responsibility for anything left at the property by you at the end of the Licence Agreement.

### **2) THE COUNCIL'S RIGHTS**

#### **ENDING THE LICENCE AGREEMENT**

Gwynedd Council may terminate this Agreement by giving you notice at any time.

The Council can end this Licence Agreement for any reasonable, and in addition or in the alternative:

- a) you have not paid the weekly charges which are due
- b) you have been violent or have threatened violence to another resident, neighbour, member of staff or visitor to the house.
- c) you have broken any of the conditions in this Agreement.
- d) you have damaged the property, the fixtures or the fittings of the property.
- e) You have caused conduct which is capable of causing a nuisance to other residents neighbours, staff or visitors .
- f) Suitable alternative accommodation has been offered to you and you no longer require temporary accommodation
- g) You have not stayed at the Hostel for a reasonable period of time without informing the Manager, and the Manager takes a reasonable view that you have left .

### **3) STEPS TO END THE LICENCE AGREEMENT**

#### **IF YOU ACT UNREASONABLY GWYNEDD COUNCIL WILL TAKE THE FOLLOWING ACTION:**

- a) You may be given a verbal warning
- b) This may be followed by a written warning
- c) In the event of further incidents you will be given a second written warning. You may be given a further chance
- d) If the situation does not improve you will be given Notice to leave
- e) If you refuse to leave at the end of the Notice period further Legal action will be taken.
- f) In the event of a serious breach of conditions, such as violent or abusive behaviour, you will immediately be issued with a letter of

eviction. This letter will give reasons why you are being evicted and inform you of the procedure for appealing

**4) RIGHT OF APPEAL**

Should you disagree with any action taken against you under section 3a to 3e above, you may appeal to the hostel Manager. If you are still dissatisfied you should contact the Homelessness Officer in the Council's Area Office.

In the event of you being given an eviction Notice under section 3f you should contact the Homelessness Services Officer ( 01286 679814) or the Homelessness and Housing Support Manager ( 01341 424383).



## **NODDFA HOSTEL**

### **RULES AND CONDITIONS OF OCCUPANCY (appended to Licence Agreement)**

These conditions are an appendix to the licence agreement which you have signed. In signing the agreement you are bound by these rules and conditions.

The aim of these conditions is to ensure that the Hostel is effectively managed and for the safety and well being of all the residents. Any breach of these conditions may lead to the licence being terminated and the resident losing the right to occupy the Hostel.

Only the resident, and agreed family members, to whom this licence has been issued has the right to occupy this accommodation.

#### **1. PAYMENT OF ACCOMMODATION CHARGES**

1.1 Please ensure that you pay your rent every week without fail including keeping up any claim for Housing Benefit.

1.2 You are responsible also for paying service charges on a weekly basis for heat , lighting .

#### **2. KEYS**

2.1 Ensure that the keys that are given to you at the start of your occupancy are for your sole use.

2.2 Any unauthorised use or copying of keys will not be allowed.

2.3 Any lost keys will be charged for.

2.4 Keep your room locked at all times. The Council will not be held responsible for missing possessions.

### **3. NIGHT TIME CLOSING**

3.1 Residents must return to the Hostel by 10pm at night. After 10pm the doors will be locked.

3.2 If you are unable to return by 10pm due to special reasons you are required to notify the hostel staff.

### **4 USE OF PREMISES**

4.1 You must use the premises for residential purposes only. This means do not carry out any business activities, either legal or illegal.

4.2 You must not under any circumstances sublet your room.

4.3 You must use the hostel as your only and principal home, this means you must not live anywhere else whilst you are a licensee.

### **5. VISITORS.**

5.1 Visitors are allowed with the prior agreement of the Manager, between the times of 10.00 a.m. and 7.00 p.m.

5.2 Visitors must not be allowed into residents' rooms and must use the lounge only.

5.3 Please ensure that visitors sign the book when they arrive and when they leave for fire safety reasons.

5.4 Permission can be withdrawn at any time if the behaviour of your visitor, or the length of time anyone visits you, becomes unacceptable.

5.5 Numbers of visitors or guests invited in to the hostel must be reasonable and visitors must not behave in a manner that disrupts or interferes with other residents or interfere with staff duties.

### **6. DRUGS AND ALCOHOL**

6.1 Ensure that no alcohol or illegal substances are brought in to the hostel or consumed or used on the premises.

6.2 Any person found to be in the possession of illegal substances will be asked to leave and the Police will be informed immediately.

### **7. SMOKING**

7.1 No smoking is allowed in the building at any time.

## **8 NUISANCE**

8.1 Ensure that you do not disturb other residents with loud noise, e.g. playing music, T.V.

8.2 Visitors or occupants should not cause any nuisance or annoyance to other residents, visitors or staff or commit any form of racial or other harassment.

8.3 Threatening or violent behaviour towards any resident/visitors or staff or wilful damage to the Council's property will constitute a serious breach of the licence and may result in the immediate notice to vacate the premises.

## **9. PETS**

9.1 Animals are not allowed in the hostel.

## **10. HOUSEKEEPING**

10.1 It is expected that you keep your room in a clean and tidy condition.

10.2 Your room may be inspected at any time by the Hostel staff or by a Council Officer.

10.3 Please ensure that no sharp objects are placed in the bins e.g. razor blades. If you need to dispose of such an item contact the Hostel staff so that it can be disposed of safely.

10.4 All residents are expected to do their fair share of cleaning and tidying up at the Hostel. You are expected to clean after yourself in the kitchen and bathroom.

## **11. KITCHEN**

10.1 Please clean and tidy up after you when you have been cooking.

11.2 Please ensure all appliances are switched off after use.

11.3 No chip pans are allowed in the hostel.

11.4 Do not let your children play in the kitchen whilst you are cooking.

## **12. LOUNGE**

12.1 The lounge will be locked at 11pm. After this time it is expected that all residents will be in their rooms.

12.2 Please ensure that the TV and electric fire have been switched off if you are the last to leave the room.

12.3 Do not leave personal possessions in the lounge area.

### **13. CHILDREN**

13.1 Children are the responsibility of their parents and must be supervised at all times.

13.2 No resident should leave their children in the care of another resident.

13.3 Children are expected to be in their rooms at a reasonable hour. They must not be allowed to run around at night.

13.4 Keep children away from electrical appliances, e.g. cooker and electric fire for safety reasons.

### **14. FIRE DRILL**

14. You will be required to participate in fire drill exercises and follow fire drill procedures

### **15. HEALTH AND SAFETY**

15.1 You must report any health and safety matters to hostel staff , such as accidents, and dangerous appliances.

15.2 You must not use alternative methods of cooking or heating in the property or room, including oil burning stoves, fan heaters, gas cylinders and paraffin heaters which are a serious fire hazard and can be a danger to you and other residents.

15.3 You must not use candles or oil burners at any time.

15.4 You must not keep any weapons or sharp implements in the hostel

15.5 Inform a member of staff immediately if you think you could be suffering from any illness that could be transferred to other people.

### **16. COMMUNITY**

15.6 .Noddfa Hostel is situated within the village of Deiniolen. Whilst you are residing at Noddfa Hostel you are expected to respect the neighbouring community .You must not cause a nuisance or disturbance to neighbouring properties or persons living in the vicinity .This includes causing a nuisance to local amenities such as shops ,public houses or open spaces .Should the Council receive any complaints regarding your or member of your families behaviour in the community then you may be asked to leave the hostel.

The Council take this matter very seriously and will not tolerate anti –social behaviour within or outside the hostel.



**GWYNEDD COUNCIL COPY**

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**Gwynedd Council**, of Council Offices, Shirehall Street, Caernarfon ,Gwynedd LL55 1SH

AND .....(now referred to as ‘The Licensee’)

FOR the occupation of .....  
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The daily rental charge for the use and occupation of the premises is £.....

You have been allocated Room .....

Occupation shall commence from.....

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**I confirm my Acceptance to this Licence and agree to abide by the Occupancy conditions as stated overleaf. I am aware that failure to adhere to these conditions will result in my permission to occupy the Hostel being withdrawn.**

**Signed** ..... **Date** ..... **Licensee**

**Signed** ..... **Date** ..... **for Gwynedd Council**



<b>NAME OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Communities Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>14 MAI 2013</b>
<b>TITLE OF ITEM</b>	<b>RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY SUGGESTIONS: COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE CO-ORDINATING, PLANNING AND PROVIDING TRANSPORT SERVICES</b>
<b>CABINET MEMBER</b>	<b>Cllr. W Gareth Roberts</b>

### **CONTEXT**

- 1 Thank you for the information I have received in relation to the discussion held in the last meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee. I understand that a number of points were raised by the three interviewees, that members of the Committee have questions in relation to these matters and that that is the information that has been referred to me for consideration.
- 2 I can confirm that I have had an opportunity to have an initial discussion with the Regulatory Department's officers and that I have provided an initial response to the Chairman of the Committee within the timescale set. This report has been based on that original response with minor additions for clarity.
- 3 The message I received noted that some of the observations should be referred to other members of the Cabinet. I would like to confirm that this reflects the situation correctly. Where this is relevant, I have referred to this under individual points, restricting my observations to matters within my field of responsibility.

### **CO-ORDINATING, PLANNING AND PROVIDING TRANSPORT SERVICES**

- 4 I note that you, as a Committee, want to thank the Service for their work in this field. I too would like to express my thanks to the Service for all the hard work done over the last two years in looking again at the transport provision across Gwynedd. Because of past weaknesses, there is no doubt that dismantling historical arrangements and rebuilding them once again is a substantial task and undertaking such work is not likely to please everyone every time.
- 5 I believe that the members of the Service are undertaking these duties thoroughly and professionally and I am also thankful to them for doing this and for enabling me as a Cabinet Member to lead on the matter. The work is not yet completed, but I am confident that the Service has a good grip on what has to be achieved and that matters of priority receive appropriate and timely attention in the work programme.

- 6 During the past two years, the priority of the Integrated Transport Unit has been to re-design the Public and School Transport Service. This work is to continue during 2013 /14 with attention paid to the Arfon Area. It is intended that the focus will be on Community transport and its provision in relation to social services.
- 7 By now, almost every post within the Transport Unit has been filled or the work is being carried out through a particular arrangement and this enables us to assign specific officer time to facilitate work on specific tasks which are prioritised in the work programme.

### **WORK WITH THE 3RD SECTOR**

- 8 Over the last few years some work has been done with the 3rd sector to try and identify opportunities for collaboration and providing sustainable community transport services. Although this work has not been completed a draft programme has been prepared and it is intended to resume this programme again during 2013 / 14.
- 9 Whilst an important contribution is being made, the Community Transport sector cannot remain static nor in its traditional form. It is intended to use resources from the 3 Year Plan to work with the sector to transform / re-design the Community Transport services throughout the County. This cannot be avoided, especially with the Community Transport funding arrangements now being prepared on a regional level. Although the focus will be on making the provision sustainable in Gwynedd, this will have to be done in the context of working jointly with other authorities to ensure consistency across North Wales.
- 10 Much work has to be done in the first place to collect information and perhaps we will not be able to run a pilot scheme within one area of Gwynedd during this year. It must be remembered that on call services have already been introduced in a few parts of Gwynedd. I believe the work of collecting information should be completed in good time to consider the suitability of further plans for realisation from 2014 / 15.

### **MAPPING PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES ACROSS THE COUNTY**

- 11 I can confirm that the first part of this work has already been done in the Meirionnydd and Dwyfor areas for the retendering process. Once the work of retendering public and education transport in the Arfon area has been completed, the second part of identifying and assessing the suitability of the provision can be completed. At that time, there will be an opportunity to identify the provision which is not being used and to identify opportunities to add services in areas or at other times.
- 12 Once this baseline is established, then careful consideration can be given to how to adapt the services further so that they meet the public transport needs of the communities of Gwynedd.

- 13 It should be noted that the Cabinet is keen to see transport receiving attention in the proposed Strategic Plan, because of its contribution to fulfilling some of the Council's strategic objectives such as; reduce carbon emissions; improve access to work; promote sustainable rural communities. I consider this to be one of the matters that I, as a Cabinet Member, must continue to give priority to over the next two years.
- 14 Of course, it must also be kept in mind that we are living in a period of financial hardship and further cuts from central Government could mean that cuts will have to be made rather than enhancing services. Changes in terms of providing services regionally and changes in providing funding regionally are also likely to have quite an influence on this field in the future. I cannot confirm what is likely to happen with these matters at present but I consider that they are matters that every one of us should keep in mind.

#### **ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS**

- 15 Work in relation to good practice in other areas of rural England and Wales is considered when assessing possible opportunities to establish services in Gwynedd. I consider this work is a continuous element of the Transport Unit's work. If there are lessons to be learnt from other areas or good examples that could be used, the brief the Integrated Transport Unit has received from me gives a clear indication that these matters should be considered.
- 16 I'm sure that the Committee members are already familiar with the steps already implemented to offer alternative provision in Gwynedd. Over the last two years, some similar services have changed to become responsive services or 'on call' (Demand Response Transport – DRT). This is one method of sustaining services in areas where the population is low and the use of public transport is low, whilst at the same time keeping the cost to the public purse down and helping to ensure that vehicles do not travel empty.
- 17 One of the most prominent alternative provisions in Wales if not further afield, is the Sherpa service which is maintained in partnership with Conwy Council and the Snowdonia National Park Authority. With this arrangement, income from car parks and progressive partnership with providers enables a service to be maintained which helps the effective control of traffic, parking and road safety, promotes the economy in villages and in local service centres, facilitates visitor movement and helps to provide transport services that local residents, as well as visitors, can use.
- 18 In the light of the above, I feel that further definite steps are required in relation to commissioning research. Having said this, if any members have examples to bring to my attention, I would be more than happy to receive them and ensure that they are considered by the Unit as part of the developmental work.

#### **FUNDING COMMUNITY TRANSPORT PROVISION**

- 19 Unfortunately, the Committee's request to consider funding the present community transport provision in Gwynedd for three years in order to be able to plan for the long term and monitor the situation annually, is not one that can be agreed to.
- 20 From 1st April 2013, because of the Minister's decision, the resources for community transport are being distributed by the Regional Transport Consortia on the basis of specific conditions. Gwynedd Council does not have the right to commit funding for 3 years. It is the Consortia's intention to keep to the present level of contribution for the first year of 2013 / 14. After that, work will be done to enable the Consortia to target the money more specifically and to ensure that the money is not considered as a permanent annual payment but rather as money which enables the present single providers to be established as sustainable in the long term and also to divert some of the money to extend the provision.
- 21 Naturally, I will make every effort to make sure that community transport provision in Gwynedd receives its rightful support from the Consortia. However, I will be trying to influence and I cannot give any certainty that our arguments will carry the day against the arguments of other authorities and areas, not to mention the possible wishes of the Government which will become obvious through the criteria of any funding plan. Having said that, perhaps this change in the funding arrangements will mean that it might be possible to fund new pilot plans as raised by members of the Scrutiny Committee.

#### **FREEZING SPENDING ON BUS SHELTERS AND SIGNS**

- 22 I note the wishes expressed by members of the Scrutiny Committee. However, it is not possible to ignore these elements when considering providing transport services. Clean and convenient bus shelters contribute to the level of service use and signs and the timetables in the bus shelters are key in relation to promoting the number of users. Failing to make the investment would be injurious to the service levels and so appropriate investment must be given to these elements. In addition, consideration must be given to health and safety and so a budget must be set aside for these elements.
- 23 I should also draw your attention to the fact that the money earmarked for these elements at present is totally inadequate to support and improve them e.g. no money has been earmarked for maintaining and cleaning the bus exchanges such as those at Bangor, Caernarfon and Oakeley Arms etc. This proposal therefore, in my opinion, is one that would be unpractical to implement.

#### **INTERGRATION OF COUNTY AND REGIONAL TRANSPORT**

- 24 I agree one hundred per cent that transport paths across the County and beyond the County boundaries need to be co-ordinated. This is key if an integrated service which is convenient for users is to be established. I also support the principle of starting services earlier in the morning and continuing until later in the evening in rural areas.
- 25 However, we are all aware that the Council's ability to extend provision in this way is completely dependent on the financial resources available. The services early in the morning and late at night are often the ones that are not used by many travellers and

- therefore are services that are not commercially viable for companies to provide which makes it difficult for the Council to justify financial subsidies or, indeed, the Government.
- 26 Through the present re-tendering process, which has already been completed in Meirionnydd and in Dwyfor, a baseline of core Public Transport services will be established. Once the process has been completed in Arfon, which is expected in September 2014, it can then be considered whether the Council has the resources to provide extra services to extend the service by starting earlier in the morning and continuing later in the evening in rural areas.
- 27 At my request, the Transport Unit has already looked at extra provision of this kind in one area, and it became very clear that the cost of subsidizing the service would be £58 for every £1 of income paid by travellers on the buses. This is clear evidence that the level of service use in that area is extremely low and therefore, it must be carefully considered whether this is something the Council should be providing. I can confirm that I have asked the Service to look again at this case and to try and find other cheaper options that could be considered.
- 28 The time to look at the suitability of the core network is when the re-tendering process has been completed across the whole County, and I have already instructed the Regulatory Head of the Transport Unit to establish a programme for achieving this. This will give me the opportunity to consider a series of choices in relation to providing extra services and to reduce services which are not used.
- 29 It is too early for me to make any promises or observations until this work, on the basis of a full baseline, has been completed and any decision will have to be taken in the financial context that is facing the Council, including the influence of the levels of finance apportioned by the Government.

#### **EDUCATION TRANSPORT**

- 30 I note the series of matters raised by the Scrutiny Committee in relation to Education Transport. However, a number of these are ones that should be considered in the first place by the Education Department as they are matters of funding and policy. It must be kept in mind that the role of the Integrated Transport Unit is procurement and services management on behalf of the client departments namely, in this instance, the Education Department.
- 31 The Transport Unit would have specific responsibilities for implementing some of these matters should the Education Department wish to provide them, and for adapting the requirements the Transport Unit are expected to implement. However, I do not believe it is appropriate for me to respond to these matters and they should be referred in the first place to Councillor Siân Gwenllian as the appropriate Cabinet Member.

- 32 The one matter I would like to make an observation on in relation to this field is on the **Safety and Quality of Vehicles**. Through the re-tendering process, contracts have been significantly tightened to try and ensure that matters of safety and quality receive appropriate attention. As they are now matters which are in the contracts it is possible to monitor them effectively and if that shows companies are not meeting the conditions of their contracts, then the Council will be taking appropriate steps, including referring the matter to VOSA or the Transport Commissioner, in order to ensure that vehicle safety and quality receive appropriate attention.
- 33 To close, I trust that this report answers the points the Committee members have raised. If you would like more information or clarification on any aspect of my response you can ask a question in the Meeting or individual members can contact me or the Service through e-mail. We will try to deal with the matter as soon as is practically possible.

#### **TRANSPORT UNIT'S WORK PROGRAMME**

- 34 As additional information, and in an effort to offer evidence that much progress is being made in transforming and redesigning Transport provision in Gwynedd, the presentation to the committee will refer to the Integrated Transport Unit's work programme. This is a programme which responds to what I regard, and I hope you regard, as important, and it has been developed by the Transport Service's Senior Manager and Head of the Regulatory Department. There are some substantial challenges ahead of us, especially in dealing with financial elements, and in the context of regional control of transport provision, but I am confident that this programme will be agreed in the next weeks and that it will be a foundation for providing effective and efficient transport services in the County.

ARGYMHELLION CRAFFU  
SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

Pwnc/ <i>Subject</i>	CLUDIANT TRANSPORT
Oddiwrth/ <i>From</i>	Cyng. ERIC JONES Cadeirydd Pwyllgor Craffu Cymunedau <i>Chairman Communities Scrutiny Committee</i>
I/ <i>To</i>	Cyng. GARETH ROBERTS Aelod Cabinet Amgylchedd <i>Environment Cabinet Member</i>  Cyng. Siân Gwenllian Aelod Cabinet Addysg <i>Education Cabinet Member</i>
Cyfeirnod Rhaglen Flynyddol/ <i>Annual Programme Reference</i>	<b>18</b>
Dyddiad/ <i>Date</i>	17 Ebrill 2013 <i>17 April 2013</i>

**B**     Education

- 1     Give detailed and urgent consideration to the Council supported post-16 transport provision, deliberating over the following matters so as to arrive at a clear understanding with post-16 further education providers before the end of this year's summer term regarding arrangements as from September 2013.

a) **Reconcile level of support within the County** to facilitate access to courses offered to students attending courses at a Secondary School or Further Education College in each area:

- Arfon
- Dwyfor
- Meirionnydd

In order to respond to the above request and points d and e below, we have submitted a request for information to Philip Roberts, Learners Services Manager, Menai Site, Bangor and John Elfyn Griffith, Learners Service, Pwllheli Site, at our annual meeting held at the Menai Site, Bangor on 2 May, 2013.

The following information will be required -

Daily number of students who need to travel between 9:00 and 12:00, between 13:00 and 18:00, after 20:00  
Starting point and point of disembarking of every journey

b) **Improve comparative support** so as to reduce cost of the Annual Travel Token for students in Gwynedd from the current £180 per head so as to more closely match the support provided by neighbouring counties:

- Isle of Anglesey – Annual Token - £60
- Conwy – Annual Token Free of Charge
- Denbigh – Annual Token Free of Charge

At its meeting held on 25 January, 2011, the Council Board resolved to adopt the post-16 Transport Policy to be implemented as from 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2011 and set a fee at £60 a term.

“Transforming Transport” Advisors who were commissioned to prepare a report on transport in 6 North Wales Authorities recommend that the 6 authorities consult on setting an annual charge of £300 for post-16 transport or not offer it.

c) Extend **payment period** for a term’s token to 6 weeks.

Point 7.2 of the policy stipulates “at the beginning of the first term of post-16 learners, there will be a period of up to three weeks where they can travel without a token”

d) Allow **different methods** of payment for a term token.

A token may be paid for by cheque, “postal order”, debit card or credit card.

e) **Extend the period** of the times and dates during which a term token can be used.

As a above



- f) Where there is a high, regular and constant demand for a service, discuss with the providers to **run two vehicles** to meet demand

The Integrated Transport Unit, Regulation Service would organize two vehicles if complaints are made about over-crowding

- g) Constant provision for vocational elements of certain Courses **at later times in the evening**

As above

- f) Specifically focus on vehicle **safety and quality**.

The Integrated Transport Unit would ensure this.

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>COUNCIL BOARD</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>25 JANUARY 2010</b>
<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Gwynedd Council Post 16 Transportation Policy and Fees</b>
<b>PURPOSE OF REPORT</b>	<b>To present the Children’s and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee’s recommendations following their scrutinising of the Head of Education’s report to them on the proposed new policy, fees and charges, including the result of consultation upon the proposals.</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>To adopt the new Post 16 Transport Policy, fees and charges with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2011</b></li> <li>• <b>To delete the existing Post 16 Transport Policy - which was approved on 20 July 2004, with effect from 31 August 2011.</b></li> </ul>
<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>Dewi R. Jones, Head of Education Department</b>
<b>SENIOR PORTFOLIO LEADER</b>	<b>Councillor Dewi E Lewis</b>

## **1. Decision making context**

1.1 Following the Council’s adoption of its Savings Strategy on 10 December 2009 it was necessary that the Head of Education:

- Revised the existing Post 16 Education Transport Policy
- Proposed the necessary fees and charges for the implementation of the new Policy

1.2 As detailed in the Report to the Children’s and Young Peoples Scrutiny Committee on 30 November 2010 the original policy, fees and charges were subject to extensive consultation before the revised versions were submitted to the said Scrutiny Committee.

1.3 The Committee Resolved:

*“To request that the Council Board repeals the existing Post 16 Transport Policy and adopt the new policy together with the proposed fees for 2011/12 as follows:*

*(i) that the proposed policy sets new guidelines for the right of learners to follow courses in specific educational institutions. In comparison with other counties – that usually charge between £250 and £350 per annum, the feeling was that a fee of £100 per term would be appropriate as the standard fee – specifically for the longer journeys and wider choices as referred to in paragraph 2.11 of the report. As a comparison, without the fee of £300 per annum for out of catchment area journeys, learners would purchase the Red Rover Ticket for public transport services at a cost of £972 per annum based on 180 school/college days in a year.*

*(ii) The proposed fee accepted by the Council, namely £5 per week / £60 per term, would allow learners to travel shorter distances to local learning centres or a centre offering less of a range in courses as referred to in paragraph 2.12 of the report.*

(iii) *A charge would be made for a new ticket due to loss, tearing or other damage to the ticket. A standard fee of £10.00 is recommended.*

(iv) *For passes under the 'empty seats' scheme, the following fees are recommended:*

- *for those living within 3 miles of a local educational establishment - £60.00 per term*
  - *for those attending higher education courses - £100 per term*
  - *for those continuing into their third year - £100 per term*
- [subject to an empty seat being available and a refund being available should the seat be needed for a learner with a right under the core scheme].*

(v) *The appropriate fee for a learner not in possession of a pass for a journey on contracted transport will be £2.00 per journey."*

#### **1.4 The Councils Board is thus recommended to:**

**1.4.1 adopt the new Policy (Appendix 1) with effect from 1 September 2011**

**1.4.2 adopt the fees and charges proposed for Academic Year 2011/12,**

**( a ) a standard fee of £100 a term  
( paragraph 5.2 in the Report, paragraph 6.2 in the Policy )**

**( b ) a reduced fee of £60 a term  
( paragraph 5.3 in the Report, paragraph 6.3 in the Policy )**

**( c ) a charge of £10 to replace a pass  
( paragraph 5.4 in the Report, paragraph 7.6 in the Policy )**

**( ch ) charges for "empty seats"  
( paragraph 5.5 in the Report, paragraph 10.3 and 10.4 in the Policy )**

- *for those living within 3 miles of a local educational establishment - £60.00 per term*
- *for those attending higher education courses - £100 per term*
- *for those continuing into their third year - £100 per term*

*(subject to an empty seat being available and a refund being available should the seat be needed for a learner with a right under the core scheme)*

**( d ) a charge of £2 for a single journey on contracted vehicles if a pass holder is not in possession of their pass  
( paragraph 5.6 in the Report, paragraph 7.5 in the Policy )**

**1.4.3 repeal the existing Post 16 age Transport Policy - adopted on 20 July 2004, on 31 August 2011.**

**1.4.4 authorise the Head of Education to insert the relevant contact details in Paragraph 7.8 and "Additional Information" sections of the Policy**

**1.4.5 ensure that before the end of the Spring Term 2011 that all the learners - and their parents, and the educational establishments involved with the new Policy and the fees and charges are informed of the new arrangements.**

## 2. Background

2.1 On 10 December 2009, the Council decided to include an “income raising scheme from post 16 transportation” by charging everyone who lives further away than 3 miles from school/college a fee of £5 per week and also to place new guidelines on the right to follow courses at specific education establishments in Group A of the Savings Strategy 2010 - 2013. It had been estimated that the fees would raise an approximate income of £230,000. In addition it was agreed to save £100,000 through “placing new guidelines on the right to follow courses in specific educational establishments, etc”.

2.2 Due to the difference between the academic year and the Council’s financial year, the income raised through fees will not be fully achieved until the financial year 2013/14. However through implementing the new guidelines it has already been possible to recognise possible savings of £69,000. The table below summarises the situation.

	<b>2011/12</b> <b>£</b>	<b>2012/13</b> <b>£</b>	<b>2013/14</b> <b>£</b>	<b>Total</b> <b>£</b>
A: Savings target	230,000	100,000	0	<b>330,000</b>
B: savings foreseen to be achieved	124,000	140,000 (264k – 124k)	39,000 (303k - 264k)	<b>303,000</b>
C: surplus / ( Shortfall )	<b>(106,000)</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>39,000</b>	<b>(27,000)</b>

The Education Department is examining additional ways to close the 10% gap between the original estimates of possible savings and the expectations of the Council’s Savings Strategy.

2.3 From statistics supplied by the two colleges of further education, the numbers of learners from Gwynedd attending has increased, as has the numbers travelling by transport provided by the Council - by 104. Using the same assumptions used in autumn 2009 when the original income proposal was suggested, this should lead to increases revenue of £17,000 ( assuming that all pay the reduced fee ).

2.4 An examination of research into the possible effects of introducing a fee for use of previously free transport to post 16 educational establishments suggests that the effect is minimal, but may have a slightly greater effect in rural areas, including the choice and location of courses followed. ( Research carried out on behalf of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, the Department for Children, Schools and Families [ in England ], House of Commons Select Committee and by Sian Thornthwaite – an advisor to the Welsh Local Government Association. )

2.5 In relation to transporting post 16 year olds, the Learner Travel (Wales) 2008 Measure states that local education authorities are expected to provide them with appropriate daily journeys between their homes and places of education and training. They do not have a duty to provide transportation to a school or college for those learners older than the compulsory school age (16 years of age). Should the Council provide transportation for learners above the compulsory school age then learners attending secondary school must be treated in the same way as learners attending college.

2.6 Since being established in 1996, Gwynedd Council has provided free transportation for post 16 learners who live further than three miles away from secondary schools and further education colleges. By now, the Council's post 16 transportation budget exceeds £1,250,000 per annum.

2.7 The present policy needed to be reviewed (adopted on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2004) for the following reasons:-

- changes in course provision patterns for post 16 learners
- availability of the Education Maintenance Allowance for learners from less well-off households
- enormous financial pressure on the Council's budget

and to introduce a new policy and a fixed charge for the transportation service. It is anticipated that the charges will recover 20% of the Council's subsidy for post 16 transportation.

2.8 The Council intends to provide transport for post 16 learners that live further than three miles away from an eligible school or college. A fee will be charged for this transportation service.

2.9 The new Policy will come into force on 1 September 2011 and will affect every learner starting an eligible course from this date. The policy will not affect learners that have started a course prior to 1 September 2011.

2.10 The Minister, Leighton Andrews, announced on 15 July 2010 that there will be changes from September 2011 in the Education Maintenance Allowance ( which is for transport, books and equipment ) for new learners ( not learners 2009/10 ). As a result of research in Wales and the UK it was noted that the £10 and £20 weekly grants – or the bonuses, were not having much effect upon the decisions of young people to continue in education after 16 years of age. Therefore from September 2011 onwards there will be a threshold for receiving the £30 weekly allowance equivalent to a family income of £20,817 or lower for families claiming child benefit for one learner, and equivalent to a family income of £23,077 or lower for families claiming benefits for two or more learners.

2.11 It must be emphasised that the Policy will place the learners in the same position as other young people of the same age who have left school in order to join the workforce and have to travel to their workplace - often on public transport.

### **3. Core Matters of the new Policy**

#### **(a) Post 16 Transportation Network**

3.1 The new policy is based on a 'network' of transportation services – be it a service bus, school / college bus, train, mini bus or taxi, that will enable learners to reach relevant post 16 educational sites.

3.2 By September 2011, every secondary school that provides for years 12 and 13 will be able to offer a full Local Curriculum which will meet teaching requirements. In some cases the provision available will be offered at other educational establishments. In addition to the transportation to the specific school at the start and end of each day, transport will also be available to/from any home on the network to/from related education establishments at the start and end of each school day.

The same applies for the choices available at the Coleg Menai and Coleg Llandrillo Cymru (Meirion - Dwyfor) sites.

3.3 When Year 11 learners in Gwynedd are exploring the choices for the next academic year, information about travelling opportunities (times and costs) to the district centre(s) will be available, including details of the courses available at every school and college throughout Gwynedd. Individual learners can then weigh up the availability of courses and transport.

#### **(b) Transport due to disability**

3.4 The proposed new policy challenges the usual way of providing for learners with disabilities – learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities. After any further period in college or school, the individual learner will look for a job or access to higher education. Sooner or later, special transport service e.g. taxi, will not be available from the home to school/college or then the workplace. The Policy is therefore based upon information from an expert regarding:

- difficulties that hinder individuals
- assessment of the ability of the individual to travel under some circumstances .

3.5 The Policy attempts to develop inclusion, along with the independence of every learner. Encouraging their educational and social development will be of great benefit to all learners and it includes working towards travelling independently. Learners will receive encouragement to achieve this as soon as possible and this of course will be in consultation with parents / guardians.

3.6 The Council will endeavour to ensure that learners with disabilities will be able to use vehicles that provide the core Network. In order to make it easier for them, the Council will consider the use of easy access vehicles, adapting the pick-up / drop-off points, providing an assistant, a 'buddy' scheme, transitional relief, etc. The aim is to develop confidence and independence when travelling that will be of additional assistance to the learner at the end of the educational period.

3.7 When making a decision, the following will be considered by the Council before allocating special transport for learners:

- the nature of the special needs of the learner
- whether the usual journey is accessible or not to the learner ?
- does the learner have either short-term or long-term severe specific medical problems ?
- does the learner have mobility problems ?

3.8 Under certain circumstances, it will not be possible to use the Transport Network – or the usual vehicle. Evidence from an expert, e.g. a Paediatric Consultant, must be submitted in writing with the application form, detailing the personal difficulties that prevent a learner from using the usual transportation method and an assessment of the learner's ability to travel under certain circumstances. The Council will consider the best way of providing transport for the individual learner, namely by using the core Network or a special arrangement under some exceptional circumstances.

3.9 The needs of learners with transport needs due to medical reasons will be reviewed annually.

### **(c) Transport Catchment Areas and Fees**

3.10 There will be two prices for travelling on the Network – a full fee and a reduced fee.

3.11 By paying the full fee, the learners will be able to travel to any place on the Network from their homes in Gwynedd to any establishment that has been named at the end of the Policy.

3.12 For the reduced price, the learner will be able to use the Network to:

- travel to the local secondary school for the home address of the learner (including journeys at the start and end of the day to establishments providing courses on behalf of the local secondary school)
- travel to the Coleg Llandrillo Cymru ( Meirion - Dwyfor ) sites in Pwllheli and Dolgellau from addresses in Dwyfor and Meirionnydd, travel to Coleg Menai sites in Caernarfon, Bangor and Llangefni from addresses in Arfon, or travel to Coleg Llandrillo Cymru ( Meirion – Dwyfor ) site at Glynllifon from anywhere in Gwynedd
- travel to any special school or appropriate course for those with learning difficulties in a further education college

3.13 Subject to the existence of an empty seat in a vehicle, learners in other categories can pay the fee for an empty seat in a vehicle.

## **4. The New Policy**

4.1 The proposed new policy is set out in Appendix 1.

4.2 This proposed policy deals with the following core matters:

- who is eligible? (paragraph 2.1 in the new Policy – see Appendix 1 )
- eligible courses (2.2)
- age of learners (2.3)
- extended period for those with additional educational needs (2.4)
- travelling distances (3.1 & 3.2)
- relevant educational sites (4.1)
- details of the 'network' (5.1 – 5.5)
- travelling for full price (6.2)
- travelling for reduced price (6.3)
- accepting the Code of Conduct (7.1)
- paying period (7.2)
- start of first term journeys (7.3)
- details of travelling tickets (7.4)
- implications of not carrying a pass (7.5)
- paying for new pass (7.6)
- implications of borrowing a pass (7.7)
- finding an application form (7.8)
- changing course (7.9)
- travelling times (8.1, 8.2, 8.3)
- transport method (9.1, 9.2)
- expectations of the vehicles and drivers (9.3)
- compliance with the Code of Conduct (11.1, 11.2)

- implications of non-compliance with Code of Conduct (11.3, 11.2)
- transport due to disability reasons (12.1 – 12.6)
- availability of financial support for learners (13.1 – 13.4)
- changes to Policy (14.1)
- changes to fees (14.2)
- complaints procedure (15.1)

4.3 Also, the new proposed policy offers additional opportunities under some circumstances:

- principles of the 'empty seats' scheme (10.1)
- 'empty seats' scheme for those living within 3 miles to a local educational establishment (para. 10.2, 10.3)
- 'empty seats' scheme for those attending higher education (4.3, 10.2, 10.4)
- 'empty seats' scheme for those continuing into their third year (10.2, 10.4)
- empty seats fees (10.3, 10.4)
- applications for an empty seat pass (10.5)
- conditions of the 'empty seats' scheme (10.6)

4.4 The gaps in paragraph 7.8 and in the Additional Information will be completed after agreeing on the details.

## 5. Fees

5.1 The decision of the Council on 10 December 2009 refers to a fee of £5 per week. This fee was proposed for travelling to the local secondary school or college – which is the reduced price referred to above.

5.2 The proposed Policy sets out new guidelines for the right of learners to attend courses in specified educational establishments. Following comparison with other counties – that usually charge between £250 and £350 per annum, it is felt that a fee of £100 per term would be appropriate as the standard fee – specifically for the longer journeys and wider choices as referred to in paragraph 3.11 above. In comparison without an annual fee of £300 a year for out of catchment travel, a learner would have to buy a Red Rover Ticket for public bus services. This would cost £972 a year based upon 180 school / college days in a year.

5.3 The proposed fee accepted by the Council, namely £5 per week / £60 per term, would allow learners to travel shorter distances to local learning centres or a centre referred to in paragraph 3.12 above.

5.4 Also, the Policy refers to charging a fee for a new pass in the event of losing, breaking or otherwise damaging a pass. A standard fee of £10 is recommended.

5.5 For passes under the 'empty seats' scheme, the following fees are recommended:

- for those living within 3 miles of a local educational establishment - £60.00 per term
- for those attending higher education courses - £100 per term
- for those continuing into their third year - £100 per term



(subject to an empty seat being available and a refund being available should the seat be needed for a learner with a right under the core scheme)

5.6 The appropriate fee for a learner not in possession of a pass that has been paid for and issued to them for a journey on contracted transport will be £2.00 per journey.

## **6. Consultation on the draft Policy**

6.1 In order to receive feedback on the contents of the policy ( but not the principle of charging a fee since this has already been decided by the Council ), meetings were organised with:

- education and training providers
- learners

6.2 In order to obtain the opinion of education and training providers, meetings were organised with the Heads of Gwynedd Secondary Schools Forum, Coleg Menai, Coleg Llandrillo Cymru (Meirion-Dwyfor) and the Heads of Pendalar and Hafod Lon Schools. The main matters arising were:

- the need to ensure that every learner is aware of the possible financial sources
- definitions of relevant courses and their length
- include students on all of the higher education courses in Coleg Menai and Bangor University
- temporary arrangements at the start of the first term
- add to the number of sites
- extend the time before having to start the journey home
- learners from Gwynedd who are in care outside Gwynedd
- the situation of individuals who only attend an institution further than three miles from their home on one day a week.

6.3. From the learner's viewpoint, meetings were requested with their representatives in Coleg Menai and Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor. Meetings were held with learners from Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor's Dolgellau and Pwllheli campuses and Coleg Menai ( learners on Llangefni and Bangor sites ). The main matters arising were:

- a)** Matters connected with the decision of the Council on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2009 to charge a fee of £60 per term:
  - observations regarding the lack of any consultation before December 2009 with young people and their parents regarding the idea of charging a fee
  - the great danger that a number of learners would not continue with post 16 education and long-term effects on skills in the local workforce
  - changes in the Education Maintenance Allowance from September 2010 onwards which will abolish the weekly sums of £10 and £20 and the quarterly bonus, with minor changes to the household income threshold ( dependent upon one, or two or more, children in the household ).
  - road safety hazards, parking problems by the colleges' sites, green matters that would arise with more learners buying vehicles
  - impact on poorer households e.g. dependency on the E M A as an 'income', numerous children, equipment costs for some courses
  - more often than not, the first payment of any E M A is not paid until at least 4 weeks, maybe 6 weeks or more

- that the cost of equipment for a vocational course reach £485 in one year

A petition from learners in Coleg Menai against the decision to raise a fee of £180 a year was received.

**b) Matters in the consultative Policy:**

- dissatisfaction with the standard of the current transport service provided by the Council (and paying for it) e.g. running late, inconvenient connections, dirty buses (learners had already complained 'to the Council')
- vehicles unsuitable for long journeys
- need assurance that learners with additional transport requirements will be able to travel (but agree with the principle)
- distance between some drop-off/pick-up points and the Network

6.4 In relation to learners with disabilities, a meeting was held with the Council's Equality and Language Unit, the Equality Core Group and Clebran Group. The main matters arising were:

- changes to the font used in the draft
- advice regarding the design of some companies' vehicles that excelled the vehicles of other companies with regards to those with physical disabilities
- date for paying for a pass for the spring term
- acknowledge that some are unable to read the Code of Practice but can understand its contents

6.5 In the Appendix 3 which was presented to the Scrutiny Committee there was a summary the comments of each establishment and the changes that were then incorporated in the Policy as was then shown as Appendix 1.

6.6 At the discretion of the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee the President of the Coleg Llandrillo Students' Union - a learner at Coleg Meirion – Dwyfor Dolgellau site, was invited to attend the meeting and give a short address to the members. Unfortunately she, together with learners who were to listen from the Public Gallery, missed the bus from Dolgellau and failed to arrive at the meeting.

## **7. Processing applications for passes**

7.1 In order to ensure consistency when selling the passes, they will have to be sold through one centre.

7.2 At the moment, discussions are taking place between the Education Department (the client department) and the Council's Contact Centre in Penrhyndeudraeth.

## **8. Raising awareness of the new Policy**

8.1 After the Council's Board adopts the new Policy and fees for 2011/12 awareness will have to be raised regarding the new arrangements by:

- placing them on the Council's website
- requesting that schools and colleges include them in their prospectuses or provide appropriate information for the learners
- taking clear steps to reach groups such as learners with disabilities and ethnic minorities
- using information networks such as the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

Clive James  
5 Ionawr 2011.

**APPENDIX 1**

**GWYNEDD COUNCIL**  
**EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**  
**POST 16 TRANSPORT POLICY**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1. The Learners' Transport Measure ( Wales ) 2008 notes that a Local Education Authority is expected to arrange suitable journeys every day between learners' homes and the places that receive education and training. But there is duty on Gwynedd Council to provide transport to a school or a college for learners [ namely pupils or students ] over the compulsory school age, namely 16 years old. Should the Council provide transport for those above compulsory school age then learners attending secondary schools must be treated in the same way as learners attending colleges.
- 1.2 Since its establishment in 1996 Gwynedd Council has provided free transport for learners over 16 years old living over three miles away from secondary schools and further education colleges. By now the Council's post 16 transport budget is over £1,250,000 per annum.
- 1.3 Gwynedd Council has decided to review the existing policy for the following reasons:
- changes in the pattern of course provision for post 16 learners
  - availability of the Education Maintenance Allowance for learners from less well-off households
  - enormous financial pressure on the Council's budget
- and to introduce a new policy and a fixed charges for the transport. It is anticipated that the charges will recover 20% of the Council's subsidy for post 16 transport.
- 1.4 It is the Council's intention to provide transport for learners aged 16 who live three miles or more from an eligible school or college. A fee will be charged for this transport.
- 1.5 The new policy will come into force on 1 September 2011 and will affect every learner starting an eligible course from this date. The policy will not affect learners that have started a course prior to 1 September 2011.

**2. Who is eligible?**

- 2.1 This Policy is for learners residing in the County of Gwynedd.
- 2.2 Learners must be following a course / courses that are included in the Database of Approved Qualifications in Wales (DAQW). [ See [www.daqw.org.uk](http://www.daqw.org.uk) for details. ]
- 2.3 Learners must be, with minor exceptions noted below, under 19 years old on 31 August in the year in which the course commences, in order to take advantage of this Policy. Learners who are eligible for transport and who reach the age of 19 during the second year of their course will continue to receive transport until the end of the academic year in which they reach their nineteenth birthday. The Council will not provide transport for

learners that are over 19 on 31 August at the beginning of the academic year excepting the minor exceptions below.

- 2.4 Learners with additional educational needs will be able to take advantage of the Council's post 16 transport scheme by paying the appropriate fee for a period of up to four years from the beginning of their first term, or until the end of the academic year after their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.

### **3. Distances**

- 3.1 The Council will not provide transport for learners that live less than three miles from an eligible school or college.
- 3.2 The Council will use the distances from the home to the educational establishment measured by means of the Council's Geographic Information System (G I S ) to ascertain the true distances.

### **4. Relevant schools and college sites**

- 4.1 The Policy is relevant for travelling to the following educational establishments:
- secondary schools maintained by Gwynedd Council with a provision for Years 12 and 13.
  - special schools maintained by Gwynedd Council with a provision for Years 12 and 13.
  - sites in Dolgellau, Pwllheli, Glynllifon of Coleg Llandrillo Cymru ( Meirion-Dwyfor ) for learners under 19 years old
  - sites in Bangor, Parc Menai, Llangefni and Caernarfon of Coleg Menai for learners under 19 years old.
- 4.2 The courses available in each of these establishments can be seen in their prospectuses, that are available directly from the establishments. An initial application form for taking advantage of the post 16 transport network will be available at the same time learners consider their choices from the Local Curriculum.
- 4.3 Also, under the 'empty seats' scheme, higher education students at Bangor University and Coleg Menai be able to travel on routes serving the Bangor site of Coleg Menai on the days of term of Coleg Menai only.

### **5. Post 16 Transport Network**

- 5.1 As a result of the geographic nature of Gwynedd, it is not always possible to arrange transport routes that go past the homes of every learner wishing to travel. Learners will have to make their own way to the nearest picking-up point. Every effort will be made to keep this distance as short as possible.

- 5.2 Transport will be available on specific routes leading to the relevant establishment(s). Learners will be informed on the Council's Website the exact routes that are anticipated will be available the following September at the time of completing the application for a place at the relevant school or college.
- 5.3 It is the responsibility of individual learners to reach the nearest picking-up point on any of the routes. The Council will not provide additional transport to reach any picking-up / dropping off points on any of the routes.
- 5.4 It is the transport provider's responsibility to assess the safety of any picking-up / dropping-off point. Learners will have to use the safest picking-up point that is nearest to their home.
- 5.5 The Council will review the network of routes on an annual basis to improve efficiency. Any changes will be known prior to the Easter Holidays and will only be introduced at the beginning of the following academic year.

## **6. Charges**

- 6.1 There will be two prices for travelling on the Transport Network – a full charge and a reduced one.
- 6.2 By paying the full price the learner will be able to travel anywhere on the Transport Network from their homes to any establishment which is named at the end of the Policy.
- 6.3 For the reduced price the learner will be able to use the Transport Network in order to:
- travel to the local secondary school for the learner's home address (including journeys at the beginning and end of the school day to establishments which provide courses on behalf of the local secondary school)
  - travel to the Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor sites in Dolgellau and Pwllheli from addresses in Dwyfor and Meirionnydd, travel to Coleg Menai sites in Caernarfon, Bangor and Llangefni from addresses in Arfon, or travel to the Glynllifon site, Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor, from anywhere in Gwynedd
  - travel to any special school or a course suitable for those with a learning disability in a college of further education in Gwynedd.

## **7. Applying for and paying for transport**

- 7.1 A ticket will be sold to a learner that is eligible for transport on condition that he / she accepts the Travel Behaviour Code and pays the current fee.
- 7.2 A permanent ticket will only be issued during the first term at the college or school after receipt of the current fee. At the beginning of the first term of post 16 aged learners there will a period of up to three weeks when they may travel without a ticket at the beginning / end of journey subject to then carrying an appropriate letter from the school / college which confirms that they registered in the school / college.

- 7.3 For subsequent terms payment for the ticket will be required prior to the start of term, namely prior to 1 September (Autumn Term), 15 December (Spring Term), 1 April (Summer Term).
- 7.4 A photograph of the learner entitled to use the ticket will be on each ticket with the number(s) of the valid travel routes.
- 7.5 The tickets must be carried every day and must be available for inspection by those authorized to do so, e.g. bus driver, bus inspector, Council officer. Learners without a ticket in their possession at the time can be refused the right to travel, unless payment is made of the appropriate amount that would be due on public transport or the current amount fixed by the Council for every journey on contracted transport.
- 7.6 There will be a charge for issuing a new ticket if lost, disfigured or otherwise destroyed. This will in accordance in accordance with the current rate.
- 7.7 Each ticket is for the use of the individual only. Allowing another individual to use a ticket that another learner has paid for, or using a ticket paid for by another learner, is contrary to the Policy. This type of misuse will lead to the individual(s) losing the privilege of using transport subsidised by the Council and those individuals' ticket(s) will be withdrawn.
- 7.8 The application form for a ticket can be found on the Council's Website - [www.gwynedd.gov.uk/](http://www.gwynedd.gov.uk/).. or by applying to....
- 7.9 Should learners change course, or the location of their course changes, a new application must be made. These applications will receive urgent priority.

## **8. Travel Times**

- 8.1 Transport will be available between Monday and Friday during the relevant school / college terms only.
- 8.2 A journey to a school or college must be completed before 12:00.
- 8.3 A journey home from college or school cannot be made before 13:00. A journey to home must commence before 18:00, excepting if the learner has an official letter from the school / college which confirms that the time of the last lesson / lecture on specified day(s) prevents travel commencing before 18:00.

## **9. Type of transport provision**

- 9.1 The Council will provide transport in the most effective and appropriate way. The Council will mainly arrange the use of public bus and train services.
- 9.2 The Council will also provide transport on buses, mini-buses or taxis under contract to the Council.

8.3 The Council expects operators to ensure the punctuality of their services, that the vehicles are clean and of quality with drivers trained specifically for the type of work and type of passengers.

## **10. “Empty Seats” Scheme**

10.1 Under certain circumstances not every seat in a vehicle that provides learners transport to a school or college utilised under the provisions of this Policy. Under certain circumstances other post 16 year old learners may pay for the use of any empty seats.

10.2 The categories of learners in question are as follows:

- those living less than three miles from the educational establishment
- learners that have had their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday during the previous academic year
- students in higher education at Bangor University or Coleg Menai.

10.3 Learners who live within the three mile radius may take advantage of any empty seats on an appropriate bus through paying the reduced fee.

10.4 The full fee will be the cost for learners who have passed 19 years of age during the previous academic year and students in higher education in Bangor University or Coleg Menai.

10.5 Applications for an empty seat ticket will be in the same way as a normal ticket. However applications will not be decided upon until after the first day of the Autumn Term.

10.6 During any academic term, as a consequence of an increase in the number of learners entitled to transport, there may be no empty seats remaining. Under such circumstances, it will not be possible for learners in any of the additional categories above to continue to travel in the vehicle. Under such circumstances the Council will refund the full fee to the learner for the term. Then it will be the individual learner's responsibility to reach the school or college.

## **11. Travel Behaviour Code**

11.1 The Council supports the Travel Behaviour Code prepared by the Welsh Assembly Government. The Code establishes the expectations of individual learners, fellow passengers and transport providers. The Code can be seen on the Council's Website.

11.2 When learners submit an application for post 16 transport, they must state on the application form that they understand and are committed to keeping the Travel Behavior Code and are aware of the possible results of breaching the Code.

11.3 An unacceptable action by a learner that is contrary to the Code could lead to:

- recovering the cost of deliberate damage from learners and / or their parents / guardians



- cancelling the travel arrangements agreed for learners for a specific period or an unspecified period. [ It will be the learners' responsibility to make their own transport plans under these circumstances .]
- disciplinary action by the relevant school or college
- passing the report of the incident to the Police.

## **12. Transport on medical grounds**

- 12.1 As a consequence of physical disability and / or other special needs, some students may face problems when using the Council's post 16 Transport Network.
- 12.2 The Policy attempts to develop inclusion along with the independence of every learner. Encouraging their educational and social development will be of great benefit to all learners and it includes working towards travelling independently. Learners will receive encouragement to achieve this as soon as possible and this of course will be in consultation with parents / guardians.
- 12.3 The Council will endeavour to ensure that it will be possible for learners with travelling difficulties to be able to use vehicles that provide the core network. In order to make it easier for them the Council will consider the use of easy access vehicles, adapting the picking-up / dropping-off points, providing an assistant, a 'buddy' scheme, transitional relief, etc. The aim is to develop confidence and independence when travelling that will be of additional assistance after the end of the educational period.
- 12.4 When making a decision, the following will be considered before allocating special transport for learners:
- the nature of the special needs of the learner
  - whether the usual journey is accessible or not to the learner ?
  - does the learner have either short-term or long-term specific medical problems ?
  - does the learner have mobility problems ?
- 12.5 Under certain circumstances, it will not be possible to use the Transport Network – or the usual vehicle. Evidence from a specialist, e.g. a Paediatric Consultant, must be submitted in writing with the application form, detailing the personal difficulties that prevents a learner from using the usual transport and an assessment of the learner's ability to travel under certain circumstances. The Council will consider the best way of providing transport for the individual learner, namely by using the core Network or a special arrangement under some exceptional circumstances.
- 12.6 The needs of learners with transport needs for medical reasons will be reviewed annually.

### **13. Financial support for learners**

- 13.1 Since 2004/05, the Welsh Assembly Government has offered the Education Maintenance Allowance for learners over 16 years old that attend a local school or college. The main element is a weekly allowance that is associated with attending the educational establishment and a sufficient studying effort is made.
- 13.2 The Allowance level is dependent on the income of the household. The allowance is paid in order to assist those who are post 16 with the cost of travelling, books and equipment when following a course in a school or college.
- 13.3 It is expected that learners with special transport needs will claim the Mobility Allowance after two years of post 16 education.
- 13.4 Learners can find out more about these sources on the Website [www.cyllidmyfyrwycymru.co.uk](http://www.cyllidmyfyrwycymru.co.uk)

### **14. Changes to the Policy and Fees**

- 14.1 From time to time, the Council will change its Post 16 Transport Policy. Any changes will be decided prior to the academic Easter holidays before the start of the following academic year. The changes will come into force on the following 1<sup>st</sup> of September.
- 14.2 The Council will review its fees for post 16 transport on an annual basis. Any changes will be decided prior to the Easter holidays before the start of the following academic year. The changes will come into force on the following 1<sup>st</sup> of September.

### **15. Complaints and Observations**

- 15.1 Any complaints or observations regarding this Policy must be submitted in accordance with the Council's Complaints and Observations Procedure.

Clive James

5 Ionawr 2011

**GWYNEDD COUNCIL**  
**EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**  
**POST 16 TRANSPORT POLICY**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1. The Learners' Transport Measure ( Wales ) 2008 notes that a Local Education Authority is expected to arrange suitable journeys every day between learners' homes and the places that receive education and training. But there is duty on Gwynedd Council to provide transport to a school or a college for learners [ namely pupils or students ] over the compulsory school age, namely 16 years old. Should the Council provide transport for those above compulsory school age then learners attending secondary schools must be treated in the same way as learners attending colleges.
- 1.2 Since its establishment in 1996 Gwynedd Council has provided free transport for learners over 16 years old living over three miles away from secondary schools and further education colleges. By now the Council's post 16 transport budget is over £1,250,000 per annum.
- 1.3 Gwynedd Council has decided to review the existing policy for the following reasons:
- changes in the pattern of course provision for post 16 learners
  - availability of the Education Maintenance Allowance for learners from less well-off households
  - enormous financial pressure on the Council's budget
- and to introduce a new policy and a fixed charges for the transport. It is anticipated that the charges will recover 20% of the Council's subsidy for post 16 transport.
- 1.4 It is the Council's intention to provide transport for learners aged 16 who live three miles or more from an eligible school or college. A fee will be charged for this transport.
- 1.5 The new policy will come into force on 1 September 2011 and will affect every learner starting an eligible course from this date. The policy will not affect learners that have started a course prior to 1 September 2011.

**2. Who is eligible?**

- 2.1 This Policy is for learners residing in the County of Gwynedd.
- 2.2 Learners must be following a course / courses that are included in the Database of Approved Qualifications in Wales (DAQW). [ See [www.daqw.org.uk](http://www.daqw.org.uk) for details. ]
- 2.3 Learners must be, with minor exceptions noted below, under 19 years old on 31 August in the year in which the course commences, in order to take advantage of this Policy. Learners who are eligible for transport and who reach the age of 19 during the second year of their course will continue to receive transport until the end of the academic year in which they reach their

nineteenth birthday. The Council will not provide transport for learners that are over 19 on 31 August at the beginning of the academic year excepting the minor exceptions below.

- 2.4 Learners with additional educational needs will be able to take advantage of the Council's post 16 transport scheme by paying the appropriate fee for a period of up to four years from the beginning of their first term, or until the end of the academic year after their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday.

### **3. Distances**

- 3.1 The Council will not provide transport for learners that live less than three miles from an eligible school or college.
- 3.2 The Council will use the distances from the home to the educational establishment measured by means of the Council's Geographic Information System (G I S ) to ascertain the true distances.

### **4. Relevant schools and college sites**

- 4.1 The Policy is relevant for travelling to the following educational establishments:

- secondary schools maintained by Gwynedd Council with a provision for Years 12 and 13.
- special schools maintained by Gwynedd Council with a provision for Years 12 and 13.
- sites in Dolgellau, Pwllheli, Glynllifon of Coleg Llandrillo Cymru ( Meirion-Dwyfor ) for learners under 19 years old
- sites in Bangor, Parc Menai, Llangefni and Caernarfon of Coleg Menai for learners under 19 years old.

- 4.2 The courses available in each of these establishments can be seen in their prospectuses, that are available directly from the establishments. An initial application form for taking advantage of the post 16 transport network will be available at the same time learners consider their choices from the Local Curriculum.

- 4.3 Also, under the 'empty seats' scheme, higher education students at Bangor University and Coleg Menai be able to travel on routes serving the Bangor site of Coleg Menai on the days of term of Coleg Menai only.

### **5. Post 16 Transport Network**

- 5.1 As a result of the geographic nature of Gwynedd, it is not always possible to arrange transport routes that go past the homes of every learner wishing to travel. Learners will have to make their own way to the nearest picking-up point. Every effort will be made to keep this distance as short as possible.
- 5.2 Transport will be available on specific routes leading to the relevant establishment(s). Learners will be informed on the Council's Website the exact routes that are anticipated will be available the following September at the time of completing the application for a place at the relevant school or college.

- 5.3 It is the responsibility of individual learners to reach the nearest picking-up point on any of the routes. The Council will not provide additional transport to reach any picking-up / dropping off points on any of the routes.
- 5.4 It is the transport provider's responsibility to assess the safety of any picking-up / dropping-off point. Learners will have to use the safest picking-up point that is nearest to their home.
- 5.5 The Council will review the network of routes on an annual basis to improve efficiency. Any changes will be known prior to the Easter Holidays and will only be introduced at the beginning of the following academic year.

## **6. Charges**

- 6.1 There will be two prices for travelling on the Transport Network – a full charge and a reduced one.
- 6.2 By paying the full price the learner will be able to travel anywhere on the Transport Network from their homes to any establishment which is named at the end of the Policy.
- 6.3 For the reduced price the learner will be able to use the Transport Network in order to:
  - travel to the local secondary school for the learner's home address ( including journeys at the beginning and end of the school day to establishments which provide courses on behalf of the local secondary school)
  - travel to the Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor sites in Dolgellau and Pwllheli from addresses in Dwyfor and Meirionnydd, travel to Coleg Menai sites in Caernarfon, Bangor and Llangefni from addresses in Arfon, or travel to the Glynllifon site, Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor, from anywhere in Gwynedd
  - travel to any special school or a course suitable for those with a learning disability in a college of further education in Gwynedd.

## **7. Applying for and paying for transport**

- 7.1 A ticket will be sold to a learner that is eligible for transport on condition that he / she accepts the Travel Behaviour Code and pays the current fee.
- 7.2 A permanent ticket will only be issued during the first term at the college or school after receipt of the current fee. At the beginning of the first term of post 16 aged learners there will a period of up to three weeks when they may travel without a ticket at the beginning / end of journey subject to then carrying an appropriate letter from the school / college which confirms that they registered in the school / college.
- 7.3 For subsequent terms payment for the ticket will be required prior to the start of term, namely prior to 1 September (Autumn Term), 15 December (Spring Term), 1 April (Summer Term).
- 7.4 A photograph of the learner entitled to use the ticket will be on each ticket with the number(s) of the valid travel routes.
- 7.5 The tickets must be carried every day and must be available for inspection by those authorized to do so, e.g. bus driver, bus inspector, Council officer. Learners without a ticket in their possession at the time can be refused the right to travel, unless payment is made of the appropriate amount that would be due on public transport or the current amount fixed by the Council for every journey on contracted transport.

- 7.6 There will be a charge for issuing a new ticket if lost, disfigured or otherwise destroyed. This will be in accordance with the current rate.
- 7.7 Each ticket is for the use of the individual only. Allowing another individual to use a ticket that another learner has paid for, or using a ticket paid for by another learner, is contrary to the Policy. This type of misuse will lead to the individual(s) losing the privilege of using transport subsidised by the Council and those individuals' ticket(s) will be withdrawn.
- 7.8 The application form for a ticket can be found on the Council's Website - [www.gwynedd.gov.uk/](http://www.gwynedd.gov.uk/).. or by applying to....
- 7.9 Should learners change course, or the location of their course changes, a new application must be made. These applications will receive urgent priority.

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- 8.1 Transport will be available between Monday and Friday during the relevant school / college terms only.
- 6.2 A journey to a school or college must be completed before 12:00.
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## **9. Type of transport provision**

- 9.1 The Council will provide transport in the most effective and appropriate way. The Council will mainly arrange the use of public bus and train services.
- 8.2 The Council will also provide transport on buses, mini-buses or taxis under contract to the Council.
- 8.3 The Council expects operators to ensure the punctuality of their services, that the vehicles are clean and of quality with drivers trained specifically for the type of work and type of passengers.

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- 10.1 Under certain circumstances not every seat in a vehicle that provides learners transport to a school or college utilised under the provisions of this Policy. Under certain circumstances other post 16 year old learners may pay for the use of any empty seats.
- 10.2 The categories of learners in question are as follows:
- those living less than three miles from the educational establishment
  - learners that have had their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday during the previous academic year
  - students in higher education at Bangor University or Coleg Menai.
- 10.3 Learners who live within the three mile radius may take advantage of any empty seats on an appropriate bus through paying the reduced fee.

- 10.4 The full fee will be the cost for learners who have passed 19 years of age during the previous academic year and students in higher education in Bangor University or Coleg Menai.
- 10.5 Applications for an empty seat ticket will be in the same way as a normal ticket. However applications will not be decided upon until after the first day of the Autumn Term.
- 10.6 During any academic term, as a consequence of an increase in the number of learners entitled to transport, there may be no empty seats remaining. Under such circumstances, it will not be possible for learners in any of the additional categories above to continue to travel in the vehicle. Under such circumstances the Council will refund the full fee to the learner for the term. Then it will be the individual learner's responsibility to reach the school or college.

## **11. Travel Behaviour Code**

- 11.1 The Council supports the Travel Behaviour Code prepared by the Welsh Assembly Government. The Code establishes the expectations of individual learners, fellow passengers and transport providers. The Code can be seen on the Council's Website.
- 11.2 When learners submit an application for post 16 transport, they must state on the application form that they understand and are committed to keeping the Travel Behavior Code and are aware of the possible results of breaching the Code.
- 11.3 An unacceptable action by a learner that is contrary to the Code could lead to:
- recovering the cost of deliberate damage from learners and / or their parents / guardians
  - cancelling the travel arrangements agreed for learners for a specific period or an unspecified period. [ It will be the learners' responsibility to make their own transport plans under these circumstances .]
  - disciplinary action by the relevant school or college
  - passing the report of the incident to the Police.

## **12. Transport on medical grounds**

- 12.1 As a consequence of physical disability and / or other special needs, some students may face problems when using the Council's post 16 Transport Network.
- 12.2 The Policy attempts to develop inclusion along with the independence of every learner. Encouraging their educational and social development will be of great benefit to all learners and it includes working towards travelling independently. Learners will receive encouragement to achieve this as soon as possible and this of course will be in consultation with parents / guardians.
- 12.3 The Council will endeavour to ensure that it will be possible for learners with travelling difficulties to be able to use vehicles that provide the core network. In order to make it easier for them the Council will consider the use of easy access vehicles, adapting the picking-up / dropping-off points, providing an assistant, a 'buddy' scheme, transitional relief, etc. The aim is to develop confidence and independence when travelling that will be of additional assistance after the end of the educational period.
- 12.4 When making a decision, the following will be considered before allocating special transport for learners:
- the nature of the special needs of the learner

- whether the usual journey is accessible or not to the learner ?
- does the learner have either short-term or long-term specific medical problems ?
- does the learner have mobility problems ?

12.5 Under certain circumstances, it will not be possible to use the Transport Network – or the usual vehicle. Evidence from a specialist, e.g. a Paediatric Consultant, must be submitted in writing with the application form, detailing the personal difficulties that prevents a learner from using the usual transport and an assessment of the learner's ability to travel under certain circumstances. The Council will consider the best way of providing transport for the individual learner, namely by using the core Network or a special arrangement under some exceptional circumstances.

12.6 The needs of learners with transport needs for medical reasons will be reviewed annually.

### **13. Financial support for learners**

13.1 Since 2004/05, the Welsh Assembly Government has offered the Education Maintenance Allowance for learners over 16 years old that attend a local school or college. The main element is a weekly allowance that is associated with attending the educational establishment and a sufficient studying effort is made.

13.2 The Allowance level is dependent on the income of the household. The allowance is paid in order to assist those who are post 16 with the cost of travelling, books and equipment when following a course in a school or college.

13.3 It is expected that learners with special transport needs will claim the Mobility Allowance after two years of post 16 education.

13.4 Learners can find out more about these sources on the Website [www.cyllidmyfyrwrycymru.co.uk](http://www.cyllidmyfyrwrycymru.co.uk)

### **14. Changes to the Policy and Fees**

14.1 From time to time, the Council will change its Post 16 Transport Policy. Any changes will be decided prior to the academic Easter holidays before the start of the following academic year. The changes will come into force on the following 1<sup>st</sup> of September.

14.2 The Council will review its fees for post 16 transport on an annual basis. Any changes will be decided prior to the Easter holidays before the start of the following academic year. The changes will come into force on the following 1<sup>st</sup> of September.

### **15. Complaints and Observations**

15.1 Any complaints or observations regarding this Policy must be submitted in accordance with the Council's Complaints and Observations Procedure.



## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The following are available on the Council Website: [www.gwynedd.gov.uk/](http://www.gwynedd.gov.uk/)

- A. Timetables and maps of the Transport Network to the relevant establishments
- B. Travel Behaviour Code
- C. Application Form
- Ch Complaints and Observations

or by request by phoning .....on 01286 679qqq or by writing to:-

.....

The details and the application form for the Education Maintenance Allowance and Assembly Learning Grant are available on the following Website: [www.cyllidmyfywrycymru.co.uk](http://www.cyllidmyfywrycymru.co.uk) or from individual schools and colleges.

The relevant schools and colleges can be contacted as follows:

Ysgol y Berwyn : 01678 520259

Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle : 01286 880345

Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen : 01286 673076

Ysgol Brynrefail : 01286 672381

Ysgol Tryfan : 01248 352633

Ysgol Friars : 01248 364905

Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen :01248 600291

Ysgol Pendalar : 01286 672141

Ysgol Hafod Lon : 01766 810626

Uned Tŷ Meirion, Ysgol y Gader : 01341 422578

Coleg Llandrillo Cymru ( Meirion-Dwyfor )

Dolgellau : 01341 422827

Pwllheli : 01758 701385

Glynllifon : 01286 830261

Coleg Menai

Bangor : 01248 370125

Llangefni : 01248 370125

Parc Menai : 01248 370125

Caernarfon : 01248 370125

## **Views of the Local Member(s):-**

Not a local matter.

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

### **1. Chief Executive**

What we have under consideration here is the implementation of a decision that has already been made by the full Council to discover savings in this field. It is apparent that the detailed work of revising the policy on fees is taking us close to the sum that was estimated and I note the undertaking of the Education Department to find the residue.

It is also pleasing to see that an assessment has been made of the possible impact of the new arrangements and the result of that assessment is that the impact will be minimal.

### **2. Monitoring Officer**

This draft Policy has been the subject of consultation with relative stakeholders including student groups and users with special needs and the result of these consultations is reported upon. I have no other observations from an appropriateness aspect.

### **3. Chief Financial Officer**

I confirm that the financial figures appearing in the report are estimates prepared on a reasonable fair-assumption basis, but numerous factors could influence the true level of income from pupils/students (up or down). Accordingly, it will be necessary for the Education Department to monitor the scheme regularly and in detail during the initial years, and respond appropriately to any movement. As noted in section 2.2 of the report, the Education Department will have to cope with any deficiency under the proposed scheme as compared to the original savings targets. Perhaps it will be possible for the author to update some of the figures at the Board meeting, including identifying the administration cost of processing applications for tickets through one centre (in accordance with the proposal referred to in section 7 of the report).

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## **C. Background Papers**

Datganiad ysgrifenedig gan Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru : newidiadau i gynllun lwfans cynhaliath addysg Cymru, 15 Gorffennaf 2010.

14-19 Curriculum Offer : Transport – Related Issues and Solutions. Dept for Children, Schools and Families.

House of Commons Transport Committee : School Transport, 2008-09.

Socio-economic disadvantages and access to higher education. Rowntree Foundation ( 2000 ).

## CH. Policy Implications

Deleting the present policy and presenting a new policy.

Implementing the Council's savings Strategy, 10 December 2010.

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Scrutiny Forward Work Programme June 2012 onwards – Version 3.00  
(18.03.13)

**Note – this is a live agenda which is regularly updated**

A Corporate Scrutiny Committee

	Item	Preparatory Meeting Date	Scrutiny Committee Date
1	Community Strategy	14.06.12	19.07.12
2	Savings Strategy	14.06.12	19.07.12
3	Systems Thinking (Scrutiny Investigation)	14.06.12	31.01.13
4	Improvement Plan	06.09.12	02.10.12
5	Rural and Urban Balance	06.09.12 02.10.12	13.12.12 07.03.13
6	Partnerships and Collaboration Assessing the progress	19.12.12	
7	Sustainable Procurement	19.12.12	31.01.13 07.03.13
8	The Council's Strategic Plan		
9	The Council and the Public Engagement Arrangements		
10	Workforce Keeping the morale of workers high in a difficult period		
11	Collaboration with Anglesey		
12	Carbon Footprint Policy Assessing the achievement		
13	Emergency Planning Assessing the progress of the SAC Report		

B Communities Scrutiny Committee

	Item	Preparatory Meeting Date	Scrutiny Committee Date
14	Housing Supply and Affordability	18.07.12	04.09.12
15	Housing Scrutiny Investigation	18.09.12	05.02.13
16	Bypass	30.10.12	04.12.12
17	Waste Strategy	30.12.12	04.12.12
18	Transport Consistency of provision for Students across the County	30.12.12	04.12.12 26.03.13
19	Wind Energy Consultation arrangements	30.12.12	04.12.12
20	Empowering Communities Local collaboration with partners		
21	Bangor Pride Consider progress and lessons to be learnt and shared across the County	04.09.12	26.03.13 10.12.13
22	Using Empty Properties Consider the impact of policies by the Council and its partners		
23	Parking Fees Consider consistency across the County		
24	Use of Cycling Routes Consider the progress on standard and use		
25	Parc Glynllifon and Parc Padarn Consider progress		
26	Allotments Challenge what has been achieved on the relevant existing policies and by-laws		
27	Marine Conservation Zones		

28	Apprenticeship Scheme Consider the progress		
29	Condition of Rural Roads Consider problems and possible solutions		
30	Tourism Assessing the impact on the Gwynedd economy		
31	Refuse Collections Information required		
32	Management of Overnight Caravanning Information required		
53	Social Housing	30.12.12	05.02.13
54	Static Caravan Occupation Period	19.02.13	
55	Noddfa, Deiniolen		
56	Cynllun Hurio Ceir		

### C Services Scrutiny Committee

	Item	Preparatory Meeting Date	Scrutiny Committee Date
33	Youth Service Progress on the Review Improvement Programme	25.06.12	31.07.12
34	Education Strategy Consider progress thus far Establish a Working Group to support the Cabinet Member Confirmation of the implications	25.06.12	31.07.12 13.09.12 15.11.12
35	Scrutiny Investigation into the Quality of Education	25.06.12	
36	Change in Healthcare in North Wales – Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board		13.09.12
37	Leisure Centres		

	Consider progress on the Strategic Review	11.10.12	15.11.12
38	Physical Disability Commissioning Plan Consider Progress of the Plan	11.10.12	15.11.12
39	Disability and Autism Consider information	11.10.12	15.11.12
40	Older People Commissioning Plan Consider 'Dignity in Care' information	11.10.12	15.11.12
41	Looked After Children		
42	Land transferred to Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd	22.11.12	10.01.13
43	Local Provision of Services		
44	Pathway to Employment		
45	Telecare and Equipment to Support People	22.11.12	10.01.13
46	Intensive Intervention – Supporting Families		
47	Young People Progress on providing opportunities for those who are unemployed to gain access to work experience and employment		
48	Child Poverty Plan		
49	Support for Carers		
50	Corporate Parent Panel		
51	Matters from the 2011-12 Improvement Plan - Health Improvement Schemes (Page 79) - Language Improvements (Page 84- 86) -		
52	Pembrokeshire Children Services Report	17.01.13	21.02.13
57	Y Gwystl – Engagement arrangements		