
ARFON AREA COMMITTEE, 12.12.12

5. RURAL AGENDA

a) Submitted – a report by the Chairman of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Dyfrig Jones, outlining the background of the work carried out to date by the Scrutiny Committee in relation to the balance between urban and rural services in Gwynedd.

b) He explained that the members of the Scrutiny Committee had expressed their wish to study this matter. However, it was seen that the 'balance between urban and rural services' was a completely open-ended subject, and consequently the committee had addressed specific matters which demanded attention.

The matter had also been considered by the Cabinet Member for the Economy, and arrangements had been made for him to submit a report to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee.

a) Reference was made to the 'Community Energy Survey' report prepared for Ynni Llŷn by Gritten Management. It was arranged for the Scrutiny Committee to receive a presentation on the contents of the report, and it was considered that this would assist in understanding one of the challenges that existed in one of the areas in Gwynedd.

The Member Support and Scrutiny Manager noted that several elements related to this field and that the Corporate Scrutiny Committee's intention was to gain the opinions of the Area Committee members on what type of field would be suitable for investigating thoroughly.

ch) The members expressed opinions and it was emphasised that a definition of the division between urban and rural areas was required in terms of influencing the scrutiny of the work.

d) Further suggestions were made with regard to other matters that could be included in the investigation, and particular attention was drawn to the following:-

- rural poverty and methods of dealing with this;
- energy costs and the way low income affects this, particularly in respect of older people;
- travel costs and the way this affects residents in remote areas;
- deterioration in the Welsh language and the link between this and depopulation in some areas;
- the demand for energy and the various provisions available.

dd) It was noted that high-speed broadband would be operational in Gwynedd in the near future, which was a positive development as it would make it possible for more businesses to be established in any part of the County.

RESOLVED to recommend that priority should be given to the need to have a definition of the division between rural and urban areas should the Corporate Scrutiny Committee decide to scrutinise the 'balance between rural and urban services'.