

Scrutiny Investigation Group – Rural Agenda
Notes of the informal meeting held on 20 February 2013

Present: Councillors Gweno Glyn, Gareth Thomas and Eirwyn Williams.

Officers: Gareth James and Ann Roberts.

Apologies: Councillors Lesley Day, Elwyn Edwards and June Marshall.

Purpose of the Meeting: To discuss the scope of the brief to be presented to the Scrutiny Committee on 7th March.

1. It was decided not to define 'rural' as most of Gwynedd is rural except Caernarfon a Bangor.
2. The importance of ensuring that the scope is not too extensive was noted and to keep to a specific element.

The options were discussed

1. Fuel Poverty – it was noted that the Corporate Scrutiny Committee had looked at this on 13th December.
2. Access to Information e.g. Benefits – it was noted that the Communities Scrutiny Committee had decided to look at this area at its last meeting.
3. Social Inclusion – there are elements the group could focus on, but a tight brief is necessary. A discussion took place and it was noted that the group could consider
 - learning from Communities First but without too much emphasis on what had been carried out under Communities First. Consideration could be given to innovative ways of moving forwards from Communities First and discover if the innovative ways are supported to expand. Look at different ways of providing services – 3rd sector, private, etc.
 - transport such as 'from door to door' in the Llŷn area and extend across Gwynedd. Savings could come from this as well. Look at other options of providing transport in areas where there is no bus services are nearby. It was noted that tourism depends on bus services. It was reported that hubs had been mentioned within the Community Transport project.
 - Bringing services nearer to the people - such as Opticians and other services. Care should be taken in deciding upon a brief as the Health Board shrinks its services and once services are withdrawn from an area the demand will then fall on Gwynedd Council to provide the service.
4. Social Isolation – it was noted that much is happening in this area in Llŷn already.

5. 'Pub as a Hub' - It was noted that a meeting had taken place on 19th February at Bryncir to promote rural licensees to discuss the 'Pub as a Hub' scheme that is managed by Cadwyn Clwyd on behalf of the Welsh Government with financial support from The Prince's Countryside Fund.
6. Invigorating Communities – it was noted that there is a project in the Strategic Plan.
7. Broadband - It was noted that a programme was in place across Gwynedd.

It was agreed:

That the discussion had been a foundation to start the work of looking at the Council's services, options and other ways of providing the services.

Use information from the latest Census as a basis for the investigation.

To discuss with the Council Leader, Mantell Gwynedd and others.

Hold the meetings of the Scrutiny Investigation Group in the Penrhyndeudraeth area.

20/2/2013.