

Corporate Scrutiny Committee

Main Activities for 2012-13

- A1 - Community Strategy**
- A2 - Savings Strategy**
- A3 - Systems Thinking**
- A4 - Gwynedd's Performance Report for 2011-12**
- A5 - Rural-Urban Balance**
- A6 - Partnerships and Collaboration**
- A7 - Sustainable Procurement**

A1 The Community Strategy

The Community Strategy aims to involve key stakeholders in the county to collaborate on forming a vision and planning and providing services for the benefit of the people of Gwynedd.

The Council is responsible for leading on the work in Gwynedd, but it also involves the Health Board, the Police, colleges and others.

Gwynedd Council and Anglesey Councils have also committed to jointly draft one Joint strategy from now onwards.

Scrutiny undertaken

Considered:

- What was achieved and which things remain unachieved from the *Gwynedd Together Strategy 2008-12*?
- Have those matters been duly addressed in the latest version of the Community Strategy – *Improving Gwynedd Together 2011 onwards*?
- What is the effect of the Strategy on the people of Gwynedd?

Recommendations from the Scrutiny Members to Councillor Dyfed Edwards, Council Leader

Recommendation A1.1

To ensure that specific consideration is given to maintaining services in rural areas along with urban areas when planning services jointly across the County.

Accepted

Recommendation A1.2

To consider withdrawing from collaborative projects when it is obvious that there is no appropriate commitment from other partners. In particular when there are substantial costs for the Council in trying to maintain the partnership.

Accepted

Recommendation A1.3

To give attention for the need to have indicators that emphasise the effect on our residents.

Accepted

Recommendation A1.4

In general, we would welcome appendices that provide evidence of your observations in your future reports.

Accepted

Anticipated Impact

- **That the work of planning the Council's and its partner's services gives specific attention to the needs of rural and urban communities in Gwynedd.**
- **That the Council makes the best possible use of scarce resources for the benefit of the County's citizens in relation to joint working.**
- **That the County's citizens can see for themselves how successful the Council is in influencing its partners to achieve for the benefit of its residents.**

A1 Savings Strategy

In order to plan for, and realize savings of £37.2m, the Council has been considering since 2008 how best to achieve this while maintaining services of the highest possible standard.

Scrutiny undertaken

Considered

- Report from the Cabinet Member providing some background to this subject area for the benefit of new members, and clarifying the Strategy's progress to date.
- Update on the funding gap faced, progress to date and plans to address the remainder
- The problems in attaining some plans and steps to address this
- It was noted that the Cabinet Member had commissioned work to assess what had happened to the performance measures in the areas where efficiency savings had been attained, but at the time of scrutiny (July 2012) there was insufficient mature evidence to present.

Recommendations by the Scrutiny Members to Councillor Peredur Jenkins, Cabinet Member for Resources

Recommendation A2.1

If it is your intention to request schools to identify efficiency savings, would you consider giving a more challenging target for those schools holding large balances rather than introducing a uniform target for everyone.

Consider

Recommendation A2.2

To provide further reports for this committee on the progress of the 62 plans which will be realised in 2013/14.

Accept

Recommendation A2.3

To provide information regarding the number of staff who are retiring and are re-employed by the Council under a different role.

Accept

Recommendation A2.4

To report back to this committee further on in the financial year on any further progress or developments.

Derbyn

Anticipated Impact

- **Identify the impact of implementing the Financial Strategy on the services provided to Gwynedd's residents**
- **Highlight potential problems and deficiencies following the Strategy's implementation**
- **Lessen the potential impact on educational arrangements by using balances held by schools to mitigate the impact of implementing the strategy on educational plans.**

<p><u>A3 Systems Thinking</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In 2009 the Council pledged to improve services to customers by using Systems Thinking. - Systems Thinking is a recognised method in the area of business developed, which aims to simplify business processes by maintaining of improving customer services - This would be expected to achieve a saving 		
<p><u>Scrutiny undertaken</u></p> <p>A Scrutiny Investigation was held and the following matters were considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The successes and deficiencies of the two pilot schemes in the Maintenance Service (Intervention Team) and the Homelessness Service - Has it improved the service for the users? - Has it achieved a saving? 		
<p><u>Recommendations by the Scrutiny Members to Councillor Peredur Jenkins, Cabinet Member for Resources</u></p> <p>Recommendation A3.1</p> <p>To extend Systems Thinking across the Council.</p>	Accept	
<p>Recommendation A3.2</p> <p>To ensure that the Cabinet Members and Senior Managers have a thorough understanding of the principles of Systems Thinking to realise the potential of redesigning Council services for the customer's benefit.</p>	Accept	
<p>Recommendation A3.3</p> <p>To provide full support to maintain the 'day job' while officers work on the Systems Thinking scheme.</p>	Accept	
<p>Recommendation A3.4</p> <p>Develop the scheme across the Council by striking a balance between carrying out this work internally and getting external and independent input as necessary.</p>	Accept	
<p>Recommendation A3.5</p> <p>To consider the information obtained from the customers and partners thoroughly in order to assess the demand and the true needs of the customer.</p>	Reject	
<p>Recommendation A3.6</p> <p>To consider the value of appropriate measures carefully to assess success and problems with implementing the scheme across the Council and report on any matters of concern to the Cabinet.</p>	Accept	
<p>Recommendation A3.7</p> <p>The process so far has been too slow – it is crucial that the work proceeds more quickly in future.</p>	Accept	
<p>Recommendation A3.8</p> <p>That work is carried out immediately to assess the scheme's costs in order to identify the sum of the expenditure and any savings that have derived from it so far and to consider the projection over the life of this Council.</p>	Consider	
<p><u>Anticipated Impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve the planning and provision of services by shifting the emphasis on the customer while achieving significant savings over the life of this Council. 		

<p>A4 <u>Gwynedd Council's Performance Report (Improvement Plan) 2011-12</u> The Council publishes an annual Report on its success in planning and providing services. The Report is based on the Council's Strategic Plan for 2001-12</p>	
<p><u>Scrutiny undertaken</u> - Considered the draft Report and made recommendations</p>	
<p><u>Recommendations by the Scrutiny Members to Councillor Dyfed Edwards, Council Leader</u> Recommendation A4.1 – Main Recommendation - In future the scrutiny input needs to happen two months earlier. This would allow the scrutiny members to submit written observations for the Leader's consideration.</p>	Consider
<p><u>Recommendations Received</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A4.2 – Enablement Scheme (T15- Ref CGOE01) – Need to quantify the progress by the number of additional hours and percentage. - A4.3 – Tomorrow's Service (T20) – Note the size of the Bid - A4.4 – Overcoming barriers to work – (T32 – SMG07) change 'adfocatiaeth' to 'eiriolaeth' in the Welsh version - A4.5 – Design, develop and implement... (T84 – Add.11) – change to Amber - A4.6 – Language Charter Scheme (T84 – PSI05) – change to Amber - A4.6 – Hold a high-profile event (T84 – PSI05) – change to Amber - A4.8 – Invest in a translation scheme (T85 – PSI09) – change to Amber - A4.9 – Children's Referral Percentage (T38 – Graph 3) – change 'Number' to 'Percentage' 	Accept
<p><u>Recommendations rejected</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A4.10 – Job vacancies indicator (T24) – Figures for Junes 2011 are used for such a crucial area in terms of the present Economy where things could change substantially within a year. The June 2012 figures should be presented (or more recent figures than June 2011) - A4.11 – Rate of Children in Gwynedd within unemployed families (T27) – A more comprehensive indicator is required to reflect a family's income level - A4.12 – Transforming Services for Children and Young People ((T40 – Add.04) – if the improvement refers solely to 'secondary' age children, this needs to be noted - A4.14 - % of 3-4 year olds able to speak Welsh (T81) – need to note a specific number of families - A4.14 – Implement the Thriving Welsh speaking Neighbourhoods Characteristics Framework (T86 – PSI10) – change to Red - A4.15 - Design and develop a Welsh Language Skills Development Academy)T86 – PSI13) - Ambiguous Note the scale of progress. - A4.16 - A developmental project to increase professional use of the Welsh language in the workplace (T86 – PSI14) – Ambiguous. Note the scale of progress. - A4.17 – Number of Residential Units (T89) – Note the number of housing units approved in column 3. 	Reject
<p><u>Anticipated Impact</u> - Matter of concern/recommendations to be referred to the Scrutiny Forward Programme - Ensure the accuracy of the report for the residents of Gwynedd.</p>	

A5 Urban and Rural Balance

- This area was noted as a concern by members of the tree Scrutiny Committees in the Workshops
Annual Scrutiny, summer 2012
- One of the Priority Projects in Gwynedd's Strategic Plan 2013-17 is Promoting Sustainable Rural Communities to address this issue.

Scrutiny undertaken

- A Scrutiny Investigation was established to look at:
- What examples are there of successful plans in enhancing inclusion in Gwynedd
- To note and consider examples of good practice outside the County
- To identify recommendations for the Council to act on directly and as a partner for promoting inclusion.

Recommendations by the Scrutiny Members

Anticipated Impact

- **Improve social inclusion**

A6 Partnerships and Collaboration

- The importance of scrutinising this element of the Council's work which is increasing in this area was noted

Scrutiny undertaken

- No scrutiny activity during the year.

Recommendations by the Scrutiny Members

Include on the Scrutiny Forward Programme 2013-14

Anticipated Impact

<p>A7 Sustainable Procurement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Council operates a Procurement Strategy across all its services. -The Council intends, through the implementation of this strategy, to ensure that it increases the number of local businesses which can compete for work and that opportunities to create social benefits are maximised. 	
<p><u>Scrutiny undertaken</u></p> <p>Considered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The successes and problems of implementing the Strategy - Independent evidence was gathered from procurement experts, companies who participated in the process, external promoters and Community Schemes. - 11 recommendations were produced for the attention of the Cabinet Member - It was decided to conduct a further Scrutiny Investigation to assess the success of implementing the strategy across all the Council's services 	
<p><u>Recommendations by the Scrutiny Members to Councillor John Wynn Jones, Cabinet Member for the Economy</u></p>	
<p>A7.1 The officers of the procurement service should be thanked for the progress made over the past two years in implementing the Sustainable Procurement Policy.</p>	
<p>A7.2 Undertake urgent work to substantially streamline the existing tender documentation. Ensure that the documentation is fit for purpose, and does not include or request unnecessary information</p>	
<p>A7.3 Work should continue on amending the Supplier Qualification Information Database (SQUID) to take into account current and proportionate risk levels in terms of turnover thresholds and insurance.</p>	
<p>A4.7 Central / corporate procurement arrangements should be developed further, ensuring there were sufficient resources for delivery.</p>	
<p>A7.5 Ensure that full and appropriate feedback is provided to unsuccessful companies at the request of those companies.</p>	
<p>A7.6 Ensure that a clause is included in the tender and the agreement noting that successful companies are required to pay subcontractors more swiftly.</p> <p>A7.6b Lobby the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) to introduce this element generally across Wales.</p>	
<p>A7.7 Detailed work should be undertaken to assess the numbers, situations and reasons as to why companies who won contracts tended to sub-contract rather than employ, aiming to increase the number of jobs being created.</p>	
<p>A7.8 Discussions to be held with the Welsh Government to see how awareness could be raised amongst businesses of the potential to receive a higher percentage of the Public Spending in Wales.</p>	
<p>A7.9 Prospective clients should be encouraged and guided to complete the SQUID electronically, so that companies are not forced to waste long periods of time re-entering information for different tenders.</p>	
<p>A7.10 Following the success of the collaborative work to form tenders jointly with local partnerships in Blaenau Ffestiniog, this arrangement should be developed with local partnerships when opportunities arise.</p>	
<p>A7.11 Ensure that the need to provide a full bilingual service is one of the most important conditions and that the appropriate weight needs to be given to this in the procurement policy and in implementing the policy.</p>	
<p>It is anticipated that the Investigation will submit further recommendations to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee meeting on 5 September 2013.</p>	
<p><u>Anticipated Impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve services by placing the emphasis on the customer while achieving significant savings over the life of this Council. 	

