

Committee	Corporate Scrutiny Committee
Date	11 September 2014
Item	<i>Gwynedd Amdani</i>
Author	Peredur Jenkins, Cabinet Member for Resources
Main matters that need to be addressed by Members	The aim of this scrutiny item is to receive an update on the Council's plans to lead on an arrangement to procure cheaper energy for the county's communities, and/or to facilitate and promote the Cyd Cymru scheme and its associated benefits to the residents of the county.

1.0 Context

The Collective Energy Buying Scheme (which is discussed under the title '*Gwynedd Amdani*' by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee) is part of the Our Council project which is part of the *Ffordd Gwynedd* – Demand Management programme. The *Ffordd Gwynedd* – Demand Management Programme is addressed in the Strategic Plan in priority 4, the field of Culture and Business Arrangements of the Council.

The aim of Our Council is to take advantage of the Council's size in the interest of the people of Gwynedd and improve the Council's image among Gwynedd citizens. The project considers a long list of ideas and develops any ideas that meet the requirements of the project's criteria matrix.

Collective Energy Buying is one of the schemes within the Our Council Project.

2.0 Collective Energy Buying Scheme

In accordance with the "Our Council" procedure and following consideration of an outline business case which discussed ideas on how to promote changing energy suppliers / collective energy buying, a project group came together in January 2014 to discuss and plan the promotion of the Cyd Cymru scheme – a collective energy buying scheme throughout Wales led by Cardiff City Council and Glamorgan County Council which is operated by the *Energy Saving Trust*.

The project group included the Cabinet Member for Resources and a number of Council officers. Following a discussion, it was decided to obtain more information from Cyd Cymru on the first stage of the scheme to ensure that this was a suitable scheme to refer Gwynedd residents towards it. It proved difficult to obtain information from the campaign – what was received was unsatisfactory and it took some time to reach us.

The following were noted:

- Concern that data was not available on the amount of savings for every household and how many had registered.
- Concern that 5,000 (the number who took part in the first round across Wales) seemed to be a small number in terms of those who "switched" and that it was unlikely that energy companies would offer huge savings.
- It would now be very difficult for Gwynedd Council to sign the charter and hold a valuable awareness-raising campaign due to the lack of time.

It was concluded:

- To recommend not to currently support the scheme as a result of the concerns and lack of time before the second round closes.
- To revisit the scheme when more data would become available and join should there be a third round.

Due to concerns regarding the scheme and without the scheme receiving the Council's support, it was premature to upload simple information about Cyd Cymru and the scheme's benefits on the Council's website as well as a link to the registration form.

Correspondence was undertaken with Cyd Cymru and it was discovered that the Cyd Cymru scheme was open to all residents in Wales, therefore there was no need to consider any other schemes to encompass all Gwynedd residents.

3.0 Recent Developments

Cyd Cymru has announced that there will be a third stage and that registration is likely to open at the end of 2014 or early in 2015, although dates have yet to be confirmed. Therefore, the option to support Cyd Cymru is still open. We have also recently received statistics on the first two stages (see below) and there will be a need to consider these and decide whether or not we will support the third stage.

Stage	Registration Dates	Number of registered households	'Switching' dates	Number of households that 'switched'	Average household annual saving
1	21/10/13-13/1/14	5,373	13/1/14-24/1/14	861	
2	27/1/14-9/3/14	1,963	10/3/14-31/3/14	674	
Total		6,802			£185

4.0 Reducing the Council's energy costs

The Gwynedd Council Carbon Management Plan has been in operation for some time and has now seen a reduction of over 30% in carbon emissions from Council buildings compared with 2005/06. This is a saving of approximately £600,000 a year in energy bills. In addition, the Council is part of a regional group that buys energy on a collective basis in order to secure the cheapest possible bill prices.