

**SCRUTINY WORKS – SCRUTINY MAKES A
DIFFERENCE**

**ANNUAL REPORT
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY 2010 - 2011**



This report expands upon the main differences made as a result of the work of the Scrutiny Committees and Improvement Working Groups. Their other successes and priorities for the coming year can also be found in the report.

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Principal Scrutiny Committee

Chairman

Cllr Keith Marshall



Vice-chairman

Cllr Guto R. Tomos



The Difference

Area Committees

On 23 April 2010, the Committee resolved to recommend the proposed model for a single planning committee to the meeting of the full Council in May, adding that the new committee should be based on area as well as political balance, and that there would be a presumption in favour of being able to discuss the application locally.

The recommendations of the Principal Scrutiny Committee were approved by the full Council on 13 May 2010 and that the Environment Scrutiny Committee held a review within 12 months of its commencement regarding how effective the new arrangements were and to consider further changes as required.

Savings Strategy 2010 – 2013

£16 million of potential savings were identified back in 2009, to be achieved over a three year period. The Principal Scrutiny Committee has received regular progress reports on the achievement of the 2010-2013 Strategy and has challenged the Heads of Department hard to ensure that these savings are realised. It was emphasised to the Heads of Department that it was their duty to remove any deficit by submitting other schemes in order to achieve the required savings. £4.12 million of the savings identified in 2009 have now been realised, namely 100% of the first year schemes. This means that the remaining £11.6 million is to be realised during 2011/12 and 2012/13.

The Report of the Savings Scrutiny Working Group on schemes relating to the Third Sector

During the Principal Scrutiny Committee's Savings Working Group meeting held on 23/10/09, it was decided to commission a detailed review of the Third Sector organisations in order to ensure sufficient information and clear understanding of the proposed schemes and the impact of the proposed savings. The Working Group confirmed that no proposed savings should be implemented until 2011/12, in order to give sufficient warning to the relevant organisations.

When defining the work's brief, the Working Group resolved that it would be reasonable and advantageous to attempt to consider the picture in a more holistic

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context. This meant looking at the work of the organisations in question and in-house fields where similar work took place. In addition, it was an opportunity to tie-in with the working programme of developing the commissioning procedure within Social Services, where relevant.

As part of the work commissioned, discussions were held with the 8 organisations in question individually in order to gather information and ensure a clear understanding of the organisation's work. As a result of the discussions, agreement was sought on the content of a paper to be submitted to the Working Group on 29/04/2010.

In addition, representatives of the individual organisations appeared before the Savings Working Group to answer the members' questions and to give a brief introduction of their organisation's work, so that the issue could be considered further.

Every individual organisation received a copy of the Working Group's recommendation and the individual organisations were given updates following the decisions of the Principal Scrutiny Committee and the Board. The Working Group recommended a savings plan for some organisations; however, further work was recommended in some fields where it was believed that it was possible to work more effectively and where further consideration needed to be given to the commissioning procedure.

The Chairman of the Savings Scrutiny Working Group submitted his report to the Principal Scrutiny Committee on 1 July 2010, asking the committee to consider the recommendations of the working group regarding eight schemes for savings which affected the 3rd sector and it was resolved to accept the recommendations of the Savings Scrutiny Working Group with the following changes:-

Domestic Violence – to reduce the financial support by 50% in 2011/12 and undertake a further assessment of the need at the end of 2011/12.

Women's Aid - Bangor – to reduce the financial support by 50% in 2011/12 and undertake a further assessment of the need at the end of 2011/12.

The Board resolved to approve the recommendations of the Principal Scrutiny Committee and requested a further assessment of the need by 2012/13.

A further report on the work was submitted to the Principal Scrutiny Committee and to the Board on 23 November 2010 where the Board resolved to approve the recommendations along with the requirement to follow the commissioning process from 2012 onwards.

Sustainable Procurement Policy 2011

The Policy was reviewed by the Sustainable Procurement Working Group. As part of the process, consultation was undertaken with five Heads of Department, Menter a Busnes, Value Wales, the Business Support Unit and the North Wales Procurement Partnership, with the aim of ensuring input and agreement on the direction and support to act.

In accordance with the key objectives of the 2008-2011 Procurement Strategy, the Council will ensure that procurement activity reflects the principle of sustainability and influences the economic development strategies.

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By developing and implementing the latest Sustainable Procurement Policy, the Council seeks to ensure that procurement activities are undertaken in a way that enables appropriate suppliers, including small and medium sized businesses, private companies and the third sector, to apply for the Council's contracts; reduce the environmental impact by having a better selection and use of goods, services and work; create an environment that provides opportunities to maximise the benefits deriving from the content and implementation of social criteria within procurement activities and ensure that value for money assessments are based, where appropriate, on lifelong costs.

The new policy ensures that the points are considered by including specific questions within the checklists and also highlighting the sustainability factors to consider within various parts of the process.

The Working Group has amended and supported the Sustainable Procurement Policy. Important messages derived from the discussion regarding ensuring that opportunities for local small and medium sized companies to apply for work are not lost; that officers within the departments who purchase receive the required training; and that performance and improvements to the economy are monitored.

The 2011 Sustainable Procurement Policy was adopted by the Council Board on 15 March 2011.

Financial Strategy 2011/12 – 2014/15

The presumptions made when establishing the budget were considered carefully, along with specific issues included in the report.

Resolved: considering the budget noted in the report and the additional observations made in terms of financial risks that had been addressed, that the Committee is satisfied with what is intended to do in terms of expenditure and how it is intended to secure a balanced budget in 2011/12; bearing in mind the changes that are now incorporated in relation to reducing the contribution of schools, that the committee continues to be comfortable with the strategy to identify the savings over the four year period outlined in the report. Also, agreement was reached on the amended profile for the savings to be identified from individual fields; it agreed with the recommendations for the 2011/12 capital programme in the report; and recommended to the Board that it recommended to the full Council to introduce an increase of 3.9% in the Council Tax in 2011/12.

Performance Monitoring and Scrutinising Business Plans

At its meeting on 1 July, the Principal Scrutiny Committee decided to pilot, through a Working Group, the work of six monthly performance monitoring and scrutinise the draft business plans of the departments relevant to the work field of the Committee. Two meetings of the Working Group were held during November 2010 to monitor the performance and another two meetings were held during January 2011 to scrutinise the business plans. The first meetings were to prepare, with the held of the relevant Performance Account Manager, questions for the Portfolio Leaders and the Heads of Departments. The second meetings were to questions the Portfolio Leaders and the Heads of Departments, ensuring acceptable responses to the members.

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The experience of monitoring performance through a Working Group was successful with members appreciating the opportunity to challenge in detail the information that was presented by the heads of departments' in their reports. In addition to getting the opportunity to go under the skin of some issues, mature and comprehensive responses received from the Portfolio Leaders and Heads of Departments meant that the process went smoothly. Additionally, the responses and experiences from the officers to the experience at the working group was positive as this method of responding to a working group had enabled a more meaningful discussion on performance.

In line with the Working Group's brief end of year performance monitoring reports were presented to the Scrutiny Committee.

As regards the scrutinising of business plans through a Working Group members were extremely glad of the opportunity and stated that they had received a better understanding of the performance indicators and the main matters facing the services in 2011/12. In addition, the Heads of Department stated that they were of the opinion that the method of scrutinising draft business plans by means of the working group was much better than scrutinising at a Committee because the procedure allowed a better dialogue and more time was given at a Working Group to scrutinise in detail and receive full responses.

What else did the Committee do?

- Considered a draft report on the Council's Achievements in 2009/10
- Considered the Council's Budget And Priorities 2011/12
- Considered Treasury Management
- Considered the Council's Self-assessment
- Corporate Governance Framework - Resolved to recommend that the Council Board adopts the CIPFA and Solace framework as a basis for the Gwynedd Local Code of Governance
- Considered the Proposed Local Government (Wales) Measure
- Considered a report on the Members Allowances Scheme
- Considered the Partnership Rationalisation Review
- Considered the Information Management Strategy
- Considered the 'Emergency Planning' progress report and it was resolved that a further report needed to be submitted to the Committee within 6 months

Next Year's Priorities

- Consider the Council's 3 Year Plan 2011 - 2014
- The Council's Democratic Arrangements in order to comply with the requirements of the new Welsh Government Measure.
- The Savings Strategy and Financial Strategy
- Collaboration Issues
- The Engagement Framework
- The Partnership Rationalisation Review
- The Procurement Strategy
- Customer Care – the outcome of two Business Transformation pilot exercises

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Environment Scrutiny Committee

Chairman

Cllr Stephen Churchman

Vice-chair

Cllr Linda Morgan



The Difference

Reducing Gwynedd's Carbon Footprint

The Gwynedd Carbon Footprint Reduction Plan is one of two plans being addressed by the Local Services Board in Gwynedd. In February 2009, a Working Group was established to be responsible for monitoring progress and providing input in order to improve the project. A progress report on reducing Gwynedd's carbon footprint was submitted to the Environment Scrutiny Committee on 29 April 2010 which included the priorities identified for the Plan's future.

The Environment Scrutiny Committee resolved to agree to the progress in the plan to develop action plans and targets in all work fields. In addition, the response to the working group's comments was accepted along with the priorities identified for the coming year.

The Council's Carbon Management Plan This Plan will be responsible for realising the majority of the Council's commitments within the Local Services Board's Carbon Footprint Reduction Plan. The Carbon Management Plan includes the Council's strategy for reducing its carbon emissions by 30% by the year 2014/15 as the first step in our contribution towards the Local Services Board's ambitious target of reducing our carbon emissions by 60% by 2021.

The Council is a member of Gwynedd's Local Services Board (which includes the majority of public sector bodies who work in Gwynedd), and it has taken the lead to promote work in these organisations in order to reduce the sector's carbon footprint in the County.

It was decided to adopt the Council's Carbon Management Plan as the Council's strategy and work programme for reducing its carbon emissions over the next five years. It was also resolved to use £2.5m from the specific reserves put to one side for funding the one-off requirements in the first three years, and then, in three years' time, to decide, in the context of the financial strategy and the situation at the time,

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whether to spend from the balances or to borrow money for funding the remaining cost.

The Council has succeeded to reduce its use of energy in its buildings by ten per cent and this has led to annual savings of more than £120,000.

Highway Assets Maintenance Plan

The above plan was submitted to the Environment Scrutiny Committee on 24 June 2010.

The Council Board resolved to adopt the Plan for implementation and to delegate the right for the Head of Highways and Municipal Department, in consultation with the Portfolio Leader, to vary the standards in accordance with the available budget or in response to changes in statutory requirements.

Review of School Crossing Patrol Services

A report was submitted to the Environment Scrutiny Committee on 16 September 2010 and consideration was given to the outcomes of the review of school crossing patrol services and the recommended model for the provision of the service in the future.

Between January and May 2010, a review was undertaken of all school crossings and school crossing patrols. The Review included undertaking:

- A Personal Risk Assessment for all crossing patrols
- A Site Risk Assessment
- An Assessment of the Pedestrian (who is younger than eleven years of age) x the traffic flow (compare the number of children who cross the road with the traffic flow within the same 30 minutes in order to identify the threshold level).

The Committee resolved that the authority does provide a school crossing patrol service in accordance with national guidance and a decision was also made on the recommendations regarding the number of school crossings.

Consideration was also given to the report of the Gwynedd Road Safety Partnership and specifically to whether or not the new arrangements for providing the service by means of cross-agency collaboration were robust. It was resolved to approve the new arrangements for the provision of the Road Safety service by means of cross-agency collaboration in order to enable the service to be provided efficiently and effectively.

Weekly Collection of Food Waste

The Council adopted its Waste Strategy for the 2010 to 2025 period in its meeting of 21, January, 2010. The Strategy includes an Implementation Plan for the period (2010-2025) which contains 12 key steps/developments that needs to be undertaken in order to achieve the Strategy. Two of the key steps in the Strategy are: Treatment of Food Waste (GwyrAD Project) 2012/13 onwards, and more specifically: Collecting Food Waste Weekly (2011/12).

Project GwyrAD necessitates the collection of food waste weekly from Gwynedd's households. There is a need to change to the weekly collection of food waste in order to meet the Assembly's targets for the reduction of biodegradable food waste disposed

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of by landfill (Landfill Allowance); and to meet statutory recycling/composting targets from 2012 onwards in order to avoid payment of substantial fines by the Council. The requirement for putting in place weekly collection of food waste throughout the County is included in the Council's Environment and Infrastructure Programmes Board Detailed Plan for 2011-14.

The option of the best means of its collection and ensuring that a consistent approach to collection is applied throughout the County was considered. The programme recommended for implementing the new service in addition to the associated raising awareness / campaigns programme was also considered. It was resolved to express support to the recommended programme for introducing the new service of weekly collections of food for Gwynedd residents.

What else did the Committee do?

- Continued to monitor performance and challenge the business plans of services
- The Welsh Government's Waste Strategy – the Committee approved and confirmed the observations as the Council's formal response to the consultation on the Municipal Waste Sector Plan
- Approved the Flood Risk Management and Coastal Erosion arrangements
- Approved the Achievement Plan for Gwynedd and Anglesey Local Development Plan
- Adopted the Council's Fleet Strategy, along with the Action Plan for the 2011-14 period
- Climate Change Project: Changing Places. The Environment Scrutiny Committee scrutinised the progress of the project and agreed upon the priorities for the coming year
- Approved the amendments to the Supplementary Planning Guidance – Building New Houses in the Countryside, to be released for public consultation for a period of six weeks
- Approved the Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan as documents to be released for public consultation for a period of six weeks
- The Gwynedd Unitary Development Plan's Supplementary Planning Guidance – the Committee approved the Holiday Accommodation Supplementary Planning Guidance documents to be released for public consultation for a period of six weeks

Next Year's Priorities

- Consider the progress in the development of the Integrated Transport Unit, including a Business Plan and detailed work programme
- The Gwynedd Local Services Board's Carbon Footprint Reduction Plan (Community Sector)
- Joint Local Development Plan
- Supplementary Planning Guidance, Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy
- The Council's Carbon Management Plan
- The Waste Strategy
- Commercial Waste
- The Residents Parking Scheme

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Development Scrutiny Committee

Chairman

Cllr Ioan Thomas



Vice-chairman

Cllr Glyn Roberts



The Difference

Meirionnydd Employment Plan

Consideration was given to the employment situation in Meirionnydd, the direction and proposed response and the proposed priorities.

It was resolved to accept and note the content of the report, along with the additional observations made by members; and to submit the Draft Meirionnydd Employment Plan document to the next meeting of the Meirionnydd Area Committee on 14 June 2010 for consideration and discussion on how to further develop the plan and priorities.

On 29 June 2010, the observations and recommendations of the Meirionnydd Area Committee in relation to the priorities and procedure for implementation, were accepted.

It was resolved to support the content of the Meirionnydd Employment Plan, the Work Programme and the amended priorities; to support the procedure recommended for the management of the Meirionnydd Employment Plan, including the recommendation of the Meirionnydd Area Committee to increase the number of elected members of the Implementation Team in order to secure representation from the five local areas included in the plan; and it was resolved that there was a need to submit a further progress report to this committee in April 2011; to send a clear message to the Implementation Team that it needed to ensure priority and hold discussions with Powys Council and the Welsh Government regarding Machynlleth Bridge.

Local Loans Fund

As part of its strategy to respond to the economic recession, the Council published the document “Responding to the Recession” in May 2009. The document included a programme of plans and interventions to support individuals, businesses and community bodies to stabilise and develop in a period of economic uncertainty.

Consideration was given to the final report of the external consultants, *CM International*, to consider whether or not having the local loans fund was feasible and it was resolved to express support to the principle and to undertake further work on two of the options.

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Four options had been outlined by the consultants, and it was seen that they could be divided into two sectors, namely the three options that could be administered externally and the one that could be administered internally.

A further report was submitted to the Scrutiny Committee on 14 September and the opportunities, strengths, weaknesses and various risks with each option were discussed. It was resolved to recommend to the Council Board to accept the option of having an Internal Fund which meant a Fund of £1m-£3m of the Council's money being managed and administered internally.

Major Events in Gwynedd

In order to set a direction for the work in future, members were requested to scrutinise Gwynedd Council's support to major events and the economic benefit that accrue from Major Events for Gwynedd.

It was resolved to support the recommendations to develop a clear Strategic Framework and operational structure within the Council to support major and strategic events in the future; also, to collaborate with the organisers of major events across the county to gather evidence of the value and benefit of events where the Council does not contribute; and to identify and review good practice by maximising the local benefit of Major and Strategic Events. Also, it was resolved to work closely with the Welsh Government's Major Events Unit in order to continue to identify, develop and attract Major Events to Gwynedd; to collaborate with other councils across north Wales and the North and Mid Wales Tourism Partnership to attract, develop and support events; to consider further the economic opportunities for north-west Wales of working in partnership with the Faenol Estate to develop the substructure that would strengthen the offer and ability to attract other Major and Strategic Events to the region in future; and to arrange a meeting with Universal Music / Faenol Festival Charity soon to discuss the best way forward regarding the Faenol Festival in future.

Glynllifon

A Working Group was established by the Committee on 22 September 2009 in order to consider options for the arrangements of delivering the service and management of Glynllifon in the future.

When adopting its Savings Strategy on 10 December 2009, the Council resolved to save £22,880 by "transferring responsibility for Glynllifon Tree Nursery" and £79,870 by the "externalisation of Parc Glynllifon".

The Working Group discussed a number of possible managerial options for the way forward. After agreeing on the factors in favour and against each option, it was agreed that there were sufficient reasons for giving further consideration to three options only, namely:

- introduce improvements to the current system
- establish an arms length 'entity' with the Council's voice as part of this
- and because of the joint-location and connection between the college's courses and the Park's resources, to establish joint management arrangements with Coleg Llandrillo Cymru (namely the former Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor).

In addition, the Members of the Improvement Working Group wished to see the final option ensuring that the property and lands of the Park continued to be a public resource; that access to the public continued and that the Welsh ambience continued also.

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The Working Group commissioned further work that would be grounds to the decision to implement one of the three above-mentioned options. The work of the appointed Consultant would be to develop this idea, to prepare a broad business study and give advice on the possibilities of establishing and maintaining a viable initiative in accordance with the brief agreed by the Improvement Working Group.

The Working Group members were not of the opinion that the Consultants had been inspired with ideas or that they has prepared a final report that provided a firm foundation to the Working Group's decision and recommended that the Development Scrutiny Committee instruct the relevant Council officers to undertake further work on the details of establishing a new entity to manage, maintain and develop Parc Glynllifon. It was also resolved to instruct officers to enter into formal discussions with Coleg Llandrillo Cymru to discover their level of interest in Parc Glynllifon and Glynllifon Tree Nursery; and for the Working Group to report back to the Development Scrutiny Committee.

The Working Group's second report was submitted to the Development Scrutiny Committee on 8 February 2011 and it was resolved to accept the recommendations of the Working Group that showed that the best long-term potential for Parc Glynllifon in future was by means of a formal agreement with Coleg Llandrillo Cymru; and to give support, in the interests of the Council and College, that the Council continues to manage the Parc, but in an alternative way, for the first two years under a transitional board that would pave the way for being managed by the College after the two years; to ask the Head of Economy and Community Department to discuss with the Property and Legal Units, heads of agreement with Coleg Llandrillo Cymru, and to report back to the Working Group; to instruct officers to enter into formal discussions with Coleg Llandrillo based on the above, with a report to be submitted directly to the Council Board; to accept further reports before transferring the management of Parc Glynllifon to Coleg Llandrillo; and to authorise the Head of Economy and Community Department to implement the next steps and to hold further discussions regarding establishing a new entity.

Heritage of the Slate Areas

The collapse of the slate industry is reflected in the communities where it used to thrive, with a reduction in the population, a decline in the wealth and physical condition of the communities and a long term increase in the social and economical challenges for the residents of these areas.

A report was submitted to the committee to scrutinise the current and proposed activities to maximise the local benefit of the heritage of the slate areas and Dafydd Roberts, National Slate Museum and Dr Dafydd Gwyn, Consultant in the Heritage field, attended the meeting to answer the members' questions.

The Slate Valleys and current regeneration initiatives in the slate valleys were reported on. In May 2010, the Council agreed to a request to lead on taking the first, tentative steps towards investigating the possibility of attaining UNESCO World Heritage Site status for the slate industry of North Wales which is the leading global designation of the significance and importance of locations to the development of the human race. In addition, the opportunity was taken to present an application to join the UK Tentative List which is only available once every ten years or so. The process of preparing and submitting a full application to UNESCO could take some years.

It was resolved to establish a specific group, with elected members serving on it, to draw up a clear plan on how to proceed with some of the programmes in the slate valleys and to

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recommend that the Council considers taking over Dorothea Quarry by enforcement for the welfare of the people of Dyffryn Nantlle and Wales as a whole as the site is dangerous, obstructs developments and as the developments taking place there at present are unacceptable.

Heritage and the Arts

A Working Group was established in order to undertake a full review of the Council's heritage and the arts activities, such as archives, museums, galleries and the arts, in an attempt to make annual savings of £59,870 from 2012/13 onwards.

It was resolved to support the Strategy, the Financial Proposals and the Operational Proposals and to reconvene the Improvement Working Group should any other proposals / developments arise in terms of this saving or any other substantial saving within heritage and the arts in the future.

What else did the Committee do?

- Continued to monitor performance and challenge the business plans of services
- Considered data on the economy's performance
- The structure of Cist Gwynedd 2010 – the benefit and effect of the grants allocated by CIST Gwynedd was considered and support was given to the direction of the field in future
- Performance of the Convergence Programme
- A verbal report was given by the Energy Island Programme Director, Sasha Davies, giving details regarding the Energy Island Programme and the major opportunities foreseen deriving from the programme to North West Wales, especially Wylfa B when it would be constructed.
- Broadband in Gwynedd – A report on the current situation in Gwynedd was considered, along with the future needs and intended responses to the situation
- Considered the Council's influence on Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd in relation to ensuring that Gwynedd's economy benefited from the substantial investment as a result of the transfer of the housing stock

Next Year's Priorities

- Meirionnydd Employment Plan
- Broadband in Gwynedd
- Consider the new direction of Communities First
- Overcoming Obstacles to Employment – consider the proposals for the continuation of the *Genesis* scheme
- Green Gwynedd and the Low Carbon Sector (Nuclear Energy and Renewable Energy)
- Consider the report of the Skills Field Working Group
- Consider the progress report of the Loans Fund
- Consider the report of the Heritage and the Arts Working Group
- Consider the progress report on the Slate Areas
- Consider the Keeping the Benefits Local work programme
- Consider data on the economy's performance
- Consider the strategic review of the Economy and Regeneration field

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Care Scrutiny Committee

Chairman
Cllr Peter Read



Vice-chair
Cllr Margaret Griffith



The Difference

Bron y Graig Residential Home

A report was considered on 17 June 2010 which examined modernising the accommodation provision for older people in four areas, namely Bala, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Porthmadog and Bangor. In relation to Bron y Graig Residential Home, Bala, it was noted that only residential care was provided there.

It was understood that Gwynedd Council, in partnership with Cymdeithas Tai Clwyd, had secured £4.3 million of capital funding from the Welsh Government's Social Grant for developing 30 extra care housing units in Bala and that Cymdeithas anticipated that the work would commence in the summer 2010 and be completed early in 2012.

Consideration was given to the options identified by the task group for Bron y Graig Residential Home, namely:

- a) To maintain the current property open and in accordance with the statutory requirements
- b) To bring the property's current use as a Council residential home to an end

The list of stakeholders listed by the Social Services Department for formal consultation was also considered.

It was recommended that the consultation on the future of Bron y Graig Residential Home, Bala was based on the option that the existing use would end only after the new care housing units would be officially opened, and it recommended that the Council commenced the consultation process by contacting the residents and their families, the staff and Unions.

The outcome of the consultation on the future of Bron y Graig Residential Home, Bala, was submitted to the Committee on 7 April 2011 and it was resolved to recommend to the Council Board:

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- a) that the current use of Bron y Graig Residential Home, Bala is to be brought to an end on the grounds that the Extra Care Housing Scheme is being developed in the town and the very high unit cost of Bron y Graig Home.
- b) that the current use of Bron y Graig Home, Bala is not ended until the Extra Care Housing Scheme is opened and this will provide an opportunity for the Housing and Social Services Department to assess the current residents and discuss with them and their families the options available, bearing in mind, if that is their wish, the possibility of transferring to one of the 30 units in the Extra Care Housing.
- c) that the Workforce Task Group prepares a detailed plan for responding to the changes in the provision of accommodation and care for older people in Bala.

Strategic Review of Residential and Nursing Services

A report was submitted to the Committee with recommendations on 17 June 2010; however, the Committee resolved to defer the discussion because the relevant Working Group had not had an opportunity to scrutinise the issue thoroughly and as the Working Group was holding a meeting with the external consultant on 21 July, with all members of the Committee to be invited to attend.

The report was considered again on 28 September 2010 and particular attention was given to the presumptions used as a basis to the service levels in future; the strategic needs proposed for the future and to approve that holding further detailed discussions should be pursued via the catchment areas and to report back to the Scrutiny Committee in December.

It was resolved to recommend to the Council Board that it should approve the recommendations and consider the option of providing small homes in rural areas as part of the Review.

On 1 February, Step 3 of the Report was submitted, along with the minutes of the Working Group including the final meeting of the Working Group when changes to the amended report, in accordance with the Working Group's decisions, were proposed. Consideration was given to the recommendations that had been approved by the Working Group and it was resolved to recommend to the Council Board:-

- a) To support the vision for the future with emphasis placed on independence rather than creating dependency by increasing support such as enablement, telecare, respite care and extra care housing.
- b) To acknowledge the need anticipated for decommissioning some internal residential homes as a necessary step in achieving this vision.
- c) To recommend authorising a formal consultation exercise in relation to the future of Hafod y Gest, Porthmadog with a report to be submitted to a meeting of the Care Scrutiny Committee in the future, considering the results of the consultation and providing recommendations on the way forward, following contact with the local member.
- ch) To authorise further discussions to find a site and a provider for a provision in the South Meirionnydd area, with a report submitted to the Care Scrutiny Committee considering the results of the consultation and, if appropriate, to submit recommendations on the most suitable procurement process, following contact with the local members.
- d) To authorise further discussions on the options for the remainder of the homes, including transferring to independent providers and considering an 'arm's length

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company' as the anticipated developments and for the additional consultations to proceed, and to submit further reports when appropriate following contact with the local members.

Strategic Capital Investment Fund 2

Consideration was given to a report, along with recommendations on how to spend the money, and where and who to target. It was agreed that the Gwynedd Housing Partnership should implement a prioritisation procedure in relation to spending the Homebuy budget of £800,000 in 2010/11, based on the points noted in the report and that it supported the need for Council Officers and relevant Partners to proceed immediately, as required, with the arrangements in order to prioritise expenditure and to ensure that the Homebuy Fund was spent in full in the 2010/11 financial year. It was also resolved that the Committee's members should receive further information regarding the details of the 'local connection' of applicants and the method of repaying money into the Fund when houses were sold.

Telecare Service

A report was submitted providing information about the current provision of Telecare Service in Gwynedd, and the plans for the future. It was understood that five Councils across north Wales were collaborating in order to establish a single Emergency Calls Monitoring Service and that two bilingual call centres would be established – one in Anglesey and the other in Conwy.

Consideration was given to the Gwynedd Telecare Service Work Programme and it was resolved that there was support to the proposal to develop Telecare as one of the priority plans across the Adult Service; that priority should be given to targeting plans that promoted independence and efficiency in terms of the cost of provision and that Gwynedd Council is a member of the regional work programme in order to ensure and promote the needs of the residents of Gwynedd.

Older People Commissioning Plan 2011-16

Consideration was given to the commissioning plan that incorporated outcomes that had been identified and agreed with older people at an initial consultative event of over 100 participants who voiced their opinion. In addition, the opinion of local people was gathered and as a consequence of the consultation, it became clear that one of the main wishes of older people was to be able to live as independently as possible.

The report was accepted and agreement was reached on its content and it was resolved that further information would be provided by the Research Unit regarding the rough estimate of the population of Gwynedd until the year 2030 and for it to be submitted at the next Preparatory Meeting.

What else did the Committee do?

- Considered the Gwynedd Homelessness Strategy 2010 – 2013
- Considered the Gwynedd Local Housing Strategy Performance Report 2009-2010 and Action Plan 2010-2011
- Monitored the performance of Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd
- Continued to monitor performance and challenge the business plans of services
- Considered the regular reports of the Joint Review Improvement Programme Scrutiny Working Group

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- Considered and proposed a response to the consultation paper “The Future of Policing in North Wales”
- Considered the Local Crime and Disorder Referrals Protocol
- Gwynedd Older People’s Strategy
- Received a presentation from Betsi Cadwaladr Local Health Board
- Approved the draft Common Housing Allocation Policy in order to commence the broader consultation process
- Considered the Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Action Plan for Gwynedd 2010-2013
- Considered Social Services’ Carers Policy and Young Carers Policy
- Consulted on the future of Learning Disabilities Residential Homes
- Considered the Response to the Annual Letter of the Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales
- Considered the reports of the Strategic Review of the Leisure Service
- Considered Draft Protocol on Managing Unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller Sites

Next Year’s Priorities

- Consider the final report of the Partners in Care Working Group project
- Consider the response to the Consultation on the Future of the Tan y Marian, Pwllheli and Pant yr Eithin, Harlech Residential Homes
- The Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services
- Consider the Requirements and Response of Gwynedd Council to Sustainable Social Services
- Consider the Protection Of Vulnerable Adults Annual Report
- Consider the response to the Consultation on the future of Hafod y Gest Residential Home, Porthmadog.
- Monitor the performance of Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd
- Consider developing the Residential and Nursing Care market in South Meirionnydd
- Monitor the performance and general work of the Community Safety Partnership
- Consider the Commissioning Plan for the provision in Gwynedd for older people with learning disabilities
- Establish a Commissioning / Purchasing Regional Procedure – Consider the report of external consultants on the action plan across north Wales and a commissioning hub
- Consider the Common Housing Allocation Policy
- Consider options following the remodelling of Day Care provision
- Consider the Gwynedd Local Housing Strategy 2012-15 – consultation draft
- Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board information sharing session
- Strategic Review – Leisure

SCRUTINY WORKS – SCRUTINY MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Chairman

Cllr Dewi Owen



Vice-chair

Cllr Gwen Griffith



The Difference

Primary Schools Organisation

The Primary Schools Organisation Working Group was established in June 2008. During spring 2009, the Improvement Working Group published its strategy *Primary Education of the Best Quality for the Children of Gwynedd*. It was agreed that there was a need to review education in every part of the county, per catchment area, and clear steps were put in place in order to undertake the process. The strategy was approved by the Council without objection on 2 April 2009.

Primary Schools Organisation – Y Berwyn Catchment Area

On 24 May 2010, the Committee resolved to approve the following proposals for undertaking a statutory consultation process as required by Sections 28 and 29 of the School Standards Framework Act 1998:

- (i) To establish a new lifelong campus in the town of Bala to open during the 2014-15 school year to include the schools of Beuno Sant, Bro Tegid and Ysgol y Berwyn Secondary School. Officers would need to undertake further work on the managerial nature of the new campus.
- (ii) To close Ysgol y Parc by September 2012 providing places for children in the catchment area at Ysgol O.M. Edwards, Llanuwchllyn and that the Council works with Community Leaders and Area Regeneration Officers to safeguard the community use of the Ysgol y Parc building. It was proposed to move towards a statutory consultation period on the proposals – with the Council's consent – during October 2010.
- (iii) To promote collaboration between the schools of O.M. Edwards, Ffridd y Llyn and Bro Tryweryn and develop ways of enabling the schools to utilise the facilities and specialisation of the Lifelong Campus. (This proposal had no statutory implications)

The above-mentioned proposals were submitted to the Council Board on 15 June 2010 and it was resolved:

- (a) that officers undertake research into the implications of the community status of Ysgol y Parc, in order to submit the information for consideration by the full Council on 15 July.

SCRUTINY WORKS – SCRUTINY MAKES A DIFFERENCE

(b) to recommend to the full Council to approve the proposals for undertaking a statutory consultation process as required by Sections 28 and 29 of the School Standards Framework Act 1998.

A report was submitted on the outcome of the statutory consultation on proposals to reorganise schools in the Berwyn catchment area, in accordance with the Council's decision on 15 July 2010, to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 24 February 2011, and it was resolved:-

(a) To convey to the Council Board on 15 March 2011 and to the full Council on 12 May 2011 the support of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to the following:

(i) In order to facilitate the establishment of the proposed Lifelong Learning Campus, to approve the proposal to close Ysgol y Berwyn, Ysgol Beuno Sant and Ysgol Bro Tegid on 31 August 2015 and to issue statutory notices to that effect in accordance with Section 29 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998.

(ii) To approve the proposal to establish a Community School on the sites of Ysgol y Berwyn and Ysgol Beuno Sant to admit pupils within the 3-19 age range as part of the establishment of a *new Lifelong Learning Campus in the town of Bala*, to open on 1 September 2015, and to issue statutory notices to that effect in accordance with Section 28 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998.

(iii) To approve:

- the closure of *Ysgol Y Parc* by 31 August 2012, and to provide places to children in the catchment area at Ysgol O.M. Edwards, Llanuwchllyn, after completing upgrading works at Ysgol O.M. Edwards and issuing statutory notices in accordance with Section 29 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998; but in the meantime;
- to request that the appropriate officers in the Education Service prepare a report for the consideration of the Council Board on 15 March 2011 and the full Council on 12 May 2011 outlining the implications of extending the closure period of Ysgol y Parc to 31 August 2013 / 31 August 2014 / 31 August 2015.

(b) That the Statutory Notices referred to in (i), (ii) and (iii) above should not be issued until the capital funding package has been agreed.

Primary Schools Organisation – Tywyn Catchment Area

On 30 November 2010, a report was submitted to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on the statutory consultation to reorganise the schools of the Tywyn catchment area, in accordance with Gwynedd Council's decision on 10 December 2009.

It was resolved to approve and recommend to the Council Board that it adopts the following proposals:

(i) to close Ysgol Abergynolwyn by 31 March 2011 and to issue statutory notices to that effect;

(ii) to close the schools at Bryn-crug, Llanegryn and Llwyngwriil during the 2013-14 academic year and to issue statutory notices to that effect with the aim of formally closing the schools once the new area school is open.

(iii) to commence a consultation process in accordance with Section 28 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 for the establishment of the area community school to open during the 2013-14 academic year on Site 1 in Llanegryn subject to the recommendation to close Bryn-crug, Llanegryn, Llwyngwriil and Abergynolwyn schools.

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(iv) to close Ysgol Aberdyfi by 31 August 2011 providing places for children in the catchment area of Ysgol Penybryn, Tywyn and to publish statutory notices to that effect.
(v) to undertake a prescribed alteration to Ysgol Penybryn, Tywyn, by permitting Ysgol Penybryn to admit nursery school age pupils in accordance with the Council's policy from September 2011 and to publish statutory proposals to that effect.

On 14 December 2010, the Board resolved to recommend the above-mentioned recommendations, with the following additions:-

- In order to allow the Council to make a balanced decision on the matter, to ask officers to undertake research to outline the various implications of extending the closing date of Ysgol Aberdyfi to the 2013-14 academic year, to coincide with the opening of the community area school, by the full Council;
- That the Council understands that parents are concerned about transporting children in buses for the first time as a result of the changes of the reorganisation of primary schools in the Tywyn catchment area. It is proposed to provide a temporary local transitional arrangement so that an additional adult will travel with the bus driver transporting the children from Aberdyfi to Penybryn, Tywyn and back and from Abergynolwyn, Brynchrug and Llwyngwrl to the new area school and back. The transitional arrangement will be reviewed after being operational for one school term. It will also be made a tendering condition that safety belts are installed in school buses when agreeing on new transport contracts as a result of the reorganisation in the Tywyn area. (It was noted that it is not intended for this to replace any other relevant policies which exist in the county).

Consultation Report – Establishing an Area School in Bro Dysynni

On 24 February 2011, the Committee resolved to convey to the full Council on 1 March 2011 the approval of the Committee to establish an area Community School at Llanegryn by 1 September 2013 to admit pupils of the age range 3-11 and to issue the statutory notices pursuant to Section 28 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 to that effect.

Report on the Closure of Ysgol Aberdyfi

On 24 February 2011, the Committee resolved to convey to the full Council on 1 March 2011 the approval of the Committee of the closure of Ysgol Aberdyfi by 31 August 2013 and to provide places for children in the catchment area at Ysgol Penybryn, Tywyn and that statutory notices are issued in accordance with Section 28 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 to that effect.

Post 16 Transportation Policy

Gwynedd Council decided to review the existing policy for the following reasons:- weaknesses in the current policy; changes in the pattern of providing courses for post 16 learners; the availability of the Education Maintenance Allowance for learners from less affluent households; huge financial pressure on the Council's budget and the introduction of a new policy and specific charge for the transport. It is anticipated that the new charges will recover 20% of the Council's subsidy for post 16 transportation.

A consultation was held with the Secondary Strategic Planning Group, Heads of Gwynedd Special Schools, Heads of Coleg Menai and Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor, learners of Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor (Dolgellau and Pwllheli), and Coleg Menai (Llangefni and Bangor), Disability Equality Core Group, Special Children Service Unit, Grŵp Clebran and Gwynedd Council's Equality and Language Unit.

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In addition, an equality impact assessment was undertaken by outlining what relevance the policy had in relation to each of the general equality duties and to each of the equality groups.

The Working Group's recommendations were submitted to the Committee on 30 November 2010 and it was resolved to submit those recommendations to the Board on 25 January 2011. The Board resolved to adopt the new Policy from 1 September 2011; to adopt the fees and charges for the 2011/12 academic year; to abolish the existing post 16 Transport Policy from 31 August 2011; to authorise the Head of Education Department to include the appropriate contact details in Paragraph 7.8 and the "Additional Information" section of the Policy; to ensure, before the end of the Spring Term 2011, that all learners – and their parents, and the educational establishments that will be part of the new policy and fees and payments will have been informed of the new arrangements and to ask the Education Service to consider the possibility of amending the policy in order to ensure that no restriction will be imposed on the educational choices of the young people of the county in relation to attending out-of-county courses that are not provided in Gwynedd.

Special Educational Needs

A Special Educational Needs Working Group was established on 17 November 2008 and a wider brief was set by the Council Board.

The membership of the Working Group included elected members, a co-opted member, a cross-section of headteachers representing schools with Units and some that did not have Units, three members of the Primary Moderation Panel, two members from SEN Units from amongst the teachers in charge to represent the group, in particular for the item on KS2 Special Educational Need Units and representation from the SNAP organisation to express the voice of parents.

A sub-group was elected to establish a model for implementing across the Authority, giving consideration to rural areas. The sub-group met on two occasions and a presentation was received on possible options in relation to the KS1 and KS2 SEN Teachers.

The report of the Working Group was discussed in detail at the Committee's meeting on 29 January 2010 and it was recommended that further consultation of the proposals should take place. Further work was undertaken to consult under the leadership of SNAP Cymru to discover the views of a cross-section of parents regarding the existing provision and the new direction recommended. Also, a request was made for the "Clywed" Scheme to consult with specific pupils in a sample of SEN Units. The intention of the consultation was to discover the views of the pupils regarding their experience of attending the units. On 24 May 2010, a further report was submitted to the Committee on the further work noted above and the recommendations of the Working Group were accepted.

The recommendations of the Committee were submitted to the Board on 25 May 2010 and it was resolved to approve the Committee's recommendations.

What else did the Committee do?

- Continued to monitor performance and challenge the business plans of services

SCRUTINY WORKS – SCRUTINY MAKES A DIFFERENCE

- Scrutinised the Review of the implementation of the Gwynedd Primary Schools Reorganisation Strategy
- Scrutinised the report on the restructuring of Gwynedd's Specific Language Impairment provision
- Scrutinised the Post Inspection Action Plan following Estyn's Inspection of the quality of Gwynedd Council's Education Services
- Scrutinised the "Towards 2025" Strategic Programme
- Scrutinised the Youth Service Progress Report
- Scrutinised the Survey of the Social Use of Welsh by Gwynedd's Primary Sector Children
- Established an Improvement Working Group for the field of Nursery Education
- Scrutinised the Annual Report of the Education Department; the Statutory Director for Social Services' Annual Report; the Annual Report of the Gwynedd and Anglesey Children and Young People Local Safeguarding Board; the Annual Report of Gwynedd's Children and Young People Strategic Partnership; the Annual Report of the complaints and representation procedure for 2009/10; the Annual Report – Protection of Vulnerable Adults; the Annual Report – Social Services; the Annual Report of the Corporate Parent Panel

Next Year's Priorities

- The report of the Special Educational Needs Working Group – submit a progress report on the performance of the new procedure.
- The Review of the implementation of the Gwynedd Primary Schools Reorganisation Strategy.
- Consider the proposals of the Service in terms of commissioning the Children and Families Service.
- Annual Report of the Gwynedd Children and Young People Strategic Partnership.
- Consider the progress report of the Disabled and Ill Children and Young People Service.
- Consider the review of the Additional Learning Needs field.
- Consider the conclusions of the statutory consultation on reorganising education in the Gader catchment area.
- Consider the outcome of the Workshop on Meirionnydd Secondary Schools.
- Consider the progress report of the North Wales Education Programme Board.
- Consider the progress reports following a review of the Youth Service.
- Gwynedd and Môn Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- Family Support Integrated Service – consider plans to proceed to establish a new statutory service.

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For further information on the issues of the:

Principal Scrutiny Committee
Environment Scrutiny Committee
Development Scrutiny Committee
Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

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