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# THE COUNCIL 21/06/2012

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**Present:** Councillor Selwyn Griffiths (Chairman)

Councillors: Stephen Churchman, Endaf Cooke, Anwen Davies, Lesley Day, Eddie Dogan, David G. Edwards, Dyfed Edwards, Elwyn Edwards, Trevor Edwards, T. G. Ellis, Alan Jones Evans, Aled Ll. Evans, Jean Forsyth, Gweno Glyn, Simon Glyn, Gwen Griffith, Alwyn Gruffydd, Sian Gwenllian, Anwen Hughes, John B. Hughes, Louise Hughes, Jason Humphreys, Peredur Jenkins, Anne Ll. Jones, Brian Jones, Charles W. Jones, Elin Walker Jones, Eric M. Jones, John W. Jones, Linda W. Jones, Llywarch Bowen Jones, Sion W. Jones, Eryl Jones-Williams, Beth Lawton, Dilwyn Lloyd, June Marshall, Dafydd Meurig, Dilwyn Morgan, Linda Morgan, Christopher James O'Neal, Dewi Owen, W. Tudor Owen, Nigel Pickavance, Peter Read, Caerwyn Roberts, John Pughe Roberts, Liz Saville Roberts, W. Gareth Roberts, Mair Rowlands, Angela Russell, Dyfrig Siencyn, Mike Stevens, Gareth Thomas, Ioan Thomas, Paul Thomas, Eirwyn Williams, Elfed W. Williams, Gethin G. Williams, Gruffydd Williams, Hefin Williams, John W. Williams, Owain Williams, R.H. Wyn Williams, Mandy Williams-Davies, Robert J. Wright, Eurig Wyn

**Also present:** Harry Thomas (Chief Executive), Dilwyn O Williams, Dafydd Lewis and Iwan Trefor Jones (Corporate Directors), Dilys Phillips (Monitoring Officer/Head of Democracy and Legal Department), Dafydd Edwards (Head of Finance Department), Geraint George (Head of Strategic and Improvement Department), Gwen Carrington (Head of Housing and Social Services Department), Arwel Ellis Jones (Senior Manager – Corporate Commissioning Service), Vera Jones (Members' Manager – Democratic Service), Marian Parry Hughes (Senior Manager – Children's Services), Ann Lloyd Jones (Senior Manager – Adults' Services), Iwan Evans (Legal Services Manager), Aled Evans (Senior Officer – Performance and Change Management) and Gwyn Parry Williams (Members' Support and Scrutiny Officer)

**Apologies:** Councillors Craig ab Iago, Huw Edwards, Chris Hughes, Aeron Jones, Dyfrig W. Jones, Michael Sol Owen, W. Roy Owen, Ann Williams

The meeting was opened with a prayer from Councillor John Wynn Jones.

## 1. MINUTES

The Chairman signed the minutes of the Council meeting held on 17 May 2012 with the following correction –

Minute 8 – The Constitution

Correct clause (vii) to read “A member asked how it would be possible for her to fulfil her role as councillor effectively if it were not possible for her to bring matters before the full Council”.

## **2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST**

- i) The Monitoring Officer drew attention to the item "Pay Accountability in Local Government in Wales" which affected the Chief Executive, the Corporate Directors and the Heads of Department. She suggested that those officers who were present should declare an interest and withdraw from the meeting during the discussion on the item. However, the Chief Executive would be required to stay in the meeting to answer any questions on the report.
- ii) The Chief Executive, the three Corporate Directors and the Heads of the Democratic and Legal Department, Finance Department, Strategic and Improvement Department and the Housing and Social Services Department declared a personal interest in the item "Pay Accountability in Local Government in Wales" as the report related to their salaries.

They were of the opinion that it was a prejudicial interest and they withdrew from the meeting during the discussion on the item (except for the Chief Executive who was presenting the item).

## **3. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- i) Councillor Beth Lawton, member for the Bryncrug and Llanfihangel ward, was welcomed to her first meeting of the Council following her success in the by-election last week.
- ii) Regards were sent to the Vice-chairman of the Council, Councillor Huw Edwards, following his recent illness.

The Chairman thanked everyone for the best wishes he had received during his recent misfortune.

- iii) Everyone who was involved with the Eryri Urdd National Eisteddfod was congratulated on a successful eisteddfod, and all the competitors from Gwynedd who took part in the Eisteddfod were also congratulated.

Mr Sion Wyn Jones, Head of History Department, Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen, Caernarfon was also congratulated on winning the Secondary School Teacher of the Year competition in Wales, and he was wished well in the next stage of the competition.

- iv) Reference was made to the rally which would be held in Pwllheli on Saturday, 23 June, regarding the Welsh Government's intention to create Marine Conservation Zones around the coast of Gwynedd.
- v) The Council was thanked for all the arrangements involving the Olympic Flame which visited parts of Gwynedd last month.

#### **4. CORRESPONDENCE, COMMUNICATIONS OR OTHER BUSINESS**

It was reported that responses had been received to the letter that had been sent to Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and the Community Health Council regarding their consultation and communication procedures.

#### **5. URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chairman agreed under Section 100B (4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 to include the notice of motion regarding membership of the Nuclear Free Local Authorities organisation, because of the need to act urgently, and also agreed to a notice of a question because of the need for a prompt answer.

#### **6. QUESTION**

Question by Councillor Gwynfor Edwards.

*"Following the recent attention to the Dispersal Order in the centre of Bangor, could the relevant Cabinet member inform the Council what kind of consultation took place before the order was issued, and of the current situation regarding implementing it?"*

Councillor John W. Williams, Planning Cabinet Member, answered

"I'm pleased to have the opportunity to answer this question as it will give me an opportunity to rectify some of the recent misinterpretations. Firstly, in terms of what the order is, I would like to quote from the Advice Note pertaining to the arrangement which states *"It is not a curfew and the power to disperse groups can only be used when anti-social behaviour is committed."*

The point on this is that the purpose of the Order is to support the police to deal with antisocial behaviour so that the majority can go about their work and leisure to enjoy in the centre of the city of Bangor without being disrupted by antisocial behaviour.

What happens in such a case is that the police states that it wishes to issue an order but it must obtain the Council's agreement before doing so. According to the Council's Constitution, the right to agree to this has been delegated to the Head of Strategic and Improvement Department. In terms of consultation, what happened in this case is that the police presented evidence of complaints about antisocial and threatening behaviour to the head of department and he agreed subject to the following conditions –

- a) Appropriate liaison with the Social Services if implementing the order affects children.
- b) That the police officers implementing the order should safeguard the welfare of any young person being moved from the area.

c) That the order should be reviewed at the regular meetings that take place between the partners. These meetings take place every six weeks and the first meeting is next week.

I will ensure that the local members receive information about the six-weekly reviews so that they are able to offer observations on the need to continue with the order or not."

## **7. THE COUNCIL'S POLITICAL BALANCE**

Submitted – the report of the Head of Democracy and Legal Department on reviewing the Council's political balance.

Reported –

- a) That a bi-election had been held in the Bryn-crug/Llanfihangel ward on 14 June 2012 when Councillor Beth Lawton, a member of the Independent Group, was elected on the Council.
- b) That the change in the political balance had been considered by the Council's Business Group on 19 June 2012 which meant that the Independent Group had gained two seats, one on the Services Scrutiny Committee and the other on the Democratic Services Committee, at the expense of the Liberal Democrats Group who had lost a seat on the Democratic Services Committee. It also meant that the Llais Gwynedd Group had gained a seat on the Central Licensing Committee and that the Plaid Cymru Group had gained a seat on the Special Educational Needs Joint Committee.

The Council Leader reported that the Plaid Cymru Group had agreed to lose a seat on the Planning Committee and gain a seat on the Employment Appeals Committee whilst the Liberal Democrats Group would gain a seat on the Planning Committee and lose a seat on the Employment Appeals Committee.

A member of the Independent Group drew attention to the fact that the group had only three seats on the Planning Committee compared with four seats on some of the other committees.

The Council Leader notified members that this matter had not been raised by the Leader of the Independent Group in the Business Meeting on 19 June 2012.

In response, the Monitoring Officer noted that the allocation was not based on each individual committee, but rather on the total. In the case of the Independent Group, and since the Planning Committee was not taken as a separate committee, she noted that five committees had 15 members on them and that the Independent Group was entitled to four seats on four of them and three seats on another committee. If the Independent Group wished to have four seats on the Planning Committee it would be required to give up a seat on another committee.

**RESOLVED**

- (i) To note that the current Constitution of the Council is as follows:-

|                   |    |
|-------------------|----|
| Plaid Cymru       | 37 |
| Independent       | 18 |
| Llais Gwynedd     | 14 |
| Labour            | 4  |
| Liberal Democrats | 2  |

- (ii) To adopt seat allocation on the Council's committees in accordance with the table below –

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

|             | Plaid Cymru | Independent | Llais Gwynedd | Labour | Liberal Democrats |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|--------|-------------------|
| Corporate   | 9           | 4           | 3             | 1      | 1                 |
| Communities | 9           | 4           | 3             | 1      | 1                 |
| Services    | 9           | 5           | 3             | 1      |                   |
| Audit       | 9           | 4           | 4             | 1      |                   |

**OTHER COMMITTEES**

|                                   | Plaid Cymru | Independent | Llais Gwynedd | Labour | Liberal Democrats |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|--------|-------------------|
| Democratic Services               | 7           | 4           | 3             | 1      |                   |
| Planning                          | 7           | 3           | 3             | 1      | 1                 |
| Central Licensing                 | 7           | 4           | 4             |        |                   |
| Language                          | 8           | 4           | 3             |        |                   |
| Appointment of Principal Officers | 7           | 4           | 2             | 1      | 1                 |
| Employment Appeals                | 4           | 1           | 1             | 1      |                   |

|                        |           |           |           |          |          |            |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|------------|
| <b>Number of seats</b> | <b>76</b> | <b>37</b> | <b>29</b> | <b>8</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>154</b> |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|------------|

|                                    | Plaid Cymru | Independent | Llais Gwynedd | Labour | Liberal Democrats |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|--------|-------------------|
| Pensions                           | 3           | 2           | 1             |        | 1                 |
| SACRE                              | 3           | 2           | 2             |        |                   |
| Local Consultative Joint Committee | 6           | 2           | 2             | 1      |                   |

|  |                                       |          |          |          |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|--|
| <b>Special Educational Needs Joint Committee</b> | <b>4</b>                              | <b>2</b> | <b>1</b> |          |  |
| <b>Joint Planning Policy Committee</b>           | <b>4 (3 seats and one substitute)</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>1</b> |  |

|                    |           |           |           |           |          |            |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| <b>Total seats</b> | <b>96</b> | <b>47</b> | <b>36</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>194</b> |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|------------|

- (iii) **To delegate the power to the Monitoring Officer to make appointments to the committees on the basis of political balance and in accordance with the wishes of the political groups.**

## **8. APPOINTMENTS TO THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

Submitted – the report of the Monitoring Officer on appointing members to Gwynedd Council's Standards Committee.

It was reported that there was a total of nine members on the committee, namely five independent members, one community committee member and three Gwynedd Council elected members.

Following the Council's decision on 1 March 2012 on the appointment procedure, two vacant seats were advertised in the press for an independent member and three responses were received from persons who met the criteria and who were eligible for appointment. A consultation panel had been established to consider the applications and interview the applicants, and a meeting of the panel had been held on 19 June 2012 in order to present a recommendation to the Council.

The Monitoring Officer noted that all members of the Council had received a letter inviting them to express an interest to serve on the committee, and the names of those interested had been submitted to a meeting of the Business Group held on 19 June 2012 in order to present a recommendation to the Council.

The term of the community committee member, Ashley Michael David Clay, had come to an end with the elections in May 2012, but he was eligible for reappointment. Consultations on the proposal had taken place with the community councils through One Voice Wales, and approval to his reappointment had been given. Because of his contribution to the committee, his experience with the work and the fact that half of the committee members would be new members, she recommended that David Clay should be reappointed for a further term.

The regulations stated that the term of councillors on the committee was to be either four years or until the date of the next local government election, whichever was shortest. As the date of the next election had been deferred until 2017, an application had been sent to the Welsh

Government asking it to change the regulations to allow the members to serve for the entirety of this Council's term.

**RESOLVED**

- (a) To appoint Linda E. Byrne, Betws Garmon and Margaret E. Jones, Chwillog as independent members on the committee to serve for a period of six years.**
- (b) To appoint Councillors Charles W. Jones, Eryl Jones-Williams and Michael Sol Owen on the committee to serve for the whole of the Council's term if the regulations permit.**
- (c) To reappoint David Clay on the committee, to serve for the whole of the Council's term if the regulations permit.**

**9. APPOINTMENTS TO THE AUDIT COMMITTEE**

Submitted – the report of the Monitoring Officer on appointing a lay member to the Audit Committee.

She noted that the Council had advertised in the press for a lay member jointly with Conwy County Borough Council and Denbighshire County Council, with the closing date on 20 June 2012. Because of the tight timetable, it had not been possible for the Business Group to consider the application and submit a recommendation to this Council, but the matter could not wait until the next meeting of the Council, as the Audit Committee had to meet to receive the final financial statements and the auditor's report on them. It was not constitutionally possible for the committee to meet without a lay member having been elected to it. Under the circumstances, she recommended delegating to her, in consultation with the leaders of the political groups and the Head of Finance Department, the authority to formally appoint a lay member to serve on the committee. This would give the Business Group the opportunity to give full and worthy consideration to the applications, including, if appropriate, holding interviews before the appointment was confirmed.

**RESOLVED to authorise the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the leaders of the political groups and the Head of Finance Department, to formally appoint a lay member to serve on the Audit Committee.**

**10. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

Submitted – the report of the Monitoring Officer on amendments to the constitution.

It was reported that the Council, on 17 May 2012, had adopted the new constitution which established a Language Committee with 15 members of the Council on a political balance basis, but it did not contain terms of reference for the committee. Following discussions with relevant members and officers, the terms of reference were recommended for the committee as noted in Appendix 1 of the report.

Under the regulations dealing with employing officers, appointments to the post of a head or director of department were to be made by a committee, the appointment of a Chief Executive to be made by the full Council and appointments to all other posts to be made by an officer. As the post of the Head of Housing and Social Services Department would become vacant in the coming weeks, the Monitoring Officer requested the Council to establish a Chief Officers Appointment Committee, which would include 15 members of the Council based on political balance, and the terms of reference recommended in Appendix 2 of the report. Due to the urgency to appoint to the post in question, the Council was requested to delegate to the committee the right to consider all the options for filling the post including, for example, restructuring, and determining the most appropriate method and acting upon it.

#### **RESOLVED**

- (a) To adopt the terms of reference in Appendix 1 of the report for the Language Committee.**
- (b) To establish a Chief Officers Appointment Committee with the terms of reference noted in Appendix 2 of the report, and to include 15 members of the Council based on political balance.**
- (c) To authorise the Monitoring Officer to make the necessary amendments to the Constitution to give effect to the decisions.**
- (ch) To delegate to the Chief Officers Appointment Committee for the post of Head of Housing and Social Services Department, the power to consider, come to a decision and act on the most appropriate way to fill the post.**

#### **11. AREA COMMITTEES**

- a) The Cabinet Member for Customer Care set out the background and context of the report.

He explained that an initial discussion on the future of the area committees had taken place alongside a discussion on establishing area forums as part of the work involved with empowering communities, with the aim of empowering the local member, improving engagement with communities, obtaining better outcomes for the area and making better use of member and officer resources. By establishing the Central Planning Committee, there had been a reduction in the number of items being submitted to the area committees, and the change to a Cabinet system meant that a number of the matters which would formerly have been submitted to the area committees, were now the responsibility of the Cabinet. The Council needed to reach a decision on whether to establish area committees in the new structure or not, and if they were established, which terms of reference to give to them, bearing in mind that some matters were now the responsibility of the Cabinet.

He drew attention to the following considerations which were appropriate for the Council to consider when discussing the matter, namely –

- a) The discussion on area forums
- b) The purpose and intent of area committees
- c) Effective use of resources



ch) The change to a cabinet system

d) Transfer of information

He noted that from the matters which had been discussed in the area committees over the last two years, it was seen that 58% of those had been reports for information only i.e. annual reports, work programmes and plans, sub-committee minutes etc. whilst 41% of the matters to hand had been ones requiring a decision. These divided to 29% which were now matters for the Cabinet and 12% which were matters that would go to either the full Council or the Planning Committee for a decision. This therefore indicated that the main focus of these committees for the past two years had been to receive information. Although they had received many items for discussion and decision, the change to a Cabinet system meant that, from now on, they would not have a key role in the Council's decision-making process.

He noted further that the Cabinet intended to establish surgeries where backbench members could discuss matters that were of concern to them within their wards and make general enquiries about the services. Furthermore, once the information portal would be established, it would be possible to arrange for the annual reports of services to be added to it for the use of each member, and sending a list of local events to local members could also be considered.

With regard to the way forward, since many of the proposals e.g. area forums, surgeries and the information portal had not been developed fully, he was of the opinion that a cross-party working group should be established, with representation from each area, to develop the ideas and submit definite proposals to the Council in October. He also recommended establishing area committees in the three areas, without operational powers, and on a temporary basis, with the matter to be considered again at the Council meeting in October.

b) Members were invited to make observations.

i) A member noted that the area committees were very important, especially from the perspective of taking action locally. These committees had now been in operation for 15 years and had been very effective. He was of the opinion that to withdraw all powers from them would impede the work of these committees. He also noted that the area committees would be a means for backbench members to have the opportunity to voice their opinion on local matters, and that the working group established to consider specific proposals should also consider how to give these committees more power. He was of the opinion that establishing the area committees for the three areas for a specified period until the Council meeting in October 2012 did not allow sufficient time, and that the recommendation in the report should be amended to extend the period by six months and to submit a report to the Council in February 2013.

The Cabinet Member – Customer Care noted that he had no objection to extending the period for six months.

- ii) Another member also agreed that the area committees should be retained and that they should not be changed to Area Forums.
- iii) A member noted that there had been a purpose to the area committees in the past but was of the opinion that there was no value to them any more since the majority of reports being submitted to them were now the annual reports of the various services and that they were for information only. However, the member was in favour of establishing area forums as it would be a more effective method of discussing local matters.
- iv) A member proposed an amendment that the words “without operational powers” should be omitted from recommendation (b) of the report.

In response, the Monitoring Officer notified the members that when a committee was established, the Council could delegate specific decision-making rights to it. In the case of the area committees, she was dubious which powers could be delegated to them since the majority of the powers were in the hands of the Cabinet. If the area committees were established, they could convene but they would not have powers to determine any specific matter delegated to them by the Council. She noted that every committee had a remit, but there was no apparent remit for the area committees. It was not possible for area committees to be given rights to make decisions that were by now a matter for the Cabinet.

The Cabinet Member – Customer Care noted that he had no objection to the omission of these words in light of the Monitoring Officer’s explanation.

The amendment was carried.

- v) A member enquired whether or not the area committees were to continue to elect members on external bodies.

In response, the Monitoring Officer notified members that the area committees used to elect members on external bodies, this was now a matter for the Cabinet.

**RESOLVED**

**a) To establish a cross-party working group with representation from each area to bring firm proposals to the table for a procedure that will meet members’ requirements, and to also consider how to give more power to the area committees.**

**b) To establish area committees for each of the areas of Arfon, Dwyfor and Meirionnydd for a specific period of six months.**

**c) To discuss the matter further at the Council meeting in February 2013.**

**12. PAY ACCOUNTABILITY IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN WALES**

- a) The Council Leader set out the background and context of the report.

He explained that there were new statutory requirements on every Council to approve pay policy statements every year. Prior to 2009, this Council did not have a pay policy for senior officers. In 2009, the Council had taken advantage of an opportunity to restructure the senior officers, which saved £1m a year, in order to take the first steps towards establishing a pay policy for senior officers. He gave details of the pay policy statement which reflected the decision made in 2009. The Council had also decided in 2009 that periodic pay reviews should be undertaken in order to ensure that its pay policy for senior managers remained current.

He noted that the Council had a statutory duty to adopt a specific pay policy for this year, and he gave details of the two options available to the Council –

a) It could adopt the existing pay policy. In doing so, it should be aware that this did not mean that senior officer salaries would not change.

b) It could review the sustainability of the existing pay policy in light of the current employment market and state of the economy and tidy up any loose ends in the existing policy.

Should the Council opt for option (b) above, he suggested that the task could be delegated to a smaller group of members to carry out the detailed research work and report back to the full Council with any recommendations for change.

b) Members were invited to submit observations.

i) A member proposed an amendment that option (b) above should be adopted only.

In response, the Leader notified members that the Council had already adopted the pay policy in 2009, and if it was decided not to adopt it today, there would be a need to consider a new pay policy.

The Chief Executive noted that if members decided not to adopt the present pay policy, then the Chief Officers Appointment Committee would be required to consider it for this year as it was a necessity to have such a policy in operation during the year.

The amendment fell.

#### **RESOLVED**

**a) To approve the current pay policy statement for this year.**

**b) That the Chief Officers Appointment Committee reviews the sustainability of the pay policy for the future in its entirety, and submits a report to the Council on any recommendations or findings.**

### **13. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE STATUTORY DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

(a) Submitted – the Annual Report of the Statutory Director of Social Services on the performance and effectiveness of Gwynedd Social Services in

2011/12 and outlining the matters agreed upon as being the most important ones to address during the coming year.

- (b) She recognised that the year had been successful but challenging at times. She referred to the death of the late Councillor Dai Rees Jones last year and to his leadership and tireless support to the service during his time as Portfolio Leader. She noted that information had been received from the auditors that they had confidence in the department's work programme and that the procedures were secure.
- (c) In terms of improving performance, there had been a significant improvement in achievement relating to performance indicators in the children and adults field. Services had been provided within the Council's financial allocation and the department had succeeded in implementing the savings programmes within the Council's plans. She noted that 75% of national indicators in the child care field had improved or remained stable, and of the 25% that had slipped, six indicators continued to perform relative to, or better than the Wales average. The performance in the adults' field was to be welcomed also.
- (ch) She provided details of –
- The budgets of housing and social services
  - Relative Expenditure per Head in Gwynedd and Wales
  - Savings until 2016
- (d) The Head of Department referred to the fact that the case load per Social Worker in the children's field had increased and that the number of children and young people referred to the Children and Families Services in 2011/12 was 2,064. During 2011/12 the Adults Services had dealt with over 9,000 enquiries which had led to over 4,500 referrals.

In relation to the age profile of Gwynedd in respect of older people and children, she provided the following details –

- An increase of 41% in the 65+ population was projected by 2033.
  - An increase of 87% in the 85+ population was projected by 2030.
  - An increase of 35% was projected in the number of people suffering from dementia in Gwynedd between now and 2021.
  - A decrease of 4.2% was projected in the number of children and young people aged 0-25 by 2033, but an increase in the number of children in care – there had been 176 at the end of 2010 but the number was now over 200.
- (dd) The Cabinet Member – Care thanked the Head of Department for the report and thanked all the officers within the services who were involved with the report.

Reference was made to the fact that this was the last meeting of the Council for the Head of Housing and Social Services Department as she had accepted a post with the Isle of Anglesey County Council. She was thanked for her service to the Council over the years and was wished well in her new job.

- (e) Some questions were raised regarding the report and the officers responded appropriately to them.

**RESOLVED to accept the report.**

#### **14. ASSESSMENT OF ACCOMMODATION NEEDS AND OLDER PEOPLE'S CARE IN THE PORTHMADOG CATCHMENT AREA**

- (a) The Cabinet Member – Care set out the background and context of the report.

He drew attention to the Council's decision on 15 December 2011 regarding the future of Hafod y Gest residential home, Porthmadog, to *"refuse the current recommendations and return to hold transparent and thorough discussions to secure a suitable provision for the needs and aspirations of the community, and to return a full report to the Council in six months' time."*

In relation to the previous consultation that had taken place between March and July 2011, it was evident that there were lessons to be learnt with regard to the arrangements of the consultation itself, and that there were differing opinions regarding the accommodation and care needs of older people in the Porthmadog catchment area. Specific work had been undertaken to gather the opinions of residents and friends of Hafod y Gest, councillors, staff and officers of the Provider and Leisure and Social Service Departments on the consultation arrangements. An independent facilitator had been appointed to hold the sessions with the stakeholders of Hafod y Gest and councillors. The report raised a number of matters including weaknesses in the arrangements for engagement, communication and effective listening as well as a lack of identified alternative options. The following were offered as lessons to be learnt –

- a) Planning the process in full from the beginning, and inclusively, ensuring everyone has the opportunity to take part.
- b) Sufficient research to the needs and aspirations of the area's residents.
- c) Identifying clear options.
- ch) Ensuring specific project arrangements.

With regard to the area's needs, the proposal that was made as part of the consultation had been to build a new development of around 40 extra care houses. This was consistent with the Council's strategic vision and the decisions made as a result of the Residential and Nursing Strategic Review that the number of traditional residential beds should be reduced, the number of dementia beds increased and the number of extra care houses increased.

The response to the consultation on the future of Hafod y Gest had disagreed with the proposal to reduce the number of residential beds, and expressed that a small residential unit should be provided as part of the extra care housing development. In considering how to move this forward, particular attention had been given to these two aspects, by

endeavouring to learn from the lessons identified and to plan the action in accordance with the observations made. A much more complete picture was needed of the area's needs and aspirations in respect of accommodation and care support, and he suggested holding those discussions in the area in order to establish the needs and aspirations of the older residents to the future. To this end, the catchment area of Porthmadog was considered to extend from Llanystumdwy, Garndolbenmaen, Beddgelert and Llanfrothen to Penrhyndeudraeth.

Following holding local discussions with regard to assessing the accommodation (housing) and care needs, the results of the initial assessment would feed in to the options to be considered when discussing formally the future of Hafod y Gest. This would be much more specific to the stakeholders of the home and would be completed in a much shorter period than previously. The first step in the work programme would be to hold meetings with the local members of the catchment area in order to obtain their input to the discussion document and also plan the rest of the work programme in more detail.

- (b) Members were invited to submit observations.
- (i) A member welcomed the report but expressed dissatisfaction that once again the residents of Hafod y Gest had been consulted without their families having been contacted. Regarding the meeting with local members on 25 June 2012, he noted that it would not be possible for him to be present because of another important commitment.

In response, Dafydd Lewis, Corporate Director acknowledged the oversight that had happened with regard to contacting families. He noted that a copy of the report submitted to the Council today had been sent to the families and he was not aware of any complaint amongst the families. He referred to the meeting that would be held with local members on 25 June 2012 where it had been confirmed that the majority of the members could be present.

- (ii) A member referred to the need to re-establish respite care in the Hafod y Gest Home over the consultation period.

In response, the Corporate Director notified members that this provision had now been available in the home since January 2012.

**RESOLVED to accept the report.**

## **15. NOTICE OF MOTION**

In accordance with Procedural Rule 13, the following notice of motion was received from Councillor Stephen Churchman –

*"In recognition of the fact that Nuclear Power has a direct impact upon Gwynedd, Cyngor Gwynedd commits to renew membership of the Nuclear Free Local Authorities which seek to promote alternatives to*

*nuclear proliferation including alternative means of investing to create realistic employment opportunities throughout this part of Wales that will actually be available for local people.*

*Membership of the Nuclear Free Local Authorities offers a real value for money investment in the future of Gwynedd, Wales and Britain and the interests of all. Membership over many years has granted Gwynedd access to Ministers and Committees in all tiers of Government in the UK that otherwise would not have been available. Membership has also provided an immense wealth of experience and level of expertise that has not been available to non-member local authorities.*

*With the nuclear question being so prominent in this part of Wales, membership is essential for Gwynedd members to make informed decisions that directly affect our communities."*

**THE MOTION was deemed to have been referred to the next meeting of the Cabinet.**

The meeting commenced at 1.00pm and concluded at 3.45p.m.

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**CHAIRMAN**