

Meeting	THE COUNCIL
Date	19 September 2013
Subject	Response to the Consultation of the Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery.
Purpose of the Report	To submit the matter to the Council for discussion
Author	Dyfed Edwards, Council Leader

1. Earlier on this year, the First Minister of Wales announced that he was establishing a Commission on Public Service Governance and Delivery. The Commission was given a brief to consider carefully, honestly and objectively how services are provided in Wales and how this can be improved. They are looking in particular at the governance arrangements of public services, i.e. how they are brought to account for their performance and how they can be provided in the most effective way for the public.
2. The Commission was set a restricted timetable and was asked to report back by the end of December this year.
3. As part of its work, the Commission has called for evidence from those who provide public services. It called for establishments to respond to the request for evidence by 31 August so that the Commission had an opportunity to examine the evidence and focus on the main themes. However, it also said that if it would not be possible to respond by 31 August, it would be willing to accept evidence until the end of September, but noted that any response that would arrive after the end of August would possibly have less influence on the Commission's work.
4. Because of this restricted timetable and in order to ensure that the Council had the greatest impact on the Commission's work, we concluded that the best thing to do was draw up a concise response based on the principles that the Commission should consider when reaching a decision and publish this response in the form of a Decision Notice and circulate it to all Council members.

5. Nevertheless, the future of public services in Wales, and in Gwynedd in particular, is a matter of great importance to the people of Gwynedd and I believe that it is a matter that deserves attention from all members at a meeting of the full Council. Therefore, I submit the response I sent to the Commission to the attention of the Council for discussion (Appendix 1). As the Commission has noted that they would be prepared to accept evidence until the end of September, I will be in a position to forward any additional observations to them following the discussion in the Council.
6. The Commission has published a questionnaire that could be used when responding to the call for evidence. This is a very detailed questionnaire including a number of various themes. To avoid obscuring the messages and having discussed with other Cabinet members, I concluded that it would be better to submit evidence based on the principles I believe should drive the Commission's work, rather than on the details of the provision at this point in time. This is why the appended response considers the evidential base of what has changed since establishing the current governance arrangements, what is likely to change in the future, and as a result, what are the current key features that would allow for sustainable governance arrangements for public services that would lead to the best outcomes for local people. To close, observations are made on a governance model that would be suitable for future public services.
7. At the end of August the Commission released a report detailing the main points presented to it as evidence up to now. I attach the progress report as context for the discussion in the Council (Appendix 2).
8. I submit the response for the attention of the full Council in order to have a broader discussion on its contents and to allow me to conclude whether or not any additional evidence needs to be sent to the Commission on behalf of the Council.