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Gwasanaeth Democraidd
Democratic Service
Swyddfa'r Cyngor
CAERNARFON
Gwynedd
LL55 1SH

Cyfarfod / Meeting

PWYLLGOR CRAFFU GWASANAETHAU
SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Dyddiad ac Amser / Date and Time

10.30 a.m. DYDD IAU, 12 CHWEFROR 2015
10.30 a.m. THURSDAY, 12 FEBRUARY 2015

Lleoliad / Location

SIAMBR HYWEL DDA
SWYDDFEYDD Y CYNGOR
CAERNARFON

Pwynt Cyswllt / Contact Point

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Dosbarthwyd: 05.02.15

**PWYLLGOR CRAFFU GWASANAETHAU
SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

AELODAETH / MEMBERSHIP (18)

Plaid Cymru (9)

Y Cynghorwyr / Councillors

Sedd Wag
Chris Hughes
Elin Walker Jones
Liz Saville Roberts

Alan Jones Evans
Selwyn Griffiths
W. Tudor Owen
Ann Williams

Hefin Williams

Annibynnol / Independent (4)

Y Cynghorwyr / Councillors

Eryl Jones-Williams
Dewi Owen

Beth Lawton
Eirwyn Williams

Llais Gwynedd (3)

Alwyn Gruffydd

Gweno Glyn

Peter Read

Llafur / Labour (1)

Y Cynghorydd / Councillor Sion Wyn Jones

Aelod Unigol / Individual Member (1)

Y Cynghorydd / Councillor Linda Ann Wyn Jones

Aelodau Ex-officio / Ex-officio Members

Cadeirydd ac Is-Gadeirydd y Cyngor / Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council – Y Cynghorwyr / Councillors Dewi Owen a / and Dilwyn Morgan

AELODAU CYFETHOLEDIG / CO-OPTED MEMBERS:

Hefo pleidlais ar faterion addysg yn unig /

With a vote on education matters only

Y Parchedig / Reverend Robert Townsend
Yr Eglwys yng Nghymru / The Church in Wales

Mrs Rita Price
Yr Eglwys Gatholig / The Catholic Church

Mr Dylan Davies
Cynrychiolydd Rhieni Llywodraethwyr Meirionnydd /
Representative for Meirionnydd Parent Governors

(Disgwyl am enwebiad / Awaiting Nomination)
Cynrychiolydd Rhieni Llywodraethwyr Arfon /
Representative for Arfon Parent Governors

Ms Rhian Roberts
Cynrychiolydd Rhieni Llywodraethwyr Dwyfor /
Representative for Dwyfor Parent Governors

Please note that the times noted below are estimates only

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES

To receive apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

To receive any declaration of personal interest.

3. URGENT BUSINESS

To note any items that is a matter of urgency in the view of the Chairman for consideration.

4. MINUTES

The Chairman shall propose that the minutes of the meeting of this Committee held on the 11 December 2014, be signed as a true copy.

(Copy enclosed – white paper)

**5. REVIEW OF THE ENABLEMENT SERVICE'S ARRANGEMENTS
*Cabinet Member: Cllr. Gareth Roberts***

10.30 am –
11.00 am

To consider the Cabinet Member's report on the above.

(Copy enclosed – green paper)

**6. EFFICIENCY SAVINGS 2015/16 – 2016/17 (SOUTH GWYNEDD DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICE AND BANGOR WOMEN'S AID SERVICE)
*Cabinet Member : Cllr. Mair Rowlands***

11.00 a.m –
11.30 a.m.

To consider a report by the Cabinet Member on the above.

(Copy enclosed – pink paper)

**7. PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (SCC/025)– STATUTORY VISITS LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN
*Cabinet Member: Cllr. Mair Rowlands***

11.30 a.m. –
11.45 a.m.

To consider a report by the Cabinet Member on the above.

(Copy enclosed – salmon paper)

11.45 a.m. –
12.30 p.m.

8. **PRESENTATIONS**

Cabinet Member: Cllr. Gareth Thomas

(a) To receive a presentation by ESTYN following the post inspection of the Education Service.

(Copy to follow)

(b) To receive a short presentation by the Head of Education on his vision for the Education Service for the future following his recent appointment to the post.

9. **SCHOOL ORGANISATION PROGRAMME UPDATE**

Cabinet Member: Cllr. Gareth Thomas

12.30 p.m. –

1.00 p.m.

To consider a report by the Cabinet Member on the above.

(Copy enclosed – cream paper)

SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

11.12.14

Present: **Councillor Peter Read (Chair)**
 Councillor Beth Lawton (Vice-chair)

Councillors: Selwyn Griffiths, Alwyn Gruffydd, Elin Walker Jones, Sion Wyn Jones, Eryl Jones-Williams, Ann Williams, Eirwyn Williams and Hefin Williams.

Co-opted Members with a vote on education issues only: The Reverend Robert Townsend (Church in Wales)

Others invited: Councillor Gareth Thomas (Cabinet Member for Education)
 Councillor R H Wyn Williams (Cabinet Member for Care)
 Councillor Mair Rowlands (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Leisure)

Also in attendance: Morwenna Edwards (Corporate Director), Marian Parry Hughes (Head of Children and Supporting Families Department), Glenda Lloyd Evans (Older People Service Manager), Nicola Hughes (Project Officer – Promoting Quality in Secondary Schools), Elfyn Vaughan Jones (Senior Advisor, GwE Challenge), Alwyn Jones (Senior Advisor, GwE Challenge), Arwel Ellis Jones (Senior Manager, Corporate Commissioning Service), Gareth James (Member Support and Scrutiny Manager) and Glynda O'Brien (Member Support and Scrutiny Officer).

Apologies: Councillors Huw Edwards, Dewi Owen, Liz Saville Roberts, Mrs Rita Price (The Catholic Church), Mr Neil Foden (Teachers' Union).

2. << CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (a) Best wishes were sent from the Committee to Councillor Huw Edwards who was absent because of ill-health.
- (b) The staff and pupils of Ysgol Hafod Lon were congratulated on an excellent Christmas Concert which had been held recently.
- (c) The following were welcomed to the meeting:-
 - Councillor Mair Rowlands in her new role as Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Leisure
 - Councillor Gweno Glyn as a new member of the Committee
 - Mr Marc Roberts and Ms Vicky Poole, Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (for Item 5 – CSSIW Annual Report)

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor Linda Ann Wyn Jones declared an interest in Item 6 (a) Savings – Adapting Providers’ Agreements as she was the Chief Executive of Cwmni Seren. The member was of the opinion that it was a prejudicial interest, and she withdrew from the Chamber during the discussion on the item.

3. MINUTES

The Chairman signed the minutes of a meeting of this Committee held on 2 October 2014.

4. ANNUAL REPORT (CSSIW)

A review and evaluation of Gwynedd Council’s annual performance was submitted by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW).

(a) The report identified where there had been progress and the fields that needed improvement in the field of Social Services. Mr Marc Roberts (CSSIW) reported that there was evidence that the Social Services’ managers and staff had worked hard and some aspects of the plans were very challenging with an enormous work programme to be realised in accordance with the budget. An improvement had been seen in the arrangements of Social Services along with the Council’s vision.

(b) During the ensuing discussion the following points were highlighted:

- (i) As a consequence of all the amendments in legislation and their requirements, it was questioned how it could be ensured that improvements were implemented in accordance with the needs and requirements of users. In response, the Corporate Director noted that the residents of Gwynedd would be placed at the forefront of what was being implemented, although it meant a change for users but by collaboration the best service would be ensured for individuals.
- (ii) Concern was expressed that savings would not be realised without affecting services to individuals and it was difficult to make cuts.
- (iii) In response to an enquiry regarding guidance and responsibility for achieving the aspirations of the CSSIW, it was noted that it was crucial for Members to support the modernisation of the Service, to influence the Health Board and to monitor how the Service dealt with users.
- (iv) In terms of influencing the Health Board, it was noted that this had been difficult for the Council in the past and it was trusted that there would be robust collaboration in future in fairness to the users.
- (v) In response to an enquiry regarding the effect of the changes on the community domiciliary care framework, the Corporate Director explained that there would be a change in the pattern of users’ needs since the cost per capita for individuals with profound needs to remain at home were high. It had to be ensured that the Health Board contributed to complex packages that existed now. More consideration had to be given to future projections and targeting for the future to ensure the best benefits for users from the money.
- (vi) In response to an enquiry regarding the role of the Corporate Director, the CSSIW representative noted that he was aware that progress had been made and a further discussion would be held during the year with the Corporate Director and the Chief Executive in accordance with guidelines regarding responsibilities and to agree on processes and protocol, bearing in mind also that there would be implications resulting from changes following the publication of the Social Services Bill.

- (vii) It was explained in the context of a Strategic Plan with the Health Board regarding children's mental health, that regular meetings were held on a managerial level, examining the issues of access to services for children and young people and the availability of the services for them locally and outside the county.
- (viii) There were concerns regarding additional work pressure resulting from staff absenteeism. In response, it was noted that arrangements were in place for the Corporate Director and the Adult Services Managers to bridge the gap with an external expert leading on specific projects.
- (ix) Assurance was requested that the elected Members received information regarding complaints and it was suggested that it would be worthwhile submitting an initial paper at the preparatory meeting of this Scrutiny Committee on the complaints procedure processes and to include the categories of complaints, the timetable and how the information was disseminated to Members.

Resolved: (a) to accept and note the content of the report and to request the Corporate Director:

- (i) To submit a brief initial paper at the preparatory meeting of this Scrutiny Committee on 13 January 2015 regarding the complaints procedure processes and to include categories and a timetable for complaints. (ii) To submit an update on the work programme for the improvement fields that had been identified by the CSSIW by March 2015.**

5. SAVINGS

- (a) A report was submitted by Councillor Peter Read, Chair of the Savings Scrutiny Working Group, which had been considering efficiency proposals from all the departments to try to contribute to the financial deficit of £50m in the Council's permanent revenue budget up until 2017/18. It was noted that some efficiency savings proposals that were intended to be implemented from 1 April 2015 could have a direct effect on vulnerable people.
- (b) The Cabinet Member for Care reminded the committee of the current financial climate and it had to be realised that there was a need to consider making substantial savings across Council services and the Service had no choice but to propose savings to the provisions below.

(i) Savings – Adapting Providers' Agreements

The Senior Business Manager explained that a proposal had been submitted not to increase fees in the field of domiciliary care and supported accommodation for the next three years which would mean an efficiency saving of £942k.

Following further work on the figures, the relevant legislation and consideration of the categories of care services purchased from external providers and comparing the fees with neighbouring authorities, savings of £308k were proposed for 2015/16. This meant fees would not be increased in the next financial year and external providers were expected to make their own efficiency savings arrangements. In reaching the above figure, it was noted that evidence was available for each category that the fees were generous and it was felt that the service could be maintained sustainably without increasing fees. However, the matter would have to be examined further beyond 2015/16 and more extensive collaboration would be required with the external market prior to offering recommendations, with the exception of two fields, namely, Direct

Payments (where the payments per hour were substantially higher than other authorities) and Respite Care.

During the discussion, the following observations were made:-

- (a) Assurance was given that there had been discussions with the third sector via the Provider Forum and the Learning Disabilities Consortium.
- (b) Concern was expressed that there would be too much pressure on the external market and that they would go out of business which would then mean that there would be nobody to provide the service
- (c) In response to a concern regarding the providers' commitment to ensuring that the service remained consistent for the client since there would be no increase in the fees, the Senior Business Manager noted that it was expected that the service would be of the same standard but providers had noted that there was a general feeling that more work and discussions had to be undertaken on any savings beyond 2015/16.
- (d) Concern was expressed that private companies could refuse to provide packages for individuals that would be too expensive for them to provide and as a consequence, the Council would have to provide them.
- (e) In response to an enquiry regarding the monitoring measures, assurance was given that this would be achieved through monitoring contracts, the complaints procedure, interviews with providers and forums and the CSSIW to ensure the safety of users.
- (f) There were difficulties in service provision in the most rural areas of the County and should consideration be given to keeping the service within the Council so that it was possible to monitor internally rather than externalising the service with the danger of companies folding should fees be frozen.

Resolved: to Approve:

- (i) **To review the original figure of £942k as an efficiency saving and to restate the figure at £373k to be implemented over the next three years as follows:**

| | | |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| £308k | £37k | £28k |

- (ii) **To reconsider all the fees annually and to consider the relevant context and the status of the market at the time.**
- (iii) **That the efficiency savings are fully compliant with the necessary legal requirements.**

(ii) Savings – South Gwynedd Domestic Abuse Service and Women’s Aid Bangor Service

It was corrected that the South Gwynedd Domestic Abuse Service also included a service for men and that it was not only South Gwynedd Women’s Aid being considered as noted in the report.

- (a) The Head of Children and Supporting Families Department reported that the service had been providing a contribution by agreement to the South Gwynedd Domestic Abuse Services and Bangor Women’s Aid Service to fund part-time children’s workers’ posts. It was explained that the Service was required to realise an efficiency savings target of £2.4m by 2017 out of a budget of £14m before reaching the discussion on cuts. Of the number of agreements that the Service had, this provision was the only agreement that was not a statutory requirement. The effect that cutting the service would

have on children and young people had been considered and a decision had been reached that the risk was lower than having to delete 1½ social workers' posts within the Department.

- (b) The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Leisure endorsed the above and emphasised that Gwynedd was one of only a few local authorities that provided core funding for organisations.
- (c) An opportunity was given to the Gorwel Manager, South Gwynedd Domestic Abuse Services to respond and she expressed concern that the service was receiving cuts from other sources that equated to £82k, which was nearly a quarter of the budget. Consideration also had to be given to the fact that the service dealt with the most vulnerable people in communities and many people reported that cases of abuse were increasing. Further concern was expressed regarding who would be dealing with the number of children on the register who received a one-to-one service.
- (d) During the ensuing discussion, individual members made enquiries and the responses were as follows:
- Should a case of domestic abuse happen outside office hours/at weekends, the Police would contact the Social Services Night Team in accordance with the statutory requirements as would be done during normal working hours. It would be the Council's responsibility as the lead authority, jointly with the Police, to investigate child protection cases.
 - Should a family need a refuge the Domestic Abuse Service would be available twenty four hours a day with direct access for families.
 - If the cut was agreed the additional post of a Children's Officer would not continue in Dolgellau.
 - Although the work of the Domestic Abuse Service was not statutory, it was explained further that the service provided support for children and families before they were referred as statutory cases. Work was undertaken to save bringing Social Services in and to save bringing children into care.
 - If it was safe for a family to remain in their locality, this was done but some families were also placed outside Gwynedd. The majority of those homed were local.
 - The impact of the cut to the Domestic Abuse Service would mean that more than one post involving working with children and young people in the community across Gwynedd would have to be abolished.
- (dd) Concerns were expressed by members of the committee regarding the number of assaults and cases that the service dealt with and the danger of the loss of investment in the health and future of children and young people.
- There were an enormous number of assaults in the home and the care received from the Domestic Abuse Service was invaluable and considering the removal of their funding was unsatisfactory, considering the effect this Service had on the lives of children and young people.
 - The investment was for the health and future of children and young people.
 - There was a need for more information regarding the funding details of the Domestic Abuse Service, including how many people had received their service along with the placements.

Resolved: To ask the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Leisure to submit the following observations of the committee to the Cabinet to ensure

that the Cabinet is completely clear about the effect of any decision that it makes:

- i) The Service is an important part of the fabric of services for a substantial number of vulnerable children in the county and those numbers should be known before the Cabinet makes its decision.**
- ii) There is a strong preventive element to the work that saves work and higher costs for the statutory services which the Council is obligated to provide.**
- (iii) Financial information must be received regarding the wider impact of this saving on the budgets of the bodies in question, including their ability to attract further grants, before making any decisions.**

6. REPORT ON THE PROGRESS OF THE EDUCATION QUALITY PROMOTION PROJECT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS SINCE JUNE 2014

The report of the Cabinet Member for Education was submitted on the progress of the education quality promotion project in secondary schools since June 2014 that stemmed from the recommendations of the Education Quality Scrutiny Investigation following a process of consultation with relevant stakeholders.

During the discussion the following issues were considered:-

- (i) There was a suggestion that there was a shortage of Mathematics teachers as well as supply teachers and some experts in the field were offering private tuition rather than teaching. It was confirmed that there was a problem in attracting Mathematics specialists to teaching posts and this was true throughout Wales and it would be a matter that would be raised with the Welsh Government. Assurance was given that the Education Service was trying to address the problem by collaborating with Bangor University to find whether it would be possible to re-train teachers of other subjects to teach Mathematics. There was a need to convince Mathematics students who were not confident in Welsh, that there was support for them to develop their language skills.
- (ii) It had to be realised that there was a general shortage of teachers in other subjects also, e.g. music. In response, the Cabinet Member for Education noted that there were good practices in Gwynedd schools and subject specialists were to be persuaded to share their expertise amongst each other.
- (iii) It was noted that more attention should be given to bridging between the primary and secondary sectors in order to raise educational standards but assurance was given that several successful bridging projects were ongoing. Reference was made to a practice in one catchment area where a weak performance in the field of numeracy in the primary sector had been identified and there had been collaboration with the primary sector in specific fields as a result.
- (iv) In response to a concern regarding the perceived decline in GCSE results, the Senior Advisor, GwE Challenge noted that the historical performance of Gwynedd as a county had been strong but there was polarisation in the performance of individual schools. Reference was made also to the pendulum effect in schools where the group was small. The field has been addressed this year and there were marked improvements in several schools that had been targeted for support. It was also noted that performance indicators and amended benchmarking had been introduced over the last couple of years with specific focus on the principal indicator (TL2+), along with higher expectations by the regulatory body, Estyn.
- (v) In terms of leadership, it was noted that attention had to be given to the number of vacant Head Teachers' posts and to develop different models in circumstances

when Heads failed to be appointed, such as appointing a Catchment Area Strategic Leader to support the primary sector also.

- (vi) In terms of the elements that contributed to good leadership, the Project Manager explained that she had submitted a report to Head Teachers, which was a comprehensive document detailing aspects of good practice that would be possible to put into action in schools. There was a similar list for governors who could be valuable in providing a 'critical friend' for schools.
- (vii) NPQH Qualification – it was noted that two senior managers from the secondary sector and seven/eight from the primary sector had been chosen to follow the NPQH qualification this year. It was noted that the Council had a scheme to develop leadership at every level and the potential of individuals had to be identified early.
- (viii) Some concern was expressed regarding all the requirements placed on heads which meant that they worked substantial hours beyond the teaching hours. It was felt that there was no incentive for teachers to apply for posts of Heads/Deputies because of the enormous work pressure on Head Teachers.
- (ix) In terms of TL2+ performance, the position of Gwynedd was the fifth highest nationally and the Capped Score points was the highest.
- (x) In the context of elements of the project that were coloured yellow and red, it was trusted that several of them would develop to be coloured green but it had to be borne in mind that the original scheme had been amended and some elements would not be implemented in the same way.
- (xi) It was noted that Estyn, as part of the Authority's inspection, had requested to submit a report after their recent post-inspection visit.

Resolved: (a) To approve the progress made thus far but there is a need to continue monitoring in the future.

(b) To accept and to welcome Estyn's specific request to submit a report at the next meeting of the Committee.

7. REPORT ON IMPLEMENTING THE EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPROVEMENT SERVICE (GwE) WITH GWYNEDD SCHOOLS

A report was submitted by the Senior Advisor, Gwynedd/Anglesey Challenge Hub of the Schools Effectiveness and Improvement Service (GwE) on the work of GwE with Gwynedd schools.

- (a) Members were guided through the content of the report, providing the background information on the GwE organisation, Gwynedd's commitment to the service, the commissioning budget targeted for specific schools, the structure of the Team, performance data across the Key Stages, a summary of Estyn's findings from inspections during the period of GwE's operation, data in terms of categorisation of schools in the primary and secondary sectors, the response of stakeholders regarding the quality of GwE's work.
- (b) During the discussion, the following matters were considered:-
 - (i) In response to an enquiry, it was explained that the criteria for the green categorisation had been tightened which made it more difficult to place schools in this category and it specifically involved the performance of groups of learners such as, free school meals learners, the gap between boys and girls, children with additional learning needs. It was explained that there were three steps in the process of designating a category for a school, namely:

- The Welsh Government placing every school in a data Category (1-4)
- GwE findings locally by scrutinising and observing lessons, discussion with leaders resulting in a judgement on the quality of leadership (A-D)
- Designating a colour category for schools in terms of offering support.

The result of Stage 1 of the process had placed a larger number of Gwynedd schools in Quartile 4 but there were no balanced findings for the standards until all stages of the process had been completed.

- (ii) It was agreed that the free school meals indicator was a very raw indicator of school performance but it was one which was driving all discussions with a number of stakeholders.
- (ii) The Cabinet Member for Education added that a procedure had been established recently of holding discussions within the Quality Group where specific schools were targeted and any steps the Authority could take regarding support were discussed and the schools were challenged.
- (iv) Great pride was expressed in the fact that specialists had been appointed to work with a cluster of schools and this was to be congratulated and stakeholders had a much more positive attitude towards GwE's activities and saw it as a resource to assist schools.
- (v) It was appreciated that an example could be seen of the nature of the support and the impact of the support on red category schools and this would be useful to share with governors.
- (vi) It was acknowledged that transparency in the relationship between GwE, schools and governors was totally necessary and governors should have access to monitoring reports. It could be seen from the best practices that governors' representatives joined and were a core part of the monitoring process and through this they had a better understanding of the scrutiny process. It was also felt that elected Members had a core role to change the mindset within some governing bodies especially in some schools that were designated in the red category.
- (vii) In response to a concern that some mentoring links meant too much travelling, it was explained that collaboration was important and there was an expectation in the current system for every Head Teacher to take on a wider responsibility for children's education. The system was seen to be effective in several areas where schools helped each other.
- (viii) In response to an enquiry regarding the success/failure of schools in realising targets, it was explained that several schools with a small number of children established an aspirational target rather than realistic and achievable targets. It was noted further that it was intended to introduce a work programme to further address assessment, setting targets, tracking and intervention. It was acknowledged that some schools set targets that were too challenging and this did not facilitate the work of identifying and addressing underachievement effectively.

Resolved: to accept the report and to note the emphasis placed on strengthening the understanding of collaboration.

8. ADDITIONAL LEARNING NEEDS STRATEGIC REVIEW

The Cabinet Member for Education noted that it was intended to submit proposals from the review of the above field to the Cabinet in February/March 2015. The Committee was requested to establish a Task Group to scrutinise the Additional Learning Needs Strategy during the consultation period in January 2015.

Resolved: to elect the following members to serve on the Task Group:

Councillor Elin Walker Jones

Councillor Gweno Glyn

Councillor Selwyn Griffiths

The Reverend Robert Townsend

CHAIRMAN

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Meeting | Services Scrutiny Committee |
| Date | 12 February 2015 |
| Title | A review of the Enablement Service's arrangements |
| Cabinet Member | Councillor Gareth W Roberts |
| Author | Morwena Edwards, Corporate Director Glenda Lloyd Evans, Adults Service Manager |

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To respond to a request from the Scrutiny Committee to outline "*what is the vision in terms of enablement for the service now and over the coming months*".
- 1.2 As one aspect that required consideration in seeking to address the overspend, the service has been reviewing the arrangements that are in place with the enablement service.

Therefore, this is an opportunity to update the members on the main findings deriving from this work, along with national learning in this field.

2. A Review of the Enablement Service

- 2.1 To set a context for the service, the enablement service is simply a way of responding intensively for a short period of time. It is based on the principle of promoting independence and not creating dependence. It has been operational in Gwynedd from January 2010. The service is available for a specific period of time, which can vary from a few days to up to 12 weeks. Therefore there is no specified time when the service is available. It is a service provided by home care workers with specialist support from occupational therapists.
- 2.2 We have been running such enablement services for over four years now, and we have seen success against the criteria with around 58% of the individuals who receive enablement staying away from the service for at least a year.

Also, a figure close to £1 million has been calculated as a saving and has been transferred out of the budget following a savings scheme. This figure was based on the argument of what would have happened to the individual had the enablement intervention not taken place.

- 2.3 The argument is that this short-term support prevents them from remaining dependent on the service in the long term. Evidently, this cannot be scientifically proven; rather we work out what would have happened to those individuals had they not received an enablement service. This is of course a matter of opinion, and it is not possible to be definite with such a calculation.
- 2.4 It appears from the measures we are using that we are succeeding with our enablement plans. We have also managed to yield significant savings from the older people service due to this success.
- 2.5 The members will be aware that there has been a situation of overspend in the older people services recently, and perhaps there is a question to answer in light of taking out £1 million as a result of enablement and this overspend. We therefore needed to revisit the arrangements of this service in light of the financial situation.

Furthermore, there is now national evidence by John Bolton, an expert in the field of older people's care, which requests us as councils across the UK to look again at our arrangements for the enablement service and assure ourselves that we are using our resources correctly and effectively. From the research undertaken by John Bolton, it appears that a large number of councils in England have identified that there has been overuse of expensive enablement intervention with individuals who did not require it, and for longer periods of time than necessary.

John Bolton argues that authorities have used the intake model, and have provided a service to individuals who probably could have returned home without any type of support or intervention, and would have managed in the long term without any intervention.

John Bolton also argued that enablement services were provided for longer periods of time than necessary to individuals. This service is relatively expensive to provide due to the intensive professional support that is available. It is also a completely free service for individuals. It is therefore essential that the service is targeted at the right individuals, and that it is not provided for longer than necessary to those individuals.

- 2.6 A managerial review was undertaken by the Older People Service and it appears that some aspects work well, but that some aspects should be changed for the future.

These are the main aspects that need to be changed / lessons to be learned:-

- 2.6.1 It appears that there are examples of individuals receiving an enablement service who would not require this type of intensive intervention. It seems that there is not enough targeting of suitable individuals and that everyone who leaves the hospital or approaches us as a service is entered immediately to receive this service. There is therefore a need to **use the enablement**

resource in the most effective way possible – an example of an application for an enablement service was to provide respite to a carer – this is not a suitable use of enablement.

- 2.6.2 The enablement service is a relatively expensive service to provide and in order to ensure that we make the best use of resources, once again we need to ensure that there are robust monitoring arrangements to ensure efficiency. There is evidence that monitoring is inadequate in some parts of the county and it was seen that some individuals were receiving the service for longer than necessary.

Interestingly, an urban myth has existed from nearly the very beginning, that the enablement service was “free” for everyone for up to six weeks. This is not true, as is noted below, the service is available for an unspecified period of up to 12 weeks (though many would not need it for 12 weeks), and six weeks was the average period of time. It seems it was introduced too close to the time where the old system of six weeks free of charge came to an end, and staff and residents confused one with the other.

- 2.6.3 It does not appear that our performance measures have identified the right things to measure – we have measured success based on the % of users who return to us within a year – but this may not be the correct measure of success with the service for the future. The measure should look at achieving outcomes that we have agreed with the user at the beginning of the intervention rather than the requirement in the future. It seems the service placed all its focus only on achieving efficiency savings.

3. Steps that are underway

- 3.1 The above lessons have already been shared within the department and managers have already put steps in place to improve arrangements. These are the main matters that have already been implemented:-
- 3.1.1 Remind managers what the purpose of the enablement service is, ensuring that this is reiterated to frontline workers. This was done across the older people service and the provider services.
- 3.1.2 Individual managers have revisited their individual monitoring arrangements, seeking to ensure that packages do not over-run beyond the individual’s recovery time.

3.1.3 As members may be aware, one of the department's main projects at present is the Gwynedd Way project (Vanguard) and this is currently being implemented. This team looks specifically at how they use enablement services, and tries to identify further lessons. This team will look at the best performance measures for enablement.

3.1.4 The Adults Service Manager will receive quantitative information regularly to monitor the numbers in the service in order to seek high-level assurance that the lessons are being realised immediately.

4. Conclusion

4.1 The enablement service is important to us for delivering our promises and achieving our vision. However, it is not suitable for everyone, and it is a significant investment for us to make as a council as it is a free service for users, and it is also a service of intensive intervention by professional workers. Therefore we must weigh up the investment against the outcomes for the residents of Gwynedd. It appears, despite the good work by frontline staff, that we must learn some lessons for the future and ensure that the best use of resources occurs. A short intensive intervention has proved to be a positive thing for us to do, in the interests of the individuals and the Council. The above lessons build on the good work and ensure that we progress into the future with an effective and sustainable procedure.

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Committee | Services Scrutiny Committee |
| Date | 12 February 2015 |
| Item | EFFICIENCY SAVINGS 2015/16 – 2016/17 (DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE HOME SERVICES SOUTH GWYNEDD AND BANGOR WOMEN'S AID) |
| Cabinet Member | Cllr. Mair Rowlands |

1. Background

As part of the corporate savings programme the Children and Family Support Department have proposed to do-commission the service agreements currently in place with Women's Aid and Gwasanaethau Trais yn y Cartref De Gwynedd.

The service agreements with Women's Aid and Gwasanaethau Trais yn y Cartref De Gwynedd are worth £22,070 and £33,810 respectively.

The Children and Families Support Department's proposals were discussed by the Scrutiny Committee on the 13 November 2014 and subsequently at the Services Scrutiny Committee on the 11 December 2014 with an expectation that a decision be reached by the Cabinet at its meeting on the 16 December 2014.

The Cabinet made a recommendation at its meeting on the 16 December 2014 that further information was required to make totally clear the impact of any decision on the organisations and those in receipt of their services.

The purpose of this report is to address the Cabinet's recommendation and confirm the Children and Family Support Department's position.

2. Additional Information from both Organisations

Further to the Cabinet's recommendation a request was made to both organisations on the 22 December 2014 for a response to a set of questions asked to determine the impact of the proposed saving.

The same 9 questions were asked to both organisations with a request that they respond in the context of the contribution made by the Council under the service agreements.

Women's Aid's response was received on the 27th January 2015 and Gwasanaeth Trais yn y Cartref De Gwynedd's on the 31 January 2015. The organisations responses can be found in full Appendices 1 & 2.

Further enquiries had to be made to Gwasanaeth Trais yn y Cartref De Gwynedd's response to question 4 which asked for the number of children supported and were on the Child Protection Register. The Children's Services believed the response in the report to be considerably higher than expected. The organisation was asked to confirm the names of children on the Register supported by the Children's Support Worker. The organisation confirmed that the numbers quoted in the report were

incorrect in that they contained those children reaching the organisation's own risk thresholds as well as those on the Child Protection Register. The correct figure for 2014 is 20, and the figures for 2013 and 2012 remain incorrect. The 20 children in 2014 on the Child Protection Register have received support in the community from various officers from within the organisation, but could not specify whether the Children's Support Worker had worked with this group.

3. Impact of the saving on service users and Gwynedd residents

Based on both organisation's response to the questions referred to in section 2 of this report, the impact can be summarised as follows:

- The loss of a Children's Support Worker in south Gwynedd and a part time Children's Worker in the Arfon Area.
- The loss of service to children and young people referred to both organisations
- The loss of additional/wider preventative programmes (e.g. DEWIS)
- Taking into account that a number of children will not have access to the support, both organisations envisage an additional impact on a child or young person's:
 - Emotional welfare
 - Ability to develop healthy relationships
 - Ability to deal with additional life transitions
 - Behaviour and performance in school
 - Behaviour in general

(Please refer the organisation's full response to question 6 in Appendix 1 and 2)

4. Monitoring Service Provision

The Adult, Health and Wellbeing Department's Business Unit conducted contracts monitoring visits to Women's Aid and Gwasaneth Trais yn y Cartref De Gwynedd on the 5 November 2012 and 27 November 2012 respectively.

The Children and Family Support Department have acknowledged that there have been weaknesses in monitoring arrangements in that it hasn't been possible to determine the real impact and/or outcomes. Efforts to address this have been discussed during annual contract review meetings.

The Business Service's Contracts Officer met with Gwasanaeth Trais yn Cartref De Gwynedd on the 16 June 2013 and observed a STAR (Safety Trust and Respect) session on the 23 September 2014.

A meeting took place between the Contracts Officer and Women's Aid on the 24 November 2014. Women's Aid provided further information based on the year's provision further to that meeting.

Contracts Monitoring visits provide an opportunity to monitor provision against expectations as per Service Agreement (e.g. Objectives, Targets, Expectations). No concerns were raised during these monitoring exercises on the quality of the service provided.

'Desktop' monitoring exercises have also been conducted in that organisations are required to provide 6 monthly reports to summarise provision and developments against that noted in the agreements.

Annual contract reviewing meetings have also been held during the agreement period (both of which have been operational for 4 years). These meetings provide and opportunity to confirm that the agreement's contents are current and correct. The contract reviewing meetings for the the period 2014-15 were held with Women's Aid and Gwasanaethau Trais yn y Cartref De Gwynedd on the 26 March 2014 and 3 June 2015 respectively at which the Head of the Children and Family Support Department and Contracts Officer met with the organisation's representatives. The current financial climate and efficiency requirements were shared at both meetings along with the Department's intention that both agreements would be considered as part of efficiency savings.

5. Children and Family Support Department's assessment of provision during contract period

An Equality Impact Assessment was completed for the Services Scrutiny Committee (Appendix 3).

The Children and Family Support Department acknowledges that a number of children and young people have been in receipt of both organisation's services. The organisation's responses found in Appendix 1 and 2 reflects the range of services provided and the effect on those services.

Whilst acknowledging the range and scope of services provided, the evidence provided as not been sufficient to persuade the Children and Family Support Department that the saving would have a real and significant impact on those receiving the support.

6. Wider impact of the saving on organisation's financial situation

Based on the organisation's responses (appendix 1 and 2) it is estimated that the saving would represent:

15% of Women's Aid annual turnover

6% of Gwasanaeth Trais yn y Cartref De Gwynedd's annual turnover

7. Conclusions

It is likely that the proposed saving will be seen as a cut in service. However, it should be emphasised that the Children's Services responsibilities and statutory duties towards children and young people living with domestic abuse remains unchanged. The statutory duty to assess needs, investigate safeguarding matters and provide services to families remains with the Children and Family Support Department. The proposed saving will not have any impact on partner's responsibility to identify and refer child protection matters.

Women's Aid Bangor

Additional information required to ascertain the effect of the proposed cut in funding.

1. What does the funding provided by the Council contribute to?

Gwynedd County Council contributes £20,400.00 per annum to the Children's Support Service operated by Bangor & District Women's Aid. This funding is used entirely for the employment of a specialist children's support worker, and the funding is used for: direct salary of the support worker (18.5hrs per week); employee NIC costs for the support worker; the support worker's share of the on-costs of the organisation in terms of office rental, utilities, insurances, administration costs etc; the support worker's mobile phone and mileage costs in relation to the role; the support worker's employer pension contributions; the cost of advertising for replacement support worker where necessary; training costs commensurate with the requirements of the role. The funding from Gwynedd County Council does not allow for peripheral costs within the role, such as therapeutic worksheets; therapeutic reading resources; materials for support sessions, such as craft items; stationery for recording purposes etc.

2. What is the organisation's turnover? (so as to identify the proportion of funding under consideration)

In 2014/2015, the organisation received a total of £144,483.00 from the Supporting People grant through the Welsh Government - £81,659.00 to the refuge service and £62,824.00 to the community support service. Within this, there is an agreed 3.5hrs per week 'child work allowance' for the support of children within the refuge setting. Therefore, the funding from the SLA is 12% of our total funding in the current year. Heading into 2015/2016, we are now confirmed as receiving a 6% cut, or a total of £8,668.98 across our main SP grant, which will drop to £135,814 for the year, which would bring the current SLA to 15% of our total income – a not inconsiderable amount. We have also received a small grant of £5,000 from Children in Need for the current financial year, giving our total turnover for 2014/15 of £169,883.00.

3. What has the organisation done to attract additional funding?

In the past 12 months, applications for further funding for the organisation have been submitted to: Henry Smith Charity; The Tudor Trust; Lloyds Foundation; and to Children in Need. The Children in Need application was specifically submitted with the aim of funding 2 x part-time children's support worker posts within the Children's Service, with a request of a total of £90k for 3 years of funding. This was because of the recognition that one part-time support worker was not sufficient to deal with the level of referrals being received by the organisation. With just one worker, working on a part-time basis, we have been forced to operate a waiting list for support, which is far from ideal when we are considering children and young people who have already experienced trauma and significant harm in their short lives, and now have to wait to be able to speak to someone regarding their experiences and to access support. Children who

Appendix 1

have experienced significant harm and trauma through domestic violence and abuse deserve to be offered support services, and to be offered those services in a timely manner, in order to be protected as best possible from future harm. Unfortunately, given the current economic climate, none of these funding applications was successful. The next planned application will be to Comic Relief for the support of children and families who are, or have been, subject to domestic violence and abuse.

4. Where to the referrals come from? i.e

- **How many cases are received via the Children and Family Support Department?**
- **How many cases does the organisation refer to the Children and Family Support**
- **Other sources?**

In the period between April 2013 and December 2014, we received a total of 43 referrals to the outreach children's support service. Of these, 5 were referred from the local authority's Social Services department, 8 were referred via police incidents, 8 were referred via the local education authority system, through Headteachers, school nurses or EWOs, with the remained being referred via other third sector family support agencies such as Gyda'n Gilydd and Teulu Ni and via parents themselves. We did not refer any cases into the children's services via the Child Protection procedures from the community service as there was no requirement for such in the time period specified.

5. What specialist work do the workers funded by the Council carry out?

The designated children and young people's support worker works primarily on a one-to-one basis with individual children according to their needs as identified within their initial assessment. The primary function of the work is to provide therapeutic support to children and young people displaying detrimental effects of having lived with domestic violence and abuse, enabling them to make sense of their feelings and their environments, to develop appropriate safety plans, and to develop appropriate relationships with others, allowing them to achieve their full potential. I have attached the job description here so as you can see the breadth and depth of work undertaken.

6. What is the effect and/or value and result of the service on those receiving the support?

In all cases where a support service has been offered, accepted and completed, it is clear from the file audits conducted that the children and young people have experienced very positive outcomes from the service. In many of the cases, the children and young people are able to better verbalise their own feelings and emotions, and are less likely to simply display adverse behaviours in the home or at school. This means that their potential within the school environment is increased greatly, attendance at school increases, participation in lessons increases and improves, and attitudes to learning improve. Children and young

Appendix 1

people also state that they are able to deal with challenges in a more productive manner, and that they are grateful to understand that they are not the only people with such things going on in their lives. The children and young people are appreciative of having someone listen to them, of being able to map out a safety plan with the support worker, and of having a contact to go to when worried or frightened.

When we receive feedback from professionals concerning children and young people, we understand that the work completed has been of immense value to the lives and potential of these children and young people. We receive feedback that children are more settled within school, less problematic to their teachers, develop more appropriate and positive relationships with their peers as well as the adults around them, and are better able to deal with their feelings and emotions resulting from their traumatic experiences of domestic violence and abuse.

We have already submitted examples of the evaluations received by children and young people in recent months.

7. What percentage of children that receive support are on the Child Protection Register?

In the past year, 10 of the 48 referrals have been on the child protection register, making a total of 20%.

8. What age groups are supported by the organisation?

The children's service offers a service to all children and young people within the ages of 5 to 17 inclusive. Very often a younger child might be referred to the service, and we would consider this on the basis of the referral and may do an assessment, but very often children aged 4 and under are not of the capacity to undertake the therapeutic work offered. We can see a pattern where the majority of children that are referred in to the service are of primary school age, and these children are offered a one-to-one therapeutic service. The greater majority of older children receive preventative services through the delivery of the STAR programme, the Healthy Relationships programme and through the schools DEWIS and CRUCIAL CREW events, where all children within years 7 and 9 with the secondary school system are given support and information.

9. What is the Service's eligibility criteria?

In terms of the receipt of referrals and the acceptance to the children's service, the criteria are very broad. The child needs to be within the age range of 5 to 18, and be resident or attending a school within the Arfon area of Gwynedd. Where preventative programmes are run, the service runs hand-in-hand with De Gwynedd Domestic Abuse Services to ensure that all schools within Gwynedd are offered the service. Children and young people being referred to the service

Appendix 1

will have a comprehensive initial assessment, completed by the child worker in post, in order to assess where the difficulties lie and to assess that our service is the correct and most appropriate service for them. Should referrals to other external agencies be required, such as to CAMHS, then this is done as a primary action.

As previously outlined, without the specialist services of our child support worker, a vast number of children and young people living in the Arfon area will remain suffering from significant emotional harm, and will not be afforded the support that they deserve at a basic level of humanity. Why would we leave innocent by-victims of the most abhorrent and invasive crimes without support?

Gwasanaeth Trais yn y Cartref De Gwynedd

Additional information requested to determine the impact of proposed savings

1. **What does the funding provided by the Council contribute to?**
The Council's financial contribution employs 1.5 specialist support worker for children and young people.
2. **What is the organisation's turnover? (so as to identify the proportion of funding under consideration)**

| 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------|
| £446,476.32 | £436,233.07 | £497,479.34 | £357,153 |

3. **What has the organisation done to attract additional funding?**
The organisation as submitted several requests for grants. They have been successful in securing funding from Lloyds on the basis that core funding is already in place (i.e. the Council's contribution).

Unfortunately a number of other requests have been unsuccessful, but the organisation will continue to submit applications so as to protect the Service.

4. **Where to the referrals come from? i.e.**
 - **How many cases are received via the Children and Family Support Department?**
 - **How many cases does the organisation refer to the Children and Family Support**
 - **Other sources?**

Referrals have been received by Education, Health, from the families themselves, other workers within the organisation, Floating Support Workers, IDVA, Gyda'n Gilydd, Hafan Cymru, CAMHS and Social Services.

| Children receiving support from GTyyCDG | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 |
|--|------|------|------|
| Children on the Child Protection Register | 73 | 42 | 65 |
| Children in Need | 18 | 13 | 23 |
| Referrals to Social Services requiring no further action | 15 | 6 | 11 |

5. **What specialist work do the workers funded by the Council carry out?**

Appendix 2

The workers work with children and young people and their families on a one to one basis and in group situations using a variety of interventions to identify requirements and achieve positive outcomes.

Workers are qualified to present the STAR programme (Safety, Trust and Respect), a programme that has been developed for children and young people who have/are suffering as a result of domestic abuse. Some programmes will also include the parents. The programme provides an opportunity for individuals to discuss their experiences, to receive information on how to remain safe at the home and how to express their concerns. The programme is delivered in a safe environment in the company of other children in similar situations.

For children who don't want provision via a group setting or for those where a group setting is not appropriate, support is offered on an individual basis. This can be delivered at home, at school or in our dedicated One Stop Shop in Dolgellau. These sessions focus on the individual's needs (feelings, anger) with a view to developing a coping strategy. Other activities will also be arranged for the child or young person, e.g. arts and crafts, social activities as many will not have had the chance to experience these.

6. **What is the effect and/or value and result of the service on those receiving the support?**

One to One input

- Children and young people develop healthy relationships with the worker. They are safe in her company, can trust the worker and be respected
- Children and young people are helped with the next steps of their lives, moving from one school or college to another, going to university
- Sharing feelings with workers can help children and young people improve their emotional wellbeing. A number of concerns can arise, and children are given the opportunity to discuss these matters as they arise.
- This has a positive effect on children, i.e. a decrease in bed-wetting, challenging behaviour, health problems (e.g. headaches, tummy aches). School attendance improves as a result.
- There is less strain on children from families supported to go through the court process
- The healthy relationship input can help children who have had difficulties in developing friendships in the past, thus reducing difficulties at school
- Participation in community based activities develops the child's self confidence
- The developing of new personal skills to deal with emotions, e.g. anger, sadness gives the child a sense of self control.

Group Work Outcomes

- Children discuss and share own experiences with others in the same situation.
- Children are helped to acknowledge that abuse is not their fault
- Children are helped to understand, identify and discuss their feelings
- Children are helped to develop their emotional vocabulary

Appendix 2

- Children are helped to develop various techniques of dealing with their feelings.
- Children are helped to develop safeguarding strategies to use when required
- A network of people is in place to help and support children and young people
- Provides and opportunity to deliver Anger Management guidelines
- Children are helped to develop positive relationships by discussing positive and negative aspects,

Preventative Work Results

- Children and young people learn to acknowledge that they have the right to be health, to be free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation
- Children develop self-respect and personal responsibility. They learn the importance of respecting others and the diversity of others.
- Development of skills to help live safe and healthy lives
- Young people are helped to prepare towards challenged, choices and decisions that will be faced as adults.
- The understanding of the difference between safe and unsafe relationships
- Children's understanding of abuse in the home is developed ned improved
- Learn about wider social issues that affect them, e.g. pornography, social media
- Information is shared about agencies/people available to help and support
- Group work can provide opportunities to challenge points of view regarding sexual stereotyping
- Children and young people are helped to understand that thoughts, feelings and behaviours influence their own perceptions and of others
- This all contributes to the prevention of abuse in the home in future relationships

7. What percentage of children that receive support are on the Child Protection Register?

Please see question 4. A significant number of children that receive support are on the register.

8. What age groups are supported by the organisation?

4-18. Children younger than 4 receive support via that offered to the mother.

9. What is the Service's eligibility criteria?

Any child requiring support having suffered or witnessed abuse in the home; whose parental consent has been sought and who resides in Gwynedd.

CONDUCTING AN EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

For further help with this template, contact Ruth Richards, Equality and Language Officer

ruthrichards@gwynedd.gov.uk ext. 2056

1) AUTHOR(S) OF THE ASSESSMENT

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

2) PARTNERS

Note all the individuals and groups who need to be included in the assessment process: These could include front line staff, partner organisations, specialist organisations etc.

Children and Family Support Department and Contracts Unit directly.

Women's Aid and De Gwynedd Domestic Abuse Service by way of review meetings and monitoring arrangements.

3) START DATE

October 2014

4) END DATE

3 December 2014

5) AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY/ SERVICE/ PROCEDURE

Note the reason for the policy and what the Authority aims to achieve through it

- All Third Sector Service Level Agreements excluding Women's Aid and South Gwynedd Domestic Abuse Service have been extended for an additional year up to 31/03/16.
- As part of efficiency proposals for 2014-2017, the Children and Family Support Department have proposed that the service level agreements for Women's Aid (worth £ 20,070) and De Gwynedd Domestic Abuse (worth £ 33,810) are brought to an end on the 31/03/15.
- The Children and Family Support Department has had to consider all service areas including third sector agreements so as to identify savings.
- The decision to put these two agreements forward as savings was not taken lightly. However, on balance it was decided that as they did not fulfill statutory responsibilities on behalf of the service, the impact would be less than the ending of other statutory functions.
- The Children and Family Support Department's proposal has been considered by the Council's internal arrangements of the Council as part of this process, i.e. Corporate Management Team and the Corporate Efficiency Workgroup.
- The proposal has also been discussed as part of all proposed corporate savings at the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 13 November 2014.

- A final decision is expected by the Cabinet on 16 December 16 2014

6) INVOLVEMENT AND CONSULTATION

What involvement and consultation exercises were conducted in relation to the policy/ service/ procedure and what were the outcomes?

An annual review meetings have been held with the agreements between both organizations

Women's Aid - 03/26/14

De Gwynedd Domestic Abuse Service - 03/06/14

Present at the meeting were managers of organisations, Head of the Children and Family Support Department and Contracts Officer from the Adult, Health and Wellbeing Department. Confirmation was given at those meetings that the Service Level Agreement was to be extended for a 4th year for the period 04/01/14 - 31/03/15.

The Head of Department did state during these discussions that challenging financial constraints were on the horizon for the Council and its Departments. In this context, she confirmed that she could not guarantee a continuation of the agreement post 31/03/15 and that all agreements would be considered as part of efficiency saving considerations.

The Head of Department discussed the proposal with De Gwynedd's Domestic Abuse Service on November 11, 2014. During that conversation, the Head was able to explain the rationale behind the proposal in question. Whilst expressing her disappointment, De Gwynedd's Manager confirmed that she understood the situation adding that they would now consider an 'exit strategy'.

7) AVAILABLE EVIDENCE

Evidence can be based on local or national data, on consultation, monitoring, staff comments etc.

1. Monitoring Data

See Appendix 1 for a summary of monitoring data from both organisations. The evidence in its entirety is available to members.

2. Those who are affected

Appendix 1 also contains feedback from those who have received services from both organisations.

8) EVIDENCE GAPS

Note any evidence gaps and how these will be filled.

There are monitoring gaps in the ability to identify and measure the full effect and/or success of the service provided by both organisations. Both organisations have been encouraged during their agreement periods to

submit qualitative information in addition to the quantities information already supplied. However, qualitative evidence has not been presented.

9) WHAT IS THE ACTUAL/ LIKELY IMPACT?

This should outline the relevance of the policy/ service/ function to the general duties of the Equality Act and to each of the equality groups (protected characteristics). You should clearly note what the actual or likely impact will be. It may be that there is no relevance or effect in relation to all the duties and characteristics, but if a relevance and/or effect is found in relation to one or more duty or characteristic, then it will be necessary to proceed with the assessment

9a)

| General Duties of the Equality Act | Relevance to the general Duties | The actual or likely impact |
|---|--|--|
| Eliminating illegal discrimination, harassment and victimisation | Yes | <p>These are services that can reduce harassment, victimisation; that can reduce the impact on good relationships and that can promote equal opportunities. As a result there is some risk in bringing these services to an end, hence the equality impact assessment exercise.</p> <p>The impact is classed likely as there is no evidence to substantiate that the impact would be real and significant.</p> |
| Promoting equal opportunities | Yes | |
| Promoting good relationships | Yes | |

9b)

| Characteristics | Relevance to characteristics | The actual or likely impact |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Race | | |
| Disability | | |
| Sex | | The likely welfare of those within this characteristic that currently have access to the service. . |
| Gender reassignment | | |
| Sexual orientation | | |
| Religion or belief | | |
| The Welsh language | | |
| Age | | The likely welfare of those within this characteristic that currently have access to the service. . |
| Pregnancy and maternity | | |
| Marriage and civil partnership | | |

NOTE: Relevance to the 'Sex' and 'Age' characteristics have been addressed specifically above. However, it is acknowledged that it could impact on individuals within the other characteristics, but not as a direct result of these characteristics.

10) ADDRESSING THE IMPACT

| | |
|-----------|--|
| a) | Note any possible equality impact(s) The loss of service provided is likely to have an impact on individuals within two specific characteristics who can currently access the service. In addition, these are services that can reduce harassment, victimisation; that can reduce the impact on good relationships and that can promote equal opportunities There is no evidence to predict the real and significant impact of bringing the service to an end. |
| b) | What steps could be taken to reduce or improve these impacts? The organisations are encouraged to identify alternative funding sources |
| c) | Do we need to reconsider the plan? If the plan is rejected, the Department would have to consider other options in order to identify savings of £ 53,880 in question. This may mean the loss of 1.5 Social Workers, who fulfill statutory duties, saving £58241. |

11) MONITORING AND REVIEWING ARRANGEMENTS

None

12) ACTION PLAN

An action plan, outlining the actions, responsibilities, timescale and review and evaluation processes should be appended.

n/a

13) DECISION MAKING

Cabinet to decide on 16.12.14

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| COMMITTEE | SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE |
| DATE OF MEETING | FEBRUARY 12TH, 2015 |
| ITEM | SCC/025 – STATUTORY VISITS – LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN |
| SUB TITLE | INFORMATION IN RELATION TO PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE INDICATOR |
| AUTHOR | HEAD OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SUPPORT DEPARTMENT |
| CABINET MEMBER | COUNCILLOR MAIR ROWLANDS |

1. This report is provided at the request of the Scrutiny Committee to share current performance within Children's Services in respect of the National Performance Indicator, SCC/025, which measures the timeliness of statutory visits to looked after children.

2. It is required as per regulations and procedures that when a child becomes looked after, it is necessary, as a minimum, that the child is visited in his placement within the first week of placement, then every six weeks for the first year and then every three months for the duration of the child's placement. In some circumstances, for example when a child has been placed with a relative or friend it is required to visit the placement weekly up until such a time that the carers are registered as foster carers for the Authority (Regulation 38, Fostering Regulations).

3. At the end of December 2014 there were 193 looked after children in Gwynedd who were placed either with foster carers (internal or agency), in residential placements (internal or out of county) or with their own parents. This is an increase on the end of 2014 figures when 185 children were looked after. Since April 2014, 49 children have become looked after for the first time. At the end of March 2013 the figure was 193.

4. The ages are as follows : 8 (4%) under one year old; 46 (24%) between 1 and 5 years; 49 (25%) between 6 and 10 years; 64 (34%) between 11 a 15 years and 25 (13%) over 16 years.

- 5.** The Welsh performance average in 13/14 in respect of this indicator was 85.3%, with the 'family' performance in the same year being 86.3%. Gwynedd's performance at the end of 13/14 was 83.7%. A target of figures in the range between 83 and 85% was set for 14/15. It became evident in the first quarter of this year that there were problems in relation to accurately recording statutory visits in a timely manner on the right form in RAISE in order to produce accurate data information in relation to actual performance. As a result, the Service undertook work to ensure compliance within individual teams and across the service and expectations were made clear to workers and managers.
- 6.** Performance figures for the first three quarters are encouraging:
Quarter 1 – 88.2% (368/417)
Quarter 2 – 89.5% (418/467)
Quarter 3 – 87.1% (427/490)
Aggregated figure 14/15 – 88.3% (1213/1374)
The above figures will place Gwynedd in the first quartile in relation to performance against this indicator and I cannot foresee that any changes within Quarter 4 will negatively impact on this.
- 7.** Some visits are late (137), and the reasons for these are known to the Service. A high percentage of late visits take place between 1 and 5 days outside the timescales. The reasons for late visits are reasonable, for example the child being ill, carers not available, worker being called to Court, the worker ill etc.
- 8.** The Service will continue to monitor performance regularly and there is confidence that the integrity of data produced from the electronic system is reliable.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| NAME OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE | Services Scrutiny Committee |
| DATE OF MEETING | 12 February 2015 |
| TITLE OF REPORT | School Organisation Programme Update |
| CABINET MEMBER | Councillor Gareth Thomas |

1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1.1. The strategy 'Excellent Primary Education for Children in Gwynedd' was adopted unanimously by the Council in April 2009. The vision of the strategy is to *"provide education of the best possible quality that will provide the county's children with the experiences, skills and confidence to develop into bilingual, successful and well-rounded citizens"* and the aims of the strategy are to:

- Provide the County's children with the best possible experiences and opportunities by ensuring **classes of appropriate size and high quality school leadership;**
- Aim to **promote and strengthen the Welsh language** – as an educational and social medium – by presenting new proposals for primary education within the County;
- Respond **pro-actively and creatively** to the needs and opportunities provided by the current education system through fostering a collaborative, sustainable and practical **long term plan;**
- Ensure that children gain the greatest positive from education spending within the county by **fully utilising all available resources** - whether human, technological or financial;
- Improve resources and buildings to **create a learning environment of the best possible quality.**
- Develop our schools into **establishments that are central to community activity.**

1.2. In its meeting on 9 October 2012, the Cabinet decided on the '*Priorities Plan - Reorganisation of Education Provision*' which set out a specific work programme based on the strategy.

1.3. The following are core sections of the work:

- Undertaking background work and developing models for providing education,
- Ensuring that the relevant statutory processes are undertaken by means of communication and consultation, and
- Attracting capital resources by compiling business cases and through contributions from the Government.

In keeping with the strategy, we hope to create a strong and sustainable education system by securing the proper type and number of schools in the appropriate places in order to maintain and improve standards for today and into the future.

2. THE PROGRAMME TO DATE

2.1. The school organisation programme is one of the biggest programmes of change undertaken by Gwynedd Council – here is a summary of the steps taken so far:

- Investment valued at **£18 million** already made to improve the learning environment
- 900 primary pupils have benefited from the investment
- **Over £430,000 annual revenue savings already achieved**
- Closure of Ysgol Rhydyclafdy April 2009
- Closure of Ysgol Llawr y Betws August 2009
- Closure of Ysgol Croesor August 2009
- Closure of Ysgol Abergynolwyn March 2011

- Construction of a new school building for Ysgol Yr Hendre September 2012 with an investment of **£9.326 million**
- Federation of Ysgol Glanadda and Ysgol Coed Mawr, Bangor, September 2012
- Entry age extension at Ysgol Penybryn, Tywyn to accept 3 year old pupils from September 2012
- Federation of Ysgol Pennal and Ysgol Dyffryn Dulas (Corris) September 2012
- Closure of Ysgol Coed Menai, Bangor in December 2012
- Upgrading of Ysgol Pennal and Ysgol Dyffryn Dulas federation with an investment of **£990,000**
- Closure of Ysgol Llidiardau August 2013
- Closure of Ysgol Aberdyfi August 2013
- Upgrading of Ysgol Penybryn, Tywyn with an investment of **£1.47 million**
- Closure of Ysgol Brynchrug, Ysgol Llanegryn and Ysgol Llwyngwriol September 2013
- Opening of Ysgol Craig y Deryn September 2013 following an investment of **£5.42 million**
- Closure of Ysgol Parc September 2013
- Upgrading of Ysgol OM Edwards with an investment of **£1 million**

2.2 Although in some cases it is still early days, we can note some educational benefits from implementing these plans:

- **Leadership**
There are problems regarding the recruitment of Head Teachers in some areas and this has led to uncertainty over leadership at a number of schools. Historically there was a need for 8 Primary Head Teachers in the Tywyn catchment area but now there are only 3 primary sector Head Teachers in the area – this has reduced the recruitment problem in the catchment area. Because the schools are bigger, these Head Teachers have more non-contact time for leadership and management purposes at their schools – with a view to improve pupils’ standards and educational experiences. In the areas in question, the improved conditions allow the Head Teachers time to effectively lead and manage their schools into the future. The number of Head Teachers who used to spend most of their time teaching has been reduced, which means that there is more capacity for leadership and school management – and to concentrate on aspects such as raising standards.
- **Classes**
In the areas where reorganisation has taken place, the age range of pupils taught together is much smaller and this means that pupils are taught in groups of the same age. Following reorganisation, there are considerably fewer classes made up of 4 different age groups in the Tywyn catchment area. This makes it easier for teachers to concentrate on improving standards instead of trying to ensure provision for a wide age range.
- **Sustainability**
Where reorganisation has been undertaken, the education system is more sustainable and stronger for the future. Ten small establishments have been reorganised, all of which were receiving additional funding under the staffing safety net. In terms of numbers, rural schools such as Ysgol Craig y Deryn and Ysgol OM Edwards are strong and will ensure sustainable education provision within their areas into the future. In terms of parent choice, these schools are popular and comfortably full in terms of numbers. Reorganisation aims at ensuring the best possible use of resources and ensuring a strong provision for the future.
- **Pupils’ Experience**
A review was undertaken with the pupils of Ysgol Craig y Deryn in order to make an assessment of the pupils’ impressions.

In the review, undertaken jointly with the school after the end of the first term of the new provision, these are the main positive aspects noted by the pupils:

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| - New friends, | - Good computers and technology, |
| - Kind teachers and staff, | - Good food, |

- Pleasant classrooms and

- Plenty of play areas

The matters which caused concern were the number of toilets on the site and their location, and the fact that the grass had not grown and that they could not play on it.

- Learning Environment

By undertaking school reorganisation an opportunity arose to upgrade resources and equipment in order to ensure a teaching and learning environment fit for the twenty first century. Four schools have been upgraded or rebuilt to category A standards (the best category) and thus meeting twenty first century schools standards. This means that the pupils and staff at these schools have access to the best possible resources, which – according to Estyn – can have *“a very beneficial effect on the standard of teaching and on staff morale which positively impacts the performance of the pupils.”*

- Standards of Education

A number of the new plans came into force in September 2013, and as yet no formal assessments have been undertaken by Estyn on some of the new establishments, or newly refurbished establishments. But a combination of factors noted here indicate that - in terms of improving standards - conditions now are much more favourable than in the past.

3. WORK BEING UNDERTAKEN

3.1. The work is being monitored under the PRINCE2 programme management structure, which means that Project Boards and a Programme Board have been established in order to ensure that the programme is being successfully led and managed. Forums which ensure a voice for local representatives and Local Members are also part of the programme in individual districts and catchment areas.

3.2. In accordance with the Schools Standards and Organisation Act (Wales) 2013 and the School Organisation Code (006/2013), there is a statutory framework which details the relevant requirements of the statutory processes. This means that there are statutory and very specific procedures and processes involved in the reorganisation of schools.

3.3. It is necessary to follow specific processes in order to attract funding from the Welsh Government, and as part of this process the entire programme had to be reviewed by a process referred to as the ‘Gateway Review’. This is an independent review of the school reorganisation programme which the Government commissions as a means of reviewing the way this revolutionary programme is implemented, and the predictions in terms of its achievement.

3.4. The Gateway Review assessment of Gwynedd Council’s school reorganisation programme was the second best under five categories, and it notes:

“The Review Team finds that the Programme has made excellent progress towards meeting their vision for schools reorganisation in Gwynedd.

Successful delivery at this stage appears probable because of a clear vision, good political backing, strong direction provided by the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO), Iwan Trefor Jones, and the enthusiasm of a committed team.

The Programme has shown that it is willing and able to take on board lessons learned from earlier projects and resulting in excellent and wide-ranging stakeholder engagement. However, constant attention will be needed to ensure risks do not materialise into major issues threatening delivery. This will require consideration of such things as leadership, benefits realisation, programme assurance, market conditions and handover to business as usual.

There is currently good momentum around the programme which, if maintained, provides a strong basis for delivery.”

3.5. Plans included in the Twenty First Century Schools Programme are being achieved and the grant sources timetables are very tight. At present, work is being undertaken on the following:

3.5.1. Establishing **Ysgol Bro Llifon** in Groeslon – school to open in September 2015 with an investment of just under £5 million

3.5.2. **Y Gader Catchment Area**, Dolgellau

- Closure of 10 schools and the establishment of a new school on 6 sites – a very innovative and challenging model
- Investment worth £4.3 million
- Revenue saving valued at £255,000
- Subject to statutory processes and Cabinet decisions, the aim is to open the new school in September 2017

3.5.3. Completion of the reorganisation process in **Y Berwyn catchment area** - consultation process to be completed and an investment of more than £9 million to be ensured in order to establish a Lifelong Campus.

3.5.4. Establishing **Meirion Dwyfor Special School** – A special school for 100 pupils with residential provision for 6 pupils, to open in September 2016 with an investment of more than £12 million.

3.5.5. Construction of a New Building for **Ysgol Glancegin**, in Maesgeirchen Bangor

- Investment of over £5 million in a new building for the school
- Aiming to complete the school building by September 2017

4. ACHIEVING THE PROGRAMME

4.1. The Welsh Government approved a budget for plans worth **£36 million** as part of a twenty first century schools programme. This money has been approved in principle and in order to obtain the funding from the Welsh Government there are specific requirements; it is necessary to complete business cases in accordance with the Treasury's *'Five Case Business Model'* procedure. This involves the compilation of a Strategic Outline Case (SOC), an Outline Business Case (OBC) and a Final Business Case (FBC) for each project. These steps involve more than compiling documents, it is necessary to work in collaboration with government representatives in order to ensure understanding of what it is we are trying to achieve and to ensure that explanation and information is presented in response to any request or challenge received.

4.2. These capital developments are important from an educational point of view, but also we have to be aware of the contribution to the local economy – during a difficult time in general. On some of these capital projects the direct expenditure for local providers (within 20 miles) can be as high as 70% with opportunities also for businesses (shops, restaurants etc) to benefit from the presence of such large developments. In addition to this, there is an opportunity to create apprenticeships as part of the development – this has already been undertaken in conjunction with some of the plans already completed.

4.3. As part of the school organisation plans, **permanent revenue savings worth £430,000** have already been achieved – and the plans in hand, but yet to be achieved (see above) will lead to at least **£345,000 of further permanent revenue savings.**

- 4.4. There is a team of 6 officers employed within the structure of the unit at a current cost of £246,000. These posts vary in order to ensure that there is sufficient ability, expertise and experience to enable all aspects of the programme to be fulfilled, including the completion of the statutory processes, the business cases and programme management. Specialist roles are commissioned according to the need for this corporate cross departmental programme.
- 4.5. In addition to this work, the team contributes to other duties as well. One specific example is the completion of the work of reviewing the capacity at the schools within the County. By undertaking this task, the Council was able to respond to the challenge of reducing empty places – this challenge was set by the Education Minister and later supported by Estyn when the Education Department underwent an inspection. Estyn recently returned on a post inspection visit in order to monitor the specific recommendation made to the County of reducing empty places. The positive conclusion by Estyn as a result of this visit was that the Council was meeting the challenge “*to a great extent*”.

5. FUTURE TASKS

- 5.1. As part of the discussions held by the Working Group established to identify £4.3m savings from the schools budget, school reorganisation has been identified as a means of contributing towards the challenge. During the 2014/15 financial year, 21 schools were protected by the safety net, receiving more than £600,000 of additional support. It is forecast that there will be 23 schools under the safety net in the 2015/16 financial year and the likelihood is that these schools will not contribute towards the cut which is imposed on the budgets of other schools within the County.
- 5.2. The Working Group issued a clear message that the process of reorganisation needs to be accelerated. The Working Group states that there is now an opportunity to look at reorganisation plans which can contribute approximately £200,000 of further savings in the future.
- 5.3. Therefore, considering what has already been achieved, the plans in hand and the message from the Working Group, it is possible that the entire reorganisation project will save around £1 million of revenue funding per year.
- 5.4. The suggestion therefore is that in the next few years it will become necessary to ensure the capacity to achieve the aims of school reorganisation, in order to reduce the burden on every individual school in the County.
- 5.5. Also, the Government is embarking on background work and planning for Band B – the next funding window in the Twenty First Century Schools Programme for the period 2019 to 2024. Of course, the exact figure for the County will depend on plans for the future and the amount of local government contribution expected as part of the programme. But we will have to take advantage of these opportunities in order to ensure improvements to our schools, and also for the sake of the indirect benefits to the local economy. It will be necessary to ensure that the Council will have the capacity, the understanding and also experience of the government’s funding systems in order to ensure the best investment for Gwynedd into the future.
- 5.6. Of course, although achieving savings is essential in view of the financial situation, and an opportunity to attract capital investment is one which should be grasped with both hands, we have to remember and emphasise that the vision of the strategy is to “*provide education of the best possible quality that will provide the county’s children with the experiences, skills and confidence to develop into bilingual, successful and well-rounded citizens*”. The vision, and the aims, will be at the heart of the discussions as we proceed with the work into the future.