

Complete Agenda

CABINET

GWYNEDD COUNCIL

DATE	Tuesday, 18th July, 2017
TIME	1.00 pm
LOCATION	Siambwr Hywel Dda, Council Offices, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 1SH
CONTACT POINT	Annes Siôn 01286 679490 cabinet@gwynedd.llyw.cymru

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET MEMBERS

Members	
Dyfrig L. Siencyn	Leader
Mair Rowlands	Deputy Leader
Craig ab Iago	Cabinet Member for Housing, Leisure and Culture
Gareth Wyn Griffith	Cabinet Member of Highways and Municipal
Peredur Jenkins	Cabinet Member for Finance
Dafydd Meurig	Cabinet Member for the Environment
Dilwyn Morgan	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
W. Gareth Roberts	Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing
Gareth Thomas	Cabinet Member for Education
Ioan Thomas	Cabinet Member for Economic Development

AGENDA

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9	CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2017/18 - FIRST QUARTER REVIEW	Cyng / Cllr Peredur Jenkins	Dafydd Edwards	77 - 81

THE CABINET 27/06/17

Present-

Councillors: Dyfrig L. Siencyn, Mair Rowlands, Gareth Wyn Griffith, Peredur Jenkins, Dafydd Meurig, Dilwyn Morgan, W. Gareth Roberts, Gareth Thomas and Ioan Thomas

Also present:

1. APOLOGIES

Cabinet Members and Officers were welcomed to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Cllr Craig ab Iago and Dilwyn Williams (Chief Executive)

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor Dilwyn Morgan declared an interest in item 6 as he had a grandson who attended one of the schools in the Bala catchment area. It was a prejudicial interest.

3. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

There were no matters arising from overview and scrutiny

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 JUNE 2017

The Chairman signed the minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 6 June 2017, as a true record.

6. FUTURE OF EDUCATIONAL PROVISION IN THE BERWYN CATCHMENT-AREA

RESOLVED

- I. Withdraw the proposal to establish a Voluntary Controlled 3-19

- Learning Campus (VC, Church in Wales) in accordance with section 55 (5) of the (2013) Schools Standards and Organisation Act 2013.
- II. Request a further report with a recommendation for September 2017 to submit an alternative model for consultation which addresses and corresponds with the requirements of the Business Case approved by the Government.
 - III. Delegate to the Cabinet Member for Education the right to hold a pre-consultation with the Church in Wales in accordance with the School Organisation Code 2013 and report on the results to the Cabinet in September 2017.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted to the Cabinet noting that the intention of submitting the report was to report back. In March 2016, the Cabinet agreed on the recommendation to consult with school governing bodies in the Berwyn catchment area on the option of withdrawing the proposal to establish a Voluntary Controlled 3-19 learning Campus. It was noted that the consultation work with the governing bodies had been completed and the responses from the six schools supported the current proposal to withdraw the application.

It was clearly noted that these matters were governance and managerial matters regarding a change in the school's status. It was also emphasised that the construction work was ongoing and was following the timetable set. It was expressed that the change in the school's status would not impact the Business Case submitted to the Welsh Government, and that it was a technical matter to change the School's status.

It was added that the Church had respected the opinion of the Governors and had written a letter and had noted that they accepted that the governing bodies of the Bala catchment area were not supportive of the current proposal. It was emphasised that their main priority was the needs of the pupils and, as a result, agreed with the Governing Bodies' request regarding the status of the new 3-19 learning campus.

Observations from the discussion

- It was noted that it was good news that the church had shown support for the application and that there was an agreement across the table.
- It was expressed that it was good news that the construction work was ongoing and that the building would be ready in accordance with the timetable.
- It was added that the campus would be a large investment in children's future education in the Berwyn catchment area.

7. PROVISION OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE IN GWYNEDD

RESOLVED

- i. Achieve the cut of £244,000 in the service by delivering the Partnership Scheme with Town and Community Councils in order to keep the majority of the County's existing public toilets open for the future.
- ii. Close those toilets for which the community has no intention or interest in contributing to a partnership by 1 October 2017.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted to the Cabinet as the item had been discussed for over a year. Following the Gwynedd Challenge consultation, in March 2016, the Full Council recommended a cut which involved closing 50 of the 73 public toilets in the county. Following this, the Communities Scrutiny Committee recommended that the Cabinet adapted the decision; first of all, by establishing partnerships with the local communities in order to avoid closing the facilities whilst achieving the same amount of savings.

It was noted that in implementing the Partnerships Scheme, it was anticipated that at least 51 toilets would be kept open through the Town and Community Councils' support and co-operation. It was emphasised that the cut would need to be realised and that the toilets would need to be closed where the community had no intention or interest in contributing with partnerships. It was noted that it was intended to continue discussing with the Town and Community Councils until October in order to create the partnerships to attempt to keep more toilets open.

It was reported that there was one change to the appendix that discussions were still ongoing in Penygroes. It was added that a petition had been received from Tywyn that had been signed by 1,000 people.

Observations from the discussion

- It was noted that it was very positive that so many town and community councils were willing to become partnerships and work together for the service to continue.
- It was emphasised that the situation looked much better compared to March 2016, and it was noted that it was commendable to see Community Councils that were willing to work in a different way.

It was noted that the input of the Communities Scrutiny Committee should be praised in leading the drive to keep the toilets open

8. SAFEGUARDING AND THE ROLE OF THE STRATEGIC SAFEGUARDING PANEL

RESOLVED

Approve the expansion of the Strategic Safeguarding Panel's field of work including requirements on the Authority involving counter terrorism, modern slavery, domestic violence and community safety.

Delegate the right to the Strategic Safeguarding Panel to review and agree necessary changes to the Corporate Safeguarding Policy arising from adopting the changes to the terms of reference.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted to the Cabinet and the importance of the work within the Council was emphasised. Current safeguarding arrangements and specifically the corporation's responsibility to undertake the safeguarding duty had been in place for approximately four years. The panel had been making good progress in terms of awareness and understanding of safeguarding issues across the Council. It was noted simply that the report asked for permission to expand the panel's scope. It

was emphasised that it was time for this as there were changes in terms of regional arrangements and legislative changes that were currently happening.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- It was noted that this was an opportunity to take advantage of extending responsibilities and reducing duplication in the field of safeguarding.
- The difference between the Safeguarding Strategic Panel and the Operational Safeguarding Panel was discussed, and it was noted that the officers of the public were part of the operational panel in order to ensure that the work was being carried out.
- Pride was expressed regarding the comment in relation to safeguard children and vulnerable adults and that the role of the staff within the Council had been highlighted.

9. STRATEGIC SAFEGUARDING PANEL'S ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

RESOLVED

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DISCUSSION

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7. STRATEGIC SAFEGUARDING PANEL'S ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

The report was submitted by Cllr Dilwyn Morgan

DECISION

An annual report on the work of the Strategic Safeguarding Children and Adults Panel was accepted.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted to the Cabinet with the intention of updating what had been achieved by the Strategic Safeguarding Panel during the year. Cllr Mair Rowlands was thanked for chairing and Cllr Gareth Thomas and Cllr W. Gareth Roberts were thanked for being members of the Panel.

It was noted that good work had been made in raising staff awareness of the work of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. In addition, it was emphasised that inspections from external bodies had noted a growth in the panel's work. The future aim of the panel was discussed, and everyone was thanked for bringing additional fields that needed attention into the panel's work and agenda.

Observations arising from the discussion:

- The idea that the item should have a place on the Council agenda in order for all members to be aware of the panel's work was welcomed.
- A question was asked about the exciting changes that CSSIW had noted – and what these changes were. It was emphasised that this was a result of changes in the field of adults due to growth in referrals through investing in a team that would ensure quality.

The meeting commenced at 13:00 and concluded at 13:45

CHAIRMAN

Agenda Item 6

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



Report to a meeting of Gwynedd Council's Cabinet

Date of meeting: 18 July 2017

Cabinet Member: Councillors Mair Rowlands, W Gareth Roberts, Dilwyn Morgan

Contact Officer: Iwan Evans, Monitoring Officer
Geraint Owen Head of Corporate Support
Morwena Edwards, Director for Social Services

Title: Report on the Council's Complaints and Service Improvement Procedures

1 DECISION SOUGHT

To accept the reports.

The item presented contains 3 reports on the Council's Complaints and Service Improvement Procedures (Corporate Procedure and Social Services Adults and Children).

Members might like to consider the reports together in order to get a wider picture of the Formal Complaints that are received by the Council and how they are dealt with.

2 BACKGROUND

The Corporate Complaints Procedure

2.1 The Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure requires an annual report to be presented to the Cabinet, which will crystallize the lessons learned over this period and showing how they have contributed to improving the way services are delivered.

The Social Services Complaints Procedure

2.2 The Council also has a specific complaints procedure to deal with complaints relating to Social Services. Under this procedure the Director of Social Services is required to produce an annual report on how complaints are handled and investigated within the service. It also includes a summary of lessons learned and actions taken in respect of the complaints received.

The Ombudsman

2.3 If the complainant remains dissatisfied, having followed the Council's complaints procedures may refer the matter to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales can investigate the complaint if it is felt appropriate. In addition to publishing the Annual Report of the Ombudsman will send an annual letter to every authority individually.

2.4 By looking at these three elements together, it is possible to offer a picture to members of the situation across the Council of the manner complaints are handled and how lessons can be learnt from them so as to improve services. was therefore decided that it was appropriate to submit these documents together to the Cabinet.

Three documents are submitted to the Cabinet's attention:

- The Annual Report on the Corporate Complaints and Service Improvement Procedure 2016/17
- The Annual Report of the Director of Social Services 2016/17 (2 reports Adults and Children)

Views of the local member:

Not a local issue.

Views the statutory officers

Chief Executive:

The Monitoring Officer:

The reports provide an opportunity for the Cabinet to take an overview of the performance and to be assured in relation to the arrangements for responding to complaints

The Head of Finance:

Nothing to add from a financial propriety perspective.

Committee:	CABINET
Date:	18 July 2017
Title:	2016/17 Annual Report on the Implementation of the Council's Complaints Procedure and the Service Improvement System
Author:	CLRs Mair Rowlands
Liaison Officers	Iwan Evans, Monitoring Officer Geraint Owen, Head of Corporate Support Department

Background

- 1.1 This is the annual report on the system to improve the Council's services for the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017. The foundation for this system is the Council's Complaints Procedure which came into operation on 1 April 2015 (see Appendix 1) and this report elaborates on the implementation and the performance of the Complaints Procedure, and how dealing with complaints has led to permanent improvements in the services the people of Gwynedd receive.
- 1.2 A number of officers across the Council have a role to play in implementing the service improvement system and complaints procedure, starting with the role that all Council officers have, which is to ensure the best possible services for the people of Gwynedd and deal with enquiries and complaints about them. These are supported by an officer within each department who are designated points of contact and complaints are referred from Galw Gwynedd and the Service Improvement Officer to them in order to ensure that they receive attention from the appropriate officer within the department.
- 1.3 The Procedure and the associated officers are supported by the Service Improvement and Complaints Coordination Team. The Team includes a Monitoring Officer, the Organisational Development Manager, the Service Improvement Officer and the Senior Solicitor (Corporate).

The Organisational Development Manager and the Service Improvement Officer lead on promoting service improvement across the Council by focusing on ensuring the greatest benefit from the opportunities the complaints offer services to identify the improvements that can derive from them, and the lessons to be learnt. The Monitoring Officer and the Senior Solicitor are responsible for ensuring that the Complaints Procedure is implemented appropriately and for deciding on investigations in the most complex cases. They also offer specialist support to the Service Improvement Officer.

The Service Improvement Officer also advocates on behalf of complainants to ensure a response to the complaints received. She has the responsibility for coordinating an informal response to all complaints that remain unresolved (see paragraph 2.2 below), receive complaints over the phone and via the Council website, and provide support to complainants and services.

2.0. The Performance of the Council's Complaints Procedure 2016/17

2.1 The procedure adopted by the Council is in accordance with the Model Concerns and Complaints Policy and the Guidance published by the Welsh Government, and produced under the guidance of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

2.2 Number of Complaints Received

Complaints are responded to in two ways, namely:

Informal Resolution

This stage offers the complainant an opportunity for informal contact in the place where the service is provided in order to seek to resolve complaints either as the concern arises or very soon thereafter.

Resolution or Formal Investigation

If the complainant is unsatisfied with the informal resolution, it can be referred for a formal investigation.

In the year 2016/17, 67 formal complaints were recorded. This is compared with 81 in 2015/16.

2.3 Reasons for Complaints

In order to be able to further analyse the nature of the complaints received, and in order to receive more meaningful information, the complaints are categorised and recorded in five specific headings, namely:

	Percentage of complaints 2016/17
Mistake/incorrect action by the Council	19%
Unhappy with the decision	27%
Lack of response/action	48%
Officer conduct	3%
Language and Equality matters	3%

2.4 Complaints Response Time

Under the procedure, it is possible to monitor time taken to investigate and respond to formal complaints. The target for formal response is 20 working days. **In 2016/17, 84% of formal complaints were responded to within 20 working days, with an average of 11.6 days.** This is compared with 81% in 2015/16, and an average of 16 working days.

If it is not practical to respond within the target period, e.g. if it is an especially complex complaint, the situation is explained to the complainant.

2.5 Other Complaint Procedures within the Council

For statutory reasons, there is a separate complaints procedure for social service users - and the reports on this procedure are submitted jointly. Individual School Governing Bodies have their own complaints procedures which are based on statutory guidance.

2.6 Complaints Referred to the Ombudsman

If the complainant continues to be unsatisfied following a formal investigation or after following social services or education procedures, he/she can take the complaint to the Ombudsman.

In 2016/17, 29 complainants referred complaints to the Ombudsman Of these, the Ombudsman was of the view that **there was no case to answer in 26 cases, with three leading to a settlement.** They did not publish a report against the Council during the year. In 2015/16, complainants referred 25 complaints to the Ombudsman - they decided that there was no reason to respond to 19 cases, with three cases leading to a settlement, and three attracting a report.

2.7 Full details of the 2016/17 performance can be seen in Appendix 2

3. Service Improvement

3.1 In addition to ensuring the implementation of the Council's Complaints Procedure, the Service Improvement and Complaints Coordination Team was established in order to make the most of the data and information deriving from complaints in order to ensure improvement in the Council's services and to drive the work of embedding the appropriate culture across the Council.

The Team have a number of responsibilities whilst achieving this:

- offer guidance and advice to departments on how to deal with individual complaints.
- introduce suitable interventions in order to embed the appropriate culture
- promote and encourage improvements based on complaints or trends
- identify fields for general improvement
- present relevant development opportunities
- Review the Council's Complaints Procedure
- raise awareness of the Procedure outside and inside the Council
- report on the performance of the Procedure

More information is available about the work completed by the Team during 2016/17 in Appendix 3.

4.0 Conclusions

4.1 Performance improvement in terms of numbers and response period in 2016/17 is encouraging and shows that the procedure contributes towards a positive effect on our services. It is likely that a number of factors contribute towards this.

- departmental procedures and the emphasis on dealing with complaints in the first instance, in accordance with the principle of the procedure of attempting to achieve an informal resolution
- Service Improvement and Complaints Coordination Team promoting the principle of resolving problems as an important part of providing a quality service for citizens and embedding a culture which maintains this.
- The principle of 'investigate once, investigate well'
- A specific officer (Service Improvement Officer) in place who ensures that departments respond to complaints promptly, who can advise members of the public and officers on

the implementation of the procedure, and identifies opportunities to resolve complaints promptly and informally.

- improvement in the methods of gathering and analysing information regarding complaints

4.2 But it is important that this work continues. The performance figures have highlighted specific fields that will be addressed over the next months. This work will be likely to include training and discussions with relevant departments on the obstacles they have and the appropriate resolutions.

4.3 Also, the work of offering guidance and support for services has proved to be key in placing an emphasis on staff to be empowered to resolve complaints and take responsibility for them and, as a result, to help embed the appropriate culture.

4.4 The key work of developing methods of gathering and analysing information to enable the Council to learn lessons from complaints will continue. This will include gathering examples of good practice within the Council and communicating them across the Council.

Appendix 1

The Council's Complaints Procedure

The procedure adopted by the Council is in accordance with the Model Concerns and Complaints Policy and the Guidance published by the Welsh Government, and produced under the guidance of the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. The advantage of this is that it is consistent with the complaint procedures of other public bodies, making the submission of a complaint easier for members of the public across public organisations.

The procedure was adopted by the Cabinet with the following aims:

- Providing a specific benefit for the citizen by focusing on the solution rather than the process. It will allow for complaints to be dealt with promptly, by removing one step of the current process which is fairly laborious and long-winded.
- It will allow complaints which involve more than one department to be better coordinated, and will allow for the coordination of complaints which involve external agencies or partners.
- By establishing a central, comprehensive database, it will be possible to keep an overview of the pattern of complaints and to learn lessons as an organisation.
- Ensuring consistency with the Council's culture and the principles of Ffordd Gwynedd.

The Procedure

A complaint is defined as:

- an expression of dissatisfaction or concern
- either made in writing or verbally or by any other means of communication
- made by one or more members of the public
- it is in relation to how the Council has acted or failed to act
- or it is regarding the standard of service provided
- and there is a need to respond to it.

A complaint is not:

- an initial request for service, such as informing about a faulty street light
- an appeal against a decision that has been 'made appropriately'
- a way of seeking a change in legislation or a policy decision that 'has been made appropriately'
- a way for lobbying groups/organisations to promote their case.

The core principles behind the Procedure are:

- that dealing with complaints is an integral part of providing services.
- staff are encouraged to consider each time whether it would be possible to resolve the complaint 'here and now'.
- seek the most appropriate result for individuals and services

- allow dealing in a pro-active way by focusing on the people's needs, namely resolving the problem rather than the complaint process itself

There are two internal stages to the new procedure, namely:

Informal Resolution

This stage offers the complainant an opportunity for informal contact in the place where the service is provided in order to seek to resolve complaints either as the concern arises or very soon thereafter. It is not essential to record all complaints or problems that are informally resolved, and it would not be practical to do so without creating a specific reporting system. Therefore it is not possible to report on the numbers.

Resolution or Formal Investigation

If the complainant is unsatisfied with the informal resolution, it can be referred for a formal investigation. "Investigate once, investigate well" is the principle in this stage of the process. The emphasis is given on one investigation to thoroughly deal with the concerns raised. Usually, an investigation would be carried out by an officer within the department who is on a sufficiently senior level and who is independent from the source of the complaint. From time to time, this will not be appropriate and the complaint will be investigated by an officer who is independent from the department in question. Unlike informal resolutions, all formal complaints are centrally recorded.

In order to be able to further analyse the nature of the complaints received, and in order to obtain more meaningful information regarding standards, the complaints are categorised into five specific headings, namely:

- Mistake/incorrect action by the Council
- Unhappy with the decision
- Lack of response/action
- Officer conduct
- Language and Equality

Under the procedure, it is possible to monitor the time taken to investigate and respond to formal complaints. The target to formally respond is 20 working days.

If this is not practical, e.g. if it an especially complex case, the situation is explained to the complainant.

For statutory reasons, complaints procedures are separate for social and school service users.

Appendix 2

2016/17 Performance

Formal Complaints 2016/17 (2015/16)

Every formal complaint is recorded centrally and below are the figures for the numbers of formal investigations to complaints during the year.

Total 67 (81)

The number of formal complaints per service are analysed as follows:

Service	Number of formal complaints
Planning	11
Highways	6
Waste	14
Municipal	2
Leisure	1
Social Services (<i>outside the social services statutory procedure,</i>	3
Consultancy	3
Revenue	1
Housing	4
Parking	1
Transportation	2
Property	0
Licensing	5
Elections	1
Education	2
Benefits	1
Audit	0
Trunk Roads	0
Public Protection	2
Economy Development	0
Registration	2
Customer Contact	0
Language	1
Income	1
Legal	1
Maritime	0
Corporate Support	1
Trading Standards	1
Committees	1
Total	67

It must be noted that the number of complaints received by a service does not necessarily reflect the standard of service provided and these results cannot be considered on their own. The nature of the services provided influence heavily on the results. Among the factors that could have an impact on the figures are the number of direct contacts that are to be had with customers, the service's public profile or if an individual has other formal ways of rectifying or submitting an appeal. As a general

comments to set the context, one must bear in mind the number of service provider contacts between the Council's Services and the public on a daily basis, compared to the number of complaints.

Informal Resolutions

Complainants are encouraged to contact the service provider directly in the first instance to seek an informal resolution. Therefore, it is not possible to comprehensively report on the numbers.

Complaints Response Time

Under the procedure, it is possible to monitor the time taken to investigate and respond to formal complaints. The target to formally respond is 20 working days.

2016/17 (2015/16)

	Under 20 working days	Over 20 working days	No response yet but within the 20 working days
Total	56 (66)	10 (15)	1 (0)

84% of investigations were completed within the target time over the year. In 2015/16, 81% of complaints were responded to within the target period

On average, formal complaints were responded to within 11.6 working days. In 2015/16 a response was received within 16 working days on average.

Reasons for Complaints

In order to be able to further analyse the nature of the complaints received, and in order to receive more meaningful information regarding standards, the complaints are categorised into five specific headings, namely:

	Percentage of complaints 2016/17
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There is no analysis available for 2015/16

5. Ombudsman Cases

5.1 A complainant can refer his/her complaint to the Ombudsman if he/she is dissatisfied with the Council's formal response. A summary of the statistics from the annual reports of the Ombudsman are seen below:

	2016/17 (2015/16)
No Investigation	26 (19)
Settlements (where a resolution is offered to the complaint by the Ombudsman)	3 (3)
Reports (following a full investigation)	0 (3)
Total	29 (25)

Appendix 3

Service Improvement

A key part of the service improvement system is the role undertaken by the Service Improvement and Complaints Coordination Team. The Team was established in parallel with the Council's Complaints Procedure in order to ensure the greatest benefit from the Procedure. The Team has led on a number of interventions over the year in order to do this.

Advice and Guidance

The Team's main responsibility is to offer guidance and advice to the Council's departments and leadership. During the year, as well as the advice given on individual cases, the following has been achieved:

- The Complaints Coordination Team visited every departmental management team last year to introduce the new procedure. By now, the services are happy and willing to pick up the phone for guidance and advice where required.
- A meeting of departmental contact points is held annually.
- A presentation was given to the Senior Managers Group.
- Guidelines and guidance for staff have been produced - a leaflet on good practice when dealing with complainants, examples of response templates, guidance on the standard of responses. All of the above can be viewed on the Service Improvement and Complaints site on the Intranet.
- Arrangements were made to make Braille paper copies and Synthetic Voice disks available at our One Stop Shops in order to comply with Equality Expectations.

The following activities are already in the pipeline:

- Identify where customer care skills need to be developed and arrange appropriate training
- Raise awareness of the procedure and promote it amongst staff by using the Council's intranet - a new Intranet Page in place.
- Raise public awareness of the procedure by means of the Website and Newyddion Gwynedd.
- Promote departments to contact Galw Gwynedd to discuss improvements to their services in terms of responding to complaints and identifying trends.

Improvement Plans

To assist the Council to learn from complaints, a procedure was established whereby the Complaints Coordination Team will discuss solutions if it is of the opinion that an investigation into a complaint has identified room to improve procedures in order to provide an improved service.

The following are examples of Plans implemented this year.

- **Social Services** The wrong name has been used on a letter and errors had been made in the legal documents of one individual. *Action - the relevant department to update and reinforce their administrative/internal control arrangements*
- **Registration** Lack of timely response. *Action - the relevant Department has established a system to prevent this from happening again.*

These are in addition to the improvements that each department is introducing in response to complaints dealt with under the informal system.

Review of the Procedure

During the year, review meetings were held with the services to see whether or not they required assistance or training in relation to any aspect of dealing with complaints, and to receive feedback regarding the efficiency and effectiveness of the process. Very positive feedback was received that the services felt that the procedure was helpful.

Raising Awareness

In order to raise public awareness and further promote the procedure:

- an article was included in Newyddion Gwynedd during the year regarding the Complaints Procedure and its objectives
- the Complaints Form was changed to allow that so that the public has an opportunity to offer praise to the Council
- a Service Improvement and Complaints page has now been included on the Council's intranet in order to ensure an improved awareness of the Procedure among Council staff
- arrangements were made for a number of officers to visit Galw Gwynedd in Penrhyndeudraeth in order to see how the Centre works and have an opportunity to discuss improvements to their services in light of the experiences of Galw Gwynedd staff

Appendix 4

Feedback from complainants

Along with receiving observations from complainants on the standard of service received, or the manner in which their complaints were dealt with, the Service Improvement Officer will also contact a sample of complainants to ask them about their experience of using the procedure.

The following are examples of the responses received:

"Thank you very much for the swift response." (Leisure)

"Thank you for your response early this morning, I really appreciate the swift attention given to investigate the matter." (Waste and Service Improvement Officer)

My observations regarding how the complaint was dealt with are very favourable. My complaint was acknowledged immediately and I received a substantial response within a reasonable time-frame. This was good service. I do not have any complaint regarding how your Council dealt with my complaint." (Corporate Support)

"Thank you for your response, I am very satisfied with the resolution." (Maritime)

"Thank you for responding so quickly, and for apologising. The proposed resolution is acceptable." (Leisure Service)

"I feel that you have taken my complaint seriously and have dealt with the matter very courteously and professionally." (Customer Care and Service Improvement Officer)

"Thank you for your response. I will let you know if the situation does not improve." (Waste)

"Thank you very much for all your assistance, it is appreciated. I have now seen the new signs, they are very good." (Municipal and Service Improvement Officer)

"I am more than happy with the swift response and the way in which you dealt with my complaint." (Municipal)

Offering Praise

This year, the Concerns and Complaints Form was amended, in order to give the Public an opportunity to offer praise about the Council's staff and its services. This change has been very positive, see below some of the observations that have been received. When such observations are received, they are forwarded to the relevant service with a requirement for them to be forwarded to the staff. Arrangements are underway to create space on the Intranet to celebrate such successes.

"Front-line staff collect our Recycling in all weathers and in all temperatures. I appreciate their work." (Waste and Recycling)

"Geraint and his colleague on the Scarab cleaned the road and the pavement very effectively near Mynydd Bangor today. It is now a pleasure to step outside through the front door." (Highways and Municipal)

"A big thank you for cleaning the road between Corris and Aberllefenni." (Highways and Municipal)

"An excellent Library Service. We have started to read much more as a result" (Libraries Service)

"Our road is being kept clean, and if any gutters are blocked, we only need to contact and they are cleaned immediately." (Highways and Municipal)

"The customer service in Bangor Library is excellent. Everyone is so enthusiastic and ready to help." (Libraries Service)

"I forgot to put my green bin out today, and the Waste collector went to the trouble of looking inside the bin and emptying it. An excellent service." (Waste and Recycling)

"The lights in the Tai Cynhaeaf area have been recently replaced with LEDs. I understand that these use less energy and thus create savings to the Council and to the environment. I have also noticed that these lights light the road much better." (Street Lighting)

"Excellent new weightlifting equipment in Dolgellau. Excellent holiday programmes for children in Tywyn. The staff need to be applauded. " (Leisure Service)

"An excellent service, as one of your staff went out of his way to help me." (Waste and Recycling)

IMPROVING OUR SERVICES BY LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS 2016-17



67

formal complaints during
the year

84%

response time of 20 days

received a prompt
response



average response
time

11.6

days

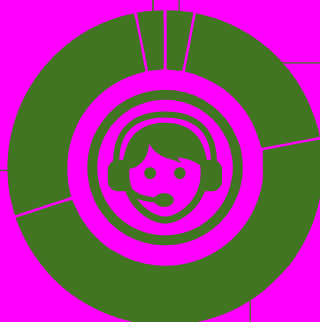
Language and
Equality issues
3%

Staff Conduct
3%

19%
Mistakes/
incorrect actions

27%
Unhappy with a decision

48%
Lack of response/action



"Thank you for your response, I am very happy with the solution."

"Thank you very much for all your support, it's much appreciated"



"I'm very happy with the early response and the way you dealt with my complaint."

Please tell us if something has gone wrong,
we are here to help

cwynion@gwynedd.llyw.cymru



TITLE	Annual Report on the administration of complaints by the Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department during 2016-2017
PURPOSE	Present an overview of complaints received during 2016-17
AUTHOR	Geraint Wyn Jones Customer Care Officer (Adults) Safeguarding and Quality Unit (Adults)
CABINET MEMBER	Councillor W Gareth Roberts
DATE	May 2017

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with the Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 and the Representations Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 which came into force on the 1st of August 2014, it is required that the Director of Social Services produces an annual report on the methods used to investigate and address complaints received by the service. The report is produced by the Customer Care Officer on behalf of the Director of Social Services.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide information on the reasons for and the number of complaints received during the year and also includes the steps taken to resolve those complaints by the Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department. The report also includes a summary of the lessons learned and the steps taken to address those lessons arising from the complaints that were received.

2. Context

- 2.1 Throughout the year, the Customer Care Officer (Adults) within the Customer Care and Information Unit deals with the administration of the complaints procedure. During the final quarter of the year, the Customer Care Officer (Adults) became a member of the new Safeguarding and Quality Unit (Adults).

3. Access to the Complaints Process

- 3.1 When an individual contacts the Customer Care Officer it is usually in connection to being dissatisfied with the service provided by the Department and making an official complaint is often the last resort. The Officer concentrates on ensuring that the Complaints Procedure is easily accessible so that individuals are aware of their right to be heard. In order to achieve this goal, information about the Complaint Procedure is widely shared in a number of formats, such as leaflets, on-line and in an "easy-read" format. All the information is available in both Welsh and English so that the complainant can choose their preferred language when making a

complaint. Facilities such as Braille, other languages and advocacy services are also available to ensure that the Complaints Procedure is accessible to all. The information leaflets are regularly updated by the Information Officer.

Complainant's preferred language used to make a complaint/enquiry during 2016/2017			
	Welsh	English	Number of complaints
Enquiries and Informal Complaints	41	79	120
Stage 1	9	26	35
Stage 2	0	2	2
Ombudsman	0	0	0
Corporate Complaints	1	2	3

4. Matters recorded as Enquiries

- 4.1 The aim is to respond to each complaint fairly, impartially and respectfully, so that every individual can be confident that their complaint will be treated with professionally in a positive way, rather than in a negative manner. In many cases, where the complainant has chosen not to make an official complaint and follow the Complaints Procedure, the matter is dealt with as an enquiry or informal complaint. An example of this would be a letter from a Member of Parliament or Local Councillor expressing dissatisfaction or asking for an answer to a specific question.
- 4.2 By responding positively at an early stage, a significant number of matters can be resolved without the need to use the Complaints Procedure. Without doubt, resolving these issues quickly provides the best outcome for all concerned.

TABLE 1. Enquiries and Informal Complaints received in 2016-2017							
	<i>Adults</i>	<i>In House Provider</i>	<i>Business</i>	<i>Housing</i>	<i>External Provider</i>	<i>Multi Service</i>	Total
<i>Solicitors</i>	3		1				4
<i>Ombudsman</i>							
<i>Local Members</i>	4	2	1				7
<i>Members of Parliament/Assembly</i>	12	1		1	1		15
<i>Service Users</i>	8	1		1	2	1	13
<i>Relatives</i>	19	22	14		2	2	59
<i>Members of the Public</i>	5	1		1			7
<i>Advocates</i>	3						3

<i>Other Agencies/</i>	4	2	2				8
<i>Disabled Parking Bay Applicants</i>				2			2
<i>Other Local Authorities</i>							
<i>Social Workers</i>	2						2
<i>Older People's Commissioner</i>							
<i>Welsh Language Commissioner</i>							
<i>Information Commissioner</i>							
<i>Provider</i>							
TOTAL	60	29	18	5	5	3	120

5. Stage 1 – Social Services Statutory Complaints Procedure – Local Resolution

- 5.1 Every effort is made to respond to and resolve complaints to the satisfaction of the complainant and the Service. A local resolution of the complaint is obviously the method which provides the best outcome, and this is done by investing time and effort at the early stages of a complaint. However, if the complainant decides to make a formal complaint, contact is made with the complainant and/or their representative, either by telephone, email or face-to-face in order to attempt to resolve the complaint. During the past few years, the Customer Care Officers have fostered a close relationship between themselves and the teams, managers and the legal department within Social Services to facilitate the efficient resolution of complaints. This is reflected in the very small number of complaints which progress to Stage 2 of the Complaint Procedure.

6. Stage 2 – Social Services Statutory Complaints Procedure – Formal Investigation by an Independent Investigator

- 6.1 By upholding the principal of concentrating on successfully resolving complaints early and efficiently at the local stage (Stage 1), the progression of complaints to Stage 2 (Formal Investigation) in order to resolve the matter in question is a rare occurrence in Gwynedd. In comparison to other Local Authorities in North Wales, the evidence shows that Gwynedd have the fewest number of complaints that have been progressed to Stage 2, which reflects on the emphasis given by the Customer Care Officer on effectively resolving complaints at Stage 1.

During 2016/2017, only two requests were received to progress a complaint

from Stage 1 to Stage 2 of the Social Services Complaints Procedure. One of these requests was resolved before the Stage 2 investigation process had commenced, therefore this complaint was considered to have been resolved at Stage 1. The second complaint was referred to an Independent Investigator in order to conduct an investigation, and the result is expected to be available during the first quarter of 2017/2018.

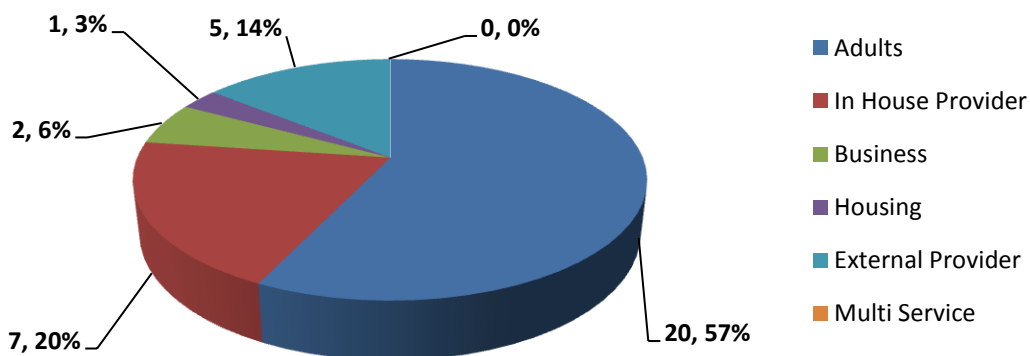
7. Complaints referred to the Public Services Ombudsman

- 7.1 If a complaint has not been resolved to the complainant's satisfaction following an investigation at Stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure, the complainant has a right to escalate the complaint to the Public Services Ombudsman, the Welsh Language Commissioner, or the Commissioner for Equality and Human Rights. The applicable authority depends on the nature of the complaint to be resolved.
- 7.2 No complaints at Stage 2 were escalated to the Ombudsman during 2016/2017.
- 7.3 Please see below a comparison of the number of complaints that followed the Social Services Complaints Procedure during 2015/2016 and 2016/2017.

TABLE 2 Social Services Statutory Complaints Procedure 2015-2016							
	Adults	In House Provider	Business	Housing	External Provider	Multi Service	Total
Stage 1	18	9	4		1	3	34
Stage 2							
Ombudsman	1						1
Total							35

TABLE 2 Social Services Statutory Complaints Procedure 2016-2017							
	Adults	In House Provider	Business	Housing	External Provider	Multi Service	Total
Stage 1	20	7	2	1	5		35
Stage 2	2						2
Ombudsman							
Total							37

Stage 1 Complaints - 2016/2017



8. Adherence to the Timetable for Responding to Complaints under the Statutory Complaints Procedure

- 8.1 The Local Authority has a duty to report on the methods used to investigate and resolve complaints with the timescales laid out in the Guidance and Regulations.

TABLE 3 Social Services Complaints Procedure – Resolution and Response Performance 2016/2017						
Stage 1						
<i>Complaints received less than 12 months after the incident occurred</i>	<i>Complaints received more than 12 months after the incident occurred</i>	<i>Complaints acknowledged within 2 working days</i>	<i>Discussion held to resolve the complaint within 10 working days</i>	<i>Decision notified to the complainant within 5 days of the date of discussion</i>	<i>Response time extended</i>	<i>Average number of days extended before providing a response</i>
35	0	35	30	30	5	7
Stage 2						
<i>Number of complaints acknowledged within 5 working days</i>	<i>Number of responses received from the Independent Investigator within 25 working days</i>		<i>Number of responses postponed due to exceptional circumstances</i>		<i>Number of responses completed within 6 months</i>	
1	1		1		1	

9. Gwynedd Council Complaints Procedure

- 9.1 Some of the complaints received during the year fell outside the scope of the Social Services Complaints Procedure. These complaints were addressed under the Gwynedd Council Corporate Complaints Policy. Not all complaints received were brought to the attention of the Customer Care Officer as some will have been dealt with directly by the team/service concerned.
- 9.2 Some examples of this type of complaint: a member of the public complaining about a decision made by the Housing Service that they are not entitled to social housing; spelling and grammatical errors in official documents; an owner occupier asking for advice on boiler repairs and central heating.

TABLE 4 Gwynedd Council Corporate Complaints received during 2016-2017							
	<i>Adults</i>	<i>Provider Unit</i>	<i>Business</i>	<i>Housing</i>	<i>External Provider</i>	<i>Multi Service</i>	Total
<i>Stage 1</i>	2			1			3
<i>Stage 2</i>							
<i>Ombudsman</i>							
Total	2			1			3

10. Learning Lessons and Identifying Trends within Complaints

- 10.1 A quarterly report is presented to the Adults, Health and Wellbeing Senior Management Team. This presents an opportunity to analyse each complaint and to identify lessons to be learned so that the service that we offer can be continually improved.
- 10.2 The Senior Management Team include the lessons to be learned in their ongoing work plans and any training needs arising are also identified. As recommended in the recent Internal Audit of the complaints handling procedure by the Department, a 'lessons to be learned' log has been created. The Customer Care Officer shares the log with Senior Managers at the end of each quarter in order to notify them of the lessons learned that need to be addressed. The log is updated regularly to include any information on actions taken in connection with the lessons. This recording method will be a more effective way of identifying the lessons to be learned and to monitor the progress made in implementing these improvements.

Please see the Complaints Log in this report for more information (pages 9-12 of this document).

10.3 Themes arising from Enquiries and Complaint – Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department

- 10.3a **Concerns about difficulties encountered in arranging home care in rural areas in Gwynedd** – During the first half of 2016/2017, the Customer Care Unit received several enquiries and expressions of concern about the availability of home care services to Service Users in rural areas of Gwynedd. The main problems were concentrated in the South Meirionnydd area and it was also identified that lack of home care provision in the Dwyfor area was also becoming an issue. The Unit received 5 complaints/concerns in connection with this issue during quarter 1 and quarter 2. On a positive note, no complaints or concerns were received about this issue in quarter 3 or quarter 4 of 2016/2017.
- 10.3b **Complaints and Enquiries in relation to payments due from Service Users towards the costs of home care and residential care** – A variety of complaints and enquiries were received about invoices issued to Service Users in connection with their assessed financial contribution towards the costs of their home and/or residential care. Several Service Users complained that the Service had not explained to them clearly that they were due to contribute to the costs of the services that they received. Other Service Users complained that the cost of the service has not been explained to them prior to the commencement of the care package. The complaints were identified as a lesson to be learned in providing more effective communication between Service Users and staff about the costs associated with care packages.

For example: A relative complained on behalf of a Service User that the Service User had not been informed that she was expected to pay a contribution towards the costs of her care once her period receiving care

under the Enablement Scheme had come to an end. As a result, the Service User refused to pay the invoice due.

11. Training and Awareness for Staff Members

- 11.1 An important role of the Customer Care Officer is to provide information and training to other staff on the Complaints Procedure so that they are aware of how the process works and of their role therein. To ensure that this training is offered to as wide a range of staff as possible, the Unit intends to move away from the traditional workshop model of training and towards using e-learning modules. The Unit hopes that this module will be ready to be delivered within the next few months.

12. Other Responsibilities

- 12.1 The Customer Care Officer (Adults) is also a member of the Disabled Parking Bay Panel, who are responsible for coordinating applications from the public for installing Disabled Parking Bays on roads outside their properties. The Panel meets every 3 months to discuss the applications received. The Customer Care Officer is responsible for dealing with all enquiries by telephone, letter and email, and assists the Administration Assistant on the Panel to communicate all decisions made by the Panel to all applicants following each Panel meeting.

13. Expressions of Thanks and Appreciation

- 13.1 It is also very important to record all instances of thanks and appreciation of the Service's work from Service Users and their families. Please see examples of the comments received on pages

<i>Adults</i>	<i>In House Provider</i>	<i>Business</i>	<i>Housing</i>	<i>External Provider</i>	<i>Multi Service</i>	Total
19	55	3	0	1	0	78

14. Work Plan for 2017-2018

- 14.1 Create and deliver an introductory course on the Complaints Procedure to staff on all levels by the use of an e-learning module and continue to offer traditional training methods to those staff who do not use IT systems
- 14.2 Act on the recommendations from the Agreed Work Plan that was drawn up as part of the Internal Audit of the Complaint Procedure in February 2017. To be completed by the end of August 2017.
- 14.3 Develop the IT system used for recording complaints (RESPOND) to improve the way we recognise lessons to be learned and to improve the monitoring of the work done to implement those lessons and improve service delivery.

Lessons Learned log derived from complaints received during 2016/17

Key:	SU - Service User ; SW - Social Worker								
Date complaint received	Ref No	Short description of the complaint	Lesson identified	Manager/Staff Involved	Responsible Senior Manager	Target Date for Actions	Date discussed by SMT	Management Team comments	Result of Actions Taken
03/05/2016	GC/3106-15	SU complained that it was not possible to report faults with the Telecare equipment during the weekends/out of hours.	Look at extending contact hours for the Telecare service in order to report faults during weekends and out of hours	Kim Warrington (Telecare Manager)	Rhion Glyn (Senior Business Manager)	As soon as possible			
10/06/2016	GC/3206-15	SU complained that the SW had not explained that she needed to contribute financially to the costs of her respite care	SW to provide a full explanation of the costs associated when discussing the possibility of starting respite care	Area Team Managers / Senior Practitioners	Mari Wynne Jones (Senior Enablement Manager)	As soon as possible		An information sheet has been produced (as part of the overall information leaflet about the service) for the SU to sign in order to verify that they understand that they will be required to contribute financially towards the costs of their care	A method has been developed to verify that the need to contribute financially towards the costs has been discussed and agreed with the SU before care begins
13/06/2016	GC/3246-15	SU assessed as needing an increase in his home care package, however the package could not be increased due to a general shortage of carers in the area (South Meirionnydd)	Identified a need for more home care to be made available in the South Meirionnydd area	Commissioning / Business Unit	Rhion Glyn (Senior Business Manager)	As soon as possible			Gwynedd and BCUHB are working on a joint Home Care project to establish a system where individual care providers will be responsible for providing care packages in defined areas of the county. There is also an intention to increase co-working between Social Workers, District Nurses and Occupational Therapists. A pilot project is underway in one area at the moment
21/06/2016	GC/3263-15	An SU's relative complained that she had no information about who to contact if a fault developed with her mother's Telecare equipment. No information provided by the SW	Ensure that all relevant contact details are given to SU's on installation of Telecare equipment	Kim Warrington (Telecare Manager)	Rhion Glyn (Senior Business Manager)	As soon as possible	Not applicable	Telecare Manager to ensure that an information sheet with all contact details is given to every SU when Telecare equipment is installed	Communicate the contact details for the Telecare service in a more efficient manner

28/06/2016	GC/3271-15	SU had been a resident at a Council owned residential home for long than was necessary because there was no SW available to make an assessment before being allowed to go home	Ensure that assessments can be completed in good time to avoid unnecessary periods of residence in residential homes/hospitals	Area Team Managers / Senior Practitioners	Mari Wynne Jones (Senior Enablement Manager)	As soon as possible		Ensure enhanced communication between staff at residential homes and BCUHB to identify individuals who are ready to leave the home/hospital. This would make the prioritising of assessments much easier.	Ensure enhanced communication between staff at residential homes and BCUHB to identify individuals who are ready to leave the home/hospital. This would make the prioritising of assessments much easier.
23/08/2016	GC/3369-15	Member of staff from BCUHB visited Plas Gwilym and asked to use the toilet. Noticed that there was no sink for hand washing or any hand sanitizer as an alternative	Hand washing facilities to always be available in every toilet	Mari Ellis Parker (Manager, Plas Gwilym)	Mari Wynne Jones (Enablement Senior Manager)	As soon as possible	Not applicable	Lesson to be cascaded amongst all Gwynedd residential home managers	Manager reported that hand washing facilities had been installed and hand sanitizer provided where there were no sinks
01/09/2016	GC/3386-15	Concern raised by local GP about the long wait for a reply to telephone calls to the Adults Advice and Assessment Team	SU had reported to the GP that they had to wait for long periods before getting through to the Adults Advice and Assessment Team	Mel Clarke (Adults Advice and Assessment Team Manager)	Mari Wynne Jones (Enablement Senior Manager)	As soon as possible		Senior Enablement Manager to hold discussions with the Senior Business Manager and Team Manager to establish the extent of any problems with staffing the telephone lines of this team	Administrative support now provided to the team. There is an intention to reorganise the contact arrangements with the Service by using the new 5-hub community system
14/09/2016	GC/3422-15	Family of SU complained that the staff had moved the SU to another room within the home without consultation with the family	Identified a need to communicate major changes in the living arrangements of SU's with the family where appropriate	Helen Jones (Manager, Llys Cadfan)	Gwenno Williams (In House Provider Senior Manager)	As soon as possible		Gwenno Williams to notify all Managers and staff for the need to communicate more effectively with families when required	All staff notified about the need to communicate matters that have a profound effect on SU's. Staff to assess when this would be appropriate as every situation is different
27/09/2016	GC/3450-15	A family member complained that the policy on charging interest on deferred charges for residential care fees had not been explained properly. Alleged that interest had been charged on the outstanding charges that would not have been accrued if the rules had been explained to him in full	Need identified to communicate the rules about charging interest on deferred charges clearly. Full information to be provided about deferred charges when the agreement is made to avoid misunderstandings in future	Nia Davies (Manager, Income and Welfare Unit)	Dafydd Tudur Jones (Financial Resources Manager)	As soon as possible		A review to be conducted of the information being provided in letters from the Income and Welfare Unit about the process of deferred charges and the policy on charging interest on these charges	

15/11/2016	GC/3500-16	Carer raised concerns that the residential home where his family member was receiving day care was not giving enough feedback on how she had been coping during her stay - not letting him know if she had refused a bath and no information about how well she had eaten. Also concerned that our recording of meetings were not detailed enough and that a member of CSSIW had not been invited.	Need identified to ensure that day care staff in homes communicate any problems that have arisen during periods in day care or respite care	Tracey Gardner (Manager, Hafod Mawddach)	Gwenno Williams (In House Provider Senior Manager)	As soon as possible		Staff have received explicit instructions to ensure that any problems that have arisen are communicated immediately to family and/or carers on the SU's return home from day care/respite care	Ensure enhanced communication between staff at residential homes and carers.
21/10/2016	GC/3459-15	Nursing home owner expressed concerns about the way a POVA meeting had been conducted. The meeting was chaired by a Gwynedd Council staff member. Owner believed that all the relevant issues had not been allowed to be discussed. He also stated that he did not believe that the proceedings had been fully recorded and complained that a member of CSSIW had not been invited to the meeting.	Need identified to review the arrangements and methods for recording proceedings from POVA meetings. At the present time, the POVA coordinator chairs the meetings and takes the minutes. Identified that there is a danger that some points from the discussion may get lost or mis-recorded. Also acknowledged that a staff member from CSSIW should be invited to every meeting in future.	Manon Williams (POVA Chair / Senior Practitioner)	Mari Wynne Jones (Enablement Senior Manager)	As soon as possible		Complaint was fully responded to in writing at stage 1 of the Complaints Procedure. A meeting was conducted with the complainant and the Enablement Senior Manager to further discuss his complaint. CSSIW have asked the Department to conduct another POVA investigation to cover all the other points that needed to be investigated.	Full consideration to be given to using administrative staff in future POVA meetings to record proceedings and take minutes. This would enable the Chair to concentrate fully on the proceedings. Ensure that CSSIW staff are invited to every relevant POVA meeting from now on

15/11/2016	GC/3540-16	An SU who is subject to a DOLS restriction order complained that forms and reports issued to her by the DOLS Coordinator had the wrong name on them and that the Senior Manager had not signed the forms in the correct place	Need identified to ensure that all DOLS documents are filled in correctly and are also grammatically correct before they are issued to families/carers	Kevin Griffiths (DOLS Coordinator)	Ceryl Davies (Learning Disabilities Senior Manager)	As soon as possible	Not applicable	Senior Manager has agreed a system whereby two members of staff will check all documents for errors before they are issued. Service Improvement Officer was also informed of this action.	System in place to verify the contents of documents by two members of staff before they are sent to the recipient
15/03/2017	GC/3734-16	SU complained that he had waited for a long period before a suitable shower seat had been installed at his home. There was a delay in ordering the seat and several types of seat were provided before the correct one was finally installed	Ensure that all orders for OT equipment are closely tracked to minimise delays in their installation	Area Team Managers / Senior Practitioners	Mari Wynne Jones (Enablement Senior Manager)	As soon as possible			
24/03/2017	GC/3811-16	A relative of a deceased SU complained that she had been given the wrong information about the extent of the estate's debt to Gwynedd Council	Ensure that the correct information is always available to answer financial queries of this nature in future	Huw Whyte (Client Assets Management Officer)	Dafydd Tudur Jones (Financial Resources Manager)	As soon as possible			
24/03/2017	GC/3811-16	A relative of a deceased SU complained that there were errors in invoices for residential care and that the invoices had been raised late	Ensure that all financial assessments are completed correctly and that all invoices are raised on time in order to aid the recovery of fees from SU's/	Nia Davies (Manager, Income and Welfare Unit)	Dafydd Tudur Jones (Financial Resources Manager)	As soon as possible			

INTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORT – 2016/2017

SOCIAL SERVICES COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELLBEING DEPARTMENT

1. Background

1.1 Following a recommendation submitted to the Cabinet by the Head of Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department, the complaints procedures of Social Services have been divided to coincide with the Children and Adults structure; a number of the audit findings apply to both departments. Welsh Government has published comprehensive guidance to enable Welsh councils to respond to these complaints. Additionally, listening to users' complaints coincides with Ffordd Gwynedd principles, namely to identify the needs of the users in order to shape and improve working arrangements and the service provided to the people of Gwynedd.

2. Purpose and Scope of Audit

2.1 The purpose of the audit was to ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for the Council to be able to deal with complaints effectively in a way which complies with the regulations and also by giving consideration to the implications of the procedure in terms of appointing independent investigators and securely maintaining the computer system.

3. Main Findings

3.1 The Department succeeds in investigating complaints effectively, and avoiding the need for the vast majority of investigations to escalate to 'step 2' investigation. However, it appears that they do not follow Welsh Government guidelines, and therefore are not taking advantage of opportunities to improve. By listening to the people of Gwynedd, a fundamental change can be made to the way the Department operates and the service can be improved from lessons learned.

3.1.1 It appears that a substantial number of enquiries reach the service that could have been discussed directly with the Unit manager to give them the opportunity to deal with the matters and learn from them. This does not mean that complaints would be turned away, rather it would change practice and culture between the services and the users.

3.1.2 Although there is some information available on the Council website regarding making a complaint and the procedure, there is the opportunity here to promote the new culture of Units using complaints to improve their service. Some of the information was also dated.

3.1.3 Contrary to Welsh Government guidelines, there is no evidence that complaints are discussed with the users at meetings or in formal telephone conversations before closing the complaint. Following investigations, meetings are arranged to discuss the way forward after closing the complaint. It was seen that the content of telephone conversations are confirmed in the formal letter which closes complaints.

3.1.4 Formal letters are being used to explain why the Council is not at fault rather than acknowledging and apologising for misconduct or a mistake. Similarly, no solutions are offered in relation to the users' dissatisfaction with the service. When a complaint is made about any action that is in accordance with policies, no consideration has been given to investigating the suitability of the policies, in order to improve the service for the user.

3.1.5 The management team discusses an overview of the complaints meaning that some complaints are overlooked while only the matters which come up more than once receive attention. Once a discussion is held on the matters arising, there is no follow-up on progress at the next meeting, and therefore there is no full assurance that the agreed actions have been implemented.

4. Audit Opinion

(B) Partial assurance can be expressed of the propriety of the Social Services Complaints Procedure as there are controls in place, but there are aspects where some arrangements could be tightened. The Customer Care Unit is committed to implementing the following steps to mitigate the risks highlighted:

- ☐ Meet as appropriate as each case demands.
- ☐ Look at the wording of letters and consider the reader.
- ☐ Create a Lessons Learnt Log and administer it continuously.
- ☐ Propose suggestions in the complaints form to managers, and also mention them in the e-mail sent.
- ☐ Include every complaint in the quarterly report to the Department Management Team.
- ☐ Regularly provide a summary of enquiries to relevant managers and senior managers.
- ☐ Include a follow up to the lessons log at the meetings of the Department Management Team to confirm that action is being implemented.
- ☐ Encourage managers to come up with different options with the support of the Department's Management Team.

Examples of Thanks and Appreciation received during 2016/2017

Ref	Short description	Category	Unit / Team
GC/3142-15	"As a professional it give me reassurance that I can rely on your team to always provide the highest standard of service, therefore I would like to thank you all for your dedication and wonderful care you provide."	Thanks	Learning Disability Team (Arfon)
GC/3231-15	"I would just like to thank the Dolgellau Adult Social Services team who provided supportive, friendly and professional service/advice to both me and my father over the final few years of his life. In particular Tesni Rowlands and Nia Owen were outstanding in the way they helped maintain and support my father's home care and in tackling the very difficult interaction with NHS Continuing Care. Please could this thanks be passed on to them and acknowledged by their managers as I know the department has been operating under very difficult financial conditions and they did an outstanding job for my father. I was most impressed with all they did and all interactions I had with them"	Thanks	Elderly Adults Team (Meirionnydd)
GC/3245-15	I have received a telephone call from Mrs XX who reports that she is now independent and happy for the care package to come to an end. She wished to thank all the staff for the care she had received and praised the carers for their work with her.	Thanks	In-House Provider Unit
GC/3266-15	I wanted to thank you for your help with the changes to my bathroom and for the handrail and lever taps. The changes to the bathroom especially have made such a difference for me. It is wonderful to be able to shower whenever I want to, no matter how I am feeling or how much pain I am in. There is also more room in there now which also makes it much easier when I am in more pain. The handrail being on the right hand side of the stairs now makes it much easier for me to get up and down. Being able to use both handrails when I am having a particulary bad day really helps	Thanks	Occupational Therapy Service
GC/3390-15	The Enablement service for Mrs XX has now come to an end following the recent visit. Mrs XX wished for me to pass on her thanks for the service that she had received and wanted to state that all the carers had been very kind to her.	Thanks	In-House Provider Unit
GC/3458-15	"He has phoned up to thank you for all the hard work and support you have provided for his family and especially his father. He wanted you to be recognised for the "good work" that you do and wanted me to highlight how pleased he is with the care his dad is receiving. He wanted me to pass this on to you and your managers"	Thanks	In-House Provider Unit
GC/3519-16	"I will never forget the exceptional care that my aunt received from your team of carers. Thank you very much"	Thanks	In-House Provider Unit
GC/3529-16	"...thank you very much for all the support that I have received from you. The help that you have given me has been exceptional. You are always ready to help me. You are kind, thoughtful and work very hard. Thanks to you, I have tried to increase my confidence in the buddi system which has helped me very much. It was excellent that your carers took the time to lead me through the process of using it without any complaints when I asked questions. "	Thanks	Telecare

Ref	Short Description	Category	Stage	Unit / Team	Outcome
Adults, Health and Wellbeing – Examples of Complaints and Enquiries received during 2016/2017					
GC/3106-15	A Service User's relative contacted the Department to complain that there is no emergency service for out of hours periods in order to resolve urgent problems with Telecare Equipment. An installed fire alarm had been ringing throughout the weekend with no way to switch it off.	Service Quality	Stage 1 Complaint	Telecare (Care and Repair)	Explained to the complainant that the Telecare service currently is only available during office hours, but that a review of the service was due very soon. The issue was passed on to the appropriate Manager for further consideration and logged as a lesson to be learned.
GC/3119-15	Service User wished to complain that he had not been assigned a new Social Worker after he had requested that his current worker be replaced.	Staff Performance	Stage 1 Complaint	Mental Health Team	The Mental Health Team contacted the Service User to confirm that a new Social Worker would be appointed to his case by the end of the week.
GC/3150-15	Service User's daughter complained that staff members had not informed her that a pre-planned meeting with her mother's Social Worker had been cancelled as the Social Worker was unwell and unable to attend. A complaint about the lack of communication.	Lack of communication Staff Performance	Stage 1 Complaint	Elderly Adults Team	Senior Practitioner had telephoned the Service User earlier that day to notify her of the cancellation and had received a positive response. The Service User had forgotten that she had received the telephone call and had not informed her daughter that the meeting had been postponed. An important lesson learned from this case was the need to contact family members (where appropriate) to cancel meetings if the Service User is suffering from memory problems.
GC/3156-15	Service User's relative complained of the lack of day care places available for elderly people in the Bangor area. The family had not been able to arrange regular day care for her mother.	Access to Services	Enquiry	Elderly Adults Team	An apology was given for the relatively small number of day care places available in the Bangor area at that time, and assurance was given that the Department would continue to assist the family to source regular day care.
GC/3178-15	Service User's daughter complained about a decision by a Residential Home to ask her to move to another home due to inappropriate behaviour towards the other residents. There was evidence of anti-social behaviour by the Service User.	Service Provision	Stage 1 Complaint	In-House Provision Elderly Adults Team	Several multi-disciplinary meetings were held with the family over a 3-month period to attempt to resolve the situation. This was a particularly complex case as the Service User was an especially vulnerable adult and the families of other Service Users had also complained to the Department about her behaviour towards their relatives. Measures were put in place to protect the Service User and other residents, which eventually resolved the complaint to the complainant's satisfaction.
GC/3181-1	Service User's relative asked not to be asked to pay an invoice for their contribution towards the costs of care at a Nursing Home due to accusations of mis-treatment having been made. A POVA	Control of Financial Resources	Enquiry	Income and Welfare Unit	A decision on this enquiry was made at the conclusion of the POVA investigation, which found that there was no evidence of mis-treatment by the Nursing Home staff. Subsequently, it was decided that the invoice for the costs would still be payable by the Service User.

	investigation was ongoing at the time.				
GC/3204-15	Carer complained that a lack of service provision by the Department for his step-son was having a negative effect on his own life	Service Provision	Stage 1 Complaint	Learning Disabilities Team	This complaint was addressed by offering the carer and his step-son a full assessment of their needs so that an appropriate service could then be implemented. All offers were rejected by the carer and step-son after lengthy and detailed discussions. The case is still open to the Learning Disabilities Team.
GC/3206-15	A Service User's relative asked not to be liable to pay an invoice for respite care. The relative stated that the Social Worker had informed the family that the Service User would not be charged for respite care and had accepted the offer of respite care on this understanding.	Lack of communication	Enquiry	Elderly Adults Team	The investigation into the complaint concluded that not all the relevant information had been given to the complainant about the possible costs associated with respite care. The invoice for £1994.18 was waived. It was identified that this case presented an important lesson to be learned, which was the need to communicate costs associated to particular services clearly to the Service User and their families before the care commences.
GC/3213-15	A complaint by a Service User that there was no home care available to give assistance to him in the mornings.	Service Provision	Stage 1 Complaint	Elderly Adults Team	Explanation and apology given, along with assurances that efforts were constantly being made to source a care provider to start the service. Also explained that there is a shortage of carers available in his area of the county.
GC/3215-15	A relative complained on behalf of a Service User that she had not been informed of the requirement to pay for home care at the end of a period of Enablement. Not willing to pay for the service.	Lack of communication	Stage 1 Complaint	Elderly Adults Team Income and Welfare Unit	Evidence exists of communication from the Social Worker and the Income and Welfare Unit with the family to explain that the service would be chargeable once the period of Enablement care had come to an end. Request to cancel the invoice refused by letter to the complainant.
GC/3246-15	Service User from South Meirionnydd complained that the planned increase in her home care package was unable to be implemented due to a shortage of available staff/care providers in the area.	Service Provision	Stage 1 Complaint	Elderly Adults Team Commissioning	Letter written to the Service User by the Senior Business Manager to explain that there is a shortage of available home care provision in the area. Apologies given for this and assurances that the Department are treating her case as a priority. Shortly after the complaint was received, extra hours had been sourced so that the hours provided could be increased.

MEETING	Cabinet
DATE OF MEETING	18th of July 2017
TITLE OF ITEM	Annual Report on the handling of complaints by the Children and Family Support Department for 2016-2017
PURPOSE	To present an overview of the complaints received during 2016-2017
AUTHOR	Marian Parry Hughes
CABINET MEMBER	Dilwyn Morgan

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with the Social Services Complaints Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 and the Representation Procedure (Wales) Regulations 2014 which came to force on the 1 August, 2014 it is a requirement on the Director of Social Services to produce an annual report on the performance of the handling and investigation of complaints within the service. The report is produced by the Customer Care Officer on behalf of the Director of Social Services.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide information on the numbers and reasons for the complaints received during the year and to include their resolution by the Children and Family Support Department. Also it includes a summary of the lessons learned and actions taken in relation to the complaints it received.

2. Context

- 2.1 During April 2017, restructuring within the Adult, Health and Wellbeing Department resulted in the Customer Care and Information Unit being disbanded. The Customer Care Officer for the Adult, Health and Wellbeing Department moved to be managed by the Senior Manager Safeguarding, Quality and Mental Health. The Customer Care Officer for the Children and Family Support Department moved to be managed by the Senior Safeguarding and Quality Manager.

Throughout the year all complaints are managed by the Customer Care Officer. Even though they are based within the Service, it is important to state that they will be seen as independent to ensure that the complaints are dealt with in accordance with the Social Services Complaints Procedure.

3. Access to the Complaints Procedure

- 3.1 When a person contacts the Customer Care Officer they invariably have an issue concerning the Departments' service and usually the making of a complaint is their last resort. Therefore the Officer's focus is on ensuring easy

access to the Complaints Procedure so that they are aware of their right to be heard. To this end information regarding the complaint process is well publicised and accessible in a variety of formats e.g. leaflets, online and Easy Read. All information is available in Welsh and English so that the complainant can choose their preferred language. Other arrangements such as braille or other languages can be provided. Advocacy or other support is available to the complainant in their preferred language to assist during the progress through the Complaints Procedure. Information leaflets are continually being revised and updated.

Language of choice by Complainant to make an enquiry/complaint during 2016-2017			
	Welsh	English	Total Complaint
Enquiries and Informal Complaint	1	31	32
Stage 1		12	12
Stage 2			
Ombudsman		1	1
Corporate Complaint		4	4

4. Matters recorded as Enquiries

- 4.1 The aim is to respond to each complaint with fairness, impartiality and respect so that the individual has confidence that their complaint will be dealt with professionally and in a positive manner. Matters are often dealt with as enquiries or informal complaints when the individual chooses not to follow a Complaints Procedure. An example of this would be a letter from a Member of Parliament or local Councillor who wishes to express dissatisfaction or needs a specific answer to a question.
- 4.2 By responding positively at this early stage of a complaint/enquiry some issues can be resolved effectively without implementing the Complaints Procedure. This is clearly the best outcome for all involved

TABLE 1. Enquiries and Informal Complaints	
	<i>Children and Family Support</i>
<i>Solicitors</i>	2
<i>Ombudsman</i>	1
<i>Local members</i>	8
<i>Members of Parliament or Assembly Members</i>	3
<i>Service Users</i>	0
<i>Relative</i>	15
<i>The Public</i>	2
<i>Foster Carer</i>	0
<i>Other Agent e.g. advocacy service</i>	1
<i>Disabled Parking Spaces Applicants</i>	0
<i>Other counties</i>	0
<i>Social Worker</i>	0
<i>Older People's Commissioner</i>	0
<i>Welsh Language Commissioner</i>	0

<i>Information Commissioner</i>	0
<i>Provider Agencies</i>	0
Total	32

5. Stage 1 – Social Services Statutory Complaints Procedure – Local Resolution

- 5.1 Every effort is made to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of the complainant and the Service. Obviously a resolution is the best outcome for all involved and this can be achieved by investing time and effort at an early stage. However if the complainant makes the decision to make a formal complaint then the usual approach is to arrange a telephone or face-to-face contact with the complainant or with a representative of the complainant in an attempt to resolve the matter. Over the years, the Customer Care Officer have successfully managed to establish close working links with the teams, managers and the legal section as a means of discussing and resolving issues. This is reflected in the low number of complaints reaching Stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure.

It is fair to say that there has been a clear trend over the past 3 years, that the Children and Family Support Department have not had a complaint escalate to Stage 2. This is down to the professionalism the Team Managers and Senior Managers show when dealing with complainants; they understand the importance of a local resolution and by discussing directly with the complainant they are able to address matters as soon as possible. This will ensure that the Social Worker is able to continue working alongside the family in the best interest of the child/young person.

6. Stage 2 – Social Services Statutory Complaints Procedure – Formal Investigation

- 6.1 By successfully following the ethos of focusing on early and local resolution and on tackling issues quickly and effectively it has reduced the need to reach Stage 2 – formal investigation of the Complaints Procedure in order to resolve issues. In comparison with other Local Authorities in North Wales, it is understood that Gwynedd have been successful in managing complaints at Stage 1 whereas other Local Authorities have a higher proportion of complaints progress to Stage 2.
- 6.2 Should a complainant wish to escalate a complaint to Stage 2, they are asked to provide a full account of their complaint along with their desired outcomes; this will form the basis for what is known as a Stage 2 investigation. This investigation is conducted by two independent individuals, they are known as Independent Investigating Officer and an Independent Person. Their role is to meet with the complainant, interview relevant staff members and view social care files. They will then produce a report of their findings along with recommendations for the Department. It is up to the Department then to respond directly to the complainant regarding the content of the report.

7. Complaint referred to the Public Services Ombudsman

- 7.1 If a complaint is not resolved at Stage 2 then the complainant has the right to complain to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales or the Welsh Language Commissioner or the Equality and Human Rights Commission depending on the nature of the complaint.
- 7.2 There was 1 Ombudsman enquiry during 2016-17. A complainant had contacted the Ombudsman as they were unhappy with the Department's response and refusal to escalate their complaint to the Stage 2 of the Social Services Complaints procedure. The Department provided the Ombudsman with a full explanation of the circumstances along with relevant documentation. The Ombudsman consequently decided not to investigate the complaint which they noted in their letter dated the 28th of October 2016 and 31st of January 2017. The matter was therefore closed by the Department.

It is noted that whilst this case was closed in 2016/17 the matter has been subsequently reopened by the Ombudsman and will feature in our 2017/18 annual report.

TABLE 2. Social Services Statutory Complaints Procedure 2016-2017	
<i>Children and Family Support</i>	
<i>Stage 1</i>	12
<i>Stage 2</i>	0
<i>Ombudsman</i>	1
Total	13

8. Adherence to the Statutory Complaints Procedure Response Time-scale

- 8.1 The Local Authority is obliged to provide information on its performance in the handling and investigation of complaints within the timetable stated in the Regulations and Guidance.

TABLE 3 Social Services Statutory Complaints Procedure Response Performance 2016-2017						
Stage 1						
<i>Complaints received within 12 months of the incident</i>	<i>Complaints received 12 months after the incident</i>	<i>Acknowledged within 2 days</i>	<i>Discussion to reach resolution within 10 days</i>	<i>Informed of Resolution within 5 days</i>	<i>Respond time is extended</i>	<i>Average days extended</i>
12	0	12	11	11	1	10
Stage 2						
<i>No. acknowledged in 5 days</i>	<i>No. Response received in 25 working days</i>		<i>No. delayed in exceptional circumstances</i>		<i>No. Completed within 6 months</i>	
0	0		0		0	

9. Gwynedd Council Complaints Procedure

- 9.1 Complaints regarding matters that are outside the remit of the Social Services Complaints Procedure are dealt with under the Gwynedd Corporate Complaints Policy. These complaints will involve other duties of the Departments e.g. Housing. Examples of general complaints are: - a neighbour complaining about the way a care provider parked their car; a private home owner asking for advice on central heating and boiler repairs.
- 9.2 During 2016/17 it has been agreed that all future complaints received by the Adult, Health and Wellbeing Customer Care Officer and the Children and Family Support Customer Care Officer will be addressed under the Social Services Complaints Procedure only. This is to avoid any confusion for the complainant. Therefore in our 2017/18 report we will not have any complaints addressed under the Gwynedd Corporate Complaints Policy.

	<i>Children and Supporting Families</i>	Total
<i>Stage 1</i>	4	4
<i>Stage 2</i>		
<i>Ombudsman</i>		
Total	4	4

10. Learning Lessons and Trends Identified - see Appendix 1

- 10.1 A quarterly report to present the complaints performance is presented to the Head of Children and Family Support Department. This presents an opportunity to analyse each complaint and to discuss and learn from them so as to improve the service they offer.

10.2 **Complaints Trends - Children and Family Support Department**

The Children and Family Support Department work daily with a wide range of different families. Some families may have contacted the Department to ask for assistance for example if their child has a disability. The most common reason why families are brought to the attention of the Department is due to concerns over a child or young person's welfare and safety.

It is within the nature of a Social Worker's role to encounter tension or conflict by families. Social Workers have to make very tough decisions and family members might not be happy. The Department understands and accepts that family members may be unsatisfied leading them to make a formal complaint against the Social Worker. It is up to the Team Manager then to ascertain if there is any foundation to the complaint and try and come to a resolution as quickly as possible in the best interest of the child/young person.

Unsatisfied with Social Worker

Many of the complaints received during this year have been regarding the Social Worker. Individuals weren't satisfied with what they considered the Social Worker's professionalism, with their actions and the decisions made.

There isn't a clear trend across the board. All complaints are individual to the case. Most complainants clearly state they wish to complain about their Social Worker. In accordance with the Complaints Procedure, the Team Manager must discuss the complaint with the complainant. It is clear that this method works. Through discussion the Team Manager is able to address any issues directly with the complainant and in most cases it can be resolved over the phone. In most cases it is miscommunication or misunderstanding. Once matters are explained fully the complainant is happy to carry on working with their Social Worker in the best interest of the children.

Complainants and Parental Expectation

It is difficult to address complaints from families who feel the Service should do more to support them, believe they should be having more Service/contact and that their children be returned to their care. Expectations from parents of what the Service can offer is high, if they feel that they have been failed by the Service in anyway they will make a complaint.

Of course, in some instances, there is a place for the Service to do more. However, it is difficult to find a resolution when opinions differ. The Team Managers along with the Senior Managers work with the complainants to understand the reasons behind any decisions made, giving the complainant a chance to express any concerns and address them best they can.

It is clear that communication is important, the way things are explained to families at the beginning is critical to ensuring that they understand why the Service do what they do, can offer what they can and why in some cases they are unable to offer any Services at all.

11. Training and Awareness for Staff

- 11.1 An important part of Customer Care duty is to provide training for staff regarding the Complaints Procedure so that staff are fully aware of the procedure and are confident of their role within it. To ensure that training reaches all staff the training delivery will move away from the traditional workshop session to an e-Learning Module. This should improve accessibility and reduce the associated costs of holding traditional sessions. The Customer Care Officer for Adult, Health and Wellbeing Department is leading on this project.

12. Other duties

- 12.1 The Customer Care for Children and Family Support Department not only

deals with complaints and enquiries but also with requests for information in response to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998. These requests can be from the Police, Solicitors, Health Board and Local Authorities as well as from individuals. In accordance with these Acts there are definite timetables to adhere to. The decision on what information is appropriate for release is skilful work and at times emotionally challenging. The Officer dealing with requests for information is required to spend large amounts of time on some of the more complex requests that we receive. This means that significant numbers of hours are used to ensure that the requests for information are answered within timescale.

- 12.2 It is predicted that the numbers of request for information under the Data Protection Act will be higher during 2017/18 in comparison to 2016/17 as the CPS expect the Police to request information from Social Services for every case involving a child/young person. This Policy was changed during October 2016.

TABLE 5. Application for information during 2016-2017	
Freedom of Information Act 2000 Request	69
Data Protection Act 1998 Request	161

13. Expressions of Gratitude - see Appendix 2

- 13.1 It is also important to acknowledge and record the expressions of gratitude that have been received from our service users and their families.

TABLE 6. Expressions of Gratitude during 2016-2017	71
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APPENDIX 1 – EXAMPLES OF COMPLAINTS AND REPRESENTATIONS DURING 2016/17

Ref	Short Description	Category	Stage	Unit / Team	Outcome
Children and Family Support Department					
GC/3238-15	Grandmother wanted to make a complaint against her grandson's social worker. Her grandson had moved back with his father, this decision was made without consulting her and she felt comments made by the social worker were unfair and unprofessional.	Staff Performance	Stage 1 Complaint	Children's Team	Team Manager contacted Grandmother by phone to discuss complaint. As father has Parental Responsibility and child asked to move back in with dad, the Department could only advise the Grandmother to get legal advice if she was unhappy with the situation. Department had no concerns for the child to live with father. Senior Operational Manager also spoke to the Grandmother over the phone, reiterated advice given. This was also confirmed in a letter and the complaint was closed.
GC/3264-15	Mother unhappy with advice given by Social Worker with regards to father having contact with child. Not happy that the Department is involved, believes several reports are incorrect, and miscommunication with regards to parenting course.	Staff Performance Contact arrangements Miscommunication	Informal Complaint	Derwen Service	Derwen Service Manager contacted mother twice to discuss the matters raised within her letter. Full explanation of the situation was explained to mother, it was clear that a misunderstanding had occurred. A letter confirming the discussion was sent out by the Senior Operational Manager – Resources and the complaint was closed.
GC/3265-15	Mother wanted to make a complaint, she was due contact with daughter on Saturday. Had not heard anything, and wanted to make plans. Found out the Social Worker was on holiday. Was told her daughter did not want contact. Not happy that the Social Worker had not contacted her sooner and also wasn't happy that the contact was not going ahead.	Contact Arrangements	Stage 1 Complaint	Children's Team	Team Manager contacted mother several times, and was unsuccessful. Social Worker was able to get hold of mother, explained the reasons why contact had been cancelled as daughter did not want contact with mother. Agreed to speak with daughter further regarding contact to ascertain her wishes. She was satisfied with the discussion, and did not wish to pursue the complaint further. Matter was closed.
GC/3317-15	Mother was not invited to her daughters LAC Review	LAC Review	Stage 1 Complaint	Independent Reviewing Officer	Senior Safeguarding and Quality Manager spoke with the mother on several occasions and wrote to her twice regarding her complaint. It was agreed that a meeting would be arranged between the mother and the Service and a meeting between the mother and the Independent Reviewing Officer to discuss her daughter's case. The matter was resolved through discussion and

APPENDIX 1 – EXAMPLES OF COMPLAINTS AND REPRESENTATIONS DURING 2016/17

					complaint was closed.
GC/3363-15	Father unhappy that his daughter's name was placed on the Child Protection register without meeting her; felt staff working with his son in prison had ulterior motives.	Staff Performance Communication	Stage 1 Complaint	Youth Offending Team	Youth Offending Team Manager spoke to the complainant, and wrote him two letters. A meeting was also held between all individuals working with his son in order for him to understand everyone's role and responsibilities. The reason for putting his daughter's name was placed on the CP register was also explained to him during the meeting. The complainant was thankful and felt the meeting had been very helpful. The matter was resolved through discussion and the complaint was closed.
GC/3444-15	Mother wanted to complaint about the Social Worker. Felt the Social Worker had made her mind up with regards to where the children would reside, she had only made one mistake and feels this should be a consideration.	Staff Performance	Stage 1 Complaint	Arfon Children's Team	Arfon Team Manager called the mother to discuss her complaint. The Team Manager explained that it was the Court that made the decisions regarding where the children should reside and not the Social Worker. The Social Worker must follow the decision made by the Court. The Team Manager advised the mother to speak to her Solicitor if she was unhappy with the decision of the Court. The Senior Operational Manager confirmed this conversation by letter, the matter was resolved through discussion and the complaint was closed.
GC/3460-15	Mother wanted to change Social Worker as she felt she had not been listened to following a minor incident at her daughter's crèche.	Staff Performance	Stage 1 Complaint	Derwen Service	Derwen Service Manager called the complainant to discuss her complaint. It became apparent during the conversation that during the Social Worker visit that the complainant had a house full of people and it was not appropriate to discuss matters then. The complainant agreed and understood why the Social Worker might not have discussed all matters in full with her. It was agreed over the phone that the Social Worker would visit again to discuss the incident and the complainant agreed. Derwen Service Manager confirmed this discussion by letter and the complainant was happy with the outcome. The complaint was closed.
GC/3541-16	Children had been taken into foster care; mother says she was promised an update on how the children were over the weekend. No one had called.	Communication	Stage 1 Complaint	Dwyfor Children's Team	The Senior Social Worker met with the individual and discussed the matter at length. During this conversation the mother noted that she did not wish to proceed with her complaint. A letter confirming the conversation was sent out and the complaint was closed.

APPENDIX 2 – EXAMPLES OF GRATITUDE DURING 2016/17

Ref	Short Description	Category	Unit / Team
Adran Plant a Chefnogi Teuluoedd			
GC/3108-15	'I feel as if I've been listened to and supported when I had no help at all'	Gratitude	Gyda'n Gilydd
GC/3109-15	'The service has helped develop my confidence, especially with the kids. I've learnt more about parenting and I've had ideas about what to do with the kids. Having the play worker has helped us do more together'	Gratitude	Gyda'n Gilydd
GC/3110-15	'Thank you for all your help with me and A. It's been amazing. I'm loving my job and she's settled at the after school club.'	Gratitude	Gyda'n Gilydd
GC/3113-15	'Excellent work undertaken by the Social Worker' (Judge noted in Court)	Gratitude	Arfon Children's Team
GC/3296-15	'I'm grateful for the reassurance, the advice and support from Gyda'n Gilydd. The meeting with the school was good. It was great support for me as XX wouldn't listen to me when I said that his exams and school work are important and that he is able to do well. I came out of the meeting realizing that it's not just me, and I had other people to back me up as he can be quite nasty with me. I feel stronger and more able to ask for help or look for information.'	Gratitude	Gyda'n Gilydd
GC/3302-15	'Diolch o galon i chdi am pob dim wti yn gwneud i ni!'	Gratitude	Gyda'n Gilydd
GC/3306-15	'XXXXXX has telephoned to thank you for everything you have done for XXXX. She said she has thanked Heledd in person for her exceptional work. She also thanked admin for their courtesy in dealing with all her calls.'	Gratitude	Meirionnydd Children's Team
GC/3308-15	'The supervision we receive from the Fostering Team is second to none, we have had an extremely stressful and upsetting time in the past few months and Stevie Thomas has always been available for advice or a visit if needed. Her advice and reassurance recently has helped us cope with a difficult situation that has on occasion has us question XXXXX placement with us.'	Gratitude	Fostering Team
GC/3309-15	'Throughout our whole experience of fostering, Mari Thomas and her team have been amazing. The support and commitment and care they show in helping families and guiding them every step of the way is essential and our experience has been an A1 performance. We'd like to thank you all from the bottom of our hearts. You all do an amazing job.'	Gratitude	Fostering Team
GC/3310-15	'Roedd XXXX yn gadael y lleoliad ddoe ac roedd XXXX yn trafod efo fi faint o gefnogaeth mae hi wedi ei gael gan chdi yn unigol! Roedd hi yn brolio'r gefnogaeth a dweud y bysa hi ddim wedi gallu ymdopi efo lleoliad XXXX heb y gefnogaeth yma!!! Da iawn chdi Bethan, amlwg wedi gwneud perthynas da efo XXXX.'	Gratitude	Fostering Team
GC/3487-16	'Hi Iona, I just wanted to say "Thank you" for the support we have had from Derwen over the school holidays, it has made all the difference. Could you pass on our thanks to Mark and the support workers, as well as all the staff at the Celebrating families' days. I hope this type of event continues in future holidays as everyone seemed to have such a good time.'	Gratitude	Derwen Service
GC/3488-16	'Newydd weld mam XXXX a mynegodd ei bod yn ddiolchgar iawn fod XXXX wedi cael	Gratitude	Derwen Service

APPENDIX 2 – EXAMPLES OF GRATITUDE DURING 2016/17

	ymuno yn y grwpiau am y tro cyntaf eleni. Mi oedd wedi mwynhau yn arw ac yn dod adref gyda gwen fawr ar ei wyneb.'		
GC/3489-16	'I can't thank you enough for what you have done and doing for my family, you are the only one who has never let us down and you are always there. We really appreciate it-your fab, thank you'	Gratitude	Gyda'n Gilydd
GC/3503-16	'I get on well with my social worker and I'm happy with her support, she is a great help if I have any issues'.	Gratitude	Fostering Team
GC/3505-16	'Always there when needed, and willing to help with various task. Always friendly and easy to approach'	Gratitude	Fostering Team
GC/3506-16	'Our worker has been great from day one, and always welcome in our home, she has been a great support and willing to give advice and praise at any time. She will contact me asap if I have called and have always kept me informed of any change.'	Gratitude	Fostering Team
GC/3509-16	'Annwyl Tîm Maethu, Nodyn byr i ddiolch o galon i chi am y diwrnod o hwyl a gawsom yn Gelli Gyffwrdd fis diwethaf. Er i ni gyrraedd yn hwyr a gadael yn brydlon er mwyn gwyllo'r gêm roedd hi'n ddiwrnod arbennig iawn, a phob un ohonom wedi mwynhau'n fawr iawn. Rydym yn gwerthfawrogi'r gwaith caled ac anodd rydych chi'n ei wneud fel tîm ac roedd hi'n fendigedig gweld chithau'n diolch i'r teuluoedd maeth, FFANTASTIG! Diolch'	Gratitude	Fostering Team
GC/3512-16	'Dear Heidi, Congratulations on your great work, it is nice to be appreciated sometimes. I see Dafydd has also emailed you thanking you for your support recently, acknowledging the difficult time in covering shifts. I have no doubt your experience of working for Tim Nos as well as your expert knowledge via your day role, makes you such a critical asset for the team. We are so very lucky. We both appreciate this.'	Gratitude	Arfon Team Manager
GC/3751-16	'Hi Non, XXXX is fab at the mo, we had a great Christmas over in France with my family and XXXX. XXXX was a star, he coped with all the changes, flying and different food brilliantly. We can't believe he is 18 in a couple of weeks. We're having a party at the Bae Abermaw hotel. We would like to invite you and any other of the team who have worked with XXXX. We very much appreciate all the work you have done for XXXX and us as a family. The person centred approach has worked so well, it was so refereshing when you started working with XXXX. You have a lovely gentle, calming but no nonsense approach, thank you so much. We will miss you!	Gratitude	Derwen Service
GC/3755-16	'Jyst eisio deud diolch am pob dim Sian, dacha Gwion di mynd above and beyond i fi a XXXXa mae'n golygu lot i ni, felly diolch o'n calon, dolig llawen a wala ni chi yn y new year'	Gratitude	Edge of Care Team

Agenda Item 7

CABINET REPORT

18 July 2017

Cabinet Member : Cllr Peredur Jenkins

Subject: Forward planning in order to be in a position to find the necessary savings from 2018/19 onwards.

Contact Officer: Dilwyn Williams, Chief Executive

Required decision

To adopt the process outlined in Appendix 1 in order to plan for any further savings required from 2019/20 onwards.

Background

1. We will not be given the details of the Council's financial settlement for 2018/19 from the Welsh Government until the late autumn and there is a doubt as to whether even then we will be given details for any period beyond that year. Neither do we currently know what key figures such as pay inflation will be until later in the year, as there is currently a debate around whether the public sector pay cap will be loosened.
2. Whilst the budgetary figures contained for the Welsh Government in the Chancellor's budget documents suggest that they will get a small increase in their cash budget, we do not know whether the Welsh Government intend to pass that increase on to local authorities. Indeed, the sounding coming out of Cardiff suggest that local government will not be a priority as we are being warned to plan for further cuts.
3. In accordance with the Council's usual arrangements, as the savings generated by the previous savings regime come to an end next year, we will need to start planning for any additional savings we will need in 2018/19, and any savings required for the period beyond then (from 2019/20 onwards).
4. The Head of Finance has undertaken a comprehensive analysis for the purposes of internal planning which outlines a series of potential outcomes for the three years to come, based on the information currently available and experience of what has happened in the past.
5. This has generated over 46,600 different scenarios.
6. On the basis of this projection work, unless something really unusual happens, even with the most optimistic projection, we will require further savings over the next 3 years.

7. Taking the most pessimistic scenarios into account, those savings could be very significant.
8. As the slide shown to members in the induction meeting shows, we have achieved £31m of savings over the last 4 years which is on top of the £31m we had to find in the previous 8 years. (copy attached)
9. The task of finding any further savings therefore is likely to be more difficult from now on.
10. This report discusses the options for finding those savings.

Options

11. The Cabinet will be aware of the process we went through the last time we embarked on a savings planning regime in December 2014 – which involved asking departments to identify the opportunities for efficiency savings with the Cabinet setting an appropriate target for each department according to the opportunities available.
12. As this regime did not deliver the required level of savings, we had to resort to find service cuts by identifying the possibilities and consulting the public on which options they would wish us to retain.
13. This led to the placing of all options in one of 10 “buckets” in order of priority and we implemented nearly £5m of service cuts by utilising buckets 1-4.
14. **One option would be to repeat this arrangement in relation to efficiency savings and then to rely upon buckets 5-10 if we need further cuts.**
15. On the basis that 1% of efficiency savings generates £1.3m (not including Education - £2.1m if education is included), over 3 years this could generate a maximum of £6.3m.
16. There are around £7.4m of savings left in buckets 5-10, and savings worth £4.7m are being planned to meet a possible financial deficiency in 2018/19.
17. This would give a total of £18.4m over the three years which would be sufficient to meet a number of the scenarios run by the Head of Finance, but certainly not the most extreme ones.
18. However we must be aware of the fact that a number of the plans in buckets 5-10 are extremely undesirable and we must ask whether there are other options.

19. It must also be borne in mind that it was the previous Council which went through this prioritisation process and that a number of the current members were not members of the Council at that time.
20. One of the difficulties at that time also was the rather artificial boundary created between efficiency savings and service cuts and the fact that it could be a grey area at times.
21. Whilst doing so has ensured that we look at efficiency savings first of all before moving to service cuts, by now we can take it for granted that a number of any “efficiency” savings will look like cuts to the public.
22. **There is an argument therefore for another option which would allow us to consider an array of possibilities across all of the Council’s services and the effect of those possibilities on Gwynedd’s residents.**
23. One way of doing this would be to look at each service’s budget; what is being achieved with that budget and considering what options exist in relation to fundamental change in those services.
24. Such an arrangement would identify whether efficiency opportunities were higher in some departments than others, and would allow a comparison to be made so as to assess one potential saving over another (whether it be an efficiency saving or a cut).
25. If it were done in an inclusive manner we could ensure that all Council members played a meaningful role in the difficult decisions ahead of us.
26. The diagram given in Appendix 1 gives a skeleton of such a regime. In accordance with the wish to ensure more pre scrutiny, the suggested regime involves the Scrutiny Committees from the outset, and includes the public and all members in the prioritisation process.
27. The problem with such an arrangement is that it will take time to implement and its product will not be available for the next financial year (2018/19).
28. However, the Head of Finance is confident that the savings already in the system should be sufficient to carry us through the 2018/19 financial year and that we could rely on balances if the situation turns out worse than the savings we already have in the system.

Recommendation

29. That the Cabinet approves the arrangements noted in Appendix 1 in order to plan for further savings from 2019/20 onwards.

APPENDIX 1

Proposed regime for finding savings from 2019/20 onwards.

Set a target of 3%, 6% and 20% for each department as a benchmark

A workshop for the appropriate Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet along with the Corporate Directors to receive presentations by Departmental Senior Managers showing what their services do for the people of Gwynedd; the measures which prove how well they perform and the resource utilised to do so.

At the end of the presentations – the Head of Service to present proposals on how they would go about meeting reductions of the magnitude noted in the benchmark with the least possible effect on the people of Gwynedd.



Scrutiny Committee to come to a conclusion on the Head of Service's proposals and to pursue any alternative options



Cabinet to consider the Scrutiny Committee's findings and pursue any other considerations consistent with their statutory role.



Cabinet to approve a document outlining all possible options available for consultation



Consult the public on the options (following the Her Gwynedd model)

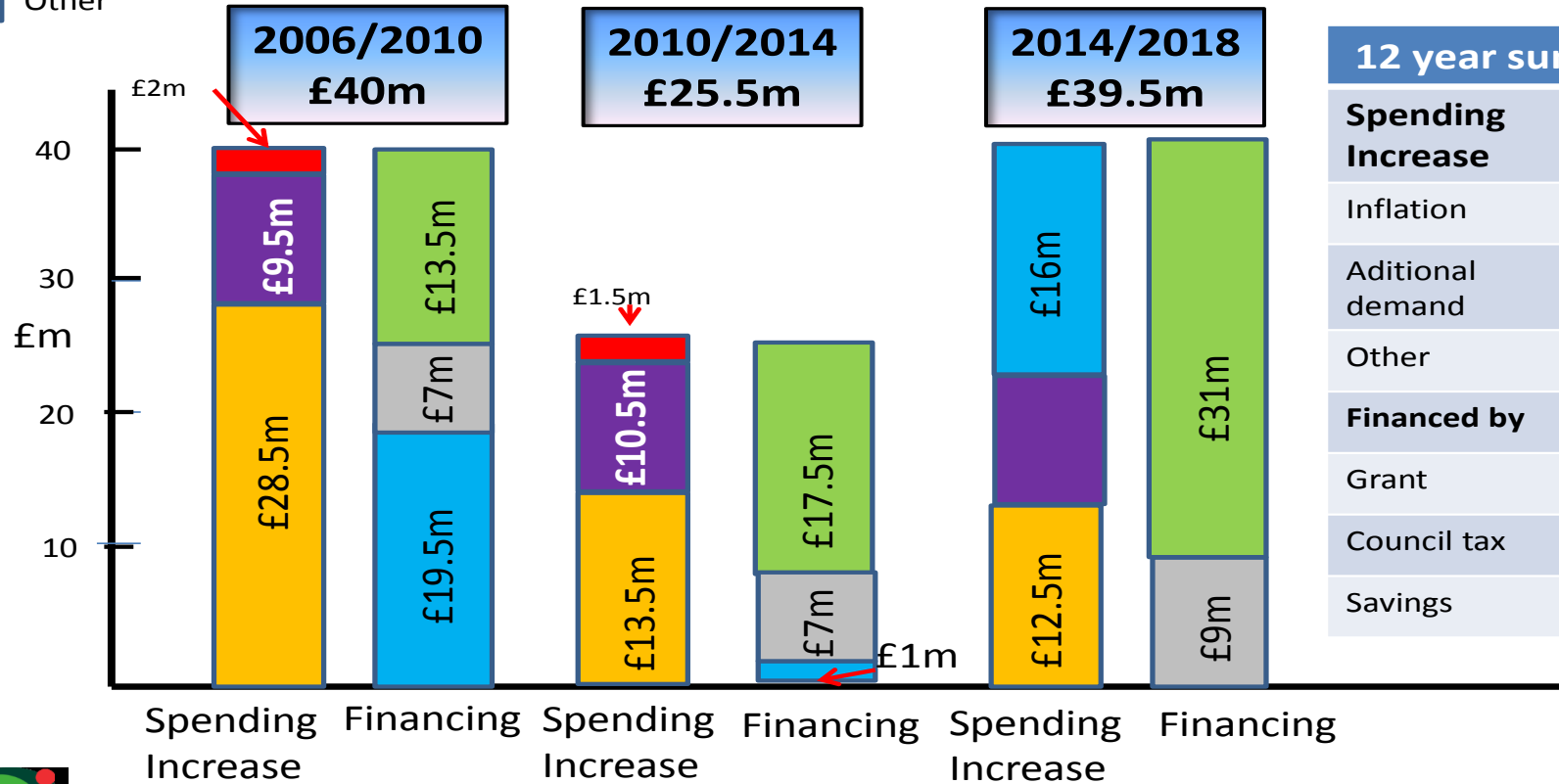


Workshop of all Councillors to input into the prioritisation process once the public consultation is complete.



Cabinet / Council to decide on savings to be implemented as part of the 2019/20 financial strategy.

Financial History



12 year summary	
Spending Increase	£m
Inflation	54.5
Additional demand	31.0
Other	3.5
Financed by	
Grant	4.5
Council tax	23.0
Savings	62.0



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Views of the Statutory Officers**Monitoring Officer:**

No observations in terms of financial propriety

Head of Finance:

I have worked with the Cabinet Member and Chief Executive to prepare the medium term financial projections for this report. I confirm that we need to plan the way forward now, in order to find any savings which the Council will require from 2019/20 onwards.

Agenda Item 8

REPORT TO THE CABINET

18 JULY 2017

Cabinet Member: COUNCILLOR PEREDUR JENKINS,
FINANCE CABINET MEMBER

Subject: REVENUE BUDGET 2017/18 – IDENTIFYING EARLY RISKS

Contact Officer: DAFYDD L EDWARDS, HEAD OF FINANCE

1. The decision sought

1.1 To note the financial risks which have been identified early in 2017/18 and ask the Cabinet Members and relevant heads of department to take appropriate steps regarding the matters under their management.

2. Early Conclusions regarding Departments' Budgets

2.1 The quarterly report of the latest review of the revenue budget for 2017/18 is presented here.

2.2 There is an outline of each department's position in **Appendix 1**, and brief comments relating to the main issues and areas where significant variances are forecasted is included in **Appendix 2** (budgets where over and underspending in 2017/18 is forecast on the basis of experience during the first quarter).

2.3 As it is so early in the year, not all of the expenditure trends are clear, and therefore the report for the first quarter tends to concentrate on matters that have become apparent since preparing the budget and any significant problems identified in the meantime.

2.4 Consequently, this report, which has been compiled on an exceptions basis, identifies financial risks, rather than predicting a total under or overspend by the Council in 2017/18.

2.5 It is too early to come to a definite conclusion about the probable financial performance by the end of the financial year. Nevertheless, there is already a tendency towards overspending on some expenditure headings, which suggests a risk of quite substantial overspending in several departments, including Adults, Children, Education, Highways, and Consultancy, but the assessment of the 2017/18 budget projected here is early, on an exceptions basis, and in accordance with the usual good practice here in Gwynedd, the relevant departments are taking appropriate steps to manage their budgets this year.

3. Next steps and timetable

- 3.1 The Cabinet Members and relevant heads are expected to continue to keep an eye on the matters highlighted in Appendix 2.
- 3.2 It will be reported further in more detail and with more basis to our projections having learnt from the experience of the second quarter, whilst keeping in mind that the content of this report was prepared **before** the end of the first quarter.
-

Local member's views

Not relevant

Opinion of the Statutory Officers

Monitoring Officer:

Nothing to add from a propriety perspective.

Head of Finance:

I have collaborated with the Cabinet Member in the preparation of this report and I confirm the content.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Outline of each department's position

Appendix 2 - Brief comments regarding the main issues

Revenue Budget 2017/18 - Summary of position by Department

	First Quarter Review		Final Position 2016/17 £ '000
	Proposed Budget 2017/18 £'000	Estimated Overspend / (Underspend) 2017/18 £ '000	
Adults, Health and Wellbeing	50,925	147	(100)
Children and Supporting Families	13,960	290	0
Education	89,500	358	(38)
Economy and Community	11,179	(26)	(19)
Highways and Municipal	23,017	149	0
Environment (Planning and Public Protection, Transport and Countryside, Corporate Property)	7,957	(134)	(39)
Gwynedd Consultancy	1,107	85	(96)
Corporate Management Team and Legal	661	0	(45)
Finance	1,076	(40)	(67)
Corporate Support	369	(20)	(56)
Corporate Budgets (Only reflects headings where an over/(under)spend is forecasted)		(380)	(382)

REVENUE BUDGET 2017/18 - FIRST QUARTER REVIEW				
Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department	Proposed Budget 2017/18	Estimated Final Position 2017/18	Estimated Overspend / (Underspend) 2017/18	Net Overspend / (Underspend) Final Position 2016/17
Area:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adults Services				
Older Peoples Services				
Residential and Nursing - Homes	10,369	10,053	(316)	(226)
Home Care	6,375	6,501	126	(23)
Other	2,847	2,700	(147)	(38)
	19,591	19,254	(337)	(287)
Physical Disability Services				
Residential and Nursing	492	472	(20)	(40)
Home Care	1,007	1,097	90	53
Other	700	600	(100)	(72)
	2,199	2,169	(30)	(59)
Learning Disability Services				
	15,189	14,961	(228)	(357)
Mental Health Services				
Residential and Nursing	1,492	1,728	236	209
Other	2,001	1,904	(97)	(151)
	3,493	3,632	139	58
Other Services (Adults)				
Management	418	418	0	(35)
Older People and Physical Disability Team	2,378	2,378	0	10
	2,796	2,796	0	(25)
Adults Services Total	43,268	42,812	(456)	(670)

REVENUE BUDGET 2017/18 - FIRST QUARTER REVIEW				
Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department	Proposed Budget 2017/18	Estimated Final Position 2017/18	Estimated Overspend / (Underspend) 2017/18	Net Overspend / (Underspend) Final Position 2016/17
Area:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<u>Provider Services (showing net budget)</u>				
Residential Care	0	75	75	159
Day Care	0	0	0	0
Community Care	0	200	200	169
Other	0	(10)	(10)	(37)
<u>Total Provider Services</u>	0	265	265	291
<u>Other Services</u>				
Housing Services	4,322	4,360	38	(36)
Departmental Central Services <i>(including the Department's savings schemes)</i>	3,335	3,635	300	315
<u>Total Other Services</u>	7,657	7,995	338	279
<u>Adults, Health and Wellbeing Total</u>	50,925	51,072	147	(100)

Adults, Health and Wellbeing

Older Peoples Services - an early review of budgets forecasts an underspend of (£337k) as the trend of a reduction in the number of clients in residential and nursing placements continues, but an increase in demand for home care.

Learning Disability Services - an underspend is forecasted on supported accommodation, day services and residential and nursing, but support packages are overspending, partly due to slippage with the savings schemes.

Mental Health Services - early forecasts are in line with the 2016/17 overspend position on residential and nursing, but vacant posts in other services leading to an underpend.

Provider Services - continuation in the trend in the overpend since 2016/17 stemming from additional staffing costs, including long term sickness on residential care and an overspend of £200k on community care, £90k of this on staffing as costs are higher than the income that is recouped, and £85k from an overspend on travelling costs, with the remainder on overheads.

Other Services - Departmental Central - the above forecasts reflect the risk that it will not be possible to realise approximately £300k of savings, with a number of savings schemes having slipped from 2016/17. The Head of Department and the Adults, Health and Wellbeing Cabinet Member propose re-packaging their savings schemes so that they are realised.

REVENUE BUDGET 2017/18 - FIRST QUARTER REVIEW				
Children and Families Department Summary Position	Proposed Budget 2017/18	Estimated Final Position 2017/18	Estimated Overspend / (Underspend) 2017/18	Net Overspend / (Underspend) Final Position 2016/17
Area:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Service Management	520	510	(10)	(17)
Operational Services	2,003	2,103	100	248
Placement Service				
Out of County Placements	1,974	1,994	20	91
Agency Fostering	927	1,132	205	29
Internal Fostering	1,663	1,738	75	73
Other Support services	1,577	1,607	30	144
	6,141	6,471	330	337
Post-16 Service	913	838	(75)	(198)
Specialist Services/Derwen	1,522	1,527	5	(79)
Youth Justice Services	234	209	(25)	(25)
Early Years Services	126	91	(35)	(63)
Other Services	2,501	2,501	0	(6)
2016/17 Final Accounts Recommendation (clear the overspend)			0	(197)
Children and Families Total	13,960	14,250	290	0

Children and Families

Operational Services - a risk of an overspend due to the increase in the number of children in care but which are not in fostering placements together with an overspend on staff costs. The Department were successful in their bid in response to the pressure on their 2017/18 and onwards budget, which has reduced the reported overspend to £100k.

Placement Service - the early review of budgets foresees an overspend, with the forecast of a £205k overspend on agency fostering as a result of five new cases in the first quarter, together with slippage in realising the savings target of £117k for 2017/18. The trend of an overspend on Internal Fostering continues this year with the forecast of an overspend of £75k.

Post-16 Service - the trend of an underspend seen last year continues with a reduction in the demand for Post-16 support schemes, with an early estimate of a (£75k) underspend.

The Children and Young People Cabinet Member, and the Department Head are requested to ensure that definite steps are taken to try to reduce the overspend, and ensure that the budget is under control by the end of the year.

REVENUE BUDGET 2017/18 - FIRST QUARTER REVIEW				
Education Department	Proposed Budget 2017/18	Estimated Final Position 2017/18	Estimated Overspend / (Underspend) 2017/18	Net Overspend / (Underspend) Final Position 2016/17
Area:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Delegated Schools	73,208	73,208	0	0
Transport	4,188	4,388	200	31
Redundancy and Early Retirement	358	358	0	0
Out of County	978	978	0	(6)
Catering and Cleaning	294	389	95	(101)
Nursery Education	600	600	0	0
School Improvement Grant	645	605	(40)	13
Management	1,773	1,732	(41)	(7)
Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion	2,515	2,705	190	176
Further Education	24	24	0	(11)
Schools Reserves	267	267	0	(16)
Education Contribution to Joint-Committees	1,200	1,177	(23)	(30)
Other	3,450	3,427	(23)	(87)
Education Total	89,500	89,858	358	(38)

Education

Following an early review of the Education Department's budget, an overspend of £358k is forecasted by the end of the year with the main areas that are contributing to this position including:

Transport - early forecasts of an overspend of £200k, with £160k on school taxi transport following an increase in the requests since the budget for 2017/18 was set, as a result of changes in circumstances. An income deficit of £40k is forecasted on the sale of post-16 transport ticket sales. The Education Cabinet Member is requested to ensure that the Education Head, in consultation with the Environment Head review the increase in costs and to manage them or report on the situation.

Catering and Cleaning - an overspend of £95k is forecasted, which is a combination of an overspend and slippage on the Free Breakfast savings scheme, and an overpend on the catering and cleaning staffing.

Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion - circumstances relating to one specific centre continues, and is responsible for an overspend of £190k.

The Education Cabinet Member and the Education Head are requested to take appropriate steps to ensure that the Department operate within their financial provision by the end of the year.

REVENUE BUDGET 2017/18 - FIRST QUARTER REVIEW				
Economy and Community Department	Proposed Budget 2017/18	Estimated Final Position 2017/18	Estimated Overspend / (Underspend) 2017/18	Net Overspend / (Underspend) Final Position 2016/17
Area:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Management	875	875	0	0
Community Learning	2,997	2,994	(3)	(120)
Tourism and Heritage	1,419	1,424	5	(6)
Economy and Community	2,437	2,437	0	88
Healthy Communities and Sports Development	3,451	3,423	(28)	19
Economy and Community Total	11,179	11,153	(26)	(19)

Economy and Community

The forecasts following an early review of the department's budgets suggest an underspend of (£26k) as a result of savings on staff costs, with the factors that lead to the main variances in 2016/17 now having been addressed. In the Youth Service, there is a savings target in 2017/18 that has been realised in advance during last year.

A shortfall of income was seen due to a number of factors at Hafan, Pwllheli and the Harbours over recent years, and thus, the fee structure was changed as part of the fees review for the 2017/18 budget, reducing the income target, and accordingly the prospects are better for this year.

REVENUE BUDGET 2017/18 - FIRST QUARTER REVIEW				
Highways and Municipal Department (including Trunk Roads Agency)	Proposed Budget 2017/18	Estimated Final Position 2017/18	Estimated Overspend / (Underspend) 2017/18	Net Overspend / (Underspend) Final Position 2016/17
Area:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Highways Services (including Trunk Roads)	9,861	9,932	71	(30)
Engineering Services	399	412	13	26
Municipal Services				
Waste	8,878	8,926	48	220
Other	3,588	3,605	17	(61)
Municipal Provider Units	291	291	0	(67)
2016/17 Final Accounts Recommendation (clear the overspend)			0	(88)
<u>Highways and Municipal Total (including Trunk Roads Agency)</u>	23,017	23,166	149	0

Highways and Municipal (including Trunk Roads Agency)

Highways Services - there is a risk that there will be a £71k overspend on Highways and Lighting as 2017/18 is the final year of a £440k savings scheme over three years, with £369k already having been realised, but the last part of the savings is proving to be more problematic for the Department.

Waste - The early forecasts suggest there will be a £48k overspend from a delay in realising the savings from the Recycling Centres.

It is expected that the Cabinet Member for Highways and Municipal and the Department Head take decisive steps during the year to ensure that they operate within their budget.

REVENUE BUDGET 2017/18 - FIRST QUARTER REVIEW				
Environment Department (formerly Regulatory)	Proposed Budget 2017/18	Estimated Final Position 2017/18	Estimated Overspend / (Underspend) 2017/18	Net Overspend / (Underspend) Final Position 2016/17
Area:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Department Management	523	523	0	(12)
Planning and Joint Planning Policy Unit	611	611	0	(20)
Street Works and Transport	4,177	4,043	(134)	(61)
Countryside and Access Services	962	962	0	49
Property and Public Protection Services	1,684	1,684	0	5
<u>Environment Total</u>	7,957	7,823	(134)	(39)

Environment (formerly Regularory)

The early forecasts of the Environment Department budgets review suggest that the income target of (£134k) on Parking and Parking Enforcement, which is included under Street Works and Transport above will be exceeded, with the impact of a late Easter this year having a positive effect on the situation.

A neutral financial position is forecasted in the other fields following the early review.

REVENUE BUDGET 2017/18 - FIRST QUARTER REVIEW				
Consultancy Department	Proposed Budget 2017/18	Estimated Final Position 2017/18	Estimated Overspend / (Underspend) 2017/18	Net Overspend / (Underspend) Final Position 2016/17
Area:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Roads and Engineering Services	(26)	57	83	(37)
Flood Risk Management Unit Services	934	934	0	(33)
Building Services	199	201	2	(26)
Consultancy Total	1,107	1,192	85	(96)

Consultancy

Due to the nature of the Consultancy Department's work, which is dependant on attracting a substantial amount of external income, this means that the picture becomes clearer as the year progresses as more work is approved. The early forecasts suggest there will be a £85k overspend at the year end, mainly on Roads and Engineering, but it is expected that this situation will change.

REVENUE BUDGET 2017/18 - FIRST QUARTER REVIEW				
Central Departments	Proposed Budget 2017/18	Estimated Final Position 2017/18	Estimated Overspend / (Underspend) 2017/18	Net Overspend / (Underspend) Final Position 2016/17
Area:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Corporate Management Team and Legal	661	661	0	(45)
Finance	1,076	1,036	(40)	(67)
Corporate Support	369	349	(20)	(56)
Central Departments Total	2,106	2,046	(60)	(168)

Central Departments

Finance - the early forecasts suggest there will be a (£40k) underspend, mainly stemming from vacant posts.

Corporate Support - as a consequence of secondment arrangements and vacant positions, early indications suggest that there will be a (£20k) underspend by the end of the financial year.

Corporate (Only reflects headings where an overspend/(underspend) position is forecasted	Proposed Budget 2017/18	Estimated Final Position 2017/18	Estimated Overspend / (Underspend) 2017/18	Net Overspend / (Underspend) Final Position 2016/17
Area:-	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Council Tax Reduction	*	*	(380)	(382)
Total	*	*	(380)	(382)

Corporate

Considering the trend over recent years, an underspend of (£380k) is forecasted on Council Tax Reduction by the end of the financial year.

REPORT TO THE CABINET

18 July 2017

Cabinet Member: Councillor Peredur Jenkins - Finance Cabinet Member

Subject: Capital Programme 2017/18 – First Quarter Review
(30 June 2017 position)

Contact Officer: Dafydd L Edwards - Head of Finance

The decision sought / Purpose of the report

To accept the report on the first quarter review (30 June 2017 position) of the capital programme, and approve the revised financing as shown in part 4 of the report, that is an increase of:

- £3,332,000 in various sources to fund actual slippages from 2016/17
 - £3,253,000 in the use of grants and contributions
 - £55,000 in the use of revenue contributions
 - £956,000 in the use of renewal and other reserves
 - £428,000 in the use of the capital reserve
-

1. Introduction / Summary

This technical report is presented as part of the 2017/18 budget monitoring procedure. The main purpose of the report is to present the revised capital programme and to approve the relevant financing sources. There is a summary in parts 3 and 4 of the report, with the recommendation in part 5:

Part 3: Analysis by Department of the £46.725m capital programme for the 3 years 2017/18 – 2019/20.

Part 4: The sources of finance for the net increase of approximately £8.024m since the opening budget, with £3.332m of the increase due to slippages from 2016/17 (previously reported on 6th June 2017).

The Cabinet has the authority to adapt the capital programme. Approval is sought for the programme (part 3) and financing (part 4).

For information there is further details on some specific schemes (the main changes per source of finance) in the Appendix A.

2. Main Findings:

The main conclusions that arise from the revised position are:

- There are firm schemes in place to invest approximately £32.7m in 2017/18, with £5.8m of it being financed by attracting specific grants.
- There is an additional £3.3m of proposed expenditure having been re-profiled from 2016/17 to 2017/18 but no loss of funding was caused to the Council where schemes have slipped.

3. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2017/18 to 2019/20

See below which shows the revised proposed capital programme.

DEPARTMENT	END OF JUNE REVIEW				INCREASE/ (DECREASE) SINCE THE OPENING BUDGET	SLIPPAGES ADJUSTMENT	OTHER CHANGES
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	TOTAL			
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000			
Education	13,256	256	-	13,512	2,321	1,857	464
Environment	7,123	3,176	-	10,299	2,896	1,245	1,651
Corporate Support	126	5	-	131	11	(17)	28
Finance	981	275	-	1,256	(14)	(14)	-
Economy and Community	682	10	200	892	(403)	(609)	206
Adults, Health and Wellbeing - Housing Unit	3,539	3,122	-	6,661	1,972	19	1,953
Adults, Health and Wellbeing - Other	498	-	-	498	197	197	-
Children and Families	69	-	-	69	-	-	-
Highways and Municipal	6,207	3,958	2,406	12,571	801	411	390
Consultancy	27	17	-	44	21	21	-
Corporate	222	570	-	792	222	222	-
TOTAL	32,730	11,389	2,606	46,725	8,024	3,332	4,692

4 CHANGES TO THE SOURCES OF FINANCE

The budget for the three year programme shows an increase of £8.024m since the opening budget position. The proposed sources of financing for this are noted below:

SOURCE OF FINANCE	END OF JUNE REVIEW				INCREASE/ (DECREASE) SINCE THE OPENING BUDGET	SLIPPAGES ADJUSTMENT	OTHER CHANGES
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	TOTAL			
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000			
Supported Borrowing	6,675	6,399	-	13,074	-	-	-
Other Borrowing	6,125	241	992	7,358	1,962	1,962	-
Grants and Contributions	5,830	750	200	6,780	2,524	(729)	3,253
Capital Receipts	1,178	146	-	1,324	64	64	-
Departmental & Corporate Revenue	2,167	-	-	2,167	58	3	55
Capital Fund	3,467	441	-	3,908	2,050	1,622	428
Renewals & Other Funds	7,288	3,412	1,414	12,114	1,366	410	956
TOTAL	32,730	11,389	2,606	46,725	8,024	3,332	4,692

5. RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet is asked to:

- accept the 2017/18 to 2019/20 revised programme and
- approve the relevant sources of finance (para. 4 above).

6. Reasons for recommending the decision

It is necessary to ensure appropriate financing arrangements for the Council's plans to spend on capital, and the Cabinet must approve the capital programme and its sources of funding.

Incorporating funding via grant is a point of order, but it is also necessary to deal with situations where there has been a change in expenditure profiles between years and the value of capital receipts and contributions.

These are recommendations to ensure definite sources of funding for the 2017/18 – 2019/20 capital schemes.

7. Relevant considerations

These are technical issues regarding the financing of schemes and relevant implications and debates have already been addressed when the individual schemes were adopted.

8. Next steps and timetable

To implement the recommendations to finance the programme.

View of the Local Member
Not relevant.

Views of the Statutory Officers

Monitoring Officer:
Nothing to add from a propriety perspective.

Head of Finance:
I have collaborated with the Cabinet Member in the preparation of this report and I confirm the content.

Appendix
Appendix A.

MAIN CHANGES PER SOURCE OF FINANCING:

See below the relevant schemes that have caused the main changes to the sources of finance during the last quarter:

	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £,000
Grants and Contributions		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Llandygai Gypsy Site (Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department – Housing Unit) – grant from the Welsh Government towards the development of a new Gypsy Site opposite to the existing site. 	1,049	750
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Transport Fund (Environment Department) - grant from the Welsh Government (see also Other Funds below) towards:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multi User Path Ty Moelwyn, Porthmadog ○ Britannia Bridge, Porthmadog (road safety) ○ Safe routes in communities – Ffordd Coetmor, Bethesda and Ysgol yr Eifl, Trefor 	754	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable Grant Schemes (Adults, Health and Wellbeing Department – Housing Unit) - grant from the Welsh Government to improve support to residents to live independently in their own homes. 	154	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coastal Path Scheme Phase 2 (Environment Department) - grant from Natural Resources Wales towards the second phase of this scheme. 	154	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bangor Area Schools Schemes (Education Department) – an initial allocation towards the preliminary and planning work for the 21st Century Schools schemes in the Bangor area to be financed from a contribution from a section 106 agreement with Redrow (see recommendation in the Cabinet report of 6th June 2017). 	100	
Departmental Revenue		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various minor schemes 	55	
Capital Reserve		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smallholdings Schemes (Environment Department) – to upgrade the private water supply in smallholdings to be financed temporarily from this reserve until the Council's next Asset Management Plan has been established (see Cabinet report of 7th March 2017). 	400	
Renewals and Other Funds		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase of Land Scheme in Llanrug (Education Department) – for the purchase of land in Llanrug for educational purposes which could enhance the options available for the provision of education in the future, to be financed temporarily from a corporate fund (approved by the Cabinet 28th March 2017). 	350	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Supply Pipe Renewal Programme for Housing Stock (Highways and Municipal Department) – to finance essential work to manage and renew water pipes on housing estates from a specific fund (see Cabinet report 7th June 2016). 	300
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Transport Fund (Environment Department) – contribution from a specific fund (see also Grants above). 	120
