

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET

REPORT TO A MEETING OF GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET

Date of Meeting:	7 March 2017
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Mair Rowlands Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Leisure
Contact Officer:	Morwena Edwards, Corporate Director
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Title of Item:	Performance Report of Children, Young People and Leisure

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to update you on what has been achieved in the field I am responsible for as the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Leisure. This will include outlining the latest with the pledges in the Strategic Plan; where the performance measures have reached; and the latest in terms of the savings and cuts schemes.
- 1.2 I will remind you that all matters have already been the subject of discussions and have been scrutinised at meetings of the relevant management team, which also included a representation from the scrutiny committee.
- 1.3 On the whole, I am satisfied with the performance of most projects and measures for which I am responsible. As I have reported previously, a number of the performance measures in the children field represents a general increase in work pressure as a result of a high number of looked-after children.

2. THE DECISION SOUGHT

- 2.1. To accept and note the information in the report.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

- 3.1. In order to ensure effective performance management and that we respond pro-actively to the need to achieve efficiency savings as expected.

4. STRATEGIC PLAN PROJECTS

4.1. P8 - Early Intervention for groups of vulnerable children and young people in Gwynedd.

- 4.1.1. The purpose of this project is to set a direction and to establish priorities for the preventative agenda in Gwynedd, working on a multi-agency basis to ensure that we focus our efforts on doing the right things in the right places. The project will ensure early intervention and will emphasise that the appropriate support should be made available at the right time. The intention here is to ensure that a clear programme of preventative services is available for young people in Gwynedd, and that it has cross-sector ownership, including the third sector.

4.1.2 Reconsider and prioritise Families First resources in Gwynedd for 2016/17 and plan for future years.

A comprehensive needs assessment was completed before summer 2016 which identified needs across the spectrum of need in Gwynedd. As I have previously reported, four main fields of need have been identified, namely, language and speech delay; parenting and behaviour support; access to low-level mental health services and support for teenagers. The four work-streams will form a basis for commissioning services and intervention as part of the Families First programme in Gwynedd.

- 4.1.3 A brief is currently being prepared for an independent appraisal of the Families First programme in Gwynedd which will feed into work to plan and re-commission the programme in the future. The transitional period of the current Programme will be between 1 April and 30 September 2017 with the new Scheme commencing on 1 October 2017.

4.1.4 Strengthen the Team Around the Family model and build upon the work of co-ordinating the support for groups of vulnerable families

There is acknowledgement that the Team Around the Family is an effective model of working with families on the earliest signs of need. Discussions at the Gwynedd Children and Young People Partnership Board have noted the intention to continue to build on this model of working for the next commissioning cycle for the Families First grant. It is intended to commission an appraisal of financial and non-financial benefits of the scheme which will also feed into the

re-commissioning scheme and into the Early Intervention strategy and I will report back on the findings.

4.1.5 **Adopt and implement the Early Intervention Strategy**

A draft Intervention Strategy has been drawn up following a series of workshops with partners. I reported at the last meeting that it was intended to submit a final Strategy to the Children and Young People Partnership Board in December 2016. There has been some slippage in the time-frame but I have received assurance that the Early Intervention Strategy will be in place before the end of March 2017, which will set out the direction and establish future priorities.

4.1.6 **Responding to the requirements of the Social Services and Well-being Act by ensuring that our work processes correspond to the statutory expectations of responding to referrals.**

The Service reports that it has contributed significantly to the regional work on operational arrangements of meeting the expectations under the Act e.g. to ensure access to Information, Advice and Support (IAS). The department has developed a care and support needs assessment form locally which is now being used by the department and has been adopted on a regional basis. The department is in the process of putting robust arrangements in place to establish IAS arrangements in practice within the service. The department is also reporting that it is collaborating with independent officers in order to reach a decision on the most suitable arrangement in Gwynedd.

5. **MEASURING PERFORMANCE**

5.1 The **Leisure Service** has been reviewing its purposes and measures since I last reported. The new measures for the Service will focus on three work fields, namely Sport for Life & Outdoor Activities; Water Activities and Healthy Living Centres.

5.2 The measures identified will focus on measuring the effect of the services offered to the residents of Gwynedd, considering the opinion of the child / young person and the parents. In the past, the measures have been reported annually, but I am pleased to note that the service has increased its reporting frequency. The measures will also consider 'hidden demand' in order to target those individuals who are members of the Leisure Centres but who no longer attend.

5.3 I agreed on a series of new measures during the last performance challenging meeting, therefore, the service will proceed to collect data and report on it next time.

5.4 In terms of the **Youth Service**, the engagement programme with young people, staff and partners for the re-modelling scheme is going well. Public engagement was carried out in January to identify priorities for the Scheme to re-model the service. The services will review their measures after receiving further information about the re-modelling. At present, it can be noted **that the number of accreditations that young people receive through the service is 703** which further exceeds the target of **400** which was set at the beginning of the year. This is something that should be congratulated.

- 5.5 As previously reported, the **Flying Start Unit** has been drawing national attention to the fact that the performance measures are not necessarily the most effective way of measuring child development. There is national recognition of this and the unit is awaiting confirmation regarding whether the Foundation Phase Profile will be the measure from next year onwards. The unit reports an increase in the number of referrals of children with severe needs in the Arfon area. The unit is in discussions with its partners to ensure that provision is available for this group of children.
- 5.6 The **Gyda'n Gilydd Team** has set out its purpose and measures that **100% of families who have reported 'progress' after receiving a service from the Team (local CSP)**. It was agreed that there was a need to look further at the purpose of the service and to develop measures which measure its purpose in a more meaningful way.
- 5.7 The trend continues in terms of the increase in looked-after children. There are currently **220** looked-after children in Gwynedd. In comparison with the same period last year, this is an increase of **10.5%**. According to 'Stats Cymru', the number of looked-after children in Gwynedd is the highest within our Family Group of Councils. It was reported that there is an increase in the number of children placed with their parents. There are currently **54** children (**25%**) placed with their parents. It was noted that this was a period of higher risk and is a high cost in terms of resources for the department as the number of visits need to be increased. I believe that this cohort of children needs to be better understood in order to identify opportunities for us to influence locally and the department has agreed to submit a report to the Leadership Team before Easter.
- 5.8 The Service reports, despite an increase in the looked-after children, the increase would be far higher without the contribution and intervention of the **Edge of Care Team**. An independent appraisal of the **Edge of Care Team** will be completed over the coming months in order to better understand where this difference is seen. The **Edge of Care Team** will set out its purpose by the next meeting and will develop suitable measures which measure its success.
- 5.9 Despite the increase in statutory visits, the Performance against **SCC/021 Percentage of reviews of looked-after children held within the statutory timetable** during the year is **93%**, which is an increase on the last quarter. There is some deterioration in the performance of **SCC/025 Percentage of statutory visits with looked-after children that were supposed to be held during the year that were held in accordance with the regulations** which is **86.6%**. I have been assured by the department that steps are in place to undertake these visits.
- 5.10 There is deterioration in a few other Measures e.g. **SCC/024 - Percentage of looked-after children who have a Personal Education Plan within 20 school days**. Though the performance is a little better this quarter (**69%**) it is true to say that the improvement is not significant. I can confirm that this measure has been addressed by the Corporate Parent Panel and I understand from the Education Department that work is progressing to ensure that every child has a Personal Education Plan. The Education department is also working to ensure that the plans are of quality and address the needs of looked-after children.
- 5.11 There is a deterioration in the measure **SCC/039 Percentage of health assessments for looked-after children** held during the year with **39%** of looked-

after children not having received a Health assessment. The matter has been addressed by the Corporate Parent Panel and the reasons behind the under-performance have been discussed with the Health Board and steps are in place to try to respond to the problem. It is also suggested that more meaningful health measures which better identify the health needs of looked-after children should be looked at in order to ensure that we address them.

- 5.12 As with the '**Child Welfare**' measure, **100%** of looked-after children have **an agreed pathway plan for looked-after children**. Despite the performance, consideration is being given to further investigating the pathway plans in order to ensure quality. Again, the Child Pathway Plans are being addressed by the Corporate Parent Panel and I understand that some work has been carried out to ensure their quality. The unit is now using the 'Outcomes Star' distance measuring tool-kit and I understand that the department is working towards developing a new measure based on this tool-kit.
- 5.13 In terms of those measures that measure **Diogelu 1** specifically, I am pleased to report that **the rate of children who were discussed in supervision, where significant harm had been considered is 100%**. I would like to draw attention to the fact that **the percentage of case conferences where the voice/views of the child were heard** has increased from **77%** to **92%** this quarter. The **Safeguarding and Quality Unit** did not express any concerns in terms of quality assurance in the field.
- 5.14 **Derwen** will be working on setting out its purpose and on setting measures that report on the satisfaction of their service users. I look forward to being able to report on these measures shortly.

6. SAVINGS/FINANCIAL POSITION

- 6.1 Leisure and Youth Savings - Following the Cabinet's approval on 13 December 2016 to re-profile part of the **HAM4** savings, namely more effective running of leisure facilities, the Service is continuing to consider options for 2018-19. This of course is a substantial scheme and the solution remains challenging.
- 6.2 I will also need to return to the Cabinet in order to receive approval for cuts schemes to re-model the service, where efficiency savings of £70,000 are to be achieved in addition to the cut of £200,000.
- 6.3 **Children and Supporting Families Department** - The Third Quarter Review of the 2016/17 Revenue Budget (which is yet to be completed) will suggest some overspend in the fields of Placements/Fostering for the year, and the Department's statistics confirm two reasons for this:
- pressure on the demand for the services as a result of an increase in the number of children coming into care for the first time
 - exceptional circumstances of high-risk cases (and, therefore, expensive care plans) which have increased the need for out-of-county placements and external fostering provision.
- 6.4 In the report of 20 October 2016 to the Performance Management Team, it was noted that the Department was of the belief that the two schemes, Plant 5 (£100,000) and Plant 6 (£80,000) were achieving the aim in terms of the method of dealing with the statutory requirements of childcare and contributes

substantially to cost savings. Though the expenditure on their budget headings has not reduced as anticipated, in light of the comments above, it is reasonable to consider that all 2016/17 savings schemes have been realised.

- 6.5 The Department is also confident that the work programme is in place to be able to realise the 2017/18 savings schemes, though it will need to be borne in mind that circumstances outside their control can change the situation very quickly.

7. NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE

- 7.1. None to note.

8. ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

8.1. Views of the Statutory Officers:

i. Chief Executive:

"I welcome this report. Clearly, there are elements of it which require further work and attention, such as the comparatively high number of looked-after children and that this is on the increase (paragraph 5.7) and the slight deterioration in statutory visits (paragraph 5.9) and health assessments (paragraph 5.10)."

ii. Monitoring Officer:

No observations from a propriety perspective

iii. Head of Finance Department:

Any observations, as required, will be submitted orally at the Cabinet meeting.

8.2. Views of the Local Member:

- 8.2.1 Not a local matter.

8.3. Results of Any Consultation:

- 8.3.1 None to note.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Performance Measures