

COMMITTEE	<b>AUDIT COMMITTEE</b>
DATE	<b>24 SEPTEMBER 2015</b>
TITLE	<b>REPORT OF THE CONTROLS IMPROVEMENT WORKING GROUP</b>
PURPOSE OF THE REPORT	<b>TO REPORT ON THE MEETING HELD ON 20 AUGUST 2015</b>
AUTHOR	<b>JOHN PUGHE ROBERTS, CHAIR OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE</b>
ACTION	<b>TO ACCEPT THE REPORT AND CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDATIONS</b>

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The executive summaries of 24 reports were presented to the Audit Committee meeting on 30 June 2015, which represented reports that had been released finally between 1 February and 30 March 2015 (reports from the 2014/15 audit plan). Five of these reports received a 'C' opinion.
- 1.2 Furthermore, the executive summaries of seven reports were presented to the Audit Committee meeting on 16 July 2015, which represented reports that had been released finally between 1 April and 30 June 2015 (reports from the 2015/16 audit plan). Two of these reports received a 'C' opinion.
- 1.3 As well as these seven reports, the Committee decided that the Working Group should also consider the Parking Enforcement report that was given a 'B' opinion.
- 1.4 At the Audit Committee held on 16 July 2015, a member drew attention to a matter that concerned him, namely the leasing of the Rhyd Ddu Outdoor Centre to Antur Nantlle Cyf. I suggested at the Committee that the relevant officers could be invited to the next meeting of the Controls Improvement Working Group to discuss the matter with the member present.

## **2. WORKING GROUP MEETING**

- 2.1 A meeting of the Working Group was held on 20 August with the Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Committee and Councillors Angela Russell, Trefor Edwards and Dilwyn Morgan and Luned Fôn Jones, Audit Manager present. Dewi Morgan, Senior Manager - Revenues and Risk, was also present for some specific items.
- 2.2 As well as the leasing arrangements of Rhyd Ddu Outdoor Centre, the Working Group addressed the following reports:

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>SERVICE</b>	<b>OPINION</b>
IT Backups and Service Continuity Arrangements	Finance	Information Technology	C
Parking Enforcement	Regulatory	Transportation and Street Care	B
Health and Safety - Lone Working	Corporate		C
First Aid Payments	Corporate		C
Jobs System	Corporate		C
Travelling Costs of Community Care Workers	Adults, Health and Well-being	Community Care	C
Children Services - Commissioning Care	Children and Supporting Families	Children and Families	C
Gwynedd Museum and Gallery Development Plan	Economy and Community	Archives, Museums and Arts	C

2.3 Officers attended to discuss the items.

## 2.4 IT - Backups and Service Continuity Arrangements

### 2.4.1 The main findings of the audit were as follows:

*One of the main weaknesses highlighted during the audit was that the Information Technology Service does not have a current business continuity plan. The service provides for a number of services with differing needs within the Council, and it is therefore crucial that their needs are highlighted and that there are measures in place for the recovery of their specific services. It was seen that an 'IT Disaster Recovery Plan' had been produced in relation to the recovery of the whole Council's Information Technology. However, it should be ensured that a service continuity plan in line with the template produced by the North Wales authorities' collaboration forum is prepared. Although there is no plan in place, arrangements have been established for reviewing the arrangements in the next weeks.*

*Another weakness highlighted was that the testing work had not been undertaken for a number of years, which could mean that processes do not work effectively. It should be noted that arrangements have been established by now for October 2015.*

2.4.2 Huw Ynyr, Senior Manager - Information Technology and Business Transformation, Finance, was welcomed to the meeting.

2.4.3 The Audit Manager provided the background of the report. She explained that the audit was included in the audit plan due to the importance of providing services for the people of Gwynedd under any circumstances. To this end, it is essential that the Information Technology Service has appropriate plans in place in order to ensure resilience because all Council services are reliant on the Information Technology Service continuing to provide a service for them should an incident occur.

2.4.4 The Audit Manager explained that the Information Technology Service was under enormous work pressures, with several services submitting requests to them for improvements to their current systems together with developing solutions as a result of Ffordd Gwynedd Reviews.

2.4.5 The Audit Manager also said that a follow-up audit was planned for quarter 3 of the current year.

2.4.6 The Senior Manager - Information Technology and Business Transformation explained that the Service was now accountable to the Head of Finance and his satisfaction with this arrangement. He expressed that the Finance Management Team has reviewed its service continuity plans and that the Information Technology Service's plan has already been sent for the attention of the Risk Co-ordinator and Insurance Manager. He added that he was currently developing a new Strategy for the Service and the Draft Strategy will be presented for approval in the near future.

2.4.7 The Senior Manager was asked if he accepted the recommendations of the report and he noted that he agreed with all the recommendations and that work was already underway to achieve them. In terms of the resilience testing work, he explained that a third party company would be testing the resilience of the Headquarters Office in September 2015 followed by the Contact Centre in Penrhyndeudraeth and the Headquarters in October 2015.

- 2.4.8 The Senior Manager IT and Business Transformation emphasised that he was aware that the IT Service was not reaching the expected requirements in full but that a lack of resources had been a problem. He was also of the opinion that the audit report achieved its purpose.
- 2.4.9 The Senior Manager - Information Technology and Business Transformation was thanked for attending the meeting, and for explaining the action that was underway.

## 2.5 Parking Enforcement

- 2.5.1 The main findings of the audit were as follows:

*It can be seen that the partnership is operating successfully and that the Council benefits from being part of it because there is robust and clear guidance available. Despite the Partnership's success, it is felt that the unit should have its own back-up procedures in case unforeseeable circumstances force the Partnership to come to an end. It can be seen that there is a good relationship between members of the parking enforcement team and there is regular communication between the Managers and front-line staff. It is felt that there is room to formalise the communication by holding regular staff meetings. It can be seen that the staff are qualified to operate effectively in their roles as Civil Enforcement Officers and arrangements have been established to safeguard them under conditions when there is a high risk to their health and safety. It appears that there is a strong support for them from the Managers. The way in which the financial situation is reported upon is a cause for concern as incorrect information regarding expenditure and the budget has been sent to the Managers. It is also felt that the reports omit some details that could be of benefit to the Managers.*

- 2.5.2 Dafydd Wyn Williams, Head of Regulatory was welcomed to the meeting.
- 2.5.3 The Audit Manager explained that the report was given a 'B' opinion as the arrangements and controls generally worked effectively and efficiently. However, the members of the Audit Committee, at its meeting in June, felt that the Working Group should have an opportunity to discuss specific elements in more depth.
- 2.5.4 The Audit Manager explained that the audit encompassed the duties of employees and lone-working as well as the arrangements for income deriving from the parking fines. She explained that elements of the audit touched on matters included in the 'Health and Safety – Lone-Working' review.
- 2.5.5 The Head of Regulatory referred to one of the main risks highlighted during the audit, namely what the implications would be for Gwynedd Council should there be a problem in the partnership and he explained that this was being addressed despite the fact that the Partnership's current arrangements were working well with two other Councils having recently joined the Partnership. In relation to the safety of the enforcement staff, he explained that Gwynedd Council was in the process of carrying out a pilot with bodycams and that the officers' response varied with some feeling that they gave reassurance when carrying out their duties and others were of the opinion that wearing them can enrage some members of the public.

- 2.5.6 The Head was asked whether the Civil Enforcement Officers had Contracts of Employment, and if so did they note their hours of work. The Head of Regulatory explained that they did have contracts, but that they did not work fixed hours due to the need for them to work flexible hours which is dependent on the need to enforce which usually comes in response to complaints. He noted that rotas are produced for officers which give details of their hours.
- 2.5.7 The members enquired whether the Civil Enforcement Officers had the right to work any hours they wished and whether the Council's insurance policy would cover them in such circumstances. The Audit Manager explained that the Council had a 24 hour insurance policy and the Head of Regulatory added that the Civil Enforcement Officers' line managers were aware of the officers' working hours. He agreed that it was essential that there is accountability if officers work beyond rota hours without direction.
- 2.5.8 The Head of Regulatory was thanked for attending the meeting, and for providing clear answers explaining the situation.

## **2.6 Health and Safety - Lone Working**

- 2.6.1 The main findings of the audit were as follows:

*A sample of six services across the Council was examined. It was found that there was no up-to-date risk assessment for lone-working in over half the sample and some had no risk assessment at all. It is important to ensure that risks facing Council employees are alleviated as far as is practically possible. Identifying the risks will assist in achieving this and in making appropriate decisions on how to mitigate them. Also, there is a need to identify a work procedure for lone-working which includes the steps that should be followed and what is expected of the officers that are lone-workers. Having these in writing strengthens the process and ensures that officers are aware of the procedure and that there is no misunderstanding of what is expected of them. It also provides evidence that the Council takes its responsibility to take reasonable care of its employees' health and safety seriously. However, it was not apparent that the Managers were aware of their responsibilities to ensure health and safety arrangements for their employees.*

*It was also seen that it would be worthwhile for Managers to look into the resources and technologies that are available to support lone-workers and to make the most of them.*

- 2.6.2 Geraint Owen, Head of Corporate Support, was welcomed to the meeting and Dafydd Wyn Williams, Head of Regulatory Department stayed for the item.
- 2.6.3 The Audit Manager explained that the audit has been included in the Audit Plan as a result of the decision to do away with the lone-working corporate system. Though a decision has been taken to dispose of the system, the Council takes reasonable care of the health and safety of the workforce.

- 2.6.4 The Audit Manager emphasised that it is the services' responsibility to establish and conduct lone-working risk assessments and not the responsibility of the Health, Safety and Well-being Service. The Health, Safety and Well-being Service has a consultative role; however, its responsibilities extend to holding periodical checks of the risk assessments and to providing advice and options where necessary.
- 2.6.5 Some staff members' duties mean that they deal with people in difficult and sensitive circumstances at times, whether that be in their homes or on the street. Therefore, it is essential that the managers of these officers identify and record situations of high risk to the safety of these workers and ensure that they have received relevant training on personal safety.
- 2.6.6 The Head of Corporate Support welcomed what was expressed by the Audit Manager in relation to responsibilities and he elaborated that very little use was made of the previous lone-working system and that the Corporate Health and Safety policy has been reviewed and that it will be addressed in autumn.
- 2.6.7 The Head of Corporate Support explained that, over the last year, a team of Health, Safety and Well-being Service officers prepared:
- A lone-working leaflet
  - A generic risk assessment for lone-working
  - Personal Safety Procedure
- He said that 30 members of staff had attended personal safety training in 2012-13, 100 in 2013-14 and 268 in 2014-15. This is a total of approximately 400 staff. However, he explained that approximately 1,000 staff have been identified as lone-workers which means that only around 40% have received training.
- 2.6.8 A member asked the Head of Corporate Support whether he agreed with the recommendations and he noted that he welcomed the recommendations and that there may be a possibility that Internal Audit would consider jointly holding an-audit with the Health and Safety Service in the future.
- 2.6.9 A member expressed the importance of raising the awareness of the services about personal safety and lone-working and the need for staff to be aware of the need for them to attend training.
- 2.6.10 The Head of Corporate Support was thanked for outlining the arrangements and the latest situation.

## 2.7 First Aid Payments

2.7.1 The main findings of the audit were as follows:

*The results of the audit tests and the supporting evidence show that there are no appropriate procedures in place to ensure that only qualified officers receive the monthly payments. A number of examples were seen where officers receive payments, however there was no current first aid certificate to support the payments. In addition, it should be ensured that the duties for first aid arrangements are identified and there is appropriate training for them. Following discussions with officers in the Human Resources Department it became evident that 'First Aid' had not been identified as part of the training for site managers.*

*It was seen that the lists of first aid officers exhibited in the offices included the names of officers, telephone numbers, department and location (including the room number if appropriate). However, it was seen that some lists had not been updated for some time and, therefore, contained incorrect details, which means that a person requiring first aid would not be able to find them.*

2.7.2 Geraint Owen, Head of Corporate Support, was present to discuss this item.

2.7.3 The Audit Manager explained that the aim of the audit was to ensure that payments are made to officers with current first aid training certificates. The audit did not encompass leisure centres and residential homes staff because any payment in relation to first aid is already reflected in their salaries.

2.7.4 The Audit Manager noted that the main weakness was that the Site Managers of the Council's main offices were not aware that it was their duty to ensure an adequate number of First Aid Assistants. She explained that this would be further addressed during follow-up work which has been planned for quarter 3 of 2015-16.

2.7.5 The Audit Manager explained that Internal Audit checked the presence of a first aid box, its contents and location as well as checking the details of qualified individuals during every audit in establishments since April 2015. This had been agreed with the Head of Corporate Support when discussing the Audit Plan for 2015-16.

2.7.6 The Head of Corporate Support noted that he welcomed the co-operation with Internal Audit and that checks undertaken by Internal Audit in establishments were an excellent example of collaboration and was a step in the right direction.

2.7.7 The Head of Corporate Support explained that he accepted the comments in the report about the failure of the site managers of the main offices to fulfil their responsibilities in full despite the fact that they receive financial remuneration for this; however, since the report was published the Health, Safety and Well-being Service has focused on assisting these site managers.

- 2.7.8 The Head of Corporate Support further noted that the Education Department had raised the awareness of School Headteachers but that it was the decision of the school's governing body as to whether or not first aid assistants are paid. He explained that it was a requisite part of the job within the Leisure Centres to obtain a First Aid certificate and he noted that the arrangements in relation to the certificate were deficient. He said that the Site Managers should shoulder their responsibilities but that the Health, Safety and Well-being Service was available to support them.
- 2.7.9 A member enquired whether there was a defibrillator in the Council offices. The Head of Corporate Support explained that one was bought from the Occupational Health Service's reserves and that it is located in Siop Gwynedd and that there was a defibrillator in every leisure centre.
- 2.7.10 The Head of Corporate Support was thanked for his constructive comments.

## **2.8 Jobs System**

- 2.8.1 The main findings of the audit were as follows:

*The Gwynedd Jobs System was developed as a basis to assist with proposed solutions as a result of the Ffordd Gwynedd reviews, e.g. self-service for submitting travelling and subsistence costs. However, for the services selected to undertake checks, it was found that there were substantial weaknesses, especially from the perspective of the accuracy of the hierarchical management framework. Several factors contribute to this failure, including lack of awareness of the system from the viewpoint of managers, lack of appropriate training for officers of the Support Service and lack of awareness of managers/senior managers of the need to introduce any changes in structure and accountability to the relevant services within the Human Resources Department.*

*It was seen that the details of the payroll system were compared with the details in the jobs system daily (overnight) - the data is matched on the basis of post number. A "Missing Posts" report was run which provided details of employees who were on the payroll but where there were no details of them on the jobs system. It was found that investigations were not undertaken in these cases and failure to check the details could lead to the possibility that a ghost employee could be on the payroll. Details of the Gwynedd Jobs System also feed into Dolen Ddysgu and this means that the details of that database are not correct either and therefore it has implications for the Learning and Development Service. Neither was the system recording correctly the contractual hours of employees on a temporary contract on every occasion. This issue has already been identified and it has been addressed.*

*It is important to acknowledge that much work and effort has been made on developing the Gwynedd Jobs System and there is no criticism from the perspective of the operation of the system but rather the details inputted into the database. If the system is to be a basis for solutions, it is crucial that the data is correct and that arrangements have been established to cope with those employees that have multiple jobs.*



- 2.8.2 Geraint Owen, Head of Corporate Support, was present to discuss this item.
- 2.8.3 The Audit Manager explained that the Jobs System is a database which records the details of the Council's structure – the database contains the details of all jobs on the structure along with every post-holder. The Jobs System is an internal development which has been developed to implement solutions as a result of the Ffordd Gwynedd Reviews. It is hoped that the procedures and systems will be on a self-service basis i.e. staff will have the ability to submit their own travelling costs/requests for leave/flexi system etc. online, with minimal authorisation/endorsement by their line managers. In order to implement this, it is essential that the management tree or chain is accurate on any system that is developed. Unfortunately, in carrying out reality checks, it was seen that significant weaknesses existed in the accuracy of the data.
- 2.8.4 The Audit Manager also noted that other weaknesses had been highlighted, such as the implications for the Learning and Development Service database, *Dolen Dysgu*, which reads information from the jobs system; records casual workers' hours and also staff in multiple jobs. Work has been undertaken to clean the data since the report was released; however, the Audit Manager was of the opinion that a considerable amount of work needed to be done before any development could be submitted which is dependent on the accuracy of the details on the jobs system.
- 2.8.5 The Head of Corporate Support explained that it was essential to have one complete and accurate database as a result of the decision not to procure an integrated salaries and human resources system. It was explained to the Working Group that several services relied on the core information in the jobs system, such as *Dolen Dysgu* and the Health and Safety Service.
- 2.8.6 Since the report was released, an officer from the Corporate Support Department is in the process of visiting every Senior Manager within the Council to train them on how to check the system as well as reviewing their structures. The Head of Corporate Support agreed that staff on temporary and casual contracts needed to be addressed and that 'missing jobs' has already been given considerable attention.
- 2.8.7 The Head of Corporate Support was thanked for attending the meeting.

## **2.9 Travelling Costs of Community Care Workers**

- 2.9.1 The main findings of the audit were as follows:

*The audit test results and the supporting evidence shows that there are no appropriate and consistent controls in place across the three areas in order to ensure the accuracy of the travelling costs claims. Unfortunately, this may contribute to the fact that the 'Community Care' travelling budget overspent by approximately £128k during 2014-15. It was seen that the checks made on the travelling costs forms focused on the vehicle milometer readings rather than the total claimed and how this compares to their work rota. However, recently it was seen that one area had taken action to strengthen their arrangements having found that the miles claimed were suspiciously high.*

- 2.9.2 Aled Davies, Head of Adults, Health and Well-being was welcomed to the meeting.

- 2.9.3 The Audit Manager explained that the audit was included in the 2015-16 audit plan at the request of the Senior Executive Manager of the Provider Services (Gwenno Williams), due to the overspend on the budget of the community care workers' travelling costs. The Audit Manager explained that this was an increasing problem, with the overspend having a detrimental effect on the budget of the Provider Services.
- 2.9.4 It was explained that one of the audit's recommendations was to reduce the emphasis on checking the mileage clock readings and focusing on the journey from A to B. This matches the principles of Ffordd Gwynedd. The Senior Executive Manager agreed with the recommendation and this is already underway across the County.
- 2.9.5 The Head of Adults, Health and Well-being noted that the audit was an extremely effective piece of work. He explained that the overspend could be due to a combination of several factors including the possibility that the budget was incorrect in the first place; however, since receiving the audit report, new arrangements have been adopted including establishing rotas and recording the miles to be claimed as well as tidying the rotas in general and that the outcome of this work was encouraging.
- 2.9.6 One of the members was concerned about the overspend in the Dwyfor Area. The Head of Adults, Health and Well-being noted that the reason for this was unclear but that recruiting carers in the Meirionnydd area was a problem.
- 2.9.7 A member asked how many carers were employed by the Council. The Head of Adults, Health and Well-being noted that over 800 carers were employed at present.
- 2.9.8 A member enquired whether the care packages are reviewed. The Head of Adults, Health and Well-being explained that packages are reviewed and that they are considering providing equipment to the individual rather than providing care if that is relevant and that some of the Department's savings schemes were based on reviews of these care packages.
- 2.9.9 The Head of Adults, Health and Well-being was thanked for attending the meeting, and for updating the Working Group about the developments and schemes that are underway.

## **2.10 Children Services - Commissioning Care**

- 2.10.1 The main findings of the audit were as follows:

*Some examples of good practice were seen in the Care/Commissioning Resources Service – Post 16 Team. It was seen that there is a framework for commissioning care for post 16 children. However, it appears that not many providers offer the necessary service locally. It was seen that there was no robust monitoring of service providers and the finance element needed to be monitored regularly. Unfortunately, some documents were not received for some of the tests by the Service following several attempts and requests for evidence. Appropriate steps should be taken to strengthen the controls within the field audited.*

- 2.10.2 Kevin Thomas, Post-16 Team Manager, Children and Supporting Families Department, was welcomed to the meeting.

- 2.10.3 The Audit Manager provided the background of the audit. The main recommendation of the audit was the need to establish an Individual Placement Agreement. This has been partly implemented – it was seen that an Individual Placement Agreement has been produced and distributed to staff members with direction for them to ensure implementation by the end of August.
- 2.10.4 The Audit Manager explained that a follow-up audit had already been held, with the result that implementation was acceptable with eight recommendations either implemented or partly implemented.
- 2.10.5 The Post-16 Team Manager provided some background to the work and noted that their arrangements had been informal and ad hoc and that he agreed with the auditors about the need to have more structured arrangements. He explained that it was the Pathway Plan which provided details about the individual's needs and that elements of the Pathway Plan have now been incorporated in the Individual Placement Agreement.
- 2.10.6 A member enquired whether the Post-16 Team Manager accepted the recommendations of the audit report. The Post-16 Team Manager noted that he accepted the recommendations in full.
- 2.10.7 A member enquired why the audit had been included in the 2014-15 Audit Plan. The Senior Manager - Revenues and Risk explained that the audit had been included in the annual Audit Plan as a result of a discussion at the Social Services Management Team (as it was at the time) as this was an area with elements of high risk.
- 2.10.8 The Post-16 Team Manager was thanked for attending the meeting and outlining the developments since releasing the audit report.

## **2.11 Gwynedd Museum and Gallery Development Plan**

- 2.11.1 The main findings of the audit were as follows:

*Although steps had been taken to strengthen the internal controls as the development plan progressed, it was found that there were weaknesses in the risk management arrangements early in the project. The main risk was a failure to establish a written contract under seal in accordance with the expectations, although the submitted tender document mitigated many of these risks. It was also found that no bond had been established with the contractor at one stage of the project.*

*By the release of this report, these matters had been rectified.*

- 2.11.2 Sioned Williams, Head of Economy and Community and Roland Evans, Senior Manager - Tourism and Heritage were welcomed to the meeting.

- 2.11.3 The Audit Manager provided the background of the audit. The Gwynedd Museum and Gallery is part of a programme that is funded through Môn Menai and the Heritage Lottery Fund as well as funding from Gwynedd Council and Bangor University. The Museum and Gallery is located in the former Town Hall building, Bangor. The Audit Manager explained that the main issues highlighted in the audit – namely failure to establish a sealed written contract and establish a bond with a contractor - had been addressed during the period between publishing the draft report and the final report, which is to be praised.
- 2.11.4 The Audit Manager noted that a follow-up audit had been planned for quarter 4 of the current year and that audit will encompass elements of closing the project including producing a project closure report, lessons learned report as well as financial reports and checking that the recommendations of the original report have been implemented appropriately.
- 2.11.5 The Senior Manager – Tourism and Heritage explained that it was the Economy and Community Department that asked Internal Audit to undertake an audit of this project as this was the largest grant that the Heritage Lottery Fund had awarded in Wales. He explained that the project was ambitious and that the Service was not familiar with managing projects of this scale. He noted that Internal Audit had identified gaps as a result of the audit but that the purpose was to ensure that arrangements worked effectively.
- 2.11.6 A member enquired why a payment was made before the work had been finished and why was the contract not signed when a contractor was designated. The Senior Manager – Tourism and Heritage noted that the payment had to be made or the grant funding would have been lost. He noted that the contract had been signed later and that this was not unique to capital schemes.
- 2.11.7 The Senior Manager - Revenues and Risk explained the importance of balancing risk – what is the risk of taking action against the risk of not taking action, and the importance that everything is considered. The Head of Economy and Community noted that a 'lessons learned log' had been prepared along with a risk register.
- 2.11.8 A member enquired whether the work had been completed. The Economy and Community officers explained that the building had been transferred on 20 August, 2015 and that the aim was to open during the half term holiday in October 2015.
- 2.11.9 The Economy and Community officers explained that they worked closely with the Heritage Lottery Fund and that the Finance Department prepared monitoring reports for them. Also, it was explained that the Heritage Lottery Fund had highlighted the risk that a full-time team was not involved with the project. The Senior Manager – Tourism and Heritage explained that they were in the process of evaluating consultants to evaluate the project.
- 2.11.10 The Head of Economy and Community and the Senior Manager - Tourism and Heritage were thanked for attending the meeting and for their comments.

## **2.12 Rhyd Ddu Outdoor Centre – Leasing Arrangements**

- 2.12.1 Sioned Williams, Head of Economy and Community, was present to discuss this item.
- 2.12.2 At the Audit Committee held on 16 July 2015, a member drew attention to a matter that caused him concern, namely the leasing of the Rhyd Ddu Outdoor Centre to Antur Nantlle Cyf. The Chairman suggested at the Committee that the relevant officers could be invited to the next meeting of the Controls Improvement Working Group to discuss the matter with the member present.
- 2.12.3 The Audit Manager explained that Gwynedd Council had been successful in obtaining Cyfenter grant funding - a grant to invest in renovating the School House building, Rhyd Ddu. Cyfenter offers investments to Social Enterprises; therefore, it was necessary to adhere to the terms and conditions of the grant. A Social Enterprise is a business which trades for strong social and/or environmental purposes and generating profit is not its main objective. An advert was placed on Sell2Wales looking for providers to undertake the work of providing accommodation at the Rhyd Ddu Outdoor Centre and expressions of interest were invited. Following a second advertisement on Sell2Wales, it became apparent that Antur Nantlle was the only prospective partner.
- 2.12.4 The Senior Manager - Revenues and Risk explained that Gwynedd Council has made every effort to try to establish a self-sufficient Rhyd Ddu Outdoor Centre but that this had not been successful and, consequently, when the opportunity arose to lease it, from a financial perspective, he was supportive of the decision.
- 2.12.5 The Head of Economy and Community noted that the Centre is a historic site and expressed its importance to the school pupils of Gwynedd. As a result of the fact that the Centre was not self-sufficient, there were three options, namely, dispose of the building for capital receipts; lease to social enterprises but with no commitment to schools and lastly, lease to social enterprises but continue to maintain the provision for schools. It was resolved that, due to the importance of the building, the ideal option would be to lease it to social enterprises with a commitment to continue with provision for schools.
- 2.12.6 The Head of Economy and Community explained that an officer from the Strategic and Improvement Department had contacted social enterprises in the area as a result of a lack of interest when it was advertised on Sell2Wales. Only one social enterprise showed an interest, namely Antur Nantlle Cyf.
- 2.12.7 The Senior Manager - Revenues and Risk noted the importance of reminding members that they have a period of five days to offer comments on individual member's decision notices before the decision comes into effect and that no comments were received in this case.
- 2.12.8 The members expressed disappointment that the member who had enquired about the matter had not attended the meeting.
- 2.12.9 The Head of Economy and Community was thanked for attending the meeting and explaining the decision.