

# GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



## Report to a meeting of Gwynedd Council Cabinet

**Date of meeting:** 21 January 2020  
**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Gareth Griffith  
**Contact Officer:** Morwena Edwards, Corporate Director  
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**Title of Item:** Performance Report of the Cabinet Member for the Environment

### 1 DECISION SOUGHT

1.1 To accept and note the information in the report.

### 2 THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

2.1 In order to ensure effective performance management.

### 3 INTRODUCTION

3.1 The purpose of this report is to update you on what has been achieved in the field for which I, as Cabinet Member for the Environment, have responsibility. This includes outlining progress against the pledges within the Council Plan; the progress of the performance measures; and the latest in relation to the plans for savings and cuts.

3.2 We are implementing the 2018-23 Council Plan, and I herein report on progress to the end of November 2019.

3.3 I would like to remind you that all matters have already been the subject of discussions and have been scrutinised at meetings of the Management Team which also includes representatives of the relevant Scrutiny Committee.

3.4 On the whole, I am satisfied with the department's performance. I will be elaborating on progress in the report.

### 4 THE RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

#### 4.1 PERFORMANCE

#### 4.2 Planning Service

4.2.1 The purpose of the **Planning Service** is to facilitate and manage sustainable developments for the benefit of our communities, the economy and the environment within the Gwynedd planning authority area (which does not include the National Park area).

4.2.2 The **percentage of service satisfaction** (C1) continues to be relatively high at 82.86%. I am very glad that comments regarding satisfaction are consistent, with very positive comments about the service and the advice given by officers.

The reasons for the small percentage of dissatisfaction continues to be surrounding the frustrating process of contacting the service. Similar comments are reported by customers who are satisfied with the service.

- 4.2.3 The measure of ***How quickly all planning applications have taken on average to be determined*** (C2) demonstrates the difference between the time taken to determine applications by Officers, as well as applications determined by the Planning Committee. The number of days on average for applications to be processed is consistent. Since adopting the Delegation Scheme back in May 2018, the average has been relatively in line with the statutory period for dealing with applications. As a result of adopting the scheme, fewer applications have been before the Committee and, therefore, a higher percentage of applications receive a decision under the delegation system.
- 4.2.4 The **Enforcement Unit's** priority is to research, provide and issue enforcement notices on the most serious cases. The enforcement indicators measure the percentage of all cases that were successful in being investigated within the time-scale. This indicator is in the process of being developed and refined in order to identify the number of cases that are still open, and in order to identify officers' workload and the performance of the Enforcement Unit in its entirety for the purpose of effective management. The aim is to be able to investigate more cases, and prioritise the high and medium risk cases in the first instance, and have a higher percentage of cases where positive steps have been completed in these cases.
- 4.2.5 In light of adopting the Local Development Plan, every Local Authority is required to develop and adopt Supplementary Planning Guidance. Seven Supplementary Planning Guidance have since been adopted and are used by officers, and another Guidance has been the subject of a recent public consultation.
- 4.2.6 The affordable housing provision means that the Local Planning Authority provides a higher level of affordable housing than the highest target within the Local Development Plan, which is 30%. This reflects the previous pattern, and it is positive for the number of affordable housing that are approved.

### **4.3 Public Protection Service**

- 4.3.1 The purpose of the **Public Protection Service** is to protect the public in relation to a range of environmental and health matters.
- 4.3.2 A new set of questions were used during the period for measuring the ***percentage of customers who responded to a survey and said that they were pleased with the service level*** (G1) this time. Since using the new system, it has emerged that the amended questions do not motivate individuals to offer comprehensive comments about the service received, and therefore the system will need to be monitored and assessed further.
- 4.3.3 It appears that the ***percentage of high risk businesses inspected in line with the programme*** (G2) measure along with the ***percentage of animal feed establishments that have had an inspection in line with the programme*** (G4) is failing to complete the inspections in line with the programme, due to a lack of capacity. Officers have assured me that capacity will be in place, and we will catch up with the programme by the end of the year for G2. However, concern continues with regard to G4 due to the need to have qualified staff to carry out

the inspections. There might be a need to commission an individual/company to help with the work in order to achieve. I am concerned about the situation with G4 as it is a statutory requirement, and therefore I will continue to monitor the situation.

- 4.3.4 The ***Percentage of food establishments meeting the Food Hygiene standards*** (G8) measure notes that 99.1% of food establishments comply, with only 0.9% failing to do so, namely 19 business out of 2120. The businesses that do not meet the satisfactory standard have already received further attention to ensure that they do not continue to operate in a manner that causes risk to the health of customers.
- 4.3.5 A report was presented to the Licensing Committee on 2 December in order to consider the options for reviewing the Delegation Scheme for Taxi Licences. The information about the ***Percentage of days taken to determine a taxi licence application*** (G7) demonstrates that there has been some increase since the end of March in the time taken to process renewal applications, as well as new applications. This is due to the fact that a higher than average percentage of new and renewal applicants needed to be referred to Committee for a decision.

#### **4.4 Transportation and the Countryside Services**

- 4.4.1 The purpose of the **Traffic, Projects and Street Works field of work** is to enable the public to use Gwynedd roads in a safe and unobstructed way.
- 4.4.2 The Parking Service manages 117 car parks across the county, and operates parking enforcement arrangements. The ***number of appeals to the Independent Adjudicator*** (Eiddo 6) have significantly reduced after dealing with locations such as Castle Square in Caernarfon. I am eager for the Department to look at the options to add a new measure in order to gauge customer satisfaction about the parking in Gwynedd, and I will report on it in future.
- 4.4.3 I am comfortable with the performance of the Transportation Unit. The Unit has one obstacle with the ***traffic orders' processing period*** (T1) when there is a need to transfer the orders to other departments or to contractors. Further discussion will be held with our legal department in order to seek to reduce the number of days.
- 4.4.4 The purpose of the **Public Transport Service** is to provide safe, quality and cost-effective transport. The service has started a comprehensive review, jointly with Transport for Wales and Bangor University, of public transport provision in Gwynedd. The review was presented to the Ministers in October, which includes recommendations for the future of the core network for 2020-2025. I hope that the review will be an opportunity for us to look at providing services through means beyond the traditional ways, and in this sense will mitigate the risk of over-dependency on one bus company.
- 4.4.5 The Service is responsible for the ***number of complaints received about public transport services contracted to the Council*** (Cludiant 02). Eight complaints had been reported; however, I am happy to report that the situation has since improved.
- 4.5 The **Countryside Unit** started the Ffordd Gwynedd review a year ago. As part of the process, they have reviewed the purpose. The purpose of the unit now is to *look after the Gwynedd path network, the beauty of the landscape and nature*

*on land and sea*. The next step will be to discover measures for the unit, along with looking at how to communicate with customers and use systems. It is very positive to report that the unit states that going through the Ffordd Gwynedd review has been useful.

- 4.6 Recently, the Environment Department has established a new system, namely Tascomi. The system will be used by the Planning, Public Protection and Building Control Services. The system will mean better services for the public, and assure us that information will be accurate and consistent.

## **5 FINANCIAL SITUATION / SAVINGS**

### **5.1 2019/20 Savings Schemes**

- 5.1.1 12 of the 2019/20 savings schemes have either been realised or are on track to be realised on time before the end of the financial year.
- 5.1.2 The Department anticipates some risks to achieving the savings for the *Increasing the number of pay and display car parks and increasing parking fees scheme*. Following the submission of the report to the Communities Scrutiny Committee, a Task Group was set up. The Task Group will discuss options and report to the Communities Scrutiny Committee in April 2020, and then to the Leadership Team in June 2020.
- 5.1.3 The work on the *Provide electric car charge points in car parks* scheme has commenced, however there is still considerable work to be done in order to guarantee that enough income will derive from the scheme by 2021/22 and 2022-23. A Capital Bid for a resource has been submitted for the infrastructure.
- 5.1.4 A report on the *Gwynedd Council Staff Travel Savings* was presented to Cabinet on 5 November 2019, and it was agreed to adopt the alternative plan that reduces the savings sum from £130k to £118k.

## **6 ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO RECOMMENDING THE DECISION**

### **6.1 Views of the Statutory Officers:**

#### **The Monitoring Officer**

“No observations to add from a propriety perspective.”

#### **The Head of Finance Department**

“I am satisfied that the contents of the report are a fair reflection of the financial situation. This means that 12 of the 2019/20 savings schemes having already been realised or are on track to being realised on time, and the risks relating to the other savings projects have been detailed in part 5 of the report. Finance Officers will continue to assist the Cabinet Member in monitoring the progress against these schemes, and an update on the department’s financial situation has been included in the financial review which is the subject of the report by the Cabinet Member for Finance on this meeting’s agenda.”

## **Appendices:**

- Appendix 1 Measures of the Environment Department