

GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



Report to a meeting of Gwynedd Council Cabinet

Date of meeting:	18 February 2020
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Dafydd Meurig
Contact Officer:	Aled Davies
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Title of Item:	A bid for funding from the transformation fund to finance the community dementia support services scheme (including Dementia Go) for two years.

1 THE DECISION SOUGHT

The Dementia Support Services in the Community Scheme (which includes Dementia Go), was supported by the Gwynedd Council Cabinet meeting on 4 June 2019 by allocating £97,660 from the Transformation Fund. Following the initial success we are now asking for this period to be extended for two years, until March 2022, in order to use the time to establish a formal method to measure the impact of the programme and to evidence the link between attending Dementia Go classes and the social and health care provision over a period of time. An application is made for £200,000 to fund two full-time posts (in Pwllheli and Porthmadog) and two 7-hour a week posts, based in Tywyn and Caernarfon. Equipment, transport and training costs are included in this amount.

2 THE REASON FOR THE NEED FOR A DECISION

The Dementia Support Services in the Community Scheme has been established since 2016 to support individuals living with dementia, along with their families, through different activities in 12 community centres across Gwynedd. Detailed engagement work was undertaken with the attendees of Dementia Go classes and other activities, to measure the value of the Scheme from their perspective, that of their families and professionals in the health and care arena who have witnessed the impact of the programme on individuals.

This is the independent conclusion of researchers from the Council's Research and Analytics Team:

"There are many pieces of qualitative information that testify that the DementiaGo programme offers benefit to individual attendees by enabling them to live a better and more independent life."

It is further stated:

"From the evidence submitted, it appears that the DementiaGo programme is a good example of a locally planned project in terms of what local users need, and has been able to adapt and develop over time without much bureaucracy or associated "system" barriers.

In addition, it appears that the project was successful in terms of cutting across organisational boundaries in order to co-produce a plan from the viewpoint of the user."

The final recommendation of the report is that a longer period of time is required to evidence the link between attending the DementiaGo programme and the social and health care provision and that this needs to be addressed as the programme develops. This involves tracking care packages provided to users after they commence the programme, and comparing them with 'similar' cases who have not attended DementiaGo.

Funding is requested for an extended period of two years from the Transformation Fund to be able to undertake this all-important research. This will enable us to highlight the strengths of the programme in strengthening the individual's well-being and, as a result, we hope to be able to provide evidence that the Plan is making financial savings for the Council in the long term.

3 INTRODUCTION

The budget until the end of March 2022 requested above is a way of achieving the five following work fields:

- Living well with Dementia: Community physical activity classes. 12 classes in every part of Gwynedd with an emphasis on physical and social well-being
- "Moving Moments" Project - Gwynedd Council Care Homes. Maintain support for Gwynedd Council residential homes to support the mobility of residents by encouraging light physical exercises and creating a fun environment at the same time.
- Train groups and communities through the "Dementia friends" programme which equips Gwynedd residents with better knowledge and understanding of the dementia condition. It eliminates the stigma surrounding dementia.
- Support and empower people living with dementia and their families. A branch of the DEEP group was established: Dementia Empowerment and Engagement Project to give a voice to people living with dementia.
- Quality of life and connecting people. Social events are offered such as the Boccia League where groups of vulnerable people, including Dementia Go classes, compete against each other in a fun and supported environment.

4 THE RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION FOR RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

The Research and Analytics Team has estimated the number of people currently living with dementia in Gwynedd namely 2,049 which is 1.67% of the population. They have drawn attention to one striking statistic, namely that it is estimated that the Dwyfor-Meirionnydd electorate has a particularly high rate of people living with dementia, namely 2.06% of the population. This is based on the older age profile of this area and this is the fourth highest rate among the 650 electorates in Britain.

They draw attention to the fact that national studies estimate the cost of the condition per case with costs varying with the severity of the condition, from approximately £26,200 per year for less serious cases, to £39,300 for moderate cases, to £41,200 in the most serious cases. These costs include health care, social care (whether or not it falls on local authorities or a contribution from the individual / family towards the costs), and the proportionate costs of friends and families providing unpaid care. They have estimated the total annual cost of dementia in Gwynedd and how much of this cost is likely to fall on the Council, and it is noted that the annual amount is £11 million.

This is the conclusion of the Research and Analytics Team about the work of the Dementia Support Services Scheme:

"If there is a saving to be made, then only a small number of 'successful' cases would be required in order for that saving to be quite a substantial one:

Based on the cost of implementing the DementiaGo programme (approximately £100k in 2019/20), and the standard cost of dementia nursing care (£662.53 per week in 2019/20), should the programme succeed to delay the transfer of some individuals to care for, say, only six weeks each - then the programme would pay for itself based on approximately 25 such cases across Gwynedd every year."

The DementiaGo Scheme is unique to Gwynedd and has been recognised on a British level at the Alzheimer's Society Awards in London on 14 November 2019 in the 'Trailblazer of the Year' category. The work has been nominated for a National Awards sponsored by Social Care Wales and a team of judges has visited a Dementia Go class on 28 January 2020. We are firmly of the opinion that the work of this Scheme supports the well-being of individuals and their families: attendees themselves evidence this consistently.

These are some of their comments:

"I feel fitter and stronger and I do my very best to live well with my

Parkinson's and Dementia - and this is all down to being able to attend the DementiaGo classes"

"The group has brought me out of my shell, I don't feel low any more... being among people with similar problems to me and who understand what I am living with"

"I genuinely love attending the classes. They make me feel happy and give me more energy."

5 NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE

We will proceed to establish the research work on the firm basis of being successful in this application. The Research and Analytics Team will outline how and which new cases will be tracked against other individuals who do not attend Dementia Go sessions. The DementiaGo Team will be involved in how to present the research to suitable users by being open with them from the offset about the aim of the research and to receive their permission, along with their family's permission. We will meet regularly with the Research Team to structure the work and timetable it over the two years with the aim of publishing the results in a report within two years.

In the meantime, the Team will proceed to develop services based on regular feedback from attendees. We will continue to welcome the increasing number of external people who take an interest in the work programme and who wants to learn from its successes.

6 ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

Chief Finance Officer :

I note this is a request for £200,000 of one-off resources from the Council's Transformation Fund. There will be several deserving applications emanating from the Council Plan competing for scarce resources from the Transformation Fund. It is a matter for Cabinet members to prioritise the applications that will make a difference when allocating resources from the Fund. I confirm that there is sufficient provision to finance the plans that have been presented to Cabinet, and that there is further money available from the Fund for some projects that will come to future Cabinet meetings for approval.

Monitoring Officer:

No comment to add in relation to propriety.