

MEETING	COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE	12 JANUARY, 2016
TITLE	CABINET RESPONSE TO SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS
PURPOSE	To report back to the Scrutiny Committee on the Cabinet's response to the Scrutiny Committee's recommendations
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INTRODUCTION

1. Following recent observations in a report by the Wales Audit Office and in a questionnaire amongst members and senior officers, the need to improve the link and dialogue between individual scrutiny committees and the Cabinet has been identified in order to secure greater continuity following scrutiny work.
2. As a pilot, a paper was presented to the Cabinet on 15th December drawing the Cabinet's formal attention to the recent work of this committee, at its meeting on 17th November, in order have a formal public discussion on the response of the Cabinet as whole and individual Cabinet Members to scrutiny recommendations.
3. The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee was present and there was an open and honest discussion with the Cabinet. The web-cast of that discussion is available but in Welsh only as there were no non Welsh speakers either present at the meeting or viewing on line http://www.gwynedd.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/195392 (See item 4).
4. The purpose of this report is to report formally back to the Scrutiny Committee on what was agreed by the Cabinet. For the committee's information, the Cabinet's conclusion was that the discussion was beneficial and it was agreed to continue with the system of discussing matters arising from Scrutiny Committees at Cabinet meetings in the future, with a minute of that discussion being circulated amongst the Scrutiny Committee members.

ITEMS

5. Three items were submitted to the Cabinet's attention. They are summarised here together with the response to each:-

A. ITEM – THE WELSH LANGUAGE AND THE PLANNING SYSTEM

<https://democracy.cyngor.gwynedd.gov.uk/documents/s1129/Planning%20and%20the%20Welsh%20Language.pdf>

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Considered - A report by the Planning and Regulatory Cabinet Member on the policy and statutory background for the Welsh Language and the Planning System and key developments that are on the way

Resolved

- a) To support the work of the Joint Planning Panel to seek to ensure that the new Local Development Plan will address the language challenge adequately and address the need for the number of houses.
- b) That is is necessary to ensure input from this committee and the Language Committee into the development of the new Supplementary Guidance Note and the attention given to the language in that guidance.

CABINET RESPONSE

Cllr. Dafydd Meurig confirmed that he would welcome the input of the Language Committee and the Communities Scrutiny Committee to the process of preparing new Planning Policy Guidelines within the Local Development Plan.

B. ITEM – SECTION 106 AGREEMENTS

<https://democracy.cyngor.gwynedd.gov.uk/documents/s1132/The%20use%20of%20agreements%20under%20section%20106%20of%20the%20Town%20and%20Country%20Planning%20Act%201990.pdf>

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Considered - A report by the Planning and Regulatory Cabinet Member highlighting the Council's arrangements for the use of Section 106 agreements and how effectively they are being implemented.

Resolved to postpone a decision for the time being whilst a small group of officers and members meet with one or two external experts to look at other possible options for the Council's use of Section 106 agreements in the future

YMATEB Y CABINET

Cllr. Dafydd Meurig confirmed that he welcomed the recommendation of the Communities Scrutiny Committee to establish a working Group of Councillors and Officers to co-operate with professional people working in the field to look at different options for how to operate Section 106 Agreements.

C. ITEM – POST-16 TRANSPORT

<https://democracy.cyngor.gwynedd.gov.uk/documents/s1135/Implementing%20Recommendations%20of%20Post-16%20Further%20Education%20Scrutiny%20Investigation%20Report.pdf>

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Considered - A report by the Education Cabinet Member responding to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Investigation into Post-16 Transport to Further Education.

Resolved:-

- a) To express concern about the slow implementation of the recommendations, to welcome the work that is now taking place, and to press for the early implementation of all the recommendations arising from the Investigation, asking the Cabinet Member to give particular attention to:-
 - i. The standard and quality of the provision, partly because of over-crowding
 - ii. The limit on the number of journeys or times that students can use the ticket and to suggest that discussions take place with providers to try to allow flexibility for a period
 - iii. The use of the "My Travel Pass" – The unwillingness of bus companies to recognise its use
 - iv. To contact the Welsh Government to press for introducing a system as is available in England to help those from the poorest families.
- b) To ask the Cabinet Member to report back on these issues by September 2016

YMATEB Y CABINET

Cllr. Gareth Thomas responded to the enquiries in the order presented in the report to the meeting –

- i. Once the Education Department is aware of any overcrowding, they respond at once, usually by providing more buses.
- ii. Discussions are continuing with the bus companies to seek to resolve the situation.
- iii. This is a matter under the control of the Welsh Government, and the Regulatory Cabinet Member agreed to contact the Welsh Government to seek to resolve the situation.
- iv. Since this was not a recommendation submitted by the Scrutiny Working Group, Cllr. Gareth Thomas agreed to make further enquiries and to report back to the Scrutiny Committee before September 2016, in the hope of implementing the new system from the start of the 2016/17 academic year.

The Cabinet Member confirmed that he would re-appear before the Scrutiny Committee to confirm which recommendations have been implemented in order to implement them before September, 2016 and also that the Cabinet Member would offer reports in the meantime if matters arose where Scrutiny input would be of assistance.