

THE CABINET 28/06/22

Present -

Councillors: Dyfrig L Siencyn, Nia Jeffreys, Craig ab Iago, Beca Brown, Berwyn Parry Jones, Elin Walker Jones, Menna Jones, Dafydd Meurig, Dilwyn Morgan and Ioan Thomas.

Also present-

Dafydd Gibbard (Chief Executive), Morwena Edwards (Corporate Director), Iwan Evans (Head of Legal Services), Dewi Morgan (Head of Finance Department) and Annes Siôn (Democracy Team Leader).

Item 5: Gareth Jones (Assistant Head of Environment Department)

Item 7 and 8: Aled Davies (Head of Adults, Health and Well-being Department) and Alun Gwilym Williams (Senior Business Manager).

Item 9: Marian Parry Hughes (Head of Children and Supporting Families Department).

1. APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

Cabinet members and officers were welcomed to the meeting.

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received.

3. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

There were no matters arising from overview and scrutiny.

5. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE: THE SLATE LANDSCAPES OF NORTHWEST WALES, WORLD HERITAGE SITE

The report was submitted by Cllr Dafydd Meurig

DECISION

1. To approve the changes included in the Consultation Report.
2. To formally adopt the Slate Landscape of North West Wales World Heritage Site Supplementary Planning Guidance to be used as a material planning consideration when making decisions within the Gwynedd Council Local Planning Authority.
3. To delegate powers to the Assistant Head of Environment Department to make any non-material modifications, that may be required to the draft SPG before it is published on the website.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted, noting the need to adopt the Supplementary Planning Guidance as it provided more substance to the Council's basic planning policies. It was explained that this needed to be adopted by the Cabinet, rather than the Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Planning Policy Committee since it related to specific areas within Gwynedd. It was explained that the document was extremely detailed and would be used as a material planning consideration when making planning decisions within the Gwynedd Council Local Planning Authority Area. It was expressed that minor amendments needed to be made to the documents and a request was made for rights to be delegated to the Assistant Head to make any grammatical corrections that were seen in the document.

In addition, the Assistant Head of Environment Department noted that the document was being submitted to Snowdonia National Park the following day, also for adoption.

Observations arising from the discussion

- Attention was drawn to the very detailed observations received from Ffestiniog Town Council and they were thanked for taking their time to offer such thorough observations.

6. THE COUNCIL'S SENIOR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The report was submitted by Cllr Dyfrig Siencyn.

DECISION

It was agreed to:

1. End the trial of operating with only one director and proceed with the usual recruitment process.
2. Abolish the post of Head of Gwynedd Consultancy on the retirement of the current Head of Service and merge the Highways and Municipal Department and Gwynedd Consultancy as one new department.
3. Transfer the Waste and Recycling units from the Highways and Municipal Department to the Environment Department and move one Assistant Head / Senior

Manager post.

4. Restart our Supporting People programme by locating the relevant Assistant Head of Service as part of the Leadership Team, for a period of two years initially.
5. Confirm that relocating elements of the Early Years and Youth Service from the Children and Families Department to the Education Department will be implemented by the Chief Executive.
6. To delegate the power to the Head of Legal Services to modify the Council's Delegation Scheme to reflect the changes as they become operational.
7. To note that the above changes will achieve an annual net revenue saving of approximately £81,000 which will sit within the Leadership Team for the time being until required.

DISCUSSION

The report was presented, noting that the Council was now adapting back after the pandemic period and that it was a good time to revisit and alter the Council's internal arrangements. It was explained that empty posts needed to be filled in the roles of Corporate Directors and for Gwynedd Consultancy to be moved into the Highways and Municipal Department. It was noted that in order to be able to cope with the added pressure, that the Waste section would be moved to the Environment Department.

It was expressed that these alterations were being made in the right places and secured a saving of £81,000 per year to the Council.

Observations arising from the discussion

- Support was expressed for the Chief Executive's plans to alter the Council's internal arrangements, highlighting that there was a long list of schemes that the Council wished to deliver and it would assist towards the efforts made to realise the schemes.
- It was expressed that it was a good time to make changes and that they made sense. It was noted that the alterations should be carried out seamlessly in order to have the least impact possible on services and to create units prior to the transfer, and specifically regarding the Waste Service.
- The need to highlight the alterations to all Councillors and the public so that they were aware was emphasised, since there was often some confusion regarding what fields of work were in the Environment Department and Highways and Municipal Department.
- The existing Corporate Director was thanked for her exceptional work over the years and it was noted that she was a role model for women.
- The exciting plans that were to be seen in the Council's priority list were highlighted, and the need to work across departments to ensure that the plans were actioned was highlighted.

7. RESIDENTIAL AND NURSING FEES 2022/23

The report was submitted by Cllr Dilwyn Morgan

DECISION

To agree to increase the Gwynedd residential and nursing standard fee for the 2022/23 financial year in accordance with the following option and to implement them in accordance with the Council's terms and conditions.

	£ per Week
Residential	£645
Residential EMI	£780
Nursing	£800*
Nursing EMI	£900*

*Not including the Health Board's contribution to nursing costs

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted and it was highlighted that the standard residential and nursing fees for Gwynedd needed to be increased for the 2022/23 financial year. A correction to the report was noted, i.e. that it was at the Cabinet meeting in March of this year when the Cabinet agreed to the standard fees for independent residential and nursing homes for 2022/23. It was explained there was a need to set the fee before April to allow implementation. At that Cabinet meeting, a request was made for a further report in order to consider the possibility of a higher fee for staffing levels, as well as annual inflation costs. It was noted that this report was the result of the work that had been done by the department to look further at this matter.

Attention was drawn to the Equality Impact report, highlighting that securing the fees allowed the Council to be viable and to pay staff properly.

The Senior Business Manager added that the Cabinet had asked the Department to look further at fees and that two options could be seen in the report. It was explained that increasing pressure could be seen specifically on residential, nursing and dementia care in the county, and that these aspects required more attention. It was explained that a higher increase was needed to the price in these fields in order to strengthen the provision.

Observations arising from the discussion

- It was noted that there was a shortage of placements in the nursing and dementia field across the county and that there was a need to pay more for that. It was explained that a discussion was being held to collaborate with the Health Board and Clwyd Alyn Housing Association to maintain a range of care in the field.
- Private and Council care staff were thanked for their work during the pandemic period and it was noted that there was a need to secure a living wage for our carers.
- Support was expressed for option b in the report in order to ensure that the field was fairly funded and it was highlighted that inflation currently

added to the challenge.

8. PERFORMANCE REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULTS, HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

The report was submitted by Cllr Dilwyn Morgan

DECISION

To accept and note the information in the report.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted, noting that it was the Cabinet Member's first report in this field, and it was expressed that it was an important report which served as a benchmark of the department's position and highlighted what work needed to be done.

He explained that no performance challenging meeting had been held yet, but that a number of the matters had been the subject of discussion with the department over the past weeks. It was highlighted that the second part of the report highlighted the progress that had been made with the department's Council Plan schemes. It was noted that a lot of work had been done on the schemes and that reference was made to the required improvements. It was expressed that the work of redesigning the Care Service was underway and that work was currently being done on tenders to develop a new care service.

It was emphasised that workforce recruitment and retention problems were evident throughout the report and it was emphasised that this problem was not unique and that it was something that could be seen both regionally and nationally. It was noted that the department was looking to develop innovative ways to attract workers to the sector and to understand the barriers. It was explained that a further report on the matter would be submitted before the Cabinet in due course.

In terms of the department's performance, it was noted following discussions with the Head of Department, that further work needed to be done to look specifically at the services' purposes and measures, in order to prioritise the work and move forward. Cllr Dafydd Meurig was thanked for his support and for his work as the Cabinet Member who had held this portfolio previously.

The Head of Department added, in relation to recruitment, that a varied programme of recruitment activities and sessions had been carried out, which had been very successful in some areas, however no interest whatsoever had been seen in other areas. It was explained that a further report on the work would be shared over the next months. In terms of the Council Plan schemes, it was noted that these were specific work programmes, with a number of work streams in each of them. It was explained that one of the department's biggest tasks was

to change the culture across the care field, both internally and externally. It was expressed that the biggest change could be seen across the service through changing the culture.

Observations arising from the discussion

- The lack of progress in the scheme for Canolfan Dolfeurig in Dolgellau was highlighted; this had been in the pipeline for over five years, and it was expressed that the money earmarked for this could now possibly be insufficient.
- It was explained back in August 2021, that the department was projecting an overspend of £1.4 million; however, after receiving £1.9 million in grant funding from the Welsh Government's Social Care Pressures Fund, the department had underspent by £68,000. It was emphasised that the underspend was completely reliant upon a one-off grant, and it was highlighted that savings would be very challenging for the department in light of the increasing pressures being witnessed.

9. PERFORMANCE REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND SUPPORTING FAMILIES

The report was submitted by Cllr Elin Walker Jones

DECISION

To accept and note the information in the report.

DISCUSSION

The report was submitted noting that it was an update on progress and a benchmark for the beginning of her journey as Cabinet Member. Cllr Dilwyn Morgan was thanked for his work as the previous portfolio holder.

It was expressed that the report outlined what was happening in the department and highlighted a number of exciting schemes. It was explained that one of the department's biggest challenges was the fact that a number of the staff had been redeployed to respond to the crisis in Ukraine. It was noted in terms of priority projects that the work of keeping families together continued. In terms of the Autism Plan, it was noted that a coordinator had been appointed on a temporary basis and that staff training had been carried out.

It was highlighted that staff capacity and recruitment was a major challenge for the department, however, she was happy with the performance nonetheless. It was explained that the number of requests for support from the department was continuing to rise. It was noted that the Department had underspent by £97,000 in the last financial year as a result to the department attracting grants.

The Head of Department added that schemes were progressing but that a high number of Supporting Families staff had been redeployed to work to assist

families who were arriving here from Ukraine. It was highlighted that the Strategy for Keeping Families Together continued to be successful, with a high number of children remaining with their families. It was noted that there was an increasing demand and a staff recruitment and retention problem, and it was noted that the number of requests in April and May had been higher than ever. Nevertheless, there was light at the end of the tunnel as the department had succeeded to appoint 7 social workers straight after they graduated from the Social Work course at Bangor and Glyndŵr Universities.

Observations arising from the discussion

- It was highlighted that the two care departments had received grant funding at the last minute from the Government and a request was made for the Local Government Association to press on the Welsh Government to include the money within the annual settlement so that departments could plan in advance.
- It was noted that although the department had underspent last year, that the Cabinet, over the past two years, had removed savings targets of £1.1 million and £300,000 from within the department. Nevertheless, it was expressed that it was very encouraging that the department had managed to recruit in order to respond to the consistent increase in demand.

The meeting commenced at 1pm and concluded at 2pm.

CHAIRMAN