

REPORT TO THE CABINET

16 February 2016

Cabinet Member: Cllr Peredur Jenkins

Subject: Efficiency Savings

Contact officer: Meinir Owen

Decision sought

The Cabinet is requested to:

- consider the recommendations of the Communities Scrutiny Committee noted in point 4.2
 - approve the efficiency schemes noted in point 2.4, 3.1, 4.1 and 5.1.
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Local member's views

Not a local matter.

Background

- 1.1 As part of the Council's Financial Strategy, a financial deficit of approximately £50m is projected over the four year period 2015/16 - 2017/18. With an assumed Council Tax increase of 3.5% and savings that are already being implemented, this would leave around £34m of further savings to be found.
- 1.2 At its meeting on 6 March 2014, the Council accepted the following strategy which anticipated addressing this deficit in the following ways:

Council Tax Policy	Consider increasing the Council Tax in the 3.5% - 5% range
Schools Budget	Consider setting a target for the schools budget based on what is practical
The Commission on Governance	Consider whether there will be any savings arising from reorganisation which we can depend upon and take into account
Efficiency Savings	Maximising the efficiency savings that can be achieved
Cuts	The remaining figure

- 1.3 The departments have submitted efficiency proposals in accordance with the targets set for them by the Cabinet on 1 April 2014.
- 1.4 In terms of the decision-making process, the proposals are being looked at by a scrutiny working group from amongst the Chairs and Vice-chairs in order to challenge the effect on the people of Gwynedd. They will then be submitted for decision to the Cabinet.
- 1.5 The vast majority of the efficiency savings were approved in order to meet the targets in December 2014 with some services to submit further proposals to address their targets.
- 1.6 Bearing in mind that efficiency savings is what is under consideration here, the effect on results for citizens should be less than we would see in our cuts regime.

2. Further efficiency proposals

- 2.1 A Working Group meeting was held to discuss further efficiency proposals from the Children and Supporting Families Department and the Adults, Health and Well-being Department on 17 December 2015.
- 2.2 The Working Group addressed the proposals and considered the implications of implementing the proposals and highlighted any considerations in terms of impact that needed to be brought to the Cabinet's attention.
- 2.3 The Working Group noted concern about the following schemes:
 - OED25 - a concern was noted that this did not encourage older people to eat and this would create difficulties in future. The Head noted that every case would be reviewed individually and arrangements would change as and when necessary.
 - OED29 - a concern was noted that there is a need for more collaboration with the third sector in future and this would hinder that. The Head noted that the department would keep an eye on that and report back if required.
 - CC3 - a concern was noted that people would have to travel far to register births, deaths or marriages. It was noted that the department would look at new ways of providing the service locally e.g. Siop Gwynedd, local Library etc.
- 2.4 A full list of all the proposals can be seen in Appendix 1. In addition, the effect on the people of Gwynedd is noted for each proposal in the appendix. The list shows that the total of these efficiency savings over the three years is £549,164.

Ref.	Scheme	Timescale			
		2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Total
Plant1	Professional Legal Fees		£32,000		£32,000
Plant2	Travel Plan	£30,000			£30,000
Plant4	Derwen Schemes		£50,000		£50,000
OED25	Reviewing lunch / supper packages (home care)		£50,000	£100,000	£150,000
OED27	Working electronically across the three areas		£17,664		£17,664
OED29	Third Sector budget			£65,000	£65,000
OED34	Improving the efficiency of field workers		£37,000	£113,000	£150,000
CC3	Deleting two part-time posts within the Registration Service			£24,500	£24,500
TAI 6	Improving efficiency		£10,000	£20,000	£30,000
TOTAL		£30,000	£196,664	£322,500	£549,164

3. Schemes to go back to Cabinet for a final decision

3.1 The Cabinet report on 16 December 2014 noted that four Learning Disability schemes needed to come back to the Cabinet for a final decision. These schemes add up to a total of £545,000 and further details about the schemes can be seen in Appendix 2 as well as the equality impact assessment for the schemes.

Ref.	Scheme	2016/17	2017/18	Total
OED 7	Review day provision for adults with Learning Disabilities	£40,000	£45,000	£85,000
OED 8	Review the Learning Disability Support Services	£70,000	£110,000	£180,000
OED 9	Review provision of Learning Disability Respite Care		£130,000	£130,000
OED 10	Reassess and review the Learning Disability Supported Accommodation Services	£75,000	£75,000	£150,000
TOTAL		£185,000	£360,000	£545,000

4. Schemes to go back to Scrutiny Committee before reaching a final decision

- 4.1 At its meeting on 16 December 2014, the Cabinet resolved that the scheme 'Alternative procedure for replacing lamps' needed further attention by the Communities Scrutiny Committee. There was a request for the committee to look at and compare the proposal with the current procedure of bulk change.
- 4.2 The Communities Scrutiny Committee addressed the matter at its meeting on 21 May 2015 and the committee was satisfied with the saving and that it improves the experience for the residents of Gwynedd, provided that:
- i) the Department kept an eye on the output rate of the lights in terms of safety of the public
 - ii) and discuss with Community Councils in the context of partial switch-off if relevant.

5. Strategic Efficiency Schemes

- 5.1 By now, some further strategic efficiency schemes are sufficiently developed to be implemented based on evidence of financial savings as a result of implementation or that a robust business case is in place with a reasonable certainty of being able to realise the savings.

Scheme	2014/15
Arfon Area Transport Savings	£267,000
Cross-departmental Procurement Savings	£118,000
Reducing sickness absences	£50,000
Assistive Technology Savings (Telecare)	£217,000
Savings by making more effective use of the Council's fleet vehicles	£130,000
Redesigning the Council's printing arrangements	£78,000
TOTAL	£860,000

- 5.2 In accordance with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 equality issues were considered and an assessment was made which highlights the potential impacts in terms of Arfon Transport and Telecare. The assessment highlights the potential impacts and the arrangements in place to respond (see Appendix 3).
- 5.3 Arrangements are in place to ensure that the situation is being monitored and reviewed regularly. As a result, we are confident that the findings of the assessment are current and relevant to the decision

Reasons for recommending the decision

To address the financial deficit through efficiency savings in accordance with the agreed strategy. In essence, efficiency savings should have less of an impact on the residents of Gwynedd than cuts.

Views of the statutory officers

The Chief Executive:

"Obviously, some of the efficiency proposals will have more of an impact than others. However, as is obvious from the discussions before the Cabinet in this meeting on the cuts, discussions which will be reiterated in the full Council's next meeting, the need to make efficiency savings which have less impact on citizens than the cuts that are being considered, is increasingly important. I encourage

the Cabinet to adopt the proposals within this report lest creating an extra burden on the cuts process which will essentially be more severe.”

The Monitoring Officer:

“I will present any comments from a propriety standpoint at the meeting”

The Head of Finance Department:

"We welcome the positive steps contained in this report, particularly in relation to the Strategic Efficiency Plans in part 5, and the steps taken by the Children and Families Department and the Adult, Health and Well-being Department as outlined in parts 2 and 3, to be able to offer the individual efficiency plans contained within the report, and which contributes nearly £1.1million towards specific requirements within the relevant efficiency system, which also minimises the inevitable cuts."

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Children and Supporting Families Department and Adults, Health and Well-being Department Efficiency Schemes

Appendix 2 - Learning Disabilities Efficiency Schemes

Appendix 3 - Strategic Efficiency Schemes