

MEETING	Cabinet
DATE	3 May 2016
TITLE	Overview of Gwynedd Council's Performance 2015-16 - fields of Children and Young People, the Welsh Language, Effective and Efficient Council and Financial Planning
PURPOSE	To accept and note the information in the report
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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with the Council's performance management system, an overview of the Council's performance thus far in 2015/16 is submitted. This report focuses on Children and Young People, The Welsh Language, Effective and Efficient Council and Financial Planning which is included in the portfolios of the following Cabinet members:

Councillor Gareth Thomas
Councillor Mair Rowlands
Councillor Peredur Jenkins
Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn

- 1.2 The report addresses the transformational plans included in the Strategic Plan and draws attention to the performance measures that reflect the Council's day to day work.

2.0 Reasons for recommending the decision

In order to ensure effective performance management.

3.0 Main messages

- 3.1 It can be seen that there is good progress for the year with projects in the Children and Young People field, with problems with data in relation to one measure, namely SCC/024 Percentage of looked after children during the year who have a Personal Education Plan within 20 school days of being admitted to care or joining a school during the year.
- 3.2 Although there is some slippage involved with specific projects in the Safeguarding field due to capacity matters, our safeguarding arrangements are continuing to strengthen.
- 3.3 Several successful activities have been held as part of the work of projects in the Welsh language field.

- 3.4 Some elements of projects in the Effective and Efficient Council field have slipped slightly, specifically within the C5 Self-service project.
- 3.5 The Financial Planning field has been successful this year.

4.0 Strategic Plan Projects

Brief progress reports are submitted below on the projects of the Strategic Plan 2015-16 in the fields of Children and Young People, the Welsh Language, Effective and Efficient Council and Financial Planning. The projects are in the ownership of the individual Cabinet members.

In order to remind members, the wording included in the strategic plan has been noted in blue.

4.1 Children and Young People

Councillor Gareth Thomas

P1 Education Quality Strategy

The purpose of this project is to prepare and develop an Education Quality Strategy that will be a basis to improve and standardise education standards across the County.

An Education Quality Strategy has been formed and will be the basis to improve and reconcile education standards across Gwynedd. The strategy corresponds to the main matters included in the Education Department's Business Plan.

Although the summer 2015 results were generally good, the Education Department has identified fields for improvement, and to this end has ensured that these measures are included in the Regional Schools Improvement (GwE) Working Group Business Plan.

P2 Improving leadership and management

The purpose of this project is to improve the condition of leadership in order to raise standards.

The Education Department has been collaborating well with the Regional Schools Improvement Service (GwE) to provide leading workshops in the self-evaluation and improvement planning for representation from Senior Management Teams of every school. The sessions enabled access to presentations on the best local practices and exemplar materials to support implementation in schools. It was also arranged that each school had access to an evaluation tool to be able to monitor that the guidance had refined implementation across several schools.

GwE was also working with the department to provide workshops to assist leaders to get their schools ready for Estyn inspections. As part of the sessions, input was provided from successful practitioners. Significant improvements can be seen in the 'progression category' profile of schools which have been inspected since then.

Creating a network of viable schools for the future

The purpose of this programme is to create a network of viable schools for the future. Delivering the programme will create better conditions to develop leadership, increase and standardise education standards and improve experiences for children and young people.

It is important to consider the outcomes of this programme in the long-term, and the way forward with the programme beyond 2018.

P3 Ysgol Bro Llifon

The purpose of this project is to provide a new school as a consequence of the Council's decision to close the schools of Groeslon, Carmel and Bron y Foel.

This project has been successfully completed.

P4 Hafod Lon Newydd

The purpose of this project is to provide a new special school for pupils of Meirionnydd and Dwyfor in light of the decision to close the existing Ysgol Hafod Lon.

Good progress has been made with the construction work and it is still intended to open the school in the autumn term 2016.

P5 The Gader Catchment Area

The purpose of this project is to establish a Welsh-medium Catchment Area School for 3-16 year olds in the catchment area of Ysgol y Gader.

It is expected that the construction work will be completed so that the new school can open in September 2017. A new head teacher will commence in post after the 2016 Easter holidays. Children from the Junior Department in Ysgol Gynradd Dolgellau have moved to the cabins since the beginning of January 2016 and it is anticipated that the Infants Department will transfer to the cabins later on in the year. Children from Ysgol Llanelltyd have also transferred to cabins at the beginning of January 2016.

P6 Glancegin

The purpose of this project is to secure an investment to provide a new Ysgol Glan Cegin building, which is located in Maesgeirchen.

The business case has been approved by the Welsh Government, therefore the £5.11 million is in place for the new Ysgol Glancegin building.

P7 The Berwyn Catchment Area

The purpose of this project is to create a Lifelong, Welsh-medium Learning Campus on the current site of Ysgol y Berwyn.

The final step in the business case has been approved by the Cabinet and Welsh Government. It is expected that the construction work will be completed on time so that the new school can open in September 2017.

P8 Transforming the provision of Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion

The purpose of this project will be to transform the service for children with additional learning needs.

Broad engagement has recently been undertaken in order to gain support for the principles of the Additional Learning Needs Strategy. Specific forums were held to discuss prioritising provision within some specific services. Although the new provision will not be in place until October 2016, by now an agreement is at work to support individuals sooner when the need arises. Training on person-focused methods are ongoing, and the e-learning modules have been completed and are available to Co-ordinators. In addition, training has been arranged to establish champions on these methods.

Councillor Mair Rowlands

P9 Ensure a range of preventative services for vulnerable groups of children and young people in Gwynedd

The purpose of the project is to ensure an overview of the preventative agenda in the County, by working on a multi-agency level to ensure that we focus our efforts on doing the right thing in the right place.

As was reported the last time in the [Performance Overview Report 16 February 2016](#), the main fields of need identified in provision at present are:

- Oracy of children under 3 years of age
- Teenagers
- Parenting and behaviour issues
- Low-income families and unemployed parents

Since January 2016, engagement work has been ongoing with relevant stakeholders who provide early interventions for vulnerable children and young people in order to gain a clearer picture of the services which are available to this cohort of young people and the fields of need. The assessment of these needs will set a long-term plan for preventative/early intervention services between the Council and the external partners, including the third sector.

A joint workshop was held with partners to discuss the assessment and to determine the direction of the work for the future, including a discussion on what needs to be commissioned and to identify priority groups for the future. There will be clarity on the action plan during April 2016.

4.2 Safeguarding

Councillor Mair Rowlands

D1 Ensure whole Council ownership in the safeguarding field

The purpose of the project is to ensure that there is corporate ownership of the safeguarding agenda and that effective steps are taken to safeguard children and vulnerable adults in Gwynedd.

Work is progressing in terms of the impact measuring elements and raising awareness of the safeguarding field. However, as with many projects, it is likely that the element of measuring the impact is the most challenging.

Nevertheless, it is anticipated that it will be possible, for the first time this year, to compare information with last year. A version of the 'Safeguarding Arrangements Investigation - Staff Awareness of the Policy Draft Report 2015-16' was submitted at the beginning of March 2016.

D2 Safeguarding children and young people

The purpose of the project is to continually improve the safeguarding arrangements and culture within the field of children and young people.

A work programme for the first part of the project, namely Child Sexual Exploitation was submitted in September and options are currently being considered in terms of using a specialist in the field in order to respond to the risk which has been nationally identified.

A copy of the regional action plan of the Regional Safeguarding Board was received, and work is ongoing to ensure that we review our arrangements for the field as a result. It is possible that it will be necessary to raise awareness and to form a local action plan to respond and ensure compliance with the expectations.

The timetable has slipped somewhat because of the lack of availability of the specialist and also the need to train staff in order to implement the Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales). This means that the project will not reach some of the milestones originally set. However, the Cabinet Member is not concerned that a slippage of a few weeks will have an impact on achieving the purpose of the project within the timetable. The Safeguarding Panel has discussed the slippage and is satisfied that a slippage of a few months will not be a problem, but will rather be beneficial in order to ensure the best specialist and good attendance by staff.

The second part of this project is the work of strengthening safeguarding procedures and culture in the field of education. A clear work programme has been drawn up and a Safeguarding Officer has been appointed to act on it. In order to undertake an annual audit of the safeguarding arrangements, the Safeguarding Officer visits schools to verify safeguarding procedures and policies and this work has taken place over the past months. The aim is to ensure robust safeguarding procedures and culture in Gwynedd schools. The progress of the project is as expected and work is also ongoing in terms of the training elements and reviewing policies.

D3 Safeguarding vulnerable adults

The purpose of the project is to continually improve the safeguarding arrangements and culture within the field of adults.

There has been some progress in terms of this project but on the whole the last months have been difficult to drive the action plan forward. The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) has conducted an investigation into the Learning Disabilities field in January, which has meant that the capacity of the project manager to co-ordinate the work programme in question was very low. During the same period, both Senior Manager posts in the adults care field have been vacant. I am pleased to report that the posts have now been appointed and therefore significant progress is anticipated in terms of implementing the work programme during the next months.

4.3 The Welsh Language

Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn

I1 Communities promoting the Welsh Language

Promote the Welsh language by supporting and empowering four communities by assisting residents to undertake an assessment of the position of the Welsh language in the community in order to strengthen the status and the use of the language.

In line with the timetable for the project, the Framework has been completed for the communities of Bangor, Porthmadog and Dolgellau and although there was some slippage in the work in Talysarn, it is anticipated that it will be completed within the next weeks.

As a result, a programme of plans has been ongoing including:

- Children and family activities where contact was made with over 650 attendees in Blaenau Ffestiniog, Talysarn and Bangor amongst other places, to popularise and promote the use of the Welsh language
- An electronic blog activity and 4 integrating learners' nights held with over 30 attendees
- Two business breakfasts have been held with 15 businesses attending, and providing a positive and practical response to increase the visibility and use of the Welsh language as a result.

- Over 15 social evenings have been held through the medium of Welsh in order to showcase the financial benefit of cultural events which aim to increase the awareness and use of the Welsh language in the communities in question, including businesses.
- There are various examples of using community events which are already happening to spread the popularising message and to increase the use of the language.

I2 The Welsh language and public services

Create a definition of a bilingual workplace that the Council, and subsequently, the Gwynedd and Anglesey Local Services Board, can adopt as a standard definition to ensure clarity and a consistent standard of bilingual public services.

There has been some change of direction in relation to this project in order to ensure that focus is placed on promoting the ability of the County's residents to use the Welsh language naturally when contacting the County's public bodies.

Following the decision of the Local Services Board to prioritise the work, we have had considerable difficulty in identifying Senior Managers (who also have the authority to implement) to lead on the work within partner organisations. This raises a question regarding the organisations' commitment to the project and the Deputy Leader intends to highlight this to the Local Services Board should the situation continue.

Work to develop a questionnaire, based on the language web, is ongoing in order to establish the levels of use of the language within the organisations. Thus far, Natural Resources Wales and Snowdonia National Park (together with the Council) have volunteered to trial the questionnaire.

I3 Young people using the Welsh language socially

Set a baseline and measure the increase in young people's social use of the Welsh language.

12 Secondary Schools in the County have agreed to take part in the project and a series of projects were held to raise awareness and confidence amongst young people regarding their social use of the Welsh language.

Further work will be required to analyse the outcomes of the Language Charter within primary schools and to plan a response as required. The Deputy Leader will also receive a further report on the work of submitting the charter to secondary schools.

We have held language awareness sessions with youth clubs in 11 areas, as well as work with eight local sports clubs to promote the use of the Welsh language when communicating during playing and practising. Also, four music events were held to popularise the use of the Welsh language in musical activities.

14 Audit of the Welsh Language's situation in Gwynedd Council

i) Consider the success of the Council in normalising the Welsh language in its departments and the services it provides to the county's residents.

ii) Deliver research work in order to find and confirm to what extent the Council goes a step further and succeeds in taking advantage of every opportunity to promote the Welsh language through the services that we provide to the county's residents.

The audit has been completed and is being analysed.

A response on the audit held during December and January was received from 172 out of 259 Council Managers. Due to the significance of the subject and the emphasis we are placing on the Welsh language, the Deputy Leader has asked the Project Leader to go back to the 87 Managers who did not respond in order to enquire why.

The initial analysis of the responses has identified several possible main themes that will need to be focused upon. In order to respond to some of the themes that have been identified, a simple framework will be prepared which outlines what the Council's Welsh Language Policy means for services in practical terms.

The initial findings of the audit and recommendations for a response will be submitted to the Language Committee in April.

4.4 Effective and Efficient Council

Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn

C3 Engagement

The purpose of this project is to improve engagement across the Council.

By the end of March 2017, this project will ensure that an Engagement Strategy is implemented that includes a series of activities aimed at improving engagement across the Council.

We have established an arrangement of logging the Council's engagement activities and work has been undertaken to raise awareness of the support available to facilitate engagement activities.

In addition, work has been ongoing to extend the use of social media with an increase of 1,467 in the number of Twitter followers (11,527) and an increase of 1,288 (5,062) in the number of Facebook likes.

As part of the 'Gwynedd Challenge' work, we engaged with over 2,000 people on the cuts programme. In order to ensure that we learn lessons from this work, we will hold sessions over the coming weeks with the Engagement Group (which will also include members from the Scrutiny Committees) and staff who were involved with the sessions in order to receive feedback.

All activities which had been identified for the year have already been completed.

C4 Implementing a performance system

The purpose of this project will be to develop and implement a new performance system. The system will ensure that service teams measure what is important for the people of Gwynedd, and those measures will be used to improve performance. The procedure for reporting on that will add value by holding services accountable.

Manager College sessions have been held with all Departments. The work of developing training on the performance module is ongoing but will not be completed until the end of the year as was originally highlighted.

There is good practice within the Corporate Support Department's Management Team, where Managers bring members from Teams with them to the performance meetings which extend the Team's ownership of the measures. Although we will not have developed the training on the performance module, it is anticipated that we will have completed the remainder of the activities for the year.

C8 Information governance

The purpose of this project is to review our training arrangements for staff who work with personal information to ensure that training is effective and that we are confident that the personal information of the people of Gwynedd is totally safe in our hands.

All milestones for the project that were to be completed by now have been completed and the progress is as expected. We have held some training sessions with teams and spoken with individual managers to explain their responsibilities to this end.

A data protection policy has been included as part of the new Policy Centre that has been launched for its workers by the Council and the e-learning module has now been prepared and introduced to the staff of two departments. In addition, the internal audit procedure was used where possible as a method of verifying compliance with the Data Protection Policy.

Councillor Peredur Jenkins

C1 Implementing Ffordd Gwynedd

The purpose of this project will be to lead service teams to reflect on their current working arrangements, to challenge whether they are placing the people of Gwynedd centrally and whether there is room for improvement.

Additional capacity has been ensured to work on the project over the last months and by now seven reviews (Responsive maintenance, Homelessness, Support Services, Social Care (Alltwen), Maintenance) are included in the programme, with reviews within the Education and Highways and Municipal Departments commencing during the last weeks.

The work of developing managers and staff to put the people of Gwynedd central is ongoing with work being undertaken on a departmental level to assist staff to identify the needs of users, the purposes and measures of their services and to analyse and interpret that information.

In order to ensure clarity regarding the role of the Cabinet Members within the reviews, the Project Leader has identified steps within the process to ensure timely communication and discussions with the relevant members when undertaking reviews.

C2 Leaders development programme

The purpose of this project is to ensure that leaders within Gwynedd Council understand the principles of "Ffordd Gwynedd", that they are aware of what they need to do in order to reinforce the "Ffordd Gwynedd" principles through all tiers of the establishment and that there is a system in place to ensure that we do this consistently.

The first cycle of the new appraisal system was undertaken and constructive feedback on the system has been received from Cabinet members and the Management Group and an agreement has been reached to extend similar arrangements to Senior Council Managers. In addition, the 360 exercise (receiving feedback from members regarding a worker's direct work cycle) has been held and a vast extent of Council heads have received the feedback. This feedback will be the focus for the discussion at the second evaluation meeting during the period between March - May this year.

The arrangement to review the developmental needs of Cabinet Members has not yet occurred and will not happen until 25 April. However, it is anticipated that most activities noted for the project during 2015/16 will have been completed.

C5 Extending the use of self-service

The purpose of this project is to extend the use of self-service to facilitate the people of Gwynedd's access to Council services, and at a lower cost than the traditional channels.

There has been little progress in the project as a result of a question regarding the technical foundation to be used and we have not yet responded to that question. The new project Leader has undertaken research, looking at the options which exist for the technical foundation to be used, but we are not in a situation where a business case has been submitted and approved to combine the contact channels in order to establish a team to lead the work.

The Cabinet Member has agreed with the Project Leader to wait until this work has been completed prior to agreeing on an amended timetable.

C6 Information Technology Strategy (IT)

The purpose of this project is to produce an Information Technology Strategy that will set out the direction for the period by the end of March 2016.

A draft of the strategy has been formed, but the Cabinet Member was eager to adapt it in order to place specific focus on the main matters that need attention, how to address those matters and the resources which will be required. In addition, the Project Manager was asked to discuss these matters with the heads of service and the directors in order to ensure that the strategy meets their requirements.

As a result, there will be some slippage to the original timetable that was submitted and the intention by now is to submit the strategy to the Cabinet in May, rather than March.

C7 Electronic document and records management system (EDRMS)

The purpose of this project is to establish the EDRMS system which will ensure that the Council's information sharing arrangements are much easier and more effective.

By now, we have developed and formed a system to manage electronic documents and minutes and have transferred the Corporate Support Department to use the system.

The system has been developed and constructed and all the Corporate Support Department has transferred to using the system, apart from two teams. The Leadership Team and the Economy and Community Department will transfer to using the system during the next weeks in line with the timetable.

4.5 Financial Planning

Councillor Peredur Jenkins

CA1 Realising savings

The purpose of this project will be to ensure that arrangements are in place to realise efficiency savings of £13.6m that have already been agreed as part of the savings system along with any further savings that are identified.

Generally, the situation is praiseworthy as departments are bridging any deficit from the slippages without corporate assistance.

However, a concern was highlighted within the Adults field regarding the risk to realising savings for 2016/17, mainly due to the size of the change the department is facing and as a result the Cabinet Member for Resources has discussed the situation with the Cabinet Member for Care and the Head of the Adults, Health and Well-being Department. At present, they are in the process of developing an adapted work programme to respond to these risks with the intention of reporting on it to the Cabinet within the next weeks.

The relevant Cabinet Members will continue to be watchful of the situation in order to ensure that the savings are realised.

CA2 Outcomes Agreement

The purpose of this project is to ensure that the Council is in a position to claim the full amount of £1.3m that is available in 2014/2015 and 2015/16 for delivering the outcomes that have been agreed with the Government.

A report on the Council's performance has been prepared and submitted to the Government which confirms that we have achieved or done better than the ambition, which means that we have received a payment of £1.3m.

CA3 Cuts

The purpose of this project is to establish the cuts that can be realised to close the remainder of the financial shortfall after we deliver the efficiency savings.

The project's progress is in line with the work programme and the milestones with work undertaken to identify possible cuts, discussions have been held with Councillors and members of staff regarding those and the 'Gwynedd Challenge' public consultation has been held.

Over the previous weeks, this work reached its culmination with several meetings and workshops being held prior to the Full Council formally agreeing on a programme of cuts equating to £4.94m at its meeting on 3 March 2016.

CA4 Further efficiencies and service provision models

The purpose of this project will be to find further efficiency schemes in order to reduce the amount of cuts required in addition to researching fields where it is possible to change the current model of provision and make savings.

The work of developing an outline business case for public transport and a leisure business model is ongoing, and the Cabinet Member will report back to the Cabinet on the outcomes when the work has matured. In addition, it is intended to provide an update on the work to look at the alternative Provision Model Strategic Case for Care early in 2016/17.

Further efficiency savings were reported to the Cabinet at the beginning of February and as part of the Financial Strategy submitted to the Cabinet and the Full Council during the previous weeks.

5.0 Measures

5.1 Developmental work - the majority of the Council's service teams have reviewed their purpose to place a focus on the citizen and have identified fit for purpose measures, although some measures are still being developed. The main matters are listed below, with a comprehensive list of measures relevant to the fields discussed in this report in **Appendix 1**.

5.2 Children and Young People

Councillor Gareth Thomas

The Education Department's measures, namely the summer 2015 results were reported in the [Performance Overview Report 16 February 2016](#), therefore there are no specific matters on those measures to arise. See **Appendix 1** for the performance of the measures.

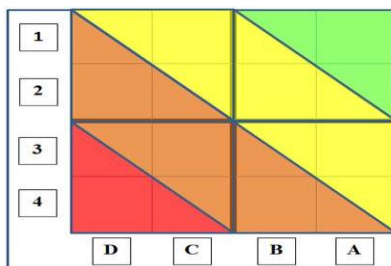
The outcomes of Welsh schools' categorisation were published at the end of January, and a copy of Gwynedd schools' categorisation picture can be seen in **Appendix 2**. The main purpose of this system is to identify which schools need the most assistance. There are three steps to the process of categorising schools:

Step 1. A school is assessed by the Welsh Government using a range of performance measures and is placed in one of four classification categories [1 is highest, 4 is lowest]. This is checked by Welsh Government in December/January every year.

Step 2. GwE and the Authority come to an opinion on the quality of the leadership and the learning/teaching in the school and places it within one of four categories [A is highest and D is lowest]. There is a process of determining a school's ability to improve, commencing with the school's self-evaluation where the Challenge Advisors will have to be satisfied and view evidence that every school leader uses performance data in a robust manner as part of an effective process of management and improvement [governors, head teachers, teachers, middle managers and heads of subject].

There must be evidence of effective use of accurate data on a pupil, classroom, group, cohort, subject and school level. Challenge Advisors will consider the performance of each learner and group of learners together with the quality of the teaching and learning at the school.

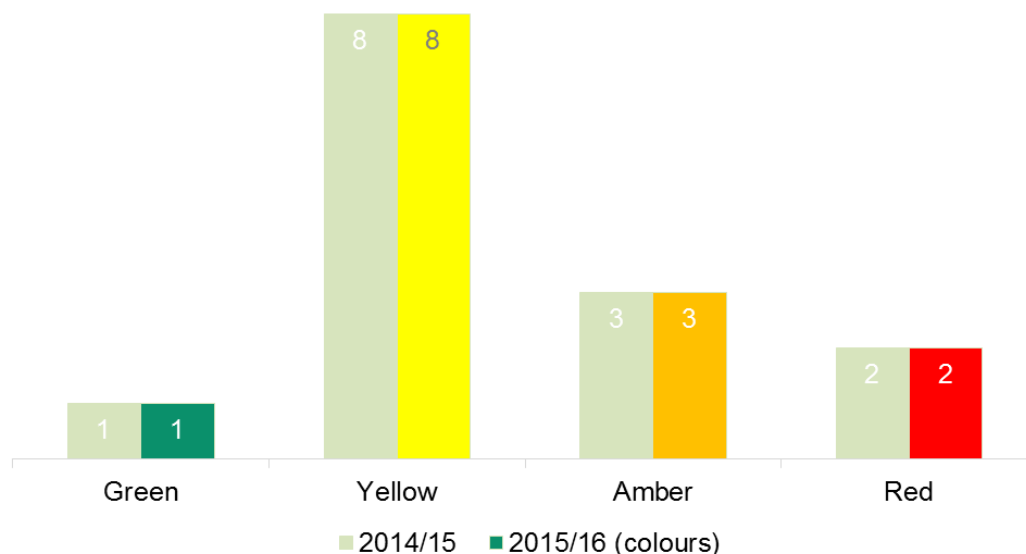
Step 3. GwE and the Authority will use the following grid to agree on the school's overarching colour category [Green/Yellow/Amber/Red] which will lead to a programme of support, challenging and intervention specifically tailored to the school. Brokering the support will be one of GwE's essential roles. The number of support days noted below has been in operation since September 2015.



Green Support Category
A school in this category can receive up to four days of a Challenge Advisor's time.
Yellow Support Category
A school in this category can receive up to ten days of a Challenge Advisor's time.
Amber Support Category
A school in this category can receive up to 15 days of a Challenge Advisor's time.
Red Support Category
A school in this category can receive up to 25 days of a Challenge Advisor's time. The school will receive a letter from the Local Authority as a matter of procedure where appropriate statutory powers can be called upon.

Main messages - Categorising Gwynedd's Schools 2015/2016

Secondary School Categories



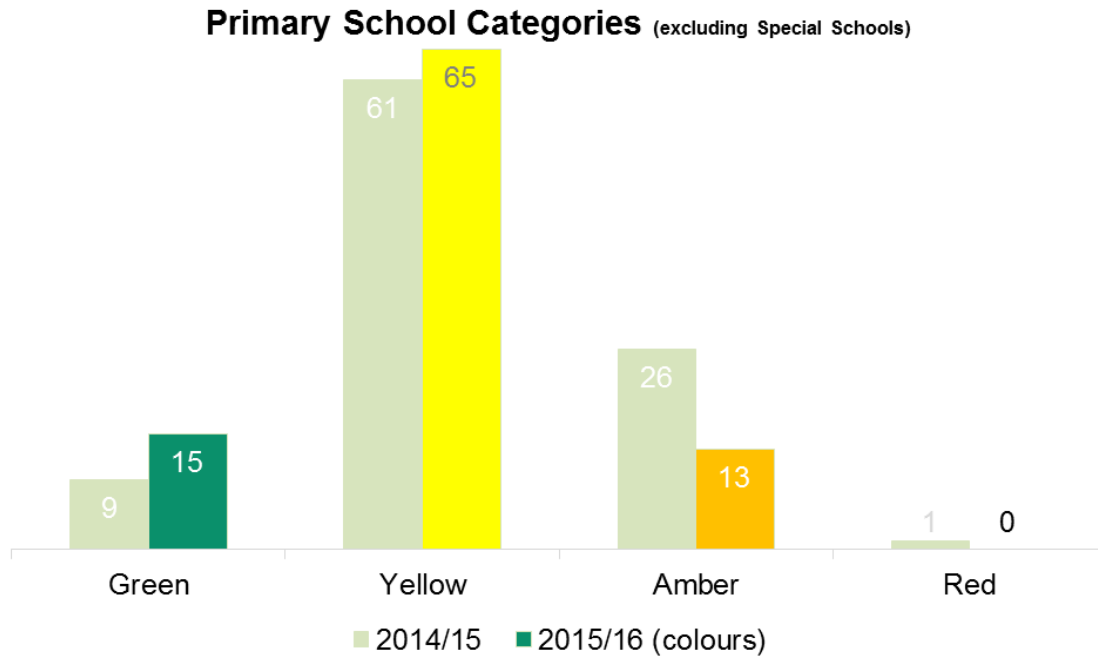
Secondary Schools

The profile in terms of the support category has remained stable in the secondary sector, but it can be seen that there is an increase in the number of schools that have received a judgement on their ability to improve.

Ysgol Friars has made a positive improvement and has been upgraded to the **Yellow** support category and Ysgol Botwnnog has gone down to **Amber**. The support status of Ysgol y Berwyn, Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle, Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen and Ysgol y Gader has been maintained to ensure that they continue to gain access to a more mature level of support. It should be emphasised that improvements in performance were seen across almost every indicator in four of the schools with very significant improvements in one school. There was a significant improvement in performance across the main indicators except the Welsh language in Ysgol Uwchradd Dyffryn Nantlle, but the school remains in the **Red** category to ensure appropriate support to move out of the Estyn statutory progression category.

From the 14 secondary schools, three schools were in an Estyn progression category – Ysgol Botwnnog (Estyn monitoring); Ysgol y Gader (Significant Improvement) and Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle (Special Measures). Ysgol y Berwyn and Ysgol Tryfan have been removed from the progression category by Estyn. GwE monitoring visits highlight progress in Ysgol y Gader and Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle, but further significant work remains to be undertaken until they are in a situation to be removed from the category by Estyn.

Primary Schools



In the primary sector, the profile is more encouraging than the situation in 2014/15. There is no longer a primary school in the red category. Good progress has been happening in Dolgellau and they are now categorised as **Amber**.

Also, it is noted that there has been a significant reduction in the number of primary schools that have been placed in the **Amber** support category.

From the 27 schools that were in the **Amber** or **Red** support category last year, the changes are as follows:

- 1 school has closed its doors
- 10 schools have improved their data group from Step 1; 1 school has reduced by a data group and 15 have remained within the same group
- 8 schools have improved their judgement on 'able to improve'; 1 school has slipped to a lower judgement; 17 have remained with the same judgement
- 13 schools have improved their category; no schools have slipped and 13 schools have remained within the same category to ensure that they continue to receive access to more intensive support

Councillor Mair Rowlands

A copy of all measures for Children and Supporting Families, Leisure and Youth can be seen in **Appendix 1**. The work of developing the purpose and measures is ongoing.

SCC/024 - Percentage of looked after children during the year who have a Personal Education Plan within 20 school days of being admitted to care or joining a new school during the year. By now, the percentage of children who have a Personal Education Plan within 20 days is 26.1%. It was suggested that the process of data collection is the reason why the figure is low, therefore due to the concerns in relation to this measure, the Cabinet member has requested that representatives from the Children and Supporting Families Department meet with representatives from the Education Department in order to identify if there are areas to improve the process of sharing data.

5.3 Effective and Efficient Council

Councillor Peredur Jenkins

CG23 - Number of employment cases referred to the Employment Appeals Committee, and the number of appeals approved by that Committee - It is noted that there is a high percentage of the few cases submitted to the Appeals Committee where the Committee has come to a different conclusion than the Council as the employer. The Cabinet Member has noted a concern regarding this and will continue to keep an eye on the situation, examining options for improvement.

CD4.02 Protecting the taxpayer's financial benefit: percentage of public accountability claims refused (settled for £0) by the Insurer - The reasons why performance appeared low were examined, noting that it was important to identify the cases that we cannot protect in order to establish whether there is something we can do about them. Reference was made to two recent cases where Scottish Power equipment was damaged, although the exact location of the equipment was not known. It was agreed to ask the Legal Department for an opinion regarding challenging such requests or preventing payments if they cannot tell us where the wires are.

CD7.05 Rate of various debt collection within the quarter - Value - The reason for the low performance of this measure was examined and the fact that one invoice for the sum of £725k remained payable within the period in question was highlighted. Without the invoice in question, the performance would be 83.62% and by mid-January performance was 87%.

Councillor Dyfrig Siencyn

CG13 Communication and Engagement Schemes: The score out of 10 received from Senior Managers at the end of a specific period to the question "To what degree has the support you have received from the Unit assisted you to engage effectively with the People of Gwynedd?"

The performance of the above measure was examined, as well as the fact that the Departments who had responded thus far had given a score of 10/10 for the support they had received from the unit. Although the response thus far had been positive, the fact that the unit itself would not have scored the engagement on the plans in question 10/10 was highlighted, and therefore in order to have a more comprehensive picture of the quality of the engagement in its entirety, it was decided to include an additional measure noting the opinion of the unit on the engagement work.

6.0 Conclusion

The performance of the projects of the fields in question in the report is generally very good and although there has been a slippage in some specific projects, there is robust evidence that the relevant Cabinet members are dealing with the situation.

7.0 Recommendation

To accept and note the information in the report.

Views of the statutory officers

The Chief Executive:

The report is part of the Council's performance management regime, and on the whole it presents a positive picture. Where there are cases of concern, the Cabinet will wish to satisfy itself that the proposed actions are acceptable.

The Monitoring Officer:

No comments from a propriety perspective.

The Head of Finance Department:

Nothing to add from a financial propriety perspective.