

GWYNEDD COUNCIL

REPORT TO A MEETING OF GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET

Date of Meeting: 13 December, 2016

Cabinet Member: Councillor Mair Rowlands
Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Leisure

Contact Officer: Morwena Edwards, Corporate Director

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Title of Item: Performance Report of Children, Young People and Leisure

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to update you on what has been achieved in the field I am responsible for as the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Leisure. This will include outlining the latest with the pledges in the Strategic Plan; where the performance measures have reached; and the latest in terms of the savings and cuts schemes.
- 1.2. I will remind you that all matters have already been the subject of discussions and have been scrutinised at meetings of the relevant management team, which also included a representation from the scrutiny committee.
- 1.3. On the whole, I am satisfied with the performance of most projects and measures for which I am responsible. Nevertheless, a number of the performance measures in the children field represent a general increase in work pressure as a result of a high number of looked after children.

2. DECISION SOUGHT

- 2.1 To accept and note the information in the report.
- 2.2 The Cabinet is requested to approve the re-profiling of a section of the efficiency savings scheme 'HAM4 - More effective running of leisure facilities' (a total of £256,500), from the 2017/18 to 2018-19 financial year. (Further information in part 6.1 of this report).

2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Cyfanswm
40,000	267,500	75,758	256,500	639,758

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

- 3.1 In order to ensure effective performance management and that we achieve efficiency savings in accordance with the financial strategy.

4. STRATEGIC PLAN PROJECTS

- 4.1. P8 - Early Intervention for groups of vulnerable children and young people in Gwynedd.
- 4.1.1. The purpose of this project is to set a direction and to establish priorities for the preventative agenda in Gwynedd, working on a multi-agency basis to ensure that we focus our efforts on doing the right things in the right places. The project will ensure early intervention and will emphasise that the appropriate support should be made available at the right time. The intention here is to ensure that a clear programme of preventative activities is available for young people in Gwynedd, and that it has cross-sector ownership, including the third sector.
- 4.1.2 Since I last reported to you, the department has concentrated on confirming a preventative action plan, by focusing on:
- Speech and Language Delay
 - Parenting
 - Teenagers
 - Access to mental health services
- 4.1.3 The work has been done jointly with external agencies including Health, CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) and the Third Sector. I believe that these agencies have a definitive role when putting the plan into practice in order to ensure cross-sector ownership of what needs to be achieved. It is proposed to submit the final plan to the Children and Young People Partnership Board in December. This will then form a firm foundation on which to commission the priorities and financial resources of Families First for 2017/18.
- 4.1.4 By now, we have been given to understand that the Families First budget will not be cut for 2017/18 and we await a grant confirmation letter in the coming weeks.
- 4.1.5 In addition, correspondence was recently received from Welsh Government's Children and Families Department inviting Authorities interested in piloting flexibility between various pots of funding as part of the preventative/early

intervention agenda. In addition, information was received regarding the vision of the Cabinet Secretary for Children and Communities to develop Children's Zones in specific communities that will respond to the needs of vulnerable children by getting organisations to work together. I am eager for us to express an interest in these two pilots.

ACTIONS FROM THE LAST CYCLE:

It was agreed that the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Leisure would give an urgent summary regarding our current position with Plans while the Corporate Director would attempt to see what the government's position was on this.

We have since received confirmation that the Families First budget will not reduce for next year. The Corporate Director has held discussions with Welsh Government and a letter confirming the grant is expected in the coming weeks. We are aiming to commission work by October 2017.

5. MEASURING PERFORMANCE

- 5.1 In terms of the youth service measures, I am glad to see a further increase in the **number of young people who receive accreditations through the service**. 135 young people are working towards completing the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Thus far, 21 have completed the bronze award, 3 have completed the silver and 2 have completed the gold, which is a very good result. The service has expressed concern about staff capacity with regards to conducting the accreditations in the future, noting that there was a risk that the accreditation figure would reduce during the year. I have requested that the Service considers options to overcome the situation.
- 5.2 The service is going through the remodelling process at present, and the engagement programme with young people has commenced. What is becoming apparent is that we need to manage the expectations of the people of Gwynedd in terms of what the service we will be able to provide in the future will be. The timetable is progressing, and the consultation will commence early in the new year.
- 5.3 The **level of use made of leisure centres** has increased since the previous report. This has happened despite the pleasant weather, which often leads to a reduction in the use. Improving the offer in terms of fitness classes and installing new fitness equipment has had a marked positive influence on the performance. This is also underlined as those aspects scored well in the customer satisfaction survey. Also, the Service has developed a new procedure for **measuring customer satisfaction**. The figure of 89% stating that they are satisfied is very encouraging as a starting point with 354 responses received. Upon analysing the data, it was noted that aspects of cleanliness, the quality of facilities such as lockers and parking spaces needed to be improved at some facilities if we were to meet the users' expectations in full.
- 5.4 The **Flying Start Unit** has been drawing national attention to the fact that the performance measures are not necessarily the most effective way of measuring child development. In particular, the following measures:

BC01 - Schedule of Growing Skills (SOGS) Assessment 2 years old - percentage of Flying Start children that have reached their norm or above their developmental norm

BC02 - Schedule of Growing Skills (SOGS) Assessment 3 years old - percentage of Flying Start children that have reached their norm or above their developmental norm

BC03 - Percentage of attendance of two year old Flying Start children

BC04 - Number of advanced parenting assistance packages which result in travelling a positive distance

An example of this is that, although **BC01** is completed when the children are aged 2 and **BC02** is completed when the children are aged 3, no consideration is given to the child's development between the two assessments undertaken by the health visitor. Despite the fact that this is now given national recognition and that work is underway to develop new measures, the Unit will consider developing local measures that are suitable for measuring their purpose - although it may initially be in the form of a pilot in a restricted area.

- 5.5 I can confirm that the trend is continuing in terms of the increase in the number of looked after children (217 children). In comparison with the same period last year, this is an increase of 17%. There has been a recent increase in the number of children placed for the first time when younger than 1 years of age - currently, 26% of the looked after children are under 1 years of age and 48% are under 5 years of age. The preventative work of the Edge of Care Team is continuing and it is anticipated that the number of looked after children would be substantially higher without this investment. Despite the substantial increase in numbers, we are yet to see this being fully reflected in terms of the overspend of the Children and Supporting People Department as a number of the children have been placed with their families.
- 5.6 In terms of those measures that measure 'Safeguarding' specifically, I am glad to report that **the rate of children who were discussed in supervision, where significant harm had been considered** was 100%. I would like to draw attention to the fact that **the percentage of case conferences where the voice/views of the child were heard** has reduced from 85% in 2015/16 to 75% to date in 2016/17. Agreement has been reached that team managers will investigate this and remind Social Workers of the need to note the views of the child clearly in any documentation. Although the views or the voice of the child is key, it should be noted that the main focus of these meetings is the need to safeguard the child.
- 5.7 Another local measure that is used for this safeguarding children element is the **percentage of risk assessments considered as exhibiting quality in decision making**. The Chair of the conference makes the decision on this and the performance to date this year is 91% compared with 97% last year. It was agreed at the previous Departmental Management Team that it would be useful for the chair's views on this to be shared immediately with relevant Team Managers and Social Workers so that lessons can be learnt for next time.
- 5.8 Specifically, in relation to 'Children's Well-being', 100% of children have **an agreed pathway plan for looked-after children**. Despite the performance, consideration is being given to further investigating the pathway plans to see whether or not the quality of the plans respond well to the requirements.
- 5.9 There has been some decline recently since the last time I reported to you (73% to 67%) in terms of the **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 ending 31 March**. The arrangements between the Children and Supporting Families Department and the Education Department continue to be robust in terms of sharing information; however, it is believed that there is further work to be done with some schools in order to ensure full understanding of the importance of the Personal Education Plan.

- 5.10 Those measures that measure the statutory reviews (**SCC021**) and the statutory visits (**SCC025**) that have been conducted on time represents the increasing pressures that have been placed on the service recently, e.g. the number of looked after children (part 4.5 of the report). A 27% increase has been seen in the number of statutory visits this year during the same period in 2015/16. Specifically, in relation to the measure **SCC025** it was reported at the Departmental Management Team that 12 visits had not been recorded; however, I can confirm that the Service is confident that these visits have taken place and that it is merely a failure to record the information. I can confirm that work is progressing in terms of discussing options to address this, e.g. considering access to the relevant IT system outside the Council's main offices.

6. SAVINGS/FINANCIAL POSITION

- 6.1 **Youth and Leisure** - All of the relevant savings schemes for 2016/17 in the Economy and Community Department have been realised, and the Department is also making very acceptable progress towards realising the 2017-18 schemes. However, one scheme, namely "More effective running of leisure facilities" is a substantial scheme, with a relatively challenging solution. It is very likely that the Leisure Service will have achieved £796,653 of savings by 1 April 2017, this over a period of three years, including £307,500 of savings from this scheme. A further £332,258 is needed to realise the scheme in full and unless the delivery period can be extended in accordance with the decision sought in part 2.2 of this Report, the Economy and Community Department will have to bridge the deficit and consequently, overspend £256,500 in 2017/18.

Current Profile:

2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Cyfanswm
40,000	267,500	332,258		639,758

Revised Profile:

2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Cyfanswm
40,000	267,500	75,758	256,500	639,758

- 6.2 **Children and Supporting Families Department** - Savings schemes in two fields are being delivered as expected; however, as a result of an increase in the demand for service, and thus an overspend in these fields in particular, the financial savings anticipated cannot be confirmed. The analysis at the end of Quarter 2 suggests an overspend of £168,000 at the end of the financial year.

6. NEXT STEPS AND TIMETABLE

- 6.1. None to note.

7. ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO RECOMMENDING THE DECISION

- 7.1. **Views of the Statutory Officers:**

i. The Chief Executive:

Obviously, the Council has considerable experience in acting on preventative programmes and I am pleased to see the possibility in benefiting from national resources to pilot new initiatives in the field. What is important to this end is that we monitor the implications of bringing this preventative work, if successful, into the Council's main work flow.

In terms of performance measures, it is good to see that the Flying Start Unit is looking for more meaningful measures instead of historical measures. On the whole, measures provide a positive picture but it is fair to note that work needs to be done on Personal Education Plans for looked after children and also the concern about emphasis on statutory reviews and visits.

Finally, in terms of delivering savings, the likely profile of implementing savings in Leisure and Children and Families are obviously areas that cause concern and a decision must soon be reached on this over the coming months.

ii. The Monitoring Officer:

No comments from a propriety perspective.

iii. The Head of Finance Department:

Part 6.1 of the report gives an explanation of the slippage of the timetable in implementing part of the "Running facilities more effectively" scheme - a slippage which is linked with a scheme to deliver £500,000 of savings in addition to the £640,000 originally planned. Part 6.1 of the report notes the need for an amended profile (post 2017/18) for harvesting £256,000 of the savings originally planned.

I assume that the Cabinet will accept the explanation for the slippage with the extended scheme, and that it will ask me and the Cabinet Member for Resources to reflect the amended savings profile in the Council's financial strategy for 2017/18. However, members will doubtless be eager for the Cabinet Member and the Head of Economy and Community Department to secure these savings of £256,000 + £500,000 at the first opportunity.

7.2. Views of the Local Member:

7.2.1 Not a local matter.

7.3. Results of Any Consultation:

7.3.1 None to note.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Performance Measures