ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT
2019-20

Foreword

In 2019-20, a thorough review of our scrutiny arrangements was undertaken. Officers and councillors spent considerable time drafting and considering possible options for future scrutiny. This was to ensure that scrutiny work added value and contributed to driving improvements in services for the people of Gwynedd. The pinnacle of this work was to submit a report before a meeting of the Full Council. This report expands upon the process, considerations, possible options and the decision in terms of our future scrutiny arrangements.

Alongside this review, scrutiny work continued with items being considered in formal committee meetings, scrutiny investigations conducted, scrutiny members attending Cabinet Members' performance challenge meetings and informal sessions sharing information on subjects for members of specific scrutiny committees.

This report provides a summary of the scrutiny work achieved during the year, focusing on the main scrutiny work and expanding on items scrutinised in formal meetings of the Scrutiny Committees - Education and Economy, Communities and Care as well as the Audit and Governance Committee (that has a role to scrutinise corporate matters as well as its audit and governance roles).

A list of all items scrutinised in formal meetings during the year can be seen in an appendix to this report.

It was not possible to complete the scrutiny work programme due to the Covid-19 pandemic. At this time everyone's safety is paramount, and any matter that continues to be a priority will be scrutinised in the future.

I wish to record my appreciation of the contribution and work of the chairs and vice-chairs, and all scrutiny members that have been part of undertaking the important scrutiny work during the year. We are also very grateful to Gwynedd residents, Cabinet Members, other agencies and relevant officers who support us to try to ensure that we fulfil our aim.

Councillor Beth Lawton

Chair of the Scrutiny Forum

Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-chairs 2019-20

Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Paul Rowlinson

Councillor Elwyn Jones

Communities Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Elfed P. Roberts

Councillor Gethin Glyn Williams

Care Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Dewi Wyn Roberts

Councillor Beth Lawton

Audit and Governance Committee

Councillor John Brynmor Hughes

Councillor Angela Russell

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Review of Scrutiny Arrangements

A thorough review was undertaken of our scrutiny arrangements, which have been in place since May 2017. Under the system in place, there were three Scrutiny Committees as well as a corporate matters scrutiny role by the Audit and Governance Committee. Scrutiny investigations held, where approximately 5 members investigate a specific matter in a series of informal meetings, before submitting a report to the Scrutiny Committee with recommendations for the attention of Cabinet Members.

The reasoning behind undertaking the review was:

- that we received observations that scrutiny did not add value, that our current arrangements are developing slowly, and a sense that matters could be done better
- that up to 50% of scrutiny committee items are items for information for members of the specific scrutiny committee
- that there are vacant seats on many of our scrutiny committees (over the past months) as members were not eager to serve on a scrutiny committee
- that seeking continuous improvement by reviewing and challenging our arrangements is a good thing, that we have pledged to do this when the new arrangements were adopted in March 2017, with support for this from the Wales Audit Office.

A working group of members and officers was established to review the arrangements. The working group's membership consisted of Councillors Simon Glyn, Nia Jeffreys, Beth Lawton, Dyfrig Siencyn along with Aled Davies (Head of Adults, Health and Well-being Department), Geraint Owen (Head of Democratic Services), Sioned Williams (Head of Economy and Community Department) and Dilwyn Williams (Chief Executive).

The working group came to the conclusion that the purpose of scrutiny should be defined in order to ensure a joint understanding of the purpose of scrutiny in Gwynedd. The definition is noted below:

CONTRIBUTE TO DRIVING IMPROVEMENT IN SERVICES FOR THE PEOPLE OF GWYNEDD

This will be done constructively by:

- Investigating concerns regarding the quality of our services
- Acting as a Critical Friend, and ensuring that appropriate attention is given to the citizen's voice
- Identifying good practice and weaknesses
- Holding the Cabinet and its members to account
- Reviewing or scrutinising, decisions or actions, that are not the responsibility of the Cabinet

The definition is based on the best practice of the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS). It does not redefine the statutory requirement in the Local Government Act 2000, but rather confirms the Scrutiny ethos in Gwynedd.

In attempting to draw up possible options to improve our scrutiny arrangements and ensure that scrutiny fulfils the purpose, the working group's attention was given to the following principal considerations:

- Information sharing arrangements with all members
- The advantages and disadvantages of formal scrutiny arrangements in a committee
- The advantages and disadvantages of investigations
- Resources and time

The result of the working group's work was three possible options for our scrutiny arrangements namely:

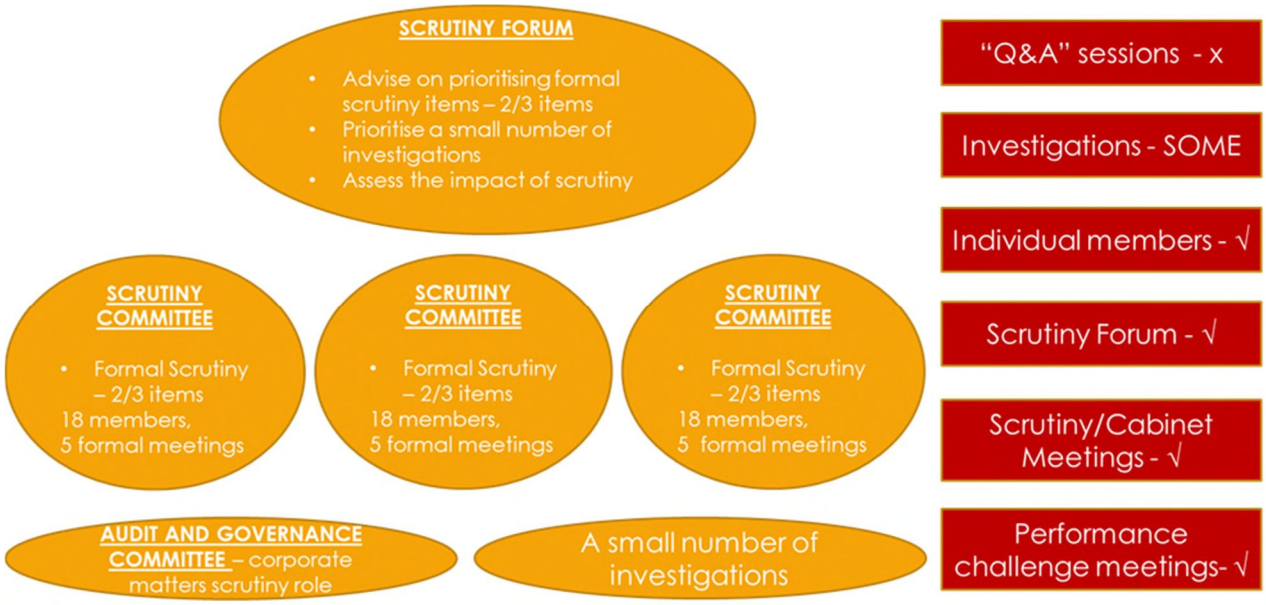
1. Three Scrutiny Committees (Adapt the current arrangements)
2. One Principal Scrutiny Committee
3. Two Scrutiny Committees

The next step was to seek the views of all Council members on the options that had been developed. Two workshops were held, where members were asked for their views regarding the advantages and disadvantages of the options. In addition, the Corporate Management Group (meeting of Department Heads) was asked for its opinion.

Following the above discussions, the observations were considered at a meeting of the Scrutiny Forum (a meeting consisting of the Chairs and Vice-chairs of the Scrutiny Committees) on 24 October 2019. Members of the working group were invited to the meeting in order to discuss the observations and address specific matters, such as the responsibility fields of the Scrutiny Committees, the role of the Scrutiny Forum, the number of members on committees and the number of meetings per option.

A report was submitted to the Audit and Governance Committee on 28 November 2019 and then to the Council on 19 December 2019 for a decision on future arrangements. There is access to the Full Council report here - Item 12 - Review of Scrutiny Arrangements

At the Council meeting, it was resolved to continue with the current arrangements, namely three Scrutiny Committees with adaptations.



The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The Act requires public bodies to design services that protect future generations in the long term. It places a duty to improve the environmental, economic, cultural and social well-being of the people of Wales.

When undertaking scrutiny, members consider the five ways of working that are noted in the Act:

Long Term

Balance short term needs with long term ones and plan for the future.

Prevention

Prevent problems from occurring or worsening in the future, rather than responding to problems.

Integration

How the Council's well-being objectives can affect the national well-being goals and the well-being objectives of other public bodies (e.g. local health board or police).

Collaboration

Working with others to achieve the well-being objectives.

Involvement

Include the people of Gwynedd when seeking to realise plans and ensure that those people reflect the area's diversity.

It is essential that members refine scrutiny skills giving consideration to what is required of public bodies within the Act. It is proposed to regularly remind members of the Act's requirements in order to be able to ensure that the Council acts in accordance with the Act.

Savings Scrutiny

In recent years, savings to the value of £32 million have been approved by the Council. £28.4 million of the savings schemes were achieved. With the financial uncertainty continuing, Council Departments were asked to identify £2 million savings for the 2020/21 financial year.

Potential savings plans for the Departments were submitted before Scrutiny Committee meetings and the Audit and Governance Committee in November and December 2019.

Care Scrutiny Committee 14/11/19

Children and Supporting Families Department

£112,830

During the discussion, concern was expressed by a number of members that a cut of £30,000 to Women's Aid would lead to greater costs to the Council in the long term, and the importance of a full assessment of the possible impact to the Council was emphasised.

Adults, Health and Well-being Department

£488,270

General concern was expressed regarding the impact of the savings proposals on vulnerable residents in the county, and the importance of monitoring the impact was emphasised.

Members expressed particular concern regarding the proposal to cut the posts of two Mental Health Support Workers (£42,000) along with the proposal to reduce the budget to support carers, including some respite schemes (£19,000).

Housing and Property Department

£59,420

The Department was congratulated for its method of identifying savings by internalising aspects of its work, and its intention to look at all similar opportunities in future was welcomed.

In the context of the schemes which had not been achieved, it was noted that the Department was seeking other schemes.

RESOLVED:

(a) To approve the Housing and Property Department's proposals to achieve its share of relevant savings as ones which would have the least impact on residents.

(b) To accept the reports on the proposals put forward by the Children and Supporting Families Department and the Adults, Health and Well-being Department to achieve their share of relevant savings; and to request that the

Cabinet consider the committee's observations as to whether these truly were the proposals which would have the least impact prior to approving those savings.

Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee 21/11/19

Economy and Community Department

£66,910

Education Department

£120,030

Schools

£608,050

It was noted that, although the proposals would have some impact on Gwynedd residents, the Department had managed to mitigate the impact as far as possible.

There was a thorough discussion that focused on the savings proposals concerning schools.

Considerable concern was expressed by members regarding two specific savings proposals, namely 'Integration - Individual Development Plans (IDP)/Statements' (£112,530) and increasing the pupil / teacher ratio in the allocation formula (£463,900).

Having received some further explanation on what either scheme would mean for the county's schools, it was noted that one scheme would involve less support for pupils with additional learning needs who were not the subject of an IDP / Statement, and the other scheme would lead to a reduction in the number of teachers and / or a reduction in the number of ancillary staff, thus impacting educational standards.

The Head of Education Department confirmed that serious consideration had been given to all options. He could not make recommendations anywhere else, and the proposals submitted were the ones that would have the least impact on children.

"The cuts in question to the schools and special education budgets would have a detrimental impact on children's education"

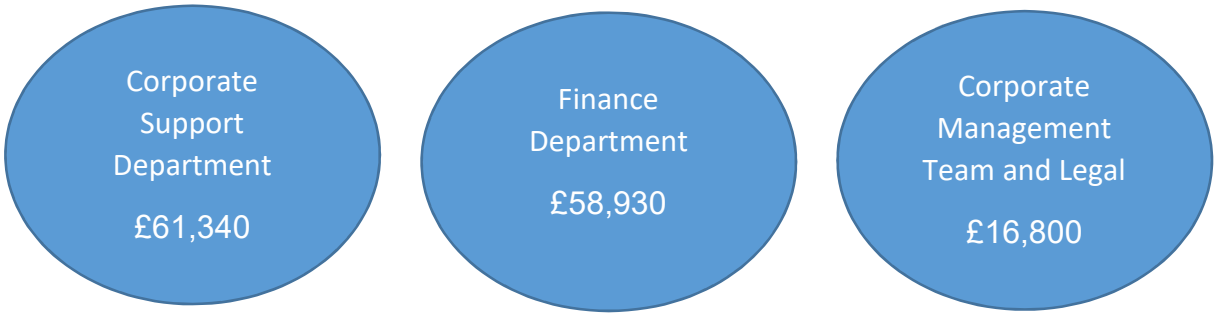
Scrutiny Member

RESOLVED:

(a) To accept that the proposals of the Economy and Community Department to achieve their share of the relevant savings would have the least impact on the residents of Gwynedd.

(b) To note the report on the proposals of the Education Department and Schools to achieve their share of the relevant savings, and the strong observations that had been made, and to convey this to the Cabinet.

Audit and Governance Committee 28/11/19



A response was given to the members' questions and observations at the meeting.

Committee members were of the opinion that the proposals were sensible and it was welcomed that the savings did not create an impact on the residents of Gwynedd.

RESOLVED to accept the report and approve the proposals of the Departments to meet their share of relevant savings.

Communities Scrutiny Committee 5/12/19

It was noted that the Departments were conducting cross-departmental discussions to try to identify opportunities to collaborate within common areas so as to avoid duplication of work.

In response to a suggestion regarding reducing / cutting down on external contracting costs so that smaller / local companies could compete for the work (below the threshold), it was accepted that more could be done to keep the benefit local and provide opportunities for local businesses to bid for the work.

The practice of increasing resources within Gwynedd Consultancy Units to enable the Department to increase income, which as a result would keep people employed in high-skilled jobs within the County through the medium of Welsh, was welcomed.

RESOLVED to accept the report and approve the proposals of the departments to meet their share of relevant savings.

Following the discussions at Committee meetings, at its meeting on 17 December, the Cabinet considered the savings proposals and the Council's budget.

By the time the report was submitted to the Cabinet, the Council had received the draft settlement for 2019-20 which was better than expected, an increase of 4.6%. Although the settlement covered inflation, it did not reach the required level to fund the additional demands on departments. There was a likelihood that the financial deficit of £3.5 million would still need to be addressed.

The Cabinet approved savings schemes to the value of £1,062,320 and rejected the savings noted below. The latest financial information would be used to consult with all members in finance workshops in January 2020.

Partial cut in the contribution to Women's Aid £30,000	Third sector agreements £150,000	2 posts, Mental Health Support Worker £42,000	Supporting Carers £19,000
Older Persons' Services, Learning Disabilities and Mental Health £120,000	Integration - Individual Development Plan (IDP)/Statements £112,530	Increase the 'Pupil Teacher ratio' in the allocation formula £463,900	Community Arts £1,000

Total - £938,430

At its meeting on 5 March 2020, the Council adopted a budget for 2020-21 that included the Cabinet's decision to implement £1,062,320 of savings together with £923,080 of savings schemes that were approved in previous years.

IMPACT OF SCRUTINY

This scrutiny work managed to highlight concerns about the impact of implementing some of the savings schemes on the people of Gwynedd.

Following the receipt of a better grant settlement than expected, it was possible for the Cabinet not to implement the savings schemes that scrutiny members had identified.

Scrutiny Matters

This section gives a taster of the items that have been scrutinised at the formal scrutiny meetings. With an emphasis on identifying the value of scrutinising matters, the items that have added the most value will be focused upon. Effective scrutiny can make Cabinet Members aware of additional matters that need to be considered. A complete list of all items scrutinised in formal meetings can be seen in the Appendix to this report.

Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board

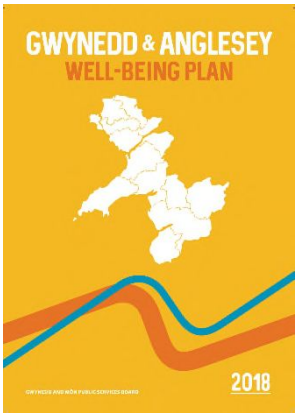
The Gwynedd and Anglesey Public Services Board was established in 2016, in accordance with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The aim of the Well-being of Future Generations Act is to improve the economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act highlights seven well-being goals and five ways of working in order to give public bodies a general purpose. The Gwynedd and Anglesey Well-being Plan was published in 2018, this includes two aims and six priority areas. The Board collaborates in order to ensure the best results for the residents of Gwynedd and Anglesey.

The work of the Public Services Board was scrutinised during the year, with the Board's 2018/19 annual report and a report on the Governance Structure and Delivery Arrangements of the Board submitted to the Communities Scrutiny Committee.

When discussing the Board's annual report at the meeting on 4 July, some of the comments made by members of the Communities Scrutiny Committee were:

- Climate Change - Disappointment that the work in the context of flooding was reactive, rather than innovative and ambitious.
- Homes for Local People - sites needed to be identified in the right places and the homes needed to respond to the need.
- Details were needed regarding the measures and milestones of the projects, together with setting a robust timetable rather than noting short-term, medium-term, long-term aims.

It was suggested when scrutinising the Governance Structure and Delivery Arrangements of the Board that support for families / carers should be included in the Health and Care of Adults work field. The need to undertake work to identify an area of work / find projects that could deliver and make a difference in the field of poverty was emphasised.



It was proposed to scrutinise a progress report to achieve the Well-being Plan at the 2 April meeting, however, this was not possible due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Scrutiny of the Public Services Board will continue during 2020-21.

Parking Management Task Group

A request was received from the Cabinet Member for the Environment to establish a Task Group, to assist the Department with the work of analysing the range of options to manage parking in light of the financial income challenges from car parks in the future.

As part of the work, it was proposed to consider the existing parking strategy, together with different fees for residents, parking for the disabled, parking for residents, parking for 'events', parking for motorhomes, enforcement and charging points.

It was concluded that there should be representation from Arfon, Dwyfor and Meirionnydd. Members of the Task Group undertaking the work are Councillors:

- Kevin Morris Jones,
- Angela Russell,
- Annwen Hughes,
- Gethin Glyn Williams.

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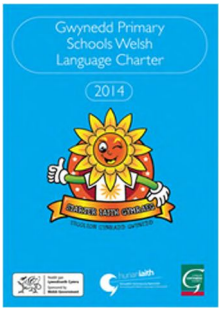
The work is ongoing and it will be reported further in the 2020-21 annual report.

The Gwynedd Primary Schools Welsh Language Charter and Secondary Sector Language Strategy

Reports detailing the implementation of the Gwynedd Primary Schools Welsh Language Charter and the implementation and impact of the Secondary Sector Language Strategy were scrutinised.



The aim of the Language Charter is to lead to an increase in children's social use of Welsh. As a result of the Charter's success, with the Welsh Government's support, the Charter was expanded to Welsh medium and bilingual schools across the north Wales region, and more recently, the Language Charter was expanded to Welsh medium and bilingual schools throughout Wales.

In order to ensure firm progression to the Language Charter, the Secondary Sector Language Strategy was developed. One of the Language Strategy's objectives is to provide clear guidance to the 14 secondary schools on potential techniques and strategies which can positively influence the linguistic habits of pupils socially, during and outside school hours. Together with looking at curricular aspects of the language e.g. medium of subjects.

These are some of the conclusions following the discussion at the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee:

- There was a clear message from members to keep a foot on the pedal and continue with the flurry of activity etc., providing support to ensure that this is undertaken. This is specifically to ensure that the Language Charter has status, as part of the new curriculum (although there is some concern that it will run alongside, rather than being integral to it) and also to ensure that the Language Charter has status as part of every school's plans.

- There was also a message regarding sharing good practice, ensuring that this happens in primary and secondary schools in general, and also that good practice needs to be identified in new interest areas, where we perhaps need to focus more on social websites, the internet, television programmes etc.
- There was also a message regarding the work that is dependent on all staff in our schools and strong encouragement to try to spread the message beyond school boundaries, with parents and society in general.
- There may be room to consider revisiting the original baseline and update committee members in due course when the Government's study of the field is mature.
- Specifically, in terms of the Secondary Sector Language Strategy, there was room to consider extending the questionnaire to older young people (16-18 age group) to see if there were any lessons to be learnt, and having learnt lessons, adapt the help and support and intervention offered.
- There was also room to press for working with pupils to encourage more bilingualism and for that to happen continuously within our schools, encouraging pupils to follow courses specifically through the medium of Welsh. Also, support for teachers should be ensured, for youth workers and all who are involved in promoting the Language Charter to assist with the Strategy in secondary and the Primary Language Charter.

Language Centres Pilot Scheme

In 2018-19, developments in the language centres sector were scrutinised before the matter was discussed by the Cabinet. On 2 April 2019, Gwynedd Council's Cabinet resolved to implement a pilot scheme at one Language Centre with a staffing structure of one teacher and assistant, in order to ascertain if it has an impact on the quality of education and children's attainment.

Once again this year, there was an opportunity to provide scrutiny input. By presenting ideas and suggestions that could contribute to the research intended to be undertaken to measure the impact of implementing the pilot at one Language Centre and to express a view on the way it is intended to measure the impact of the pilot's implementation.

The fact that the team acting on behalf of the Education Department was a multidisciplinary team was welcomed. It consisted of experts from the department and outside experts, but it was emphasised that the report on the conclusions of the research should be presented in the name of an outside expert, in order to ensure objectivity.

The linguistic expertise within the Education Department was also welcomed, and the research included a combination of quantitative and qualitative data. It was noted that it was crucial to obtain feedback from schools as this was key to the methodology, and the opinion of schools, the language centres, pupils and their parents was vital. It was also noted that the methodology needed to consider the longer term and the impact of the policy on the Council and our schools in the longer term, as well as the members' desire to be part of the on-going process.

Benefiting from Tourism Scheme

An update was received on the Benefiting from Tourism project, included in the Council Plan. The purpose of this project is:

"To reinforce Gwynedd's status as a sustainable destination of international quality by researching and implementing the best option to ensure that Gwynedd's residents and businesses benefit from the tourists that visit the county."

When scrutinising the issue, members noted that there were benefits to the people of Gwynedd from tourism, however, the impact of excessive tourism on the County needed to be addressed. This included the impact on the language, parking arrangements, the impact on local people etc. e.g. the increase in Airbnb's together with extending the holiday season and the impact on caravan parks that could turn into additional 'villages' and affect our services, planning procedures and the language.

Following further discussions outside the Committee meeting, the Economy and Community Department organised a workshop for all Councillors together with members of the Snowdonia National Park and representatives from the tourism sector. The purpose of the workshop was to share and review current tourism information, giving information about the policy and planning context, highlighting challenges and opportunities in the tourism sector as well as having members' input and representatives from the tourism sector to establish principles for tourism in the future.

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Domiciliary Care Project

In November 2019, an update of the work was received to ensure a new model for domiciliary care in Gwynedd. The intention was to move to a model where there is one provider for every area, with a close and constructive relationship with all other members of the community resources teams.

The project's business case received the Cabinet's approval on 23 July 2019, where it was agreed to establish a new model for providing and commissioning domiciliary care based on sub-areas, and jointly-commissioning with the Health Board. The Cabinet asked the Adults, Health and Well-being Department to review the financial model in order to ensure that it did not hinder their ability to achieve their savings, and to report back if there was any risk to this.

During the discussion, the following observations were made by scrutiny members:-

- This new model for domiciliary care provision placed Gwynedd at the forefront.
- The emphasis on communication with workers was welcomed.
- The collaboration with the Health Board to present the business case to the Finance and Planning Committee was welcomed, and hope was expressed that there would be joint-commissioning, as this would be beneficial to both partners.
- It was encouraging to hear, should some providers withdraw / fail to meet the requirements, that the Council had internal providers of a considerable size who could employ the staff.

The Care Scrutiny Committee will receive further information as the work proceeds, as well as discussions between the Head and the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Well-being with the Chair and Vice-chair.

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The National Fostering Framework and the North Wales Adoption Service

Information regarding regional work associated with fostering and adoption was scrutinised.

In terms of the Fostering Framework, information was received about the main work-streams together with the regional priorities. In addition to the regional priorities, it was reported that the Service in Gwynedd was reviewing its structure in response to the service's requirements in terms of achieving a better balance when assessing and supporting kinship and general foster carers.

A request was made for an update on the marketing element and the successes / failures of dividing the fostering team's roles, within 12 months' time, in addition to a report explaining how Gwynedd's work interlinks with regional work (successes and failures).

The North Wales Adoption Service was established in April 2010. Wrexham Borough County Council is the Host Authority for the Service and since 2010, the staff have been seconded to the Service but continue to work within their original authorities. Following a review of the Service in 2017-2019, insufficient capacity at an operational and strategic level to manage and develop the service was identified, and therefore the structure was remodelled by moving over to a service, which was managed fully by Wrexham Council. All current staff will transfer into Wrexham Council's employment in 2020, but will continue to work from their current local authorities.

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Some of the observations made by members in their discussion were:

- That many of the Service's work streams were dependent on grants or additional funding, and that this created concern as a result of having to depend on grants. There was a need to consider plans for reserve funding.
- There was a risk that schemes could be withdrawn due to budget shortfalls
- Should Gwynedd Council consider the option of buying a house in order to keep children from the same family together?
- There was a need for better marketing of the Service as well as improving communication methods.
- Request for an update within 12 months' time.

Housing Action Plan 2020-2025

A report in relation to the Housing Action Plan was submitted before the Care Scrutiny Committee, to consult with the Committee before the proposed expenditure programme was submitted for the Cabinet's approval. The report detailed the main housing challenges in Gwynedd, the resources available for the housing plan 2020-2025, and the long list of schemes that needed to be prioritised.

The action plan will work towards the ambition of the Council's Housing Strategy 2020-2025, namely to:

"Ensure that the people of Gwynedd have access to a suitable home of a high standard, that is affordable and improves their quality of life."

33 possible schemes had been included in the report and the Committee was asked to prioritise the schemes. Support was noted for all the schemes together with initial comments in terms of prioritising the schemes. It was concluded, due to the number of well-deserved schemes, that one meeting should be held between representatives from the Committee, the Head and Cabinet Member for Housing and Property on a task and finish basis.

A meeting was arranged to identify which plans were most important when trying to improve the housing situation of Gwynedd residents. The following scrutiny members were present at the meeting:

- Dewi Wyn Roberts (Chair),
- Menna Baines,
- R. Medwyn Hughes,
- Eryl Jones-Williams,
- Cai Larsen.

It was a valuable meeting with an opportunity for scrutiny members to give deserved attention to all the schemes with all present benefiting from the meeting.

The scrutiny work managed to contribute to prioritising the schemes and to highlight further matters that required consideration.

Scrutiny Investigations

Waste Enforcement Scrutiny Investigation

The report of the Waste Enforcement Scrutiny Investigation was submitted to a meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee on 4 July 2019. It was the fruit of thorough work over a period of time where there had been engagement with different groups of people. Members of the group who undertook the work were Councillors:

- Stephen Churchman (Chair)
- Keith Jones,
- Mike Stevens,
- Catrin Wager (up to 1 April 2019, when she was appointed to the Cabinet).

Seven meetings took place between July 2018 and June 2019 in order to gather evidence and discuss recommendations as well as visits. As part of the work programme work was undertaken to understand and analyse the current situation, to consider relevant legislation and to engage with officers working in the Planning and Landlord Licensing field. Access can be gained to the full investigation report via this link - Waste Enforcement Scrutiny Investigation Report.

The Communities Scrutiny Committee resolved to accept the six recommendations that had been included in the report together with an additional recommendation. These are the recommendations submitted to Councillor Catrin Wager (Cabinet Member for Highways and Municipal):

1. **To use the powers of the Environmental Protection Act (1990), Sections 46 and 47, which relate to waste receptacles, to introduce a new procedure, where and when required, to fine residents and businesses who dispose of their waste on the wrong day or in the wrong way, as a matter of priority.**

2. **To undertake a county-wide promotion campaign to raise awareness of the waste and recycling arrangements, focusing specifically on the City of Bangor and to acknowledge the geographical and demographic differences within the county at different times of the year.**

3. **To place "QR Code" stickers on recycling receptacles to allow 24 hour access to residents to their waste and recycling collection days and information on items that can be recycled.**

4. **To formalise collaboration arrangements between Council Departments.**

5. **To increase awareness of the Clinical Collections Services and Collection Assistance Service available for older people and disabled people to dispose of their waste. This can be done as part of the broader promotion campaign.**

6. **To promote the current network of Recycling Centres and hold a specific campaign to promote the Bulky Waste Collection Service.**

7. **For the collection service workers to act appropriately so that the waste did not escape from the vehicles**

"Implementing the recommendations will make a difference to the service and to the environment for residents."

Scrutiny Member

The recommendations were submitted to the Cabinet on 17 September 2019, where it was determined to implement them. An update was received on implementing the recommendations at the 6 February 2020 meeting.

IMPACT OF SCRUTINY

Through the recommendations, this work led to improving the service and maximising the promotion of information about waste and recycling arrangements. Improving the information available to the people of Gwynedd and as a result improving the environment.

Planning and the Welsh Language Scrutiny Investigation

A group of members were elected at the end of 2017 to undertake work to:

- Ensure that the consultation process on the draft Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) is inclusive;
- Scrutinise a draft framework for preparing a Welsh Language Statement and a draft framework for preparing a Welsh Language Impact Assessment;
- Scrutinise how it is intended to implement the SPG in the context of the requirements of the new TAN 20;
- Receive an overview of the observations received from the public at the time of the public consultation on the draft SPG in order to present an opinion to the Joint Planning Policy Committee prior to the adoption of the final SPG.

The group was chaired by Councillor Gruffydd Williams, with Councillors Simon Glyn and Aled Ll. Evans (Language Committee Member) as members. Initial recommendations were made and submitted to the Joint Planning Policy Committee on 26 April 2018.

The work continued in 2019-20, the investigation's draft final report was submitted to the Communities Scrutiny Committee on 4 July 2019. Over the period of the work, 13 investigation meetings took place and oral evidence was received from 17 witnesses. Access can be gained to the investigation report via this link - Planning and the Welsh Language Scrutiny Investigation Report.

IMPACT OF SCRUTINY

Underlining the importance of the Welsh language and the importance of assessing the impact of developments on the language.

Supporting Disabled People Scrutiny Investigation

This work was commissioned by the Care Scrutiny Committee following a Notice of Motion submitted to the Council by Councillor Peter Read:

"That the Council refers the question of the suitability of arrangements to provide wheelchairs to the residents of Gwynedd for consideration on the scrutiny programme."

The intention of the work was to identify if there was a need to improve current provision focusing on the provision through the Health Service. Members of the group who undertook the work were Councillors:

- Dewi Wyn Roberts (Chair),
- John Brynmor Hughes,
- R. Medwyn Hughes,
- John Pughe Roberts,
- Angela Russell.

The aim of the scrutiny investigation was to answer the following questions:

- Is there evidence to show that the individuals who use the services are central to the process of assessing and providing suitable equipment, and assisted to live their lives in the way they wish to live them?
- If there is dissatisfaction or complaints about the existing service, are they addressed in a satisfactory manner?
- If needed, how could the service be improved for the future?

Background information and the evidence of individuals' experiences was gathered in different ways: face to face meetings, questionnaires, phone calls, e-mails, public reports or policies, and reports commissioned specifically for the investigation. Four meetings of the investigation were held between August 2018 and August 2019 in order to receive and analyse evidence, and agree on recommendations.

At the time of the investigation, there were 14,000 wheelchair or prosthetic provision services users registered with the North Wales Posture and Mobility Service (PAMS). During 2018, 515 referrals were received for this provision from Gwynedd residents - 466 were adults and 49 were children. This is equivalent to 11.5% of the referrals that PAMS received for the year.

The number of 'official' complaints about the provision was low - one a year from Gwynedd residents in the last three years, but the evidence of 'informal' complaints gathered by the investigation painted a different picture. North Wales PAMS responded constructively to discussions to seek opportunities to improve the service for the benefit of the user. The investigation report notes that this spirit of collaboration between PAMS and Gwynedd Council should be developed for the future.

12 recommendations derived from the scrutiny work that included requesting the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Well-being refer the investigation report for the attention of the North Wales Community Health Council, and ask them to consider the need to ask the Welsh Government to undertake a national review of the suitability of the wheelchair provision from the perspective of the service user. Together with referring the report for the attention of the Minister for Health and Social Services at Welsh Government. Access can be gained to the full investigation report via this link - Supporting Gwynedd's Disabled Persons Scrutiny Investigation.

A progress report on the implementation of the recommendations had been programmed for presentation to the Care Scrutiny Committee on 26 March 2020. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this was not possible.

IMPACT OF SCRUTINY

Highlighting the existence of a problem, and to hand over the reins to the committees of the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board in order to undertake further work.

Impact of New Building Developments on the Quality of Education Scrutiny Investigation

There has been considerable investment in developing educational buildings in Gwynedd recently. The main question to be addressed by the investigation was -

"What effect has new building development had on schools and the quality of pupil education, and are there lessons to be learnt for the future?"

Members of the group who undertook the work were Councillors:

- Beth Lawton (Chair),
- Steve Collings,
- Cai Larsen,
- Paul Rowlinson.

Thorough research was undertaken to understand the policy context, identify good practice from any other studies, research the best definition of the quality of education and how to measure this. Case studies were completed on the following schools - Ysgol yr Hendre, Ysgol Craig y Deryn, Ysgol Bro Llifon and Ysgol Glancegin. The schools were visited to gather qualitative data and to get the views of the Headteachers, pupils and governors of the above schools that had a new building. Ysgol Treferthyr was visited in order to see an example of a school that needed a new building.

It was intended to also gather quantitative data, and although data about individual schools was available via the Council's Education Department or through the StatsWales website, Welsh Government stated in summer 2019 that publishing the details of the performance of individual schools would not be permitted. This meant that it would not be possible to use the data of pupils' progress in order to measure the impact of a building.

Nine investigation meetings took place in addition to the visits. Clear recommendations were produced based on evidence to be submitted to the Cabinet Member for Education.

A draft investigation report was to be submitted before the Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee on 19 March 2020, however, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the meeting was cancelled. The draft report can be seen here - Draft Report. We will report further on the investigation's work in the 2020-21 Annual Report.

Performance Challenge

Regular meetings are held between Cabinet Members, Heads of Departments and their service managers to review the performances of the services. The Chief Executive or Corporate Director is present at these meetings to challenge performance.

Scrutiny members nominated by the scrutiny committees are invited to the meetings. They are present in order to:

- Have a flavour of what grasp the individual departments have of performance matters.
- Identify, if required, any performance matters which could merit the attention of a formal scrutiny committee in due course.

These are the members who attended the performance challenge meetings during 2019/20, per Department:

Education

Beth Lawton
Dewi Owen

Economy

Elwyn Jones
Paul Rowlinson

Adults, Health and Well-being

Peter Read

Children and Supporting Families

Beth Lawton

Housing and Property

Peter Read
Angela Russell

Environment

Glyn Daniels
Berwyn Parry Jones

Highways and Municipal

Elwyn Jones
Edgar Owen

Consultancy

Simon Glyn
Mike Stevens

Corporate Support

John B. Hughes
Dewi W. Roberts

Finance

Medwyn Hughes
Huw Wyn Jones

These members are required to report back to informal meetings of the scrutiny committee, that take place following the formal meetings.

What is expected of the scrutiny members is that they note their:

- General impressions - impression regarding to what extent evidence exists that the Cabinet Member and the Head of Department have a firm grasp of performance arrangements within the services for which they are responsible.
- Matters requiring attention - any matter which may require scrutiny attention (whether a measure which is a cause of concern or a project that is not delivering the expected outcomes)

During 2019-20, some of the issues noted by members were:

- The need to keep an eye on the situation in terms of discussions between the Education Department and Children's Services regarding the play facilities for Hafan y Sêr (short break unit located at Ysgol Hafod Lon site).

"An agreement now between the services for moving forward. A scrutiny member's intervention had been helpful in breaking down the barriers."

Senior Officer

- Gwynedd and Anglesey Additional Learning Needs and Inclusion Service - some were satisfied with the service, others were not satisfied with the new service.

The Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee received an update on 21 November 2019. It was recognised that there were challenges, however, major developments had taken place and the fact that this would continue was welcomed. Also, the committee took pride in hearing that Gwynedd was so much ahead of the other authorities in this field.

- Staff safety issues had been raised by the managers of Storiel, the Record Office and the Maritime Service. It may be necessary to look in greater detail at staff security, especially those who work on their own and those who may face anti-social behaviour and threats from others.

The Audit and Governance Committee will consider this matter when drafting its work programme in terms of scrutiny.

Facts about Scrutiny in Gwynedd in 2019/20

49 members were a part of undertaking important scrutiny work during the year.

41 items have been scrutinised in formal meetings.

3 meetings of the Scrutiny Forum have been held during the year.

Scrutiny members have **attended meetings** of the Area Education Scrutiny Boards.

Information sessions held on the following fields:

- Supporting People Well-being Programme
- Children and Young People's Mental Health and Well-being

Meetings have been held between the Chairs and Vice-chairs and relevant Cabinet Members and Heads.

Support for the scrutiny work by the Democracy and Language Manager, Senior Language and Scrutiny Advisor and Scrutiny Advisor. There are 3 x Business Support Officers available to lead on scrutiny investigations.

APPENDIX

Scrutiny Work Programme 2019-2020

Education and Economy Scrutiny Committee	
20 June 2019	• Secondary Sector Language Strategy (AE11b) • Primary Welsh Language Charter (AE39)
10 October 2019	• Benefiting from tourism (AE42) • Pwllheli Hafan and Harbour (AE23) - progress report • Language Centres - pilot scheme methodology (AE53b)
21 November 2019	• Savings 2020/21 (AE40) – Education and Economy Departments • Pwllheli Hafan and Harbour (AE23) • Brexit (AE35c) • TRAC (AE59) • Additional Learning Needs (AE10c)
23 January 2020	• Youth services (AE8b)
19 March 2020 (Programmed but not scrutinised due to Covid-19 pandemic)	• Report on 2019 outcomes (AE19c) and Education Annual Report (AE20b) • Schools' Transport (AE29) • Investigation report "The impact of new building developments on schools and the quality of education' (AE14)

Care Scrutiny Committee	
6 June 2019	• Recruitment Difficulties (G17)
12 September 2019	• Supporting the Disabled People of Gwynedd Investigation Report (G10)
14 November 2019	• Savings 2020/21 (G51) - Children, Adults and Housing and Property Departments • Social Services Complaints (G22) • Home Care Service (G44)
30 January 2020	• Regional work: Fostering and Adoption (G21c) • Development of the Problematic and Harmful Sexual Behaviour Team (G53) • A Healthier Wales Transformation Funding (Children) • Housing Action Plan (G56) • Dementia Care (G46)

26 March 2020 (Programmed but not scrutinised due to Covid-19 pandemic)	• Transforming health and care across Gwynedd and Anglesey • Supporting the Disabled People of Gwynedd Investigation (G10) - response to recommendations

Communities Scrutiny Committee	
4 July 2019	• Public Services Board Annual Report (C1) • Waste Enforcement— present recommendations (C2) • Parking Management Arrangements (C11) • Planning and the Welsh language – present recommnedations (C10)
26 September 2019	• Parking Income Arrangements (C11) • Transport (C24) • Gwynedd and Anglesey Joint Local Development Plan Monitoring Report (C33)
5 December 2019	• Crime and Disorder (C7) • Public Services Board's Governance Structure and Delivery Structure (C1a) • Savings 2020/21 (C30) – Environment, Highways and Municipal and Gwynedd Consultancy Departments • Holiday Homes and Planning (C34)
6 February 2020	• Street Enforcement (C23) • Waste Enforcement (C23) - response to recommendations • Planning Matters and the Delegation Scheme (C29)
2 April 2020 (Programmed but not scrutinised due to Covid-19 pandemic)	• Progress report on delivering the Well-being Plan (C1b) • Transport Review (C24) • Programme of Works - Rights of Way Improvement Plan (C6) • Children's Playing Fields and Green Spaces (C35)

Audit and Governance Committee	
13 June 2019	• 2018/19 Savings Overview: progress report on realising savings schemes
28 November 2019	• Savings 2020/21 (ALI18) – Corporate Support Department, Finance Department and Corporate Management Team and Legal • Financial Strategy – 2020/21 Budget Remit (scrutinising the work, early in the Council's budget cycle)

13 February 2020	• Budget 2020/21 (with a focus on risk, prior to the Cabinet recommending a budget and tax to the Full Council for approval) • Capital Strategy (including Investment and Borrowing Strategies) - note the information and relevant risks, and support submitting the strategy to the Full Council for approval • Savings Overview 2019/20: progress on realising schemes