

CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2017

- PRESENT:** Councillor Aled Morris Jones (Chair)
Councillor Dylan Rees (Vice-Chair)
- Councillors Richard Griffiths, Richard O. Jones,
Alun Roberts, Shaun Redmond
- Co-opted Member: Mr Keith Roberts (The Catholic Church)
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Chief Executive
Assistant Chief Executive (Governance and Business Process Transformation/ Statutory Director of Social Services)
Head of Learning (for item 4)
Head of Adults' Services (for item 5)
Head of Corporate Transformation (for item 3)
Programme and Business Planning Manager (GM) (for item 3)
Scrutiny Manager (AGD)
Committee Officer (ATH)
- APOLOGIES:** Mrs Anest Frazer (Co-opted Member – The Church in Wales)
- ALSO PRESENT:** Councillor Llinos Medi Huws (Leader & Portfolio Member for Social Services), Councillor R.Meirion Jones (Portfolio Member for Education), Councillor Dafydd Rhys Thomas (Portfolio Member for Corporate Services), Councillor Carwyn Jones (a Local Member with regard to item 4), Councillor Lewis Davies (a Local Member with regard to item 4), Vicky Poole (North Wales Area Director - CSSIW (for item 2), Marc Roberts (Lead Inspector – CSSIW) for item 2), Assistant Chief Executive (Partnerships, Community & Service Improvements), Head of Democratic Services
- Also Present for item 4: Mrs Emma Taylor (Chair of Governors, Ysgol Beaumaris, Mrs Rhian Jones (Ysgol Beaumaris), Councillor Frank Carr (Beaumaris Town Mayor), Councillor Alwyn Rowlands (Beaumaris Town Council).

The Chair welcomed all those present to this meeting of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee. He extended a particular welcome to Vicky Poole, North Wales Area Director CSSIW and Marc Roberts, Lead Inspector CSSIW and also to representatives of Ysgol Beaumaris and Beaumaris Town Council who were present to address the meeting with regard to item 4 on the agenda.

1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Lewis Davies (not a member of the Committee) declared a personal interest with regard to item 4 on the agenda as Chair of Ysgol Llangoed Board of Governors. Councillor Davies said he had taken legal advice and had been advised that the interest is not prejudicial.

Councillor Carwyn Jones (not a member of the Committee) declared a personal interest with regard to item 4 on the agenda as Chair of Ysgol Llandegfan Board of Governors. Councillor Jones also declared a further prejudicial interest with regard to this matter on the basis of his first cousin's employment in Ysgol Beaumaris and the attendance at Ysgol Llandegfan of his cousin's son. Councillor Jones said that following an application to the Standards Committee, he had been granted a dispensation on 18 July, 2017 to participate fully throughout the school's modernisation process in the Seiriol area but not to vote on the matter.

Councillor Alun Roberts declared a personal interest with regard to item 4 on the agenda as a member of Ysgol Beaumaris Board of Governors. Councillor Roberts said that he had taken legal advice and had been advised that the interest is not prejudicial and that he was able to participate and to vote on the matter.

2 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES 2016/17

The performance review letter of the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) in relation to the Isle of Anglesey County Council's Social Services was presented for the Committee's consideration along with the Authority's responsive Action Plan. The letter summarised the outcome of the Inspectorate's inspection, engagement and performance review activity with regard to Anglesey's Social Services during 2016/17.

Vicky Poole, North Wales Area Director for CSSIW reported on the main points of the letter as follows –

- The Local Authority has made sustained progress in implementing the Social Services and Well-being Act (SSWBA) with particular focus having been given to developing preventative services that promote independence and community resources.
- The Adults' Services transformation programme emphasises supporting people to live independent and fulfilled lives. The single point of access in adult's services is well established.
- The Inspectorate noted that there were positive examples of the development of alternative models of delivery in line with the SSWBA which looked at new ways of providing services for people.
- The Inspectorate noted that partnership working with the BCUHB is ongoing and that positive progress has been made specifically with regard to developing residential services to support people who have dementia and complex needs. Strategic partnership working with BCUHB continues to be a challenge which the local authorities in the region need to address collectively.
- The Inspectorate also noted that the Authority has plans to recommission domiciliary care on a patch basis and has advised caution in this approach.
- The local authority is an outlier in its reported performance with respect to the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards and is looking at its data collection processes to better understand the reasons for this. This is an area that CSSIW will be following up in 2017/18.
- There has been insufficient progress in modernising services for adults with learning disabilities, although it has been noted that more progress has been made in this area this year.
- Advocacy and access to advocacy is an important part of the SSWBA. Advocacy has been identified by the local authority as an area for development in adults' services. Children's Services were seen to make effective use of informal advocacy.
- During 2016/17, the Inspectorate's engagement activities across all authorities in Wales focused on two main themes viz.

- Safeguarding for adults – the Inspectorate was satisfied with how safeguarding arrangements for adults at risk were working in Anglesey and found this to be an area of strength for the local authority
- Carers – the Inspectorate recognised that there are established third sector services to support carers commissioned by the local authority. The elected member who is the designated carers' champion is well informed about carers' needs which is also a strength. However, there is a waiting list for the established young carers' service – this has been discussed with Children's Services. Support for carers of people with mental health and substance misuse problems is also an issue across all authorities in Wales. Officers have not consistently given attention to the development of the carers' strategy and support services.
- Follow up work with regard to the November, 2016 inspection of Children's Services is ongoing. The local authority has produced an improvement plan that is being monitored by CSSIW through a structured series of review meetings. CSSIW is also observing key officer meetings and member scrutiny and tracking the experiences of families. The service will be re-inspected to evaluate progress.
- The letter also summarises the Inspectorate's inspection, engagement and review plans for the current year.

The Leader and Portfolio Member for Social Services said that the performance review letter reflects progress made by the Local Authority with its Adults' and Children's services. Although the principal focus in 2016/17 has been on Children's Services where the work is ongoing, the authority has not lost sight of Adults' services and recognises the need to maintain momentum in this area. The Letter serves to highlight the importance of approaching both with an equal commitment to improvement. The Portfolio Member paid particular thanks to the work of the Carers' Champion who had brought to the fore - the need to give carers a voice both locally and nationally. As the previous Carers' Champion she had established links with Action for Children which supports services for young carers in Anglesey; the local authority acknowledges that there is further work to be done to improve the young carers' service and to understand the needs of young carers more fully.

The Assistant Chief Executive (Governance and Business Process Transformation/ Statutory Director of Social Services) confirmed that addressing the needs of young carers is identified as item 12 in the Improvement Priority Plan; options are currently under consideration including both regional and sub-regional working.

The Committee considered the information presented and made the following points –

- The Committee noted the contents of the letter; the Committee sought clarification as to whether the level of concern on the part of the Regulator with regard to certain aspects of service provision has reduced as the Authority moves forwards.

The CSSIW's Lead Inspector said that whilst there has been concern around some areas as described in the letter e.g. slow progress in modernising the way services for adults with learning disabilities are commissioned, the Inspectorate is aware of the work being undertaken particularly with partners to progress matters in this area. The Authority is assessing how the risks with regard to domiciliary care are being managed; whilst the Authority is taking a systematic approach to the matter the outcome remains difficult to predict because the situation is evolving and remains live. The Inspectorate is assured that performance in relation to DoLS is primarily a data collection issue and there is no evidence to suggest that service users have suffered an adverse impact as a result of this matter. A substantial amount of work has been done based on the detailed Children's Services Improvement Plan and whilst the Inspectorate continues to have concerns regarding Children's Services, it recognises that progress has been made especially in

relation to the strategic approach to preventative services and to workforce and quality assurance issues.

- The Committee sought clarification of the Inspectors' use of the word "caution" in that part of the letter which refers to services for older people and residential provision to support people who have dementia and complex needs. The Inspectors clarified that the caution is in relation to recommissioning domiciliary care on a patch basis (other authorities in Wales have tried this approach and have encountered problems) and not in relation to the approach to residential support for people with dementia regarding which the Inspectors have no concerns. There are risks around transferring the right people to extra care provision; the Authority is aware of these and is drawing on its previous experiences of placing individuals in extra care provision. The Authority is also aware of the need to continue to provide appropriate care for vulnerable older people within their own homes.
- The Committee noted that the Children's Panel will be considering the actions within the Improvement Priority Plan that are specific to Children's Services and that it is scheduled to report on progress against the detailed Improvement Plan to this Committee in November. The Committee further noted that it needs to be kept similarly informed of progress with regard to matters pertaining to Adults' Services and it requested a corresponding update on Adults' Services to the November meeting.
- The Committee noted that some of the improvement priorities identified in the Action Plan do not carry an implementation target date. The Committee emphasised the importance of specifying timescales and of not leaving matters open ended and therefore at risk of not being addressed in a timely way. The Head of Adults' Services said that some actions do not have a target date for specific reasons i.e. because they follow on from other actions e.g. action point 1 is dependent on the receipt of a report from CSSIW. The Officer said that completion dates can be incorporated in the updates on the two services to the Committee's November meeting.

It was resolved that the Committee –

- **Accepts and notes the content of the Annual Performance Review Letter issued by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales in June, 2017 as a reflection of the progress of Social Services in 2016/17.**
- **Endorses the Social Services Action Plan in response to the Annual Performance Review Letter.**
- **Requests that a progress report against priority actions in both Adults' and Children's Services be presented to the Committee's November meeting.**

ADDITIONAL ACTION PROPOSED: That the updates on Adults' and Children's Services to the Committee's November meeting include implementation dates for all priority actions.

3 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT (IMPROVEMENT PLAN) 2016/17

The report of the Corporate Head of Transformation incorporating the Annual Performance Report for 2016/17 was presented for the Committee's consideration. The report looks back at the performance of the Council for 2016/17 and specifically the progress made against the improvement objectives set out in the 7 key areas in the 2015/16 Annual Delivery Document.

The Portfolio Member for Corporate Services reported that the Annual Performance Report conveys a positive message about the Council's performance in 2016/17. The Authority succeeded in continuing to deliver on many of its commitments in a number of priority

areas in the preceding year including Adults' Services, Education, Economic and Community Development and Housing; these successes are expanded on in the narrative of the report. Over 64% of the Council's Performance Indicators (PIs) improved during the year and whilst some PIs declined in performance, the percentage of those is also down from 45% in 2015/16 to 24% in 2016/17. The Portfolio Member for Corporate Services said that he was very gratified to be able to report that the Isle of Anglesey County Council is for the first time ever within the top four local authorities in Wales as regards overall PI performance and seventh out of the 22 local authorities as regards PIs in the top quartile performance. This is undoubtedly a significant and commendable achievement particularly in the context of the changes that have occurred at the Council in recent years as well the increasingly challenging financial climate.

The Leader said that the previous Council had worked committedly over the course of its term to take the Council forwards; in so doing it has set a challenge to the new Council to maintain the momentum of progress. She noted that thanks are due to all who have contributed to the success to which the Performance Report is testimony.

The Committee considered the report and noted the progress made in fulfilling the objectives which the Council had set in 2016/17 which also marked the end of the period of the 2013/17 Corporate Plan. The Committee further noted that whilst one of the Council's stated aspirations was to "drive community regeneration through developing holistic town and community plans for the Island's main settlements prioritising Holyhead, Llangefni and Amlwch", there was no mention made of the plans for Amlwch as one of the named priority settlements and neither was it linked to the schemes referred to in the list of achievements. Additionally, the Committee noted that there was no reference to community regeneration plans for Beaumaris as the primary town in the south-east corner of the Island which it believed should also be included in any renewal programme.

The Committee noted that the period which the Performance Report covers pertains to the previous Administration at the Council prior to the May 2017 local government election and asked that this be clarified within the report.

Having considered the report the Committee resolved that it agreed that a final version of the 2016/17 Performance Report be published by the statutory October deadline, and that it be completed by Officers in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for publication on the Council's website with the proviso that it be clarified that the report refers to a period pertaining to the previous Administration.

ADDITIONAL ACTION PROPOSED: The Head of Service (Community Regeneration and Economic Development) be invited to report to the Committee on the progress of community regeneration plans for Amlwch as a named priority settlement, and whether there are plans in the offing for Beaumaris.

4 SCHOOLS' MODERNISATION PROGRAMME - SEIRIOL AREA

The report of the Head of Learning incorporating the outcome of the non-statutory consultation on the modernisation of schools in the Seiriol area was presented for the Committee's consideration. The report set out the following elements of the process –

- The context including the main change drivers for modernising primary education provision on Anglesey that underscores the schools' modernisation programme as a whole and will influence the decision regarding the best provision for the Seiriol area (section 2)
- The consultation process which ran from 19 June, 2017 to 30 July, 2017

- The observations and responses received from the staff, governors and parents of pupils during consultation meetings at the schools affected - Ysgol Beaumaris, Ysgol Llandegfan, and Ysgol Llangoed (section 4)
- The other stakeholders to whom the consultation document was circulated (section 5)
- The extended list of drivers for change against which the options were scored out of 10 (section 9)
- A detailed analysis of 9 options encompassing those that were included in the consultation document as well as others that emerged during the consultation exercise and their scores (section 9).
- A cost analysis of the options and summary of the scores in tabular form (section 10)
- A recommendation on the way forward as regards the preferred option(s) on which to base a next step statutory consultation process (section 11)

The Portfolio Member for Education reported that the consultation on the provision of primary school education in the Seiriol area is the latest phase of the Schools' Modernisation Programme on Anglesey and follows on from the decision taken by the Executive on 21 July, 2016, to authorise Education Officers to proceed with an informal or non-statutory consultation on the primary school education provision in the area and to prepare options with which to proceed. A number of options have been considered and have been scored with 2 options jointly scoring highest (79), namely –

To close Ysgol Beaumaris and give parents a choice to send their children to the two other schools, to renovate both and to perhaps federalise (option 2), and

To close Ysgol Beaumaris and give the parents a choice to send their children to the two other schools and to review the catchments (option 3)

The Portfolio Member said that he had attended the consultation meetings at the three schools and had spent time reflecting on all the material considerations and had come to the unavoidable conclusion that most of the options which score highly against the drivers for change involve the closure of Ysgol Beaumaris. Although consideration has been given to ways of avoiding putting forward this option, the combination of factors and the resulting scores produce the same end result, namely that closing Ysgol Beaumaris features prominently in the options that most closely meet the criteria for change. The Portfolio Member for Education added that notwithstanding he remained open to listening to feasible alternative options.

In response to a request for clarification by the Chair regarding the validity of the process given that the consultation had run into the school holiday period, the Head of Learning said that the consultation which was held and on which the report is based is an informal and non-statutory consultation i.e. it is a consultation which the Authority does not have to hold and which it is not obliged by law to do so, but is an additional step which the Authority has chosen to take in this, as in all the other areas where it has consulted on modernising the primary school provision, as a matter of good practice. In being informal and non-statutory the consultation process that was held does not have to comply with any legal requirements so the validity/and or legality of the process is not an issue that arises. The Authority seeks to hold an informal consultation process within a 6-week period; although the process in this instance lasted to the end of July, the consultation meetings involving the staff, governors and parents of pupils at the three schools and all engagement activities were held in June prior to the end of the school summer term.

The Head of Learning proceeded to highlight a number of considerations in addition to the main section headings referred to above including the following –

- The drivers for change have been agreed and established by the Authority since 2012 and have been applied consistently in each of the areas in which the Authority has consulted on the reconfiguration of the primary school provision. Additionally, in making a business case for funding to Welsh Government for new schools and/or adaptations, the Authority is required to show how the proposals will contribute towards among other things - energy efficiency, non-contact time for teachers and reduced repair and maintenance backlog costs.
- Eleven ideas for possible options emerged from the consultation meetings in the schools and from responses to the consultation. These are listed on page 6 of the consultation outcome document which also notes whether or not they were given further consideration. These are in addition to the original options that were listed in the consultation document. Twenty options were available following this process and were assessed against the established criteria.
- The non-statutory consultation document also took into account the possible need for additional housing in the Seiriol area consequent upon the Joint Local Development Plan and the implications for pupil numbers. Based on the data in the JLDP regarding housing developments in the area and the average number of children of primary school age in every household (according to a standard formula), the table at page 75 of the report shows that Ysgol Llandegfan would have to accommodate 6 additional pupils; Ysgol Beaumaris 14 and Ysgol Llangoed, 8. In taking into account the empty places in the schools, it can be seen that there is room available at both Ysgol Beaumaris and Ysgol Llangoed but that Ysgol Llandegfan will continue to be full to capacity over the coming years. Based on the formula, to bring Ysgol Beaumaris back to capacity would require 550 new houses to be built in the area.
- As well as observations made directly at the consultation meetings, correspondence was received from variously the Headteachers, Chairs of the Governing Bodies and/or Governors, Town/Community Councils, Playgroup Committees associated with the three schools as well as from the 3 Elected Members for the Seiriol area (appended to the consultation outcome report). The latter draw attention to the need for a cohesive corporate plan for the whole south-east corner of the Island as an area that has been rapidly losing services and they emphasise the importance of retaining the three schools.
- From the scoring exercise, the two highest scoring options (79 - options 2 and 3) both entail the closure of Ysgol Beaumaris; the next highest (78 – option 16) also refers to the closure of Ysgol Beaumaris. Out of the 9 highest scoring options, 7 involve the closure of Ysgol Beaumaris.

Representatives of Ysgol Beaumaris as the school on which the two recommended options had the greatest direct impact were invited to address the meeting.

Emma Taylor, Chair of Governors at Ysgol Beaumaris referred to correspondence which she had circulated on the 29th September which raised concerns regarding the matters noted below which she expanded on at the meeting –

- Inadequate timeframe to analyse the consultation outcome report especially given its far reaching implications for primary education in the area;
- Recommended options to close Ysgol Beaumaris run contrary to the Welsh Government's advice to local authorities to consider all alternatives to closing rural schools
- Inconsistencies in the drivers for change used in the scoring exercise
- Scoring mechanism is problematic in terms of the rationale for selecting the 11 drivers listed as well as the logic of weighing each equally.
- Inaccuracies and inconsistencies in the scores allocated.

Rhian Jones, Chair of the Committee for responding to the report highlighted the following issues –

- Whilst recognising that a great deal of work had gone into the consultation and the resulting document, it was considered that the consultation outcome report is flawed in being based on a process that did not follow the Schools Organisation Code or the guidelines it sets for conducting such a consultation and the detailed factors that have to be taken into account, including the disposal of land. Ysgol Beaumaris is situated on a key site the additional use of which as a site for extra care housing is also being proposed as a separate matter at this meeting. The community should have been informed of the intentions as regards the site as a whole and no decision should be made on the basis of one part of the site without considering and consulting on the use of the site in its entirety.
- The draft Strategic Outline Plan (SOP) Band B makes reference to 3 options for the Seiriol area including the closure of a primary school and the renovation of another which makes the impression that the closure of Ysgol Beaumaris has been predetermined difficult to avoid.
- The consultation document refers to a backlog of repairs and maintenance costs at Ysgol Beaumaris amounting to £971k which is a factor reflected in the scoring exercise. No breakdown of this figure is given and no mention is made of the fact that £190k comprise of possible costs with the remainder being phased costs.

Councillors Frank Carr and Alwyn Rowlands both expressed concerns about the impact the closure of Ysgol Beaumaris would have on the future of the town as a viable and thriving community and they emphasised that every effort would be made to withstand any decision taken to close the school.

Councillors Carwyn Jones, Lewis Davies and Alun Roberts (also a member of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee) addressed the Committee as Local Member and collectively they raised issues in relation to education costs per head which in the Seiriol area are reported as £4,356 - comparing favourably with the Anglesey average (£4,869) and only slightly higher than the Welsh average (£4,226); the perceived complexity and inconsistency of the scoring system used in this exercise ; the need for a corporate regeneration plan for the south-east corner of the Island; the impact of the potential loss of a school on the demographic of Beaumaris as a town and the future of its youth population; the reduction over the years in the pupil numbers at Ysgol Beaumaris and whether this was planned; the possibility of an increase in pupil numbers in future with the advent of major economic developments on the Island including Wylfa Newydd; the weight given to the volume of support for Ysgol Beaumaris; the suitability and potential of the Ysgol Beaumaris site as a shared site for much needed social housing; the need to take a much broader and more detailed approach to the future of primary education in the area in tandem with the area's economic future and to allow much more time for that process to take place; the absence of any positive option in the form of a new area school.

Those speaking in favour of retaining Ysgol Beaumaris asked the Committee to reject the recommendations of the report and to allow additional time for the school and the community to develop alternative options.

The Portfolio Member for Education reiterated that no decision had been made and that he remained open to new proposals although he could not see that any such alternatives had been put forward hitherto. He said that parental choice is an important factor and that in the case of Ysgol Beaumaris, only 37 of the school catchment's pupils attend the school with the parents of 34 children choosing to send their children to school elsewhere. The cost per pupil at Ysgol Beaumaris is therefore higher meaning that the provision of education at the school is more expensive than at the other two schools. Consideration has been given to the areas on the Island where it would be feasible to establish a new area school; this option was found to be unsuitable for the Seiriol area.

The Head of Learning in responding to the points raised highlighted and re-emphasised the following –

- That the consultation exercise conducted was an optional, informal and non-statutory consultation meaning that the question of the legality or the propriety of the process does not apply. It provided the Authority with an opportunity to engage informally with the community and to obtain views and perspectives as a starting point ahead of reporting to the Executive on the need or otherwise to proceed to a formal and statutory consultation stage. Should it be decided that a formal and statutory consultation process be undertaken, then much more detailed work will be carried out as part of the process in accordance with the statutory guidelines.
- That in drawing up the Band B Strategic Outline Plan, the Authority has to inform Welsh Government of the areas to be included within Band B as well as the approximate amount of funding for which it is applying. To be able to do this the Authority must have an idea of the possibilities in terms of modernising the schools in the areas in Band B but it does not mean that any conclusive decisions have been made beforehand, only that the Authority must make a business case for funding for Band B based on the areas included in the Band B. This has to be done before any consultation takes place.
- Costs have to be taken into consideration. The cost per pupil in Ysgol Beaumaris is 50% higher than that in Ysgol Llandegfan for example. To seek to continue to justify such a cost is to perpetuate a situation whereby the primary school children of Anglesey are not given equal educational opportunities which is a key principle of the Schools Modernisation Programme. The strategy from the outset has sought to reduce the variation in costs per pupil. Therefore, discussions have to be held with those communities where there are small schools because smaller sized schools are more expensive to maintain.
- That there is a backlog of repairs and maintenance work on the Island's schools to the value of over £15m. There has been a historical failure over decades to invest sufficiently in school buildings including many buildings which were modern structures in the 19th century but cannot be considered so in the 21st century. Reference has been made to the repair and maintenance costs associated with Ysgol Beaumaris; these are estimates based on the Council Property Service's long-standing schedules. However, it is likely that the cost of bringing Ysgol Beaumaris up to the standards expected of a modern day, twenty-first century school would exceed these estimates.
- Statistics provided by Horizon suggest that preparations for Wylfa Newydd will only bring an additional 220 children to the Island. If all 220 were to re-locate to Beaumaris then that would bring the school to capacity. However, reliance cannot be placed on this possibility in considering the future of Ysgol Beaumaris. As mentioned, 550 additional homes would need to be built in the area to bring the school to full capacity.
- That there were 37 statutory age pupils at Ysgol Beaumaris at the time of the consultation. The pupil projections up to 2022 as set out in the original report are for 40-50 pupils. The prospects as regards births in the area therefore are not at present propitious.
- The school site covers approximately 5 acres which is not considered adequate for building a twenty first century school of a single storey, the usual requirement for such an establishment being approximately 6.5 acres.
- Whilst the Authority is sympathetic as regards the reduction in pupil numbers that has occurred over recent years at Ysgol Beaumaris, it has not been due to any intentional strategy. Any such suggestion is unacceptable and implies that officers would be willing to sacrifice children's education to achieve a particular objective which is not true.
- Parental choice is an important consideration. Last year, 34 children from the catchment attended schools other than Ysgol Beaumaris. The authority has also taken into account the likelihood that parents would not choose to make the journey back to Beaumaris or Llangoed if Ysgol Llandegfan were to close, or if a new school were to be built in the centre of the three catchments.
- That the drivers on which the scoring system has been based have been part of the process from the outset; the methodology for scoring is a practice that has been developed

by the Authority since 2012. The scoring system and how it is applied is scrutinised by Welsh Government each time an education reorganisation process is put into effect and documents submitted for scrutiny and approval by Welsh Government. The Authority's approach has not been questioned for accuracy for any of the processes it has implemented to date. The Authority is due its fourth Gateway review by Welsh Government which involves being questioned on the processes for its modernisation strategy. The way the Authority in Anglesey operates especially in conducting an additional, informal consultation process is considered good practice.

The Chief Executive gave his perspective on the situation and he made the following points –

- Whilst the Authority recognises the importance of education at a local level, it must continue to address the issue of empty places as a cost it cannot afford in the current financial context and as a matter on which it has, and will continue to be challenged by Estyn.
- The approach to scoring has been consistent since the beginning of the School Modernisation Programme.
- That challenging Ysgol Beaumaris on addressing the reduction in the number of pupils choosing to be educated at the school should also be the responsibility of its Board of Governors.
- In those areas where a new school has been established as part of the modernisation programme, a new school was not regarded as a positive solution at the time of consultation. The options now being proposed for the Seiriol area offer significant investment and benefits in two of the area's primary schools with the aim of ensuring a sustainable education provision for the area in future years.
- That the south-east area of the Island encompassing the Seiriol ward could benefit from a dedicated corporate plan within resources. However, such a plan would still need to devise a strategy for raising pupil numbers from 40 to 150 in order for the area to have a school that is defined as viable; this is a significant challenge.
- The fact that 34 pupils from the Beaumaris catchment and 29 from Llangoed attend schools elsewhere is a key consideration that has to be given weight.
- Whilst the cost of provision is not the main reason for seeking to modernise primary education on the Island, regard must be had of how resources are used. The costs at Ysgol Beaumaris are £55k higher than those at other schools meaning there are less resources available for pupils of other schools which militates against the principle of equal opportunity.
- Raising and maintaining educational standards is a key driver in the schools modernisation programme. Standards in the Foundation phase and in KS2 at Ysgol Beaumaris have been variable against the quartiles for a period of 3 years or more.
- The Authority has to ensure that there is sufficient and appropriate leadership capacity within the Island's schools which continues to be a challenge.
- The Committee in coming to a recommendation should consider the matter in the context of the Island as a whole; the informal non-statutory process has given consideration to a number of options including those from within the community as well as taking account of the range of education related factors which are common to the modernisation programme as implemented throughout the Island.

The Committee in considering the information presented both on paper and verbally, made the following observations –

- The Committee noted that the consultation undertaken was an informal process which allowed the Authority to gauge views in the area. The Committee understood also that in order to establish how much funding it might require when submitting the Band B

SOP and related business case to Welsh Government the Authority needs to have drawn up options before consultation has taken place.

- The Committee noted that the cost of education per head at Ysgol Beaumaris is high and is commensurate with a school with much higher pupil numbers. The Committee noted further that the provision of education at Ysgol Beaumaris is expensive and therefore unsustainable in the long term.
- The Committee accepted the importance of ensuring both a level playing field for all primary schools on the Island and equal educational opportunities for the Island's primary school aged children.
- The Committee recognised that small schools are not best suited to deliver modern education standards and practices and it supported the Authority in wanting to ensure that the Island's children are provided with the best possible standard of education to be able to compete successfully in the wider jobs market within an environment that provides up to date facilities.
- The Committee accepted that committing expenditure to the upkeep of old school buildings is not the best use of scarce resources.
- The Committee noted that falling pupil numbers at Ysgol Beaumaris is a significant factor that is difficult to explain. The Committee further noted that 34 of the catchment's children currently attend school elsewhere which it also considered to be a significant factor.
- Whilst it acknowledged and it sympathised with the strength of feeling within the community of Beaumaris in relation to the option of closing the town's school which the Committee viewed as a very difficult option, for the reasons stated above the majority of the Committee was of the view that all three schools cannot be maintained and therefore retaining the status quo is not an option.

Councillor Richard O. Jones proposed that the options recommended within the report be accepted by the Committee to be forwarded to the Executive. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Richard Griffiths.

Councillor Shaun Redmond proposed an amendment to the effect that further consideration be given to an additional option of a new school to replace the current Ysgol Beaumaris, Ysgol Llangoed and Ysgol Llandegfan; the new school to be located on the site of the present Ysgol Beaumaris but to occupy a smaller footprint to enable consideration to be given to co-locating affordable housing on the same site. The reasoning for the proposal being to protect the value, future prosperity and vibrancy of Beaumaris as a well-regarded town on the Island There was no seconder for the proposal.

Councillor Alun Roberts proposed a further amendment to the effect that the Lifelong Learning Service be asked to reconsider the options in the light of the discussion at this committee and report back to the Committee at its November meeting. The proposal was seconded by Councillor Aled M. Jones.

The second amendment was rejected by the Committee and the original proposal was carried by the majority. Councillor Shaun Redmond abstained from voting.

It was resolved that the Committee –

- **Accepts the report on the non-statutory consultation in the Seiriol area and recommends the report to the Executive.**
- **Supports the recommendations in the report in relation to the preferred options, namely to undertake a statutory consultation upon the following -**

Option 2 – Close Ysgol Beaumaris and give the parents the choice to send their children to the other two schools, renew both schools and possibly federalise them;

Option 3 – Close Ysgol Beaumaris and give the parents the choice to send their children to the other two schools and review the catchment areas.

NO ADDITIONAL ACTION WAS PROPOSED

5 EXTRA CARE HOUSING - SEIRIOL AREA

The report of the Head of Adults' Services setting out a proposal to engage with the community of Seiriol on the development of extra care housing in the area was presented for the Committee's consideration.

The Portfolio Member for Social Services reported that a key element of the Transformation Programme for Adults is reconfiguring accommodation provision and moving away from the traditional residential care setting towards an Extra Care housing model. In October, 2015, a commitment was made to give consideration to appropriate site options within the South of Anglesey for the development of extra care housing, and the Seiriol area was identified as the preferred location should sites be available within that vicinity. During 2016 a survey of possible sites was commissioned through the Council's Property Services which considered the factors listed in the report. Those factors have influenced the site selection process the report on which is attached at Appendix A. The report identified the preferred option as being to develop Extra Care Housing on the site of the current primary school either to be co-located with the school thereby ensuring the effective use of land, or alternatively to be the sole tenant. Two locations within the site were assessed, the one being the location of the now vacant day centre and the other to the rear of the school. The latter provides for better use of the area potentially supporting the maintenance of a build design consistent with the listed status of the school and potentially allows for sharing catering facilities with the school.

Councillor Lewis Davies speaking as a Local Member said that the site would be better suited to social housing which is in short supply in Beaumaris. The proposed development of an Extra Care facility on this site serves to increase the older people demographic of Beaumaris and together with the possible closure of the primary school, reinforces the impression of the town as primarily a place for older people. Councillor Davies emphasised the importance of having a corporate plan for the area to address this and other considerations relevant to the area's future and its economic prosperity and viability.

The Chair clarified that opportunities to comment on the proposals in detail will arise during the engagement period. He requested that the outcome of the engagement with the local area be reported back to this Committee ahead of the presentation of the feedback to the Executive.

It was resolved that the Committee supports holding a period of engagement locally within the Seiriol area during November, 2017 with regard to the following matters:

- **Developing Extra Care housing provision in the Seiriol area to provide a minimum of 39 self-contained flats in accordance with nationally approved models of provision**
- **That the preferred site for this development is the site of the current Ysgol Beaumaris either co-located with an adapted school or as the prime use for this land**
- **That the Council pursues options to fund the development through the Housing revenue Account so that the development becomes additional council housing stock within the county providing vital accommodation for older people.**

ADDITIONAL ACTION PROPOSED: Head of Adults' Services to present a summary of the feedback from the engagement process to this Committee prior to its consideration by the Executive.

**Councillor Aled Morris Jones
Chair**