

CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2018

PRESENT: Councillor Aled Morris Jones (Chair)
Councillor Dylan Rees (Vice-Chair)

Councillors Lewis Davies, Richard Griffiths, Richard Owain Jones, Shaun Redmond, Alun Roberts

Co-opted Member: Mr Keith Roberts (The Catholic Church)

Portfolio Members

Councillors Llinos Medi Huws (Leader and Portfolio Member for Social Services), John Griffith (Portfolio Member for Finance), Carwyn Jones (Portfolio Holder for Major Projects and Economic Development) R. Meirion Jones (Portfolio Member for Education, Libraries, Youth & Culture), Alun Mummery (Portfolio Member for Housing and Supporting Communities), R.G. Parry, OBE, FRAGS (Portfolio Member for Highways, Property and Waste), Dafydd Rhys Thomas (Portfolio Member for Corporate Services)

IN ATTENDANCE: Chief Executive
Head of Function (Resources) and Section 151 Officer (for item 2)
Head of Learning (for items 6 & 7)
Head of Housing Services (for item 2)
Head of Adults' Services (for item 2)
Head of Highways, Waste and Property Services (for items 4 & 5)
Head of Children and Families Services (for item 3)
Library Services Manager (RR) (for item 7)
Principal Valuation Officer (for item 4)
Support Manager (Highways, Waste and Property) (for item 6)
Senior Manager (School Support) (EC) (for item 6)
Scrutiny Manager (AGD)
Committee Officer (ATH)

APOLOGIES: Councillors Trefor Lloyd Hughes, J. Arwel Roberts, Nicola Roberts, Anest Frazer (The Church in Wales)

ALSO PRESENT: Head of Audit and Risk, Senior Internal Auditor, Councillor Jason Zalot (Beaumaris Town Council), Rhian Jones (Chair of the Committee against the closure of Ysgol Beaumaris)

1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Councillor Richard Griffiths declared a personal but not prejudicial interest on the basis of his daughter's employment in the Housing Department.

Councillor Alun Roberts declared a personal but not prejudicial interest as a member of the Governing Body of Ysgol Beaumaris.

2 EXTRA CARE HOUSING - SEIRIOL AREA

The report of the Head of Adults' Services incorporating a summary of the feedback from the engagement process and final recommendations with regard to the proposed development of an Extra Care Housing Scheme on the Ysgol Beaumaris school site in the Seiriol area was presented for the Committee's consideration. The report provided a synopsis of the comments made at the public meeting held in Llangoed on 15th January, 2018 and the Council's response to the issues raised, along with the Site Selection Report by the Authority's Senior Valuation Officer and feedback from an on-line questionnaire.

The Leader and Portfolio Member for Social Services said that a commitment was made in 2015 to develop Extra Care provision in the Seiriol area; the Ysgol Beaumaris site was subsequently identified as the most suitable site for the development both in terms of the residents of Seiriol and more broadly for the South of the Island. Both the Corporate Scrutiny Committee and the Executive supported holding a period of engagement locally within the Seiriol ward on the proposal and specifically, the location of the proposed scheme. This process took place during November and December, 2017 and entailed meetings with the local town and community councils, drop-in sessions, an on-line survey and a public meeting. The Portfolio Member said that the responses to the proposal were mixed and whilst there is general support for Extra Care Housing (ECH) as a form of provision there is disagreement as regards the best location for an ECH development in Seiriol as well as concerns about the impact of the proposed scheme on the future of the Haulfre Residential Home.

The Head of Adults' Services gave a visual presentation to the Committee based on the presentation made to the town and community councils and to the public meeting held at Llangoed on 15th January, 2018. The presentation addressed the following matters –

- The evidence in support of extra care compared to residential care. Extra care supports an independent life and higher quality living and is generally cheaper for residents and more cost-effective for local authorities.
- The key features of Extra Care Housing.
- Extra Care provision on Anglesey in the form of the established Extra Care Scheme in Penucheldre, Holyhead and the planned development at Hafan Cefni, Llangefni which is scheduled to open in the summer, 2018.
- The sites considered for the Extra Care scheme in South Anglesey (an area encompassing Seiriol) and their ranking following evaluation and scoring for suitability.
- The two favoured options (Beaumaris Day Care Centre and Ysgol Beaumaris) which are both on the site of Ysgol Beaumaris. These are considered preferable because of their accessibility to the town and amenities of Beaumaris; because of their centrality within the Seiriol Ward and because there is enough space to develop the scheme behind the school if it were to remain as a school.
- The proposed 3rd floor model for the development in Beaumaris images of which were shown, as well as an example of a typical Extra Care Housing apartment
- Feedback from the engagement process which can be summarised as follows:
- General agreement with the concept of Extra Care Housing but not with the school site as the best location;
- Much support for the utilisation of the Haulfre site with many respondents believing that the residential home is still needed and that the ECH development should also be on the Haulfre site.

- Opposition by the community to the possible closure of Ysgol Beaumaris as well as to the school site as the preferred site for the ECH development mainly due to the location on top of a steep hill.
- Cwm Cadnant Community Council did favour the development of an ECH facility in Beaumaris but not necessarily the school site as the preferred option, stating that other options in Beaumaris should also be considered.

The Head of Adults' Services also showed a short video clip of the amenities available at the recently opened Cae Garnedd ECH facility in Penrhosgarnedd, Bangor along with testimony provided by some of the residents, families and staff of the benefits which living at the facility has brought them. The Officer said that whilst acknowledging the important points raised during the engagement process and the public meeting, the service's recommendations remain the same for the reasons set out in the report – that the site of Ysgol Beaumaris is used to develop the ECH scheme within the Seiriol area taking into account the points made during engagement with the community particularly with regard to ensuring that the site is accessible for older people. Although the Haulfre site was favoured by many within the community it is important to reiterate that Beaumaris is more central to the Seiriol area; it is more accessible to local amenities and it provides a better opportunity to develop the site as a community hub. Urban locations are consistently recommended for the development of ECH facilities and are supportive of the consideration that living well and living independently means having access to resources. It is the Council's oft stated strategy to offer more options to allow people to live independently thereby reducing the dependency on residential care provision. This approach is consistent with trends nationally; further investment in residential care provision would be a step backwards as regards providing a model of care that is sustainable into the future and ensures independence. As the older population increases, continuing with residential placements as the main form of provision would be a negative step in terms of the Authority's ability to manage demand in a way that offers less institutional options to individuals and which supports them in remaining independent in the long-term. In any process to decommission Haulfre Residential Home, the service would work closely with individuals and their families to ensure a successful transition to the ECH provision or depending on individual circumstances, to other provision within the South of the Island. The school site is not perfect but with considered design it can provide a good provision for the area. The proposal also provides an opportunity for the Authority to be ambitious in funding the scheme via the Housing Revenue Account thereby enabling the Council to manage its housing and its care options for older people. The recommendation does not make any presumption as regards the outcome of the consultation on the future of the school; it offers an opportunity to co-locate provision for older people with the school should that be the Council's wish.

Rhian Jones, Ysgol Beaumaris and Councillor Jason Zalot, Beaumaris Town Council were given the opportunity to address the meeting. Both emphasised the strength of feeling within the community against locating the ECH facility on the school site for a number of reasons including accessibility. They suggested that the investment should instead be made in Haulfre while keeping the primary school open. The indications are that pupil numbers at Ysgol Beaumaris are on the increase making the Council's approach look like short-termism. They were concerned that the ECH development was being discussed ahead of the closure of the statutory consultation on the future of the school, when in the community's opinion, both are inextricably linked.

Councillors Carwyn Jones, Lewis Davies and Alun Roberts spoke as Local Members. They highlighted the following points –

- They welcomed the investment in the area but not in the location proposed.

- They took issue with the assessment of the Ysgol Beaumaris site as the most suitable site suggesting instead that Haulfre, Llangoed would be a better location for the ECH facility and would provide a far more suitable environment for older people than the hilltop site at Ysgol Beaumaris.
- They were concerned about the future provision for the residents of Haulfre Residential home in the event of its closure many of whose needs are not suitable to independent living. They emphasised that there is a need for residential provision in the area and that the closure of the home would be the latest loss of a service in the south of the Island when a Welsh Government report on a review of health and social care in Wales in 2018 refers to the need still for residential and nursing care homes to provide flexible and long-term care for those who are unable to live in their own home.
- They pointed out that Beaumaris town is in dire need of investment but of the social housing type to provide for families and young people rather than of the extra care type which will only serve to reinforce the impression of Beaumaris as an ageing town. The land on the school site earmarked for extra care housing would be put to better use by a social housing development whilst retaining the school on a reduced footprint.
- The perception within the community is that the matter, including the future of the school has been predetermined. For the engagement process to be meaningful, the Council should listen to the views of the community and those of the Local Members and be prepared to change approach on the basis of what the local people are saying. The majority of the community who expressed an opinion do not think Ysgol Beaumaris is the right site for the ECH development; many do not want to see neither Ysgol Beaumaris nor Haulfre Residential Home closing. The decision needs to take account of those feelings.

The Committee considered the information presented and it sought clarification/ explanation of the matters noted below –

- The Committee noted that it is the local community's view that that the future of Ysgol Beaumaris and the development of the Extra Care Housing facility are interlinked and that many in the community believe that coming to a decision on the ECH development before the consultation on the future of the school has ended means that the fate of the latter has already been determined. The Committee sought clarification of the thinking behind the timing of the consultation and decision-making processes with regard to both matters. The Chief Executive said that the ECH facility is being considered before the future of the school has been determined because the two are not interdependent. The Officer's report makes it clear that the ECH scheme can proceed were the school to remain open or were it close. The Leader and Portfolio Member for Social Services said that she had sought to align the two consultation processes when the engagement on the ECH facility had been completed much sooner.
- The Committee noted the support by many within the local community for the retention of Haulfre Residential Home. The Committee also noted there is a view locally that the Haulfre site could be used for developing Extra Care Housing. The Committee sought clarification of the reasons for not designating Haulfre, Llangoed as a preferred option. The Head of Adults' Services said that the Haulfre site was one of 7 sites considered for the ECH scheme. However, its distance from amenities and lack of access to public transport (which are important BREEAM standards in the context of ECH) mean it did not score as highly as the school site which is more central to the wider area. This is why extra care provision is often located in or near to towns.
- The Committee noted that the ECH development is to be funded through the Housing Revenue Account. The Committee sought clarification of the reasons for utilising the HRA as the funding source for the scheme and whether the risks are greater in going down this route. The Head of Function (Resources) and Section 151 Officer said that the HRA is wholly separate from the Council's other budgets and is designated for Council housing purposes only. There can be no cross-subsidisation between the HRA and the Council's other budgets. The Council's decision to opt out of the HRA subsidy system and

to become self-financing means that it has more freedom regarding how it manages its housing including the ability to borrow (albeit up to a capped amount) to develop new housing. The proposed ECH scheme in Beaumaris will have to be self-sustaining i.e. the rental income it generates will be used to support it, hence the need for the scheme to be able to maximise its rental income by ensuring full occupation. The Head of Housing Services confirmed that Welsh Government social housing grants for ECH schemes such as was used to fund the Penucheldre ECH development in Holyhead have reduced significantly and the latest ECH scheme in Llangefni is being funded by private loans taken out by the Housing Association. The greatest risk to the HRA is from there being a large number of voids in the ECH scheme; the risk is reduced in locating the scheme in an urban setting.

- The Committee noted that it is intended that Haulfre residential home should close and that its residents where appropriate, will transfer to the new ECH facility in Beaumaris. The Committee sought clarification and assurance that there will also be appropriate and adequate provision for those residents whose care needs cannot be met by the ECH facility and that they will be suitably looked after. The Committee further sought clarification of the impact which the closure of Haulfre Residential Home is likely to have on the Gerddi Heulfre and Blaen y Coed provision for people with learning disabilities. The Head of Adults' Services said that the service is aiming to extend the options available to people whose needs may be more acute e. g. in Garreglwyd where there is a new resource for people with dementia. The service's strategy does not state that there will never be a need for residential care provision, but in acknowledging this, the strategy does seek to provide more options to allow people to live independently e. g. ECH. People who have specialist needs will be provided for through specialist residential care, through nursing care and/or EMI nursing care – the Officer said that he was confident that these forms of provision are continuing but notwithstanding they may have to be accessed beyond the individual's immediate community. The learning disability service is under review as a whole with the objective of establishing the best model for the delivery of learning disability provision; it would therefore be premature to predict the outcome of the review with reference to Gerddi Haulfre and Blaen y Coed.

Councillor Lewis Davies proposed the following amendments to the recommendations in the Officer's report –

- Due to the strength of feeling among the local community and Local Members, that the Council re-considers establishing Extra Care Housing on the site of Haulfre, Llangoed
- That Haulfre Residential Home is incorporated within the scheme in order to provide for those who are no longer able to live independently
- Due to the shortage of land for housing for young people in Beaumaris, that the Ysgol Beaumaris site is developed for social housing whilst retaining a smaller school.

The Committee was advised, and it noted, that as the statutory consultation on the future of Ysgol Beaumaris remains open, it is not able to consider any proposals which reference the primary school. Councillor Lewis Davies subsequently withdrew the reference to the school from the third of his proposals.

In the ensuing vote, the first and third of the amendments above were carried by a majority of the Committee's members. From the Officer's recommendations, the Committee accepted that the ECH scheme be funded through the Housing Revenue Account.

The Committee, having considered the information presented both verbally and in writing along with the representations made at the meeting, RESOLVED to recommend to the Executive -

- **That due to the strength of feeling among the local community and Local Members, the Council re-considers establishing the Extra Care Housing development in the Seiriol area on the site of Haulfre, Llangoed.**
- **That due to the shortage of land for housing for young people in Beaumaris, the Ysgol Beaumaris site is used to develop social housing.**
- **That the ECH development is funded through the Housing Revenue Account.**

NO ADDITIONAL ACTION WAS PROPOSED

3 CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT PLAN - PROGRESS REPORT

• The report of the Head of Children and Families' Services setting out the progress to date on implementing the Children's Service Improvement Plan was presented for the Committee's consideration. The report set out progress thus far with regard to the following areas of focus –

- Service Re-structure
- Recruitment and Retention
- Policy and Guidance update including the Workforce Strategy
- Quality Assurance
- Working with Partners

The Leader and Portfolio Member for Social Services reported that a great deal of work has been done so far and is ongoing. Attached at Appendix 3 to the report is a detailed self-assessment summarising the strengths, achievements and areas remaining to be improved against each of the recommendations of CSSIW's Inspection report from its inspection of the Council's Children's Services in November, 2016. A letter from CSSIW's Head of Local Authority Inspection dated 11 January, 2018 notes that although the pace of change has been slow there has been positive incremental improvement overall and that significant progress has been achieved in implementing the new service structure. The letter acknowledges that there is continuing corporate commitment to securing improvement in Children's Services and that increased scrutiny and challenge from elected members has been a positive development. The Regulator states that it will continue to monitor progress ahead of a more formal review by way of re-inspection later in 2018.

The Head of Children and Families Services said that he was pleased with the Regulator's letter which recognises the continuing progress made by the Council to implement the recommendations of the inspection and to improve its Children and Families Service. The Officer, in acknowledging that much work remains to be done said that reforming practice does not happen overnight. However, the service is aware of the areas it needs to focus on and is prioritising accordingly.

• A report by the Scrutiny Manager incorporating a progress update on the work of the Children's Services Improvement Panel was presented for the Committee's consideration. The report provided a summary of the matters which have received the Panel's attention over the course of November and December, 2017 along with an updated version of the Panel's work programme to May 2018.

Councillor Richard Griffiths, the Corporate Scrutiny Committee's representative on the Panel reported that all work-streams pertaining to the Service Improvement Plan appear to be on target thus far. However, the Panel wishes to bring the Corporate Scrutiny's attention to the fact that although good progress has been made on implementing the revised staffing structure, some social worker posts remain filled by agency workers. This needs to be addressed as soon as possible.

The Committee considered the information presented and was assured by the feedback received from the Panel and the areas covered by it during the reporting period as set out in section 2.2 of the report. The Committee noted that the Panel had observed that there had been a significant reduction in the service's dependency on agency staff in filling vacancies but that 4 social worker posts continued to be filled by agency staff and needed to be filled on a permanent basis. The Committee therefore sought an update on the recruitment position, particularly in relation to whether the service had taken the step as previously suggested by the Committee to be more proactive in its approach to recruitment and to advertise more widely.

The Head of Children and Families Service said that the Guardian (on-line) and Community Care (a social work journal) which the service has used to advertise vacancies are recognised sources of social work advertisement and recruitment. The service has started to offer taster placements aimed at sparking the interest of sixth form pupils for example and there are two internal members of staff who are following the traineeship programme to become qualified social workers which it is hoped could be a recurring feature in future years. Social worker recruitment is a national issue and many of Wales's 22 local authorities depend to varying degrees on agency staff. Additionally, 5 of the service's staff have been trained as social care ambassadors to go out to local colleges and sixth forms to talk about social care work.

It was RESOLVED that the Committee –

- **Takes assurance from the progress report and is satisfied with the steps taken to progress implementation of the Service Improvement Plan and the pace of progress.**
- **Notes the progress made to date with the work of the Children's Services Improvement Panel and that all work-streams pertaining to the Service Improvement Plan appear to be on target thus far.**
- **Notes the Panel's concern that some social worker posts continue to be filled by agency staff and notes also, that the service is taking steps to broaden and diversify its recruitment approach.**

NO ADDITIONAL ACTION WAS PROPOSED

4 THE SMALLHOLDINGS ESTATE - MATTER REFERRED TO SCRUTINY BY FULL COUNCIL

The report of the Head of Service (Highways, Waste and Property) was presented for the Committee's consideration. The report provided an overview of the position with regard to the Council's smallholdings estate following the completion of the 5 year Improvement Plan which sought to address the deteriorating physical condition of the rural estate.

The Portfolio Member for Highways, Property and Waste reported that the Council's Smallholding Estate is currently made up of 98 holdings in total analysis of which is provided in section 5.13 of the report. 51% of the total holdings are held on the more modern Agricultural Tenancy Act 1995 agreements or Farm Business Tenancies while the remaining 49% are held on the stricter Agricultural Holdings Act 1996 tenancies. As holdings become vacant, they are transferred to the newer AHA tenancy agreement which are fixed term agreements on open market rents. Since commencing on the improvement programme, the rent income generated by the holdings has increased by £120k.

The Principal Valuation Officer said that he considered the Improvement Programme overall to have been a success; the value of the estate has been significantly optimised and the condition of a large proportion of the estate has been improved.

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

- The Committee noted the current age profile of the Council's smallholdings estate and noted particularly the aging demographic trend of tenants with only 10% of tenants aged 40 and under, 30% aged 51 to 60 and 25% aged 61 to 70. Whilst it accepted the reasons for this as set out in the report, it sought clarification of whether there is recognised practice elsewhere among Wales's local authorities which the Council could draw upon to promote mobility and increase opportunities for new entrants. The Principal Valuation Officer said that the Welsh Government's report – Welsh County Farms: Way Forward Initiative - highlights Anglesey's policy with regard to the management of its rural estate as being positive and proactive in comparison to the minimalistic approach of other authorities in Wales.
- The Committee noted that the discussion at Full Council had been about not selling smallholdings without the approval of the Council. The Committee therefore sought clarification of the current approach taken to the sale of smallholdings. The Portfolio Member for Highways, Waste and Property confirmed that the right to sell resides with the Portfolio Member but that any such decisions are taken in consultation with the Officers. Disposals have been necessary both to generate the capital to fund the improvement programme and in terms of the management of the estate – in order to remove from the portfolio, assets that were under-performing and assets that were surplus to requirements.

It was RESOLVED to note the information presented with regard to the current position of the Council's Smallholdings Estate following the completion of the 5 year Improvement Programme.

NO ADDITIONAL ACTION WAS PROPOSED

5 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was considered and RESOLVED under Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, to exclude the press and public from the meeting during the discussion on item 6 on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A of the said Act and in the Public Interest Test as presented.

6 SCHOOL TRANSPORT - MATTER REFERRED TO SCRUTINY BY THE AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The joint report of the Head of Learning and the Head of Highways, Waste and Property was presented for the Committee's consideration. The matter was referred to the attention of Scrutiny by the Audit and Governance Committee in the wake of an Internal Audit review of school transport which had resulted in a Limited Assurance opinion meaning that significant weaknesses had been identified in the system of internal controls with regard to School Transport.

The Highways Service Support Manager reported that the Internal Audit review report on School Transport was presented to the Audit and Governance Committee on 21 September, 2017. The report included an Action Plan setting out 16 items which required addressing over a period of time, according to priority. As well as the Internal Audit action plan, the Head of Resources/Section 151 Officer, Head of Learning and the Head of Highways, Waste and Property met in August, 2017 to establish a programme of short, medium and long-term actions. The Learning Service has appointed a Consultant to work as a Project Manager on this matter. The Learning Service also benefits from the specific time allocation of an officer in the Transformation Service team who has specialist knowledge of IT systems and who will work with other authorities in North Wales which

already utilise the Transport ONE software system to which Anglesey has also subscribed. The ONE system is designed to enable bus and taxis routes to be tracked to ensure that the optimum routes are adopted thereby providing better value for money.

The Officer proceeded to highlight the progress made since September, 2017 as set out in the report including progress against the recommendations made in the Internal Audit action plan.

The Head of Learning reported that an internal audit review of school transport arrangements was requested after over-expenditure on the school taxi services was identified in 2016/17. The school bus service continues to spend within budget and in terms of expenditure per head, is the cheapest in Wales. The demand for school transport is constantly changing with a significant increase in the number needing a school taxi service; consequently, a review of school transport policy will be held to ascertain whether in some cases, a service is being provided unnecessarily or is being duplicated. However, work over the past few months means that the service is now better informed as to the nature and extent of the demand for transport and is working on putting in place the systems to better enable it to manage the demand in line with statutory requirements. Work on evaluating and tracking bus and taxi routes has begun and as a result, it is anticipated that the overspend will be reduced this year. This is before work on systems has commenced. The Education Service has received funding through the Council's Invest to Save initiative to improve business processes. This will be used to establish a system to help plot bus and taxi routes digitally to achieve economy in the use of the service. This work is currently being undertaken manually. There is some data cleansing work to be undertaken before the Transport ONE software system can be fully utilised to ensure that the database from which the system will draw is up to date and accurate. It is expected that this work will be completed by July this year with a view to fully implementing the ONE system by September, 2018.

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

- The Committee noted the progress made since the presentation of the Internal Audit review report in September, 2017. The Committee noted and welcomed the measures being taken to make the transport to school service more efficient and cost-effective.
- The Committee further sought clarification of the actions taken to ensure that the safeguarding elements of the school transport system are compliant and up to date. The Head of Highways, Waste and Property explained the arrangements with regard to DBS both for bus and taxi operations in terms of certification, renewal and spot checking. Safeguarding awareness sessions have also been arranged by the Human Resources Service for bus and taxi operators. The Head of Learning said that the Council's safeguarding thresholds are appropriately high and that continuing efforts are made to improve safeguarding arrangements as far as is possible.

The Committee noted the information presented and assurances given and was satisfied that the Highways, Waste and Property Service and the Learning Service are jointly taking actions to address the issues raised by the Internal Audit review of school transport and are putting in place measures to improve the School Transport service's efficiency, accountability and value for money. The Committee requested a further update on progress for its June, 2018 meeting ahead of the scheduled completion of the action plan in September, 2018.

It was RESOLVED that the Committee –

- **Notes the Internal Audit Action Plan with regard to School Transport dated September, 2017.**
- **Notes and is satisfied that progress is being made against then recommendations contained in the Internal Audit report and that there is a commitment by both services to complete the action plan by September, 2018**
- **Notes that the Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements Board has already considered the Internal Audit Report at its meeting on 8 December, 2017 and is monitoring the safeguarding issues.**
- **Notes the recommendation made by the Audit and Governance Committee that an action plan be created and monitored and overseen by a Project Team.**
- **Refers the matter back to the Audit and Governance Committee following Internal Audit's monitoring of the action plan. The Committee notes that the IA service has in place a follow-up and monitoring process to ensure that the management steps in relation to all reports with a Limited Assurance opinion have been implemented effectively and that the Head of Audit and Risk will report to the Audit and Governance Committee on progress within the specific timetable agreed.**

ADDITIONAL ACTION PROPOSED: That the Corporate Scrutiny Committee be updated on progress at its June, 2018 meeting ahead of the scheduled completion of the Action Plan in September, 2018

7 ITEM FOR INFORMATION - THE LIBRARY SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17

The Committee was in open session for the following item.

The report of the Head of Learning incorporating the Annual Report of the Library Service for 2016/17 setting out performance against the fifth quality Welsh Public Library Standards 2014-17 was presented for the Committee's information.

The Head of Learning reported that the Welsh Government via its policy division MALD (Museums, Archives and Libraries Division) requires that the Council submits an Annual Report on performance towards fulfilling the Public Library Standards for Wales. The Annual Report contains a summary of Library and Information Service performance during 2016/17 and has been submitted to MALD in draft form due to the assessment timetable. The Assessment shows the service to be performing well and that it has met 17 of the 18 core entitlements in full thereby maintaining its performance in 2015/16. Of the 7 quality indicators, the Isle of Anglesey achieved 4 in full and 3 in part which is similar performance to that in 2015/16. However, MALD expresses concerns in some areas particularly in relation to staffing. Performance is broadly similar to last year, with some notable improvements in usage levels. The ongoing issue of low staffing levels remains an area of concern especially during a period of planning changes for the future. The Officer said that notwithstanding, the service has succeeded in maintaining the quality of the service and that in moving towards the sixth quality framework of the Welsh Library Standards the transformation process bodes well for the service's being able to sustain performance against those standards.

The Committee acknowledged the performance of the Library Service in difficult times and in a period of transition.

It was RESOLVED that the Committee –

- **Suggests that the Portfolio Member FOR Education, Libraries, Culture and Youth approves the Welsh Public Library Standards Annual Report for 2016/17.**
- **Notes the Welsh Government's (MALD) assessment of the Library Service's 2016/17 Annual Library Report and the issues arising therein.**

NO ADDITIONAL ACTION WAS PROPOSED

**Councillor Aled Morris Jones
Chair**